



**The oath to the Constitution of 1857 by public instruction teachers in
San Luis Potosí, 1890. Mexico¹**

El juramento a la Constitución de 1857 por los profesores de instrucción pública en
San Luis Potosí, 1890. México.

O juramento à Constituição de 1857 por professores de instrução pública em
San Luis Potosí, 1890. México

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Abstract

The objective of this work is to analyse the ritual of the oath to the Constitution of 1857 by teachers of the public education system, as officials of the Liberal Mexican State, specifically in the state of San Luis Potosí in 1890. The historical reconstruction was done with the consultation of primary sources such as minutes of the swearing-in ceremonies to the Constitution, trades and reports of the political leaders of the City Councils, with support in secondary sources, and with the application of comparative techniques. The socio-historical and political context of 1890 in which these ceremonies were carried out is also located. The oath, as a republican ceremony, implied a commitment to liberal constitutional ideals. It is corroborated that the school, as a public institution, where students go to appropriate culture, is also where national values are built and a sense of belonging to the nation is forged.

Keywords: Constitution. State. Teaching.

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Resumen

El objetivo de este trabajo es analizar el ritual del juramento a la Constitución de 1857 por los profesores de instrucción pública, como funcionarios del Estado Liberal Mexicano. Específicamente en el estado de San Luis Potosí en 1890. La reconstrucción histórica se hizo con la consulta en fuentes primarias como actas de las ceremonias de juramento a la Constitución, oficios e informes de los jefes políticos de los Ayuntamientos, con apoyo en fuentes secundarias, y con la aplicación de técnicas comparativas, además se sitúa el contexto socio histórico y político de 1890 en que se llevaron a cabo estas ceremonias. El juramento, como ceremonia republicana implicaba comprometerse con los ideales liberales constitucionales. Se corrobora que la escuela, como institución pública, a donde acuden los estudiantes a apropiarse de la cultura, ahí también se construían los valores nacionales y se forjaba el sentido de pertenencia a la nación.

Palabras clave: Constitución. Estado. Magisterio.

Resumo

O objetivo deste trabalho é analisar o ritual de juramento à Constituição de 1857 por professores de instrução pública, como funcionários do Estado Liberal Mexicano. Especificamente no estado de San Luis Potosí em 1890. A reconstrução histórica foi feita com a consulta de fontes primárias como atas das cerimônias de posse da Constituição, ofícios e relatórios dos líderes políticos das Câmaras Municipais, com apoio em fontes secundárias, e com a aplicação de técnicas comparativas, situa-se também o contexto sócio-histórico e político de 1890 em que se realizaram estas cerimônias. O juramento, como cerimônia republicana, implicava um compromisso com os ideais constitucionais liberais. Corrobora-se que a escola, como instituição pública, onde os alunos se apropriam da cultura, é também onde se constroem valores nacionais e se forja o sentimento de pertencimento à nação.

Palavras-chave: Constituição. Estado. Ensino.

Introduction

The performance of humans in society is mediated by a combination of patterns, stereotypes and methods of coexistence which are repeated on a daily basis. These actions constitute part of the socio-cultural legacy through which new generations are appropriated. Our values form and underpin individual and social behaviour in every person. Swearing an oath to the Constitution is a value; its implication is to affirm or recognise obedience or loyalty. Carmen Castañón (2016) analyses the concept of taking the oath, and concludes that it is a commitment which is expressly and solemnly assumed through ethical values. It also entails promising one's own honour and commitment to the fulfilment of duties. Within the context of civil service, it relates to the commitments of duty, responsibility and loyalty to the task entrusted to us by the government and the State, within a frame of legality outlined by the law. Overall, according to the Real Academia de la Lengua Española dictionary (2021), swearing the oath means to solemnly obey the constitutional precepts of a country. From this definition, the ritual of taking an oath to the constitution is analysed as an obligation for exercising one's profession as a teacher in public schools in Mexico in the second half of the 21st Century, specifically in the state of San Luis Potosí.

