
A Pedagogy Encouraged and Repressed: Episcopal Schools in Mexico, 1876–1940

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INTRODUCTION

Prior to the Liberal Constitution of 1857, the Roman Catholic Church held a spiritual and educational monopoly in Mexico. The Mexican government played virtually no role in the education of its citizens, and all religions except Roman Catholicism were illegal. Under the Constitution of 1857, liberal leader Benito Juárez began to develop a system of public education and also encouraged other religions to enter Mexico. Juárez foresaw the potential of Protestantism as both a spiritual body and a provider of education to improve the lives of Mexicans. Voicing his disgust for Catholic education, Juárez wished for the Indians of his country to be exposed to a religion that would “make them read rather than light candles”.¹ An early Protestant missionary claimed that on his deathbed Juárez said, “upon the development of Protestantism largely depends the future happiness of our country”.²

If Juárez was correct, then Mexico is still waiting for happiness, since Protestantism has never rivaled the dominant Catholic faith. Nevertheless, Protestants have made major contributions in Mexico, especially in the field of education. While the Episcopal Church was less visible in Mexico than other Protestant denomi-

¹ Deborah J. Baldwin, *Protestants and the Mexican Revolution: Missionaries, Ministers, and Social Change* (Urbana, 1990), 17.

² William Butler, *Mexico in Transition* (New York, 1892), 252–53.

nations, it did manage to establish two important and enduring educational institutions.

In 1876, Mary Josephine Hooker, the widow of an Episcopal priest from Philadelphia, established a school and orphanage for girls in Mexico City. The Reverend Henry Forrester founded the Dean Gray School for Boys in Mexico City in 1894. The Dean Gray school changed its name in 1907 to Saint Andrew's school, and in 1910 it moved to a new campus in Guadalajara.

Throughout the world, Protestant missionaries have viewed education as a central and critical aspect of their work. An observer in India notes that Protestants there were "of one mind in giving high priority to education in their scheme of work", and that in the face of weak public education they "felt that it was needful both because of humanitarian considerations, and because their religious work needed an educational basis".³ The fact that the same observations could easily apply to the Mexican missionary experience suggests the universality of the Protestant dedication to education.

There are several reasons for the Protestant emphasis on education, some articulated and others implied. First, unlike the Roman Catholic Church, Protestants—including Episcopalians—viewed reading the Bible as an important element of Christianity. While the Catholics used priests as interpreters of scripture, Protestantism required its adherents to read the Bible themselves. Therefore, in countries with high rates of illiteracy, Protestant missionaries founded schools to teach potential members to read. Only by becoming literate could one fully experience Christianity, and that meant direct interaction with the Bible itself.

For Protestant missionaries, the school also functioned as a relatively efficient tool for evangelization. While the missionaries may have had trouble spreading the gospel to Mexican adults in the church, they found it much easier to reach their children in the schools. Girls' schools such as the Hooker School served the evangelization effort particularly well since their purpose was to

³ Violet Paranjoti, *East and West in Indian Education* (Lucknow, 1969), 106–7.

educate teachers. Therefore, Mexican girls could receive their education at a mission school such as Hooker, and then go out into the country and establish other schools, forming an expanding network of evangelical schools. Mrs. Hooker herself highlighted the importance of schools as evangelical instruments, writing, "God's purposes are sure to be accomplished and He intends to evangelize this nation, and the speediest method of promoting its evangelization is to educate well its present generation of children".⁴ Episcopal missionaries considered schools to be in some ways superior to churches as venues for evangelization in foreign countries because they considered children to be more likely candidates for conversion.

Most missionaries viewed the foreign-controlled mission as a temporary body. Missionaries sought to aid in the establishment of a native church that would eventually render the mission unnecessary. Naturally, schools played an integral role in this process. If a native church was to survive independently, the mission schools had to educate her future leaders. Missionaries created boys' schools such as Saint Andrew's to fulfill the need for native clergy. As an early headmaster at Saint Andrew's wrote, "native workers are all-essential and they can come only through the school. Aside from this, it is possible to make it one of our most effective agencies for evangelization".⁵ Without schools to train future native ministers, Protestant missionaries could never realize the goal of an independent, self-sufficient foreign Protestant church.

In addition to these practical concerns, many missionaries considered education to be a moral imperative. Early missionaries in Mexico found an educational system in that country that reached only a tiny percentage of the population. Not only was education very limited, it was concentrated among the upper class. This situation stood in stark contrast to the United States, where by the

⁴ Mary Josephine Hooker to The Young Members of the Church in the U.S., Canada, and England, 21 October 1878, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

⁵ Lefford M.A. Haughwout to John Wood, 9 September 1907, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

1870s most children were receiving public education.⁶ Early missionaries considered it their duty to try to address the glaring need for education of the more humble classes in Mexico. People who chose to become missionaries did not do so for fame or money, but rather out of a genuine desire to improve the lives of people in foreign lands. Therefore, to ignore the obvious educational needs of the Mexican population would have been inconsistent with their Protestant mindset. Incidentally, this argument also justifies the establishment of hospitals, another feature of the missionary work in Mexico. However, while the need for both was great, schools received more interest perhaps because they satisfied the evangelical and practical goals of the missionaries, in addition to the sense of moral obligation.

For all of these reasons, Episcopal missionaries saw the Hooker School and Saint Andrew's as critical components of the overall Mexican mission. Both schools garnered praise from visitors from the United States as well as from Mexican government inspectors. While the Episcopal mission in general endured many ups and downs, the schools were a constant bright spot. Several observers referred to the Hooker School as the "most outstanding feature" of the Episcopal mission in Mexico.⁷

While the government welcomed the establishment of the schools, the Roman Catholic Church was less enthusiastic. The first few decades of the missionary experience in Mexico were marked by frequent conflict with the Catholic church, which at times escalated to violence.

