

Private religious schools for boys in the Spanish post Civil War period: an analysis through triangulating historical sources*

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ABSTRACT: This research offers a triangulation of historical sources to look into day-to-day life at private religious schools for boys in the post-Civil War period in Spain (1939-1945). The article will compare information from other studies on these schools with information provided by a new source: the testimonies of former pupils. The text offers a comparative analysis between the recollections of former pupils from certain schools and the reports that teacher training students wrote on the same schools on their placements there during the time the interviewees were pupils. The work aims to provide information on a little-known topic: educational practice at private religious schools. In turn, it reflects on the features and value of the historical sources used.

EET/TEE KEYWORDS: Private school; Oral testimonies; Trainee reports; Religious orders; School culture; XXth Century.

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Introduction

In recent decades, and as Del Pozo and Rabazas (2010) have pointed out, the use of so-called «new sources» in the History of Education field has ceased to be deemed an innovative element¹. The consolidation of fields of study that for centuries were overlooked in the history sphere has obliged researchers to look beyond «classical» sources such as legislative texts and official documentation. The interest in new topics requires widening traditionally used resources. Far from the old focus on objectivity, current history may even evaluate seemingly more subjective testimonies which, although subject to rigorous analysis, are no longer perceived as a threat to scientific rigour but rather highlighted as a hugely valuable source of information that enables us to observe the past in a more complete sense.

As part of this historiographic trend, the analysis below presents a triangulation of historical sources in the aim of approaching schooling and everyday life from an *ilustre desconocida*² [illustrious unknown]: private religious schools, focusing here on schools for boys. Many authors have stated the many difficulties inherent to research into this type of educational institution, leading to its deserved moniker³. The reluctance shown by most religious congregations to allow external people to look through their past has, until today, made it difficult for historians working in the field. For a long time, this led to scant bibliography on religious schools, with most books being commemorative publications edited by people with close ties to the institutions. Nonetheless, different articles have recently been published that approach this topic in line with academic standards. The History of Education Studies Group (GEDHE) at the University of the Balearic Islands, where this research was designed, has taken an interest in reconstructing the past at these institutions and recently carried out some investigations into the area. Two studies stand out: the research into the San José Obrero School in Palma through the use of photographs⁴ and the work on religious schools in the post-Spanish Civil War period (1939-1945) based on placement reports written by those taking teacher

¹ M.M. del Pozo Andrés, T. Rabazas Romero, *Imatges fotogràfiques i cultura escolar en el franquisme: una exploració de l'arxiu etnogràfic*, «Educació i Història. Revista d'Història de l'Educació», n. 15, 2010, pp. 165-194.

² A. Tiana Ferrer, *La escuela privada*, in J.L. Guereña, J. Ruiz Berrio, A. Tiana Ferrer (edd.), *Historia de la Educación en la España contemporánea. Diez años de investigación*, Madrid, Centro de Publicaciones del Ministerio de Educación y Ciencia, 1994, pp. 117-139.

³ E. Bernad Royo, *La instrucción primaria a principios del siglo XX*, Zaragoza, IFC, 1984; P. Dávila Balsera, L.M. Naya Garmendia, *Las escuelas de los Hermanos de La Salle en Gipuzkoa. Evolución y tendencias en el alumnado y profesorado (1904-2006)*, «Ikastaria», n. 16, 2008, pp. 271-315.

⁴ F. Comas Rubí, B. Sureda Garcia, *Album photographique scolaire, histoire et configuration de l'identité des établissements scolaires: le cas du collège Sant Josep Obrer de Palma*, «Encounters in Theory & History of Education», n. 17, 2016, pp. 119-140.

training courses at the *Escuela Normal* [Teacher Training School] in Palma⁵. The latter work served as inspiration for the research detailed in this article, taking the questions and hypotheses that arose from analysing the aforementioned placement reports as a starting point. With a view to providing a response to the «silences» and comparing the information in these reports⁶, fifteen former pupils from religious schools for boys were located and interviewed; they coincided with the trainees placement time at the school and, in certain instances, in the same classrooms. The research therefore enabled us to gain an insight into the daily activity at private religious schools for boys through the eyes of two different stakeholder parties (the trainee teacher and the pupils), with information on the same reality expressed through two highly different documents: trainee reports and personal testimonies.

1. Methodology and sources

In order to undertake the research, a history method was applied that required the use of heuristics (locating and compiling sources), criticism (verifying the authenticity and value of the sources) and synthesis (final product). The analysis in this article is based on the recollections from fifteen oral testimonies from different towns in the Balearic Islands which, in accordance with the method used, shall be subject to appropriate historical critique.

Table 1. Categorisation of the interviewees according to town and school

TOWN	SCHOOL	CONGREGATION	TESTIMONIES
Artà	San Buenaventura	Franciscans	Gabriel Serra
			Jaume Casellas
			Guillem Massanet
Ciutadella	San Francisco de Sales	Salesians	Joan Bagur
			Alfredo Moll
Llucmajor	San Buenaventura	Franciscans	Bernat Garcias
Palma	San Agustín	Augustinians	Bartomeu Sansó
	Montesión	Jesuits	Rafael Perera

⁵ G. Barceló Bauzá, S. Moll Bagur, B. Sureda Garcia, *La escuela privada religiosa en Mallorca durante la postguerra. Cultura y práctica escolar*, «History of Education & Children's Literature», vol. 2, n. 12, 2017, pp. 191-212.

⁶ The «silences» refers here to all those issues with a huge interest for the field of study that the trainee teachers – whether consciously or not – failed to mention in their reports.

