

REFORMING WOMEN'S EDUCATION IN MID-NINETEENTH CENTURY MANILA

Marya Svetlana T. Camacho

Preceding the general reform of basic education of 1863 was the concern to improve the education of young women in Manila and the provinces under colonial administration. The education offered in beaterios was deemed insufficient as it focused on religious instruction, literacy and womanly arts. To this end, the services of the Daughters of Charity (Hijas de Caridad) were sought in view of the educational impact that their schools and method had attained in Spain. This paper studies the background of their coming to the Philippines and the educational principles that inspired their schools, exploring particularly how consonant these were with the objectives of the Escuela Municipal de Niñas de Manila and some other schools entrusted to the congregation.

INTRODUCTION

This paper takes a look at the educational work carried out by the Daughters of Charity in Manila, or *las Hijas* (also called *Hermanas de la Caridad de San Vicente de Paul* in Spanish, in the second half of the nineteenth century. The royal decree (*cedula*) mandating their coming to the Philippines, as part of the measures to look after the spiritual welfare in the Philippines, was dated October 19, 1852. Primarily, they were to replace the Brothers of St. John of God (*Hermanos de San Juan de Dios*) in the administration of hospitals, a service for which they had proven their worth in different places. At

the same time, they could devote themselves to teaching in the existent *colegios* in Manila since that was their other foundational mission.¹

But it took a decade for the first group composed of fifteen sisters to arrive in the colonial capital.

Thus, it was that the Daughters of Charity came just before the Educational Reform Decree was enacted in 1863. The municipal government of Manila conceived of the project of the female counterpart of the *Escuela Municipal de Niños de Manila*, which it negotiated to be assigned to the Daughters of Charity and inaugurated in 1864. Thereafter, within the first decade of their activity in Manila, the Hermanas had their hands full running four schools for girls aside from the hospitals. While this paper focuses on the *Escuela Municipal de Niñas*, the other schools are also referred to in a comparative way.

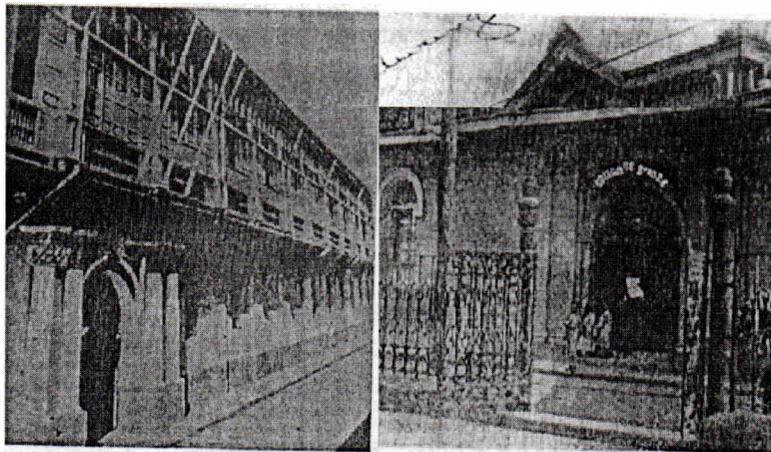
To the extent possible, this paper studies the contribution of the Daughters of Charity to the development of education of women by way of examining the educational principles, curricula, teaching method and ethos animating the schools they ran. Given the dearth of sources from which to get glimpses of school population and life, and of the dynamics among authorities, teachers and students, it draws mostly on prescriptive material and project documentation. Admittedly, there were gaps and discrepancies between norms and application or life, but it may be assumed that great deviations from rules and ideals would not have become the norm. It should be remembered that the congregation had decades of experience in teaching girls and had developed praxes in the organization of schools and pedagogy. While certainly the Hermanas would have needed to make adjustments to the local situation, their initial grounding would have been firm enough to be sustained.

¹R.C. October 19, 1852. *Archivo Historico Nacional* (AHN thereafter), Ultramar, 5323, folder J.I. In article IX, the congregation's assigned mission is expressed. They were to replace the Brothers of St. John of God, a religious order which had been previously expelled in Spain, a move that Isabel II intended to carry out as well in the Philippines through the Holy See. The next article expresses the counterpart mission assigned to the Vincentian Fathers who, aside from taking care of the spiritual direction of the Daughters of Charity, would be put in charge of the diocesan seminaries.

SOURCES

As in the case of most of the girls' schools in the Spanish colonial Manila, there are very few sources known to exist in the Philippines for the schools run by the Daughters of Charity. The destruction of their archives in *La Concordia* in Paco and *Colegio de Santa Rosa* in Intramuros during the Second World War left practically nothing of institutional records. Relative to the schools, the most that could be found in the provincial archives of the congregation in Parañaque were the Rules of the congregation and commemorative publications containing fragments of their history.

