

RESCUING THE *JÍBARO*: RENEWING THE PUERTO RICAN *PATRIA* THROUGH SCHOOL REFORM

Solsiree del Moral

ABSTRACT

U.S. sugar corporations transformed the early-twentieth-century Puerto Rican economy. None of the changes favored small farmers and laborers. By the 1920s, the effects of U.S. colonial practices included land consolidation, the transformation of small farmers into wage workers, and increases in levels of rural poverty and standards of living. However, educators emerged with a solution to the “rural problem.” They proposed the rural school was the key institution that could contribute to the transformation of rural families, social relationships, and the economy. Teachers, an important intermediate group in colonial society, promised the regeneration of the emerging “national” icon, the *jíbaro*, the man of the highlands. In this article I examine teachers’ visions for national regeneration.

Keywords: Puerto Rico, teachers, nation, *jíbaros*, rural schools, empire

RESUMEN

Las corporaciones azucareras de Estados Unidos transformaron la economía de principios de siglo veinte de Puerto Rico. Para los años 20, los efectos de las prácticas coloniales de Estados Unidos incluyeron la consolidación de tierras, la transformación de los pequeños agricultores en trabajadores asalariados, y aumento en los niveles de pobreza y calidad de vida. No obstante, los educadores emergieron con una solución al “problema rural”. Propusieron a la escuela rural como la institución clave que podía contribuir a la transformación de las familias rurales, las relaciones sociales y la economía. Los maestros, un importante grupo intermedio en la sociedad colonial, prometió la regeneración del ícono “nacional” emergente, el *jíbaro*, el hombre de las tierras altas. En este artículo examino las visiones de los maestros para la regeneración nacional.

Palabras clave: Puerto Rico, maestros, nación, *jíbaros*, escuelas rurales, imperio

RÉSUMÉ

Au début du vingtième siècle les compagnies sucrières américaines ont transformé l'économie portoricaine. Durant les années 1920, on pouvait compter parmi les effets des pratiques coloniales américaines la concentration des terres, la transformation des petits agriculteurs en travailleurs salariés, l'augmentation du niveau de pauvreté ainsi que le niveau de vie. Cependant, des éducateurs ont trouvé une solution au "problème rural." Ils estimaient que l'école rurale était l'institution-clé capable de contribuer à la transformation des familles rurales, des relations sociales et de l'économie. Les enseignants qui représentaient un important groupe d'intermédiaire de la société coloniale, ont promis la régénération de l'icône "nationale" alors émergente : l'homme des hautes montagnes, le *jibaro*. Cet article examine la vision des enseignants concernant la régénération nationale.

Mots-clés : Porto Rico, enseignants, nation, *jibaros*, écoles rurales, empire

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The rural school in Puerto Rico finds itself in a particular location in the social order of our country. It holds a prominent post in our community's scale of progress... Our rural school has to resolve problems of great significance.

Juan B. Soto Latorre¹

In 1898 the United States invaded the island of Puerto Rico. The United States acquired sovereignty over the island through the Treaty of Paris, which brought the war between Spain and the United States to an end. After two years of military rule, in 1900 the U.S. Congress approved the Foraker Act, the island's first colonial constitution as a member of the U.S. empire. The U.S. Congress approved the Jones Act in 1917, which revised the Foraker Act and further consolidated Puerto Rico's political and colonial relationship to the United States. In addition, the Jones Act granted Puerto Ricans born on the island a restricted form of U.S. citizenship. The island was now an unincorporated territory of the United States and Puerto Ricans were U.S. citizens. Early in the twentieth century, U.S. policies laid the foundation

for the island's permanent colonial relationship within the empire.²

Puerto Rico was increasingly integrated into the U.S. empire in the early twentieth century. The island's colonial status and relationship to the U.S. shaped the reorganization of the economy, particularly its three main export crops. Sugar and tobacco industries expanded, while the coffee industry rapidly declined. Land ownership at the end of the Spanish colonial period was highly concentrated. Workers moved from the declining coffee regions into the expanding sugar and tobacco economies. The new U.S. sugar corporations acquired lands along the coast. Landless laborers along the coast became wage workers on sugar plantations and mills. They became increasingly dependent on their wages as they lost traditional access to small plots of land and usufruct rights.³ In the face of poor working and housing conditions, workers along the coast became radicalized, joined unions, and went on strike as they made demands on owners and bosses.⁴ Labor militancy in the 1910s, 1920s, and 1930s—during the expansion of U.S. imperialism, centralization of land and capital, restrictions in trade during WWI, and increasing costs of imported goods and food—became the norm throughout the Caribbean region.⁵

Worker militancy became political power in late 1910s and early 1920s Puerto Rico when labor channeled their demands into a new party, the Socialist Party (1915).⁶ The Socialist Party, an important political player in the 1920s, challenged traditional alliances between coffee and sugar elites and between the dominant political parties, liberal *Unionistas* and pro-U.S. *Republicanos*. In addition, radical workers maintained pressure on the reformist leadership of the Socialist Party. The divisions within the Socialist Party and the alliances the party leadership forged with others were representative of the deep political partisanship of the 1920s. *Unionistas*, Republicans, and Socialists formed alliances and coalitions in their quest for political authority.⁷ Once in power, they were faced with the challenge of governing.

One of the dominant questions of the 1920s was how to address the economic challenges wrought by U.S. colonialism, specifically U.S. sugar corporations, land consolidation, rural to urban migration, and unregulated wage work. Teachers, specifically the leadership of the Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico (AMPR, Association of Teachers of Puerto Rico) proposed an alternative to the stalemate of partisan politics. Through their speeches, letters, and articles, they intervened in the highly partisan debates of the 1920s with suggestions for specific ways that the rural school could contribute to the regeneration of rural communities, the reconstitution of small farmers, the restriction of rural to urban migration, and the reestablishment of an idealized social harmony.⁸

In the 1920s, Puerto Rican teachers and their leaders emerged as an

alternative voice to partisan debates. Educators witnessed the labor radicalization in the late 1910s and early 1920s and proposed that teachers and schools could correct the situation. If labor was radicalized, unionized, and militant, they proposed it was because U.S. sugar corporations were foreign to the island's traditional ways. Sugar corporations were transforming social relations on the island. Some teachers feared that the traditional small farmer was losing land to sugar corporations.⁹ Landless workers were becoming embittered about labor and housing conditions along the coast. However, they proposed, rural schools could resolve the crisis. Teachers argued that rural instruction could help regenerate the *jíbaro*, or rural worker. Modern agricultural instruction could rebuild his skills, transform him into an efficient small farmer, and allow him to provide for his family. They imagined that the rural school was the institution that could help reconstruct rural communities and, by doing so, help limit migration. Curbing internal migration could help control the growing number of radicalized urban workers who were taking to the streets and challenging the alleged social harmony.

In this article, I highlight teachers' contributions to 1920s conversations about colonial reform, rural poverty, and regeneration. Through an analysis of the speeches and writings teachers proposed in the late 1910s and early 1920s, I examine how teachers imagined they could resolve the dominant economic questions of the time. First, teachers promoted the *jíbaro* as the authentic representative of the island and its people. The celebration of the *jíbaro* asserted that the island was fundamentally an agricultural country where labor must return to the land as the source for wealth. Although they declared the centrality of the *jíbaro* to Puerto Rican heritage and culture, they also proposed that the *jíbaro* had fallen into a state of degeneracy. He had been neglected by elites and professionals and left to the isolation and tradition of the countryside. He had not evolved, had not adapted to "modern" ways of living.¹⁰ However, teachers, informed by the modern science that was education, could penetrate the alleged ignorance and illiteracy of rural families. The rural school could lead to his regeneration and, by extension, the regeneration of Puerto Rican society.

Second, these visions were a way for elite teachers, as an intermediate group in colonial society, to mediate the class challenges of the 1920s. The visions represented a political critique of U.S. colonialism and its economic representative—the U.S. sugar corporation. They argued U.S. corporations and sugar centrales (mills), in general, were undermining the traditional, patriarchal, and rural heritage of Puerto Rico. The economics of the new colonial economy undermined the traditions of labor, family, and community on the island. Thankfully, the rural school was the institution that could help re-establish this traditional heritage. It

could bring balance to social relations. It could generate social harmony.

Brought together, these two lines of argument suggest that when teachers demanded rural schools be reoriented to meet the demands of rural populations, they were also rejecting the dominant U.S. imperial paradigm of Americanization.¹¹ When they asserted that local schools must address local needs, they were challenging the colonial administrators' assumption that the teachers' primary goal was to provide English-language instruction and to cultivate "tropical Yankees."¹² In the 1920s, as they inserted themselves into conversations about how to address economic challenges, teachers argued that practical methods were required to address local realities. In the process, they were establishing the groundwork for the reorganization of colonial education, the reorientation that would become the foundation for reconstruction in the 1930s. As they demanded more attention to rural schools, teachers were also establishing their authority over local schools and rejecting U.S. imperial visions.

