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EDUCATION OF THE LEAST PROTECTED STRATA OF SOCIETY IN NEW SPAIN: THE MAIN FEATURES

The article presents the results of historical-pedagogical research, which purpose was to identify the main features of education of the least protected sections of society in New Spain. The authors' analysis of the original scientific-historical sources and scientific works of contemporary Latin-American researchers makes it possible to draw the following conclusions. The education of the most marginalized population in New Spain was in line with the interests of the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church. It was a state affair under the direct control of the Spanish monarchs, who in their own hands signed a large number of orders for the study of the Law of God and the Castilian language of the indigenous population of the colonies and the opening of appropriate educational institutions for this. Thus, already in the XVI century were initiated the first schools for the Indians, where catechism training by Catholic friars first in the languages of the local ethnic groups and later in Spanish only was conducted. Based on the study, the authors found that the Sanitization of numerous ethnic groups of New Spain led to the loss of their identity and language. Generally, the education of the most vulnerable in New Spain took place in two main directions: it served as a radical modification of material life (through the introduction of new technologies), as well as the transformation of spiritual existence (through a new religion).

***Key words:** education in New Spain; formation of the least protected of society; main attributes of education; educational activities of Catholic missionaries in the new world.*

In order to better study the subject of research it is appropriate to observe its behavior over a certain period, to register the laws and follow the stages of its development, to consider some aspects of its historical existence. Thus, for understanding of the current educational problems of any country, it is expedient to analyze the development of its educational system in the historical plane, to identify the socio-economic, political and cultural contexts, in which the subjects of education acted at a certain historical stage, to reveal moral and ethical values and the concepts that they operated, to indicate the educational ideals of this historical epoch, the content, forms, principles of the learning's organization. Consequently, the retrospective analysis of the education of the most vulnerable strata of society in New Spain is an important element in assessing the current state of this educational branch in many Latin American countries.

It is important to note that education problems in the Latin American colonial period devoted their works such scholars as Álvarez, Bazant, Bolaños, Bracamonte, Cardiel-Reyes, Díaz-Covarrubias, Escalante-Gonzalbo, Gonzalbo, Greaves, Hernández, Hernández-Camargo, Labastida, Lecoin, Loyo, Mejía-Zúñiga, Meneses-Morales, Novo, Ornelas, Palacios, Ríos-Zúñiga, Sánchez-Flores, Solana, Staples, Tanck-de-Estrada, Tena, Torres-Septién, Vázquez, Zebadúa among others.

It should be recalled that the impressive Spanish colony, called New Spain, lasted for 300 years (from 1521, the year of the Aztec Empire's fall and the beginning of Spanish rule, until the 1920's, when the newly Spaniard provinces began to gain independence and to build new democratic states). It comprised modern territories of Mexico, the southwestern states of the USA (as well as Florida), Guatemala, Belize, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Costa

Rica, Cuba. In addition, to it was subordinated the Philippines and other islands in the Pacific Ocean and the Caribbean Sea. The capital city was Mexico City. A vice-king, who was directly subordinated to the monarch of Spain, ruled the colony. Under the vice-kings, there was an advisory body - an audience holding both administrative and judicial powers. The jurisdiction of the Mexican audience has spread to the southern part of the country, and the jurisdiction of the Guadalajara audience was to the north [2].

Despite the active interaction of local and European traditions, in the cultural sense, the society of New Spain represented a rather variegated picture: the population of the colony were numerous local ethnic groups, Europeans, Asians, Africans. The most vulnerable social stratum were the Indians. The colonial economy was based on their exploitation. Representatives of the conquered peoples were forced to work on the lands and mines picked up from them. The Spaniards introduced in traditional Indian agriculture new agrarian technologies and new crops including citrus, wheat, sugar cane and olives, trained Indians livestock, began systematic development of the earth's interior and created new mining centers such as Guanajuato, Zacatecas, Pachuca, Tasco and others [1].

The most important instrument of political and cultural influence on the Indians was the Roman Catholic Church. Its pioneer-missionaries actually expanded the scope of Spanish influence. They studied the languages of the local ethnic groups, transposed the Law of God and taught the Indians for the catechism, as well as the Spanish and Latin languages. Catholic monks were the first Europeans to teach indigenous people the latest agricultural, mining, construction technologies. So, including in view of this fact, we can speak of the availability of non-formal education of the least protected strata of society beginning from the very first years of the Spanish conquest, which we can describe as horizontal and mutually enriching: both conquerors (teachers) and conquered (students) were trained; it was undoubtedly an active acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities.

With regard to formal education, since the beginning of colonization in New Spain, a system of education under the jurisdiction of the Spanish monarchy was in place and in line with the interests of the Catholic Church, and its main aim was to attract the local population to the Christian religion. For this purpose, in the 16th and 17th centuries Catholic Orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, and Augustin appointed monks, who were to live in Indian villages and teach the children and adults the Law of God.