According to Carlos Ramos y Carlos González (2021), the rite, which is understood as a ceremony to swear an oath to the constitution, dates back to the Political Constitution of the Spanish Monarchy in 1812, when it was suggested that all servants of the Crown should respect the constitution and its laws. This sentiment was undoubtedly echoed in the constitutions of Independent Mexico throughout 19th Century. Ramos and González refer to the fact that the 1824 Federal Constitution was published on 4th October of the same year, and that President Guadalupe Victoria was the first to swear the oath to it. Article 101 of the constitution specifies that "I swear to God and the Holy Gospel that I will loyally carry out the mission that the United States of Mexico has entrusted to me, and I will uphold and lead others to fully uphold the constitution and general laws of the federation." In that regard, Mario Melgar (2008) affirms that the first constitutional texts of Mexico included a religious oath and an obligation to fulfil the constitution. As can be clearly observed in the aforementioned article – I swear to God and the Holy Gospel – the sentiment conveyed is first and foremost a religious one, even though the separation of church and secular state had already been established.

During the interim government of Miguel Barragán, President of the Republic, a decree was issued on 27th October 1835, in which it specifically expressed that the publication of the Constitutional Bases (Conservative constitution), should be made in a solemn act; the president would swear an oath of the following terms: "Do you swear before God to uphold and lead others to uphold the constitutional bases sanctioned by the current general Congress?". Furthermore, the civil, moral and ecclesiastical authorities, members of corporations, state managers and employees, military chiefs and troop officials had to take the following oath: "Do you swear before God to uphold and lead others to uphold the constitutional bases sanctioned by the current general Congress?" - as stated in the second article of this decree. The discursive and ideological emphasis of the first article continue – to swear before God – and later to the law. Within this socio-historical context, the historical relationship between church and State, constitutes a nexus which the conservative political group would defend, whilst the liberals would fight until they managed to establish the Liberal Mexican State.

For the purposes of this paper, the 1857 Federal Constitution is the liberal document which explains and outlines the process of formation of the Mexican State. The constitutional oath was no longer made to God nor to the Gospel, and was redirected to the obligation to "uphold and lead others to uphold the constitution; instead, a compromise was made to carry out the mission – according to the constitution – from which we can infer the concept of respect to the constitutional text." (RAMOS Y GONZÁLEZ, 2021, p. 114).

Article 83 of this Constitution effectively leaves out God and the Gospel, and focuses on “unreservedly upholding and leading others to uphold the Constitution, including all of its additions and reforms, the laws of reform as well as any other law which may come from it, always seeking the wellbeing and prosperity of the union” (CONSTITUCIÓN 1857, p.203). It is important to note that the reform laws are also alluded to within the content of the article, which is a step towards the consolidation of the ideas of the liberal State. The ideological differences with the conservative political group provoked political divides which gave rise to the War of Reform, from 1857 to 1861, despite the oath to the constitution. The argument of Carlos Ramos and Carlos González (2021) is complemented by the opinion of Susana Duro (2021), who regards the constitutional values and principles as limits to political action by the State and the civil service. She reiterates that “both the institutions and powers of the state, and the civil service, must comply with the law. Because the parties and the institutions, the powers and the authorities are at the service of the Constitution. Not the other way round” (DURO, 2021, p.251). This encompasses respect for the Constitution and its laws. The civil service is mediated by a set of values which underpin the behaviour of all those who work for the state, and this includes public school teachers.

In his dissertation about the 1857 Constitution, Francisco José Paoli Bolio (2017) emphasises that, despite the ideological and political differences between liberals and conservatives, “the Constitution was transformed into a liberal symbol compared to that old regime which endlessly resisted political and socio-economic modernisation” (PAOLI BOLIO, 2017 p.133). Therefore, the constitution, as a regulatory document of the Mexican state, is fundamental for juridical and political organisation and to guarantee rights and obligations to citizens. For this reason, to swear an oath to the constitution is a symbol of respect and obedience to the regulatory mandate.