With the passage of time, the attitude of the government toward the schools changed. Beginning with Juárez and the liberal reform of 1857, the state and the Catholic church entered a state of constant conflict. When the conflict intensified, the reaction of the state affected not just the Catholic faith, but all religions. As governmen-

⁶ Lawrence A. Cremin, *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (New York, 1988), 544.

⁷ "Domestic Science Class in Hooker School, Mexico City" *Spirit of Missions* 92 (1927): 478; Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1925.

tal restrictions changed, the Episcopal schools were forced to adjust in order to be able to continue their educational mission.

EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS AND THE POSITIVIST STATE
DURING THE PORFIRIATO, 1876-1910

Continuities and Similarities

The establishment of the Mary Josephine Hooker School coincided with the ascension of Porfirio Díaz to the presidency in 1876. The Dean Gray School for Boys (Saint Andrew's School) was founded in 1894, roughly halfway through Díaz's thirty six year dictatorship. The Episcopal schools in Mexico enjoyed relatively friendly relations with the government of Mexico during this period. The Protestant schools and the Díaz government shared a distaste for the educational efforts of the Roman Catholic Church. Educational leaders in Díaz's government criticized the Catholic church for teaching to the oppressed masses the "duty of almost passive resignation".⁸ Methodist missionary William Butler passed similarly harsh judgment, finding that after 300 years the Catholic church had "failed to elevate Mexico, but made her a land of ignorance, unrest, and misery".⁹ As a result of these perceived shortcomings, both Protestant missionaries and the government sought to develop an alternative to Catholic education.

The ideology of positivism dominated Mexican social thought during the Porfiriato. The French philosopher Auguste Comte developed positivism in the wake of the French Revolution. The philosophy is based on the principles of "order and progress", which also served as the slogan for Díaz's government. Comte argued for a new order which would replace the faith in religious beliefs with a faith in scientific learning. Social position would be determined by merit and work rather than birth or the grace of God.¹⁰

⁸ Irma Wilson, *Mexico: A Century of Educational Thought* (New York, 1941; reprint, Westport, 1974), 229.

⁹ Butler, *Mexico in Transition*, 297.

¹⁰ Leopoldo Zea, *Positivism in Mexico* (Austin, 1974), 28-29.

Gabino Barreda, an educational leader in Díaz's government, studied with Comte in France and returned a committed positivist. The philosophy underwent substantial modifications as it crossed borders and moved from the philosophical to the practical realm. Nevertheless, Barreda installed positivism as the central philosophy of the Mexican educational system. In its original conception in Mexico, positivism accepted the superiority of Europeans and Anglo Saxons.¹¹ Barreda regarded the North Americans as "the most practical people on earth" who regard "ignorance as death".¹² The Díaz government encouraged immigration from the United States and welcomed the influence of Protestantism. While Protestant schools suffered hostility from the Catholic church and ambivalence from many Mexicans, they could count on the support of the government.¹³

The Díaz regime also had a more practical reason for its attitude toward the schools. In 1874 the scope of education was limited, with only about one fifth of the school age population receiving instruction.¹⁴ Faced with the enormous task of extending education to all while restricting the role of the Catholic church, the government was in no position to curtail the activity of the Protestant schools. Unlike private Catholic schools which generally catered to the wealthy, the Episcopal schools tended to educate members of the lower and middle classes¹⁵. The Hooker School offered a twofold benefit to the government as it not only educated girls at no cost to the state, but many of its graduates went on to be trained as teachers. The importance of this function was particularly evident in a period when the lack of qualified teachers greatly impeded the progress of national education.

¹¹ Mary Kay Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class in Mexico, 1880-1928* (De Kalb, 1982), 13; Wilfrid Hardy Callcott, *Liberalism in Mexico, 1857-1929* (Palo Alto, 1931; reprint, Hamden, 1965), 134.

¹² Wilson, *Mexico: A Century*, 231.

¹³ Butler, *Mexico in Transition*, 297; Callcott, *Liberalism in Mexico*, 117, 140.

¹⁴ Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, 20.

¹⁵ "The Mary Josephine Hooker School for Girls in the City of Mexico" *Spirit of Missions* 76 (1911): 427-29.

Unlike the private Catholic schools, the Episcopal schools generally accepted the state curriculum, which was based on the ideals of Auguste Comte. As applied in the state pedagogy, positivism prescribed instruction based on scientific methods. The ideology of both the state and the Protestant schools favored the practical over the theoretical. The schools encouraged students to develop skills that would allow them to be productive in society, with the hope of social advancement for lower classes. These preferences were undoubtedly a response to the perceived weaknesses of Catholic education, which positivists and Protestants alike criticized as abstract and antiprogressive.¹⁶

The official educational system and the Episcopal schools shared a strong belief in the need to improve the moral condition of Mexican children. While positivists tended to divorce the notions of morality from religion, the fact remains that the goals of the two groups were very similar. Educational leaders in the government and Episcopal school teachers alike frequently cited the role of the school as an agent for moral development. An early head of Saint Andrew's outlined the emphasis placed on cleanliness, punctuality, and military drill as methods of counteracting the deficiencies of the "tropical character".¹⁷ Likewise, an Episcopal teacher lamented that prior to enrollment at the Hooker School, children "are not taught, and therefore have no idea of truth, honor, system, or discipline, and what one feels like doing is what one does".¹⁸ A guide to moral education in public schools in 1910 echoed these values: "One will endeavor to inspire a love for work, for the nation, for other people, for justice and truth, and for respect for the law and constituted authorities... They will be taught to obey and to sacrifice".¹⁹ In its

¹⁶ Wilson, *Mexico: A Century*, 229, 276, 321-23.

¹⁷ Lefferd M.A. Haughwout, "A Day at San Andrés, Mexico City," *Spirit of Missions* 73 (1908): 279-80.

¹⁸ Henry Forrester, "Two Phases of Child-Life in Mexico," *Spirit of Missions* 68 (1903): 173.