The study of documents in the original language showed that the «important» thing about Christianizing the Indians and inculcating them “good habits” were the conditions justifying the concession of the so-called western territories of the Spanish monarchy, that is, Spain had the right to own new territories, because its kings considered it their duty enlighten local «sinners» [4].

However, many Catholic monks referred to the cause of evangelism with great responsibility and were sympathetic to the respect and love of their “disciples”. In this sense, it is interesting to refer to the historical-pedagogical works of Mexican scholars (Gonsalbo, Sanchez-Flores, Staples, Tank-de-Estrada, etc.), who analyze the organization of boarding schools for the Indians: Franciscans in Tlatelolco, Jesuit in Pátzcuaro, Tepetzotlán, College of St. Gregorio in Mexico; as well as so-called training centers, started

by the monk Pedro de Gante, and the Schools of Arts and Crafts of St. José of Naturals, which taught, in addition to religious subjects, Spanish and Latin languages, painting, making things of everyday use, embroidery, sewing of clothes and shoes, as well as workshops for masons, blacksmiths, carpenters, tailors. These educational institutions used innovative teaching methods for that time with the use of theater, music, dance, drawing, etc. [4; 9].

The original documents of this era show that « [...] Don Vasco de Quiroga, the first bishop of Michoacán, offered in 1531 to the Indian Council a plan for the social organization of the Indians, in which he advised to initiate the creation of 200 collective dwellings, the existence of which would be based on Christian mercy, collective labor and common life, and in which different craft would be taught» [7, p. 188].

Our pedagogical research has shown that the first attempt to introduce the education of marginal groups of the population of New Spain can be called the decision of the Third Mexican Council (III Concilio Mexicano, 1585) on the mandatory study and use of the Indian language monks for the evangelization of the local population, as well as royal orders about *encomienda*- the duty of those who enjoy the right to land and the collection of taxes from the Indians living on it, to provide at their expense to the local population the opportunity to study. They were published in the 16th century by the kings of Spain, Fernando Catholic and Carlos I, but these decrees were ignored and not fulfilled [6, p. 15-23].

The study found that the first attempt to streamline formal primary education made in 1600 vice-king Gaspar de Zuñiga-y-Acevedo, who suggested the «Regulations for Teachers of Highly- Honorable Arts to Teach Reading, Writing and Counting», but population not properly perceived it [8, p. 13-14].

In the 17th century, Spanish kings issued several orders¹ for the initiation of elementary formal education of Indians in New Spain, who required the study of the Spanish language and catechism, as well as the prohibition of using any languages other than the Castilian in the Spanish colony². Orders demanded that the local population learn to read and write in Spanish, which should have started schools that would operate on public funds, and teachers would receive a salary from the funds of Indian collective farms. It is important to note that these orders for the first time mentioned elementary schools for girls³ [10].

¹These are the following royal orders: Royal cédulas of 1603 (2), 1605, 1618 (2), 1621, 1622, 1629, 1634 (2), 1636, 1637. In the *Compilation of the laws of the kingdoms of the Indies*, 1681, these cédulas were grouped into Book I, titles 13, 15 and 22 and in Book VI, title 1 In the reopening of the de los de los reinos de la india, 1681, se agruparon estas cédulas en el libro I, títulos 13, 15 y 22 y el libro VI, título 1 (Muro Orejón, A. (1956). *Cedulario americano del siglo XVIII*, Sevilla, Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, pp. 319-322)[5].

² Despite the fact that the Indian languages were forbidden, the teachers-monks freely owned both languages (Although in the royal decree of 1770 the official goal for America and the Philippines was that “once and for all, the different languages of the same domains are extinguished, and only Spanish is spoken”. Later, in 1778 and 1782, they ceased to insist on this mandate and emphasized the first letters by promoting, but not obligating, the Castilianization. As a result, teachers were often bilingual (Tanck De Estrada, 2000) [10].

³The most important were two royal orders: the one of February 16, 1688 and other of April 6, 1691 (Muro Orejón, A. (1956). *Cedulario americano del siglo XVIII*, Sevilla, Escuela de Estudios Hispano-Americanos, pp. 319-322) [5].

In the end, the royal orders brought fruitful results. Thus, in 1754 primary schools for children and adults were opened in 281 Indian villages located in the Archdiocese of Mexico City. The parents of students funded most of them, and some were receiving money from public funds or from a parish priest. And in 1808, in Mexico City, there were already 467 elementary schools, one in each Indian village, accounting for 37% of the total (1245) of Indian settlements; in Michoacán County – 94 schools (37% of the total (254) of Indian settlements); in the Guanajuato district – 19 (50%). In total, in New Spain, 1,015 Indian settlements had elementary schools (26%).