Historical Context: U.S. Empire, Americanization, and Teachers

The United States has been dynamic and malleable as an empire since the nineteenth century. It has taken multiple forms: as a nation-building project during the nineteenth-century westward continental expansion;¹³ as a formal empire that acquired colonies in the 1898 war and engaged in extended military occupations in the Caribbean into the 1930s;¹⁴ as the global anti-Communist police during the Cold War era;¹⁵ and more recently, in its multiple military campaigns abroad.¹⁶ U.S. imperialism has impacted the countries it invaded, occupied, and governed. At the same time, the economy, politics, and cultures of the United States have been transformed by its colonial practices. For example, during the historical period of focus here (1890s-1930s), advances in medical science, public sanitation, and state surveillance in the United States emerged from scientific exchanges, state interventions, and unequal practices abroad between local and U.S. colonial actors.¹⁷

U.S. imperialism thrived in the Caribbean and the Pacific from the 1890s to the 1930s. With the 1898 Treaty of Paris, in addition to Puerto Rico, the United States acquired Guam and the Philippine Islands. The Treaty provided Cuba's independence from Spain, although Cuba became a U.S. protectorate from 1898 to 1901 and the Platt Amendment compromised the island's sovereignty from 1903 to 1934.¹⁸ With the support of the United States, Panama gained its independence from Colombia in 1903. That same year, the United States gained rights over the Canal Zone in perpetuity through the Hay-Bunau-Varilla Treaty.¹⁹

The United States placed the Dominican Republic in a customs receivership in 1905 and occupied the island from 1916 to 1924.²⁰ On the other side of Hispaniola, Haitians suffered the violence of a U.S. military occupation from 1915 to 1934.²¹ Nicaragua was the site of another U.S. military occupation from 1912 to 1925 and again in 1927.²² In Honduras, U.S. Marines “guarded banana plantations that belonged to U.S. firms.”²³ Finally, in 1917 the United States purchased the Danish West Indies. Meanwhile, in the Pacific, the United States annexed Hawaii in 1898 and U.S. Marines confronted Filipino revolutionaries during the Philippine War of Independence (1899-1902).²⁴ Construction of the new Panama Canal was intended to connect the colonized economies and military bases of the Caribbean and the Pacific.²⁵

U.S. imperialism in the Caribbean was hegemonic. However, U.S. policies and intentions varied from one location to another as they were informed by local particularities.²⁶ In Puerto Rico, a formal and unincorporated U.S. territory, Americanization policies represented U.S. colonial ideologies.²⁷ Americanization in the Americas, William Roseberry argues, has been informed by “intersecting histories characterized by differentiation, heterogeneous cultural relations and values, and relations of power that encompass contradictions and tensions.”²⁸ The process of Americanization (or Westernization or modernization) of a particular country was contingent on the historical moment, the interests and motivations of colonial or national groups (businessmen, politicians, professionals, educators), and how these groups negotiated their interests with imperial actors. The process was never uniform, linear, simplistic, nor uncontested. Instead, Americanization was dynamic and shaped by unequal relations of power. From 1898 to 1930, Americanization policies in Puerto Rico were particularly assimilationist. On the one hand, Americanization meant the integration of the Puerto Rican economy and politics into the U.S. federal system. On the other, Americanization also represented the intentions of U.S. colonial actors to conquer the natives’ hearts and minds, to create popular support for U.S. colonial rule on the island, or, as José Manuel Navarro argues, to create “tropical Yankees.”²⁹

Americanization, or the assimilation of non-Anglo Saxon peoples on unequal terms, was also important on the U.S. mainland and its other overseas territories.³⁰ Schools and the classroom were key sites for the practice of Americanization. Eastern European immigrants on the east coast and Japanese, Chinese, and Mexican immigrants on the west coast and southwest region suffered through multiple interpretations of Americanization policies in schools.³¹ African Americans and Native Americans experienced a different version of restricted integration through vocational and industrial training institutes and boarding schools.³² Meanwhile, colonial Hawaiians, Puerto Ricans, and Filipinos

witnessed the imposition of Americanization through colonial schools.³³ English-language instruction and U.S.-centered curricula were dominant, even though definitions of Anglo-Saxon values themselves were in flux in the United States at the turn of the century.³⁴

In Puerto Rico, the U.S. colonial government founded a secular, co-educational, free, public school system.³⁵ At the height of the early-twentieth-century Americanization campaign, an important shift began to occur in Puerto Rico. The 1920s marked the emergence of teachers as professionals and authorities on the island. Teachers, those who had been practicing under the Spanish colonial government in the 1890s and the new generation who was trained under the Americans in the 1900s and 1910s at the University of Puerto Rico, emerged as a moral and critical voice in the 1920s.³⁶ The two regional teachers' unions came together in 1911 and united under the AMPR. The number of teachers grew quickly with the expansion of the public school system. In 1910, 1,623 teachers practiced in colonial schools. A decade later, there were 3,220 teachers. By 1930, there were 4,451.³⁷

Those who rose to positions of leadership in the teaching profession were also active and prominent members of the AMPR. The AMPR held an annual conference in December. Representatives from local associations travelled to the island-wide meeting. There, they attended presentations on a variety of professional and social topics. They organized into committees and made recommendations for improvements in their working conditions, curricula, and infrastructure. In turn, annually, the AMPR president brought the teachers' accords and recommendations before the commissioner of education and the legislature. In this way, teachers advocated for higher salaries, improvements to schools, control over double enrolment, and many other issues.³⁸

The elected leadership of the AMPR in the late 1910s and 1920s were influential intellectuals and respected educators, such as Santiago Negroni, José González Ginorio, and Gerardo Sellés Solá. Individual leaders of the AMPR often came from regionally prominent land-owning families. Politically, the leadership was reformist. They were not advocating for the immediate national independence of Puerto Rico. Instead, they accepted, some grudgingly, that Puerto Rico was tied to the United States and that the U.S. citizenship granted in 1917 forged a strong link between colony and empire. Despite the political framework of colonialism, teachers, nevertheless, were deeply invested in addressing, correcting, and improving immediate local matters. In their speeches, writings, and conferences, and in their persistent calls for attention to public schooling before the commissioner of education and legislators, the AMPR leadership was establishing the authority of their profession. If immediate concerns of the 1920s were to be addressed, such as

poverty, unemployment, and migration, it would be under the skilled and professional direction of local teachers. In the 1920s, AMPR leaders were jockeying for authority over the “regeneration” of the people, at the same time that they were challenging what was expected of their profession—to implement U.S. imperial Americanization policies.³⁹

Teachers Respond

Francisco M. Zeno had an explanation for the radicalization of labor in 1920s Puerto Rico. In 1922, Zeno served in the upper house of the legislature, a member of the liberal Union Party.⁴⁰ He supported political projects he believed could address the roots of the “rural problem,” rather than its symptoms. Zeno proposed U.S. sugar and tobacco corporations were hoarding Puerto Rico’s arable land. Their aggressive land consolidation practices challenged the social welfare of rural communities. These “diabolical” corporations challenged *colonos*, displaced small farmers, and forced *jibaros* into *arrimado* status, as residents on their employers land.⁴¹ He defined *jibaros* as rural wage workers.⁴² In turn, the practices of these corporate “octopuses” were transforming the good-natured *jibaro* into a radical wage worker easily “manipulated” by socialist leaders.⁴³ The solution to rural poverty was enforcement of the “500 acre” law and, if necessary, the redistribution of land among the peasantry.⁴⁴ Zeno, therefore, supported economic reforms through legislative projects that allowed the insular and municipal governments to intervene for the improvement of rural housing, hygiene, and sanitation. Zeno identified the rural school as the institutional partner that could guide the redistribution of land and support the creation of small farmers.

Unfortunately, he argued, the Department of Education’s approach to rural education over the past twenty years had been a “complete failure.” “Useless” teachers wasted resources through a poorly planned curriculum and with misguided intentions.⁴⁵ Instead, he proposed adult night schools had to be established in large enough numbers to combat the “grand social problem” of illiteracy, for it was adult men’s illiteracy that “strangled” Puerto Rico’s opportunity to control its political destiny.⁴⁶ Second, rural schools should be staffed by newly-trained teachers with a curriculum that supported modern and efficient agricultural instruction. The primary goal must be to create small farmers! Puerto Rico was an agricultural country and children should be taught to farm. Anything else was misguided and wasteful of time and resources. Rural schools were the partner in a future where Puerto Rico’s agriculture was modern, efficient, and connected to native industry. At present, they were “deplorably deficient.”⁴⁷ The colonial Department of Education,

under direction of foreign “dominators” like Commissioner Paul G. Miller who voted down Zeno’s bill to convert rural schools into agricultural schools, failed to serve the interests of the country of Puerto Rico.⁴⁸

According to Zeno, these private entities transformed rural land tenure patterns, impoverished both colonos and jíbaros, and generated conditions propitious for socialism. Foreign dominators were responsible for the lack of harmony between the classes. Rural schools and teachers, however, must be recruited to overcome the colonial economic structures that generated poverty in the countryside. A modern, scientific, and locally-appropriate curriculum that created farmers and agriculturalists could help jíbaros overcome poverty. Until this was accomplished, Zeno proposed that teachers, schools, and the Department of Education had failed. Puerto Rico’s peasantry lived in poverty. Rural schools and teachers, he proposed, were part of the problem, rather than the solution.⁴⁹ However, teachers in 1920s Puerto Rico would not stand for Zeno’s attack on their labor, profession, and patriotism. They would respond. While they did not disagree with Zeno’s criticism of colonial economics and its effects on jíbaros’ personality and behavior, they vehemently challenged his characterization of their professional contributions as teachers.