¹⁹ Secretaría de Instrucción Pública y Bellas Artes, *Informes presentados al Congreso Nacional de Educación Primaria por las delegaciones de los estados, del Distrito Federal, y territorios en septiembre de 1910*, 2 vols. (Mexico, 1911), 1:234; 2:83, 180, 355, 653-54; quoted in Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, 28-29.

appreciation of the importance of morality, cleanliness, and order, the ideology of the Episcopal schools mirrored that of the positivist state in Porfirian Mexico.

As an ancillary benefit of the moral uplift of students, both positivists and Episcopal leaders envisioned the educated student as an agent for changing values and practices in the home. Mary Kay Vaughan asserts that a 1908 law "encouraged the (public school) child to reform the deficiencies of his family".²⁰ Likewise, as a teacher at the Hooker School exudes:

More than one Mexican home has received its first ray of light through the little girl whom the school has trained and sent back to her *pueblo* or the *hacienda* from which she came, carrying with her the influence of the school and the message of the Church to her people.²¹

Again the similarity between positivist government goals and those of Episcopal missionaries are striking.

Although Díaz pursued a cautious rapprochement with the alienated Catholic church, a respect for religious plurality reigned during his administration. Methodist William Butler described Díaz as a "remarkable man" who protected all forms of worship.²² Likewise, Manuel González, who interrupted Díaz's reign in a titular sense only, granted the request of a besieged Protestant clergyman for protection from a Catholic mob:

Sir, I willingly give you the desired protection, as it is my duty to see that the laws are respected; and while I feel no interest whatever in your religious forms or opinions, we are all interested in encouraging the organization of a body of clergy strong enough to keep the old church in check.²³

²⁰ Vaughan, *The State, Education and Social Class*, 36.

²¹ Mary W. Roper, "The Little Brown Sisters of Our Sister Republic," *Spirit of Missions* 75 (1910): 137.

²² Butler, *Mexico in Transition*, 281.

²³ David H. Strother, *Church and State in Mexico. House Miscel. Doc.*, 47th Cong., 2d sess., No. 39. (Washington, 1883) 90; quoted in Callcott, *Liberalism in Mexico*, 117.

By preserving the plurality of religion in Mexico, the government encouraged the development of Protestant education.

While Díaz was quietly conciliatory toward the Catholic church, positivists in the governmental education system were more hostile. Leaders of the Episcopal Church in Mexico shared with government pedagogues a sense of disgust for the Catholic church. Rome, in turn, was critical of both, associating positivism with atheism and Protestantism with foreign aggression and annexation. Both the positivists and the Protestants believed in the need to wrest control of education away from the Catholic church. Positivists believed that the right to educate was central to the development of loyalty. Therefore, they sought to replace the loyalty to Catholicism inculcated during the colonial and early national periods with loyalty to the state.²⁴ Likewise, Episcopal priests and teachers frequently criticized the Roman Church and its educational program, alleging that the church had failed to improve the lives of Mexicans over the course of several centuries.

In Mexico, education for women was virtually nonexistent prior to 1867. However, during the Porfiriato ideas about women and their roles in society began to change.²⁵ The Hooker School was in the vanguard of extending education to women. While most of the graduates trained to become teachers, the school encouraged the development of other skills. The school celebrated the fairly progressive notion of feminine self-sufficiency, encouraging women to enter the workplace in a variety of fields.²⁶ Likewise, the official public education system began to promote education for women during this period, also with an eye toward preparing future teachers.

There is an obvious irony in the friendly relations between the positivist state educational apparatus and the mission schools in this period. While positivism rejected the validity of religion, the schools

²⁴ Wilson, *Mexico: A Century*, 276.

²⁵ Callcott, *Liberalism in Mexico*, 151, 193; Wilson, *Mexico: A Century*, 254–63.

²⁶ "The Mary Josephine Hooker School for Girls in the City of Mexico" *Spirit of Missions* 76 (1911): 427–29.

were openly evangelical. However, several factors already mentioned mitigated the impact of this apparent conflict. Positivists in the government directed their antireligious beliefs toward the dominant Roman church, from whom they hoped to wrest control of education in Mexico. Protestants were also critical of Catholic education. Furthermore, Episcopal schools adopted the state curriculum and shared the positivists's goal of moral uplift. Positivists also recognized the valuable service provided by mission schools in a country badly in need of educational institutions, and appreciated their supposedly superior North American perspective. Thus, while the two groups would appear to be philosophically incompatible, both government officials and Protestant missionaries found common ground in the field of education.

Discontinuities and Conflicts

Although many similarities existed between the ideologies of the positivists in the government and the Episcopal educators at Hooker and Saint Andrew's, on some issues there was fundamental disagreement. Many positivist educational thinkers maintained that all education in Mexico should be lay.²⁷ However, two factors limited the impact of this position on the Episcopal schools. First, the antireligious aspect of positivism was to a large degree applied in Mexico as anti-Catholicism. Second, positivist rejection of religion in schools was more ideological than practical; no legal restriction was passed banning religious education in private schools during the Porfiriato. Therefore, while they accepted most tenets of the positivist curriculum, Mexican Episcopal schools continued to augment it with religious studies.

A second difference between the mission of official state schools and Episcopal schools was the governmental emphasis on nationalistic education²⁸. As mentioned above, positivist educators

²⁷ Wilson, *Mexico: A Century*, 321–25; Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class*, 55.

²⁸ George F. Kneller, *The Education of the Mexican Nation* (New York, 1951; reprint, New York, 1973), 41; Wilson, *Mexico: A Century*, 302.

resented the historical domination of education by the Catholic church²⁹. They viewed government control of education as the best way to transfer loyalty from the church to the state. While the state program inculcated nationalism and patriotism, there is no evidence that the Episcopal schools also engaged in this pursuit.

Though the Episcopal schools later clashed more directly with the government on issues such as curricula and religious education, there was little conflict between the two during the Porfiriato. Both institutions intended to curtail the Roman influence. Episcopal schools willingly implemented the official state curriculum, and the government did not interfere with the teaching of religion in them. Though illegal in Mexico until the constitution of 1857, the government subsequently took a favorable stance toward Protestants.³⁰ Episcopal and public schools alike attempted to address the moral deficiencies of the Mexican population through education. Finally, the state encouraged education by Protestant groups as a way of expanding the limited scope of education for the masses during a period of fiscal constraint.

