

The Modern School of Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia (1859–1909), an International and Current Figure

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Background/Context: Throughout history, a country's economic and military strength has influenced its times of cultural splendor and the rise of famous intellectuals and artists. Spain has been an exception to this. At the turn of the 20th century, a surprising series of events that no one could have predicted occurred. At the time, Spain had recently lost the last of its overseas colonies. A few years later, the Moroccan War was also a failure. All these events sent Spain into a state of confusion and provoked strong political tensions within the country: popular uprisings, street fights, and a general state of economic, political, and military weakness. Simultaneously, the cultural and intellectual scene developed a fascinating degree of momentum. Spain became the cradle of some of the world's foremost painters, poets, writers, and intellectuals, such as Picasso, Machado, Lorca, and Buñuel. Among them, the Catalan pedagogue Ferrer i Guàrdia (1859-1909), who was important in the libertarian tradition of popular culture, became a world figure with his educational project, the Modern School. This project was specifically aimed at the lowest social classes so that they would have access to a scientific, democratic, quality education, thereby developing their skills in a society where education was limited to the upper classes and contributing educational development to improve social conditions. Both his project and Ferrer i Guàrdia himself were persecuted and attacked until he was finally sentenced to death in October 1909.

Purpose: This goal of this study was to analyze Ferrer i Guàrdia's indefatigable fight for an egalitarian, high-quality pedagogical project. Specifically, the figure of Ferrer i Guàrdia was analyzed in the context of a socially and militarily decadent country, which led to his defamation, persecution, and death—in contrast with the international impact and prestige he achieved.

Research Design: This research was based on historical methods, specifically drawing on analyses of literature review, historical documents, books, and articles (both scientific articles and newspaper articles from the time) regarding the life and work of Ferrer i Guàrdia and the historical context in which he lived.

Findings/Conclusions: The article concludes with a summary of the great current value of Ferrer i Guàrdia's libertarian approach to education, which consisted of transforming education to provide high-quality learning for all regardless of socioeconomic class.

Francisco Ferrer thought that no one is voluntarily a bad person and that all evil in the human world proceeds from ignorance. For this reason ignorants have assassinated him and ignorance is perpetuated even today through new and indefatigable inquisitions. Yet, even in the face of these facts, some of the victims—among them Ferrer—will live forever. (Albert Camus)¹

Athens, one of the most important Greek city-states in the history of art, reached its highest artistic level when the Hellenistic system of democracy and social development was at its maximum (Gombrich, 2008). Similarly, great cultural developments in various countries are related to their political and military power. Examples include Italy during the Renaissance (15th and 16th centuries) and France under Louis XIV. During these historical periods, art was promoted as the most vivid expression of political, economic, and military power of a nation. During these periods, not only artists but also internationally recognized intellectuals were celebrated. The case of Spain serves as the exception to this rule in light of its apparent bifurcation in national power and intellectualism (Bernal Muñoz, 1996; Blanco, 1966). This article is particularly aimed at shedding light on the ways in which, despite a lack of economic and political power, cultural contributions may garner great international prestige. In this context, the pedagogue Ferrer i Guàrdia made significant contributions worth studying.

At the start of the 20th century, Spain was marked by severe problems associated with economic underdevelopment as the wealthy social classes continued in their ways and refused to give up their privileges while a great part of the Spanish population (workers and peasants) suffered miserable living conditions. The political regime continued to be unrepresentative of the people and instead was composed of those who already held privileged positions and of such institutions as the Church (Carr, 1980; Connelly, 1968; Ealham, 2005). In addition, the Spanish military had lost its pride, and the people lost confidence in the military because of the loss of Spain's overseas colonies in 1898. The

independence of Cuba, the Philippines, Puerto Rico, and Guam contributed to Spain finally losing any possibility of becoming a world power, which was perceived as a national catastrophe. While most European nations were building vast empires, Spain was losing the last of its colonies (Chandler, 1975). This military defeat implied once more the fall of the Spanish nation on many levels during this period, except on a cultural level, as we argue in this article (Balfour, 1997).

The impact of the events of 1898 represented a slow crisis in the power of the State and thus began the critiques of the regime itself and of the Church, which was considered part of the government (Comellas, 1988). These critiques led to political instability and an anticlerical atmosphere that lasted until the 1950s. From 1900 to 1916, there were 24 Spanish governments: 10 were conservative, and 14 were led by liberal parties. Between 1917 and 1923 alone, there were 14 governments (Comellas, 1988). The political parties (conservative and liberal) took turns taking power without any clear guidelines and often with divisions within the parties. Simultaneously, new political parties arose, such as the republicans, socialists, and regionalists (Casanova & Gil Andrés, 2011).

In 1921, the so-called Disaster of Annual reinforced this atmosphere. The Spanish government believed that keeping the Moroccan colonies was the last chance to maintain its prestige among the nations of Europe (Chandler, 1975). However, in opposition, the Riffians (a denomination that refers to the Imazighen, an ethnic group inhabiting the Rif, in northern Morocco) created groups resisting this occupation. To counter this resistance, Fernández Silvestre, the commandant-general of Melilla, decided to start an offensive in Alhucemas. This action was considered very risky because Spanish troops had limited knowledge of the territory and lacked adequate weaponry and supplies (Casanova & Gil Andrés, 2011; Madariaga, 2000). Meanwhile, the Spanish population did not fully support the occupation of Morocco: They still recalled “the privations suffered during service in Cuba and felt that the Spanish bourgeoisie and the Church were once again sending [the workers] to fight for the interests of the capitalists” (Chandler, 1975, p. 305). When General Fernández Silvestre’s troops reached the camp at Annual, a settlement in northwestern Morocco, and el-Krim, one of the rebels’ leaders, caught them off guard. The result was a massacre in which approximately 15,000 Spanish soldiers died. Consequently, the government resigned, and Antonio Maura² returned to office (Casanova & Gil Andrés, 2011; Madariaga, 2000).

These events disrupted Spain. The successive governments were incapable of addressing this situation, and strong internal political tensions emerged with uprisings, street fights, and, in general, a period of profound economic, political, and military weakness (Balcells, 2009; Ealham, 2005).

Simultaneously, the cultural and intellectual atmosphere was stirring and gaining strength. Spain had become the cradle of some of the best painters, poets, writers, and intellectuals of the 20th century, such as Picasso, Machado, Lorca, and Buñuel. Far from eliminating creative thinking and improvement, many artists, such as Pablo Picasso, Miquel Utrillo, and Ramon Casas, developed their artistic careers in tight linkage with their political commitment to the popular social movements and in a context of great political difficulties. For example, Picasso’s art has always been connected to the social and cultural climate of the time (Kaplan, 2003). Even during the Civil War, Picasso created some of his most famous works, such as *Guernica*,³ his masterpiece (Kaplan, 2003).

After the disaster of 1898 and the political instability that reigned over Spanish territory, Spanish artists attempted to express a rejection of the State and to present a different Spain to the world (Blanco, 1966). Whereas the government administered legal or economic remedies, artists in various fields created works showing that Spain could be different on both an artistic level and a social level. In their works, they denounced the lack of connection between the people and the State; therefore, they needed to adopt an attitude contrasting with the atmosphere of political and military defeatism, or the so-called Spanish problem, that existed (Blanco, 1966). They changed the culture and art in reaction to a poor, slumbering atmosphere of mediocrity and religious outrage (Bernal, 1996). One key to promoting change that went beyond the artistic was to be connected with the rest of Europe in the form of the “de-clergyization” of society, freedom of conscience, and antidogmatism. This Europeanization of Spain followed the rules of rationalism, freedom, and science. Education was a key part of this process. For this reason, several Spanish intellectuals and artists were associated with the *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (Free Learning Institution, 1876-1936), directed by Francisco Giner de los Ríos. This institution promoted a movement that fought to change education to make it scientific rather than dogmatic (Otero-Urtaza, 2011).

Among these intellectuals, painters, writers, and other artists was the Catalan pedagogue Ferrer i Guàrdia, who worked within the libertarian tradition of popular culture and became a world figure for his part in the educational project of the Modern School (Corominas, 2003b; Solà, 2010). We will show the impact of his work throughout the seven sections of this article.

In the first section, Methods of Investigation, we explain the sources of information that were used. In the second section, several of the more relevant elements of the personal and political trajectory of

Ferrer i Guàrdia are presented. In the third section, the project of the Modern School is introduced, including its origins, its characteristics, and the impact that it had on those who held political and ecclesiastic power. The fourth section narrates the various events in which those in power persecuted and finally ended the life of Ferrer i Guàrdia as they tried to eliminate his influence not only in the educational realm but also politically and ideologically. The fifth section describes the influences and impacts of the Modern School project both in Spain and internationally. The sixth section describes the impact that this project and its ideological foundation have had on current educational projects and proposals. Finally, the conclusions synthesize the main contributions of this article.