The rite is the ceremony in which the duty that the State bestows to its civil servants is made valid, just and legal. Swearing an oath to the constitution was a ritual which was carried out within public institutions by civil servants, with the aim of completely guaranteeing the obligation of the new civil servant to respect, defend and fulfil their job roles at the head of public departments.

This article is a work of historical investigation, which aims to reconstruct the oath to the Constitution of 1857, taken by primary school teachers as an act of republicanism by civil servants. Its historical antecedent is found in the same oath taken by the Head of State and the citizens.

The socio-historical context of 19th Century Mexico is nuanced by social and political movements and revolutions. The period between the War of Independence of 1810 and the declaration of Independence in 1821 is full of battles and bloodshed. The ideological differences between liberals and conservatives caused political conflict and armed uprisings during the process of the forming of the nation. The political organisation of a liberal or centralist republic, according to the hegemonic political group of the time, gave rise to the first empire controlled by Agustín de Iturbide, an unstable and short-lived government, followed by a return to the disputes calling for an organisation which guaranteed the consolidation of the Mexican nation to be defined.

Due to these turbulent times, the economic and political interests of foreign powers took on an influential role for the independence of Texas, and later in the Mexico-United States war, the most serious consequence of which was the loss of more than half of the national territory. France, England and Spain also adopted a belligerent stance towards Mexico. In the end it was France that, due to geopolitical interests, invaded Mexico by order of Napoleon III and established the second Mexican empire.

The disputes between liberals and conservatives and their ideological and political differences provoked the civil war from 1857-1861, and consequently France, with the help of the conservative group and the Catholic Church, were able to name Maximiliano of Hapsburg as emperor of Mexico. Two governments – that of Benito Juárez and that of the empire - ruled the country simultaneously. The war was the driving force which pressured both belligerent governments, but the liberals eventually triumphed, which gave rise to the restoration of the Republic.

To explain the relevance of the oath to the Liberal Constitution of 1857 for the employees of federal, state and municipal government, it is important to specify that a point of reference is the Ayutla Revolution of 1854, led by Juan Álvarez, against the abuses and excessive power of Antonio López de Santa Anna. One of the demands of the revolution was to put together a Constituent Congress in order to create a new constitution. When the revolution succeeded, Juan Álvarez himself seized power, however he shortly resigned and the presidency was taken by Ignacio Comonfort, who had to swear an oath to the new Constitution of 1857. As described by Ray Broussard (2021), Comonfort betrayed the liberal cause of the Constitution due to political interests and pressures, and he changed his allegiance in order to participate in a political coup against his own government: “the president led the movement against the aforementioned code and Congress. The military coup in Tacubaya in December 1857 can be considered as the beginning of the War of Reform” (VILLEGAS, 2001, p.53). Given these events, the conservative general Félix María Zuluaga, who highlighted the cause of the interests of the conservative group, became president of the country. This event gave rise to the War of Reform from 1857 to 1861.

Within this political and historical context of Mexico in the 19th Century, the federal states participated in the decisions of the central government, adapting to the tensions generated by the political changes in the country’s capital. The state of San Luis Potosí was no exception, and when the 1857 Constitution was instated, the local reactions quickly emerged, both in favour of and against the new constitution, depending on whether the individual favoured liberal or conservative ideology. Even with the end of the second Mexican Empire and the restoration of the Republic, the 1857 constitution stayed in place.

During the rule of Porfirio Díaz, the ceremonies in which the oath was sworn to the 1857 Constitution continued all over the Republic. In around 1890 the state government of San Luis Potosí, led by Pedro Díez Gutiérrez, carried out the ceremony of the oath to the constitution for those civil servants who formed part of the structure of the state and municipal government.