Logically the next stop was the provincial archives of the Vincentian Fathers, the male branch of the Vincentian family. They housed a lot more documents pertaining to the institutions in Manila - both hospitals and schools - that the Daughters of Charity were entrusted with. The most comprehensive came from the folder of *Colegio de Santa Rosa*, containing its history and *Reglamentos* (Regulations) or the school manual, and a few other administrative documents.



Real Colegio de Santa Isabel, Intramuros. Source: www.hmdb.org

Notably absent in the Vincentian archives is material on the Escuela Municipal de Niñas de Manila, the very first school that the congregation was assigned to. This is an understandable circumstance since this institution was established by the City of Manila. Hence, the Philippine National Archives was a potential source of documentation. The documents in the section of Manila Complex yielded some information about the search for a suitable building for the school as well as the inaugural speech of the Civil Governor of Manila, and little else. At least these materials provided a local connection to some documents kept at the *Archivo Historico Nacional* in Madrid, consisting of consultations from Manila to Madrid providing details of the project which were not available in the Philippine archives. This would not be solely the merit of archival management but perhaps also of the bureaucratic thoroughness in sending reports to the metropole.

To complete the sources for this paper, the nineteenth manual produced by the Daughters of Charity for use in their schools became a reference. That it was applied in the schools in Manila was quite plausible since the congregation stressed the importance of following stipulated teaching methods and curricula. Some published information about the teaching mission that the Sisters carried out in Spain were also used. The *guias oficiales* of the period provided some information about the personnel of the schools and the educational scenario in that period, as well as Evaristo Fernandez Arias's report for the Amsterdam Exposition. After a brief survey of secondary sources on the educational institutions run by the Daughters of Charity during the Spanish colonial period, it is easy to see how little information there is available. Based on the aforementioned materials, this article aims to contribute a bit more to the knowledge of such a valuable service.

THE EDUCATIONAL MISSION OF THE *HIJAS DE LA CARIDAD*

St. Vincent de Paul, with St. Louise de Marillac, founded the *Filles de la Charite* in 1633 in Paris to minister corporally and spiritually to sick persons among the poor. Religious instruction of indigent and working girls also became part of their mission with all other

educational goals subordinated to it. This was in keeping with the ideas on feminine education at that time which emphasized moral formation more than intellectual instruction, in view of the roles women from the lower classes were to be prepared for - in the home and manual trades. The community expanded to Spain in 1790 and in the nineteenth century to other countries in Europe and to America.² Naturally, the fifteen sisters who came to the Philippines in 1862 belonged to the Spanish province.

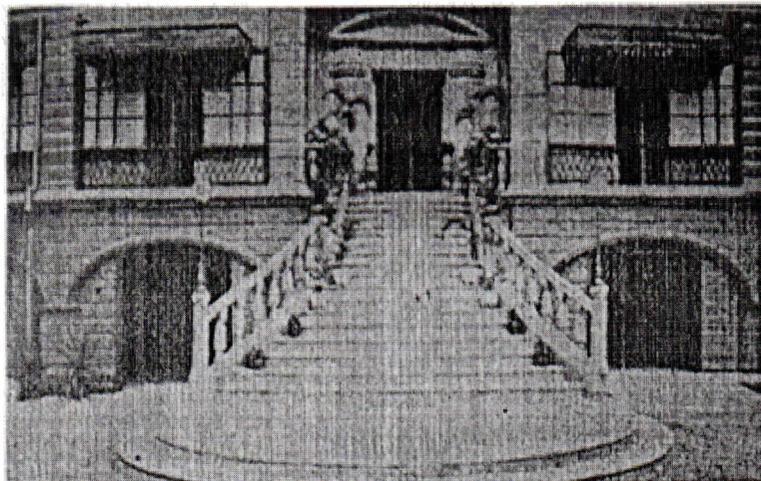
The foundational rules of the Hermanas de la Caridad devoted some chapters to their different works of charity: care for the sick, the elderly, the orphans and abandoned children, on the one hand, and education of girls, especially from among the poor (*Reglas particulares para la maestra de escuela*).³ The first Superiors General made commentaries on these. The Superior General Marie Carrere updated the educational principles in 1844 which resulted in the Instructions, translated into Spanish in 1847 as *Instrucciones para las Hijas de la Caridad empleadas en escuelas y obradores* (Instructions for the Daughters of Charity Employed in Schools and Workshops). As explained by Isabel Florido, among other things, it clarified theoretical aspects and intended to reduce discrepancies in teaching methods so as to establish uniformity in all schools for the sake of continuity despite changes in personnel. At bottom, the idea was to instruct in skills, work and order, as well as in faith, virtue and morals; in sum, to develop the body and soul. An 1866 edition was made, featuring advancement in organization and teaching method responsive to the evolution of educational policy.⁴ This particular edition is what is used for this article. Presumably, the later groups of Sisters who arrived in the Philippines used it, although I have not found any copy in the Philippines.

