angle to examine various issues in the higher education arena.

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The global reception of John Dewey's thought: Multiple refractions through time and space. Bruno-Jofré, R., & Schriewer, J. (Eds.). New York, NY and Abingdon, England: Routledge, 2012. 272 pp., hardcover, 84£, ISBN: 978-0-415-89888-1.

The product of a panel discussion entitled *The International Diffusion of Educational Ideas* organized by the Faculty of Education at Queen's University in Canada in 2008, this book focuses on the theme of how John Dewey's educational ideas were received at an international level. It is part of a prestigious book series, the Routledge's *International Studies in the Philosophy of Education*.

The contributors explored this topic in a range of different contexts, covering four continents and 11 countries. The first chapter of Part I is concerned with the role of religion in the dissemination and reception of Dewey's ideas in Spain and Chile. The next chapter reveals that Argentina's acceptance of Dewey has always been selective due to different local discourses. The third chapter examines how and to what extent Dewey's ideas were adopted and reconstructed by the educational leaders in post-revolutionary Mexico. Part II of the volume incorporates discussions of the reception and appropriation of Dewey's ideas in East Asia, including China and Japan. Part III explores Dewey's contribution to the "Luso-Afro-Brazilian Space" by using an axis for a historical-comparative approach to reveal distinctive components of the educational transfers between Portugal, Africa, and Brazil. Part IV explores the political and social contours in the framing and up-take of Dewey's ideas in Europe, where Russia and Germany are investigated. An *Afterword* presents a perceptive argument on how to understand the connection between Dewey's texts and the texts produced by the authors through the introduction of three theoretical concepts: *intersections*, *oppositions* and *configurations*.

The study of the diffusion and influence of Dewey's educational ideas is not a

new research area. However, the essays collected in this book demonstrate at least two strengths compared with previous studies. The first strength lies in the *research approach* adopted by the contributors. While not totally rejecting the traditional approach to the topic, most authors shift the research focus from the “diffusion” and “influence” of Dewey’s ideas towards the contextual “reception” of Dewey’s ideas. Reception, namely, selective acceptance and adoption of Dewey’s theories and ideas in a particular temporal and spatial context, “forms an endless series of interpretations and re-interpretations, filtered by prevailing interests and channeled into pre-existing discourse configurations” (p. 6). The underlying assumption is that this kind of research cannot be done simply on the dimension of the *dissemination* of Dewey’s thought. What is needed is a context-specific approach to avoid over-generalization, and it is in this sense that the idea of *reception* makes sense. Although this work is not the first one to stress the importance of the process of the reception of educational knowledge in a specific context⁵, it offers a myriad of examples of using this approach, and hence portrays a fuller story, providing readers with many examples or cases of the process of the reception of Dewey in a much wider space and in more contrasting contexts around the globe than had been done.

The second related strength of the book is that it highlights numerous *theories of reception* that can be used to explain the process of reception of Dewey’s ideas at an international level. If researchers do not simply focus on the meanings given by the notion of dissemination, but pay more attentions to the meanings produced by the process of reception, then, is there a “mechanism” for the reception of international knowledge, i.e. a sound explanation for the formation of *meanings* constructed by the reader, the adopter or the recipient in a specific context? The book provides a number of theories for shedding light on the process of reception, among which the concept of *externalization* helps significantly. As a concept of sociology of knowledge, “externalization” is borrowed from the *theory of self-referential social systems*.⁶ It functions like a “floodgate” which a system is induced to open or shut according to internal necessities. It has the capacity to

⁵ For example, see G. J. J. Biesta & S. Miedema “Context and interaction. How to assess Dewey’s influence on educational reform in Europe?” 2000, *Studies in Philosophy and Education*, 19(1), 21–37. doi: 10.1023/A:1005255629965

⁶ See N. Luhmann “*The differentiation of society*” (S. Holmes & C. Larmore, Trans.), 1982. New York, NY: Columbia University Press. See also P. Berger & T. Luckmann “*The social construction of reality: A treatise in the sociology of knowledge*,” 1966. Harmondsworth, England: Penguin.

reconstruct the meanings processed through *educational reflection* by a system and to explain the linkage between educational reflection theories (including the references to the international level or classical authors embedded in these theories) and distinctive historical and political settings. Hence, it is remarkably appropriate and powerful to apply this concept to the study of the reception of Dewey's educational ideas in a variety of social contexts.

