



## Histories of Educational Technologies

### Cultural and Social Dimensions of Pedagogical Objects

# From Sitting in a Gallery to Sitting at a Table. School Furniture in Early Childhood Education in the 19th Century

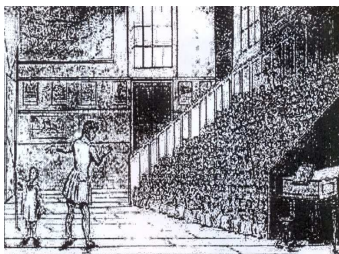


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The main change that ever happened in early childhood education was the introduction of a table where children could **do** things (draw, or play, for example)

Gallery



Contradictions

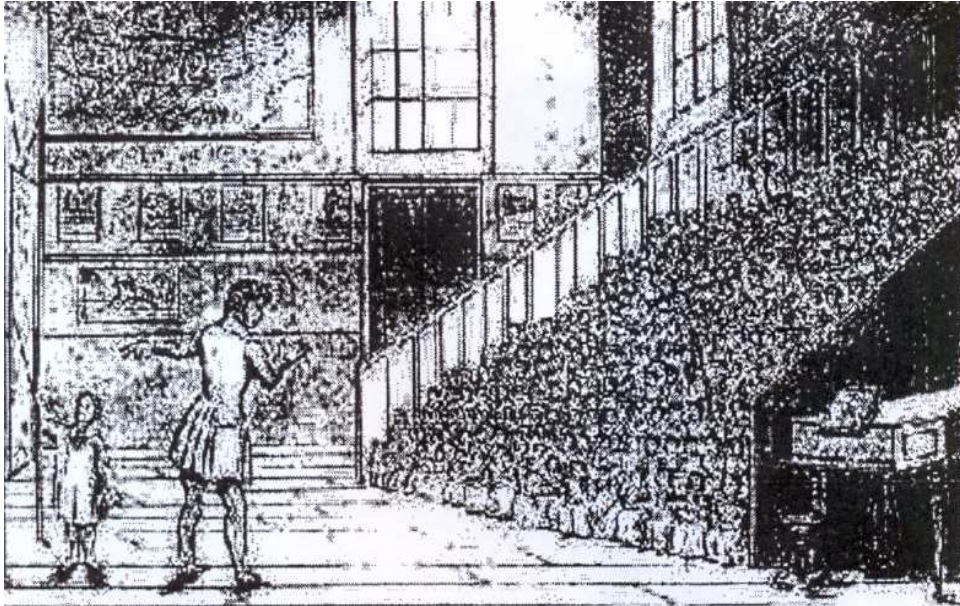


Table



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## Galleries



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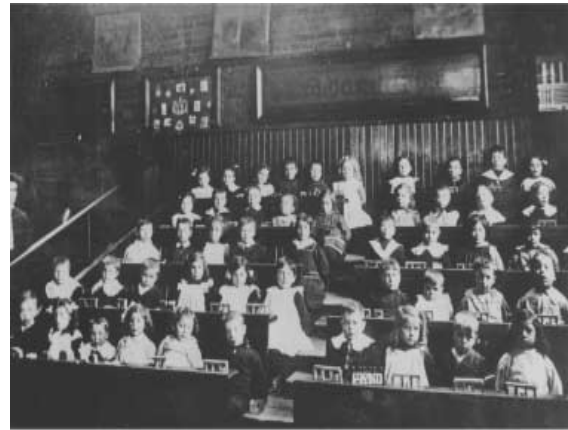
## Tables



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## Contradictions

Gallery Classroom, Oratory School, Chelsea, 1905, p. 311  
 Froebel's Gift Four in Use in a Galleried Classroom, c.1900. p. 314



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## We are going to approach **the first formal education spaces for children**

- Educational spaces connected with the
- **Simultaneous method:** A large number of students are arranged in a gallery, or in any other way, so as to be *immediately under the eye of the teacher, and taught together*. The instruction is simultaneous, the mind of each child being at all times under the influence of the master  
AND
- **Lancasterian method:** Some of *the more advanced pupils* are employed during a part of the day, as monitors, to instruct the lower forms, which vary in size from eight to twelve children.