The organized leadership of the teaching profession quickly intervened in the 1920s debates about U.S. colonialism, rural poverty, and schools. Educators responded to what they characterized as an uninformed and biased critique of their profession. They rejected the idealism of those who questioned teachers’ quality of labor and who challenged their patriotic commitment to regeneration and progress of Puerto Rico. Different educators—the leadership of the AMPR, Puerto Rican administrators in the colonial Department of Education, and individual teachers—proposed that the rural school was the core institution that could address Puerto Rico’s greatest challenges—poverty, disease, and ignorance. This was the argument proposed by the winning essay at the annual AMPR conference. The author, Juan B. Soto Latorre, an inspector at the Department of Labor, proposed that rural schools had a special responsibility to rural families and communities. In December 1917, Soto Latorre declared: “the Puerto Rican rural school has the unavoidable obligation to prepare the child campesino to accomplish work that is more scientific, more modern, more productive, more in harmony with our times.”⁵⁰

This argument allowed educators to defend their profession at the same time that they challenged the 1920s partisan politicians and U.S. colonial administrators. Educators wanted to establish their profession’s authority over the classroom. It was the teacher, not the politician, who could guide the alleged “regeneration” of the peasantry. It was teachers

who could lead the project of progress and modernity for Puerto Rico. José González Ginorio, a dominant figure in the early-twentieth-century AMPR, spoke as the president-elect of the organization at the December 1919 conference.⁵¹ He emphasized the urgency of rural schools and the obligation of teachers to turn their attention to the countryside. "Let those of us in the association become inspired to accomplish the holy mission with which we have been entrusted: the education of the Puerto Rican *campesino*. Our task is the hardest, the most important, the greatest, the most grievous, the only one that in reality demands sacrifices of all types. Our task is the most humble because it has been the most ignored, but it is the only one that will bring about the regeneration of our people."⁵²

Since the late 1910s, Puerto Rican educators witnessed the politically organized labor movement in both sugar plantations along the coast and in urban centers. The leaders of the AMPR, in particular, were reluctant to embrace labor militancy. Elite educators were reformers and liberal proponents of social harmony. They imagined they had the ability to re-establish social harmony on the island through schools. Militant and radical labor posed a challenge to that vision. Faced with working-class men and women demanding political power and redistribution of wealth and resources, elite educators did not recognize him as a constituent member of the Puerto Rican community. Instead, they proposed he represented a challenge to the alleged social harmony that existed between classes and races on the island, in the tradition of contemporary Unionista political discourse.⁵³

The teaching leadership could not engage the new urban worker or sugar worker as a modern incarnation of the rural peasant. Instead, they chose to believe the militant worker, who was "rebellious" and "resentful," was a deviation of the traditional worker of Puerto Rico—the *jíbaro*—and the product of the practices of U.S. colonialism and the sugar industry in the early twentieth century.⁵⁴ Rejecting urban labor militancy went hand-in-hand with the embrace of the rural *jíbaro*. The new urban worker was not an organic member of Puerto Rico, like the romanticized *jíbaro*. At this moment, in the 1920s, educators chose to highlight the *jíbaro* as the model worker.

When the AMPR leadership spoke before the legislature to request attention and funding for rural schools, for example, they emphasized this unwelcome transformation. Gerardo Sellés Solá, a prominent educator and president of the AMPR from 1920 to 1931, proposed that the *jíbaro* had been transformed by the hardship of life in the countryside, that poverty, tradition, and neglect had threatened his "warm and generous nature."⁵⁵ As he made the case before the Puerto Rican legislature for more funding for rural schools and rural teacher training, Sellés Solá

emphasized the transformation of the allegedly gentle and complacent *jíbaro* into a militant worker: “Our ‘*jíbaro*’ has already suffered too much. With good reason his generous and hospitable character becomes distrustful and even rebellious and resentful. The school will resolve all of this. Let’s save the *campesino*, the noblest people who live on this land that we love.”⁵⁶ Sellés Solá reminded legislators that it was “they,” the modern version of man—those who resided in towns and cities and included teachers and legislators—who had the obligation to contribute to the regeneration and salvation of the peasant and the countryside. “Over there [countryside] lives... the great mass of the Puerto Rican population waiting for his brothers from the city to rescue him by initiating a new era of education, economic and moral welfare, and happiness.”⁵⁷

As they rejected militant organized labor and embraced the *jíbaro* as the model worker of Puerto Rico, educators also argued that the island was first and foremost an agricultural country. “We should keep in mind that all that we do for our rural class we do for the collective good of our country, because the rural class constitutes the major nucleus of our society.”⁵⁸ The original source of labor, they argued, was the rural peasant. Whether he migrated to a coastal sugar plantation and became a wage worker or to an urban city to work in other industries, they located the core heritage of the island and its people in the highland mountains and its residents. The obligation of teachers, therefore, was to rescue the *jíbaro* and the countryside from the ravages of U.S. sugar corporations, land consolidation, and wage work. That industry, they argued, was foreign to the island and they did not see a future where it might continue as the dominant industry. Sellés Solá rejected a Puerto Rico where sugar corporations monopolized the land and impoverished its workers: “in our distant future, we do not foresee the large landowners, or the corporations who own thousands of acres of land, or the worker who earns four *reales* per day, no.”⁵⁹

Additionally, when educators spoke of the *jíbaro* as the model worker, famer, husband, and center of the rural community, they were reproducing a narrow definition of men, masculinity, and country. They romanticized the *jíbaro* and all he represented. They located the *jíbaro* at the core of the country’s values. They defined Puerto Rico as a patriarchal society founded in rural traditions. The successes of the *jíbaro* family, and the rural community more broadly, were dependent on the *jíbaro* man—as a father, husband, and farmer. His values and his successes had been undermined by the economic practices of U.S. colonialism and by the forced incorporation of the Puerto Rican economy into the modern U.S. empire. The decline of coffee and the migration of rural families into towns and cities had fundamentally challenged the *jíbaro* and his family. In other words, U.S. colonialism had undermined *jíbaro*

masculinity. It was fundamentally emasculating. A demand for more attention to rural schools was also a call to reconstruct rural masculinity, to make of the jíbaro “a real man.”⁶⁰ One of the proponents of this line of argument, Antonio Otero y Arce, shared his views with teachers at the Ponce Rural Teachers Institute in 1926.⁶¹

The Rural School as an “Anachronism”

The first two decades of the twentieth century witnessed great expansion in the public school system. By the 1920s, U.S. colonial officials celebrated the growth in the number of schools, teachers, and students. At the end of Spanish colonial rule in Puerto Rico, elite children were privileged with access to 501 schools, 384 designated for boys and 117 for girls. By 1920, the Department of Education celebrated the founding of 1,422 classrooms, where 176,617 students attended under the instruction of 3,220 teachers.⁶² However, until then, most of the investment in public school infrastructure and teachers was disproportionately directed to urban areas, to the neglect of the countryside. Although the total number of schools had grown, rural communities continued to be underfunded.

It was this disparity that alarmed José C. Rosario. Rosario was the first general superintendent of rural education for the Department of Education, a position created in 1921, after years of teacher demands for attention to rural schools.⁶³ It was rural communities, he and others declared, that needed the most attention from teachers. Before a gathering of teachers at the AMPR annual convention held in Arecibo that year, Rosario painted a vivid picture of the differences between urban and rural spaces. He saw such grave disparities in measures of progress and modernity between cities and the countryside that he argued the countryside represented, allegorically, a distant past.⁶⁴ After thirteen years, Rosario returned to the town where he had practiced as a teacher.⁶⁵ He was proud to report to the teachers in the audience of the “innumerable changes” to be admired in the town. He was surrounded by progress everywhere—“magnificent residences” replaced the old *bohíos* and a small, beautiful, and elegant park replaced the old plaza “that had been covered in wild foliage.” Most impressive was the new “majestic school building, simple but imposing, the pride of the neighborhood.” “Without doubt, my town has progressed,” he told himself.⁶⁶

In contrast, “what a sad disappointment” Rosario witnessed when he returned to the rural barrio and school. “Ten kilometers away from the very beautiful urban school building and ten thousand kilometers from this world, an anachronism in the form of the rural school can be found, one that contrasts abruptly with the progress I had noticed until then.” In the countryside he found “the same school house in which I had taught

thirteen years ago, the same little school, a bit more worn down with time, a bit dirtier, with two or three more holes in the walls and more on the floors.” Rosario described the disparity of progress in urban and rural schools and asked himself and others at the teachers’ conference: “How is it possible that in the middle of so much progress, of so much healthy change, we find the rural school in such a state of abandon?”⁶⁷

He was right. The numbers were on his side. The majority of school funds in the first twenty years had been concentrated in urban cities where modern school houses were built and high schools were founded.⁶⁸ In the meantime, investments in rural schools languished. One room school houses were dominant in rural communities. Often they were inaccessible due to poor roads and their location in the countryside. The occupation of rural teacher was an entry-level position where the youngest teachers with the least amount of training, certification and experience were sent. Teachers were poorly supervised and more poorly paid. They had scant resources available—books, chalk, and paper.⁶⁹

During his recent visit, Rosario found the same one-room school-house serving four grades, with its “neophyte teacher, apathetic parents, long tables to accommodate four or five students at a time, and its tiny patch of unproductive land.”⁷⁰ Rosario questioned how the rural school and teacher could have been neglected by the legislature and the Department of Education, even though the majority of the population lived in rural areas. In 1916, “out of 419,000 children in Puerto Rico, 331,000 lived in rural areas, out of which only 26 per cent receive education. 74 per cent of school-age children are illiterate.”⁷¹ This neglect denied students the right to attend school. Few families could benefit from modern education in the form of hygiene, home economics, efficient practices, etc. This had to be addressed. Modern rural schools had to be built, schools staffed by well-trained, paid and respected teachers, who could offer a modern curriculum. Only then, Rosario and other educators argued, could the rural communities be reformed, the rural man regenerated. This might contribute to the promotion of a vibrant rural life and community, one that might help curb rural to urban migration. That migration, they feared, contributed to the transformation of the *jíbaro* into a disgruntled urban worker.⁷² “*Jíbaros* abandon the mountain. It is our duty, as patriots, to retain them in the mountain. The cities are overwhelmed with unemployed laborers. Yet, the *campesino* exodus continues. This is because he who learns to read, thinks that the work of the hoe and machete degrade him.”⁷³

Rosario acknowledged that the founding and management of rural schools had proven to be a challenge to the colonial government. The rural school house was inadequate and archaic. The rural teacher had to find lodging in the home of a willing *hacendado*, yet given economic

challenges, hacendado families had become reluctant to host teachers. Parents had to be willing to remove their children from laboring in the fields and the home to attend school and that was a sacrifice few could afford. Landowners had to be convinced that they should support schools for the children of rural workers, something they feared could not possibly be in their best interest. While the expansion of rural schools was a challenge, the reality, Rosario and others proposed, was that Puerto Rico was a rural country. The majority lived in rural areas. More attention had to be paid to rural communities.