THE EPISCOPAL SCHOOLS IN
REVOLUTIONARY MEXICO, 1911-1920

Revolutionary Violence Without Revolutionary Change

Revolutionary violence broke out in 1911 when several groups of rebels took up arms to prevent the continuance of Porfirio Díaz's reign. However, the Hooker School in Mexico City and Saint Andrew's in Guadalajara continued to operate with only minor interruptions during the first phase of the revolution. While other Protestant groups participated actively in the overthrow of Díaz³¹, reports from Episcopal missionaries reflect an apolitical stance in the first years of revolution. Reports from 1911 to 1914 suggest that

²⁹ Gonzalo Baéz Camargo and Kenneth G. Grubb, *Religion in the Republic of Mexico* (New York, 1935) 71; Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class*, 14.

³⁰ Baldwin, *Protestants*, 3.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 81.

the schools continued to operate with minimal interruption, although there was some decrease in enrollment³².

Revolution in Mexico was not the only major development of 1911. That year, Anglican churches signed the Edinburgh Agreement. This agreement called for an end to proselytizing in Roman Catholic countries, since these lands were already nominally Christian. Surprisingly, there is nothing in the record to suggest that this major change in stated policy had any effect on the efforts of the Episcopal schools in Mexico.

Despite changing governments, both schools attempted to conform to the official government curriculum. Students at Hooker continued to take examinations administered by the state, although the director of the school noted some difficulty in establishing the expectations of the chaotic and changeable government³³. Likewise, Saint Andrew's coursework was identical to that administered in the public schools.³⁴ However, the chaos in the country rendered the state educational apparatus ineffective, and many public schools throughout the country suspended operations.³⁵

As the revolution wore on, the struggle to remain open grew more difficult, and the danger posed by the violent fighting forced both schools to close briefly. Prior to Hooker School's closing in May of 1914, school director T.E. McKnight noted the renewed importance of his institution:

We feel just now that our school is more needed than ever before as a safe refuge for the girls from the atrocities of the bandits...So many of our girls have lost their fathers and their homes in the last year. Of all the girls we have here now, only six of them have fathers, and three of these are in the same family.³⁶

³² Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1911-14.

³³ T.E. McKnight to John Gray, 29 November 1912, Archives of the Episcopal Church; T.E. McKnight, "Beginning Again in Mexico" *Spirit of Missions* 81 (1916): 109-10.

³⁴ Leland H. Tracy, "Training Hands and Heads in Mexico" *Spirit of Missions* 78 (1913): 324.

³⁵ Kneller, *Education of the Mexican Nation*, 44; Baldwin, *Protestants*, 135-36.

³⁶ T.E. McKnight, *Spirit of Missions* 79 (1914): 283.

Although the political unrest was far from settled, the Hooker School reopened in 1916. The principal noted that they had grown accustomed to “the more or less constant sound of bullets through the air and even an occasional skirmish in front of the school gates”.³⁷ Although many of its students were drafted to serve in the military, Saint Andrew’s weathered three armed robberies before finally closing briefly in 1917.³⁸ Saint Andrew’s also faced obstacles when it reopened in 1919. Not only had teachers and pupils endured “binding, beating, and stripping”, but after it had been forced to close the school had been thoroughly ransacked, losing “pretty much all of its movable equipment, including furniture, farming implements, tools, electric wiring, irrigating pumps, piping, tanks, bath tubs, toilets, window glass, screening, etc.”.³⁹ In the wake of these losses, when St. Andrew’s resumed operation, it was without the benefit of electricity or plumbing.

During the revolution, the schools continued to emphasize moral and practical education. Hooker maintained its emphasis on character development and, in an attempt to make the girls self-sufficient upon graduation, sought to expand its curriculum to include domestic economics and commercial training.⁴⁰ Saint Andrew’s placed a renewed emphasis on agricultural training. The school granted each student a quarter of an acre to farm and graded him according to the performance of his crops. Again, the Episcopal missionaries sought to provide students with the skills to earn a living.⁴¹

As mentioned earlier, the revolutionary period saw little progress in the public schools. It is worth noting, however, that the educational ideology of this period also emphasized the

³⁷ McKnight to Gray, 17 August 1917, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

³⁸ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1914–17.

³⁹ Henry Aves, “Then and Now in Mexico” *Spirit of Missions* 86 (1921): 368.

⁴⁰ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1912; McKnight to Gray, 9 July 1919, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

⁴¹ Tracy, “Training Heads and Hands”, 323–26, Baéz Camargo and Grubb, *Religion in Mexico*, 109.

importance of practical education. Educational officials in the revolutionary era "sought a more pragmatic pedagogy...which would be directly utilitarian, i.e., aimed at increasing agricultural and industrial production".⁴² The ideological similarities between educational leaders in the government and Episcopal missionaries are noteworthy because they probably influenced the attitude of the state toward these schools after the end of the revolution.

The Constitution of 1917

Aside from interruptions due to violence, the period from 1910 to 1920 saw few changes in the actual operation of schools, whether public or private. The Episcopal schools continued to operate, while public education measured a moderate increase in the number of schools. Nevertheless, although its immediate effects were limited, the adoption of a new constitution in 1917 promised major changes in both public and private education, as many of its authors sought further to limit the role of the Roman Catholic Church in society.

On paper, articles 3 and 130 of the constitution threatened the viability of all religious schools. To a large degree, the constitution intended to curtail the role of the Catholic church in society. However, the wording addressed all religious institutions, so Episcopal schools faced the same restrictions as Catholic schools. Article 3 promised that primary education would be free, obligatory and lay. It specifically prohibited religious groups and ministers from directing primary schools, whether public or private.⁴³ Among other restrictions article 130 prohibited ministers who were not born in Mexico to reside there.⁴⁴

As written in 1917, the constitution did not threaten Saint Andrew's because the school did not offer primary education at

⁴² Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class*, 96.