Pollença	Montesión	Theatines	Antoni Reynés
			Josep Lliteras
			Antoni Cifre
Sóller	Sagrado Corazón de Jesús	Missionaries of the Sacred Heart	Miquel Colom
			Francesc Arbona
			Salvador Reynés

The reasons behind the selection of the schools in the table above should firstly be mentioned. In order to compare the information in the teacher trainee reports, priority was given to locating former pupils who were enrolled at one of the schools from said reports. These schools were: San Buenaventura in Artà, Montesión in Pollença, Sagrado Corazón in Sóller, San Buenaventura in Lluçmajor and Montesión in Palma. In turn, and with a view to enriching the analysis, the number of schools included was widened from the previous research. In this sense, testimonies from former pupils at a Salesian school in Ciutadella (San Francisco de Sales) and an Augustinian school in Palma (San Agustín) were included.

Following on from the selection criteria for the oral histories, it is important to highlight the factors to be taken into account when decoding and rigorously interpreting what the interviewees recount. When looking into their family background, we saw that it changed depending on the town under analysis. Most of the interviewees who lived in small towns at the time (Artà, Sóller, Pollença, etc.) came from families who worked the land. In contrast, most of the interviewees enrolled at schools in larger towns such as Palma or Ciutadella came from middle class families where the father and older brothers worked in small workshops, factories or, in certain instances in Palma, in public bodies such as the army or the provincial council. It should be underscored that those who grew up in families with a medium to high purchasing power were able to take their baccalaureate (five out of fifteen) and, even, a university degree (two of the five who took the baccalaureate). In turn, those interviewees from lower income households left education at the end of primary school in order to join the labour market and contribute to household income (eight of the fifteen), although some of them continued studying at the Business School (two of the fifteen).

The link between the interviewee, his family and the school in question – both in the past and at present – is also one of the key aspects to bear in mind. A large number of the interviewees (twelve out of the fifteen) state they actively collaborated during their school years in associations, publications and other activities linked to the school; meanwhile, a smaller number (six out of fifteen) state that they continued to take part in school activities after their studies, although this participation has reduced today due to their advanced years. The fact that at the end of their schooling many interviewees continued to maintain direct and emotional ties with their school shows a sense of belonging that may have influenced their recollections.

Further aspects that may condition the answers provided by the interviewees include those linked to what certain sociologists have termed the «social construction of memory». Despite the recollections of the interviewees being individual, according to Maurice Halbwachs we are unable to talk of strictly personal recollections as they are only maintained if they are shared and set by different mechanisms in society. The French author highlights that the past is not preserved but rather reconstructed based on the present, thanks to instruments, social conventions, words and socio-temporal categories that social groups provide to each of their members. Thus, we need to take into account that the events and experiences recounted by the interviewees – what could be deemed «individual memory» – come from the collective memory of the social group they belong to, as well as from the latter's interference with other collectives they have ties to⁷. And in a similar vein, Theodore Plantinga adds that mass media and the culture industry also play a fundamental role in the construction of collective memory by homogenising and operationalising the past in the aim of making the world around us coherent⁸. Consequently, when undertaking a study of this kind, one should bear in mind that there is no pure and rational memory but rather an image of the past shaped by nostalgia and conditioned by society and its institutions.

To end this section on methodological issues, it should be stated that in order to carry out the fieldwork, we selected one of the most currently used techniques in the field of qualitative research: semi-structured interviews. This technique enables information provided by oral accounts to be collected through a flexible script and the formulation of open questions, allowing for greater nuance to be compiled and different issues be, in turn, interwoven⁹. The interviews were also recorded on a Dictaphone since, in comparison to systematic note-taking, it enables greater control over the interview and a more reliable transcription¹⁰.

2. *The historical and pedagogical context: post-Spanish Civil War schooling*

From the start of the Spanish Civil War, and where the military coup was victorious like in Majorca, the foundations of Republican education policy were ripped apart and replaced with a new educational order. The new system that

⁷ M. Halbwachs, *La mémoire collective*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1968.

⁸ T. Plantinga, *How Memory Shapes Narratives: A Philosophical Essay on Redeeming the Past*, Michigan, The Edwin Mellen Press, 1992.

⁹ L. Díaz Bravo, U. Torruco García, M. Martínez Hernández, M. Varela Ruiz, *La entrevista, recurso flexible y dinámico*, «Investigación en Educación Médica», vol. 2, n. 7, 2013, pp. 162-167.

¹⁰ M.S. Vallés Martínez, *Entrevistas cualitativas. Cuadernos metodológicos*, Madrid, CIS, 2002.

started to emerge during the conflict, and whose fundamental features would remain almost intact until the 1960s, was based on two basic principles: the glorification of Spanish nationalism and religious fervour¹¹.

As is well known, conservative Catholicism was to be one of the main ideological supports of the new regime in all areas. The church was a staunch ally of Francoism, particularly in the education sphere. Religious symbols and practices that had been eliminated during the 2nd Republic returned to public schools. The entire set of religious practices and symbols was also strengthened and legitimated at religious schools: the crucifix and religious portraits, attendance at religious events and holidays linked to Catholic commemorations were common at these types of schools. The Franco regime also introduced a glorified patriotism and nationalism at schools which, combined with a religious bent, gave rise to so-called National Catholicism to designate the ideological orientation of the period. During the post-war period, schools became one of the most powerful tools to legitimise the new regime, honour its heroes and justify the dictatorship¹². One of the questions that this study may help to uncover is the penetration level of official patriotic slogans in daily practice at private religious schools.

This new turn in school culture was imposed through several mechanisms. One of the main ways was the cleansing of teacher training throughout Spain. The process was implemented by *comisiones depuradoras* [purge commissions] at provincial and, later, national level, and sought to impose faithful adherence amongst teachers to the new principles of those who had revolted against the legitimate Republican government. The cleansing commissions in each region set out a charge sheet against teachers they suspected of having ideological beliefs on the left. When presented with the accusation, teachers had to produce a discharge sheet to demonstrate their innocence, based on different documentary evidence. Finally, the Provincial Commission would issue a verdict, which would be ratified or amended by the *Comisión depuradora central* [Central Purge Commission]¹³.

