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Educational activities of the Economic Society
of Friends of the Country of Madrid during the
XVIII century

Summary

Die Wirtschaftsgesellschaften der "Freunde des Landes", die in Spanien während der zweiten Hälfte des 18. Jahrhunderts entstanden und sich vermehrten, waren eines der wichtigsten Werkzeuge für die Entwicklung aufgeklärter Politik in der Volkserziehung. Trotz ausgedehnter Zusammenarbeit mit der Regierung waren sie inoffizielle Gesellschaften, die die Aufgabe hatten, durch angemessenen professionellen Unterricht Wissen und Fähigkeiten zu erweitern, die für die Entwicklung von Landwirtschaft, Industrie, Handel, Verkehr und der Wissenschaften benötigt wurden.

Unter den Wirtschaftsgesellschaften verdient die der "Freunde des Landes" Madrid bzw. die "Matritense"-Wirtschaftsgesellschaft besondere Beachtung, da sie von ihrer Gründung her ein Modell für die später entstehenden Gesellschaften war und in ihr die ausgesuchtesten Mitglieder der aufgeklärten Minderheit (wie z.B. Campomanes, Jovellanos, Cabarrus usw.) aktiv mitwirkten.

Es ist im Rahmen dieser Untersuchung nicht möglich, die Analyse auf alle Bildungsaktivitäten der "Matritense" auszuweiten. Deshalb wird dieser Aufsatz die Analyse der von der "Matritense" bevorzugten Volkserziehungspolitik im Dienste der wirtschaftlichen Entwicklung des Landes zum zentralen Gegenstand haben. Es seien hier nur auf die wichtigsten Ergebnisse aufgezeigt.

Die schulische Realität der "Matritense" Wirtschaftsgesellschaft während des Untersuchungszeitraumes erlaubt die Annahme, daß die pädagogische Aufgabe der erwähnten Gesellschaft im Grunde auf zwei Arbeitsfelder im Bereich der industriellen und Volkserziehung ausgerichtet war. Erstens waren diejenigen Schulen, die angesichts ihrer Ausrichtung auf eine soziale Schicht zum einen als Volksschule sowie jene, die ihren Intentionen und Inhalten nach als Industrieschulen bezeichnet werden können, ausschließlich für Mädchen eingerichtet und unterrichtlich speziell auf die Produktion von Primärressourcen und elementarverarbeiteten Gütern der Textilindustrie ausgerichtet. Zweitens befaßten sich die sogenannten Kunst- und Handelsschulen lediglich mit der professionellen Unterrichtung von Jungen für das Erlernen eines Gewerbes und die Produktion künstlerischer Gegenstände.

Obwohl die von den aufgeklärten Spaniern erwarteten Resultate nicht erreicht wurden, kann dieser Versuch wegen seiner Intentionen, das Land zu modernisieren und die augenblickliche kulturelle und ökonomische Lage zu verbessern, als von großer Wichtigkeit für die spanische Geschichte angesehen werden.

Die Hilfe, die der aufgeklärten Kultur- und Wirtschaftspolitik durch die Madrider Wirtschaftsgesellschaft zuteil wurde, ist insofern von besonderer Wichtigkeit, als die Errichtung von Schulen (per Ratsbeschluß) eine große Anzahl von Untersuchungen und Analysen in verschiedenen Produktionsbereichen hervorbrachte.

Zusammenfassend kann gesagt werden, daß es nicht möglich ist, eine Bilanz des spanischen Erziehungswesens des 18. Jahrhunderts zu ziehen, ohne die "Matritense"-Wirtschaftsgesellschaft in ihrer wichtigen Funktion, die sie durch ihre diversen Bildungsaktivitäten erfüllten, in die Betrachtung mit einzubeziehen.

1. Introduction

The economic societies of friends of the country, that emerged and multiplied in Spain during the second half of the XVIII century, were one of the most important tools for the development of enlightened policy in popular education(1). Though collaborating stretchly with the government, these were unofficial societies, wich had as mission to extend , by means of appropriate professional instruction, the necessary knowledge and abilities for the development of agriculture, industry, trades, commerce and sciences.

Among the economic societies, the Friends of the Country of Madrid or "Matritense" Economic Society, deserves special attention since from its foundation it was the model for the ones created afterwards and it had active participation of the most selected members of the enlightened minority such as Campomanes, Jovellanos, Cabarrús, etc.