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- Different from fee-charging carers, day nurseries, known as escuelas de amiga (Spain),
- dame schools (UK),
- sale de custodia (Italy)...
- Owners: elderly and dealt directly with parents
- They were beyond the control of municipality or religious institutions
- Institutions promoted by public figures, associations, religious institutions... in the name of philanthropy or charity
- Infant Schools, 1816
- Salles d'asile, 1826
- Escuelas de párvulos (Spain), 1838

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Pedagogue	Name of the Institution	Material Characteristics
<b>WILDERSPIN</b> 1792- 1866	Infant Schools	Gallery Wall Charts Abacus
<b>COCHIN</b> 1789- 1841	Salles d'asile École gardienne	Blackboard Lesson posts Wall-size maps
<b>MONTESINO</b> 1781- <b>1849</b>	Escuelas de párvulos Scuola infantile	
<b>FRÖBEL</b> <b>1782-1852</b>	Kindergarten	Garden/ Nature Toys // Games and activities// Tables and chairs

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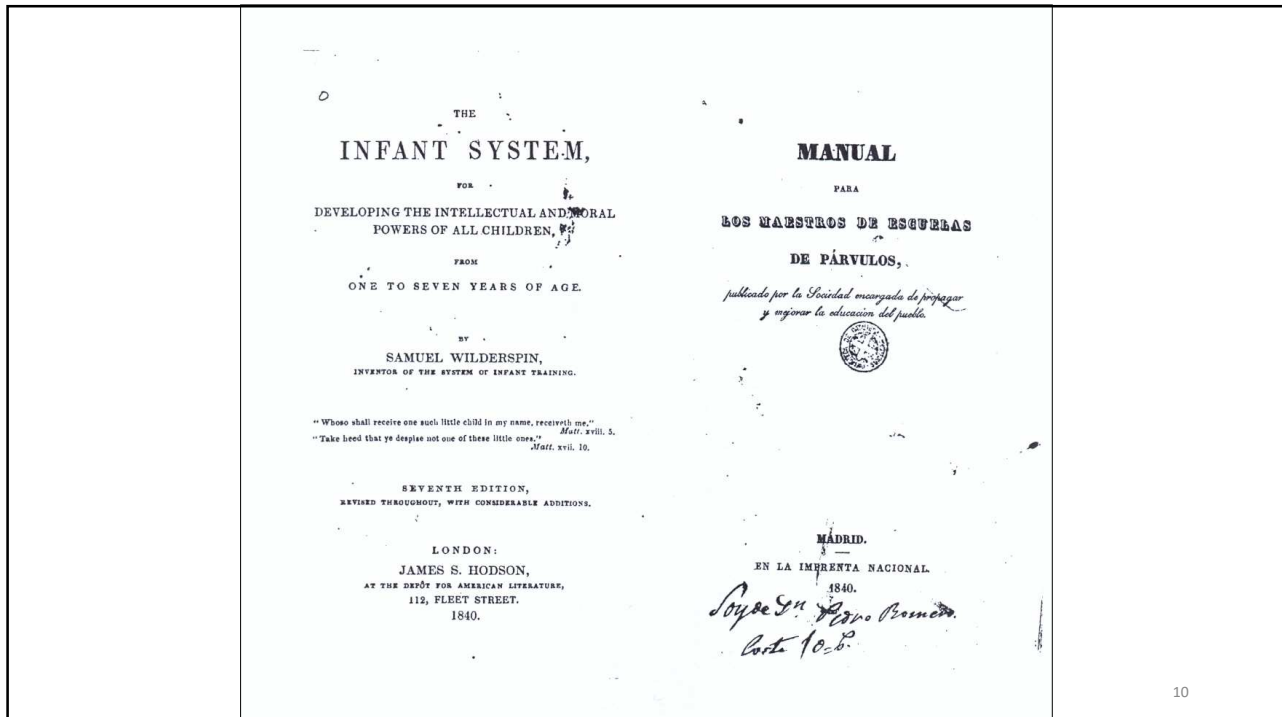
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To deal with this subject, we have focused on the interpretation of primary sources:

- **Teacher's Manuals,**
- **images,** engravings, and
- **archives documentation,** mainly **teachers' correspondence** where the reality of the first infant schools were described.

