

## **Culture and Globalisation**

### **Jaime Torres Bodet and the Intellectual/International Cooperation of Postwar**

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**Abstract:** History of UNESCO and particularly of his early life, has been insufficiently unexplored. In this sense, the article studied the ideas of the second Director of this organization, the Mexican Jaime Torres Bodet, during the 1940s and early 1950s. Specifically, it try to explain how the term Intellectual Cooperation is being replaced by International Cooperation and why this change was related to a new meaning of education. For this reason, it is emphasized a perspective or continuity rather than a brake between the new organization and his predecesor. This means, support the perspective which states that the early beginnings of UNESCO were made under assumptions of Intellectual Cooperation. Then, to understand the history of the organization of the early 40's it is needed to understand the role of its predecesors and ideas on "cultural internationalism". To make this work, we use as a primary source documentary the official publication of the organism, *El Correo*, and the memories of Torres Bodet.

**Keywords:** The History of UNESCO; education; international relation; cultural international relations

*"Wars begin in the minds of men, and are in the minds of men  
that the defenses of peace must be constructed".*

Constitutive Act of UNESCO

#### **1. Introduction**

Before the end of the Second World War, a new international order was conceived. Created after the First War, The League of Nations was replaced by the United Nations (UN). Specialized agencies were created, such as the United Nations for the Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO), which replaced the labor started by the organization of Intellectual Cooperation.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> We include on the term Intellectual Cooperation the three general stages: the Committee on Intellectual Cooperation in Geneva since 1922, the Intellectual Institute on Intellectual Cooperation founded in Paris in 1925 and two years later, the International Institute for Educational Films that was installed in Rome. In addition the organization included National Commissions on the member countries and many specific commissions.

As synthesized in the words in the heading, this was proposed to foster peace through a change of mentality relying on education just as its predecessor during the interwar. Even though this founding statement marked a line of continuity between the two, it is clear that their actions were different, among other factors because the sense of cooperation was changing. In fact, if we think of the speeches delivered by the first directors of UNESCO, we immediately associate science with the English Julian Huxley and mass education with the Mexican Jaime Torres Bodet. Nothing would seem to get them closer to the meaning of Intellectual Cooperation and its conceptual universe.

However, as we intend to show in this paper the change of meaning was a process. In this sense, we analyze the speeches of Torres Bodet in order to understand how was the replaced of the term of Intellectual Cooperation by International Cooperation in the new organization. It is considered therefore a wide temporality that begins in 1940 and ends with his resignation in 1953, but not before making a brief history in the interwar period, in which he was formed as an educator, writer and diplomat. The proposal then is to contribute to the history of UNESCO,<sup>1</sup> from a perspective that emphasizes the continuity rather than a break with the previous experience, to understand the founding of the UNESCO, as a process of adaptation to the “persistent tension between unity and diversity in the field of Intellectual Cooperation”. (Pemberton, 2012, p. 35) This means, support the perspective that assumed that the early beginnings of UNESCO were made under assumptions of Intellectual Cooperation. Then, to understand the history of the organization of the early 40's it is needed to understand the role of its predecessors and ideas on “cultural internationalism”.<sup>2</sup> As Emma Rothschild says, when a word - and the ideas to which is associated-, crosses borders and nationalities to become a shared

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<sup>1</sup>The History of this organization has been renewed in recent years through initiatives as UNESCO History Project and Global History of UNESCO (coordinated by the University of Aalborg by Poul Duedahl). Furthermore, it was made shortly before The United Nations Intellectual History Project (1991 to 2010) that published various volumes about the main ideas and concepts that contributed along history.

<sup>2</sup>In his work about Intellectual Cooperation Jean- Jaques Renoliet, specifically set out that this stage is a forgotten part by the historiography of UNESCO that must be rescued in order to understand the premises in which arises the new organization. In this sense, the collaboration of Akira Iriye to the History of UNESCO Project, she used the term “cultural internationalism” to interpret the intellectual cooperation in the interwar period. (Laqua, 2011, pp. 224-225)

semantic universe, we have the opportunity to associate the analytical perspectives of intellectual history and international history.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. Letters, Education and Diplomacy

By 1940, the interwar had reached its end and the world was in war again. In May, German troops invaded Belgium, where Jaime Torres Bodet was a resident since 1938 in charge of business affairs of Mexico. Although he managed return to his country, this event marked the end of a formative period through which the Mexican had accumulated many experiences in the world of letters, education and diplomacy.