METHODS OF INVESTIGATION

The findings presented here are part of a larger research project launched in 2007 that is aimed at scientifically recovering the historical memoir of the Catalan pedagogue Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia. In particular, our work is intended to show how, during a time of economic and military decline in Spain, the figure of Ferrer i Guàrdia arose along with his pedagogical project and its strong international impact. This impact stands in stark contrast to the persecution that he suffered until his death in his native country, a persecution that was designed to silence his ideals and his pedagogical project.

This work is unique in that, despite his status as one of the most prominent international Spanish pedagogues, there has been a dearth of studies dedicated to Ferrer i Guàrdia and his work until recently (Corominas, 2003b; Solà, 2010). Even during the centennial of the founding of the Modern School, in 2001, no commemorative public event or mention was organized by the government or other public institutions (Solà, 2010). During the centennial of the closing of the Modern School (1906), however, and particularly with the centennial of the death of Ferrer i Guàrdia (1909), people began to talk and publish more publicly about the injustice done to him and his great pedagogical work, the Modern School (Avilés, 2006; Begarsa, 2009; Solà, 2010).

Our work on Ferrer i Guàrdia began by organizing a conference in 2009 at the University of Barcelona to commemorate the centennial of his death. This conference included the participation of the Catalan pedagogue and expert on Ferrer i Guàrdia, Pere Solé, the director of the Ferrer i Guàrdia Foundation, and Marta Mata. Mata was a pedagogue (one of the founders of the pedagogical reform movement after the Franco regime), a socialist senator and deputy in 1977, and the president of the national school board from 2004 until her death in 2006. She was one of the intellectuals who always defended and vindicated the figure and educational work of Ferrer i Guàrdia.

The methods used in this study were primarily historical methods but also included interviews and specific review of the literature. We drew from analyses of biographic reports, historical documents, specialized books, and articles and newspaper articles from that time.

Specific work that we performed and resources that we reviewed in our historiographical investigation were as follows: (a) Research in institutions and special centers, such as the Arxiu Ateneu Enciclopèdic Popular,⁴ Biblioteca Pública Arús,⁵ Biblioteca Pabelló de la República,⁶ and the Centre d'Estudis Llibertaris Federica Monseny.⁷ (b) Review of several documents at the Ferrer i Guàrdia Foundation,⁸ particularly its library, which needed to be visited in person in 2007 to gain access to all the biographic material on Ferrer i Guàrdia and his associated secular education activities (these materials can now be accessed freely in digital form on the foundation's website⁹). The materials that were reviewed consisted of books edited by the Modern School editors, the Bulletins of the Modern School, the lawsuits against Ferrer i Guàrdia, and other documents linked to his life and work. (c) Research in the Catalan Library, Barcelona, and the Main Library of the University of Edinburgh. (d) Anarchy Archives, the Hathi Trust Digital Library, Internet archives, and the newspaper and periodical library of the journal *La Vanguardia* in search of works from the early 20th century that were not available in physical formats. (e) Two videotapes produced in Spain that discuss the Modern School and Ferrer i Guàrdia (Corominas, 2003b; TVE, 1997).

Second, we consulted regular scholarly sources to conduct an extensive literature review. Finally, we performed fieldwork consisting of interviews. All three sources allowed us to analyze of the life and work of Ferrer i Guàrdia and to document the historical context in which he lived. In addition, regular sources of scholarly work, such as the Journal Citation Report, Scopus, and ERIC, were searched for articles in international journals and for links primarily to the following topics: Ferrer i Guàrdia, the Modern School, the rationalist movement, the Tragic Week, and the libertarian movement.

Finally, interviews with various people at the centers and archives that we consulted yielded selections of books and reference documents regarding Ferrer i Guàrdia and his historical context.

FERRER I GUÀRDIA AND HIS TIME

During the first decade of the 20th century, when the pedagogical project of Ferrer i Guàrdia was born, Spain underwent a period during which the parties taking turns in the monarchic restoration were suffering a rapid decline. In Catalonia, the region where Ferrer i Guàrdia's Modern School was founded, and, more specifically, in Barcelona, its capital, these parties of the monarchic restoration were replaced by the nationalist and republican parties. There was a simultaneous rise of La Liga Regionalista (the Regionalist League) of Prat de la Riba, a party of the conservative right (Ehrlich, 2004). This political moment was accompanied by an overexploitation and low salaries that led to miserable living conditions for the working class. There was a lack of housing, problems with public facilities, and poor living and hygiene conditions. The situation was even more worrisome in terms of education, as 70% of the population was illiterate in 1900 (Quintanilla & Sánchez-Ron, 1997).

This precarious situation of living standards, together with the lack of trust in the government, caused the people to self-organize and search for democratic ways to address the problems. This situation also caused the spread of anarchist ideology throughout Spain; because of its close ties with a large segment of the population, anarchism attracted more followers than the socialist parties (Comellas, 1988).

Meanwhile, a segment of the population started to be interested in the ideology and the tactics of French anarcho-syndicalism (Alvarez, 1991). In this atmosphere, a profound anticlergy and antibourgeoisie sentiment grew among the masses of workers and field laborers, who saw that the Church was part of the power structures that oppressed them. The force and influence of the ecclesiastical ideological apparatus were well known by Spaniards. In the educational realm, for example, there were parochial schools and male and female congregations in which the ideology of the dominant power was instilled and in which the working class did not have access to a quality education (de Puellas Benitez, 2004; Vilanova & Moreno, 1992). When the Church saw its power endangered in the educational domain by the growth of secular schools promoted by the workers' movement, it asked that the Concordat of 1851¹⁰ be invoked. In its article number 2, this Concordat established that *the instruction in universities, schools, seminar and public and private schools of all classes will follow the doctrine of the Catholic religion*. This move was an attack on any educational proposal that was not under the power of the Church (Marín, 2009). Politicians with a markedly anticlerical stance, such as Alejandro Lerroux,¹¹ who later served as president of the Second Spanish Republic during the years 1934-1935, profited from this atmosphere of general dissatisfaction with the dominant power and the Church. He and his party, the Radical Republican Party, attracted more followers and obtained more power (Álvarez, 1990).

In this context, we find the figure of Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia. He was born in Alella, a coastal town in the province of Barcelona, in 1859, the 7th of 14 children in a Catholic family of small landowners. When he was 13, his father punished him for accusing the local priest of interfering in family issues; he was sent to work in Barcelona (Corominas, 2003b; Solà, 1978a). While he worked, he attended evening classes taught in a workers' athenaeum, where he was first exposed to Republican ideals. During the First Republic (February 1873 to January 1874), he was exposed to various experiences of libertarian and secular education (Fidler, 1985). In his 20s (1883), he entered into service in the Company of Railways of Madrid, Zaragoza, and Alicante, working as a conductor. Shortly afterward, he married a woman he met on a train, Teresa Sanmartí. His passion for education had already begun showing in his work: He created a traveling library for the railway workers. His work also allowed him to travel without suspicion between the French border and Barcelona, which made him a valuable communication link between Ruiz Zorrilla,¹² a Spanish politician exiled in Paris at the time because of his republicanism and opposition to the return of the Bourbon dynasty, and his followers in Spain (Avilés, 2003; Solà, 1978a). Based on this relationship with Zorrilla, Ferrer i Guàrdia developed relationships with other Spanish and French revolutionaries (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913). This mission continued until May 19, 1885, when an attempted insurrection by General Villacampa (a follower of Ruiz Zorrilla) in Santa Coloma de Farners failed during an effort to proclaim the Republic. Ferrer i Guàrdia was involved and therefore sent to exile in Paris (Álvarez, 1990; Canal, 2000).