² Isabel Florido, *Action educativa de las Hijas de la Caridad en Espana, 1783-1893* (Madrid: Imprenta SM, 1988), 22, 31-32. Their arrival responded to a milestone in Spanish public instruction (Royal decree of May 11, 1783) which sought to expand free schooling for girls.

³ St. Vincent de Paul, *Reglas comunes de las Hijas de la Caridad*, MS, Paris, January 18, 1893.

⁴ Florido, *Action educativa*, 21, 66-70.

Reforming Women's Education in Mid-Nineteenth Century Manila



Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion de la Concordia in Paco, Manila.
Source: www.flickr.com

In 1864 the Escuela Municipal de Niñas was inaugurated. In the same year the *Colegio de Santa Isabel*, with which the *Colegio de Santa Potenciana* would be merged with eventually, was turned over to the Daughters of Charity. Two years after, the managing committee of the Colegio de Santa Rosa requested the community to take over the school after the directress died. In 1868 Doña Margarita Roxas founded a colegio in her country villa in Santa Ana, outside Manila, to be run by the Hermanas. This was a different arrangement from the other schools which belonged to the government, as the Sisters were to manage it on their own. Taking the name of the estate, it was familiarly called La Concordia while its real name was *Colegio de la Inmaculada Concepcion*. In 1870 the government approved the opening of a school for primary education attached to La Concordia, which offered free schooling for girls living in the area. As in other parts of the world, the community also established homes for orphans and the abandoned, namely, *Hospicio de San Jose* (1865) and *Asilo-Colegio de San Vicente de Paul* (Looban, 1885), where they likewise carried out their educational task.

The educational scenario in Manila consisted mainly of *beaterio-colegios* mostly founded by women born in the Philippines under the auspices of male religious orders. They were essentially beaterios, quasi-religious houses, which had education (with emphasis on the

Christian faith and needlework) of girls of different ethnic background, especially orphans, as an apostolic work. These were *Santa Catalina* under the Dominicans; Santa Rosa, which the government took over after the foundress died in the late eighteenth century; *San Ignacio*, under the spiritual direction of the Jesuits; *San Sebastian*, located in the suburbs and was smaller than the others. Specifically for Spanish girls were the colegios of Santa Potenciana, managed by the government, and Santa Isabel, an enduring foundation of the confraternity of the *Santa Mesa de Misericordia*.

Unfortunately, there have been no statistics found that to some extent would reflect the state of education of women in Manila in the middle of the nineteenth century. There are a few figures from the beaterios and colegios mentioned above. For the year 1864, Santa Catalina reported 54 *internas* or boarding students, and Santa Isabel, 81. In 1866, Santa Catalina had 56 *internas*, and Santa Rosa, 63 (there are no statistics from Santa Isabel). In 1868, which was the first year of operation of La Concordia, it admitted 64 *internas*; Santa Catalina had 64, and Santa Rosa increased significantly to 156. Understandably as boarding schools, they had much fewer students than the Escuela Municipal de Niñas when it opened - with 200 - which was only for day students (*externas*). In 1868 it had increased its enrollment by ten more students.⁵ These figures would be more meaningful if there were statistics available showing age groups of the female population of Manila (i.e. *Intramuros* and *arrabales*). There is an attempt to show this regarding the size of the same schools twenty years later in the last section of this paper.

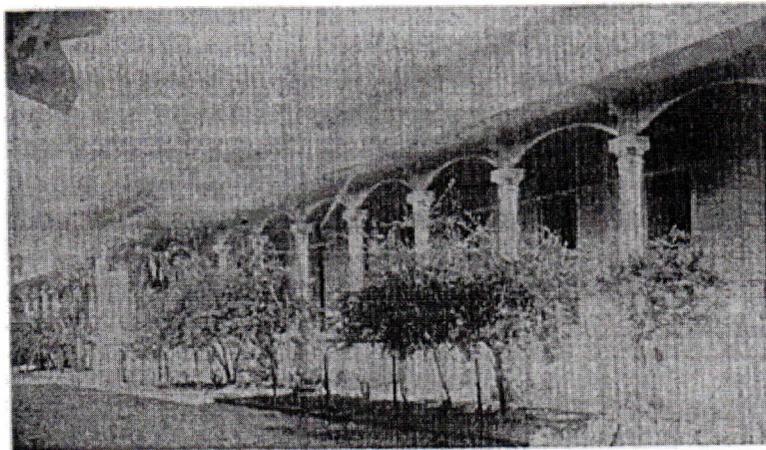
LA ESCUELA MUNICIPAL DE NIÑAS

The second mission consisting of sixteen Hermanas arrived on November 5, 1863. It was headed by Sor Maria Ibarra, who would become the head of the Escuela Municipal de Niñas where she worked until her death in 1875. Given her background, she must

⁵ Evaristo Fernandez Arias, *Memoria historico-estadística sobre la enseñanza media y superior en Filipinas escrita con motivo de la Exposición colonial de Amsterdam* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipografico de La Oceania Española, 1883), Cuadro 27.