By then, Torres Bodet had experience.<sup>2</sup> During the last two decades he has an active participation in the world of the letters and in an ambitious project of education under the leadership of the intellectual José Vasconcelos. Despite this, he resigned in 1924 and worked as a private secretary of Fernando J. Gastelum, who was appointed head of the Department of Health. Thanks to the sponsorship of Gastelum, in 1928 founded the magazine *Contemporáneos* along with other Mexican writers.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>(Rothschild, 2006, p. 217) The intellectual history was born international because it questioned itself how the ideas were created and how they were migrated from country to country (through whom and what ways). Its innate resistance to nationalism has grown through the recent years as from the international turn that offers rethink categories as international and global, it happened as the circulation of ideas. (Armitage, 2014, pp. 235-36)

<sup>2</sup>He was born on Mexico City on 17 April 1902, his first years passed in the capital during the last years of the Porfiriato and the first years of the Revolution. The training provided by his family (Catalan lineage) included the encouraging to the reading of French authors, and the sum of studies in the National Preparatory School and the National University. He graduated in Law and the doctorate was in the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters but supplemented his humanistic education taking classes at the High Studies School with the professor Antonio Caso. In 1920, the young Torres Bodet joined public life by taking private secretary of intellectual José Vasconcelos, who invited him to make trips in the country to build support for the work of the newly created Ministry of Public Education. Shortly after, served as the chief of the Library Department of the mentioned Secretary between 1922 and 1924, this position let him create thousands of popular libraries in the whole country to collaborate with the campaign against illiteracy. In addition, he created *El Libro y el Pueblo* Journal, it was an official publication from he defines the role of the public libraries and propose a technical training to start the cataloging process. (Orozco, 2014, pp. 139-151, Macías, 2011, pp. 11-16, 1989, p. 322)

<sup>3</sup> The group of *Contemporáneos* took its name from the homonymous literary magazine, which was published in 1928 to 1931. It represented to an inheritor group or generation of the “ateneístas” in the knowledge of the universal literature, but with a stylist own search and a marked lack of interest for the national politics. Although they were pro-European, this group is distinguished from the Mexicans

One year later, he resigned and started a diplomatic<sup>1</sup>, moving to Madrid until 1931 where he became second secretary and from there to Paris between 1931 and 1934, when he travels to Buenos Aires as business manager for a short time because the next year he goes back to Europe to take over as first secretary of the Embassy of Mexico in France. Between 1937 and 1938 he returned to Mexico to take over as head of the Diplomatic Department of the Foreign Ministry and in the same year he returned to Europe to perform in charge of business affairs in Brussels between 1938 and 1940. In these charges, he alternated solving specific requests in the foreign services with the promotion of Mexican culture abroad.<sup>2</sup>

His close relationship with Latin American and European intellectual networks and his diplomatic efforts let him to maintain contact with Intellectual Cooperation, which by 1940 had worked intensively through various Conferences and meetings, where it was launched an ambitious plan of review the textbooks, among other measures.<sup>3</sup> While he served as Secretary of Foreign Affairs (1940-1943), he

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vanguards that follows futurism as the estridentism movement, since they maintained an unconnected dilettantism to political and social opinions. (Leal, 1957, pp. 290-296)

<sup>1</sup>He had two options, collaborate with some South American magazines or submit to the open competition, which he decided from a visit to Genaro Estrada, Sub-secretary of the mentioned branch, who convinced him. (Torres, 1981, p. 161)

<sup>2</sup>As he tell to his friend Bernardo Ortiz de Montellano when he assume his first position abroad, he passes through La Habana and New York, where encountered writers and artists. Once installed in Madrid, Torres Bodet request material from México to put together a conference that he should pronounce at the Lectures and Conferences Society in Madrid, about the Mexican spirit on art and literature. In that city he was a very dedicated participating member of Café Regina (commanded by Ramón Valle Inclán), making contact within very intimate environments with the young Spanish generation as Pedro Salinas, Benjamin Jarnés and Federico García Lorca. In Paris, he met Paúl Valery in 1932 –who participates on the Intellectual Cooperation Project–, when he transferred to La Haya in this year tried to help to his friend in his cultural Project to improve the Cinema Club. Once transferred to Buenos Aires reinforce literary friendships with the diplomat labor, specially with Jorge Luis Borges, Eduardo Mallea and Pedro Henríquez Ureña. On his return to Europe to take charge of the Mexican Legation in Brussels, he should solve importance political issues as the expropriation of the petroleum companies that Cardenas president had solve before, at the same time in literary matters, he was with young poets through the Writers Club of Belgian French Language, to whom included on the list of distribution of his book “*Muerte de cielo azul*”. He also maintained his role as nexus between intellectual networks, getting close to Mexicans with Latin American and European writers. (Schneider, 1998, pp. 27, 29 and Ortiz, 1999, pp. 269-285)

<sup>3</sup>Is impossiblesummarize here the work of Intellectual Cooperation, because its steps encompassed a variety of topics and subtopics on each Conference, going from the rescue of the cultural heritage until the creation of the intellectual property, passing by the activation of the international mobility of students and professors, the publication and circulation of work of art, books and magazines, the review and correction of the school manual of History and Geography worldwide. For a general vision we refer to Renoliet, 1999 and Kolasa, 1962. In the case of a particular study about the link of this organization with Mexico we refer to (Pita, 2014).