Although the political sphere cut all ties with educational work from the Republican period, as evidenced by new legislation, the cleansing processes, changes to syllabi and even the decoration and names of schools, it should be stated that the teaching practice of many teachers was able to include signs of resistance to the onslaught of pedagogical traditionalism dictated by the new

¹¹ A. Escolano Benito, *Discurso ideológico, modernización técnica y pedagogía crítica durante el franquismo*, «Historia de la Educación. Revista interuniversitaria», n. 8, 1989, pp. 7-28.

¹² A. Mayordomo Pérez, *Nacional-catolicismo, tecnocracia y educación en la España del franquismo (1939-1975)*, in A. Escolano, R. Fernandes (edd.), *Los caminos hacia la modernidad educativa en España y Portugal (1800-1975)*, Zamora, Fundación Rey Alonso Henriques, 1997, pp. 147-174.

¹³ F. Morente Velero, *La escuela y el Estado Nuevo. La depuración del Magisterio Nacional (1936-1943)*, Valladolid, ÁMBITO ediciones S.A., 1997.

leaders. In this sense, Gabriel Barceló points out that most teachers in the post-war period were heirs of a previous school culture and education that had introduced new ideas. This could explain why, despite the homogenous and stereotypical image of Francoist education, there were many continuities in educational practice in the early Franco years¹⁴.

3. Triangulating sources: two tales of everyday life at religious schools in the post-war period

In order to be able to easily compare the information provided by the personal testimonies with the reality described in the trainee reports used in previous research¹⁵, it was decided to present the study results via the same thematic classification used in said earlier research.

Buildings and spaces

All the interviewees highlight the quality and suitability of the school facilities where they studied. In line with the information contained in the trainee reports, the former pupils recall their schools as light, airy and clean spaces¹⁶. Along these lines, Rafael Perera from the Montesión School in Palma states that «it was a clean, pleasant space»¹⁷, and Guillermo Massanet from the San Buenaventura School in Artà affirms that «the classrooms were cheerful»¹⁸. In turn, and in contrast to the idyllic discourse of the trainees, most interviewees mention that their schools did not have heating, which meant the temperature in some rooms in winter was the same as or below that in the street. Bernat Garcias from the San Buenaventura School in Lluçmajor explains that «it was cold and better to keep your coat on»¹⁹.

¹⁴ G. Barceló Bauzá, *La enseñanza primaria en Mallorca (1939-1949). Cultura y prácticas escolares*, Doctoral Thesis, Department of Pedagogy and Specific Didactics (Supervisors: F. Comas Rubí and B. Sureda Garcia), Palma, University of the Balearic Islands, Academic Year 2016-2017.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Light is central feature in both the trainee descriptions and the recollections of the former pupils. This is not incidental as for some congregations, the presence of light was of utmost importance, not only for lighting conditions themselves but also for its mystical significance: light and truth. See: S. Ramos Zamora, T. Rabazas Romero, C. Colmenar Orzaes, *Fotografía y representación de la escuela privada madrileña en el franquismo. Entre la propaganda y el relato*, «Historia y Memoria de la Educación», n. 8, 2018, pp. 397-448.

¹⁷ Oral interview with R. P., 29.03.2017.

¹⁸ Oral interview with G. M., 06.02.2017.

¹⁹ Oral interview with B. G., 03.04.2017.

In terms of spaces designed for breaktime, most interviewees agree with the trainee teachers, stating that the schools had a patio that was big enough for all enrolled pupils. Nevertheless, a small number of interviewees state that the patio was not suitable and, therefore, children would often crash into one another when playing their different games. To solve this issue, some schools chose to organise breaktime in shifts, as was the case at the Montesión School in Pollença, according to the testimony of Josep Lliteras²⁰. It should be stated that the three interviewees from the San Buenaventura School in Artà contradict what the trainees had written in their reports, emphasising that breaktime did not take place at the school but rather in the surrounding streets.

With regard to annexes, and despite being constantly cited by the trainees as a quality feature of the school, many of the former pupils do not recall them. Those who do recall these spaces, such as libraries, laboratories or school museums, state that they were not used or only used on special occasions. Antoni Reynés states that «we never went and I don't know what it was for» with regard to the school museum at the Montesión School in Pollença²¹. Nonetheless, they do recall well other spaces that are not mentioned in the trainee reports²², such as the brothers' rooms on the top floor of the building; the rooms exclusively used by youth associations or by former school pupils; the cafeteria where students and staff affiliated with the school would eat; the secretary's office where school material was on sale; the meeting room that also doubled as a cinema and theatre, etc. It is important to underscore the difficulty many of the interviewees had in discerning the spaces at their schools since most included convent or church spaces which were attached to the school. The former pupils recall the non-school and religious spaces as being part of the school spaces in a symbolic union that comprises a single space of learning and co-existence.

In turn, many of the interviewees describe the decoration of their schools as simple and austere, emphasising the religious portraits and, specifically, the pictures of saints that founded or belonged to the school's religious order. Alfredo Moll, a former pupil of the Salesian school in Ciutadella, highlights that the décor was very sober, only recalling the presence of portraits of standout Salesian leaders such as Saint John Bosco and Dominic Savio²³. In turn, the interviewees from the San Buenaventura School in Artà underline that, alongside the odd map, the school's hallways housed portraits of Franciscan luminaries such as Ramón Llull, Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Anthony of

²⁰ Oral interview with J. LL., 22.03.2017.

²¹ Oral interview with A. R., 22.03.2017.

²² In contrast to the trainees, the former pupils go beyond exclusively «educational» spaces (classrooms, annexes, libraries, etc.) and expand on their descriptions by mentioning areas and places not related to classes but which were significant in their daily life as pupils.

²³ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

Padua²⁴. Six of the fifteen former pupils remember the presence of the Spanish flag. Only the oral histories from the Salesian school in Ciutadella, the Theatine School in Pollença, the Jesuit School in Palma and the Franciscan School in Lluçmajor recall it, and in the case of the Lluçmajor school, it was not flown either in the patio or at the entrance – unlike the other aforementioned schools – but rather kept in the headmaster’s office.