Reforming Women's Education in Mid-Nineteenth Century Manila

have been chosen specifically to fulfill the educational task awaiting the second group of sisters. A brief history of the Colegio de Santa Rosa identifies her as the "principal author of the curriculum" which became normative in the schools run by the Daughters of Charity until the end of Spanish rule. She was born into an aristocratic family from Guipuzcoa in the Basque region and went to the finest schools in Spain and abroad, where she learned modern teaching methods even before she joined the religious community. In the Escuela she instituted those methods.⁶ We do not know the names of the other sisters who served in the school with her. But the *Guia oficial*, from 1884 onwards, features the names of the sisters serving in each institution they ran. The Escuela had a stable teaching staff of nine during most years, but the 1896 *Guia* mentions only six names.⁷



Escuela Municipal de Niñas later the Manila High School. Source: University of Michigan Library Southeast Asia Collection

(appendix). "Cuadro estadístico de los Colegios de Niñas de Manila con expresion de las maestros de instruccion primaria que han salido de ellos y premios otorgados desde que adoptaron la forma que actualmente tienen hasta el año de 1883."

⁶ The source is an unpaginated typewritten manuscript found in the Provincial Archives of the Vincentian Fathers (PAVF), LI/D, 6, 7. It bears no title and is divided into two parts with corresponding headings: *Primer y segundo periodo* and *Tercer periodo*. The latter chapter was used for this article.

⁷ In 1884 the superior was Sor Victoria Mateu. The other teachers were Tomasa Varona, Eustaquia Mendizabal, Filomena Lizarraga, Romana Talon, Magdalena Ceall, Adelaida Lucas, Isabel Garcia and Dominica Jimenez (*Guia oficial de Filipinas 1884* [Manila: Establecimiento Tipografico de Ramirez y Giraudier,

Based on the date of the approval to put the Hijas de la Caridad in charge of the Escuela Municipal, May 3, 1863, it can be surmised that the project was pursued more actively upon the issuance, in December 1863, of the decree establishing a plan for basic education in the Philippines, and also owing to the presence of the sisters serving in the military hospital. Without supporting documents, we cannot pinpoint if the project of a school for girls was conceived at the same time or soon after that for boys, which had been entrusted to the Jesuits. The search for a suitable house to be rented at an affordable rate was well documented. The house of Jose Arrieta in the plaza of Fort Santiago was chosen as the next best and was to be rented for 240 pesos annually. A budget of 690 pesos was approved for the renovation to prepare the space for the school and the second community house for the Sisters.⁸

On April 8, 1864, the Governor General wrote to the Minister of War and Overseas Territories, informing him that the house had been rented and the installations made. Only the budget remained to be approved before the school could be opened.⁹ From other documents a description of the place may be gleaned. The location was considered good enough since the entrance opened to a spacious

1884], 143-44). The following year the superior was Antonina Blanco; F. Lizarraga and Isabel Garcia were replaced by Celestina Arroniz and Juana Iriondo (*Guia oficial de Filipinas 1886* [Manila Establecimiento Tipografico de Ramirez y Giraudier, 1885], 211). In 1896 the head was Celestina Escalona; only E. Mendizabal and Adelaida Lucas remained of the original staff (*Guia oficial de las Islas Filipinas para 1896* [Manila: Secretaria del Gobierno General, 1896], 398).

⁸ The documentation on the search for and selection of a suitable building for the school carried out by the city government of Manila may be found in Philippine National Archives (PNA), Manila Complex, Various Colegios and Beaterios, SDS-19179. Evidently it was the basis for the reports sent to Madrid cited in the next notes.

According to E. Bazaco, the school was located on Calle Arzobispo at the end opposite that where the Ateneo municipal was. This may dovetail with the location of J. Arrieta's house in the plaza of Fort Santiago which is the northern end of said street. However, in the *Guia oficial* of 1896, the address given is Calle Cabildo which is perpendicular to Calle Arzobispo. Evergisto Bazaco, *History of Education in the Philippines*, vol. 1, *Spanish Period 1565-1898* (Manila, University of Santo Tomas Press, 1939), 277; *Guia oficial* 1896, 188-a.

⁹ Governor General to the Minister of War and Overseas Territories, Manila, April 8, 1864. AHN, Ultramar, (Filipinas, Fomento), 446 (1), no. 3.

public square, which was safer in case of earthquake. Similarly, that the house consisted of only two stories - and not three - was an additional point of security. The ground floor was designated for the dormitory of the Sisters, the infirmary, chapel, parlor for visitors, and the office of the superior. In the upper floor the classrooms and dining room of the community were located. This was probably the best arrangement to afford the sisters a degree of independence as a community from their students. The house was not big enough to accommodate boarding students as had been envisioned originally.¹⁰ A few weeks earlier, on March 16, the school had been inaugurated by the municipal government. By September 1864, in an appeal to maintain the original budget, the city government reported that the Sisters deserved such support so that they would keep healthy and be able to serve the 180 students enrolled.¹¹ This was not a far cry from the number envisaged in the plan, of 150 to 200 girls in the day school, and 25 to 30 boarding students. The girls could be of any ethnic background.