While in exile, he was accompanied by his wife, Teresa Sanmartí, and their three daughters. In Paris, he was able to work as a wine trader. He opened a restaurant, gave Spanish lessons, and was the unpaid secretary of Ruiz Zorrilla. During this time in France, his political ideals gained maturity. Although he was a follower of Republican ideas, he also began to note contradictions within republicanism regarding social reforms, and he began to advocate for action based more on the strategy of organizing strikes (Palà, 2008). He lived through the consolidation of a third bourgeois republic (the French Third Republic). France at that time was a state with a strong rural base and where the Church had a role in education. Nevertheless, in 1882, the right to public, free, secular education for all boys and girls was achieved. His involvement in Freemasonry beginning in 1883 promoted his civic involvement in France and led him to participate in the International League of Free Thinking in July 1892, where he met Lerroux (Avilés 2003, 2006). Certain Masonic ideals were consistent with his later educational proposal of the Modern School: the fight against fanaticism and ignorance (TVE, 1997). His circle of friends broadened to include such intellectual freethinkers and anarchists as Charles Ange Laissant, Charles Malato, Paul Robin, Elisée Reclus, Sébastien Faure, Jean Marestan, and Laurent Tailhadey, who also

influenced his thinking, which was increasingly directed toward the proposal of a new pedagogical project (Avilés, 2003). In 1893, he separated from his wife. Teresa disagreed with him having custody of their three daughters, and she tried to kill him on June 12, 1894, by shooting at him three times. Ferrer i Guàrdia never reported the crime (Archer, 2011; de Vroede, 1979), although Teresa had threatened to accuse him of being an anarchist (Avilés, 2003). Six years after the divorce, he married Leopoldine Bonnard, a teacher who was very closely associated with various French freethinking movements. He travelled throughout Europe accompanied by Leopoldine and one of his Spanish-lesson pupils, Jeanne Ernestine Meunier, a wealthy, very religious woman. His goal was to learn the best educational practices and thus shape his pedagogical project. When Meunier died, a large part of her estate went to Ferrer i Guàrdia with the explicit instructions that it be used to carry out his pedagogical project (Archer, 2011). This funding and the experience acquired during his 15 years of social and political involvement in France prompted Ferrer i Guàrdia to return to Barcelona to realize his project of the Modern School. He was filled with the conviction that intervention was necessary to change the social and political course of the country by reforming education (Corominas, 2003b). In the words of Ferrer i Guàrdia,

The experience I acquired during my fifteen years' residence at Paris, in which I witnessed the crises of Boulangism, Dreyfusism, and Nationalism, and the menace they offered to the Republic, convinced me that the problem of popular education was not solved; and, if it were not solved in France, there was little hope of Spanish republicanism settling it, especially as the party had always betrayed a lamentable inappreciation of the need of a system of general education. (1913, pp. 2-3)

Beginning in 1901, he also edited and funded the journal *The General Strike* [La Huelga General¹³] and contributed several articles. His association with this journal, with its markedly libertarian ideology and with a clear position in favor of the general strike as primary tool for the social revolution, was used against him twice, in 1906 and 1909. His support to the Workers' Solidarity trade union, an anarchist union created in 1907 in Catalonia, was also used against him. This union published a journal called *Workers' Solidarity*, which was funded by Ferrer i Guàrdia until his death in 1909. After the events of the Tragic Week in 1909, the union was reorganized in 1910 as a workers' confederation, the CNT¹⁴ (Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores) (Aisa, 1988).

THE MODERN SCHOOL PROJECT AND ITS POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS CONSEQUENCES IN SPAIN

The expansion of anarchism in Spain, particularly in Catalonia, caused acceptance by many and a willingness to participate in an educational project such as the one proposed by Ferrer i Guàrdia. In anarchism, unlike socialism, education was part of the revolutionary strategy, and thus education increasingly became one of the most important axes of social and political transformation in Spain (Álvarez, 1991). Ferrer i Guàrdia was part of that support for education as a driver of change. Eventually, social and educational thinkers worldwide considered the Modern School to be the emancipatory school of the 20th century because of its spirit of struggle in a repressive atmosphere; it was regarded initially as a force that discredited the political and military institutions in Spain (Corominas, 2003b).

In August 1901, at 70 Bailén Street, Barcelona, a school that intended to radically transform the pedagogical experience of its historical time opened its doors. This was the first of many Modern Schools that opened, inspired by the same pedagogical ideals of the original. This first school had classrooms for zoology and mineralogy, for example, and an abundance of graphical material in such subjects as anatomy, botany, and geography (Cappelletti, 1980).

The influences of Ferrer's pedagogic project were diverse, although all had the single objective of providing a scientific education that could overcome the mediocrity of the time. Among his diverse influences, his stance in favor of integrated learning stands out. This stance was based on a high regard for community values, human solidarity, Freemasonry, and such secular ideas as anticlericalism, rationalist optimism, and coeducation of social classes. Ultimately, the influences of the so-called new school included the promotion of activism, the abolition of prizes and punishments, the coeducation of the sexes, and the prescriptions of the social hygiene movement (Solà, 1980).

The students were assigned to two groups: a preparatory group and a higher group. The classes started on September 8, 1901, with 30 pupils (12 girls and 18 boys). The girls and boys were taught together in the same classrooms: One of the principles of the Modern School was coeducation, as opposed to the sex segregation that prevailed (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913). This educational project challenged many of the norms and beliefs of that time in history, which annoyed the ecclesiastic and conservative powers (Fidler, 1985). The Modern School had the goal of producing students who could engage in scientific reasoning and who were egalitarian and free (Solà, 1978b, 1980). Thus, it was considered necessary that not only boys and girls but also children from different social classes share classrooms. There should not be one school for students of higher social class and another for those of lower class, but rather one school where the classes mixed; otherwise, the school could not be considered rational. In the words of Ferrer, "The only sound and enlightened form of school is that which co-educates the poor and the rich,

which brings the one class into touch with the other in the innocent equality of childhood by means of the systematic equality of the rational school” (1913, p. 46).

Because of the coeducation of sexes and social classes, the Modern School could not be a public school because it would have needed to be regulated by the Catholic Church. Ferrer i Guàrdia wanted the freedom to decide the functioning and practices of the school, whereas the educational institutions of the day maintained historic vices that stood in the way of his pedagogical philosophy (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913).

His position in favor of women’s rights was not limited to offering a coeducational school: He also publicly spoke out. He collaborated with the feminist movement and unequivocally took the side of women. This position created many critics and confrontations, as often still occurs when men stand in solidarity with women who are victims of sexual or domestic violence (Gómez, 2014). The Modern School, via its bulletins¹⁵ and Sunday conferences, always accounted for the importance of women’s education and emancipation (TVE, 1997).

The guiding principles of educational practice in the Modern School as a reflection of the objectives that Ferrer i Guàrdia proposed were published in the first Bulletin of the Modern School (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913, pp. 20-21):

The mission of the Modern School is to secure that the boys and girls who are entrusted to it shall become well-instructed, truthful, just, and free from all prejudice. To that end, the rational method of the natural sciences will be substituted for the old dogmatic teaching. It will stimulate, develop, and direct the natural ability of each pupil, so that he or she will not only become a useful member of society, with his individual value fully developed, but will contribute, as a necessary consequence, to the uplifting of the whole community. It will instruct the young in sound social duties, in conformity with the just principle that “there are no duties without rights, and no rights without duties.” In view of the good results that have been obtained abroad by mixed education, and especially in order to realize the great aim of the Modern School—the formation of an entirely fraternal body of men and women, without distinction of sex or class—children of both sexes, from the age of five upward, will be received.

The purpose of the bulletin was to present the principles of a school not only for the sons and daughters of anarchist or libertarian militants but for all who wished to live in a society free of both religious and political dogmas: The education on offer was one that made people free (Avilés, 2006; Solà, 1978a). The goal of education was not to adapt the educated person to the society as it was, but rather to prepare him or her to acquire a critical vision and transform society from its very foundations (Cappelletti, 1980).

The birth of the Modern School was part of the birth of the pedagogical renewal movement that arose at the start of the 20th century and was developed throughout the first third of the century in Catalonia (González, Marqués, Mayordomo, & Sureda, 2002). Ferrer i Guàrdia benefitted from the particularly favorable circumstances of this “advanced” school reform promoted by the renewal movement.

He found himself working at a time when the educational deficit in Spain was enormous. This deficit particularly affected the workers, the peasants, and the petite bourgeoisie. By 1900, the population had grown as a result of reduced mortality, and cities had begun to receive a large influx of formerly rural populations lacking qualifications and seeking a better life for themselves and their families (Tiana, 2006). Therefore, the proposal of Ferrer i Guàrdia was as much pragmatic (i.e., overcoming this educational deficit) as it was ideological (i.e., addressing the social inequalities, struggling against the power of the State, and neutralizing the control that the Church held over teaching).

His intent was to develop a project that was openly meant to overcome intellectual mediocrity (i.e., the existing limitations resulting from superstition and authoritarianism that prevailed at the time). The shortages in health instruction and material prevailing in the Spanish educational system, including public, private, and religious schools, also called for a transformation of the system (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913). Ferrer i Guàrdia was a pioneer in introducing the principles of the social hygiene movement to schools in Spain, and, in particular, he viewed health instruction as a means to create a healthier working class that would be less dependent on the ruling classes (Moreno, 2006). The *Bulletin of the Modern School* frequently included articles on this topic addressed to teachers, families, and students. Accordingly, internationally recognized scientific methodological models in the teaching of gymnastics were introduced in Spain (Torrebadella, 2014).