According to the historical records, at the beginning of each school year, teachers were obliged to swear the oath to the liberal constitution. It is important to note that, if these records are correct, the oath, which was established as a rite that was repeated throughout the 19th Century, represents a symbolic and meaningful feeling of belonging to the nation and of commitment that was adopted by civil servants. In this case, teachers had the responsibility for education, as delegated by the state.

This investigation is carried out from a social history perspective as, through the analysis of the ceremony of the Oath to the Constitution, the role of teacher as a representative of the State in public education institutions can be observed. This implies that one of the tasks of education is to form national consciousness of the students who are educated in the public space created by the State: the school.

Based on the previous information, the following investigation is proposed: the swearing of the oath to the constitution of 1857 represents an implied acceptance of the responsibilities entrusted by the Mexican Liberal State to each of its civil servants, including teachers who were employed by and who worked in schools where citizens of the nation were formed.

With primary sources from the Historical Archive of the State of San Luis Potosí, minutes from the oath ceremonies, documents and reports sent by the political head of local government in which the oath ceremony is described, supported by secondary sources, and with the application of comparative techniques, the swearing of the oath to the constitution is situated within the socio-historical and political context of 1890. The categories are defined as: State, Constitution, Civil Service, National Values, Civil Servant and Rite, helping to make the historical reconstruction. The aim is to analyse the ritual of swearing the oath to the 1857 Constitution at the end of the 19th Century by teachers in the public education system, as civil servants of the Liberal Mexican State.

Results

The Ayutla Revolution of 1854 was a rebel movement led by Juan Álvarez which arose as a reaction in defence of the civil and political rights of Mexicans, which were becoming more and more limited because of the dictatorship of Antonio López de Santa Anna. This provoked the resignation of the dictator in 1855. Edmundo O' Gorman (1990) argues, when Juan Álvarez took the presidency, he tried to consolidate some elements of the Plan de Ayutla, and in 1856 he gathered a Constituent Congress to create a new Constitution. However, his old age and his political differences with the elites forced him to step down, and it was Ignacio Comonfort who swore the oath to the Constitution of the Liberal Court in 1857.

The 1857 Constitution is a juridic-regulatory document of the Mexican Republic in which conformity to the Liberal Mexican State is defined. Within it there is an underlying line of illustrated thought, of the precepts of democracy, republic, representative powers and rights, which are constituents of the new nation under the republican system. These approaches differ from the ideas of the conservative group, which is characterised by a monarchic model.

The 1857 Constitution is an achievement of the armed movement of the Ayutla Revolution. The swearing of the oath to the constitution was transcendent as a starting point for the implementation of a regulatory code for the country. The historical sources suggest that those who took this oath for the first time established implicit commitment, defence and respect to the constitution, and assumed responsibility for their duties as employees of the state.

The ritual of swearing the oath to the constitution was established so that, from that point on, an oath ceremony would be carried out to the Magna Carta. Within the institutions of the Mexican State, civil servants on all levels of the hierarchy became subject to certain obligations within the public administration. In every state of the republic, in every municipality and in every public body, all civil servants were obliged to take the oath. The historiography documents the reactions of conservative groups that identified with the Catholic Church, stating that they encouraged people to refuse to swear the oath.

In the state of San Luis Potosí, the findings, which are the results of an investigation into primary sources in the historical archives of the state, show that the ceremony of swearing the oath was established within the bureaucratic system of the public administration.

Furthermore, it was found that on 7th January 1890, to mark the beginning of the school year, a ceremony of the swearing of the oath took place in a room within the government palace, and that Juan Flores Ayala, interim governor, and Joaquín R. Zamarron, the senior officer, were present at the event. The ceremony was attended by teachers who were going to be in charge of running schools for preschoolers, children and adults in the capital city and in other municipalities. Teachers from the state teacher training institutions (for male and female teachers) were also present at the ceremony, as well as the director of the Scientific and Literary Institute.