Regenerating the Jíbaro: “*¡La vida del campo será la vida ideal!*”⁷⁴

Reimagining the rural worker allowed teachers to assert the value of their profession. However, it was often accompanied by paternalistic and derogatory descriptions of jíbaros and their way of life. Teachers established a social, cultural, and class distinction between themselves and the peasantry, between themselves and workers. When they proposed rural reform and attention to rural schools, educators often began by addressing the question: How did the jíbaro live? The question and the descriptions were important because they implied that “we” (teachers, urban residents, and/or landed rural elite) did not know how “they” lived. The distance, in terms of engagement, contact, exchange, was that great. The descriptions were voyeuristic—teachers or school inspectors who “witnessed” the conditions shared the information with those who were unaware or appeared disinterested. The characterizations of how “they” lived were provided to establish the foundation from which educators had to rebuild and to emphasize the urgency behind the regeneration efforts.

In their writings, speeches, and letters, educators and hygienists often characterized the conditions of rural communities, or rather the contemporary version of the jíbaro in the countryside, as “frightening” and “alarming.”⁷⁵ They penned derogatory descriptions of rural housing, family units, hygiene, and morals. Educators provide detailed descriptions of an allegedly ignorant and isolated rural people who required rescue and regeneration at the hands of more knowledgeable, better informed, and scientific professionals. Their descriptions were shaped by a deep paternalism, a sense of ownership and responsibility towards the social and intellectual inferiors, a people imagined to be utterly incapable and unaware of how unhealthy and backwards their lifestyles were.⁷⁶ These same descriptions of jíbaros and rural communities were often repeated in speeches and presentations of the annual AMPR conferences.

Early in his career, Pedro N. Ortiz had been a rural teacher and,

later, a supervisor of rural schools in Comerío, Aguas Buenas, and Naranjito. In 1920, when Ortiz spoke before an audience of teachers on the question of hygiene and rural schools, he did so as a researcher in the Department of Health. Ortiz's participation at the annual convention represented the close collaboration between the medical profession, public health and sanitation officials, and educators. Scientific discourses informed visions for reform in the early 1920s. In Ortiz's speech and in those of many other educators, *jíbaros* discursively came under attack. If the rural school house was an anachronism, the conditions under which the peasantry lived were an example of "atavism."⁷⁷

In the 1920s, health officials, in the tradition of neo-Lamarckian eugenic discourse, reproduced the idea of a causal link between the environment, delinquent behaviors, and diseases in the individual's body.⁷⁸

The conditions of the peasant in Puerto Rico's rural districts represents a synthesis of the atavism of the routine of life, a way of life that has been passed down from generation to generation, with all its defects and stigmas. It is an environment marked by a lack of resources, social disequilibrium, bad nutrition, the ego of some and the indolence of others. These factors become a plague that mines the organism and retards the moral and physical development. This has created a legion of pale-faced ones [*pálidos*] without ambition, other than the instinct to survive.⁷⁹

Their homes were "primitive," "poor bohíos." The parents were "long-suffering humans, without ambition, badly nourished, and barefoot." "What can we expect from a union of parents who have uncinariasis, malaria, tuberculosis, and, ultimately, are malnourished?" The children were "usually sickly, malnourished since birth." Intellectually, the "*jíbaro's* mind fails before the complexities of modern civilization." Ultimately, Ortiz argued, "our peasantry has not evolved. They live in the same primitive state," without ambition and without hope. *Jíbaros* were no different than his natural environment, "like the scrawny tree that grows and gives fruit with no flavor, like the wild plant that grows forgotten and without cultivation."⁸⁰

The argument that a traditional and "degenerate" environment produced unhealthy and immoral individuals often also informed teachers' writings. A version of a "popular" interpretation of neo-Lamarckian eugenics that linked environment to backwardness, immorality, and disease shaped teachers' arguments regarding the urgency behind rural school reform. Teachers promoted a strong relationship between rural schools, healthy parenting, and happy families. "The physical condition" of "our" rural men was believed to be "intimately linked" to his potential "advancement and progress in agriculture."⁸¹ A requirement for success in farming and rural life, therefore, was a healthy body. Severo

Image 1: The jíbaro's bohío.

Source: "Paisaje con bohío y ropa." Oscar Colón Delgado, Colección Mariela Miranda Recio.



O'Neill proposed that "teaching agriculture in the rural school should not be limited to instruction in how to cultivate plants and raise animals. Rather, it should also help improve their social conditions and their ways of living."⁸² Rural communities could be served by rural schools that also promoted health, hygiene, and sanitation.

We need strong and robust men for agriculture. Men who have more to offer than scientific knowledge about agriculture, men who also have vigor and energy... If we travel half a kilometer from the centers of our population we can observe the poverty and misery in which our campesinos are immersed. You must travel through one of our fertile campos, where nature abounds in its greenness and exuberance. There we can see the sad appearance that those small bohíos offer, bohíos made from stalks of royal palms, bohíos in which the majority of our rural masses reside. His hunchbacked, weak, and skinny body, his sad eyes and pale face are marked with the daily suffering that says much about our civilization and progress.⁸³

The reform of rural communities, families, and men was not only defined by economics. It also incorporated a vision for a healthier, stronger,

able man.

Educators accepted the scientific description of jíbaros' inferiority and proposed that, thankfully, through the institution of the rural school, the jíbaro could be reformed. This was the promise of teachers and rural schools. Jíbaros could be instructed in modern and efficient methods of farming. Educators imagined that the curriculum could teach jíbaros how to manage a modern and efficient farm with multiple purposes: to produce for consumption so he could provide subsistence for his family and to produce for trade at market so he could engage in modern trade and commerce and acquire income. Modern farming, food for consumption, and goods for trade—these were fundamental ways the teaching and training of jíbaro men could lead to a rural transformation. Education could help jíbaros “provide for their families,” with the produce from their cultivated plots in the countryside. This could affect their quality of life, inspire their wives, produce healthier children, and change the future of the country.⁸⁴ Ortiz and other educators promoted a reformed vision of the jíbaro that was romantic, modern, and practical, for he was more effectively engaging in modern markets as well. They were not advocating for jíbaros who remained isolated in the mountains. Rather, they imagined that he could become engaged in modern industry and trade. This vision of reform is different than naïve nostalgia and traditional interpretations that sought to regenerate jíbaros to fit an imagined romantic past.⁸⁵

Economic Foundations: “¡Así se hace patria!”⁸⁶

Fundamentally, educators proposed they were facing an economic problem. “Let’s resolve, my friends, the problem of the Puerto Rican campesino, which is ECONOMIC, and then the problem of the rural school will be resolved.”⁸⁷ Rural poverty was not a marker of the failure of teachers or the poorly funded rural schools. It was, rather, a reflection of the economic relationships that dominated rural communities. This argument was a reaction to those who put much of the responsibility for the conditions of the countryside on rural teachers. This was a response to legislator Zeno, who equally condemned the colonial economy, rural schools, and rural teachers. As well as a response to U.S. administrators who staffed the leadership of the colonial Department of Education, like Paul G. Miller, and U.S. professors at the University of Puerto Rico, like Fred K. Fleage, who questioned the commitment of the young generation of rural teachers.⁸⁸

Instead, vocal AMPR leaders, like Augusto Dieppa, countered that teachers were doing the best they could, given the limited resources afforded to them and the multiple obstacles they faced daily, including

low salaries, underfunded schools, and questionable support from both the landed elite and rural peasants. The problem and the solution to the conditions under which the rural worker lived, instead, required a reevaluation of economic relations. Dieppa acknowledged that

the rural school has its deficiencies, just like graded schools and high schools ... But that is no reason to argue that they are a failure, because at the head of each of those schools are competent teachers, studious teachers, teachers who love teaching, teachers who have treated their profession like a vocation, and teachers who keep vigil and put great effort into the educational development of the poor and scorned campesino children.⁸⁹

The problem, rather, was land consolidation, land loss by small farmers, and *arrimado* status. Sugar corporations were dominant. The transition of small farmers into wage workers on sugar plantations also meant a loss of time, land, and interest in developing modern and efficient farming methods. For Dieppa, these colonial economic relations, in combination with the “ignorance” and “disinterest” of parents and the rural landed elite and the inattention of the legislature, together were responsible for the state of rural life.

As long as hunger, nudity and anemia exists in our countryside; as long as we are without laws to protect and defend the children against usury and theft; as long as there are ignorant parents who exploit their children ... ; as long as agricultural corporations exist, corporations to which the small pallid ones of the mountains provide labor ... ; and as long as no laws, courts, or men exist who will punish these abnormalities and defend the rights of children, the Puerto Rican rural school will be an ETERNAL FAILURE.⁹⁰

This was the root of the problem. Schools and teachers were not the ones responsible.

The AMPR leadership offered two complementary projects to address rural economics. First, Sellés Solá proposed the founding of “school-farms” on which practical farming methods could be taught. School-farms, in the tradition of the industrial education offered through school-workshops, would serve as model farms. Sellés Solá looked to European examples of schools and farming and asked to adapt the model to Puerto Rico. “This type of school has produced great benefits in diverse countries. Denmark’s and England’s national progress is greatly indebted to the school-farm. Why not try it in Puerto Rico?” Sellés Solá imagined “an infinite number of small farms intensely and scientifically cultivated, with the cow, the horse, the team of oxen, the trees, the domestic birds, the clean and picturesque little house, the vegetable garden, the fortunate rural couple, and the happy children.”