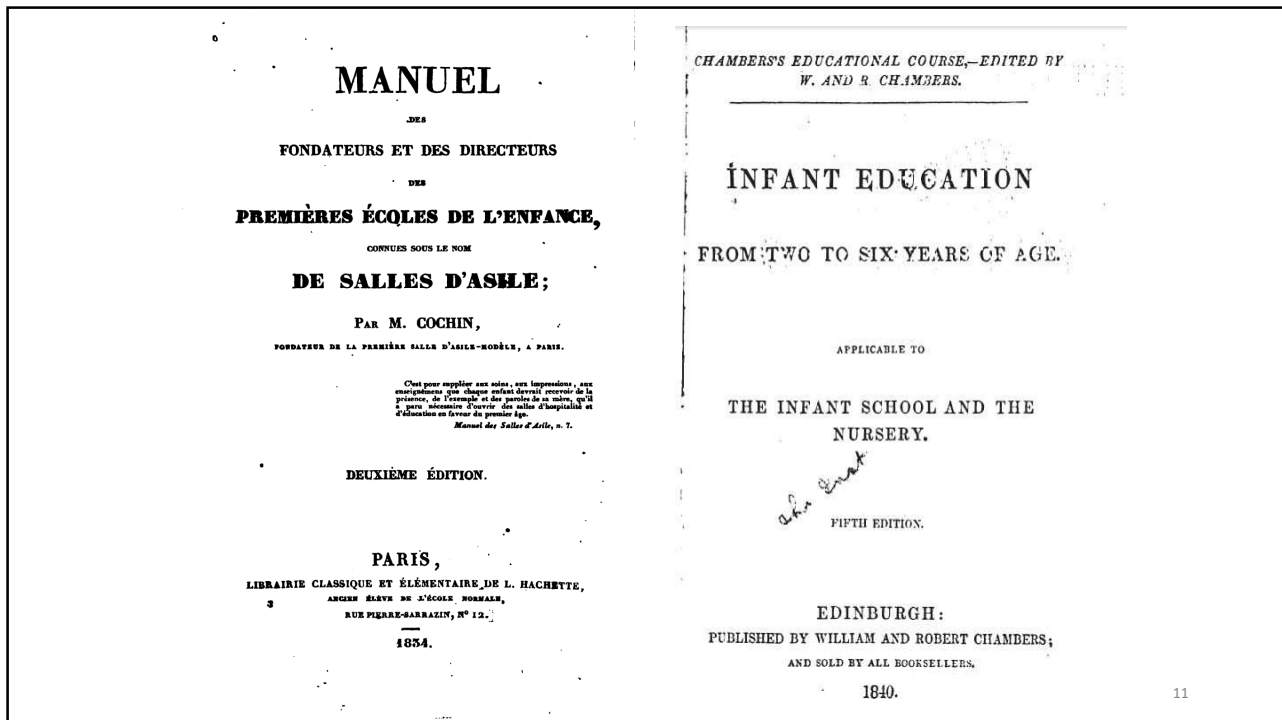
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A Pieza de la escuela.  
 B Patio ó lugar de recreo.  
 C Gradería.  
 E Estufa.  
 F Lugar comun de las niñas.  
 G Idem de los niños.  
 H Bordes plantados de flores.  
 I I Columpios giratorios.  
 K Escala de pies.  
 L L Sitios enrejados para flores.  
 a a a Asiento alrededor de la escuela.  
 1 2 5 &c. Semicírculos.