participated in several decisions related to the initiative to temporarily relocate its headquarters to Havana during the German occupation of Paris.<sup>1</sup>

He shared the principles of this organization in special, the promoting of the peace among children and youth. Also, was agreed what the idea that the intellectuals like the representatives of culture has an important place in this ambitious program. Therefore it is not surprising that when he became Minister of Education in his country (between 1943 and 1946), he appointed a reviewer commission of plans, programs and textbooks to modify the contents to promote "the mutual understanding between countries", following the guidelines of the statement of Intellectual Cooperation which had been signed by Mexico but not implemented few years before<sup>2</sup>. As he noted in another event, universality defending Intellectual Cooperation required both intellectual exchange between institutions and nations around the world and the need to provide a general education based on scientific methods.<sup>3</sup>

### **3. The (First) Transition**

After the war, the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation tried to resume its activities but would be insufficient to stay, so it began a slow process of transition before it disappeared in the late 1940s. This was not easy. France tried to maintain the autonomy provided by the Institute and the influence it had on him.<sup>4</sup> The Anglo

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<sup>1</sup>The Second American Conference of National Commissions of Intellectual Cooperation held in La Habana (1941) was agreed to intensify the inter-American relations within the international program and as a measure was set out the necessity to create a Center that replace temporarily during the war to the Intellectual Cooperation Institute in Paris. The Center did not enter in functions because when the countries should pay the affiliation fees the war ended and the Institute restarted its activities. (Pita, 2014, pp. 221-223)

<sup>2</sup>During the Lázaro Cárdenas presidency, it was signed the declaration on teaching history, but its measures was not applied because the socialist education came first. The following president, Ávila Camacho, rejected this model and implemented a new one, despite being nationalist combined the National History with the Universal History. The new programs in charge of Torres Bodet, especially fifth grade of America History, it would spread inter-Americanism in a universal sense of culture and peace. (Pita, 2014, pp. 117-119)

<sup>3</sup>These words are part of an exposition in the Conference held in Albuquerque (1944) where he went joined to others Mexican intellectuals to discuss the role that would correspond to Mexico in the intellectual cooperation. (Torres, 1945, pp. 43-47)

<sup>4</sup>The stance of France maintain its interest in continue with the Institute (IICI), so in 1945 the government allocated a new subsidy for its maintenance. However, the first day of the Conference in London on November 1945, the French delegation announce that the government does not have the intention of propose the maintenance of the Institute because is unrealistic. The abandonment of its

proposal insisted that the institute only developed cooperation between intellectuals and the desirability of establishing a relationship of greater base under the domain of education. This proposal prevailed during the Conferences of Allied Ministers of Education (CAME), which met on several occasions to plan how and in what way would be the restoration of culture and education at the end of war. Between 1943 and 1945 this meetings showed that deciding on the name that the organization was a complex game of interests. Thus, discussions on the organization's name remained until its constitution, while science was gaining ground to position in the same level as education and culture.<sup>1</sup>

Preparatory discussions will point to what extent sought to distance Intellectual Cooperation, the intention to disengage from the previous organization, as justified by criticizing the elitism of that one. Thus, the scientist hegemony required amongst other things that the charge as the first director of UNESCO fell on the known English scientist Julian Huxley and not his countryman Alfred Zimmern who had participated during the interwar as director of the Committee for Intellectual Cooperation since 1926 to 1930.<sup>2</sup>

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intentions is because is conscious the project is "too partisan" so it prefers sacrifice the Institute to obtain, as compensation, the UNESCO reside in Paris. (Renoliet, 1999, pp. 161, 165, 175) and (Kolasa, 1962, pp. 128-136)

<sup>1</sup>According to the interpretation published in *El Correo* a few decades later, this was visible since the first meeting of the Conference of Allied Ministers on Education (CMAE), held in London in November 1942 and mostly since May 1943 when it was named a committee ad hoc to elaborate a proposal with the London International Assembly and the Council for International Civic Education jointly. At the end of this year the CMAE decided to incorporate more members (including USA) and the invitation letters included that the goal was to create a permanent organization on postwar education. On April 1944, USA concretely propose the addition of scientific research to the United Nations for the reconstruction of Education and Culture, that recommendation was included on the Dumbarton Oaks Conference instead (Washington, August –October 1944). However, during the San Francisco Conference (April 1945) they still talk about the United Nations for the International Organization (UNCIO). It was recently at the beginning of the work in the Preparatory Labor Committee (November 1945) that Science was imposed finally as part of the organization. *El Correo*, Howard Brabyn "Nacimiento de un ideal", Octubre 1985, pp. 5-12. Nobody doubted the end of the war was due to the scientific advances, but the education and science weren't the main concerns. As showed a survey on June 1945, the main concern in Great Britain was the housing and welfare because of economic collapse. *El Correo*, Briggs Asa, "Gran Bretaña: el ambiente cultural en 1945", año XXXVIII, (Octubre 1985, pp. 14, 19)