The school-farm model could prove to be a way to “overcome” the “hopeless” destiny of the “rural wage worker” of early-twentieth-century Puerto Rico.⁹¹ “A piece of land cultivated by the child, whose products he will harvest and sell, will be a blessing and an inspiration. Let’s form an educated campesino, owner of his home and of the farm that he cultivates. Otherwise, we will leave arduous problems for the next generation to resolve.”⁹² Sellés Solá proposed this vision in 1922. Educators and administrators did not disagree about the value of agriculture, farming, healthy rural families, and schools. However, they debated over the funding and founding of the school-farms on the island.

A second project proposed that rural schools should also teach manufacturing and industry. Juan B. Soto Latorre represented that version in his award-winning AMPR essay. He proposed that the Department of Education more carefully engage the possibility of industrial training in rural schools. Soto Latorre argued that the Puerto Rican countryside contained multiple forms of raw materials that could be harvested and transformed into manufactured goods. Grasses and trees could provide the base for textiles, like Panama hats. Fruits, palm trees, and coconuts could serve as the basis for candy making and extraction of coconut oil. Campesinos, he argued, were unaware of the value of the raw materials that surrounded them and could be utilized for industrial work. Soto Latorre argued teachers should be trained in the theory and practice of light manufacturing based on local goods and markets in order to teach campesinos to work the land in a way that could also lead to industrial manufacturing.

When we have the good fortune of emancipating the worker, teaching him how to produce the majority of what he consumes, the country life will be the ideal life. The proletariat masses who drag out a miserable and monotonous existence, full of deprivations and vicissitudes, in the future will be a community that is, not only prepared for agricultural work, but also capable of carrying out industrial labor, under the auspices of an educational institution that is scientific and under the direction of the very competent Department of Education.⁹³

Industrial training, not just practical farming, should be a requirement of rural schools. This was the way to resolve the conditions under which rural workers labored and lived.

It was radical for teachers to argue that rural poverty was symptomatic of colonial economics. The AMPR leadership was offering a criticism of colonial economic relationships forged by the island’s increased integration into the U.S. empire. This was, for example, the economic argument proposed by the island’s dominant labor union, the *Federación Libre de Trabajadores* (FLT), Free Federation of Workers, since the late 1910s.⁹⁴ The difference was that the men who represented the AMPR

Image 2: School Children at Exhibition of Native Industry.

Source: Francisco Vizcarrondo, *The Second-Unit Rural Schools of Porto Rico* (San Juan: Insular Department of Education, 1930), 14.



leadership were teachers and school administrators employed by a colonial school system that was particularly hostile to any critique of U.S. colonialism. Within that professional space, any critique of the status quo suggested a lack of support for U.S. colonialism and often led to the repression of teachers.⁹⁵ In the case of rural schools, teachers gambled on their ability to speak out against the poverty of the countryside and to demand that the colonial Department of Education acknowledge that its priority should be to help improve the conditions of the rural poor instead of teaching English in urban schools. This was a risk that the leadership embraced as they engaged in the debate over the centrality of rural schools for the progress and modernity of Puerto Rico.

Resolutions, Recommendations, & Policies:
“¡Entonces Puerto Rico se habrá salvado!”

The debates and discussions over the direction of rural education in Puerto Rico became policy recommendations by the mid-1920s. At the 1925 AMPR convention held in Juncos, teachers unanimously supported an “important resolution” that asked the AMPR directorship to commit to the creation of a rural agriculture and industry curriculum for all schools (elementary and high schools). In the resolution, the AMPR membership asked its leadership to designate a commission to evaluate and analyze current conditions and outline a plan for an agriculture and industry training program. The commission’s action was “urgent” given the island’s “economic problem.” Puerto Rico was an agricultural country facing the “social problem” of rural to urban migration, or “the exodus of the campesino population to the cities.” Teachers declared agriculture was the “primary source of wealth” in Puerto Rico and that public schools were called to prepare “the citizens who are to resolve the agricultural problems of our island.” The founding of industry in Puerto Rico required “efficiently prepared technicians and artisans.” It was the responsibility of schools to prepare “men and women qualified for industry and occupations.”⁹⁶

In addition, the teachers’ resolution specifically requested that the AMPR leadership identify and assign “Puerto Rican educators” to a committee that must hold hearings where those interested and concerned could express their opinions.⁹⁷ This last request, that the commission be composed of Puerto Rican educators, reflected teachers’ criticism and rejection of twenty years of top-down Americanization policies imposed by a highly-centralized colonial Department of Education. They rejected the U.S. and pro-U.S. administrators’ insistence on enforcing English-language instruction and the creation of “tropical Yankees” when they, instead, asked for a curriculum that focused on agriculture and industry.⁹⁸ They were asking administrators to be mindful of the islands’ economic conditions. Curriculum should reflect the island’s particular needs, resources, and promises. Teachers’ support of the resolution signaled their challenge to the imposition of a U.S.-based curriculum and asserted authority over local visions for local schools.

Since the late 1910s, in their speeches, resolutions, and essays, teachers called for attention to rural communities, families, and schools. They envisioned a modern and reformed *jíbaro* and rejected his contemporary incarnation as a militant, organized, urban worker. Instead, they believed that, armed with efficient schools and a scientific curriculum, they could create a modern farmer. The new version of the *jíbaro* could be a family man responsible for his wife and children. As a small farmer who was

also actively engaged in modern markets for trade and income, he could provide the sustenance required for a healthy family. A new curriculum, therefore, could help establish this vision of traditional gender norms and patriarchy in rural communities as a way to address rural poverty.

Image 3: *Modern farmers*

Source: Young sons of resettlers in an outdoor class of the agricultural school. La Plata project, Puerto Rico. Photographer: Edwin Rosskam (1903-). Library of Congress.



The regeneration of the jíbaro, his family, and rural communities was no longer simply discursive. Teachers found ways to demand that their profession's leaders bring their concerns and visions to the legislature.

Teachers' proposed that island partisan politics had offered no solutions.⁹⁹ Meanwhile, U.S. colonial visions were vague and not adaptable to local conditions and demands. It was in teachers' hands now. Abraham Sepúlveda, the Rural School Inspector for Ponce, called for collaboration and commitment from all for this, ultimately, patriotic goal:

What we need is the help of our farmers, municipal and insular authorities, and especially our legislators. That they may facilitate the means and resources required to continue to prepare our rural youth in modern methods of agriculture and to convert the island we love, in a short period of time, into an agricultural and industrial factory. Then, Puerto Rico will have been saved.¹⁰⁰

The teachers' resolution was incorporated into a list of recommendations that the president of the AMPR presented before the island legislature in 1926.¹⁰¹ In addition, in 1928, the General Superintendent of Rural Education submitted to the Commissioner of Education a plan for the reorganization of the rural school curriculum. That year the legislature of Puerto Rico allocated \$25,000 for the reorganization of rural consolidated schools into second-unit schools.¹⁰² The Department of Education reorganized the rural curriculum and founded the second-unit schools, a type of agricultural-vocational school.¹⁰³ First-unit schools provided the first six years of elementary study.¹⁰⁴ Students who graduated from the first-unit schools (or completed at least three years) and older or adult students then enrolled in second-unit schools. "Their main purpose is the improvement of conditions in rural sections, especially those relating to the social and economic life of the country dwellers."¹⁰⁵ The first schools were established in Carolina, Arecibo, Aguadilla, Utuado, and Lares. By February 1931, 27 second-unit schools had been founded throughout the island.¹⁰⁶

Second-unit schools offered a gendered vocational curriculum. The new rural curriculum prepared young boys to become small farmers or artisans. Francisco Vizcarrondo, the assistant commissioner of education, explained, "Most of the people in the rural zone live on farming, this being the principal occupation. What our country boys need especially is to learn how to make a small farm produce for the needs of the family and something extra for saving purposes."¹⁰⁷ Vocational and industrial courses for boys included agriculture, hair cutting, carpentry, electricity, tin work, auto mechanics, shoe repairing, and "zootechnics." Meanwhile, the schools prepared girls to become better wives and mothers. They taught women labor skills to supplement their husband's income, in addition to their traditional home keeping duties. The girls' curriculum included hand embroidery, machine embroidery, cooking, lace making (hand, machinery, and *mundillo*), and social welfare. Both boys and girls took courses in manual and industrial work and native industries.

In addition, agriculture and home economics were required subjects.¹⁰⁸

In 1930, Vizcarrondo was proud to report the motivations behind the founding of the new second unit schools. In a language reminiscent of teachers' visions and demands since the late 1910s, Vizcarrondo explained the justification behind the reorganization of the rural school curriculum: "One of the greatest tasks that the department of Education has had since its organization has been the solution of the rural problem; a solution which will make rural life and rural conditions so attractive that the present exodus to the cities might soon be stopped."¹⁰⁹ In addition, the four main intentions of the new second-unit schools corresponded to the concerns teachers brought before the AMPR leadership, the commissioner, and the legislature over the past ten years. The new second unit schools intended to: "1) elevate the standard of living in the rural communities; 2) increase the productive capacity of the island; 3) put into operation a program of social and sanitary betterment, such a program to take into account the most urgent needs of those people living in the rural sections; 4) organize and put into operation a program of vocational education."¹¹⁰ The goals of the school brought together the modern ideas and projects teachers had proposed over the past ten years, and were informed by the same intentions, improving rural conditions and curbing migration.