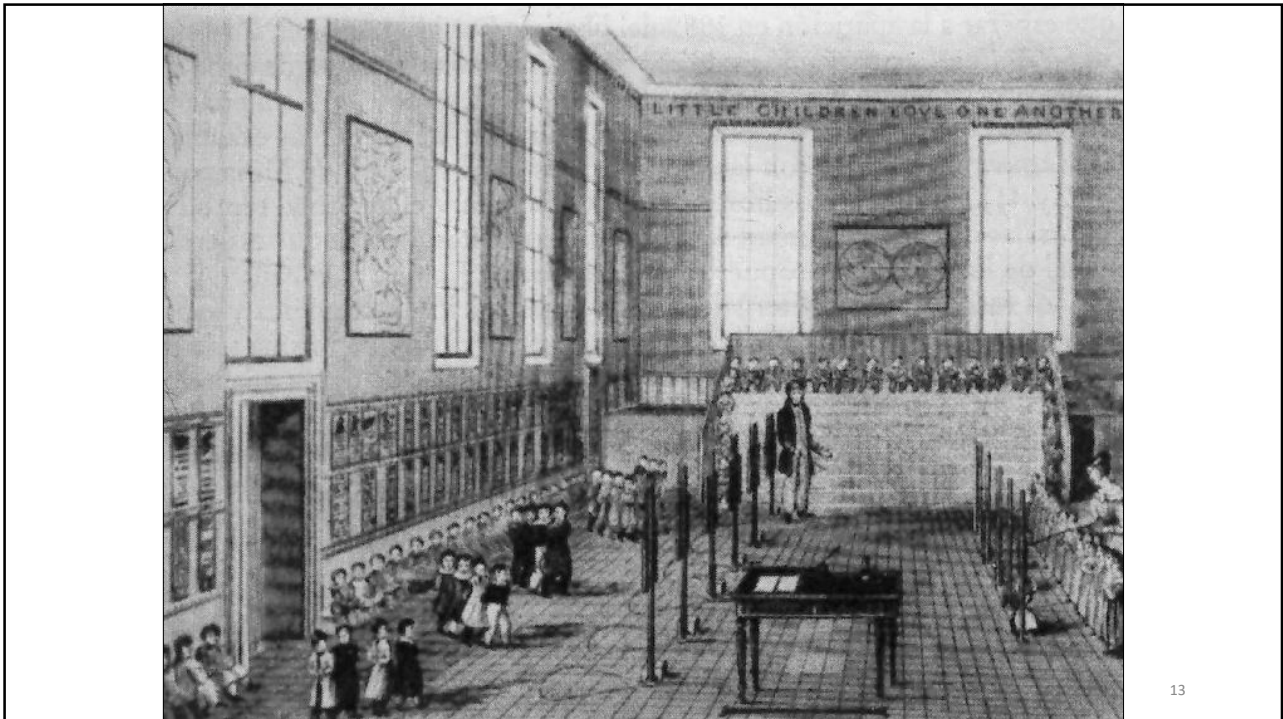
## Model School

What could children (up to 250) and teachers do in such a space?

Children arrive at the school at 7:00 in Summer and 8:00 in Winter. They could stay until nightfall.

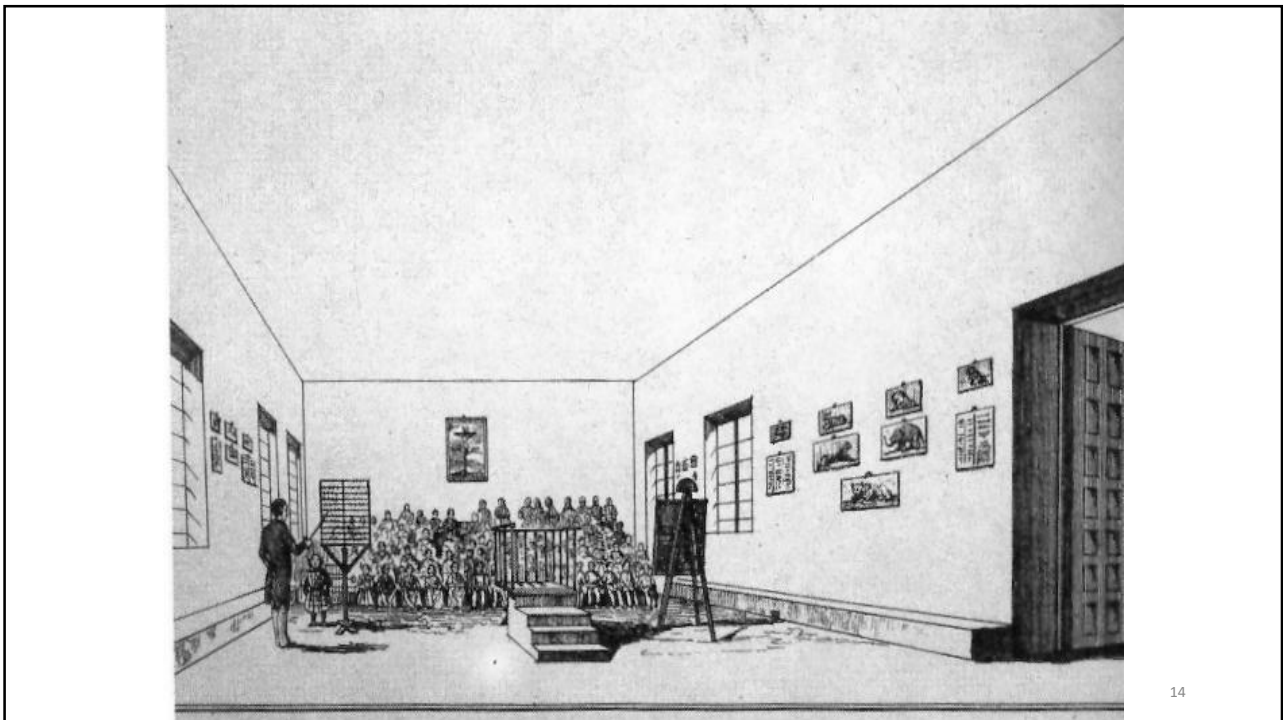
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## Gallery exercises as educational technology