It is not possible, within the limits of this study, to extend the analysis to all the educational activities of the "Matritense"(3). Therefore this paper will center its contribution in the analysis, favoured by the "Matritense", of popular educacional policies in service of the country's economic development. Though, this study will only point out its main results.

Initially, we will begin framing the educational activities of the "Matritense", having in mind the particular conditions of Spain in the second half of the XVIII century.

2. "Matritense" Economic Society of Friends of the Country

After a quick bureaucratic process(4), the Economic Society of Madrid was founded in september 16, 1775, and its statutes were approved the 25 of the same month(5).

The Society's activities were canalized through - three associations or classes, as they were officially designated, committed to agriculture, industry and arts and trades. When joining the Society, each person was assigned to one or another class according to his knowledge, capacities and interests. Every class worked with some autonomy but having meetings periodically in order to talk over matters of its own speciality. However, the most important - topics were discussed in the general meeting of the Society, which took place every week.

Of the three classes that existed, the last two are of special importance to this study. On the one hand, the industry class was the one which from 1776 created and promoted the popular schools of the "Matritense", and on the other hand the arts and trade class was in charge of the - guidance of the pre-professional teachings. The agricultural class was not in charge of any scholastic task during this period.

In 1787, after a long debate(6), the "Junta de Damas" (Ladies Council) took over the industry class through the direction and government of the popular schools of the "Matritense". (?).

3. Educational activities of the "Matritense"

It is believed that the scholastic reality of the "Matritense" Economic Society during the studied period, permits to consider that the pedagogical task of the mentioned Society was basically directed towards two lines of work in the field of industrial and popular pedagogy. In first place, the schools which could be called popular (taking into -- account the social sector to which they were directed) and industrial (taking into account their contents and intentions) were exclusively for girls and they were specially directed towards teaching and production of prime resour--

ces and elementary manufactured products of the textile industry. In second place, the so called arts and trades -- schools only committed to instruct boys professionally for the learning of a trade and the production of artistic objects.

3.1 Patriotic Schools

Since mid 1776, date of creation of the first schools, until 1808, when the decline of pedagogical activities of the "Matritense" began ending in 1811 with their close, the "Matritense" founded four popular schools named as patriotic: San Ginés, San Sebastián, San Martín and San Andrés. Also, 6 other similar establishments devoted to diverse activities of popular industry were created: schools of embroidery, lace, blonde lace, school of society education, of the "Retiro" and of flowers of the queen. (8)

The popular schools directed by the "Matritense" were economically sustained by the state and were free (9). The daily activities were teaching and learning of various technical abilities combined with productive work, teaching of literacy and christian doctrine.

The "Matritense" had three main goals: religious and moral formation, technical and economical apprenticeship and the properly enlightened finality of the attainment of happiness and individual and collective welfare . It is - difficult to establish the priority of any these goals. The refore they must be considered complementary and interrelated. (10).

In the stage studied the popular schools assigned - to the "Matritense" only admitted girls (11). They were of humble origin and though at the beginning their number was limited, by 1787 any person between 4 and 12 years was admitted and afterwards between 4 and 16. The total number

of assistant students always had the tendency to increase. In this way, for example, the total number of students attending the schools of the "Economical of Madrid" was around 475.

In each school there was a woman teacher incharged of instruction who since 1792 had an assistant, normally elected among the most distinguished students, fact coinciding with the growth of the number of students (12). Both posts were occupied by public competition with the following requirements: a certificate of good conduct in public and private life and a demonstration of the technical ability for teaching, since the persons who occupied this posts were frequently illiterate (13).

When founded the four patriotic schools had specific activities: the San Ginés School would teach to prepare and spin hemp and linen; while the San Andrés School would teach to prepare and spin wool and to manufacture wollen yarn (14). Starting in 1787 and by 1792, all the schools begun a process of unification of activities and a diversification of the tasks to accomplish: each school was divided into three classes which would undertake successively, from the most simple tasks of yarning, to the most complex of weaving, knitting, embroidering, and lacing. Also since 1792, the sistematic teaching of literacy and the rest of technical teaching given, were begun to be planned by all the Matritense Schools(15).