Conclusion

Puerto Rico's relationship to the U.S. empire was redefined in the 1930s. The new second-unit schools and the reorganization of the rural curriculum in 1928 reflected a new historical moment. The devastation wrought by hurricane San Felipe was quickly followed by the economic turmoil of the Great Depression. Economic reconstruction and, eventually New Deal policies, took center stage.¹¹¹ The U.S.-centric idealism of Americanization seemed irrelevant and out of context given the economic devastation of the 1930s.¹¹² The Department of Education and colonial schools were reorganized a second time in July 1931, under the direction of its new commissioner of education José Padín and assistant commissioner Pedro A. Cebollero.¹¹³ Commissioner Padín collaborated closely with other prominent economic and colonial reformists, like Carlos E. Chardón, the new Chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico.¹¹⁴ Second-unit schools became one example of broader and longer-term reconstruction efforts of the 1930s and 1940s, like the Chardón Plan, the Puerto Rican Emergency Relief Administration (PRERA), and the Puerto Rican Reconstruction Administration (PRRA).¹¹⁵

However, the specific proposals that became law after 1928, the modern visions for the regeneration of the jíbaro and rural communities,

were informed and framed by earlier proposals teachers promoted since the late 1910s. The new reconstruction policies represented bottom-up recommendations a generation in the making, policies born from the frustrations of rural teachers and rural communities in the colonial school system over 20 years. Although the second-unit schools were founded under a different colonial framework (reconstruction rather than Americanization), the logic of the 1920s was still present in the economic reconstruction arguments of the 1930s.

The argument that the *jíbaro* required “rescuing” in order for Puerto Rico to be “saved” continued to inform the new 1930s school project. José Padín’s speeches and regular reports on the second-unit schools began by justifying the need to “rescue” and “save the *jíbaro*.”¹¹⁶ The tropes of rural life as anachronistic, the critique of poverty and tradition in the countryside, and the fear that the *jíbaros*’ condition was holding back progress of all others in Puerto Rico remained dominant. However, Padín interpreted *jíbaros*’ isolation in the mountains as a practice in resistance against colonial authority. It was the responsibility of teachers, nevertheless, to help him understand that the new authority—teachers—were there to help him modernize, unlike the repressive Spanish and Americans.

For more than four centuries the *jíbaro* has lived dispersed through the paths of our mountains. Surly, suspicious, unsociable, until now he has resisted all the efforts made to socialize him. General Dabán tried to relocate him in small villages in order to better provide him with sanitary services and instruction, but the campesino did not want to trade the independence of his isolation for a questionably effective hygiene and an insubstantial education. When in 1815, at the hands of Governor Ramírez, Puerto Rico left behind slavery and marched towards the Promised Land, the *jíbaro* was left behind in the mountains, forgotten by men and gods. He is still there, waiting for the arrival of a new Moses to rescue him.¹¹⁷

A new generation of teachers and the second-unit schools intended to redeem the “enslaved” *jíbaros* and deliver them to the Promised Land.

The 1930s vision also incorporated the earlier promises of modern science, public sanitation, and hygiene. Padín’s description of *jíbaros*, while similar to Pedro N. Ortiz’s from 1920, now also proposed an explicit critique of U.S. colonialism. The conditions that most urgently required reconstruction were not ones carried within an individual’s gene pool (eugenics), but rather the result of colonial politics and economics.

We have to rescue him. It is necessary that we emancipate him from his profound ignorance. We must disinfect his body and cure his soul because the *jíbaro*, in quantity and quality, is the best that we have. Without him, Puerto Rico becomes merely a geographical expression:

“a piece of land that belongs to but is not part of the United States,” according to the famous juridical opinion that we Puerto Ricans carry across our hearts like a Caribbean arrow.¹¹⁸

Colonial reformers, like Padín, acknowledged and lamented the limitations of the colonial relationship. Puerto Ricans must commit to the regeneration of the jíbaros if they were to reconstruct themselves. This did not, however, imply a revolution leading to political sovereignty. Nevertheless, regeneration of the jíbaro was a worthy and patriotic goal, one that rural schools promised to engage. “In order to save the jíbaro, the second unit school navigates over the muddy and choppy waters that hurricane San Felipe left behind. We must rescue our brother so we may sleep soundly. We must save him because without him we are lost.”¹¹⁹

An important distinction, therefore, as educators moved forward in the 1930s, was that the language of regeneration combined with a new vision for the responsibilities of an activist-state. Padín combined a discourse that promised to “rescue” the jíbaro with one that also intended to “socialize” him and “revolutionize rural life.”¹²⁰ The argument that the regeneration of the jíbaro was the responsibility of an activist state was informed by the prominent international rural school example of the post-Great Depression era—Lázaro Cárdena’s socialist schools in post-revolutionary Mexico. Puerto Rican educators travelled to Mexico, met with leading scholars like Moisés Sáenz, and returned to the island armed with a new language and purpose for the state.¹²¹ In Mexico, a nation-building project sought to regenerate rural communities and incorporate isolated regional indigenous and *mestizo* peoples into one centralized Mexican nation with the help of schools and teachers.¹²² Puerto Rican educators proposed that the Island’s colonial state could serve the same purpose, although within the limitations of the imperial framework. “The second unit school—the school farm—represents the type of socialized school capable of revolutionizing our rural life.”¹²³

The new rural school curriculum, with its intention to rescue, socialize, and revolutionize the jíbaro, radicalized the language of reform proposed by teachers in the 1920s. The 1930s visions, although informed by calls for rural reform that imagined regeneration of jíbaros as patriotic duty, were now also informed by the socialist schools of Mexico. The colonial framework, the fact that Puerto Rico “belonged to but was not part of the U.S.,” did not mean, for colonial reformers like Padín, that schools were restricted in their ability to regenerate its citizens. That goal, regeneration combined with reconstruction, shaped the 1930s and 1940s Puerto Rican school project. Although nevertheless colonial, it marked a dramatic change from the limited and self-serving Americanization ideologies of the early twentieth century.

Notes

- 1 “La escuela rural en Puerto Rico se halla colocada en una posición tal en el orden social de nuestro país, que está llamada a desempeñar uno de los puestos prominentes en la escala del progreso de nuestra comunidad... Nuestra escuela rural tiene que resolver problemas de alta transcendencia.” Juan B. Soto Latorre, “Como puede la escuela rural influir en el desarrollo de las industrias del país,” *Porto Rico School Review* 2 (March 1918):34. Hereafter cited as *PRSR*.
- 2 James L. Dietz, *Economic History of Puerto Rico: Institutional Change and Capitalist Development* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986); Francisco A. Scarano, *Puerto Rico: Cinco siglos de historia* (San Juan: McGraw-Hill Interamericana, 2008); César J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History since 1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007); José Trías Monge, *Puerto Rico: The Trials of the Oldest Colony in the World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Christina Duffy Burnett and Burke Marshall, eds., *Foreign in a Domestic Sense: Puerto Rico, American Expansion, and the Constitution* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2001).
- 3 César J. Ayala and Laird W. Bergad, “Rural Puerto Rico During the Early Twentieth Century Reconsidered: Land and Society, 1899-1915,” *Latin American Research Review* 37 (2002):65-97.
- 4 Dietz, *Economic History*; Scarano, *Puerto Rico*; Ángel G. Quintero Rivera, *Patricios y plebeyos: Burgueses, hacendados, artesanos y obreros. Las relaciones de clase en el Puerto Rico de cambio de siglo* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1988); Ángel Quintero Rivera and Gervasio García, *Desafío y solidaridad: Breve historia del movimiento obrero puertorriqueño* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1986).
- 5 Labor unrest grew throughout the early twentieth century. As a result of the migration of coffee workers to sugar areas, the centralization of land, and the oversupply of labor that supported a decrease in wages, strikes abounded along the coast of Puerto Rico. For example, there were 78 strikes that involved 25,000 workers in 36 towns between July 1, 1917 and May 31, 1918. Dietz, *Economic History*, 112 n. 91. On labor in the broader Caribbean region, see Winston James, “Culture, Labor, and Race in the Shadow of U.S. Capital,” in *The Caribbean: A History of the Region and Its People*, ed. Stephan Palmié and Francisco A. Scarano (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 445-458; O. Nigel Bolland, “Labor Protests, Rebellions, and the Rise of Nationalism during Depression and

War,” in *The Caribbean*, ed. Palmié and Scarano, 459-474.

- ⁶ However, the Socialist Party was not the only one to appeal to workers in the early twentieth century. The Independence Party, later the Nationalist Party, and the Union Party also developed arguments intended to generate the support of workers.
- ⁷ Rafael Bernabe, *Respuestas al colonialismo en la política puertorriqueña, 1899–1929* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 1996).
- ⁸ In this article, through an analysis of the writings and speeches of the AMPR leadership, I examine how the teaching leadership proposed this line of argument. Their perspectives were recorded in the meeting minutes held in the AMPR archives and published in the education journal (*Puerto Rico School Review*), individual memoirs, and newspaper articles. On the 1920s history of the AMPR, see chapter 2 and 3 in Solsiree del Moral, *Negotiating Empire: The Cultural Politics of Schools in Puerto Rico, 1898-1952* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2013). On teacher mobilizations from the late nineteenth century to the turn of the century, see Rubén Maldonado Jiménez, *¿Hasta cuándo? La lucha de los maestros por justicia salarial, antes y después de la invasión de Estados Unidos a Puerto Rico, 1880–1900* (San Juan: Ediciones Nueva Provincia, 1998); Rubén Maldonado Jiménez, *La persecución política del magisterio en Puerto Rico* (Toa Alta: Editorial Nueva Provincia, 2006).
- ⁹ We have to make a distinction between recent historical research, which argues that small farmers did not lose land to sugar corporations (Ayala and Bergad 2002), and the dominant line of argument in teachers’ writings in the 1910s and 1920s, which developed a strong link between the transformation of small farmers into wage workers and the rise of large sugar corporations.
- ¹⁰ Fundamentally, their vision for the regeneration of Puerto Rican society, but particularly the reorganization of rural families and communities, was a modernizing project. Urban professionals (teachers) proposed that the allegedly backwards practices of the countryside must be reorganized and restructured into efficient and modern examples of family, home, and community. This argument resonates with the modern visions of late nineteenth-century intellectuals. Silvia Álvarez Curbelo argues that modernity was the dominant discourse of nineteenth-century Puerto Rican elites. Although members of a society that was not modern—a closed and isolated colony, rather than a nation-state, poorly connected to the world economy and still dependent on slave labor and other forms

of coerced labor—elite writings articulated an urgency to pull Puerto Rico into modernity. Silvia Álvarez Curbelo, *Un país del porvenir: el afán de modernidad en Puerto Rico (siglo XIX)* (San Juan: Ediciones Callejón, 2001). See also Ileana M. Rodríguez-Silva, “Liberal Elites’ Writing: The Racial Dissection of the Puerto Rican Specimen,” *Silencing Race: Disentangling Blackness, Colonialism, and National Identities in Puerto Rico* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 59-90; Zilkia Janer, *Puerto Rican Nation-Building Literature: Impossible Romance* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005).