Although the **class time** was considered basically **static**, there were **activities** proposed to facilitate **children movement** without provoking any alteration in the order of the class.

Key: **Everyone will do the same at the same time**

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Rigid and military classroom management:  
All obey immediately and do the same at the same time

### GALLERY EXERCISE.

The teacher will now ring his hand-bell for school, directing the whole to range themselves in their *usual* places in the gallery. Here all the *simultaneous* exercises and feats are performed.

*Manual Exercise.*—Gain the general attention by a few rounds of what may be called the manual exercise. The whole rise up at one moment by word of command—sit down—rise again—face right, left, about—hands up, down, forward, behind, up again, fingers opened, moved, hands clapped in time, or to a tune sung or played by the teacher, and when they have learned to sing, accompanied by the children. When all is still again, (and the tinkle of the bell should be *instantly* obeyed, and produce the utmost stillness, whatever is going on,) a course of gallery exercise will commence, in which those things will be taught in succession, which all can take directly from the teacher's descriptions, illustrations, demonstrations, and exhibitions.

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## Manual Exercises: Pupils are infants, and require the amusement suited to their age

### EXERCISE IN AMUSING MOVEMENTS, IMITATIONS, &c.

It is not to be forgotten that the pupils are infants, and require the amusements suited to their age. The teacher of an Infant School, who can devise and practise the greatest variety of attractive, and even whimsical diversions, which shall yet have something in them improving, is the most likely to conduct an Infant School successfully. Mr Wilderspin is the master of all infant school teachers in this art of rousing and exciting the children, when their spirits flag, or a hot day renders them drowsy; his very manner of conducting the little sports must be imitated, if the teacher would succeed. He deprecates buffoonery and ridiculous pastimes, and holds that all the children's movements may be graceful, though active and joyous.

### Manual Exercises.

(By the word of command.)

Right hand up.	_____	down, and
Left hand up.	_____	down, and
Both hands up.		
Fingers apart.		Fingers together.
Back of the hands.		Palms of the hands.
Finger joints.		Wrist joints.
Elbow joints.		Shoulder joints.

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### Manual Exercises.

(By imitating the Master.)

Stretching out and in the arms.  
Stretching up and down the arms.  
Crossing the arms.  
Twisting the arms.  
Gradual motions from perpendicular to horizontal position of the arms, and the reverse.

Pointing out Parts of the Body.

The teacher names the parts, and the children touch or point to them.

Crown of the head.	Back of the head.
Forehead.	Eyes.
Eyelids.	Eyelashes.
Eyebrows.	Ears.
Cheeks.	Nose.
Nostrils.	Lips.
Upper lip.	Under lip.
Teeth.	Gums.
Tongue.	Chin.
Neck.	Shoulders.
Armpits.	Elbows.
Wrists.	Fingers.
Thumbs.	Knuckles.
Nails.	Breast.
Sides.	Back.

Counting a Hundred.

From 1 to 20,—Beating on the knees alternately.  
— 20 to 30,—Stretching out the arms alternately.  
— 30 to 40,—Nodding the head.  
— 40 to 50,—Clapping the hand.  
— 50 to 60,—Moving the fingers.  
— 60 to 70,—Crossing one forefinger over the other alternately.

From 70 to 80,—Stretching up the arms, taking the tones of the voice thirds and fifths.  
— 80 to 90,—Gradually raising the hands, and going up the scale with the voice.  
— 90 to 100,—Lowering the hands, and descending the scale.