Another educational initiative promoted by the Modern School and linked to the commitment to provide access to education by all social classes and ages were the “Sunday conferences,” or “the popular university,” as Ferrer i Guàrdia called it (1913). This practice meant that on Sundays, the school was opened to all the students’ families, the workers, the students themselves, and all others who wanted to attend. The success of these conferences led them to become regular science classes by 1902

because of the great importance that Ferrer i Guàrdia placed on everyone—regardless of their social class, age, or educational level—having free access to scientific knowledge (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913). The school thereby became not only one for educating boys and girls but also a place where any adult could learn and become active in his or her community (Tiana, 2006; de Vroede, 1979). According to Ferrer i Guàrdia (1913),

In view of these results, and in order to encourage the disposition of the general public, I held a consultation with Dr. Andrés Martínez Vargas and Dr. Odón de Buen, professors at the Barcelona University, on the subject of creating a popular university in the Modern School. In this the science which is given—or, rather, sold—by the State to a privileged few in the universities should be given gratuitously to the general public, by way of restitution, as every human being has a right to know, and science, which is produced by observers and workers of all ages and countries, ought not to be restricted to a class. (p. 97)

In this context, Ferrer i Guàrdia edited publications associated with the Modern School and published textbooks and works of scientific dissemination for the general public.¹⁶ These series of books and works of the scientific-rationalistic, socialist, anarchist and freethinking type were also intended to gain an international audience (Velázquez & Viñao, 2010). The books in the scientific dissemination series were addressed to an adult audience with the intention of disseminating the ideas of internationally recognized libertarian authors, such as Jean Grave, Michel Petit, Federico Urales, Paraf-Javal, Anselmo Lorenzo, Charles Malato, Georges Yvetot, Errico Malatesta, and Piotr Kropotkin (Avilés, 2003; Solà, 1978a).

Among the diverse books edited in the publishing house and used in the Modern School, we find *Las Aventuras de Nono* [The Adventures of Nono] (Grave, 1991). In this novel, the main character, Nono, suffers the misfortunes of a traditional school with punishments and dogmatic learning and a family who cannot pay for textbooks. The character is taken by a fairy to the country of Autonomy, a utopian land where the prevailing values are solidarity, sincerity, and mutual support and where education is based on science. In the book's preface, which Ferrer i Guàrdia addresses to teachers, he indicates the importance of this work in the education of children:

This book is so connected to what is natural, because it shows both how irrational, conventional and fictitious is current society, and it is very useful for the intellectual development of future generations that have to incorporate the scientific regime into their own functioning and universal solidarity into their consequences.¹⁷ (Grave, 1991, p. 9)

Although the influences of Rousseau and the naturalistic movement are clear, certain principles of the Modern School differ. According to Ferrer i Guàrdia, education initially cannot be only “negative” in the Rousseauian sense, in which no adult should intervene in the educational process. For Ferrer i Guàrdia, without any educational intervention, the inequalities that exist in the social and family environments of boys and girls would be reproduced (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913; Jacquinet, 1903). With the Modern School project, Ferrer i Guàrdia intended that the adults in children's lives would create a scientific and rational learning environment in which certain methodological guidelines are adapted to childhood, but content of the highest quality is always provided (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913). For Ferrer i Guàrdia, it was essential that teaching be founded on a scientific perspective based on reason and that teaching move away from that offered by the majority of schools dominated by the Church. This idea was expressed as follows in the first *Bulletin of the Modern School*: “a learning which is purely scientific and rational, such as the one that this institution intends to develop, would need perfectly suitable material, without any mixture of any kind nor any weakness before the dominant conventionalisms” (Escuela Moderna, 1901, p. 14).

The Modern School project was not the effort of one individual. Ferrer i Guàrdia had many diverse collaborators who contributed in various ways, including Leopoldine Bonnard, Ferrer i Guàrdia's companion and wife of several years, with whom he had a son; Josep Casasola, who collaborated in the daily work of the school; Odón de Buen, director of Mallorca's Laboratory of Marine Biology and a pioneer in oceanography in Spain; A. Martínez Vargas, who taught at the school's Sunday conferences; and Anselmo Lorenzo, Cristòfol Litran, Batllori, and others who collaborated in the editorial work of Ferrer i Guàrdia. All these collaborators shared a common vision of scientific and social progress and were held in high academic esteem at that time (Sola, 1978a).

Despite the closing of Ferrer i Guàrdia's school in Spain in 1906, as explained in the following section, his pedagogical work had a clear impact in three domains (Solà, 1978b). First, the impact on an ideological level was one of a frontal attack on the values and principles of traditional society. Whereas the Church promoted an education based on the submission and perpetuation of the established order, the Modern School promoted reflection and critical thinking as tools to transform the status quo. In particular, the coeducation of the genders and social classes meant, on a practical level, such

confrontation. These practices involved the elimination of any sort of hierarchical social organization. Second, there was great impact on advances in the field of theory and pedagogical practice in Spain. A priority of Ferrer i Guàrdia during his travels in Europe before the Modern School project was to learn—to eventually incorporate—the advances occurring in various popular pedagogical movements. Finally, the school had the great political impact of uniting Spanish intellectuals and the general population in the same educational and social project. This led to the achievement of one of his objectives, which was collaboration between those of different social classes and ideologies.

The Modern School, as a starting point, already had a clear mission: to make education a tool to transform society on a scientific and rational basis (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913). The objective of Ferrer i Guàrdia was for the Modern School to expand throughout Spain, thereby creating the social change that the libertarian environment of the moment required. Within a few years, there were 147 branches in various parts of the world. There were schools in Spain (i.e., in large cities such as Madrid, Seville, Cadiz, and Valencia) and in such countries as the United States, Portugal, Brazil, Switzerland, and The Netherlands (González et al., 2002). In 1906, the year of the closing of the Modern School, the project had already expanded throughout Spain, and in Barcelona, the project had more than 1,000 students (Araus, 2002). In Spain between 1910 and 1920, although the name Modern School was not used, many rationalist schools were created because of the influence of the work of Ferrer i Guàrdia and the anarchist union CNT (Tiana, 2006). Indeed, the CNT, in its founding congress, adopted the rationalist pedagogy as an educational strategy and cited the Modern School as an exemplar. This impact had great repercussions that went beyond the borders of Spain, thereby transforming part of the international educational landscape and earning Ferrer i Guàrdia an international reputation as one of the foremost Spanish pedagogues (Corominas, 2003b; Solà, 1978a). However, it was precisely the impact that he created that also caused his persecution until he was executed in 1909 as part of a government and Church agenda to silence his ideas and eradicate his pedagogical project.

THE CLOSING OF THE MODERN SCHOOL AND THE PERSECUTION OF A REVOLUTIONARY (1906)

The libertarian and anarchist ideas and practices that were being consolidated in Spain were not appreciated by the government nor the Church because they jeopardized the existing hierarchical power structure. Ferrer i Guàrdia and his determination to realize an educational project that disseminated libertarian ideas and achieve social change were viewed as dangers that needed to be stopped (Corominas, 2003b). The first effort by the government to stop Ferrer i Guàrdia's educational work consisted of accusing him of being involved in the attempted regicide of Alfonso XIII and Victoria Eugenia. This charge did not end the life of Ferrer i Guàrdia, but it managed to close down the Modern School in Spain (Archer, 2011; Solà, 1978a), as discussed in a later section.

On May 31, 1906, shortly after 2 p.m., while the royal procession travelled the main street in Madrid toward the Royal Palace carrying the newlyweds Alfonso XIII and Victoria Eugenia, Mateo Morral threw a bomb hidden in a bouquet from the balcony of the third floor of number 88. The bomb did not hit its target (the king and queen) but did kill 23 people and injured more than 100. Morral managed to escape and hid in the editorial office of the anticlerical journal *El Motín*, directed by the veteran republican Nakens, who helped him to escape. Dressed as a mechanic, Morral reached Torrejon de Ardoz on June 2 with the intention of taking a train to Barcelona. Before Morral was able to do so, he was recognized by a guard and committed suicide by shooting himself (Esteban, 2001).