Few remember the presence of a portrait of General Franco (five of the fifteen) inside the classroom, which would contradict with the regulations from the time and what is stated in most of the trainee reports. Conversely, they clearly remember the crucifix and the religious portraits, as well as maps of Spain or Europe. With regard to the decoration at the Franciscan school in Artà, Jaume Casellas states firmly that there was no portrait of the dictator²⁵, underscoring «there was absolutely no political paraphernalia»²⁶. According to Bernat Garcias, the same was true for the Lluçmajor school run by the same order. The interviewee mentions that «in class there was a crucifix but no portrait of Franco», adding that «it was strange for the time»²⁷. This information highlights some resistance amongst certain religious orders to incorporate patriotic/totalitarian symbology and discourse at their schools that the new regime’s authorities attempted to impose in education²⁸.

Furniture and materials

Most of the interviewees recall there being the same type of furniture: desks with attached benches for two or three pupils; individual desks; the teacher’s desk; wooden floors; coat racks; cupboards to store material, and shelves for textbooks and reading books. In the same way as they are described in the trainee reports, the former pupils highlight the quality and good repair of the furniture and material in the classrooms, although interviewees from the Salesian school in Ciutadella and the Franciscan school in Lluçmajor underscore their poor

²⁴ Oral interview with G. S., 06.02.2017; Oral interview with J. C., 06.02.2017.

²⁵ Oral interview with J. C., 06.02.2017.

²⁶ Patriotic symbology is hardly mentioned by the interviewees, as well as in the descriptions from the trainee teachers. In contrast, reports from the same period about public schools highlight its presence alongside, on occasions, Falange ornamentation. See: G. Barceló Bauzá, F. Comas Rubí, B. Sureda García, *Abriendo la caja negra: la escuela pública española de postguerra*, «Revista de Educación», n. 371, 2016, pp. 61-82.

²⁷ Oral interview with B. G., 03.04.2017.

²⁸ The conflict between the patriotic/fascist sector and the Catholic Church – especially important in the field of education – has been analysed in works such as Cañabate (2003). See: J.A. Cañabate Vecina, *La pugna entre la Iglesia Católica y el Frente de Juventudes en el ámbito educativo. Referencias internacionales, antecedentes y trayectoria general durante el Primer Franquismo*, «Historia de la Educación: Revista interuniversitaria», n. 22-23, 2003, pp. 105-121.

state-of-repair. Joan Bagur highlights with regard to the furniture at the Salesian school that in the initial post-war years, the state of the desks and chairs was very ramshackle with broken, unstable desks making writing exercises difficult. The main causes of this ill-repair were, according to the interviewee, their age and the damage caused during the Spanish Civil War²⁹.

In terms of writing material, the same tools are mentioned as those that appear in the trainee documents, such as pencils, fountain pens, notebooks, ink, etc. The interviewees explain that they could be purchased at stationers or printers in town, although the secretary's office at some schools also sold them. Salvador Reynés from the Sagrado Corazón School in Sóller recalls there being «a small shop under the stairs» where one could buy all the material required for class³⁰. Different interviewees mention these kiosks at their schools (seven of the fifteen), explaining that payment for the material was made at the end of the month alongside tuition and other services offered at the schools.

In turn, most of the interviewees categorically state that the didactic resources merely amounted to an encyclopaedia – at times passed down from elder siblings due to the high cost – and a blackboard. The few interviewees who mention the presence of laminates, sets of geometric shapes, measuring tools, minerals or other typical material for active and intuitive learning (six of the fifteen) underscore that they were not used or only used on occasions; this contradicts with what the teacher trainees state in their reports, where they highlight and appreciate the presence of these materials a lot. With regard to reading books, only a few interviewees recall them (four out of fifteen). According to the testimonies of the former pupils from the San Francisco de Sales School in Ciutadella, the biography of Saint John Bosco – founder of the Salesian order – was mandatory reading for all pupils at the school, alongside other religious texts.

School organisation

In order to present the information on organisational aspects at the schools clearly and orderly, this section will be split into different blocks: enrolment and attendance; timetables; syllabus issues and human resources.

a) Enrolment and attendance

According to nearly all the interviewees, school attendance was high and regular throughout the year. In line with the trainees and other former pupils,

²⁹ Oral interview with J. B., 22.12.2016.

³⁰ Oral interview with S. R., 14.03.2017.

Alfredo Moll states that «absences were rare and, if you were absent, you had to bring a note»³¹. Some interviewees give examples highlighting the importance that teachers placed on this issue. According to Jaume Casellas, a former pupil at the Franciscan school in Artà, when a child missed several days in a row, the teacher would ask the rest of the class if they knew why he was absent and, if they did not, would ask one of his classmates to go to the missing pupil's home to check on him³². Nevertheless, the interviewees from Artà, Sóller and Pollença mention that they themselves, or other classmates, would stop attending school for a specific part of the year so as to help their parents during the crop seeding and harvest periods, or to take part in harvesting the olives organised by different groves in the town³³.

With regard to tuition payments – one of the many «silences» in the trainee reports – most interviewees state that it was a mandatory monthly fee which would be handed over to the school secretary by the pupils themselves. Those able to recall the exact amount (eight of the fifteen) state that tuition for the first years ranged from five to fifteen pesetas, and progressively increased to reach between sixty and eighty pesetas for baccalaureate, depending on the school, the extra-curricular activities pupils did and the school services they used. There are also other instances, such as the San Francisco de Sales School – where neither interviewee recalls a monthly fee – which state that payment was voluntary. School income came from family donations (financial or food baskets) and activities organised by the school such as plays, cinema, religious ceremonies, etc. Joan Bagur also highlights raffles and flea markets being run every so often as a way to raise funds³⁴. Along the same lines, and as an example of family involvement in helping the Salesian school financially, Alfredo Moll explains that when the brothers needed to renovate the large patio, they split it into square metre plots and most families bought one in order to ensure the work got done³⁵.