The inaugural speech by the Civil Governor of Manila, Estanislao de Vives, commended the accomplishment of civic duty which the opening of a public school represented. The education of the woman redounded to the good of society, for it would “convert the woman into an unshakable shield of the principle of the family,” a duty which providence had meant her to fulfill. Contrasting the denigration of women in pre-Christian civilizations and the consequent corruption of societies, he highlighted the upliftment Christianity introduced. By recognizing her dignity as equal to man’s, the Gospel sought to banish the prejudice against her nature and capacity, especially her intellectual faculty. Thus she needed to receive appropriate instruction and religious-moral education that would enable her to exercise her share in domestic authority and become the abiding strength of the family.¹² The Escuela Municipal would provide that opportunity through free schooling in the obligatory subjects of the curriculum.

¹⁰ Dossier on the acquisition of a house for the establishment of the Escuela de Niñas entrusted to the Hijas de la Caridad. *Ibid.*

¹¹ City government to the Queen, Manila, September 17, 1864. *Ibid.*

¹² *Discurso que en la solemne inauguración de la Escuela de Niñas a cargo de las Hijas de la Caridad leyó el Señor D. Estanislao de Vives*. PNA, Manila Complex, SDS 19179, no. 17.

According to the Reglamentos of the Escuela Municipal,¹³ the twofold object of the school was to “give to the girls of this City the invaluable benefit of an excellent education and basic instruction.” The difference between education and instruction was clearly delineated. The first concept included the theoretical and practical teaching of the Christian religion and morals, together with urbanity. The second had three levels (*infima, media* and *superior*) and consisted of obligatory classes on Christian doctrine, literacy and numeracy, and needlework; and optional subject matter such as geography, history, natural history, and other womanly arts.

Essential to religious and moral education were the practices of piety such as daily attendance at Mass¹⁴ and praying of the Rosary, monthly Confession and Communion, and celebration of religious feasts. In principle, applicants would be admitted as long as they could be accommodated in the school premises; the only other admission criterion was good moral standing, to safeguard that the environment fostered be conducive to education as defined in the regulations. Disciplinary cases related to disobedience, misconduct and morally harmful habits were the gravest cause of expulsion aside from laziness and apathy towards learning (this might be based on the results of examinations). Part of the reason for drastic punishment was to prevent negative influence from spreading among other students. Nonetheless, measures should be taken to help students make amends and to warn parents of their daughters’ offenses. And meting out punishments should be done with appropriate discretion and consideration towards the student punished and her parents.

¹³ A copy of the *Reglamentos* may be accessed in AHN, Ultramar, 446, caja 1, no. 3. It was approved by the Civil Government of Manila on February 15, 1864 with some corrections. It is also found in Daniel Grifol y Aliaga, *La instruccion primaria en Filipinas* (Manila: Tipo-litografia de Chofre y Ca., 1894), 132-36.

¹⁴ The City Government requested budget for the stipend of the chaplain of the school since it was necessary to have one who would celebrate Mass daily in the school chapel. Otherwise, the provision of daily Mass stipulated in the school regulations would not be fulfilled for two reasons: the difficulty of finding Mass at a fixed time, and the inconvenience of going out of the school when it was raining or very hot, conditions that could be harmful to the students. Corregimiento of Manila to the Superintendencia de Propios y Arbitrios, Manila, June 9, 1864. PNA, Manila Complex, SDS 19179, no. 17.

With respect to instruction in the obligatory subject matter, the most basic level (*infima*) consisted of Christian doctrine, and principles of reading and sewing. The middle level included, aside from Christian doctrine (catechism), basic sacred history and general history of Spain, reading and writing, principles of Spanish grammar with handwriting exercises, principles of arithmetic and of the metric-decimal system, and more advanced needlework (such as backstitch and sampler). The highest level (*superior*) covered the same areas as the middle but presumably with greater depth and breadth; sewing included making buttonholes, embroidery, crochet and pattern-making.

The daily schedule ran from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a break from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The activities were divided in three: sewing, prayers, and knowledge and literacy subjects. The break in the middle of the day was devoted to prayers and lunch. The program for the most basic level was invariable, beginning with sewing, proceeding to prayer and ending with reading. For the next two levels, the greater number of activities and subject matter led to varying distribution on different days. Thursday afternoon was free time; considered holidays were All Souls' Day and celebration of the king's birthday, and of course the feast of St. Vincent de Paul.