<sup>2</sup>Zimmern believed in the evolution of an international mentality as a moral strength guided by the values of truth and good faith. As a social democrat, he valued the civilization concept defined as a Hellenic value and Christian of the social and political body. To support his vision of intellectual cooperation, he built networks with academics, diplomats, religious and political leaders (no scientists) in the summer school of Geneva that founded since 1924. (Zimmern, Huxley, 2010, pp. 314-316)

To the Education Conference (London, November 1945), where eventually UNESCO was constituted, Torres Bodet went with other Mexican delegates: Samuel Ramos, José Gorostiza and Manuel Martínez Baez. (Martínez, 2011, p. 6) In his memoirs mention that although the Allies agreed that an educational reconstruction of nations occupied during the conflict was necessary, there was no agreement on how to carry out the promotion of education and culture, and what role the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation would play. The balance fell to the proposal that a permanent organization within the framework of the United Nations that would meet its guidelines on political, economic and social cooperation. Mexico's position was that it was not seeking to create a "simple organism of intellectual cooperation", but a larger organization (UN) dedicated to all educational and cultural issues not only in the countries devastated by conflict but all those countries that had not received until then "the benefits of universal culture". (Torres, 1981, vol. I, pp. 380-383)

Thus, in his speech he said that the world hope laid in the affirmation of international cooperation as undeniable means of affirming culture, but it should be given a step of intellectualism understood as mere evaluation of truth and virtue of intelligence, to a more democratic education"by the efforts of all and for the good of all". (El Correo, Torres, "Gran Bretaña: el ambiente cultural en 1945", año XXXVIII, 1985, p. 9.)

With the use of the term international cooperation, Torres Bodet echoed strong criticism of elitism with which the founders of the new organization crossed out his history with its predecessor, trying to start his own tradition with the use of a new term.<sup>1</sup>

Indeed, for the Mexican this action could not be performed under the same patterns as it was done previously, because the effects transcended the contact established between the intellectual elites to the people they represented. This was in his opinion, one of the reasons why without abandoning the above methods, changes were made to the Act of UNESCO, so that the idea of mutual understanding was directed at "action to knowledge and understanding of the masses", beating the solidarity of "a minority of spirits" but without stifling the sense of the individual. However, maintaining a separation between mass and individuals would have

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<sup>1</sup> For example, Joseph Needham, member of the Preparatory Commission in 1946, affirmed that he wanted to be sure that UNESCO avoid the previous tendency to the "mandarinism" and contemplative and vaguely way through affiliate universities as well as with government and industrial institutions. (Pemberton, 2012, p. 43)

negative consequences. The entire population needed the experience of the "high culture" to educate. Without it the situation it would be absurd as "build dams in an irrigation system would consider it necessary, without opening the channels through which they would cause water to circulate those dams to fertilize the land that await". For that reason it is essential to overcome the opposition of intellectualism of the eighteenth and nineteenth century materialism. As an example of overcoming, refers to the Mexican case of the campaign against illiteracy, where the new education educate both "the learner and the one teaching". Because of this, it proposed to form a new agency for intellectual cooperation, which with the support of governments to focus less on theory and more in favor of solidarity proposed discussions. (Pita, 2014, p. 258)

By February 1946, the League of Nations was dissolved to form the United Nations (UN) and shortly thereafter the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation remained without effect upon joining UNESCO. The first director was the scientist Julian Huxley (1946-1948), who appealed to continue the line drawn by it, but from a new direction: the global scientific humanism. This should work as a philosophy that encouraged international understanding, continuing the previous efforts between wars, but from a scientific view of spiritualism retreating from war. Part of the premise that science and culture "are not only means to reach a practical end, but the means themselves are their ultimate goals", so that while education should have a social and individual function, should be based on research. Therefore, the "atmosphere of scientific internationalism" was spreading in every aspect of the proposal during the first two years of UNESCO.<sup>1</sup>

However, the organization should face the immediate effects of the war so during these early years, a plan was launched to help countries devastated by the war. Therefore, the aim of the first General Conference of UNESCO focused on projects to help in this regard, taking advantage of the reconstruction to guide the means and purposes of education based on the idea of international understanding and promoting of peace.<sup>2</sup> This type of education, it was required that specialists and

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<sup>1</sup> Pemberton, 2012, p. 48. However as Torres Bodet would remember, hence the impressions on his encounter with Huxley during his travel to Mexico at the beginning of 1946, the UNESCO would be under his command "an instrument of many keyboards" (music, theater, dance, paint and mainly science) but no education, topic that almost brushed the same as help to the not just victims of war, but also those who have historically been "victims of peace". (Torres, 1981, vol. I, pp. 427-428)