When it came to non-payment, many interviewees highlight that there were several classmates whose families could not pay the fees but who were never expelled from school. Rafael Perera states that at the Montesión School in Palma «they could expel you for bad behaviour but never for non-payment»³⁶.

³¹ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

³² Oral interview with J. C., 06.02.2017.

³³ Seasonal absenteeism is a standout aspect in both the trainee reports and the interviews from former pupils. It should be stated that as Barceló, Comas and Sureda (2016) highlight, this would also occur at public schools and, consequently, raises doubts concerning the homogeneous image of the socioeconomic profile of pupils enrolled at private schools. See: Barceló Bauzá, Comas Rubí, Sureda García, *Abriendo la caja negra: la escuela pública española de postguerra*, cit.

³⁴ Oral interview with J. B., 22.12.2016.

³⁵ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

³⁶ Oral interview with R. P., 29.03.2017.

In turn, some pupils received a discount on their tuition fees since they actively collaborated with the attached church, either in the choir or as altar boys³⁷.

Most of the oral histories from former pupils mention that the reasons why their parents enrolled them in a private religious school in the town were based on a belief that the quality of the education³⁸ and the religious nature were better than those at public schools. In turn, they state that pupils in public schools were seen in a negative light – a stigma that according to the interviewees still persists. Thus, in most recollections there are statements such as «they seemed to teach us better»³⁹, «you got the feeling that those at public school were below you»⁴⁰, «the better-off families always sent their kids to private school»⁴¹, «those who could not go to Calós⁴² were seen negatively in Ciutadella»⁴³, etc.

b) Timetables

Most of the interviewees explain, as reflected also in the trainee reports, that there were morning and afternoon classes from Monday to Saturday, except on Thursdays when they only went to school in the morning. At some schools, such as the Montesión School in Palma, Thursdays only had classes in the morning and at the other schools, in line with the new regime's instructions, the afternoon was spent on school trips or outings «alongside the beauty of Creation»⁴⁴. Although there are slight variations in the start and finish times, most oral histories state that the school day comprised six hours of classes:

³⁷ Oral interview with A. C., 22.03.2017.

³⁸ One of the main foundations of «school marketing» at these schools was based on the quality of the education focused, amongst other factors, on covering the needs of the middle classes and leaders through a modern, technical curriculum. See: A. Viñao Frago, M.J. Martínez Ruiz-Funes, *Tradición y modernidad: el programa iconográfico del Colegio de Nuestra Señora de la Bonanova de Barcelona (1900-1956)*, «Revista di Historia dell'Educazione», vol. 5, n. 1, 2018, pp. 17-40.

³⁹ Oral interview with M. C., 14.03.2017.

⁴⁰ Oral interview with G. S., 06.02.2017.

⁴¹ Oral interview with J. LL., 22.03.2017.

Local elites and wealthy social groups chose private schooling since, as Zamora states (2014), it was a «breeding ground for social leaders» that makes these schools a social springboard for the middle classes, as well as a way to show belonging amongst socioeconomic elites. See: J.A. Zamora Sánchez, *El liderazgo de los antiguos alumnos formados en el colegio jesuita San Luis Gonzaga de El Puerto de Santa María (1864-1924)*, «Aula de Encuentro», vol. 1, n. 16, 2014, pp. 157-175.

⁴² Calós is the popular name for the San Francisco de Sales School in Ciutadella: an abbreviation of home of the fathers (*Casa de los Padres*).

⁴³ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

According to Marqués (2017), in the post-war period, not taking your children to the Salesian school in Ciutadella was synonymous with poverty and social rebellion and, consequently, in order to avoid any possible problems, most families chose the benchmark religious school. See: A. Marquès Benejam, *Els col·legis religiosos de Ciutadella de Menorca. La postguerra i els primers anys del franquisme. 1939-1967*, Master's dissertation (Supervisor: David Font), Palma, Universitat de les Illes Balears, Academic Year 2016-2017.

⁴⁴ «Boletín Oficial del Estado» (BOE), 1938, p. 6155.

three in the morning and three in the afternoon. In turn, and despite their having no recollection of the time distribution for different subjects (in contrast to the trainee reports), they are all aware that much of the time was spent on independent learning, which at the Franciscan schools in Artà and Lluçmajor and the Sagrado Corazón School in Sóller took place in a large common room alongside pupils from different years, from initial class groups to baccalaureate pupils. Some of the former pupils underscore that the individual learning time took place at the start and end of the school day, at times being voluntary⁴⁵ and coming at additional cost to the monthly tuition fee⁴⁶.

In terms of patriotic liturgies, many of the former students state that they never sang the national anthem at school (eleven out of fifteen), in contrast to public schools where the impression was that more events and celebrations of this kind were held. Despite not recalling the *Cara al Sol* [Facing the Sun] fascist anthem, Miquel Colom does remember having sung the school anthem on several occasions, the lyrics of which he still recalls (and demonstrated by singing it during the interview)⁴⁷. In turn, all the interviewees coincide with the trainee reports by recalling the recital of prayers in the classroom and attending mass almost every day before the start of the school day. At times, this attendance was rewarded with a higher mark in religious studies class⁴⁸ or with discounted tickets to the school cinema⁴⁹. The interviewees also clearly remember the annual celebration of the school congregation's patron saint. The church attached to the school and its youth organisations usually organised the celebrations, with the children and school community actively participating.

The youth and alumni associations of the schools are also clearly recalled in the descriptions from former pupils regarding daily life at school. These organisations designed a range of extra-curricular activities (sports and cultural and religious activities) for pupils at the schools⁵⁰. Alfredo Moll underlines the importance and role of the Dominic Savio Association (active pupils) and the Alumni Association at the San Francisco de Sales School in Ciutadella. Both organisations had different rooms at the school itself which housed games such as pool, ping-pong and darts, as well as a space for sofas and chairs for meetings⁵¹. It should be highlighted that not only did these organisations

⁴⁵ Oral interview with J. B., 22.12.2016.

⁴⁶ Oral interview with S. R., 14.03.2017.