Ferrer i Guàrdia was arrested two days after the attempt. Mateo Morral was the librarian of the Modern School, and that placed Ferrer i Guàrdia under suspicion of complicity or perhaps of being the instigator. No solid proof against Ferrer i Guàrdia was ever presented, but he was convicted, and the Modern School was simultaneously closed (Avilés, 2006). Several articles in conservative papers¹⁸ attempted to defame the work and person of Ferrer i Guàrdia and to involve him in the bombing without providing evidence. He was judged guilty by association: his acquaintance with Morral. Newspapers also criticized the two regarding other aspects of their lives, for example, the money Ferrer i Guàrdia had in the bank. His ex-wife, Teresa Sanmartí, was questioned regarding the Ferrer i Guàrdia's personal life when they were married, 13 years earlier, in a search for clues that could prove the accusation (Avilés, 2006).

Finally, on June 12, 1907, because of national and international pressure on the Spanish government and the lack of evidence, Ferrer i Guàrdia was acquitted of the charges. This event was a setback for those who had seen an opportunity to remove from the public scene someone who was annoying them (Solà 1978a).

His educational project was not as fortunate. In the month following Morral's failed bombing attempt, the Modern School was closed by the Office of the Inspector of First Teaching of Barcelona, headed by Federico Lopez. The inspector's office cited the important date of July 1, 1906, and a series of legal irregularities were alleged that allowed for the closing of the school. One irregularity was that, according to the Royal Decree of July 1, 1902, it was compulsory for an accredited teacher to open a

school. The Modern School was out of compliance, but so were many other schools in Barcelona at the time. Ferrer i Guàrdia tried many times to open other Modern Schools, but all his attempts failed because of bureaucratic roadblocks set in his path by the government (Solà, 1978a). The government's goal was to end the project. The reasons for denying him the opening of new schools were always different. The true reason never surfaced: the Modern School's critical, libertarian education.

In his works, Ferrer i Guàrdia described the situation and how he felt before the closing of his project and the impossibility of restarting it. His words show a motivation to persevere and to continue with his educational project (Ferrer i Guàrdia, 1913, pp. 137-138):

My enemies, who are all the reactionaries in the world, represented by the reactionaries of Barcelona and of Spain, believed that they had triumphed by involving me in a charge of attempted assassination. But their triumph proved to be only an episode in the struggle of practical Rationalism against reaction. The shameful audacity with which they claimed sentence of death against me (a claim that was refused on account of my transparent innocence rather than on account of the justice of the court) drew on me the sympathy of all liberal men—all true progressives—in all parts of the world, and fixed attention on the meaning and ideal of the Rational School.

With the arrest of Ferrer i Guàrdia, campaigns supporting him and his educational project soon started. This was particularly true abroad (in Europe and America) and with regard to groups of anarchists, socialists, anticlerical voices, freethinkers, and liberals (Avilés, 2006; Solà, 1978a). In Spain and Catalonia, many voices were raised not to defend him but to take the opportunity to accuse him. These voices were particularly loud among the republican opposition and a great part of Freemasonry to disassociate themselves from him and to keep from being attacked as well. Ferrer i Guàrdia represented radical thought that was not interesting to them. The Modern School represented a clear example of persecution because of its particular brand of ideas and values. The official version presented by the accusers of Ferrer i Guàrdia (essentially the authoritarian and conservative right) was that they considered the Modern School to be a center of anarchist propaganda that generated, by necessity, terrorist activity (Jensen, 2010). However, the consequences of the closing of the school and the arrest of Ferrer i Guàrdia only generated a broad campaign to make Ferrer i Guàrdia a martyr of secular education in an inquisitorial Spain (Connelly, 1968).

The closing of the Modern School and the impossibility of restarting a similar project in Spain did not discourage Ferrer i Guàrdia; on the contrary, he continued with his educational task through his editing work for the Modern School, and in Paris, he created the International League for Rationalist Childhood Education. These efforts united many diverse people (ideologically diverse, in particular) in the common cause of education that was founded on a rational and scientific basis and that eliminated all that was supernatural (de Vroede, 1979).

In addition, in France, he continued with the publication of the *Bulletin of the Modern School*. His tireless work and capacity to create new meeting spaces for those who wanted to transform education were key in the continuation and internationalization of his pedagogical experience across Europe and America (Avilés, 2006; Solà, 1978a). Together with the League, he started several journals with the aim of disseminating his educational ideas, which included *L'École Renovée*, published in Brussels and Amsterdam, and *La Scuola Laica*, published in Rome. Both the League and the ideas that were transmitted through it created great echoes in such countries as France, Italy, and Belgium (Solà, 1978a).

In France, the work he had started through the International League for Childhood's Rationalist Education facilitated the presence of the Modern School. This work also contributed to the dissemination of the so-called *Education Nouvelle* (Boscut, 1994; Marchat, 2007) and further rationalism in education (Vanobbergen & Simon, 2011).

DEATH OF FRANCISCO FERRER I GUÀRDIA (OCTOBER 9, 1909)

The release of Ferrer i Guàrdia from prison in 1907 resulted in his triumphal return to Barcelona and greater knowledge of his work (Archer, 2011). However, the governing powers soon found another cause to charge him to obtain a death sentence or to perform what was called "legal assassination" (Corominas, 2003b). This time, he was accused of being an instigator of what has become known as the Tragic Week of Barcelona.

The events of the Tragic Week started in Barcelona and expanded to other Catalan cities on July 26, 1909 and ended August 2. On July 11, Prime Minister Maura sent an order for mobilization of Catalan reservists to enter a conflict provoked by the abuses of Spanish colonialism and the discontent of the Rif people in Melilla. Maura's order was poorly received for two reasons. The first was the negative opinion held by the population toward the conflict in Morocco, which was understood as only a defense of economic privileges of the government and the landowners. The second reason was legislation that

allowed anyone to pay a small amount to be exempt from the draft. Therefore, the majority of the reservists were poor and working-class men. Some were married and had children, which meant sending off to war the only member of a family who could bring in an income (Connelly, 1968; Marín 2009; Martín, 2011).

On July 18, while a contingent was embarking, there were already conflicts on the docks, but it was not until July 26 that a general strike was promoted by various workers' organizations and led by Solidaridad Obrera (Workers' Solidarity); radical republicans and socialists, among other groups, were also involved. The strike began along the city's periphery, where most of the factories were located, and it gradually spread to the center of the city. Gradually, what began as an antiwar protest transformed into an anticlerical protest with the burning of convents, churches, and other religious buildings. The magnitude of the disturbances caused the General Captain of Catalonia to announce a "state of war." The news regarding the deaths of all the reservists (mostly the July 18 contingent) by the Rifs in what would become known as the "Disaster of the Wolf's Cliff" added to the situation and increased the rage of the insurrectionists. However, on July 29, military reinforcements from other parts of Spain began to arrive, which gradually suppressed the insurgency, though with great brutality (Connelly, 1968; Marín, 2009; Martín, 2011). After these government successes and in the midst of a forced silence due to state censorship and due to a campaign of the reactionary press, a program of brutal repression was launched. Constitutional guarantees were suspended, and the anarchists were the great losers (Marín, 2009). There were arbitrary arrests, the closing of certain centers, deportations, executions, and similar brutality. The conservative Spain did not tolerate or forgive the popular revolt (Connelly, 1968).

The case of Ferrer i Guàrdia (one of five arrests that ended with execution) evolved rapidly. It is very possible that Lerroux's followers were involved in the Tragic Week because of their participation in the initial strike committee. Thus it was also easy to accuse Ferrer i Guàrdia because of his very public position against the power of the government and the Church. Certain political factions accused Ferrer i Guàrdia of having participated in and having been the instigator of the events (Bergasa, 2009). Simultaneously, a forceful campaign against Ferrer i Guàrdia called "Campaign of the Delateu! [Denounce!]" began (Izquierdo i Ballester, 2009; Solà 2010). Many newspapers, such as *ABC*, *La Vanguardia*, and *El Noticiero Universal* [The Universal Journal], and the primary right-wing and traditionalist institutions in the country supported the campaign of psychological preparation of the masses with the purpose of demonstrating, whatever it took, the criminal guilt of Ferrer i Guàrdia. Another objective of the campaign was to ignore the strong expression of international disgust generated by the brutal repression of July and to prepare for the legal process against Ferrer i Guàrdia (Izquierdo i Ballester, 2009).

Maura's government joined in the accusations. It was said that Ferrer i Guàrdia had escaped sentence in 1907 because of outside pressure and the weakness of the civil justice system. Therefore, for this not to occur again, it was decreed that Ferrer i Guàrdia would be judged by a military court (Avilés, 2003; Solà, 1978a). Whereas civil courts look for clear and precise evidence of guilt, such is not the case in military courts. In this case, it was believed to be appropriate to have him judged by a military court, which did not require particular evidence.