⁴³ Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class*, 117-21; Callcott, *Liberalism in Mexico*, 274-75.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 278.

that time. However, the provisions of the constitution meant that Hooker as well as hundreds of other Protestant and Catholic schools could not continue to operate as before. The Catholic church defiantly refused to acknowledge the Constitution of 1917 and pledged to keep its schools open.⁴⁵ Although equally threatened by the provisions of the constitution, Episcopal leaders took a more cautious approach.

While acknowledging the threat posed by the new constitution, the Episcopal bishop of Mexico expressed hope for either mitigating provisions or the selective enforcement of the law.⁴⁶ The years that followed proved that this hope was well founded. Although many of the delegates at the Constitutional Congress intended to divorce religion from education completely, leaders in the government took a more moderate stance toward private schools in the enforcement of the law.⁴⁷

President Carranza himself proposed a draft of the constitution that excluded religion from public schools only. Although he was overruled by the more liberal factions of the congress, it is clear that he was not passionately opposed to religious education in private schools.⁴⁸ On the contrary, evidence suggests that Carranza admired the educational efforts of the Protestant churches. During his tenure as governor of Coahuila, Carranza expressed great interest in the Protestant schools of the state, offering them official recognition and financial assistance.⁴⁹ The governor's decision to appoint many graduates of these schools to positions in the educational bureaucracy of his new government illustrates his esteem for the value of their efforts.

Although the Episcopal missionaries did not indicate any political preferences, they likely benefited from the general Protestant

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 354–59.

⁴⁶ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1917.

⁴⁷ Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class*, 117–21.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 117, 120.

⁴⁹ Calcott, *Liberalism in Mexico*, 251.

support for Carranza's initiative. Protestant groups in Mexico participated in Carranza's army, while in the United States, non-Roman church leaders lobbied the government for a noninterventionist stance.⁵⁰ Both of these undoubtedly improved the prestige of Protestantism within Carranza's revolutionary forces. Of the Protestants who participated directly in the military, most were Mexican nationals rather than North American missionaries. Carranza rewarded some of these soldiers with posts in the government. Given his admiration for non-Roman education, it comes as no surprise that he assigned many Protestants to the task of helping to rebuild the state educational system.⁵¹ Graduates of these schools themselves, revolutionary leaders adopted a friendly rather than confrontational stance toward existing Protestant schools.

Unlike the Catholic church, Protestant teachers also demonstrated a conciliatory tone in spite of the serious threat posed by the new constitution. Rather than confront the government, missionaries opted to cooperate with it, in hopes that the government would show restraint in its application of the new constitution.⁵² The government and the missionaries shared a common opponent in the Catholic church. Having noted the strong influence of that church in Mexican society, the Protestant missionaries could understand the need to include sweeping restrictions in the new constitution. Soon after the new constitution was adopted, the bishop of the Episcopal Church in Mexico received assurances from the government that the Hooker School would not be affected by the new laws.⁵³ Other denominations including the Baptists, Congregationalists, and Presbyterians also reported that they had been promised immunity from the threat of article 3.⁵⁴

In conclusion, the period from 1910 to 1920 saw few practical developments in education in Mexico. At both the private and

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 251–52; Baldwin, *Protestants*, 80–81.

⁵¹ Callcott, *Liberalism in Mexico*, 252; Baldwin, *Protestants*, 136–42.

⁵² Baéz Camargo and Grubb, *Religion in Mexico*, 73.

⁵³ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1917.

⁵⁴ Baldwin, *Protestants*, 168.

public school level, violence associated with the revolution forced school closings and damage. The most notable event of this period was the passage of the Constitution of 1917, which promised large-scale changes in education and threatened to end all primary education sponsored by religious bodies. However, President Carranza and the Protestant members of his educational bureaucracy declined to use the new constitution to repress Protestant schools such as the Hooker School. Likewise, rather than reject the new constitution as did the Catholic church, Protestants attempted to remain in the government's good graces in hope of only selective enforcement. As the director of the Hooker School reported in 1919, "we have by our thorough work gained the good will of the authorities".⁵⁵ Although little changed in the operation of these schools, the passage of the constitution was an important talisman because it placed their future on shakier ground. There was no guarantee that future administrations would interpret the constitution in the same way that Carranza's did.

EDUCATIONAL EXPANSION AND CONFLICT, 1921–1930

Rebuilding and Expanding

With the installation of Alvaro Obregón as president in 1921, Mexico finally reached the end of a decade of destructive violence. The social costs of the upheaval were great, and the field of education suffered more than most. However, the decade of the 1920s was to be one of growth in both public and private education.

While revolutionary rhetoric featured promises of large-scale expansion in public education, little change occurred until 1921. In that year, revisions to the constitution centralized educational authority under the auspices of the newly created Secretaría de Educación Pública (SEP). Its first leader, José Vasconcelos, began an ambitious program to increase the reach of the schools. Vasconcelos inaugurated a rural education program, and the government

⁵⁵ McKnight to Gray, 13 January 1919, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

bolstered his efforts by increasing budget appropriations for education. By 1924, Mexico boasted 1,089 rural schools.⁵⁶

Like his predecessor, Obregón opted not to provoke confrontation with religious schools by strictly applying article 3 of the constitution. Rather than attempting to regulate private schools, Obregón and Vasconcelos invested their energies in the development of the moribund public education system. Consequently, the first part of the decade offered an opportunity for private schools to grow without the interruptions of war or government repression.⁵⁷

As already mentioned, Saint Andrew's found its physical plant decimated. In spite of the physical damage caused by the revolution and the uncertain footing of the church in post-revolutionary Mexico, the Episcopal missionaries' dedication to education did not waver. As the bishop wrote, "perhaps the present most urgent feature of our general problem, and the one the people feel the most, is the need of schools...We can worship out of doors, but our children are growing up in ignorance".⁵⁸ Unfortunately, the process of rebuilding at Saint Andrew's progressed slowly, as the bishop's requests for more money fell on deaf ears.⁵⁹ However, the students participated by building furniture for the school, the crops were sown again, and by 1921 the school was again fully operational.⁶⁰

While physical damage was minimal at the Hooker School, enrollment ebbed during the revolution before beginning a steady climb in the 1920s. Not beset by the financial hardships of Saint Andrew's, Hooker expanded its plant in order to accommodate more students. By 1924, the school had fifty boarding students and sixty day students, up from thirty two and twenty two, respectively, in 1921.⁶¹

⁵⁶ Kneller, *Education of the Mexican Nation*, 46–49.