- ¹¹ On Americanization and education in Puerto Rico, the classic text is Aida Negrón de Montilla, *La americanización en Puerto Rico y el sistema de instrucción pública, 1900-1930* (San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 1998).
- ¹² José Manuel Navarro, *Creating Tropical Yankees: Social Science Textbooks and U.S. Ideological Control in Puerto Rico, 1898-1908* (New York: Routledge, 2002); Pablo Navarro-Rivera, “The Imperial Enterprise and Educational Policies in Colonial Puerto Rico,” in *Colonial Crucible: Empire in the Making of the Modern American State*, ed. Alfred W. McCoy and Francisco A. Scarano (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2009), 163-174.
- ¹³ Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Manhood and the Antebellum American Empire* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Amy S. Greenberg, *Manifest Destiny and American Territorial Expansion: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/St. Martins, 2012).
- ¹⁴ See authors collected in McCoy and Scarano, ed., *Colonial Crucible* and the collection of essays in “Part 6: The New Empire,” in *The Caribbean*, ed. Palmié and Scarano, 415-504.
- ¹⁵ Greg Grandin, *The Last Colonial Massacre: Latin America in the Cold War* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Gil M. Joseph, “What We Now Know and Should Know: Bringing Latin America More Meaningfully into Cold War Studies,” in *In from the Cold: Latin America’s New Encounter with the Cold War*, ed. Gilbert M. Joseph and Daniela Spenser (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 3-46.
- ¹⁶ Greg Grandin, *Empire’s Workshop: Latin America, the United States, and the Rise of the New Imperialism* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2006).
- ¹⁷ Warwick Anderson, *Colonial Pathologies: American Tropical Medicine, Race, and Hygiene in the Philippines* (Durham: Duke University

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- ¹⁸ Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (North Carolina: University of North Carolina Press, 1998).
- ¹⁹ Michael L. Conniff, *Black Labor on a White Canal: Panama, 1904-1981* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1985); Julie Greene, *The Canal Builders: Making America's Empire at the Panama Canal* (New York: Penguin Press, 2009).
- ²⁰ Frank Moya Pons, *The Dominican Republic: A National History* (Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 1998).
- ²¹ Mary A. Renda, *Taking Haiti: Military Occupation and the Culture of U.S. Imperialism, 1915-1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001); Hans Schmidt, *The United States Occupation of Haiti, 1915-1934* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1995).
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- ²⁴ Noenoe K. Silva, *Aloha Betrayed: Native Hawaiian Resistance to American Colonialism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004); Kramer, *The Blood of Government*.
- ²⁵ Walter LaFeber, *The New Empire: An Interpretation of American Expansion, 1860-1898* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1963).
- ²⁶ Lanny Thompson, *Imperial Archipelago: Representation and Rule in the Insular Territories under U.S. Dominion after 1898* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2010).
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- ²⁸ William Roseberry, "Americanization in the Americas," *Anthropologies and Histories: Essays in Culture, History, and Political Economy* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1989), 88.
- ²⁹ Navarro, *Creating Tropical Yankees*; Negrón de Montilla, *La americanización*.
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- ³⁶ On the history of education in these early years, see Juan José Osuna, *A History of Education in Puerto Rico*, 2nd. ed., (Río Piedras: Editorial Universitaria, 1949); Negrón de Montilla, *La americanización*; Carmen Gómez Tejera and David Cruz López, *La escuela puertorriqueña* (Sharon: Troutman Press, 1970); Alfonso López Yustos, *Historia documental de la educación en Puerto Rico, 1503-1970* (San Juan: Sandemann, 1985); Rubén Maldonado Jiménez, ed., *Historia y educación: Acercamiento a la historia social de la educación en Puerto Rico* (San Juan: Editorial de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, 2001); Ramón Claudio Tirado, *Cien años de educación y de administración educativa en Puerto Rico: 1900-2000* (Hato Rey: Publicaciones Puertorriqueñas, 2003); Pablo Navarro Rivera, *Universidad de Puerto Rico: De control político a crisis permanente, 1903-1952* (Río Piedras: Ediciones Huracán, 2000).
- ³⁷ Osuna, *A History of Education*, table 6, 628.
- ³⁸ The AMPR annual accords and meeting minutes are collected in the "Libro de actas, 1910-1915, Libro #1," housed in the private archives of the Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico in San Juan. From 1917 until the mid-1920s, the accords were published in the *Porto Rico School Review* journal.
- ³⁹ Del Moral, *Negotiating Empire*.
- ⁴⁰ Francisco M. Zeno, "Notas del autor," *Cuestiones sociales. El obrero agrícola de Puerto Rico* (San Juan: La Correspondencia de Puerto Rico, 1922), n.p.
- ⁴¹ Zeno, *Cuestiones sociales*, 85.
- ⁴² Zeno, *Cuestiones sociales*, 11.
- ⁴³ Zeno defines the relationship between sugar corporations, land consolidation, the radicalization of the worker, and socialist ideology in "Chapter 11," *Cuestiones sociales*, 83-87.

- ⁴⁴ Zeno, *Cuestiones sociales*, 125-142.
- ⁴⁵ Zeno, *Cuestiones sociales*, 139.
- ⁴⁶ Zeno discusses the relationship between illiteracy, adult education, and political sovereignty in “Chapter 8,” *Cuestiones sociales*, 59-63 and 111-115.
- ⁴⁷ Zeno, *Cuestiones sociales*, 111. Zeno argues that inefficient rural schools should be converted into practical agricultural schools and details an ideal curriculum in “Chapter 15,” *Cuestiones sociales*, 119-138.
- ⁴⁸ Zeno, *Cuestiones sociales*, 59.
- ⁴⁹ Zeno details how rural schools and other social policies can serve as solution to the rural problem in the “Solutions” section, *Cuestiones sociales*, 91-148.
- ⁵⁰ Soto Latorre, “Como puede la escuela,” 35.
- ⁵¹ José González Ginorio, one of the founding members of the AMPR, worked as a rural teacher, principal, school inspector, superintendent of schools, and the San Juan municipal commissioner of schools. Additionally, he served as president of the AMPR in 1920, 1939, and 1940. José González Ginorio, *El descubrimiento de Puerto Rico. Examen crítico del segundo viaje de don Cristóbal Colón y de las autoridades en relación con la historia del mismo* (San Juan: Imp. Venezuela, 1936).
- ⁵² José González Ginorio, “Manifiesto del nuevo presidente de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico,” *PRSR* 4 (Feb. 1920):55.
- ⁵³ On the tradition of silencing class and racial differences through the promotion of the concept of “social harmony” in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, see Rodríguez-Silva, *Silencing Race* and Findlay, *Imposing Decency*.
- ⁵⁴ Gerardo Sellés Solá, “A los honorables presidentes del senado y cámara de representantes y las honorables comisiones de instrucción de la legislatura insular,” *PRSR* 5 (April 1921):35-43; José González Ginorio, “Educación doméstica: Para padres y maestros,” *PRSR* 1 (Oct. 1917):10-16.
- ⁵⁵ Sellés Solá, “A los honorables,” 37.
- ⁵⁶ Sellés Solá, “A los honorables,” 36-37.
- ⁵⁷ Sellés Solá, “A los honorables,” 36.

- ⁵⁸ Soto Latorre, "Como puede la escuela," 40.
- ⁵⁹ Gerardo Sellés Solá, "Párrafos del informe del presidente de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico a la duodécima asamblea anual de la asociación, celebrada en la ciudad de Ponce durante los días 26, 27, 28 y 29 de diciembre 1922," *PRSR* 7 (Jan. 1923): 49-50. This call for a challenge to large landowners, and particularly, absentee owners, became part of the platform of both the Nationalist Party and the Popular Democratic Party in the 1930s and 1940s.
- ⁶⁰ Antonio Otero y Arce, "Trabajo leído en el Instituto de Maestros Rurales celebrado en Ponce," *PRSR* 11 (Jan. 1927):39. A common theme in the writings of male educators and intellectuals was the "feminization" of public spaces in the early twentieth century with the introduction of a co-education public school system, the presence of female university students, and the feminization of the teaching profession.
- ⁶¹ In addition to Otero y Arce, "Trabajo leído," see Liga de Asociaciones Escolares de Puerto Rico, *Trabajos leídos por su presidente Don Antonio Otero y Arce en las Asambleas de padres y maestros celebrados en la isla de Puerto Rico* (Imprenta "El Día", 1925).
- ⁶² Osuna, *A History of Education*, 120 and 628.
- ⁶³ Gerardo Sellés Solá, "A Letter," *PRSR* 6 (Oct. 1921):40-41.
- ⁶⁴ José C. Rosario, "El problema de la escuela rural. Conferencia leída por el Sr. J.C. Rosario, Superintendente General de Educación Rural, ante la asamblea de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico celebrada en la ciudad de Arecibo durante los días 27, 28, 29, y 30 de diciembre de 1921," *PRSR* 6 (Feb. 1922):21-29.
- ⁶⁵ In his speech, he does not name the rural town where he first worked as a rural teacher and it is likely that he worked in several different rural schools before he was promoted to supervisor. He was the Supervisor of Schools in Carolina from 1915 to 1917 and Supervisor of Schools for the municipality of Utuado from 1917 to 1921. Department of Education, *Annual Report of the Commissioner of Education* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 1915-21).
- ⁶⁶ Rosario, "El problema," 21.
- ⁶⁷ Rosario, "El problema," 21.
- ⁶⁸ Osuna, *A History of Education*.
- ⁶⁹ Isaac Del Rosario, *Mis cinco años de maestro rural* (Mayagüez: Imp.