Comparing the *Reglamentos* with the manual for teachers, the similarities are readily seen. It may be inferred that the latter was used as a reference for the former. The minimum age stipulated is six although it could be adjusted according to circumstances and demands of patrons. The *Escuela's* regulations indicate five years as the minimum age. The schedule and the number of hours of classes generally coincide.¹⁵

The Manual insists on catechism as the most important and essential part of teaching, more important than the other subjects added to the curriculum. The school would serve as the anchor of faith for the girls who would have to face worldliness outside of it. Thus the corresponding responsibility of the Sisters to understand the catechism well to be able to teach it well. The question and

¹⁵ *Manual para uso de las Hijas de la Caridad empleadas en las escuelas y obradores*, with the prologue of the 1866 edition (Madrid: Imprenta de Hernando y Compañía, 1897), 11-17.

answer method is recommended. After religion, urbanity is the most important to learn. Again, it is the responsibility of the sisters to model it as the best way for students to assimilate it.¹⁶

Regarding the skills and knowledge subjects, the Manual is straightforward in stating objectives. Literacy and numeracy are of practical use in life. Those who advance in these skills are ready for other (optional) subjects such as history and geography. The pedagogy engages the different thinking levels, from memorization to comprehension and reflection, (particularly recommended on occasion of mistakes) with a view to forming the capacity for judgment of students. The combination of exercises for the skills subjects, explanation and questioning by the teacher, review and the use of graphic material is described in the Manual as a way to reinforce learning. Among the materials requested by the Daughters of Charity from the city government to procure for the school, the following were included: handwriting samples, posters or boards for basic writing, chalkboards for arithmetic exercises.¹⁷ Some form of cooperative learning is recommended through the advice that the more advanced students be asked to help those who are behind. In this way, the former will use their time well and better learning results are obtained in general.¹⁸

A constant idea that appears in the prescriptive documents of the Daughters of Charity, but hardly in the Reglamentos of the school, is the principle of learning by imitation. Corollary to this was the duty of the teacher to model what she teaches, most importantly in the area of faith and virtue. This is a time-tested principle that continues to be applied today in the so-called hidden curriculum. However, for the Sister, as for any Christian who knows her faith well, the task of forming souls affects her own spiritual life. She is not alone in this task but has to count on the work of grace through her agency, that is, her constant modeling and well-prepared classes.¹⁹

¹⁶ *Manual*, 90-114.

¹⁷ "Lista de mobiliario a adquirir para la Escuela Municipal de Niñas hecha por la Superiora de las Hijas de Caridad." AHN, Ultramar, 446, caja 1, no. 3.

¹⁸ *Manual*, 22-86.

¹⁹ *Reglas comunes*, nos. 2-3, 9,11; *Manual*, 134; *Reglamentos*, art. 24-25.

Another key aspect of education is that of rewards and punishments. A more positive approach is invariably recommended by the community's rules and manuals: to encourage good deeds, both in the practice of virtue and excellence in studies. Medals and other analogous objects are to be given in the Escuela Municipal. According to the Manual, punishments are to be made taking into consideration the individual's character and the fittingness of the punishment to obtain the intended result of amendment or improvement. Punishment must be proportional to the nature of the fault and given to correct and not out of resentment. The objective is to make the girls be sorry for the fault committed - which has a moral dimension - more than the punishment it deserves, in accordance with the teachings of classic theology.²⁰ In the Rules, St. Vincent de Paul advises the Sisters to correct with gravity but not harshly, with an encouraging attitude that will help them not to fall into the same offenses. Punishment is for habitual failings and must respect the dignity of the person, specifically by not putting her unduly to shame in public.²¹

THE OTHER COLEGIOS

To evaluate the changes that the Daughters of Charity could have effected in the girls' colegios entrusted to them in Manila, the institutional rules (which contain the curricula among other things) of the period before their arrival will be compared with those that were published towards the end of the nineteenth century. Of the first group, the available documents are the *Estatutos para el Beaterio de Santa Rosa*,²² authored by Bishop Francisco Gainza in 1856, and the *Reglamento del Real Colegio de Santa Isabel*,²³ published in 1858. Of the second group, we have the *Reglamento para el Colegio de Santa Rosa*²⁴ prepared by the *junta directiva* or management committee of

²⁰ *Manual*, 134-44, 149-51.

²¹ *Reglas comunes*, nos. 12-14.

²² Archives of the University of Santo Tomas, tomo 118, no. 1 (microfilm roll 101).

²³ This was published in Manila by Imprenta de Ramirez y Giraudier.

²⁴ A copy is available in PAVF, 1-I/D, 6, 7.

the school and published in 1892. By that time Santa Rosa had been converted to a colegio, shedding its quasi-religious status. Available as well are articles from 1891 issues of the women's periodical *El Bello Sexo*; this paper makes use of those featuring the colegios of La Concordia and of Santa Isabel.²⁵

The greatest difference may be found in Santa Rosa. The earlier statutes indicate that the classes for Christian doctrine and reading, writing, and the four operations of arithmetic occupied three hours in the morning. Another class was devoted to needlework. The 1892 *Reglamento* outlined a vastly more complex curriculum in three levels, both for the more academic subjects and the womanly arts, which had become standard in the other colegios of the Daughters of Charity. In comparison, the 1858 curriculum of Santa Isabel was remarkably advanced,²⁶ even offering a few more subjects than the Escuela Municipal in the second and third levels. This program of studies was maintained until the end of the century.