Our study showed that funding for these schools was carried out by a majority of public funds (44%), in some cases by the money of parents of students (24%), and only 3% of educational institutions provided the Catholic Church. The teachers' salaries were paid by the public funds of each Indian village. Another important fact for the development of the education of the least protected sections of society in New Spain is that in the late 18th - early 19th century Schools for Indian girls, so-called *migas*, were opened in the districts of Mexico City, Veracruz, Puebla, Durango, as well as women's boarding schools in the cities of Mexico City, Guadalajara, and Toluca [10].

We should also note that during the period of the existence of the newcomer's seat of the New Spain development not only elementary, but also secondary and higher education of the most vulnerable strata of the population. Thus, in 1533, in Mexico City, was launched the first in America Higher education institution for indigenous people: College of the Holy Cross Tlatelolco. During this period, the college of St. Joseph of Belen (Colegio de San José de Belén de Naturales, 1539) was also opened. As well as Royal College of St. Nicholas in the city of Patzcuaro (Real Colegio de San Nicolás Obispo, Pátzcuaro, 1540); college of higher education of the people of Tiripitio (Colegio de Estudios Mayores de Tiripetío, 1540); Royal and Pontifical University of New Spain (Real y Pontificia Universidad de México, 1551); Royal and Ancient College of St. Idefonso (Real y Antiguo Colegio de San Idelfonso, 1588); boarding schools for the Indians in Parrás, Coahuila (1622) and San Luis de la Paz (1640); College of the Divine Mercy (Colegio Nuestra Señora De La Misericordia, 1658); St. Javier College in Puebla (1751); Royal and Pope University of Merida, Yucatan (1767); University of Guadalajara (1792). In these educational institutions, students studied philosophy, Latin grammar, law and medicine [3].

Thus, our analysis of the original scientific and historical sources suggests that the education of local ethnic groups in New Spain was considered by the Spanish conquerors a public affair and corresponded, first of all, to the interests of the Spanish crown, with the aim of attracting as many subjects as possible to the culture of the metropolis. Since the first years of the Conquest (16th century), higher education institutions of the medieval European type have been launched and primary schools have been opened for the least protected sections of the society. These educational institutions were held at the expense of the public funds of Indian collective farms and the money of the Catholic Church. Since the 17th century they were partially financed by state educational institutions.

While in the 16th century the training was conducted mainly by Catholic monks (and sometimes by Indian leaders) in the languages of local ethnic groups and concentrated exclusively on the catechism, from the middle of the 18th century this changed. It was issued royal decree that in all Indian kingdoms the population should study the Law of God

and the Castilian language and speak only it, all other languages were forbidden. Thus, in 1767, Catholic friars were strictly forbidden to use any other languages than Spanish and were not allowed to teach the Law of God in the languages of the Indian peoples. Obviously, these orders provoked dissatisfaction not only with the indigenous population, but also with many Spanish missionaries. However, the monks held classes in both languages, in addition, they taught the Indians to read and write in the language of the conquistadors.

It is important to note that this so-called “Cultural Conquest”, or the Castilianization of the numerous ethnic groups of New Spain, has led to the fact that many of them have almost lost their identity and language over the past two centuries. The “Cultural Conquest” and the Castilianization suppressed the traditional forms of education of the Indian people and replaced them with new, Catholic-based religions, moral and ethical values, and the outlook of the European Middle Ages, on new educational technologies.

On the other hand, we should emphasize the importance of the missionary activity of Catholic priests. They teach the Indian population not only Christian dogmas, traditions, customs, Spanish and Latin languages, but also the skill of making new fabrics, furniture, food, etc., designing houses for the European technology of the time, the use of irrigation systems, the cultivation of plants and livestock still unknown in America. In turn, the first missionaries studied the languages and culture of ethnic groups, many of them trapped in the spirit of ancient Indian civilizations, and opposed the violent Castilianization, trying to «protect the pure souls of the Indians» from the influence of the bad habits of the «old world». Later, the Creoles, who fought for the independence of many Latin American countries in the nineteenth century, found inspiration for their struggle in the images of these Spanish missionaries.

Consequently, based on our analysis, we can argue that the education of the representatives of the most vulnerable population in New Spain was the most complete compared to other historical periods, since it took place in two main directions: it served a radical modification of material life (through the introduction of new technologies), as well as the transformation of spiritual existence (through a new religion), although some of the methods that it was implemented and its consequences for the disappearance of many original cultures of the American continent are the subject of radical criticism.

It is also important to note that the process of eliminating illiteracy didn't become a priority at this stage, all training was conducted orally. The writers of the ancient Aztec Empire (*tlakuilos*) studied the Latin alphabet, but used it to express thoughts in their own language (*nahuatl*) while writing texts.

There is no doubt that in the process of education of margins in New Spain the greatest attention was paid to religious education. The Indians had to study the dogmas of the new religion, for which the conquistadors used all possible measures and tools. It is important to note that from the very beginning of the process of Christianization of the Indians there were two opposing points of view on this problem: the official and opposition (missionary). The latter became the basis for the development of ideas of enlightenment

(with their appearance in the 18th century) and radical changes in the education of the least protected sections of society in the Latin American region.

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