By studying the minutes from the ceremonies, we can appreciate the teachers as historical actors in the public education of San Luis Potosí; both their name and the institution where they worked is included. The signature confirms their attendance at the ceremony of the oath to the 1857 Constitution, as requested by the state government.

By the end of the 19th Century, the state executive had defined and put in operation an administrative structure of public education, which offered educational services provided by teachers in schools for children, preschoolers and adults. The data collected from the documents of the oath ceremonies is presented in table 1, which contains quantitative information regarding those who swore the oath to the 1857 Constitution in San Luis Potosí in 1890.

Table No.1, Quantitative data of teachers who swore the oath to the 1857 constitution

Job Title	Number	Job Title	Number	Teacher Training College (male)	Number	Teacher Training College (female)	Number
Director (girls' schools)	14	Director	13	Director	1	Director	1
Director (preschool section)	12	Assistants	10	Teachers	15	Teachers	5
Director (schools for adults)	2						
Assistants	13	Total	23	Total	16	Total	6
Total	41						

Original Table. Data taken from (AHESLP. 07/01/1890.5. Exp.16. c.5).

The largest group was that of the female teachers, made up of 41 women in total. The group was distributed into the following categories, for each of the educational institutions in the capital city. *Directors of girls' schools:* Teodora Muñoz, Manuela Dávalos, Merced Vargas, Concepción C. de López, Esther Álvarez, Concepción Jáuregui, Trinidad Infante, Guadalupe Cortés, Refugio Marmolejo, Amelia Amaya, Otilia Amarillas, Gerónima Villa, Concepción Gómez, Flavia Salado. *Directors of preschool sections:* Florencia Salado, Virginia Álvarez, Mariana Rodríguez, Virginia Barbosa, Gertrudis Arreola, Elena Cuadriella, Demetria Martínez, Dolores Sánchez, Estéfana Villalobos, Rafaela Mora, Jesús Briones, Jesús Reyes, Antonia Limón. *Directors of schools for adults:* *Concepción Dávalos y ayudantes:* Lorenza Díaz de León, Adelaida Pérez, Basilia Cárdenas, Luisa Medina, Úrsula Pérez, Ángela Méndez, Jesús Maclinfort, Clotilde García, Virginia Tamez, Ana Narváez, Ana Ma. Romo, Marciana Noyola. This cumulative data also demonstrates the increasing number of women in primary education at the end of the 19th Century.

Regarding the number of male teachers, there were 23 individuals, distributed in the following categories: *Directors:* Herculano Cortés, Pio Mendoza, Agustín Lizcona, Profesor Bartolo Guardiola, Germán Faz, Félix Guerra, Librado Rivera, Pedro Farela, Ángel Veral, Candelario Martínez, Emiliano Reyes, Isidro Esparza. *Assistants:* Patricio Monsiváis, Longino Gallardo, Alberto Núñez, Pedro Picazo, José Betancourt, Francisco Lechón, Librado Beltrán, Aurelio Cortés, Mariano Martínez, Ángel Sierra, Manuel L. Briones y Calixto Figueroa.

The following table shows the teaching staff in the teacher training colleges that attended the ceremonies and swore the oath to the Magna Carta.

TEACHER	NAME	SUBJECT	INSTITUTION
Teacher	Jacobo Moore	Drawing	Escuela Normal de Profesores (Teacher training college for male teachers)
	Alejandro Peralta	Music	
	Marcelino Leija,	Music Assistant	
	Ricardo Rode	English	
	Cayetano García	Astronomy	
	Pedro Muñoz,	Drawing	
	Serapio Jiménez	Bookkeeping	
	Wenceslao Zarzoza,	Prefect	
	José M, Aguirre	Logic	
	Gregorio Barroeta	Physics	
	Pedro Rentería	Natural History	
	Luis Leija	Music	
	Juan Esparza	Music Assitant	
	Francisco Ávalos	Mathematics	
	Augusto D Argence	French	
Juan Rentería	Director		
Teacher	Nicanor Muñoz	Bookkeeping	Escuela Normal para Profesoras (Teacher training college for female teachers)
	Jesús Ramírez	Assistant	
	Francisca Ontañón	French	
	Dolores Vargas	Physics	
	Guadalupe Vázquez Castillo	Director	

Original Table. Data taken from (AHESLP. 07/01/1890.5. Exp.16. c.5).