By the 1890s, based on Santa Rosa's, the curricula in the colegios for girls in Manila consisted more or less of the following:

Clase deparvulitas (primary): Reading with wooden letters and posters

- Basic Christian doctrine (said aloud)
- Basic sacred history (said aloud)
- Basic spelling (said aloud)
- Basic arithmetic using balls
- Basic grammar and analogy using boards
- Basic urbanity

Clase media (intermediate/middle): Theoretical and practical reading in prose

- Writing in Spanish and English characters
- Christian doctrine studied and explained
- Art of pronunciation/speaking (theory and practice)

²⁵ In the section "Los establecimientos de enseñanza para la mujer in Filipinas": "Real Colegio de Santa Isabel," (vol. 1, no. 2 [1891]: 21-22); and "Colegio de la Concordia (de la Inmaculada Concepcion) (vol. 1, no. 6 [1891]: 91-93).

²⁶ In his report on higher education in the Philippines, Evaristo Fernandez Arias considers the Colegio de Santa Isabel as the school with the best curriculum, which placed her at par with the best school for girls in Spain (*Memoria historico-estadística*, 53). This might be expected of a school that catered only to Spaniards.

Reforming Women's Education in Mid-Nineteenth Century Manila

- Sacred history with places of the Old and New Testaments
- Grammar with analogical analysis
- Theoretical, practical and urbanity explained
- Metric system with the cube

Clase superior (highest): Reading in script and verse

- Writing in Spanish, English and *redondilla*
- Theoretical and practical spelling
- Arithmetic: decimal system, common fractions, denominators, rules of three, interest, etc.
- Grammar, analytical analysis and syntax
- Explanation of Christian doctrine
- Religion and morals
- Sacred history, Old and New Testaments
- World history
- History of Spain and the Philippines
- Geography, explanation of the globe, maps of Europe, Spain, Luzon and planetary system
- Natural history
- Domestic economy and hygiene (in *La Concordia*)

Needlework and related crafts were also classified in three levels.

On the other hand, the curriculum of *La Concordia* divided them into four types: useful (sewing, mending, dressmaking), useful and pleasing (such as lace-making and crochet), for leisure (aside from silk embroidery, this included beadwork and artificial fruits and flowers), and for adornment (including drawing, painting, piano and religious songs).

The three-level curriculum of the *colegios* was certainly more advanced than the provisions for primary instruction in the government schools stipulated in the *Reglamento para las escuelas y maestros de instruccion primaria de indigenas del Archipielago Filipino* (1863). The latter provided for one level, albeit with a broader range of subject matter: Christian doctrine, basic morals and sacred history adapted to children; reading, writing, Spanish, basic Spanish grammar and spelling; basic arithmetic (four operations, fractions, decimals and basic metric-decimal system and their equivalences in ordinary weights and measures); rules of urbanity and vocal music; and of

course, the womanly arts.²⁷ Although more data are needed to corroborate it, probably the girls attending the colegios were expected to have more years of schooling - to be able to advance through the three levels - than those enrolled in public schools.

Beneath these improvements, the primary educational goals of all the schools remained the same: Christian education that would inculcate in the girls good religious and moral habits that would prepare them to govern the home as mothers. Love for work, simplicity and modesty were valued in particular. The outlook on discipline was also maintained: corrections were meant to make the girls aware of the importance of fulfillment of duty; therefore, affection and prudence were considered more effective than harshness and rigor.

In the last quarter of the nineteenth century, these three colegios and the Escuela Municipal became normal schools and graduated students who could take the examination to be certified as *maestras de instruccion primaria*. In effect, they became the main training ground in Manila and nearby provinces for this new breed of civil servants before the establishment of the *Escuela Normal Superior* in 1892 under the Assumption Sisters. As a showcase of progress in women's education in the Philippines, Evaristo Fernandez Arias compiled statistics of students produced by the colegios of Manila, namely, Santa Catalina, Santa Rosa, La Concordia, Santa Isabel and the Escuela Municipal for the period 1868-1883.²⁸ The Escuela Municipal was the first (1868) and most consistent in graduating teachers, reporting a total of seventy-four in sixteen years. It was followed by La Concordia, Santa Rosa and Santa Catalina in descending order. We may assume that such performance resulted from the profile of the girls who enrolled in the Escuela as well as its greater number of students. In fact, based on the aggregate number of students, La Concordia, which graduated its first teachers in 1869, had a higher percentage of teacher graduates (1.2 percent) than the Escuela (one percent).

From 1864 to 1883, the Escuela Municipal reported an aggregate of 5,263 enrolled based on annual figures, but this number

²⁷ *Legislacion vigente de instruccion primaria en las Islas Filipinas*, 3rd ed. (Manila: Est. Tipo-litografico de Chofre y Ca., 1887), 16.