⁵⁷ John A. Britton, *Educación y Radicalismo en México* (Mexico, 1976), vol. 1, *Los Años de Bassols*, 34.

⁵⁸ Aves, "Then and Now in Mexico", 367.

⁵⁹ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1920.

⁶⁰ Aves, "Then and Now in Mexico", 377.

⁶¹ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1924.

Calles and the Conflict Between Church and State

During the presidential administration of Plutarco Elias Calles (1924–1928), the conflict between church and state intensified, and its consequences affected the Episcopal schools much more directly. Calles remained dedicated to the expansion of public education. While he did not realize his goal of opening one thousand new schools per year, by 1930, 3,954 rural schools were in operation. Concomitant with the public school initiative was Calles' more direct confrontation with religious schools. In 1926, Calles declared his intent to enforce article 3 to the letter, ensuring that no school could include religious education in its curriculum.

It is clear that the target of Calles' action was not the Protestant schools. Calles himself sent his children to a Protestant school, and his subsecretary of education, Moisés Sáenz was a product of one such school.⁶² However, Calles felt strongly about what he deemed the negative influence of the Catholic church in Mexico. He described the church as "a perpetual menace to the Mexican state and a permanent obstacle to social progress."⁶³ Although he felt no contempt for Protestant schools, Calles was unequivocal in his determination permanently to separate religion and education in Mexico.

As in the past, the Catholic church responded angrily. Refusing to relinquish its role in education, the church boycotted public schools, informing parents that by sending their children to public schools, they were "committing a grave mortal sin which cannot be absolved in Confession until the children are removed from these establishments."⁶⁴ Many Catholics took arms and the *Cristero* revolt ensued, with its primary victims being rural teachers and the military.

The new restrictions brought a more moderate response from Episcopal leaders. As in the past, they noted that the government intended the measures as a response to the abuses of the Roman

⁶² Baldwin, *Protestants*, 135.

⁶³ Kneller, *Education of the Mexican Nation*, 49.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 51.

Catholic Church. The Episcopal Church and its schools were innocent victims of the struggle; they were not guilty of the violations of the Catholic church, but they were equally affected by the punishments.⁶⁵ The relationship between Protestant missionaries and the Catholic church was no less acrimonious than that between the state and Rome. Protestants were sympathetic with the government's desire to restrict Roman power, even in cases where it also affected their own work.

Since article 3 referred only to primary schools, Saint Andrew's was not affected by the government's new stance. However, Calles's enforcement of Article 3 prompted major changes at the Hooker School. Evidence suggests that enforcement of Article 3 in private schools was spotty. Budget limitations compromised the ability of government inspectors to ensure that schools were in compliance with Article 3.⁶⁶ Furthermore, the government concentrated its enforcement on Catholic schools. One government official is quoted as saying "'They (the Protestant schools) are of such little importance that we pay no attention to them'".⁶⁷ Additionally, the *Cristero* rebellion further distracted the government's attention and resources.

Although enforcement was inconsistent, the change in national policy definitely impacted the Hooker School. Due to its location in Mexico City, the school probably faced more scrutiny than most. In 1926, the bishop reported regular inspections at Hooker, while the 1927 report acknowledged, "Our most serious problem at Hooker has been the discontinuance of religious instruction...it has been necessary to dismantle our chapel".⁶⁸ Calles' enforcement of Article 3 brought major changes to the Hooker School.

Although Episcopal leaders in Mexico acknowledged the negative impact on their work resulting from Calles's stance, the relationship between the two remained friendly. Episcopal Bishop

⁶⁵ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1926.

⁶⁶ Vaughan, *The State, Education, and Social Class*, 139.

⁶⁷ Frank Creighton, "Our Mission in Mexico" *Spirit of Missions* 92 (1927): 587.

⁶⁸ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1926, 1927.

Frank Creighton appealed for understanding from church supporters in the United States:

Mexico is attempting to crystallize the benefits of the revolution and hold them for future generations. Her methods may not always meet with your approval but the principles she is attempting to lay down are sound. Will you be patient while she attempts to apply them? She needs your sympathy and your prayers for guidance as she passes through troubled waters.⁶⁹

For its part, while apparently strictly enforcing Article 3, the government praised the Hooker School. As one teacher reported:

The government teachers who came to give the official examinations...were loud in their praises of the work of the school. This was an unusual compliment, as private schools are not especially favored by those interested in the educational program of the government.⁷⁰

The school received similar commendations in 1927 as well. Although the enforcement of Article 3 restricted religious education and led to armed conflict between the government and the Roman Catholic Church, there is no evidence of antagonism between the government and the Episcopal Church arising in this period.

While Hooker discontinued formal religious teaching, teachers and administrators sought other avenues by which to expose students to Christianity. As the school's director noted:

The mission school has a very important object in the training of its children to know the value of health, cleanliness, sanitation, loyalty, and high ideals. And none of this is forbidden. Unconsciously we hope that ethics or character education is being imparted. The function of a mission school is to impart, through force of example, that which religious teaching embodies.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Creighton, "Church Work in Mexico" *Spirit of Missions* 94 (1929): 20.

⁷⁰ Myrtle E. Falk, "Hooker School, Mexico, Commended by Government" *Spirit of Missions* 91 (1926): 233.

⁷¹ Creighton, "Church Work in Mexico", 20.