<sup>2</sup> At the request of the Member States, it was sent to the war devastated regions Educational Missions to advise the education reorganization. This program was approved in the Second Meeting of the General Conference. It was recommended to the Member States to build National Commissions of

teachers came together to discuss how the education for the peace should be in primary and secondary schools to disseminate the purpose of the United Nations, similar to what the League of Nations had done in the twenties.<sup>1</sup>

These plans began to be called by the term economic, political and social cooperation, which in general were encompassed by international cooperation. This new terminology was associated -and used in the practices-, with the program of technical assistance. The urgency of reconstruction after the war seemed to justify the change, but that seems more an argument than a justification. In America's continent -less affected by the battle-, this conceptual universe was part of the lexicon of the new body of the Organization of American States (OAS). Torres Bodet, was conscious of this appropriation. In the creation of this regional organization he also played an important role, participating in the most important Conferences that happens between 1945 y 1948 to founding. In his memories write about this meetings, and notes that such the new term of international cooperation was viewed with suspicion by Latin American, because in this stage implies a justification of paternalistic imperialism by which the United States would help the rest of the American countries. (Torres, 1981, vol. I, pp. 600-657)

Parallel to this, and despite the political situation in the Middle East, the Third General Conference of UNESCO met in Beirut (November 1948). In it, the annual report of the General Director, Huxley was presented and Jaime Torres Bodet was appointed as the new Director, resigning as Secretary of Foreign Affairs of Mexico (occupied since 1946). He had to move immediately to Beirut to take part in the

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non-government organizations that help to the mentioned activities, while UNESCO prepared an appropriate material for national campaigns, mainly through the radio, films, documentaries and illustrated pamphlets. This would be under direct control by TICER (Temporary International Council for Educational Reconstruction), founded on May 1947. In addition, the international organization planned immediately actions of help like, buying books, teaching materials, and scientific equipment. (*El Correo*, Drzewieski, Bernard "Proyecto de ayuda a los países devastados". vol. I. num. 1, Febrero 1948, p. 5) In the seminar held in New York under the directions of the Chinese pedagogue Y. R. Chao, existing materials were examined in order to prepare new ones; a guide of studies for professors was wrote in German, about what is UNESCO, as well as diverse documents for the international organism servants related to UN. It was expected that the materials were published in various languages to encourage its dissemination. At the end of the meeting, the participants made an excursion to the Hyde Park's residence where Mrs. Roosevelt talked them about the work of the Commission of Human Rights. (*El Correo*, s.a., "Los educadores redactan programas sobre la ONU", vol. I. núm. 8, Septiembre 1948, p. 4.)

<sup>1</sup>Primera reunión que tuvo lugar en Sèvres en 1947 y el año siguiente se organizaron otros cuatro seminarios en ese año en distintas ciudades: Nueva York, Praga, Berkhamstead (Gran Bretaña) y Caracas. (*El Correo*, s.a., "Los educadores redactan programas sobre la ONU", vol. I. num. 8, Septiembre 1948, p. 1.)

conference of the meeting closure. In his last speech as a director, Huxley declared feeling calm to leave the direction to someone like him for his “record of service” in diplomacy and education; he had shown great conviction by the value of education.<sup>1</sup>

Meanwhile, in the speech of the takeover (which was emblematically titled I have faith), Torres Bodet emphasized that despite knowing the doubts that fell on UNESCO, he held the conviction that it was necessary to raise “the intellectual and moral condition of men” in order to disappear in them the idea of war. To realize this peace education, planning a series of measures: associating youth to the program of UNESCO through essay and poster contests; to review and improve teaching manuals of History and Geography, with their respective guides for teachers who lecture the subjects; teaching assignments to cooperate in the study and improvement of curricula; conduct seminars for teachers and educators permanently. Finally, the new Director added a new action that characterized his tenure as director- adult education as an active part of society.<sup>2</sup> The measures retook the actions made it for Intellectual Cooperation, but this not contradicted the previous point expressed in the Education Conferences, because the education of adults –as an essential part of the program-, exceeded the criticized elitism. Thus, without using the term he appropriated its meaning.

#### **4. Education for International Understanding**

After assuming as director, felt the need to simplify the UNESCO not only administratively but also academically, when establishing priorities in his action programs. For that reason, defending the main problem in promoting a culture of promotion of peace. It was necessary that everyone knew each other and “nothing would contribute that much to such international harmony as spreading spiritual values thanks to the education of the masses”. The teaching of all people, the principle of equality that was in the Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the

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<sup>1</sup>As this Mexican would remember, the Huxley’s discourse was optimistic to establish a positive balance based on the progress of the institution in its two years of existence, what proved that the organization acted “in terms of intelligence and spirit”. From the wise and naturalist place, he formulated twelve questions to the government representatives but he didn’t formulate an urgent one, what was the UNESCO doing to contribute to save the peace? (Torres, 1981, vol. I, pp. 666-667)

<sup>2</sup>*El Correo*, s.a., “Hacer de la educación una doctrina constante para la paz”, año 1, núm. 11-12, Diciembre 1948- enero 1949, pp. 1-2.