Sawing.

All standing up, put out their hands and bend their bodies, as the man above the saw-pit, and make a hissing noise; then raise themselves quietly; then bend down again, hissing, &c.

Rhyme.

(With corresponding motions.)  
Together we children assemble at school,  
And must be attentive to order and rule:  
We sing or we read as our teacher commands,  
And keep time so nicely in clapping of hands.  
Our hands and our faces so tidily clean,  
And moving so nimbly our fingers are seen,  
When wearied with sitting, our arms we stretch out,  
And afterwards twist them so quickly about.  
Our right from our left hand we easily know,  
Apart or together our fingers we show:  
We quickly exhibit the moving of joints,  
Wrists, elbows, or shoulders, as master appoints

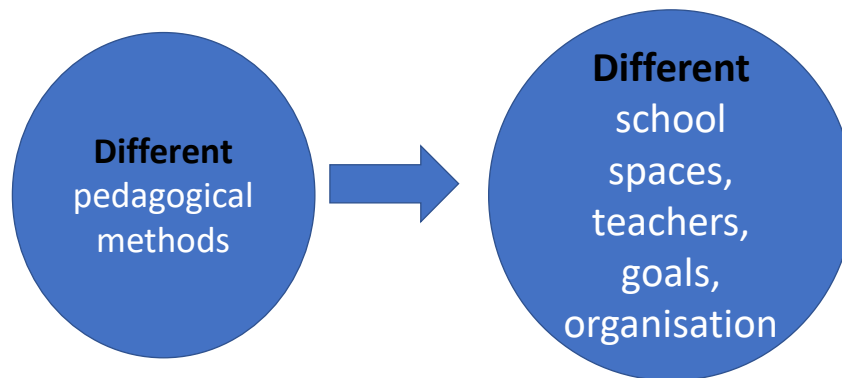
The Positions of Rest.

The master, placing a boy silently into each position before the children in the gallery, when they name the position.  
1. Standing; 2. Leaning; 3. Sitting; 4. Reclining;  
5. Kneeling; 6. Squatting; 7. Lying.

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## Early Childhood Education Pedagogical Models, 19th Century Transitions: Infant schools vs. Kindergarten



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The mere layout of a classroom may indicate the method for which it was designed. But not how it was used. **Here come contradictions.**

It may change over time and it could be used in a different way depending the teachers, the situation, the number of children...

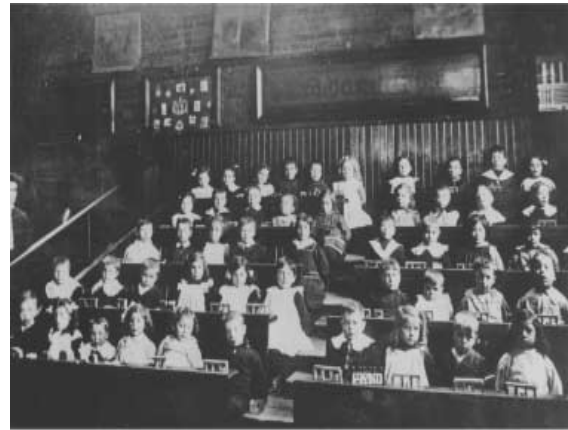
- As historians, we must distinguish between theories, legislation and reality,
- BUT
- **It is not difficult to find examples of incoherence between spaces and theories, or spaces that do not belong to their time or that do not respond to the current theory or method.**

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## Contradictions

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- The 1857 Act took preschool education into account as first grade of elementary education, and apportioned primary education into three levels, with preschool education as the first part.
- This shows the **long-standing idea of early childhood education as part of public education** in Spain. The law encouraged the foundation of *escuelas de párvulos*, but without any financial contributions of the state.
- Infant schools should be established in municipalities with **more than 10.000 inhabitants**.
- **Municipalities ought to pay all the costs of public infant and primary schools until 1901:** teachers, buildings, furniture, materials, renovation, ....