The school hoped to convey a religious message indirectly, by showing the students Christian virtue rather than teaching the faith directly.

The boarding program at the school provided another way to provide a Christian education. Approximately fifty of the students at Hooker School were boarding students in 1926. When the school day ended, Hooker legally ceased to be a school and became a home. No article of the constitution restricted religious instruction in the home. Therefore, outside of education hours, the school continued its program of religious practice and instruction, as the resident teachers led the children in nightly prayers and Bible study.⁷²

Teachers and administrators also encouraged all Hooker students to attend Sunday services at the local Episcopal church. For boarding students, attendance at church was obligatory, and the school provided transportation. Although the school could not legally require them to do so, reports suggest that day students also participated in the formal church services on Sunday.⁷³

In spite of the restrictions on religious instruction, the Hooker School grew rapidly in the period from 1920 to 1930. In 1919, the school had only thirty eight students, twenty six of whom were boarders. However, in 1930, enrollment reached its apex, with 370 students, seventy of whom were boarders⁷⁴. A large part of this increase was due to expansion of the physical plant at Hooker to accommodate more students. In 1919, there was no room available in the dormitory department.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, the growth in day students was likely the result of other factors as well. The open hostilities between the Catholic church and the government probably compelled some families to substitute Protestant schools for Catholic ones.

⁷² Martha C. Boynton, "New Buildings Enhance Hooker's Service" *Spirit of Missions* 95 (1930): 668.

⁷³ Creighton, "Church Work in Mexico", 20.

⁷⁴ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1919; Boynton, "New Buildings", 668.

⁷⁵ McKnight to Gray, 9 July 1919, Archives of the Episcopal Church.

The Episcopal schools were in a particularly good situation to capitalize on this phenomenon since in appearance the Episcopal Church was relatively similar to the Roman Catholic Church.

The Hooker School found alternative means to pursue its religious mission in the face of government restrictions. Unlike the Catholic church, the Episcopalians maintained positive relations with government authorities. Meanwhile, public education also enjoyed a period of expansion, as its scope broadened to include neglected rural districts.

SOCIALISM IN THEORY AND IN PRACTICE, 1931-40

Shifting Ideologies in the Secretaría de Educación Pública

The installation of Narciso Bassols as head of the *Secretaría de Educación Pública* in 1931 brought wholesale changes to the relationship between private schools and the state. In the three years preceding Bassols' term, the SEP had five different directors and lacked continuity and consistency. Bassols, however, was a man of energy and vision and his term was active and controversial.

Unlike Calles, who clashed with the Catholic church, Bassols was an atheist and a Marxist, dubious of all religions. As Bassols described his beliefs, "the modern man has faith in his own power to combat evil. The other faith has died".⁷⁶ Bassols's beliefs led him to enforce article 3 with renewed vigor, he attempted to drive any suggestion of religious activity out of the classroom of all schools. The intent of enforcement had shifted from Calles's milder anticlerical approach to the decidedly antireligious stance of Bassols.⁷⁷

In addition to applying article 3 to more institutions, Bassols interpreted it more broadly. A new law passed in 1931 clarified the prohibitions of article 3 and allowed Bassols to expand the scope of his enforcement.⁷⁸ Beginning in 1926, the government had stressed

⁷⁶ Britton, *Los Años de Bassols*, 27.

⁷⁷ Baéz Camargo and Grubb, *Religion in Mexico*, 85.

⁷⁸ Britton, *Los Años de Bassols*, 35.

the prohibition on religious instruction in the classroom. Bassols expanded this approach, enforcing as well the following conditions:

1. No religious group or organization may direct or financially support any school
2. No priests or ministers may teach in any school
3. No religious symbols of any kind will be allowed in any school
4. No school may have a religious name
5. All private schools must be self-supporting⁷⁹

Like many Protestant mission schools in Mexico, the Hooker School received financing from the United States and employed members of the clergy as teachers. Thus, the government's revised stance of 1931 constituted a new threat to their survival.

Unlike many of his contemporaries and successors, Bassols took a practical approach to applying his ideology. He greatly increased the number and efficiency of inspections of religious schools, and took decisive action against schools that were not in compliance.⁸⁰ His reports from 1932 to 1934 contained a strict accounting of the inspections of all private schools in Mexico City, a detail that was absent from reports before and after his term.⁸¹ The strict enforcement of article 3 led to the closing of a great number of Protestant schools. In 1921, enrollment in Protestant primary schools was 8,704, while secondary and normal schools boasted 2,135 students. By 1935, however, the number of students in primary schools formerly associated with Protestant groups was around 2,000, while the number for secondary and normal schools dipped to about 100.⁸² These data dramatically reveal the impact of Bassols's policies on education in Protestant schools.

Bassols's tenure at the head of the SEP came to a close in 1934, the year of Lázaro Cárdenas's election to the presidency. In that

⁷⁹ Baéz Camargo and Grubb, *Religion in Mexico*, 128; Britton, *Los Años de Bassols*, 35.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 12.

⁸¹ John A. Britton, *Educación y Radicalismo en México* (Mexico, 1976), vol. 2, *Los Años de Cárdenas*, 14.

⁸² Baéz Camargo and Grubb, *Religion in Mexico*, 111.

year, article 3 was revised to state that education in all schools in Mexico was to be socialistic. While this change suggested further radicalization of the educational system, a lack of clarity and consensus mitigated its actual effects.