Reforming Women's Education in Mid-Nineteenth Century Manila

does not distinguish the actual number of girls who went through the different levels from one year to the next. Hence, it is reasonable to assume that the actual number of students is lower than the aggregate given. Below are the annual statistics taken from Fernandez Arias's report.

Year	No. of students enrolled	No. of maestras graduated
1864	200	
1865	204	
1866	201	
1867	208	
1868	210	5
1869	210	6
1870	249	7
1871	270	
1872	258	6
1873	324	8
1874	358	5
1875	280 (limit given for this year)	9
1876	299	
1877	303	10
1878	304	
1879	249 (limit given for this year)	6
1880	239	8
1881	273	
1882	312 (established annual rate)	4
1883	312	

Marya Svetlana T. Camacho

The enrollment at the Colegio de Santa Rosa more than doubled in 1867, a year after the Daughters of Charity took over the school: from 63 to 163; it peaked in 1870 and 1882 with 186. Although we have no exact information or explanation except for a passing mention by Fernandez Arias, this would have been possible after more dormitories were constructed.²⁹

To provide some point of reference, in 1884 there were thirty-five schools for girls (the same number for boys) for elementary education (*enseñanza elemental*) in Manila, with 2,189 students (and 2,462 in the schools for boys). The Philippine total of female students was 66,425. Thus the Escuela Municipal would have served about ten percent of the female student population (primary and intermediate levels) in Manila.³⁰



Manila High School formerly the Escuela Municipal de Niñas.
Source: www.carlospromulo.org

²⁸ Fernandez Arias, *Memoria historico-estadística*, cuadro 27.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 54.

³⁰ Estado demostrativo del numero de escuelas de enseñanza elemental que existen en Filipinas y numero de alumnos de ambos sexos que a ellas concurren”, [chart], *Guía oficial de Filipinas 1884* (Manila: Establecimiento Tipografico de Ramirez y Giraudier, 1884), 426. The statistics for Manila show a lower density of students per school about 72 per school compared to that in the provinces with the highest student populations, i.e., Ilocos Norte, Pangasinan and Iloilo, which

In keeping with the foundational charism of the Daughters of Charity, they gave free education or half-scholarship to an equivalent of ten percent or higher of their students, especially poor orphans.³¹ In the case of La Concordia, its day students received free education and accounted for thirty percent or more of the total population of the school in its first ten years; eventually, however, the number of boarding students increased, reaching more than two hundred from 1880 to 1882. Nonetheless, we do not have the figures of the number of scholars among the internas to complete the picture.

CONCLUSION

The Daughters of Charity was the first religious community that came from Spain to undertake teaching as a primary mission in the Philippines. Until then, the existing beaterios served as centers of feminine education as conceived at that time, in a private capacity. Secular colegios like Santa Isabel were exceptional. The Daughters of Charity brought with them a curriculum and pedagogy developed over the years in Europe, representative and supportive of the modernization recently legislated for the Philippines. Their assignment to run the Escuela Municipal de Niñas de Manila was a concrete gesture of the city government to advance the education of girls along the lines of the aforementioned reform.

The background this article provides on the educational principles and practices that the Daughters of Charity had instituted in Europe and which grounded their educational work in Manila, beginning with the Escuela Municipal and extended to other colegios, would partly substantiate the significance of their entry into the Philippine educational scene during the Spanish colonial period. The meager information afforded by the available documentary sources radically

averaged at 363 per school. There remains a doubt whether the Escuela Municipal was counted among the thirty-five schools since, according to E. Bazaco, it was under the direct supervision of the Commission of Manila and not of the Bureau of Public Instruction as other public schools were (*History of Education*, 277).

³¹ Also, for some statistics on the number of students served over the years, see Rolando S. DelaGoza, C.M. and Jesus Ma. Cavanna, C.M., *Vincentians in the Philippines, 1862-1982* (Manila: Congregacion de la Mision, 1985), 404-12.

limits our knowledge of the extent to which the education in the schools of the Hijas de la Caridad impacted local society, both in terms of numbers of students and of development of women's education. Nonetheless, relative to the other colegios in the city, the Escuela Municipal served a greater number of students and produced the most number of teachers before the opening of the Normal School. The curriculum continued to be in function of the feminine roles recognized in nineteenth-century Philippines - and in most part of the world: mother, homemaker and teacher. Nonetheless, instruction in skills and general culture was expanded, keeping pace with the increasing realization that the intellectual development of women was important to their personal growth and to societal progress. Paradoxically, when the Americans came, the Daughters of Charity relinquished what they had started with, the Escuela Municipal; but their work in the other schools has endured up to the present.

Marya Svetlana T. Camacho
Department of History
University of Asia and the Pacific
Pearl Drive, Ortigas Center
Pasig City 1600, Philippines
Email: svetlana.camacho@uap.asia