Table 2 shows the names of the teachers and employees of the Teacher Training College for Male Teachers or the Teacher Training College for Female Teachers, as well as the job title of each person. Both institutions were responsible for teacher training in San Luis Potosí. In the aforementioned ceremony, Conrado Díaz Soto, the director of the Institute for Science and Literature, also took his oath, participating in this symbolic republican ritual.

The ceremony of the oath consisted of each of the teachers swearing allegiance. This was done by the highest-ranking civil servant, and in this case, it was Juan Flores Ayala, the governor of the state. The script used to take the oath is the following: Do you swear to uphold the general Constitution of the Republic, with its additions and reforms, and also comply to the State version, and the laws stated in both, and to loyally carry out the duties of your job? – to which the teacher replied – Yes! I swear! – which was immediately followed by – If you uphold the constitution, the nation and the state will reward you, if not, you will be ordered to do so!

By analysing the discursive content of the oath as a manifestation of the law, we can observe that it refers to the Federal Constitution of the Republic, but at the same time it also

refers to the upholding of the constitution of the State of San Luis Potosí, that is, the constitution of 1861. The juridic regulatory document of the state is mentioned in the words of the constitutionalist Ricovar (2001), who said “it was a copy of the 1857 federal constitution.” (p.352). This phrase is concluded with an emphasis on loyally carrying out the duties of one’s job, as ordered by the State. The message of the discourse puts an emphasis on commitment, responsibility to one’s professional mission and institutionalisation with the federal pact of the states, for the unity of the Republic.

The political organisation of the state of San Luis Potosí was composed of departments and municipalities, each with its respective elected authority, and in each place there was a bureaucratic structure of local government and its respective town council, where employees were also obliged to take the oath. Given this knowledge, we might wonder: how was the ceremony carried out in the municipalities? Who attended? How was this formal ritual documented? On analysing the documents, it was found that the process was similar to the one in the capital city, with a few variations: the person responsible for overseeing the taking of the oath was the municipal president or the employee which the president had assigned. Minutes were taken and the document was signed by the president, the secretary of the local council and the teacher who had taken the oath, then a copy was sent to the general secretary of the government as evidence of the fulfilment of this republican ritual.

A description will now be given of how the ceremonies of swearing the oath to the 1857 Constitution were carried out in some municipalities of the state of San Luis Potosí in 1890. The first example is from the municipality of Tamazunchale, where the ceremony was carried out at nine in the morning on 18th January 1890, under the authority of Florencio Barzó, the political leader and president of the local council, and Maercelino Bracerat, the secretary, as well as Luis G. Vázquez, the teacher who was in charge of Primary School for Boys No.1 in that area. The report describes exactly what happened in the ceremony; it is affirmed that it took place in a room of the town hall in order to comply with the guidelines provided by the government of the state in its respectable notice from the 2nd day of the current month (AHSLP, 18/01/1890, c.5).

On the 18th and 20th January 1890, ceremonies were carried out in the town hall of Villa Tampacán and Axtla respectively. In the municipality of San Martín, Carlota Hernández and Emiliano Hernández, the directors of the local boys’ and girls’ schools respectively, took the oath on 20th January 1890. The municipal president, Nabor Goytortúa, oversaw the taking of the oath, and it was registered in the minutes created by Manuel Priego, secretary of the town hall.

