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Paulí Dávila*, Luis M^a Naya*****The Basque teaching profession,
associativism and the Spanish civil service******Baskijski učiteljski poklic, učiteljska društva in španska
državna služba******Izvleček***

V prispevku bomo analizirali položaj baskovskega šolstva od konca 19. do prve tretjine 20. stoletja, kajti gre za ključno obdobje za proučevanje različnih dejavnikov, ki so vplivali na proces normalizacije izobraževanja v Baskiji. V tem času lahko opazujemo: 1. standardizacijsko politiko države; 2. politike deželnega sveta baskovskih ozemelj, ki spodbujajo nove oblike baskovskega izobraževanja; 3. dejanja združenj baskovskih učiteljev, ki zahtevajo enakovrednost baskovsko-navarskega izobraževanja s preostalim španskim izobraževanjem; 4. strokovni pedagoški tisk, ki zahteva prej omenjeno, in 5. oblikovanje alternativ uradnemu državnemu izobraževanju ter nastajanje mestnih in podeželskih šol.

Abstract

In this contribution, we are going to analyze the situation of the Basque teaching from the end of the 19th century up to the first third of the 20th century because it is a key period to study the different agents who took part in the process of normalization of the teaching in the Basque Country. In this sense, it can be observed: 1) the standardizing politics of the State; 2) the policies of the Provincial Council of the Basque territories, raising new forms of formation of the Basque teaching; 3) the actions of the associations of the Basque teaching, requesting the equalization of the Basque-Navarre teaching to the one that the rest of Spanish colleagues had; 4) the professional press of teaching claiming the aforementioned ones and 5) the creation of alternatives to the official teaching of the State from some city councils, through the creation of a municipal and a rural teaching.

Ključne besede: Baskija, Španija, učitelji, 19. stoletje, 20. stoletje**Key words:** Basque Country, Spain, teachers, 19th century, 20th century
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In Spain teachers as a body of civil servants of the Spanish State is a relatively recent phenomenon. At the beginning of the 20th century educational policies developed by the Spanish State (henceforth referred to as “the State”) were aimed at ensuring that schoolteachers obtained a salary given that, being financially dependent on local or provincial bodies, this was not guaranteed. The 1900 Budget guaranteed the prompt payment of salaries as an obligation of the State. Nonetheless, this general policy did not include the whole territory of Spain, given that what were known as the “Basque Provinces” (Guipúzcoa, Vizcaya and Álava) as well as Navarre enjoyed special relation, the Economic Accords, which were agreements between the State and each one of these provinces. The Accords recognized distinct administrative powers for these Basque territories.¹

In this contribution, we will analyze the situation of the Basque teaching profession from the end of the 19th century to the first third of the 20th century, a crucial period for studying elements involved in its functioning. We wish thus to highlight two relevant elements in this process: 1) educational policy and the teacher profession within the framework of the Economic Accords and 2) the role played by teachers’ associations in making demands regarding the homologation of Basque-Navarre teachers with their Spanish colleagues.

The aim of this contribution is to highlight the conflict existing between the State and the Basque territories regarding teachers, and to emphasize the role of the professional teachers’ associations. This conflict was finally resolved in favour of the State, which, through a Decree, managed to harmonize the role of all civil servants, including those carrying out professional teaching in the Basque Provinces.

1. Educational policy and the teaching profession within the framework of the Economic Accords

Between the 19th and the 20th centuries, the relations between the State and what were known as the “Basque provinces” and Navarre were based on a series of pacts. These agreements between each province and the State gave recognition to a political and administrative singularity. The pacts were known as *Fueros* (special legislative privileges) until 1876, Economic Accords (from 1878) and Autonomy (during the Second Republic (1931-1939) and since 1978) (Davila 2004 and 2005). The so-called “Basque problem” has to be understood in this political framework, in which there have been differentiated degrees of taxation and of administrative and political autonomy.

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Also, in the educational field, the Moyano Law was the basis of the Spanish educational system from 1857 until 1970. This law, despite modifications, dominated in everything important in educational legislation and administration in Spain for over a century.

These two general approaches on policy and education are basic to understanding the development of the teaching profession in the Basque Country, above all when the State incorporated teachers into the civil service. The process by which schoolteachers carrying out their profession in the Basque Country became to have the same rights as the rest of their Spanish colleagues was highly conflictive. The payment to teachers at the expense of the State budget, from 1900, was fundamental to creating a single body of State civil servants. In the Basque Provinces this payment was regulated by the Economic Accords through the *cupo* (a quota that had to be paid by the Basque provinces to the State for expenses of the latter, an amount negotiated approximately every six years).