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## The first and only public infant school –escuela de párvulos- in Málaga

### The process of establishing a school was long and filled with problems

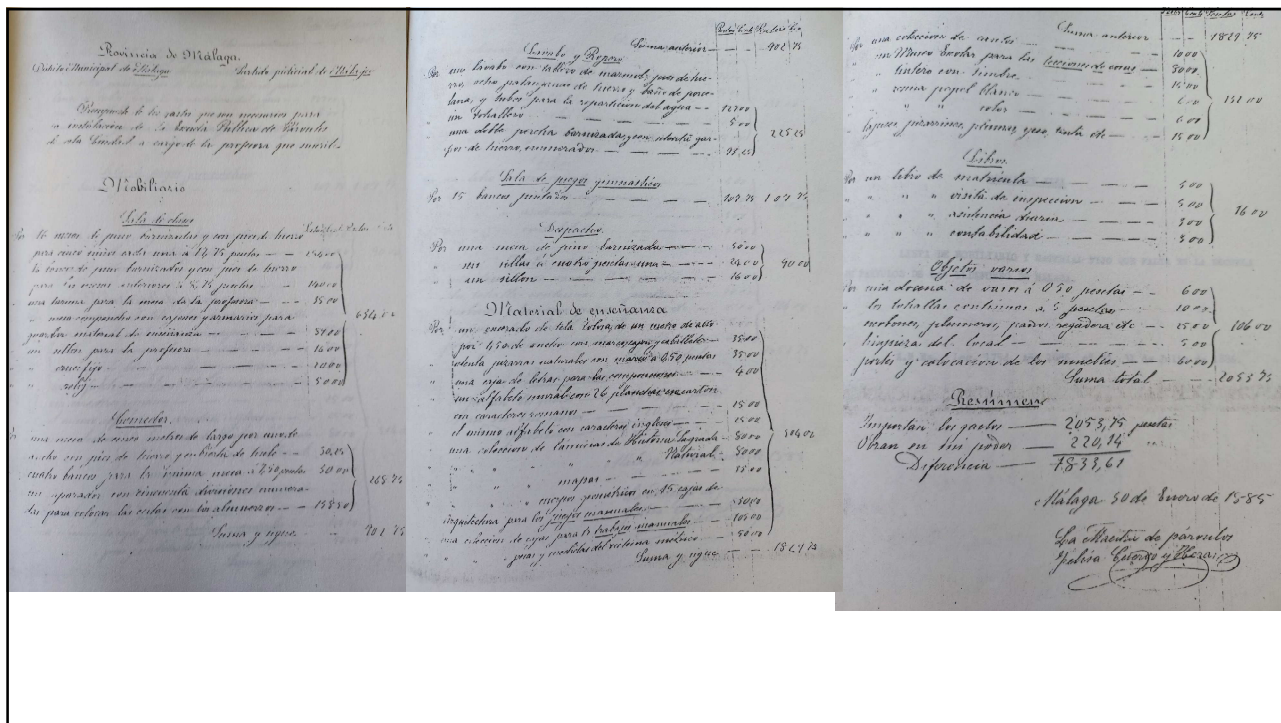
The City Council approved the establishment of this school (**4 October 1883**)

The teacher was appointed (June 1884)

The teacher began to look for a building. The City Council should approve and rent it.

- Proposals and opinions about different buildings:
- House with gardens (**residential area**)
- A house in a **working-class neighbourhood** (fishermen and industry)
- Interim rent (September 1884)
- The budget for the material was approved in February 1885
- The school opened on **1<sup>st</sup> July 1885**.