Although all the papers in this volume can be seen as examples of the "mechanism" of local reception of international (educational) knowledge, each needs to be understood in its specific context. Given the nature of this journal, I would like to take Schulte's work as an example (see Part II, Chapter 5). In her studies on China's reception of Dewey's ideas, the focus of investigation is properly put on the "re-contextualization" of the reception of Dewey's educational thought, which covers three periods. The first is the period in which Dewey was warmly welcomed as a *friend* of China in the 1920s. The second period refers to the time when Dewey was regarded as a *friend* during the early stage of the Marxist era in China after the 1950s. The sharp contrast between these two periods can only be understood in each specific context. The third period has to do with the re-appearance, re-interpretation and re-appropriation of Dewey's educational thought after the 1980s, which is labeled as a *flagship* period. In the mid-1980s, Dewey's idea about vocational education was recovered and re-activated in China. In the 1990s, Dewey's emphases on "education as life," on experience and on "active development" are regarded as highly compatible with the orientation toward "quality education." This re-emergence of Dewey needs to be located in the Chinese social and economic situation of the past few decades. Three symbols of the receptions of Dewey's ideas in China can be seen as the signs of the externalization of the Chinese social (educational) system at three historical stages.

Some interesting issues appear in Schulte's work, which might trigger debate and/or further study. First, what is missing seems to be the story of Dewey's ideas in China between the 1920s and 1950s. The fad for Dewey's ideas continued after he left China in 1921, and its influence did not fade away until the May Thirtieth Movement of 1925. This movement aroused Chinese people against imperialism and stimulated their resistance to Western powers, social systems and values. Nevertheless, the reception of Dewey's ideas continued in China during the 1930s and 1940s. Hence, it could be argued that there is a time gap that needs to be further investigated with regard to Dewey's educational

ideas in China. Secondly, Schulte's assessment of Hu Shi seems to be negative, suggesting that Hu misinterpreted Dewey's pragmatism by taking it to an extreme and could be viewed as having used Dewey to prop up his own reputation. But even though Hu may have misinterpreted Dewey, some facts can be discovered to show that Hu played an irreplaceable and positive role in the Chinese reception of Dewey's ideas. In November, 1922, due to his academic influence, Hu was appointed by the National Government to make a draft of the scheme of the new national educational system. It is evident that Hu planted Dewey's pragmatist ideas within the system, or put another way, the ideas happened to be in concordance with Hu's own pragmatic educational thought. This suggests that there is still space for further study of Hu's contributions to the dissemination and reception of Dewey's educational ideas in China.

This volume is no doubt a remarkable contribution to studies on Dewey and I recommend it to all those who work in or are interested in the fields of history of education, philosophy of education and comparative education.

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民间故事的学前教育价值与传承研究：以浙江为例 [*The value and heritage of folktales in early childhood education: Based on a case study in Zhejiang province*]. 章红, 等 [Zhang, H. et al.]. (Eds.). 杭州, 中国: 浙江大学出版社 [Hangzhou, China: Zhejiang University Press], 2011. 465 pp., (paperback), 46¥, ISBN: 978-7-308-09417-7.

A significant aspect of cultural heritage, folktales serve as a source of values, beliefs, and norms, due to their relation to local customs, history and place names. Folktales have long been a form of entertainment for people, while they also convey moral lessons to children. Indeed, folktales could be considered the earliest kind of children's stories. Nowadays, folktales are not as popular as they once were, because the widespread availability of cartoons and children's books