United Nations in December 1948.<sup>1</sup> This meant that the desired civilizing progress of nations required of a new spirit of international relations. One in which the understanding of the other did not fall into the elites but into the people and for this was a prerequisite to combat illiteracy.<sup>2</sup>

This position made explicit the change of direction, which was being operated on the concept of Intellectual Cooperation, although in practice it was tried to continue with several projects initiated in the previous decade.<sup>3</sup> Of these, undoubtedly the biggest boost was that one of education. As stated in the International Conference on Adult Education (June 1949), the mission of the organization “it is not to make a speech about peace but to pursue for it, creating the conditions to ensure it”.<sup>4</sup>

Thus, Intellectual Cooperation vanished in two forms: one, which was associated with the principle of international cooperation and another, which joined education for international understanding. As already mentioned since its inception and during the First General Conferences, this principle was noted as a strategic point of the organism, but during these early years was more a brand identity than a concrete despite the several meetings performed by specialists.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>According to the Torres Bodet explanation, the Declaration wasn't a pact but they intended to provide it with law nature as an agreement although the sanctions just were from moral order “it is primarily, a call to the rulers to remind that man exists, it is not an automaton to the service systems political or financial domain and must be considered, not as a means but as an end, as the sole purpose that all we are interest in”. (Torres, 1981, vol. II, pp. 8,9,12)

<sup>2</sup>*El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime “La Unesco debe llegar a las masas”, vol. II, num. 4, Mayo 1949, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>A few days after his designation as Director, Torres Bodet invites to his Mexican intellectual friend Alfonso Reyes to take in charge the Mexican Permanent Delegation before UNESCO in the French capital, charge that reject because of health problems in that and other moments. He asked for help to relaunch a previous Project of Intellectual Cooperation named International Library of American Culture, which wasn't succeeded because of the international economic depression. He suggests the two collections that the Fondo de Cultura Económica owned related to “Biblioteca Americana” and “Tierra Firme”, be joined in a sole collection with an appropriate title under the auspices of UNESCO. (Curiel, 1994, pp. 112-113, 116)

<sup>4</sup>Torres, 1987, pp. 87. Actually, was created the Fundamental Education Centre on the Pátzcuaro city in Michoacán (Mexico), shortly after.

<sup>5</sup>The UNESCO Constitution approved 22 regulatory texts as educational instruments. Not all of them were applied at the beginning of the education for international comprehension project because the intention was to guarantee the opportunity of education for all. In 1947 was written a Convention to promote the international comprehension in the educational institutions, to States orient its course of study for grades towards peace and security, proposal reasserted in the First Conference in which was presented three regulatory texts for the specific area in which every signatory State declared the free circulation of textual material, visual and auditory in scientific matters, culture and educational in order to promote the free interchange of ideas that facilitate the mutual comprehension. (Martínez, 2011, pp. 603-604)

The Fourth General Conference of UNESCO (1949) was a tense meeting. The increasing critics claimed that the organization was not complying with the proposed goals. There was thus a strong discussion by delegates on the budget that should be approved for the next year, because it was questioned that given the economic situation it was not possible for countries to meet their obligations if they increased.<sup>1</sup> The Director answered with a New Year's message, in which reflected on what had happened that first half of the twentieth century. His positive outlook, noted the progress and not the disasters of wars. He hoped that the States understood that collective security is stated on four basic guarantees: food, health, work and culture. Said that to conquer these guarantees is not only the work of several years, but of the whole century, and as long as a desire for peace is maintained.<sup>2</sup>

Despite the attempt, the atmosphere of the next General Meeting in May 1950, showed the limits of the Mexican efforts to support the objectives of the organization, due to this he presented his first resignation (which was removed). Skepticism reigned hostilities in Korea, situation that confronted the organization with the beginning of the aggression of the Cold War. Despite this, Torres Bodet's proposal was to keep in his speeches the conviction that before the crisis, UNESCO should redouble its efforts to serve the UN conscience, to remind it the necessary "solidarity of free men".<sup>3</sup>

The work plan for the following year sacrificed several projects to focus on those, which may have in practice a much more immediate result, focusing on three groups requiring special attention: workers, women and youth<sup>4</sup>. It also maintained the proposal of the teaching of history as a means to foster international understanding, which meant -like it was tried with the revision of texts in the previous decades,"expelling the narrow nationalism that instills hatred and

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<sup>1</sup>*El Correo*, s.a., "Balance de una Conferencia y La conferencia adopta un total de presupuesto para 1950", Noviembre 1949, vol. II, num. 10, p. 1-3.