The principle on which salary payments to teachers was based was already embodied in the Moyano Law. It was not until 1882 that, in order to pay schoolteachers, a provincial Fund was created, an entity that was under the control of the Provincial Government and not the municipal Town Halls. Given this governmental power, the Basque Provincial Governments argued that it should be the Basque municipal authorities that continued paying the salary of teachers, as this was a way of controlling the latter. Nonetheless, as we have pointed out above, the conflict arose from 1900 on, when the State took on the payment of salaries. The State, professional teachers' associations, professional journals and teachers' congresses coincided in this same objective. That is, while schoolteachers called for the State to pay them directly, the Basque Local and Provincial authorities wished to maintain powers.

The Basque Provincial Governments argued that the agreed Economic Accords in force granted them a series of administrative powers, amongst these being the cost of primary school education (buildings, schoolteacher's housing, school material, etc.). These administrative powers were subject of debate during the first third of the 20th century, especially when it came to revise the Economic Accords. Amongst the demands by Provincial Governments before the Ministry were ambitious ones regarding public education (appointment of teachers, a Basque university and, arising therefrom, official recognition of the Basque language), demands that were never addressed. Thus, until the State proposed the change in the system and took on the responsibility for teachers' salaries, with the aim of creating a corps of civil servants, each province had a special Fund for paying such salaries.

1.1. The Economic Accords and payment of teachers

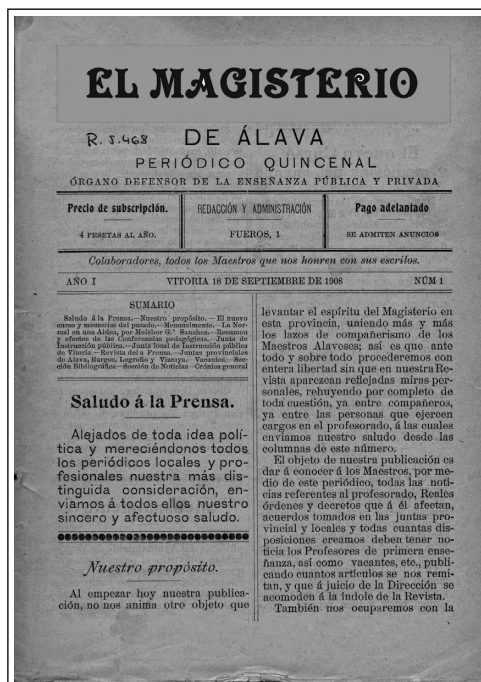
The system for the payment of teachers' salaries changed in 1900. The Royal Decree of July 21st, setting out for the first time the obligations of the State in this regard, although resources continued to be within the ambit of the local (municipal) authorities. To make this possible and workable, the State took on the

payments but, in order to offset this, a surcharge of approximately 16% of the contribution was applied to municipal councils, which had to pay for buildings, crops and farm animals - except in the Basque Country. Consequently, this Royal Decree established a system eliminating the special Funding bodies in all the provinces of the State. This new situation meant applying a policy that was not in harmony with that set out in the Economic Accords.

In order to analyse this important Decree, the Provincial Governments of Álava, Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya met together, the representative from Guipúzcoa being charged with drawing up a letter to the President of the Spanish Government, who had previously informally expressed agreement with the request put forward that the Basque Provincial Governments would obtain the powers and duties pertaining to the Decree. The arguments in this petition were purely rhetorical with

respect to the special characteristics of the Basque Provinces, besides being highly repetitive: “by virtue of the Economic Accord, the State does not intervene in the collection of territorial or industrial contributions, nor in the administration of consumption tax, nor in the other agreed taxes; here surcharges do not exist, nor forestry harvesting, in short, here the action of the State is totally unknown as regards the exacting of resources (...) municipal funding does not exist, being the responsibility of the Provincial Governments’ Tax Offices (...). In short, it is totally impossible for the State to fulfil in the Basque Provinces what is stipulated in the Royal Decree” (Provincial Archive of Álava, File DH 604, number 2).

Subsequently, the Provincial Governments exchanged communications in order to harmonise payment criteria, in accord with the Decree. Nevertheless, and given that the functioning of each Provincial Government varied with respect to their Finance Committees, the President of the Provincial Government of Guipúzcoa proposed that each Provincial Government adopt the measures they deemed opportune (Provincial Archive of Álava, File DH 602, number 2). Provincial Governments would thus come to agreements with their respective local municipal authorities regarding payments for teachers and the manner in



Various articles on the Basque-Navarre teachers were published in *El Magisterio de Álava*. (<http://escuelaentierradecampos.blogspot.com/2014/05/el-magisterio-de-álava-periodico.html>, accessed 12. 10. 2019)

which the corresponding quotas would be managed by the Finance Committees of each Province.