⁴⁷ Oral interview with M. C., 14.03.2017.

⁴⁸ Oral interview with B. G., 03.04.2017.

⁴⁹ Oral interview with A. C., 22.03.2017.

⁵⁰ As part of the Catholic Movement's strategy, most religious orders would organise «undemanding» activities that took up most of students' free time in order to recruit militants for their cause and, in this way, recover the power they had lost due to political liberalism and workers' movements. See: P. Fullana Puigserver, F. Montero García, *Los modelos educativos juveniles del movimiento católico en España (1868-1968)*, «Historia de la educación: Revista interuniversitaria», n. 22-23, 2004, pp. 33-51.

⁵¹ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

run activities in the rooms but they also organised and managed football and basketball teams⁵², singing groups, plays and hiking groups.

c) Syllabus issues

In clear opposition to what is set out in the trainee reports, where the trainees recount how the feats of the rebels against the Republic were present in the day-to-day workings of the classroom⁵³, most oral histories (twelve out of fifteen) firmly state that they never heard anything about the Spanish Civil War or General Franco at school. Jaume Casellas affirms that «politics wasn't mentioned»⁵⁴ at the Franciscan school in Artà, whilst Bernat Garcias also states that at the San Buenaventura School in Lluçmajor, «I never heard any propaganda from either side» with a neutral discourse being maintained and that merely «religious guidance was present, just guidance»⁵⁵. Indeed, only two of the fifteen testimonies mention patriotic indoctrination. Rafael Perera states that at the Jesuit school in Palma, «the teachers spoke to us about the national uprising where they defended the values of Spain, Christianity and stopped the spread of Marxism»⁵⁶. Along the same lines, Joan Bagur clearly recalls that on a school outing certain battles from the Spanish Civil War were re-enacted, such as the Siege of the Alcázar battle in Toledo, where he once played the role of General Moscardó⁵⁷.

In contrast to the scant recollections on patriotic teachings, many former pupils highlight that their teachers repeatedly spoke about religious topics and, more specifically, the most important figures from the religious order that ran the school. Alfredo Moll states that despite not remembering «have any political talk» at the Salesian school in Ciutadella, he does remember several mentions about Saint John Bosco⁵⁸, underscoring that for the teachers there, «he was the leader», an example to follow⁵⁹. As an example of the fervour surrounding Salesian leaders, the other former pupil from this school underlines that in their

⁵² According to Bourdieu (1993), playing different sports at schools became an element of social distinction that made them stand out from public schools, as well as allowing them to control and model student morality. See: P. Bourdieu, *Sport and Social Class*, «Information (International Social Science Council)», vol. 17, n. 6, 1978, pp. 819-840.

⁵³ In his trainee report, José Roig explains that on a visit to the Port of Sóller «a new discussion about the sacrifice and dangerous undertakings of Sanjurjo, Goded, Franco and Our Crusade came up». See: AHUIB (FENMA), record 189, J. Roig, Colegio de San Buenaventura de Lluçmajor, 1940, p. 6.

⁵⁴ Oral interview with J. C., 06.02.2017.

⁵⁵ Oral interview with B. G., 03.04.2017.

⁵⁶ Oral interview with R. P., 29.03.2017.

⁵⁷ Oral interview with J. B., 22.12.2016.

⁵⁸ The former pupils reveal that Catholic schools made great effort to foment fervour for the leaders of their congregations, becoming one of the many ways in which a collective identity and sense of belonging to the schools was intentionally sowed.

⁵⁹ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

Drawing class, they would produce different portraits of both Saint John Bosco and Saint Dominic Savio⁶⁰.

In terms of language, many of the interviewees express a flexibility in this area (fourteen of the fifteen). Catalan was normally used amongst friends and, at times, even teachers without the children being reprimanded for it⁶¹. Along these lines, Antoni Cifre mentions that «we always spoke in *Mallorquín*⁶², although we wrote everything and were taught in Spanish»⁶³. As with the values of National Catholicism, only the testimony from the Montesión School in Palma paints a completely different picture to that of the other interviewees, since the Jesuit school did not allow Catalan to be used at all. Rafael Perera recalls that «nobody dared speak in *Mallorquín*». He also adds that due to this, when he speaks to a former classmate today and despite both having Catalan as a working language, «we always speak in Spanish»⁶⁴.

d) Human resources

The figure of the teacher, as well as his training or background, is another of the «silences» in the trainee reports. All the interviewees stress there being three teacher categories: lay brothers – whom they called «brother» – that worked on the early courses and domestic and administrative tasks at the school; ordained presbyter brothers – whom they called «father» – that taught on the higher courses and managed the school; and finally, the secular teachers with a degree who taught sections of the baccalaureate. With regard to the secular teachers at the Sagrado Corazón School in Sóller, Salvador Reynés highlights that the town doctor taught chemistry and the others were graduates from nearby towns⁶⁵.

Some oral histories also underscore that there were periodic changes in teaching staff due to instructions from the provincial chapter. According to Guillermo Massanet's testimony, these processes were run around every four years and, depending on the requirements at the time, each congregation would reorganise the duties and destinations of its members⁶⁶. In this vein, several former pupils recall that some brothers left for other areas of the country or overseas to open new schools or new charitable centres. These new missions where brothers were sent served as a pretext during the school day to extol the values and pathway of the order⁶⁷.

⁶⁰ Oral interview with J. B., 22.12.2016.

⁶¹ The treatment of Catalan is one of the «silences» in the reports, although flexibility surrounding this issue can be intuited in the report by the trainee S. Montelongo who states that «at times, when speaking to them in Spanish, they reply in *Mallorquín*». See: AHUIB (FENMA), record 189, S. Montelongo, Colegio de los Teatinos de Palma, 1940, p. 4.

⁶² *Mallorquín* is the popular way to refer to the Catalan dialect spoken on the island of Majorca.

⁶³ Oral interview with A. C., 22.03.2017.

⁶⁴ Oral interview with R. P., 29.03.2017.