- de La Voz Escolar, 1920); Sellés Solá, "A los honorables," 35-43; Osuna, *A History of Education*; Gerardo Sellés Solá, "Mensaje del presidente de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico, Sr. G. Sellés Solá, leído en la sesión inaugural de la asamblea anual de la asociación, celebrada en la ciudad de Arecibo durante los días 27, 28, 29, y 30 de diciembre de 1921," *PRSR* 6 (Feb. 1922):8-20.
- ⁷⁰ Rosario, "El problema," 21.
- ⁷¹ José Padín, "Editorial Comment: ¡Ese sesenta y cinco y medio por ciento!," *PRSR* 1 (Feb. 1917):6.
- ⁷² "Importante resolución aprobada por unanimidad en la asamblea anual de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico," *PRSR* 10 (Feb. 1926):43; Francisco Vizcarrondo, "Asamblea anual de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico," *PRSR* 11 (Jan. 1927):8-9, 47.
- ⁷³ Juan B. Huyke, "Carta circular no. 123-C. Agricultura en las escuelas públicas," *PRSR* 8 (May 1924):12.
- ⁷⁴ Soto Latorre, "Como puede la escuela," 40.
- ⁷⁵ Antonio G. Martínez, "El problema de los niños," *El Mundo*, 3 December 1919, 9.
- ⁷⁶ E. Alfaro Díaz, "Por el campesino," *PRSR* 1 (March 1917):50-51; Miguel Meléndez Muñoz, "Problemas sociales: El jíbaro y la tierra," *PRSR* 14 (Feb. 1930):33-4; González Ginorio, "Manifiesto," 53-6.
- ⁷⁷ Pedro N. Ortiz, "Conferencia sobre el tema "La higiene como problema comunal en nuestros distritos rurales. Influencia y labor de la escuela rural en la solución de este problema," *PRSR* 6 (Nov. 1921):30.
- ⁷⁸ On neo-Lamarckian eugenics, Latin American intellectuals, and nation-building narratives, see Nancy Leys Stepan, *"The Hour of Eugenics": Race, Gender, and Nation in Latin America* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991). On the role of eugenics and science in characterizations of the peasantry, see Benigno Trigo, *Subjects of Crisis: Race and Gender as Disease in Latin America* (Hanover: University Press of New England, 2000). In addition, Cesare Lombroso was particularly influential in Puerto Rico and Cuba with the 1899 Spanish translation of *Criminal Man*.
- ⁷⁹ Ortiz, "Conferencia," 30.
- ⁸⁰ Ortiz, "Conferencia," 30.
- ⁸¹ Severo O'Neill, "La enseñanza de la agricultura en las escuelas

- rurales,” *PRSR* 3 (March 1919):65.
- ⁸² O’Neill, “La enseñanza,” 67.
- ⁸³ O’Neill, “La enseñanza,” 65.
- ⁸⁴ R. B. Pérez Mercado, “Conferencias rurales,” *PRSR* 4 (Jan. 1920): 45-46.
- ⁸⁵ Augusto Dieppa, “La escuela rural,” *PRSR* 5 (March 1921):14-16; Sellés Solá, “Párrafos,” 49-50.
- ⁸⁶ E. G., “Notas escolares: Peñuelas,” *PRSR* 1 (Dec. 1917):79-81.
- ⁸⁷ Emphasis in original. Dieppa, “La escuela rural,” 15.
- ⁸⁸ Fred K. Fleagle, “Rural and Industrial Education. The School and the Community,” *PRSR* 1 (Jan. 1917):24-27, 37; Fred K. Fleagle, “Rural and Industrial Education. Relation of the Teacher to the Community,” *PRSR* 1 (Feb. 1917):23-26.
- ⁸⁹ Dieppa, “La escuela rural,” 15.
- ⁹⁰ Emphasis in original. Dieppa, “La escuela rural,” 15.
- ⁹¹ Sellés Solá, “Párrafos,” 50.
- ⁹² Sellés Solá, “Párrafos,” 51.
- ⁹³ Soto Latorre, “Como puede la escuela,” 40.
- ⁹⁴ See similar positions proposed by the FLT in the 1920s. José O Solá, “Partisanship, Power Contenders, and Colonial Politics in Puerto Rico, 1920s,” *Caribbean Studies* 38 (Jan.-June 2010):3-35.
- ⁹⁵ Negrón de Montilla, *La americanización*.
- ⁹⁶ “Importante resolución,” 43.
- ⁹⁷ “Importante resolución,” 43.
- ⁹⁸ The term “tropical Yankees” comes from Navarro, *Creating Tropical Yankees*.
- ⁹⁹ Sellés Solá, “Párrafos,” 49-64.
- ¹⁰⁰ Abraham Sepúlveda, “Distrito escolar de Ponce, Puerto Rico: Notas agrícolas,” *PRSR* 11 (May 1927):37.
- ¹⁰¹ Juan E. Silva, “Acuerdos tomados por el Departamento de Inspección de la Asociación de Maestros de Puerto Rico en la asamblea celebrada en la ciudad de Juncos el día 28 de diciembre de 1925,” *PRSR* 10 (Feb. 1926):44.

- ¹⁰² Pedro P. Arán, "Rural Education: The Second Unit Rural Schools," *PRSR* 14 (April 1930):15-16, 46.
- ¹⁰³ Francisco Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico: The Second Unit Rural Schools of Porto Rico* (San Juan: Insular Department of Education, 1930).
- ¹⁰⁴ The curriculum of first unit schools included: arithmetic, Spanish, English, nature study, practical and theoretical agriculture, health and sanitation, citizenship, geography, history of Puerto Rico, and manual arts. Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico*.
- ¹⁰⁵ Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico*, 3.
- ¹⁰⁶ José Padín, "Lo que recomienda el comisionado Padín en cuanto al desarrollo del sistema de segundas unidades," *PRSR* 15 (Feb. 1931): 26, 36-37.
- ¹⁰⁷ Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico*, 5.
- ¹⁰⁸ Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico*, 4-5.
- ¹⁰⁹ Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico*, 3.
- ¹¹⁰ Vizcarrondo, *Education in Porto Rico*, 7. Arán, "Rural Education," 15-16, 46.
- ¹¹¹ Dietz, *Economic History*; Scarano, *Puerto Rico*.
- ¹¹² The 1925 Columbia University study of Puerto Rico's schools called for a reassessment of the prioritization of Americanization policies given the reality that rural families could only afford to send a few of their children to school for about three years. International Institute of Teacher's College, Columbia University, *A Survey of the Public Educational System of Porto Rico* (New York: Bureau of Publications, 1926).
- ¹¹³ Departamento de Instrucción, *Reorganización del Departamento de Instrucción: Plan de reorganización efectivo el día 1º de julio de 1931* (San Juan: Departamento de Instrucción, 1931).
- ¹¹⁴ "Educational Events: University of Puerto Rico," *PRSR* 15 (Jan. 1931):8-13; José Padín, "Discurso pronunciado por el doctor José Padín, comisionado de instrucción, en la toma de posesión del nuevo canciller de la universidad," *PRSR* 15 (March 1931):3-4; José Padín, *La doctrina del nuevo trato: Su origen y significación* (San Juan: Bureau of Supplies, Printing and Transportation, 1936).
- ¹¹⁵ Dietz, *Economic History*.

- ¹¹⁶ Padín writes: “Así se rescatara al jíbaro.” Padín, “Valores sociales,” 3.
- ¹¹⁷ José Padín, “Valores sociales y económicos de las segundas unidades rurales,” *PRSR* 14 (April 1930):3.
- ¹¹⁸ Padín, “Valores sociales,” 3.
- ¹¹⁹ Padín, “Valores sociales,” 3.
- ¹²⁰ Padín, “Valores sociales,” 3.
- ¹²¹ Padín, “Valores sociales,” 3, 47; Moisés Sáenz, “La educación rural en Méjico,” *PRSR* 14 (March 1930):24-25, 27; José Padín, “The New Educational Program,” *PRSR* 15 (March 1931):8-11, 38; Rafael Ramírez, “Educación rural: México y algunos aspectos de su educación rural e indígena,” *PRSR* 20 (Dec. 1935):7-10; Gildo Massó, “Educación rural: Visitando escuelas rurales en Jalisco, México,” *PRSR* 20 (Jan. 1935):10-13. While Mexico was the model for vocational training in rural schools, Cuba was often a point of reference for industrial or vocational training in urban schools. Frances M. Fernald, “Education in Cuba: The “Presidente Machado” Industrial School, Havana,” *PRSR* 14 (May 1930):8; Juan López López, “Tópicos industriales: La escuela técnico-industrial ‘Presidente Machado’,” *PRSR* 15 (March 1931), 25, 27.
- ¹²² Mary Kay Vaughan, *Cultural Politics in Revolution: Teachers, Peasants, and Schools in Mexico, 1930-1940* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1997); Alexander S. Dawson, *Indian and Nation in Revolutionary Mexico* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2004); Stephen E. Lewis, “The Nation, Education, and the ‘Indian Problem’ in Mexico,” in *The Eagle and the Virgin: Nation and Cultural Revolution in Mexico, 1920-1940*, ed. Mary Kay Vaughan and Stephen E. Lewis (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 176-195; Elsie Rockwell, *Hacer escuela, hacer estado: La educación posrevolucionaria vista desde Tlaxcala* (Zamora, Michoacán: Centro Público de Investigación, 2007).
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