The minutes show evidence of the ceremonies of the oath to the 1857 Constitution and the 1861 state version of the same document. They were carried out in the municipalities of Tampamolón, Ciudad Valles, Rioverde, La Pastora, Ciudad Fernández, San Ciro, Hidalgo, Lagunillas, Santa Catarina, Rayón, Partido de Hidalgo y Real de Catorce

As a result, the oath was an institutional rite of the State, related to the secular principles of the Liberal Mexican State of the 19th Century. The oath taken by teachers that were integrated in public schools demonstrated their commitment and responsibility to the educational cause.

Discussion

Educational services progressed significantly under the Mexican State during the 19th Century. The 1857 Constitution declares the human rights in its first title, in the first section, and states education as one of them. In article 3 of this document, it is stated that teaching is open to everyone. The law would determine the professions for which a degree was needed to carry out the job, as well as the requirements which should be met by each professional. In this

sense, education is considered as a responsibility of the state, and teaching as a profession, for which all teachers required a degree. Therefore, as teaching was a profession linked with the liberal education project of this constitution, as well as having a degree, teachers had to swear the oath to the constitution. This is in itself nuanced with symbolism, and implies a love of one's country, of the triumphant liberal political project, and of course of one's responsibility to the educative role of the teacher to help forge the ideas of human rights.

The ceremonies which took place in the rooms of the state of municipal government palaces represent acts of government and civil service based on the absolute respect for legality expressed in the constitution. The reports of the ceremonies of the oath contain the phrase "Freedom and Constitution", two concepts for which the connotation should be analysed from a socio-political and historical perspective of Mexico in the 19th Century. Freedom is considered a fundamental human right, as discussed by John Locke in his essays about civil government (2018), in which he refers to civil rights. Mexico achieved its independence as a result of a process filled with bloodshed; the configuration of the Mexican state entails an ideological conflict, in which illustrated ideas reign and in which human rights were essential in the configuration of the new nation. At the same time, there was a desire to create a regulatory framework that gave legality and juridical certainty to the nation. The concept of the Constitution is without doubt associated with the quest to consolidate the state, its organisation and political division, and to recognise the fundamental rights of humans within the context of the nation. Therefore, the value of the "law is what helps to maintain balance in the powers of the state and the socio-affective relationships of men in society." (HERNÁNDEZ, 2021. p.56). The minutes in which these ceremonies of the oath to the constitution are reported are historical evidence of the implementation of these practices of public ritual and implied commitment to the educative responsibilities entrusted to teachers by the state.

Finally, in this study, the historical evidence of the ceremony of the oath to the constitution has been recovered; within it we can see the historical actors who participated; the public-school teachers to which the state gave the mandate to educate the population in cities as well as rural areas. The two teacher training colleges and the Institute of Science and Literature were the centres for higher education in the area, and for this reason, their teachers also participated in this ritual. To place oneself in this time and in these spaces, where the ceremony was carried out, from a historical perspective of empathy, is to recover the republican symbolism of these acts, but also to appreciate how meaningful they were to the people who were given this duty by the state.

Final Comments

The results of this study show that the educational mission carried out by teachers was part of the services of the state. The socio-political and ideological role as civil servants as well as the act of educating, constituted a form of progression of liberal ideas. This was proved and legalised in the swearing of the oath through the act of committing oneself to loyally carrying out one's job as an educator in the public spaces created by the government for the appropriation of culture and the formation of citizens, namely the school.

It is proved that the school, as a public institution in which students attend in order to acquire culture, also helps to create national values and forge a feeling of belonging to the nation. With the oath to the 1857 constitution and the 1861 state constitution of San Luis Potosí it was guaranteed that the teachers played a part in the construction of these national ideas, and strengthened the values as part of the unity of the states, as members of the federation.

Moreover, the 1857 constitution had been a product of a violent and difficult historical process for the country; its defence was a statement which kept the memory of the Magna Carta alive, as a code that explicitly declares the juridical-political principles of the country.

Since the institutionalisation of the oath to the constitution, the president, governors, mayors, political leaders and civil servants of the government system have played a part in maintaining liberal ideas in the three levels of government.

Archive

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