⁶⁵ Oral interview with S. R., 14.03.2017.

⁶⁶ Oral interview with G. M., 06.02.2017.

⁶⁷ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

In turn, some interviewees recall that the school incited them to «devote their life to God»⁶⁸. Miquel Colom states that at his school «they wanted pupils to become brothers and around seven went into the order»⁶⁹. The same thing occurred at the San Agustín School in Palma⁷⁰, where several visits were made to the seminary to explain how it worked and to promote it⁷¹.

Methodology

Just as many of the trainees described in their reports, the interviewees unanimously state that the teaching methodology in the era was based on memorisation and rote learning of different content. With regard to the Theatine school in Pollença, Antoni Reynés recounts that «the lessons didn't need to be explained but learnt by heart: you had to record the information up here (pointing to his head)»⁷². In this way, many interviewees state that they are still able to remember lesson content and recite the definitions of concepts that appeared in school encyclopaedias.

All the interviewees state there were no active or intuitive learning elements, which contrasts with the information in some of the trainee reports from the time⁷³. Rafael Perera explains that in terms of using the laboratory or undertaking experiments or active learning activities, «this wasn't part of normal methodology, it was an occasional approach»⁷⁴. In turn, competitions or quizzes were very common methodological strategies recalled by the interviewees (nine of the fifteen) and were used to see whether they had learnt the lesson from the previous day⁷⁵. At the Sagrado Corazón School in Sóller and the Montesión

⁶⁸ Oral interview with F. A., 14.03.2017.

⁶⁹ Oral interview with M. C., 14.03.2017.

⁷⁰ Oral interview with A. S., 22.02.2017.

⁷¹ Encouraging religious vocations was a common phenomenon at religious schools. Recruiting new «workers» was vital for the survival and development of congregations, running to 6% of former pupils at some schools. See: Zamora Sánchez, *El liderazgo de los antiguos alumnos formados en el colegio jesuita San Luis Gonzaga de El Puerto de Santa María (1864-1924)*, cit.

⁷² Oral interview with A. R., 22.03.2017.

⁷³ The constant allusions to innovation and the use of Pestalozzi or Herbart's pedagogy methods do not show what teaching practice was like at these schools but rather comprise (as in the case of masking corrective corporal punishment) a strategy of trainees to comply with the theoretical requirements of an academic project such as teaching training reports. See: Barceló Bauzá, Moll Bagur, Sureda Garcia, *La escuela privada religiosa en Mallorca durante la postguerra. Cultura y práctica escolar*, cit.

⁷⁴ Oral interview with R. P., 29.03.2017.

⁷⁵ The use of competitive and emulation methodologies is another characteristic feature at these schools which encouraged, through school competitions and quizzes, the absorption of lessons in a fun, playful way. See: Ramos Zamora, Rabazas Romero, Colmenar Orzaes, *Fotografía y representación de la escuela privada madrileña en el franquismo. Entre la propaganda y el relato*, cit.

School in Palma, competitions were organised between two permanent teams: Rome and Carthage. Miquel Colom recalls that this methodology «helped to learn a lot since it sparked enthusiasm amongst most of the pupils»⁷⁶. Rafael Perera points out that the competitions only took place «in lower years» and that each team had its own hierarchy⁷⁷. Other oral histories mention that as well as competitions and quizzes, the teachers would use other memory techniques, such as singing aloud certain content from the school encyclopaedia⁷⁸.

Most interviewees recall school outings and excursions, although the frequency changes depending on the school they attended. On the one hand, some interviewees (six out of fifteen) express they went on trips «when it suited the brothers, not every week»⁷⁹, whilst others (seven of the fifteen) highlight that every Thursday afternoon «we would go on a walk»⁸⁰ in the country or on a beach in the area. Alfredo Moll states that a distinction should be made between school trips and walks as they had different lengths (trips were longer) and frequencies (walks every Thursday and trips every two to three months)⁸¹. Contradicting what was described in the trainee reports, most interviewees state that these outings were only walks and playing outside, refuting that teachers took advantage of the time to explain content from previous classes.

Discipline

When it comes to general behaviour amongst pupils, all the former pupils underscore that it was very good, although several of them state that there was always a classmate who repeatedly behaved badly and who, therefore, «stood out from the rest»⁸². It should be stated that just after recounting that pupil behaviour was generally good, they would always mention the severity of punishments where teachers' instructions were not obeyed, underlining the reason behind the «good behaviour» of the pupils at these schools. In this sense, several interviewees state that good behaviour «we were ruled by fear»⁸³. Although the teacher trainees repeat on several occasions that «punishment was banished at this school»⁸⁴, most interviewees recall different times where they or other classmates suffered corrective punishment⁸⁵. Gabriel Serra explains

⁷⁶ Oral interview with M. C., 14.03.2017.

⁷⁷ Oral interview with R. P., 29.03.2017.

⁷⁸ Oral interview with A. R., 22.03.2017.

⁷⁹ Oral interview with J. LL., 22.03.2017.

⁸⁰ Oral interview with J. B., 22.12.2016.

⁸¹ Oral interview with A. M., 10.04.2017.

⁸² Oral interview with G. M., 06.02.2017.

⁸³ Oral interview with B. G., 03.04.2017.

⁸⁴ AHUIB (FENMA), record 189, S. Pedreño, Colegio La Salle de Palma, 1940.

⁸⁵ The reasons behind these differences may lie in the contradiction between scientific

that the most violent punishment in early years was pinching and slaps to the back of the head. The interviewee also states that some brothers used a hard stick or ruler to hit children⁸⁶. According to Andreu Sansó from the San Agustín School in Palma, corporal punishment was used cruelly, highlighting hair-pulling and the use of a *vergueta* [rod]⁸⁷. Some oral histories explain that parents would defend the use of this type of punishment. Along these lines, Guillermo Massanet and Miquel Colom state that if their parents learnt that they had been hit, instead of feeling sorry for them, they would punish them again⁸⁸. Finally, other punishments remembered more vaguely include additional tasks, public mockery or having to stand or kneel in one spot⁸⁹.