Due to the contents, goals and methodology which were used, the basic apprenticeship consisted in oral explanations and mainly practice of a series of technics and manual abilities which were adquiered by means of imitation. Initially the instruments used to impart this teachings were the distaff and the winding machine. Afterwards other instruments, more adequate to the new labors of 1792, such as the sewing frame, loom, etc., came into -

use (16). To teach literacy, the Anduaga method and the reading book recommended by the 1763 Provision, were used; in the apprenticeship of Christian Doctrine, the Ripalda, Fleury and Pinton catechisms were used (17).

In the initial stage of the Matritense Popular Schools examinations and premiums were given twice a year, in St. John's and Christmas. Besides these, other gratifications were given with certain periodicity to teachers and students. From 1792 only one annual examination took place but the number of monthly gratifications in each school increased. The examination consisted of a series of manual - activities such as embroidering, sewing, etc., depending on each schools' speciality, measuring at the end of a given time the quantity obtained as well as its quality (18).

The pedagogical supervision of the popular schools would be shared by the specialist in each main matter - taught in them (19). Technical supervision was entrusted to Felipe Beltrán, but not for a long period of time. Religious tutelage would be imparted by clergymen, the theologists of the patriotic schools in 1784, even though since 1792 they were substituted in their functions by the - teachers of reading and writing. Also, the "curadores" (supervisors) male members, named by the Society depending on the type of industry, and afterwards the "curadores" female members, named by petition of the Ladies - Council were the ones in charge of the general supervision, within the established cannons of the Society, over the apprenticeship and teaching imparted by the popular schools assigned to the "Matritense". In hierarchy, over the mentioned supervisory functions were the industry group and the Ladies Council, and at the top, the directive - members of the General Council of the Society.

3.2 The Arts and Trades Schools

The main reason which made us consider clock making, saddlery drawing and machinery schools under the name of arts and trades is the fact that this establishments were going to be related under the technical supervision of the arts and trades class of the Matritense Economic Society; while the so called popular schools depended of the industry class.

Looking at the development between 1775 and 1808 - of the arts and trades schools of the "Matritense", it is easy to notice they never achieved important goals from a quantitative point of view. The number of professionals - and apprentices working under the schools sponsored by the Economic Society of Madrid, will certainly be low and will not grow significantly during this period.

Even more, an important number of petitions searching to open new arts and trades schools, will systematically be rejected, disregarding their importance and - necessity, due to scarcity of resources or lack of agreement between the conditions proposed by the petitioners and the Administration or Society. New projects were some times rejected because of both causes.

If it was necessary to underline a main characteristic of the "Matritense" arts and trades schools, from the scholar organization point of view, we would nominate the preponderant place occupied by the workshops, the professional apprenticeship, always around 80 or 90 %. - The theoretical studies concerning whatever profession and the literacy apprenticeship were not very frequent - in these schools; in fact, in the case of the Society's trades schools which actually functioned, we could not find any data in this sense(21).

It is also convenient to remember that the Society never sponsored directly any arts and trades school. It frequently informed, when urged by the Council of Casti-
lla, about plans to establish new trades schools giving ample information about the questions asked in an offi-
cial manner. In some cases, when the administration direc-
tly requested it, the Society took charge over trades -
schools in order to supervise the fulfillment of a con-
tract, when in reference with teaching or apprenticeship,
accorded with any determined professional(22).

4. Conclusion

In the second half of the XVIII century in Spain, the "Matritense" Economical Society of Friends of the Coun-
try developed an important work in the field of popular -
education, permitting the national socio-economical develop-
ment, by means of creating diverse schools whose objective
was the qualification of labour and the rise of cultural -
standards among the people.

Even in the produced results were not the ones en-
visaged by the enlightened Spaniards, this effort can be
considered of great importance in Spanish history, becau-
se of its intentions to modernize the country, rising the
cultural and economic standards existent at the moment.

The help given the Economic of Madrid towards the -
enlightened cultural and economic policies is of main im-
portance, more so taking into account the creations of -
schools which prepared, by Council petitions, a large num-
ber of studies and analysis in different areas of produc-
tion and activities.

Summing up, it is not possible to make a balance of XVIII century Spanish education without taking into account the important role played by the "Matritense" Economical - Society, through its diverse educational activities, of which we have studied the most important here.

Notes.