On October 9, the War Council was constituted in the Model Prison of Barcelona to judge Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia. The attorney defending Ferrer i Guàrdia, Captain Francisco Galcerán (a military rightist), argued against the injustice of the trial and the lack of clarity in the entire process. He was convinced of the presence of a campaign to defame Ferrer i Guàrdia without including the voices of everyone who supported him, thereby leading to a verdict of guilty (Avilés, 2006; Bergasa, 2009; Solà, 1978a). Based on our analysis of the transcripts, it is evident how the defense emphasized the injustice of the campaign against Ferrer i Guàrdia (Publicaciones de la Escuela Moderna, 1912, p. 28):

This campaign has been addressed mainly against the person of Ferrer due to hatred and the education provided to the working class, be it in the Modern School—which was closed some time ago—be it in the series of books published by the publishing house he founded. . . . I do not have documents against what this voice mutters in our ears, and I do have letters of serious people at the disposition of this court who respond that the ideas of Ferrer are opposed to all sorts of violent acts; offers from extremely well-known persons in France, Italy, Belgium and the United Kingdom to depose in this case and in this sense; but here, where we grant great importance to the testimonies of wage-earners such as "Esmolet" of Premià, "El Manquet," "Barberillo" from Masnou, and others, we do not admit the opinions of philosophers and we classify the petition of the convicted in this sense of stratagem to extend the summary, when the only object, in light of how and from where was the drive, was to state that moral force represents the fact that so many authorities from the social sciences present themselves to defend, to help me in the defense of Ferrer. . . . Summing up, sirs: Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia, prosecuted for his rationalist ideas, driven and accused to the extreme, involved once in an abhorrent crime, seeing his schools closed and insulted day after day by the followers of intransigence, does not give up or ask for revenge: he works.¹⁹

Galcerán stated that Ferrer i Guàrdia was not being judged for his involvement in the events of the Tragic Week but for his pedagogic project and his ideas, without using them as an apology for violence. Although this was true, the prosecution did not mention the Modern School once during the trial, fearing that people would protest abroad as they did in 1906 (Solà, 1978a).

The arbitrariness of the trial was profound, not only because of the weakness of the accusation against the pedagogue and the low level of protection offered by the military code, but also because only the testimonies against Ferrer i Guàrdia were heard. None of this testimony was precise, and all consisted of third-person accounts of Ferrer i Guàrdia directing fire or other attacks (Bergasa, 2009; Connelly, 1968). There were even middle-level leaders of the radical party who testified against Ferrer i Guàrdia to save their own lives (Connelly, 1968). To the followers of Lerroux, with their marked antireligious ideology, it was clear that the freedom and innocence of their leaders would be achieved if all blame was placed on Ferrer i Guàrdia (Connelly, 1968).

When the War Council asked whether Ferrer i Guàrdia wanted to add anything else to the words of his lawyer, he presented a short statement in which he claimed his innocence and that the Modern School was not in any case a promoter of the Tragic Week: “I end by stating that the persons who criticize the works of the Modern School, or have not read them, or find themselves unable to judge them do so due to the atavist prejudices that almost all of us suffer from. Nothing else to say” (Publicaciones de la Escuela Moderna, 1912, p. 36).

The silence in Spain regarding his detention, in part due to the strong repression by the government, contrasted with the rapid mass actions of protests abroad. These protests were started to gain the freedom of Ferrer i Guàrdia and other victims of the repression following the Tragic Week. The Committee for the Defense of Ferrer i Guàrdia and the victims of the Spanish repression was formed in Paris (Lázaro, 1981). This committee centralized all international action for the liberation of Ferrer i Guàrdia. There were also petitions from various countries such as Germany and Belgium that were presented to the Vatican asking the Pope to intercede (Corts, 2009). The foreign press published articles in which the dubious involvement of Ferrer i Guàrdia in the tragic events was highlighted, as were the various irregularities of the trial. For example, the *New York Times*, which published various articles about the case between 1909 and 1910, published an article on October 1 in which it was reported that he was being accused without evidence and without hearing testimony from those who could have spoken in his defense (Fundació Ferrer i Guàrdia, 2008).

Nevertheless, neither the voices raised in his favor around the world, nor the defense by his lawyer, nor his own words prevented the handing down of his death sentence. On October 13, Ferrer i Guàrdia was executed. Before his death, he uttered the words, “I am innocent. Long live the Modern School!”²⁰ The night before his execution, although Ferrer i Guàrdia could not fully believe that he would be shot (Bergasa, 2009), he felt that his absolution was impossible and wrote his last will. A portion is presented here as evidence of his coherence and ideology:²¹

I wish that on no occasion, near or far, not for one or another motive, are manifestations either political or religious held before the mortal remains of mine, because I believe that any time expended on the dead would be better used to improve the conditions of the living, almost all men having great necessity of it. . . . I also wish that my friends talk little or nothing of me, because idols are created when men are eulogized, which is a great evil for the future of mankind. Only the events, regardless from whom they come, need to be studied, acclaimed or censured, praising them to be imitated when they seem to have an effect for the common good, or criticizing them so they may not be repeated if they are considered damaging to the general welfare.

Once the execution of Ferrer i Guàrdia was known, his world prestige caused, in a continuation of the initial campaign for his release, the start of protests and campaigning on an international level against the Spanish government. Paris (through the committee organized to ask for his pardoning) and other French cities, Rome, Milan and other Italian cities, Budapest, Lisbon, and American cities all witnessed new mass demonstrations. In places such as Switzerland and Belgium, there were true riots in town halls. Workers declared strikes and boycotts of Spanish goods in certain cities (Corominas, 2003b; Lázaro, 1981; Solà 1978a). On the international level, not only were there mass protests in response to the execution of Ferrer i Guàrdia, but his ideas and his project became a reality and were continued in such countries as France, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, and the United States (González et al., 2002; Lázaro, 1981). The great international response represented by the shout of “Maura, no!” caused King Alfonso XIII to ask Antonio Maura to resign the presidency (Avilés, 2006).

The sentence was recognized as so utterly unfair that it caused feelings of guilt among Catalanian politicians and leaders. For example, Francesc Cambó, the leader of the conservative Catalanist party Regionalist League, in his address to the parliament of 1914, stated that if there was guilt for the execution of Ferrer i Guàrdia, it was primarily that of the citizens of Barcelona who had never requested a pardon (Cambó, 1991).

Although the solidarity campaign was international and large, there was also international criticism of Ferrer i Guàrdia. These attacks came not only in the form of opinions published by newspapers of clerical tendency (e.g., the paper *Universo*), who continued to discredit Ferrer i Guàrdia a month after his execution (TVE, 1997). Criticisms were also voiced by other intellectuals, for example, the Spanish writers Unamuno (Rabaté y Rabaté, 2009) and Brenan (2008), who called him uneducated and pedantic and supported his execution (Moa, 2001). Later, in a 1991 review of the case of Ferrer i Guàrdia, Unamuno changed his position and declared the execution of Ferrer i Guàrdia to be a terrible mistake (TVE, 2007).

The events of both 1906 and 1909 were part of a single campaign to eliminate a figure who represented the union of particular European progressive ideas and the popular demands of a critical culture that promoted social justice. Far from succeeding in this endeavor, the campaign amplified its impact, fame, and international recognition at that historical moment and currently.

THE MODERN SCHOOL AFTER THE FOUNDER'S DEATH TO THE PRESENT

Although the educational model of the Modern School had spread rapidly while Ferrer i Guàrdia was alive, a powerful mass movement founded on the ideological basis of the Modern School began after his death in 1909. Without intending to, the Spanish government had made of Ferrer i Guàrdia a martyr, thereby contributing to the dissemination of his ideas and his educational project. Committees, groups, leagues, and federations arose to defend Ferrer i Guàrdia's project and that of a rationalist education (Solà, 1978a; de Vroede, 1979). Ferrer i Guàrdia was proclaimed a genius educator, and the praise expanded among the works of libertarian activists and educators of the time (Abbot, 1910; McCabe, 1909; Simarro, 1910).

On a European level, the strong mark left by Ferrer i Guàrdia after his stays in Paris, Belgium, and other European cities led to the creation of various educational centers. A few examples of centers modeled on Barcelona's Modern School include Ferrer i Guàrdia's school in Lausanne, Switzerland (Wintsch & Heimberg, 2009), which was active for 10 years; the publishing of a bulletin (*Bulletin de l'École Ferrer*) similar to the one began by Ferrer i Guàrdia in 1901 in Barcelona (Fidler, 1990; Heimberg, 2006); the Modern School Clivio in Italy (Giancarlo, 1994); and the Liverpool Modern School (Fidler, 1985).