<sup>2</sup>*El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime. "Para la libertad, la justicia y la paz", enero de 1950, vol. II, num. 12, p. 1.

<sup>3</sup>About the Korea topic, the Director doesn't even mention political statements. He is limited just to comment that the UN's Technical Assistance Conference assigned more than 20 million dollars to the economic development on disadvantaged countries. On its behalf, UNESCO disposed the necessary amounts to make a long-term construction program for the mentioned country on Korean educational matters and an educational program focused on disseminate the UN's principles and work. *El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime "La humanidad no ha de abdicar para progresar", vol. III, núm. 5, June 1950, p. 1 y 10.; *El Correo*, s.a., "La contribución de la Unesco al programa de ayuda a Corea de las Naciones Unidas diciembre de 1950", vol. III, núm. 11, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup>*El Correo*, s.a., "La sexta conferencia general de la Unesco", vol. IV, num. 6, Junio 1951, p. 2.

misunderstanding”.<sup>1</sup> Aware of resistance to this internationalism, he said that this was not a subversive idea, because they did not seek to deviate the “national loyalty” but to understand in their duties as citizens “the international obligations subscribed to their homeland”. It was about creating internationalism of interdependent nations and not to promote a “superficial cosmopolitanism”.<sup>2</sup>

To develop this, he tried to associate this proposal with other regional organizations such as the Pan American Institute of Geography and History (IPGH), for modifying the teaching from a perspective that respecting the universal principles of intellectual cooperation. Both bodies agreed that international understanding was due to a problem that parted from the teaching of these subjects, which vitiated by nationalism was biased, spirit which would have to be modified to create new world citizens. Therefore, he asked them to collaborate in creating a history of scientific and cultural development of mankind.<sup>3</sup>

Conceived from a humanistic view, peace was the result of both agreements state (political fact), and the harmony of peoples” (moral value). To support this idea, he recalls two of the seven points of the statement made in 1933 under the auspices of the Institute of Intellectual Cooperation, when they asked about the future of civilizations. To continue with this work, UNESCO should oppose to the crisis” dikes of hope that would create certainty about the benefits of international cooperation. This meant the reinforcement of the idea that humanity exists as “an international society of spirits, which prefigures and prepares the universal society

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<sup>1</sup>In Sevrés, France, they met between July 18 and August 21 about 65 professors of 30 countries. The Seminar’s General Directorate was in charge by Swiss educator Georges Panchaud and the activities were going through four divided groups by age of the students: under 12 (by the French André Ferré), from 12 to 15 (by the American Howard R. Anderson), over 15 years old (by the Mexican Silvio Zavala) and one dedicated to instruct to professors (coordinated by Kuruvila Zachariah from India). The results that the group in charge of the over 15 years old, is transcribe its resolutions in the Journal, with the promise that the following numbers appear the results of the other groups. *Revista Historia de América*, Zavala, Silvio, “El seminario de la Unesco sobre la enseñanza de la Historia como medio para fomentar la comprensión internacional”, Diciembre 1951, num. 32, pp. 171-178.

<sup>2</sup>*El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime, “Las naciones unidas y el civismo nacional”, Octubre 1952, vol. VI, núm. 10, pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Torres Bodet, Jaime. “La UNESCO en la V Asamblea del Instituto Panamericano de Geografía e Historia”, en: *Revista de Historia de América*, núm. 30, Diciembre 1950, pp. 492-432. The proposal of this publication retook the initiative made by Huxley during his period as a Director, which consists on the creation of a History of the development of human thought, and the one that Torres Bodet commented with his friend Alfonso Reyes at the end of 1948 to retake the proposal of Intellectual Cooperation to publish an American Thought Library. The project concluded almost two decades later and underwent many changes from the original propose made by Huxley, therefore his History shows complexity in the debate of historiographical and scientific ideas and the political posture inside UNESCO. See Poul Duedalh, 2011.

of peoples”.<sup>1</sup> This allusion takes up the idea put forward the previous decade by Paul Valery to justify Intellectual Cooperation alluding that the League of Nations is a Society of Spirits not as fiction but “as an undeniable force over time consisting not only of public events or written documents, but a huge amount of dialogues”. (Foncillón & Valery, 1933, pp. 11-21)

The defense of this principle was coherent for the director with the principles and goals of the new organization: there was no science or art without humanism and the immediate practical purposes were launched with the creation of international advice of specialists dedicated to reorganize the international communication. This quiet work as counselors of universal consciousness would guide the construction program of UNESCO, which will indirectly impact on the masses.<sup>2</sup> To subtract the UN and UNESCO climate crisis, it was essential to remember the “dimension of the durable” above the political level of immediacy. This should be combined with the urgency: the importance of teaching missions in underprivileged countries (Siam, the Philippines and Afghanistan), the campaigns against illiteracy (India and Brazil), hygiene education and scientific agriculture through the cooperation centers (Cairo, New Delhi, Shanghai and Montevideo) and scholarships for students from deprived zones to investigate the need for film, the radio and the press in these countries.<sup>3</sup>