This regulation for the manner of paying teachers left aside a fundamental question for the teaching profession: the salary increases decreed by the Government and which were applied in Spain, but not in the Basque Country. This question was one of growing concern as manifested by written demands from teachers to the Minister, through their professional associations, for parity of salaries and remunerations with teachers throughout "*the whole of Spain*". The difference in treatment demanded by the Basque Provinces, embodied by the singularities of the pact agreed upon, thus gave rise to a contradiction with the interests of teachers who were not awarded salary increases. The reason why this was not possible lay in the fact that the quota agreed upon did not provide for salary increases unilaterally decided by the State. In fact, this problem continued from 1900 to 1912, when the State took on complete responsibility for paying the salaries of Basque teachers. Throughout all this, period Basque teachers constantly demanded to be treated equally in financial terms with the other colleagues of their profession.

2. Defence of the civil service by Basque associativism

Throughout all this process, the role of teacher associativism, through the *Basque-Navarre Federation of Teachers' Associations* and through professional journals (*Magisterio Alavés*) was the key. The demands made and the support from the rest of Spanish teachers, as expressed in the professional teaching publications, achieved a legislative agreement in 1912 by which Basque teachers were placed on parity with the rest of Spanish teachers. This meant a victory for Basque teachers, as the salary increases which the State recognised for Spanish teachers would also be extended to include their Basque counterparts. However, it also represented a victory for the State and for the Basque Provincial Governments, on managing to incorporate the provisions of this Act into the so-called "cupo". With this, one of the aims of any State was achieved: having a single civil service depending on the State, that is, an intellectual army, according to the terminology used at the time, at the service of the State. Also achieved was that appointment to the civil service would be through open competitive examinations – a key factor to understanding the functioning of the State with respect to civil servants and their service (Davila 1994).

In the period between 1900 and 1912, professional teachers' associations made a number of demands. Thus, in 1906 and on the occasion of the renewal of the Economic Accord, the President of the *Association of Primary Education Teachers of Vizcaya* petitioned the Minister with the decisions taken at a meeting on June 19th of that year, requesting the elimination of the direct payments by the Town Halls, given that they were commonly paid late and termly and, failing the State taking on responsibility for payment, it should be the Provincial Governments



Historical memory of education in the Basque Country: UPV/EHU Museum of Education – a step into the past. (<https://basquebooks.blogs.unr.edu/upvehu-museum-of-education-a-step-into-the-past/> accessed 12. 10. 2019)

that make these payments. Moreover, they demanded that no distinction should be made between teachers when being appointed, a concern of the *Association*, above all given the political force that Basque nationalists were gaining. The associated teachers feared that, amongst other conditions, they would be required to be fluent in the Basque language, as was being argued by “the party known as nationalist or Biscayan – which is perhaps the name that euphorically conceals an unhealthy and pernicious tendency in favour of the supreme interests of the Motherland” (General Archive of the Administration: File 6233).

In the same way the President of the *Association of Teachers of Tolosa* stated in November 1906, when he addressed the Minister, that: “the wish of Basque teachers is to be treated like the rest of the Nation and, as a consequence, Primary Education and Teachers be excluded from the “Economic Accord” which has to be signed these days, or otherwise this oblige the Basque-Navarre Provincial Governments to concede to us the same advantages as those in the other provinces have or might have; that is, we wish to be Teachers with the same rights and obligations as those in the rest of Spain and, consequently, that we be remunerated by the State on a monthly basis, with the same salary fixed by the State, and without any dependence on Provincial Governments or Town Halls” (General Archive of the Administration: File 6233). These petitions did not bear fruit. Between 1910 and 1912 there was intense activity between the Ministry and both the professional Teachers’ Associations as well as the Provincial Governments, which finally bore fruit with the definitive payment of teachers by the State, as laid down by legislation of December 31st 1912. The *Federation of Basque-Navarre Teachers’ Associations* arose in 1911, with the aim of seeking a solution to this conflict. This association disappeared in 1913 just after achieving the objective of teachers’ salaries being paid by the State, as reported in the professional press at the time. In this sense, in 1910 various articles were published on this topic in *El Magisterio de Álava*, illustrating the concern of the Basque-Navarre teachers to be on parity with the rest of teachers in the State. All dealings with the Ministry

were channelled through this Federation in order to obtain parity with the rest of “*teachers in Spain*”, becoming thus a key element in the policy drawn up between the Ministry and the Provincial Governments.