There were Latin American countries such as Argentina and Uruguay where the influence of Ferrer i Guàrdia predated the "passionate outburst" generated by the events of the Tragic Week (Solà, 1982). Between 1907 and 1911, organizations were created to follow in the Ferrerist path, for example, the Popular League for Rationalist Childhood Education in Uruguay, the Pro-Ferrer Committee in Buenos Aires (Argentina), the Solidarity of Tailor Workers in Montevideo (Uruguay), and the Paraguayan Federation for the Freethinking and the League of the Human Rights of Asunción (Paraguay). In Rosario, Argentina, Enrique Nido (Amadeo Lluan), a friend and ex-collaborator of Ferrer i Guàrdia, began a Modern School that lasted until his death in 1926 (Cappelletti, 1980, 1994). In Buenos Aires, the *Revista Racionalista Francisco Ferrer*²³ (Rationalist Journal Francisco Ferrer) has been published every two weeks since 1911. In Latin America, particularly in Uruguay, the largest democracy at that time, the legacy of the Catalan pedagogue contributed to the debate regarding secular and rationalist pedagogy and served to promote libertarian education (Solà, 1982). Schools modeled on the Modern School were also created in Bolivia (Cappelletti, 1994) and in Brazil, where the trajectory of the dissemination of libertarian schools was also reinforced and generated the creation of more schools (Jomini-Mazoni, 1999) known as the Modern Schools of São Paulo (Cappelletti, 1994; Gallo, 2013; Luizetto, 1994). In Mexico, rationalist schools were organized beginning in 1912 following the model of Barcelona's Modern School (Cappelletti, 1994; Ribera, 1995; Subirats, 1994).

In North America, various leagues arose, particularly in New York and other important cities—for example, the Francisco Ferrer Association (1910) and the Spanish Pro-Revolution Committee of New York (1910). In the United States between 1909 and 1960, 22 schools were created following the model of the Modern School, and 12 additional schools with similar practices and philosophies were founded. One of the most representative schools was that of Stelton (Zigrosser, 1918) because it operated for a long time. This school was managed by the Ferrer Association and functioned from 1915 until 1953 (Avrich, 1980; Tager, 1986). Various individuals who contributed to maintaining Ferrer i Guàrdia's pedagogical project in the United States include Emma Goldman, Margaret Sanger, Will and Ariel Durant, Man Ray, and Rockwell Kent, who turned several educational centers, inspired by Ferrer i Guàrdia's ideas, into the hubs of New York's art scene (Antliff, 2007). Emma Goldman wrote about the Catalan pedagogue after his death, highlighting his fight against the established norms and in search of the truth: "Francisco Ferrer was not only a doubter, a searcher for truth; he was also a rebel. His spirit would rise in just indignation against the iron régime of his country" (1911). The domain of adult education includes a project begun in 1910 and aimed at Finnish immigrants to the United States. This project, as explained by Kaunonen (2011), was organized by the Work Peoples' College, and although

the direct link with the Modern School is not clear, both institutions had similar missions and were possibly linked.

The influence of Dewey's work on the concept of progressive education through Dewey's Laboratory School in Chicago (Schutz, 2001) was also present in the North American libertarian environment in search of a more democratic education. Although the Association of Modern Schools of North America was dissolved in 1950, it was the seed of the 1960s renewed educational movement invigorated by A. S. Neill (founder of Summerhill), Paul Goodman, and Ivan Illich. These last two authors, who were important in the development of deschooling, experienced their peak influence in the early 1970s (Igelmo, 2012). Célestin Freinet (1969) was among those who best developed and eventually systematized Ferrer i Guàrdia's ideas through the creation of the Cooperative of Secular Teaching and The Modern Popular School in France (Boscut, 1994; Maruny, 2010).

The international influence of Ferrer i Guàrdia continues to the present as his theoretical and practical ideas continue to serve as the basis for progressive educational movements. The crucial questions that Ferrer i Guàrdia already asked himself when creating his pedagogical project are also those that concern education professionals now, for example, why is it necessary to educate? What is the meaning of education? What is the best education that we can offer children? How should we educate to develop critical and transformative individuals?

The growth of interest in Ferrer i Guàrdia has persisted. In one of his visits to Barcelona, Paulo Freire was interested in the persecution that Ferrer i Guàrdia suffered and its implications (Flecha, 2008). The Brazilian pedagogue felt a connection with Ferrer i Guàrdia: He had also been the victim of persecution in his own country, which had sent him into exile. In Belgium, at the Free University of Brussels, every October 13 there is an annual commemoration of Ferrer i Guàrdia's death as a symbol of free thinking (Corominas, 2003b).

There are also scholars who argue the validity of the Catalan pedagogue's ideas. For example, Agustín Corominas (2003a) reflected on the current meaning of the ideas on which Ferrer i Guàrdia based his pedagogical work:

The work of Ferrer is clear: first, there is profound reflection regarding the need for education and about the meaning of education, which he defines as the freeing of individuals and the transformation of society. Through this, he applies a series of methods that have as their objective to educate in the sense that education puts forward. We believe that restarting the debate about the meaning of education in the 21st century is one of the great legacies that Ferrer and other pedagogues have left us and that we need to restart from a progressive perspective of education, urgently, I think. . . . Ferrer presents himself to us thus, as a very up-to-date thinker, when we ask ourselves about such aspects of education as the open school, the educational community and learning communities, in which parents, teachers, neighbors . . . participate in a very active way in the enrichment of school learning.²⁴

Such discussion also occurs among scholars worldwide. In his analysis of U.S. schools, Kurt Love (2012) recounted the Modern School project as an inspiration for the change that is currently needed to overcome the situations of inequality and negative experiences of many children in classrooms. Love proposed that the anarchist pedagogies again be regarded as the hope of schools and that the patterning of schools on the Modern School

offer a hope that is genuine because it can be a calling to operate not from a place of fear, but from love, not with an education based on scarcity, but rather on abundance, and not with a blinding ignorance, but with a sense of clarity and purpose that we are seeking and leads us to make the kind of change we desire for our individual lives and our communities. (p. 73)

Ferrer i Guàrdia's legacy inspires not only scholarly work but also many successful educational projects that are being carried out currently. These projects draw from the ideas and actions that Ferrer i Guàrdia put into practice in the Modern School. Such schools, as defended by Chomsky (2000), are not just a space of opposition to hegemonic power but also a space for critical reflection and transformation (Gitlin, 2014). This role of a school counters, for example, the socioeconomic segregation that prevails in our public schools (Posey, 2012). Examples of these contemporary educational projects are found all around the world. More than 200 schools in Spain and Latin America are being transformed into learning communities in a process of transformation whereby the entire community participates in a school with the goal of overcoming school failure and the problems of coexistence.²⁵ Within the democratic education movement,²⁶ which is very much aligned with the Modern School's idea of the Sunday conferences for making culture available to the entire community, dialogic literary circles (DLCs) are found. DLCs began in 1980 with the goal that all people, regardless of their age, social class, or academic level, have access to classical culture. The readings are selected for the DLCs based on their status in the canon of universal classical literature. Priority is placed on participation by adults lacking a university degree and at initial levels of adult education. Other examples are found in the practices and

discourse promoted by the movements of pedagogic renewal (Benso, 2006) and the World Forum of Education,²⁷ which stems from the World Social Forum of Porto Alegre, whose motto is “Another education is possible.”

CONCLUSIONS

As we have demonstrated, the struggle of the pedagogue Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia was part of an exceptional time in history. The cultural splendor of a country lacking any power in economic or military terms produced an intellectual who made crucial contributions to world culture that extended beyond their particular historical moment. Ferrer i Guàrdia stood out for additional reasons. He had a clear vision of the need to promote a type of education that transcends social class and gender divisions, which are challenges facing public education systems worldwide (Posey, 2012). The approach of Ferrer i Guàrdia in his Modern School project not only contributed to the creation of educational centers around the world with the goal of a quality scientific education for all but also imbued the international educational landscape with a libertarian ideology. His work contributes to the still-vivid debates in education and is often taken into consideration in times of educational crisis. He provides answers to inform an educational system that produces critical citizens who long for a free and democratic society (Flecha & Soler, 2014; Sealey-Ruiz, 2013).

Our challenge now is to find ways to continue in this path of work and to contribute to the transformation of educational institutions that are more democratic and committed to social justice. The Russian anarchist Piotr Kropotkin declared this in London days after the death of Francisco Ferrer i Guàrdia: “Now he is dead, but it is our duty to resume his work, to continue it, to spread it, to attack all the fetishes which keep mankind under the joke of state, capitalism and superstition.”²⁸ We hope that the present work contributes to this enduring endeavor of finding justice for the person and ideas of Ferrer i Guàrdia.