In opposition to what trainees from the *Escuela Normal* state in their reports, nearly all interviewees stress that there was little contact between the school and their parents, with parent-teacher meetings being exceptional events. Along these lines, the different recollections from interviewees include statements such as, «my parents only spoke to my teacher once a year»⁹⁰, «parents did not come into it at all»⁹¹ or «parents and teachers had hardly any relationship»⁹². Most agree that contact meant casual meetings at church, the theatre or in other places not linked to the school. Finally, it should be emphasised that all remember the monthly report or update that parents had to sign. This document set out the child's marks for each subject, attendance and behaviour.

Conclusions

Methodological reflections

The use of a new historical source enables better understanding of events and facts, although the information from each source may not match. Here, the oral histories have provided a series of elements and fulfilled certain functions worthy of listing and explaining:

- Oral testimony as a «key»: faced with the lack of cooperation from most schools in providing valid sources for analysis, the testimony of former pupils

approaches and the values and norms at the time. In order to pass their placement subject, teacher trainees would write reports as much in line as they could with pedagogical theories taught at the *Escuela Normal*, which disapproved of the use of corporal punishment despite its general social acceptance at the time.

⁸⁶ Oral interview with G. S., 06.02.2017.

⁸⁷ Oral interview with A. S., 22.02.2017.

⁸⁸ Oral interview with G. M., 06.02.2017; Oral interview with M. C., 14.03.2017.

⁸⁹ Oral interview with B. S., 22.02.2017.

⁹⁰ Oral interview with G. M., 06.02.2017.

⁹¹ Oral interview with J. LL., 22.03.2017.

⁹² Oral interview with A. S., 22.02.2017.

allowed us to look into the past at these schools and explore their daily activity which, at times, the schools seemed to want to hide from us.

- Oral testimony as a «supplement»: the interviewees have provided a set of information which, contrasted with other sources provided by the interviewees themselves and current scientific literature, has enabled us to fill in the «silences» that either voluntarily or involuntarily populate other sources (composition of teaching staff, funding, non-formal education, etc.). In turn, and although not mentioned in the results of this work, contentious and uncomfortable events at the schools, such as repeated physical or even sexual abuse – always retold «off the record» – contained in the oral histories could also be looked at in future research.

- Oral testimony as a «filter»: other elements that cannot be deemed as «silences» – since they appear or are mentioned in other sources – but require comparison with oral sources due to the questions they pose (truthfulness, disinformation, lack of specificity, etc.) have also been analysed. Examples of these include corporal punishment, overstated parental collaboration and the extent of patriotic decoration and liturgies.

- Oral testimony as a «source of sources»: the fact that each interviewee backs up his recollections with other historical sources such as photographs, school magazines, newsletters, etc. enabled a broad historical reconstruction rich in nuance, contrasting and widening information provided by the interviewees, as well as sketching new lines of research linked to the area of analysis.

With regard to the teacher trainee reports, triangulating sources enables us to see that the trainees (in order to pass their placements) produced these documents based on expectations, scientific culture and regulations from the period rather than on the reality and educational practice observed. As the oral histories have demonstrated, methodological innovation was not a constant at religious schools, in contrast to what the trainees attempted to represent. Corporal punishment (despite it being hidden) was the basis of school discipline and religious indoctrination at religious schools; it meant that the patriotic indoctrination demanded by the new national government played a secondary and anecdotal role. Nevertheless, these documents continue to be excellent records to look into the pedagogical practices and ideas that were deemed acceptable and «ideal» at a certain period of history, as well as ways to observe the articulation of academic discourse and educational ideals alongside what really went on inside the classroom.

Considerations on the content

After undertaking the fieldwork and analysing the information from the oral histories in-depth, we could state that private schools in the post-war period had their own school culture and identity. These characteristic features were

conditioned by several factors. Being located in a small rural town or provincial capital, and run by a religious or other order, are just some of the many variables inherent to school practice and daily life at these schools (methodology used, available resources, overarching values, etc.). Nonetheless, and despite the differences, a set of common attributes can be seen at all the schools.

One of the shared specificities at religious schools is the huge social influence they enjoyed during the post-war and later years. These schools built up a network of institutions, associations and other community structures far beyond the school gate, offering a wide selection of leisure, cultural and religious pursuits where pupils and parents would participate. This is why most interviewees state that their schools were «more than just a school»: they were sports clubs; youth associations; theatres; cinemas; music conservatoires; places of worship, etc. where children – tutored by the Catholic Church – would spend most of their time on both working days and holidays.

In turn, the collective identity and sense of belonging – constructed intentionally through alumni associations, school magazines, and songs and symbols innate to the schools – were further essential features shared by private institutions. This series of elements helped form the idea of an «us» (pupils and alumni of the school in question) and «them», which was key to making these schools authentic generators of social capital, comprising networks of support and influence amongst members.

Finally, the recollections of the interviewees also reveal that private religious schooling in the post-war period enjoyed a certain level of autonomy and independence in comparison to public schooling. Most of the former pupils insist that the values of National Catholicism promoted by the new regime had scant presence in the everyday activities at their schools. They recall often being told about the life and work of the founders and most venerated members of the religious congregations, serving as moral and value referents. In turn, little or nothing was explained about the leaders and martyrs of the military uprising that had triumphed and whose glorification was common at state schools and in public activities. In general, the interviewees do not recall patriotic liturgies, songs or ceremonies, or portraits of the head of state – *Generalissimo* Francisco Franco – playing a role in school life. In turn, common elements include religious ornamentation, singing the school song and events organised by youth and alumni associations at the school. We could therefore state that religious schools in the early post-war years were not completely subject to official instructions and guidelines from the new regime. They maintained a wide margin of independence with regard to the values they taught, although the presence of symbols and ideology of the new government – in line with the interviewees' accounts – could vary depending on the congregation or religious order that governed the school.