- (1) Among the numerous bibliography that exists in this sense, look at: ANES, G.: Economía e Ilustración en la España del siglo XVIII. Barcelona, Ariel, 1969, and El Antiguo Régimen. Los Borbones, vol. 4. Madrid, Alfaguara, 1975; DOMINGUEZ ORTIZ, A.: La sociedad española en el siglo XVIII. Madrid, 1955; ELORZA, A.: La ideología liberal en la Ilustración española. Madrid, 1970; SANCHEZ AGESTA, L.: El pensamiento político del despotismo ilustrado. Madrid, 1953; and SARRAILH, J.: La España ilustrada de la segunda mitad del S. XVIII México, 1957.
- (2) No study exists which analyses the Economic Society Matritense with the necessary depth and rigour. However, the following studies give fairly good information: LESEN Y MORENO, I.: Historia de la Sociedad Económica de Amigos del País de Madrid. Madrid, 1863; AGUILAR PINAL, F.: La Real Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País. Madrid, 1972; BOSCH Y FUSTEGUERAS, A.: El centenario. Apuntes para la historia de la Sociedad Económica Matritense de los Amigos del País. Madrid, 1875; NOVOA, E. y otros: Gestas de la Matritense de los Amigos del País. Madrid, 1933
- (3) In our doctoral thesis, "La Sociedad Económica Matritense de Amigos del País. Su obra pedagógica. 1775-1808" (Madrid, Universidad Complutense, 1978), we have studied the educational activities of the Matritense during the period mentioned. Also, look at our following publications: "Pedagogía e Ilustra

ción españolas. El ideario educativo de los fundadores de la Sociedad Económica Matritense". Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños, Madrid, 1981, 18; and "Otras actividades culturales y educativas de la So-

ciudad Económica Matritense". Revista Española de Pedagogía, n° 159, 1983. Also, Ilustración y educación. La Sociedad - Económica Matritense. Madrid, Editora Nacional, 1984.

- (4) The origins of Economic Society Matritense can be followed through these documents: Memorias de la Sociedad, vol. II, Apéndice; Libro de Acuerdos de la Sociedad, 1775-1776. See also the bibliography mentioned in note 2.
- (5) According to the Memoirs of Society, volume II, memoir 5 of the appendix. The royal act approving the statutes was dated November 9, 1775. Archivo Histórico Nacional, legajo 1607(1) y Archivo de la Sociedad Económica Matritense (A.R.S.E.M.), leg. 3/38.
- (6) The Economic of Madrid received in August 27, 1787, a royal order which allowed the creation of the Ladies Council. It was assigned to the Matritense. A.R.S.E.M., leg. 86/23. The statutes of the Ladies Council can be found in folio 130/5.
- (7) NEGRIN FAJARDO, O.: Ilustración y educación..., op. cit.. See introduction and chapter: "El debate para la admisión de mujeres en la Sociedad".
- (8) This section of the patriotic schools is the summary of chapter 3 of the doctoral thesis mentioned in note 3. - See it for more information.
- (9) See, among other documents, legajos 103/15 and 4/12. A.R.S.E.M.
- (10) Legajos 82/5, 99/15, 101/33, 11/2 and Libro de Actas de la Junta de Señoras, years 1795 and 1796. A.R.S.E.M.
- (11) Among other documents, this statement is endorsed by the following legajos: 13/11, 22/35, 41, 82/5, 11/2, 135/25 and 178/27. A.R.S.E.M.

- (12) Legajos 103/15 and 9/52 A.R.S.E.M.
- (13) The examinations were carried out before a board of examiners consisting of executives from the Society. Legajo 178/27. A.R.S.E.M.
- (14) Legajo 9/10. A.R.S.E.M.
- (15) Legajos 103/15 and 178/27
- (16) Legajos 47/7 and 73/18
- (17) According to the Libros de Actas de la Junta de Damas . 1792 and following; also, legajos, 64/16. A.R.S.E.M.
- (18) In the A.R.S.E.M. there are many documents in the matter. As an example the book of acts of the Ladies Council and the legajos 39/57,58; 103/15; 178/27 can be looked up.
- (19) In relation to this matter see section 3.2.5 of the doctoral thesis mentioned in note 3.
- (20) Idem, chapter 4
- (21) Through all the papers it can be detected that work was considered a priority over teaching and learning.
- (22) That happened with the Saddlery School of M. Chacón and with the Astrology Instruments School of F. Lorenzo. See the doctoral thesis mentioned in note 3.