Notes

1. Text reproduced in the book that Sol Ferrer dedicated to her father: *La vie et l'oeuvre de Francisco Ferrer*. Paris: Librairie Fischbacher, 1962. Authors' translation of the original text: “Francisco FERRER pensait que nul n'est méchant volontairement et que tout le mal qui est dans le monde vient de l'ignorance. C'est pourquoi les ignorants l'ont assassiné et l'ignorance criminelle se perpétue encore aujourd'hui à travers de nouvelles et inlassables inquisitions. En face d'elles, pourtant quelques victimes, dont FERRER, seront toujours vivantes.”

2. Antonio Maura (1853-1925) was the five-term president of the government, first as a member of the liberal party and then of the conservative party, which he led in 1902.

3. El Guernica is a painting created in May and June 1937, during the Spanish Civil War. It was named after the town bombed in April by the Condor Legion, sent by Nazi Germany in support of Franco's troops. The painting became a symbol of the horror of war. This piece is currently in the Museo Nacional, Centro de Arte Reina Sofia (Madrid, Spain): <http://www.museoreinasofia.es/coleccion/obra/guernica>.

4. For more information, see <http://www.ateneuenciclopedicpopular.org/spip.php?rubrique12>.

5. Library specializing in contemporary social movements. For more information, see <http://www.bpa.es/>.

6. The Library of the Republic's Pavilion, in Barcelona and belonging to the University of Barcelona, is considered one of the world's most important archival libraries of works on the Second Republic, the Civil War, the exile, Francoism, and the Spanish transition.

7. For more information, see <http://www.centrefedericamontseny.org/>.

8. For more information, see <http://www.ferrerguardia.org/>.

9. This material can be viewed (after free registration) at <http://biblioteca.ferrerguardia.org/>.

10. The concordats are an agreement between the Catholic Church and a state to regulate their relationship, similar to an international treaty. The concordat of 1851 served to reaffirm the Catholic unity of Spain and therefore the confessional nature of the state. On an educational level, this meant recognizing the right of the Catholic Church to control the teaching provided in both religious and public schools.

11. Alejandro Lerroux (1864-1949) was a Spanish politician who was the president for a short time during the Second Republic in Spain. He was the founder of the Partido Republicano Radical [Radical Republican Party] in 1908. He is known for his anticatalanist and anticlericalist views.

12. Manuel Ruíz Zorrilla (1833-1895) was a Spanish politician, republican leader and deputy in the Congress and later Minister of Development, Grace and Justice during the Second Republic.

13. Certain statistics can be found online (after free registration) on the website of the Library of the Ferrer i Guàrdia Foundation: <http://biblioteca.ferrerguardia.org/arxiu-digital-hemeroteca/la-huelga-general/view-category.html>.

14. CNT denotes the Confederación Nacional de Trabajadores [National Workers' Confederation]. This group was an anarchist trade union founded in Spain in 1910 that contributed to the Spanish anarchist movement.

15. The various bulletins of the Modern School can be accessed (after free registration) at <http://biblioteca.ferrerguardia.org/arxiu-digital/view-document-details/408-boletin-de-la-escuela-moderna.html>.
16. These publications can be accessed (after free registration) at <http://biblioteca.ferrerguardia.org/documents/3-editorial-publicaciones-de-la-escuela-moderna/view-category.html>.
17. Authors' translation of the original text: "Libro tan en consonancia con lo natural, porque lo mismo evidencia cuanto hay de irracional, convencional y ficticio en la sociedad presente, es indicadísimo para la formación intelectual de las nuevas generaciones que han de instalar el régimen de ciencia en su fundamento y de solidaridad universal en sus consecuencias."
18. On Thursday, June 21, 1906, *La Vanguardia* published the following personal attack on Ferrer i Guàrdia linked to his inheritance from Mrs. Munier for the creation of the Modern School: *¿No resulta que a Ferrer se le publican con toda complacencia declaraciones en que pinta su habilidad para captarse voluntades de señoras ricas . . . que es precisamente lo que tanto se execra, cuando se dice que lo hacen sacerdotes y frailes?* [Is it not so that the declarations of Ferrer are published with all satisfaction regarding the way he can capture the will of rich ladies. . . , which is precisely what is so loathed when it is said of priests and monks?] Retrieved from <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/1906/06/21/pagina-7/33384559/pdf.html?search=Ferrer>.
19. Authors' translation of the original text: "Esta campaña se ha dirigido principalmente contra la persona de Ferrer por odio y por temor a la educación dada a la clase obrera, sea en la Escuela Moderna, que lograron tiempo atrás cerrar, sea en la serie de libros publicados por la casa editorial por él fundada. . . . Yo tengo documentos contrarios a lo que esta voz susurra en nuestros oídos, y a disposición del Tribunal tengo cartas de personas serias que responden de que las ideas de Ferrer son opuestas a toda clase de actos violentos; ofrecimientos de personajes conocidísimos en Francia, Italia, Bélgica e Inglaterra para deponer en esta causa y en este sentido; pero aquí que damos gran importancia a declaraciones de asalariados, del 'Esmolet' de Premià; de 'El Manquet' y del 'Barberillo' de Masnou, y otros, no se admiten las opiniones de filósofos y se clasifica la petición del procesado en este sentido de estratagema para prolongar el sumario, cuando el único objeto, viendo cómo y de dónde venía el empuje, fue hacer constar lo que representa en fuerza moral, que se brinden tantas autoridades de la ciencia social a defender, a ayudarme en la defensa de Ferrer. . . . Resumiendo, señores: Francisco Ferrer Guardia, perseguido por sus ideas racionalistas, empujado y acosado hasta el último extremo, envuelto un día en abominable crimen, cerradas sus escuelas é insultado un día y otro por los partidos de la intransigencia, ni se rinde ni pide venganza: trabaja."
20. On October 14, 1909 (page 2), the journal *La Vanguardia* published the last words of Ferrer i Guàrdia. Retrieved from <http://hemeroteca.lavanguardia.com/preview/1909/10/10/pagina-2/33373156/pdf.html?search=Ferrer%20i%20Gu%C3%A0rdia>.
21. Ferrer i Guàrdia's last will can be viewed in its entirety at <https://colectivoeducadores.files.wordpress.com/2010/02/testamento-ferrer-i-guardia.pdf>.
22. Authors' translation of the original text: "Deseo que en ninguna ocasión ni próxima ni lejana, ni por uno ni otro motivo, se hagan manifestaciones de carácter religioso o político ante los restos míos, porque considero que el tiempo que se emplea ocupándose de los muertos sería mejor destinarlo a mejorar la condición en que viven los vivos, teniendo gran necesidad de ello casi todos los hombres. . . . Deseo también que mis amigos hablen poco o nada de mí, porque se crean ídolos cuando se ensalza a los hombres, lo que es un gran mal para el porvenir humano. Solamente los hechos, sean de quien sean, se han de estudiar, ensalzar o vituperar, alabándolos para que se imiten cuando parecen redundar al bien común, o criticándolos para que no se repitan si se consideran nocivos al bienestar general."
23. Several of these statistics can be accessed (after free registration) at <http://biblioteca.ferrerguardia.org/Revista-Racionalista-Francisco-Ferrer/View-category.html>.
24. Author's translation of the original text: "L'obra de Ferrer és clara: primer, hi ha una profunda reflexió sobre el perquè cal educar, sobre quin sentit té l'educació, que ell concreta en l'alliberament de les persones i en la transformació de la societat. A partir d'aquí aplica una sèrie de mètodes que tenen com objectiu educar en el sentit que planteja l'educació. Creiem que recuperar el debat sobre el perquè de l'educació i el seu sentit en el segle XXI és un dels gran llegats que Ferrer i altres pedagogs ens han deixat i que des de visions progressistes de l'educació cal recuperar, crec que amb urgència. . . . Ferrer se'ns presenta, doncs, com un punt de referència ben actual quan ens plantegem aspectes com l'escola oberta, la comunitat educativa o les comunitats d'aprenentatge, en les que pares, mestres, veïns... participen d'una manera ben activa en l'enriquiment dels aprenentatges escolars."
25. Additional information is available at <http://www.comunidadesdeaprendizaje.net/>.
26. Additional information is available at <http://confapea.org/tertulias/>.
27. Additional information is available at <http://www.ewf2014.org/>.
28. Kropotkin's speech, Memorial Hall, London, October 21, 1909.

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