The constitution of this Federation was drawn up because of the call made by the provincial and local teachers’ associations to hold a meeting in Zumarraga (in Gipuzkoa province). Prior to January 1911 the provincial Associations had remitted letters to the Ministry demanding parity of salaries. The *Spanish Society of Pedagogy* took measures in Madrid so public powers might attend to the petitions of the Basque-Navarre teachers. To this end, a campaign was undertaken to gather the opinions of the teachers affected so that these measures would have effect. The January 29th 1911 issue of “*El Magisterio de Álava*” informed of the first meeting held on January 23rd 1911, and made known the following objective: “The ideal for which this Federation has to work is to achieve total parity of the public schoolteachers in this province with those in the rest of Spain”. Also, the good relations between Basque teachers and the *National Association of Primary Teachers* enabled measures, closely in accord with the Ministry to be undertaken by the Association itself, and in the manner desired by the Basque-Navarre teachers.

The Law of December 30th 1912 established that the Basque Provinces be on parity with the rest of the provinces of the State, regarding the obligation of primary schooling, a situation made very clear in Article 1 thereof: “The obligations of primary education personnel and material, which will take effect on the passing of this Law in the Basque Provinces, will be met by the Treasury, incurring budget costs by the State, in the same way and under the same conditions as established for the other provinces.”

This Law was clearly welcomed by the Basque teaching profession, as it resolved a problem of great concern regarding salaries and salary increases for these teachers. The Royal Order of January 29th 1913 would extensively develop aspects arising from this important legislation, giving rise to a series of rules for the drawing up salary payslips, appointment of qualified staff, ex-gratia payments, etc. Navarre, on the other hand, did not appear as a province affected by this law and, until March 14th 1913, there was no Decree issued about the situation of teachers in this province.

Conclusions

In the first decade of the 20th century, Spain developed policies favorable to the teaching profession with the goal that teachers become State civil servants. To this end, it was fundamental for the State to pay the salaries of teachers directly.

Nonetheless, given that, the Basque Country enjoyed an agreement with the State, known as the Economic Accord; it was not possible to apply this decision. To this end, Basque teachers suffered financial discrimination. In order to resolve this situation, Basque professional associations and the teachers’ press demanded the same financial privileges as their Spanish colleagues. After various negotiations, in 1912 the State took on the responsibility for the salaries of teachers in the Basque Country.



Education in the Basque Country. (<http://aunamendi.euskoi-kaskuntza.eus/es/destacados/educacion-en-euskal-herria/na-28/> accessed 12. 10. 2019)

The role played by the professional associations and the teachers' press, both in the Basque Country and in Spain, was fundamental, as they channelled the protests and demands of professional teachers into accepting to a great degree that the State take over responsibility for their salaries. The consequence of all this was that the Basque provinces lost certain control over teaching staffs and, at the same time, ceded part of their powers, thereto recognised under the Economic Accord, to the State. From this moment on the Basque teachers' professional press and associations were to share the same interests as their Spanish colleagues, being as they were part of the same corps of civil servants.

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Summary

The Basque teaching profession, associativism and the Spanish civil service

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The creation of the teaching as a government employees' body, in the Spanish case, is recent. The educational policies developed by the Spanish State, at the beginning of the 20th century, were directed to assure that teachers should have an insured salary. This right was not guaranteed until that moment because they depended on local and provincial instances. Since the Law of Budgets of 1901, the State was guaranteeing the punctual payment of the salaries to the teaching. Nevertheless, this general politics could not be extended to the whole territory since the Basque Country and Navarre were enjoying a particular privilege as they had the Economic Agreement, which was an agreement between the State and these territories. In these agreements a series of attributions was recognized to the territories on the part of the State.

In this contribution we are going to analyze the situation of the Basque teaching from the end of the 19th century up to the first third of the 20th century because it is a key period to study the different agents who took part in the process of normalization of the teaching in the Basque Country. In this sense, it can be observed: 1) the standardizing politics of the State; 2) the policies of the Provincial Council of the Basque territories, raising new forms of formation of the Basque teaching; 3) the actions of the associations of the Basque teaching, requesting the equalization of the Basque-Navarre teaching to the one that the rest of Spanish colleagues had; 4) the professional press of teaching claiming the aforementioned ones and 5) the creation of alternatives to the official teaching of the State from some city councils, through the creation of a municipal and a rural teaching.

In all this process, the role of the associativism of the teaching, through the Federation of Associations of the Basque-Navarre Teaching, and the professional magazines ("El Magisterio Alavés") was a key element. The aim of this contribution is to reveal the existing conflict between the Spanish State and the Basque territories in relation to the teaching, indicating the set of agents who were rose up before this situation.

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