In early 1952, criticism increased by those who felt that the proposed activities were away from the practical purposes of the organization. Torres Bodet defends the technical “quiet work” of scholars, researchers, artists, and is urgent at that time because “the art cannot do without all humanism”.<sup>4</sup> Added to this, significant cuts were made in the budget, which ended with his irrevocable resignation in

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<sup>1</sup>*El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime, enero de 1952, vol. V, num. 1, pp. 1 and 4. The two points that quote from the Intellectual Cooperation are: the near future of civilization, in all its forms, is closely subordinated to the maintenance of the general peace, and all of the other conditions, individual or technical, depend on that. 2. The future of the culture, even inside of the National Unities, it finds eminently linked to the development of universal elements that equally depend on a humanity organization as moral unity and legal.

<sup>2</sup>Torres Bodet, Jaime. “Síntesis del discurso pronunciado por el Sr. Jaime Torres Bodet, Director General de la Unesco, en la Segunda Asamblea General del Consejo Internacional de Filosofía y de Ciencias Humanas”, *Revista de Historia de América*, num. 33, Junio 1952, pp. 181-184.

<sup>3</sup>*El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime, “Un plan de desarrollo para los países desfavorecidos”, vol. II, núm. 3, Abril 1949, p. 1; *El Correo*, Torres Bodet, Jaime “Mi fe en la UNESCO”, vol. II, num. 3, Abril 1949, p. 3 y 4.

<sup>4</sup>Síntesis del discurso pronunciado por el Sr. Jaime Torres Bodet, Director General de la Unesco, en la Segunda Asamblea General del Consejo Internacional de Filosofía y de Ciencias Humanas. *Revista de Historia de América*, núm. 33, junio de 1952, pp. 182 y 184.

November 1952, a day after the new budget was approved.<sup>1</sup> As he mention, this serious decision about restrict the financial aid involved a regression for the organization, and it was not based on an economic problem because budgets on military resources continued to rise. Collective security cannot be more urgent than progress, because both are closely linked conditions for ensuring peace. Alluding to the objective of UNESCO is and should be to organize the international cooperation to “educate people and facilitate their access to science”, therefore concludes by proclaiming the priority of “the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind”. (Torres, 2002, pp. 121-126)

## **5. Conclusion**

The history of the early life of UNESCO cannot separate from the context of the Second World War and its immediately post-war. But this should not lead us to interpret the actions and proposals of this international body only as a result of the historical context (marked by the financial crisis, the decolonization processes and the Korean War). It is necessary to consider it part of a long process that began since the end of the First World War with the founding of the Organization of Intellectual Cooperation and which was consolidated especially in the 1930s. The efforts of this organization not only formed a baggage of initiatives but an intellectual manifestation and its social function as guide of the universal consciousness.

As it was attempted to show in this article, there were several points of contact between this idea and shortly afterwards was presented by some of their key players. However, the transit as we call this process occurred during the decade of 1940 was not simple. None of the actors committed to the creation of UNESCO ignored the political implications, which had to assume the term of Intellectual Cooperation during the conferences that even during World War II planned what would happen in the immediate postwar period. Nor were oblivious to what was implied to incorporate new terms such as economic and social cooperation, political, technical assistance, international cooperation and education for international understanding.

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<sup>1</sup>The Swiss pedagogue Jean Piaget attempt to convince him to move away his resignation, because it would be a “symbol” of the UNESCO experience interruption, and Torres Bodet answered to that reaffirming his definitive restraint because “the men are never symbols. The symbols are the institutions”. (Martínez, 2011, pp. 16-17)

For Jaime Torres Bodet this migration was initially justified because he trusted that it was essential to provide the new organization with a less elitist proposal that would adapt the role of the intellectual to the needs of the new international relations. This did not mean to abandon the humanist principles, which had sustained the previous postwar experience, which had formed him as a writer, educator and diplomat. It is significant that in his late years as Director, when he had to face criticism for the lack of immediate results, the Mexican made an explicit mention of Intellectual Cooperation. He tried to remember to the others, that the world need -as the heading said with which we began this work-, create the peace in the minds of men. It remains for future studies to wonder in which way the concept of intellectual cooperation continued to be transformed to become in the next decades in an apparent synonym of international cooperation (enunciated by moments under the synthesis of International Intellectual Cooperation).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Responding to the 50 questions about UNESCO, it defines International Intellectual Cooperation as the encouragement of knowledge and mutual comprehension of Nations, through expert meetings and international conferences, international investigation programs coordination, documentation and statistics services, specialized publications, that is to say organize the intellectual infrastructure of modern civilization in its broadest universality. El Correo, s.a., "La UNESCO en 50 preguntas", Julio-Agosto 1966, año XIX, p. 53.

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