The SEP under Cárdenas failed clearly to define what "socialist education" implied in practical terms. As George F. Kneller notes, "Over the interpretation of the term 'socialistic,' as employed in article 3 of the Constitution, gallons of ink and tears were shed".⁸³ Cárdenas himself grew tired of the endless debates over the meaning of "socialist education" and by 1938 suggested that the term "democratic" replace "socialistic".⁸⁴ While debate about the meaning of the term raged on, actual enforcement of the provisions of Article 3 in private schools declined. Future directors of the SEP did not pursue the aggressive tactics of Bassols, and there is little evidence to suggest that the new educational ideology had a significant impact on private schools.⁸⁵

Adjustment and Accommodation in the Episcopal Schools

Throughout the 1930s, enforcement of article 3 in private schools was concentrated in the capital. Even Bassols, the most aggressive enforcer of the era, focused his efforts on schools in Mexico City.⁸⁶ As a result, there was little interruption or adjustment at Saint Andrew's in Guadalajara. The record indicates that the school did briefly change its name to the religiously neutral "*Granja México*", but there is no mention of government inspections or curriculum changes.⁸⁷

The Hooker School, on the other hand, experienced major changes during the decade. These changes were certainly in response to the restrictions being enforced by Bassols. As early as

⁸³ Kneller, *Education of the Mexican Nation*, 65.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 54.

⁸⁵ Britton, *Los Años de Cárdenas*, 17, 34.

⁸⁶ Britton, *Los Años de Bassols*, 34, 45.

⁸⁷ Annual Report of the Protestant Episcopal Church, 1937.

1931, the new attitude of the government was noted in the bishop's report:

Hooker school continues to attract a large student body, and has made splendid strides forward under the direction of its principal, Miss Martha Boynton. It is becoming increasingly difficult to maintain private schools in Mexico, especially those conducted under religious auspices, or supported wholly or in part by funds from church organizations. The future of Hooker school will depend entirely on the attitude of the government.⁸⁸

As noted above, the attitude of the Mexican government toward religious schools did not change between 1931 and 1934. Therefore, Hooker had either to find a way to continue its program under the new restrictions or close its doors.

Like Saint Andrew's, the Hooker School responded by changing its name. The school became known as *Colegio Progreso*. It was staffed entirely by Mexican citizens, most of whom had graduated from Hooker. *Colegio Progreso* received all of its budget from tuition expenses and did not incorporate religious teaching in the curriculum. Therefore, it complied with all of the government restrictions. On the other side of a newly constructed wall was Casa Hooker. Casa Hooker was a home for girls that was sponsored by the Episcopal Church. Since it offered no classes, Casa Hooker was not a school; consequently it did not have to conform to the government's religious restrictions. Therefore, by constructing a wall, the boarding department and the school became separate institutions on the same campus, and neither was in violation of article 3.⁸⁹

In spite of the difficulties imposed by the new regulations, Hooker remained popular. While enrollment declined somewhat from the 288 students in 1931, by 1938 it had climbed back to 235. Likewise, the boarding department remained attractive, fluctuat-

⁸⁸ Ibid., 1931.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 1933-36.

ing between fifty five and sixty nine students. Apparently the school continued to impress government inspectors, as it received government commendations in 1932, 1935, and 1938.⁹⁰

The decade of the 1930s featured the final battles in the decades-old struggle between church and state in Mexico. The impact of the conflict on Episcopal schools in Mexico peaked in the early years of the decade. While many private schools ceased operations, both Hooker School and Saint Andrew's found ways to adjust to the ever-changing climate and continue their educational mission.

CONCLUSION

The two major Episcopal mission schools in Mexico were founded during the dictatorship of Porfirio Díaz. During this period they enjoyed friendly relations with the government and operated with a substantial degree of autonomy. Their educational philosophies and practices were compatible with those of the government in that era. Both the government and the Episcopal schools emphasized the moral and material improvement of their students.

The revolution impacted the two Episcopal schools differently. Both schools were interrupted by the violence, but Saint Andrew's suffered the physical pillaging of its campus, while the physical plant of the Hooker School was spared. The revolution also produced the liberal Constitution of 1917, which posed a threat to the ability of the schools to operate in Mexico.

Alvaro Obregón's presidency signaled the end of revolutionary violence. Public and private schools both entered into an era of expansion. While the possibility that the constitution could be more literally enforced loomed, the schools experienced little government intervention or oversight during the first half of the 1920s.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 1931-38.

Plutarco Elías Calles succeeded Obregón in 1924. The conflict between Calles and the Catholic church came to a head in 1926 as Calles began to enforce the provisions of article 3 of the constitution. While the Catholic church reacted with outrage and defiance, the Episcopal schools chose quietly to conform to the constitution. After making adjustments, both schools continued to grow, reaching their highest enrollments in the period from 1928 to 1931.

In the 1930s, the position of the government with respect to religious education was further radicalized. The proactive measures of Minister of Education Narciso Bassols impelled even larger changes in private schools. Many private schools closed, but both the Hooker School and Saint Andrew's went to further extremes to comply with government regulations. While governmental rhetoric remained radical, the degree of enforcement declined after Bassols left office in 1934. Enrollment at both schools remained fairly steady throughout the decade.

In the background of this history looms the protracted war between the two most powerful institutions in Mexico, the Catholic church and the national government. While Díaz chose not to interrupt his model of "Order and Progress" to confront the Catholic church directly, he did welcome other religious groups. The revolution and the ensuing constitution promised to curtail the church's influence. Ensuing administrations fulfilled that promise despite loud, frequent, and sometimes violent protests from the Roman Catholic Church. One of the major battlegrounds in this conflict was the field of education. In this war, the Episcopal schools could be an ally to neither side. They faced resentment and scorn from the Catholic church as a competitor, and repression and suspicion from the government. Nevertheless, the schools proved remarkably adept at adapting to the legal, social, and political vicissitudes that characterized Mexico during this period. Flexibility, a measure of cooperation rather than confrontation, and above all wise leadership permitted the Episcopalians a measure of modest success.

Today, St. Andrew's has returned to Mexico City and continues its operations as a seminary under the direction of Father Vincent Schwann. Its enrollment remains modest, with twelve students being trained to serve congregations in Mexico. Most of the graduates return to serve a parish in their home diocese. The school is now under the aegis of the independent Anglican Church of Mexico, and all students and faculty are Mexican citizens. Unfortunately, less is known about the Hooker School. For reasons that are not clear, the school ceased operations during the 1960s, leaving Saint Andrew's as the only remaining monument to the educational efforts of early Episcopal missionaries in Mexico.

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