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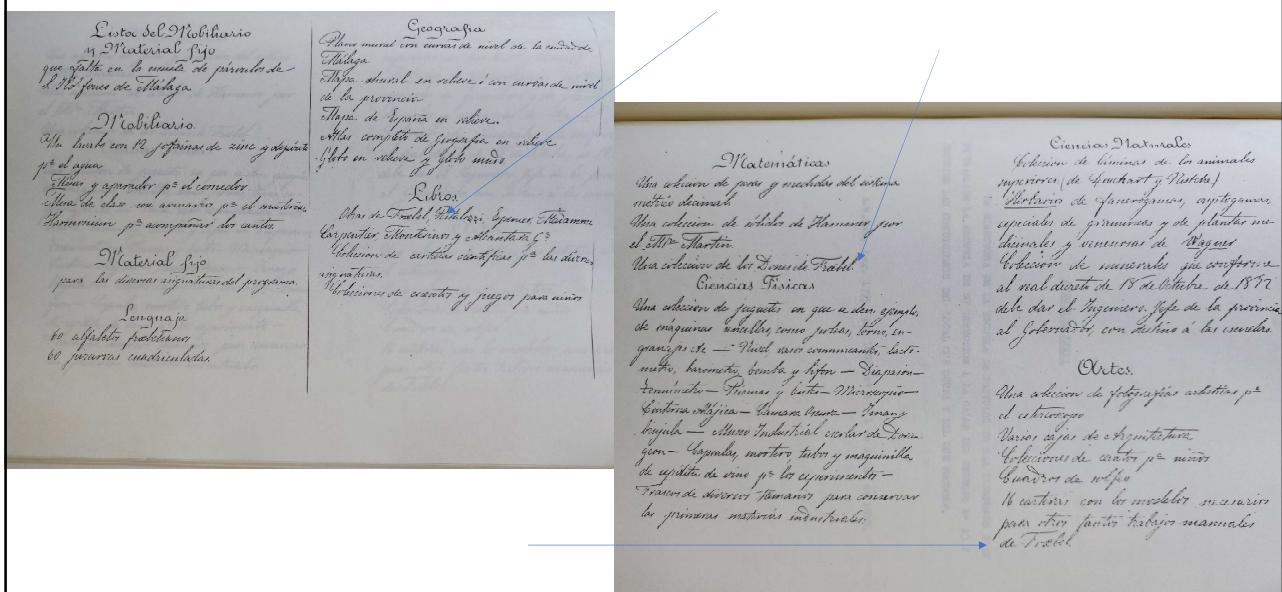
## BUT all continued this way: July 1886

- “Being a newly created school and having received nothing for installation, I lack all the necessary furniture and teaching materials.”
- “With the regular budget I could only buy the essential so that children could have a seat and start some lessons.”

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## July 1886



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## First proposal of the teacher and the City Council response

- **House with gardens far from the city center.**
- **To fulfill the purposes of an infant school, it needs to be closed to the manufacturing centers.**  
Contrary to her proposal.
- She accepted something totally different provisionally (4 years)
- She explained that the house rented by the municipality "lacks the most essential for this kind of schools: **a large courtyard to use as a playground** and other very necessary elements."
- She declines its responsibility "for the unpleasant accidents that could happen when children so young must go up and down stairs."

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## Current house ↔ New proposal

**Poor condition of the house** I have, (...) they cause harm to the education and the health of the children. Besides, the classroom is not big enough for the number of children attending (...) very often the thermometer **measures 38° and 40°C**; it causes that many children get a disease and must leave the school, and those who do not, fall asleep or enervated, being impossible to make them to pay attention to the lessons. In addition, the school lacks the playground. 1888

"[the house has] a ground floor with a **very nice patio** that can become school **garden** that is essential in these schools; it has also some **sheds** that can be arranged easily as very good **playground**; thus the children will remain outdoors and will be protected against the sun and the rain; a **dining room**, a **bathroom**, **closet** and **toilets** with the convenient separation for both sexes, and in sufficient numbers to the **120 or 130** children attending. 1888

Calle del Cerrojo, Barrio Trinidad (working class)

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Nevertheless, after the renovation works we find **two reports**:

- **INSPECTOR**: "The classroom, situated on the ground floor, is too narrow because of the two rows of seats that stand around the perimeter. A row should be removed to raise the wide at one meter. The **inclination of the stands is dangerous** because of the **low light** and the **scarce space**." 1899
- **City Council**: "Although this school do not fulfill the requirements of the modern pedagogy, it satisfies all the hygienic exigencies. The school material is quite acceptable and fit the school and teaching conditions." This school "**can be showed as a model in its class because of its hygienic and pedagogical conditions**." 1901

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## Theoretical confrontation Inconsistency background

From the beginning, **the teacher**

- proposed to establish the school is a house following the Froebel model (she stressed the need for a garden)
- **asked the City Council the purchase of sets of the Froebel gifts besides the materials of an infant school/primary school**
- How could have been used Froebel gifts in this *school*?
- the successive emplacements of the school did not meet even the minimum requirements neither for a *escuela de párvulos* nor for a kindergarten.

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- **Examples of incoherence:**

- Spain
- England
- Everywhere....

**Visual/historical evidence demonstrates that when the architecture of the classroom space underwent transformation with the replacement of the gallery by desks, teaching methods still largely remained as rigid as before.**

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Thanks for listening!

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