

# H-Net Reviews

in the Humanities & Social Sciences

Pedro Fraile. *La otra ciudad del Rey: ciencia de policia y organizacion urbana en Espana*. Madrid: Celeste Ediciones, 1997. 152 pp. \$52.25 (paper), ISBN 978-84-8211-092-9.

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The relationship between space and social control has received in the last two decades a large amount of original contributions. The influence of Michel Foucault's power/knowledge hypothesis in the development of this kind of studies has also been highlighted, and I don't think that it needs further comment here. Coming from this background, Pedro Fraile presents in this book the first findings of a new research project on urban history.[1] His previous work devoted to the thought and institutional organization of penitentiary systems in Spain has marked the first step towards this direction, specially regarding the change of domination strategies and their contribution to the development of new social control systems in the eighteenth century.[2]

The main aim of this work is to trace the genealogy of "policy science" during the eighteenth century, and into contemporary treatises. Pedro Fraile raises the early development of this many-faced knowledge, presenting political reflections from authors of the French and the Hispanic monarchies. "Policy science" is intended to be the reflexive mean for the organization and regulation of urban life in the context of political centralization. Although the most influential work in this subject, *Traite de la Police* by Nicolas Delamare, was published in Paris between 1705 and 1738, Fraile shows how the influence of earlier Spanish political thought is at play in the development of this knowledge in Spain.[3]

In this sense, the eighteenth century appears to be the period in which "policy science" covered a vast range of the interests of political administrators governing larger and potentially conflicting cities (and states) in European countries like France, Spain or Germany.[4] Later (well into the nineteenth century), the stress on urban government was put in the hands of a rather different form of

expertise— that in many cases prefigures our contemporary sources of municipal administration. As the author writes, "concepts such as administration, government or town planning that are easily distinguishable today were, at that time, rather confused, though they gradually became systematized and consolidated in books and treatises from the seventeenth through to the end of the eighteenth century" (Fraile 1998: 22).

As we have already noticed, the development of this kind of political thought in Spain, beginning in the sixteenth century, paves the way to the development of "policy science." The steady centralization of administrative duties carried out by the Hispanic monarchy impelled many administrators, under the influence of Renaissance political thought, to write on the subject of local policies and urban organization. The best example of this trend provided by Pedro Fraile is the 1597 work by Castillo de Bovadilla, *Politica para Corregidores*. [5] In it, the Spanish author stressed the political role of the *Corregidor* (a personal institution directly nominated by the King in order to supervise the government of cities and towns), and discussed the rights and duties of the post.

However, the initial commitment of a proper "policy science" in Spain was acquired after the Bourbon ascension to the throne in the eighteenth century, together with a number of administrative reforms dealing with the monarchy's position in government. It was under the reign of Carlos III (1759-1788) that a number of these means were implemented. Similar developments in France followed, as the creation of the 'Superintendencia General de Policia para Madrid y su Rastro' in 1782 parallels its Parisian counterpart of the seventeenth century. [6] Nevertheless, as Pedro Fraile underlines several times, the development of "policy science" in eighteenth-

century Spain is due to the work of authors following closer contemporary European writings on the topic. In fact, it is hard to distinguish whether a text is an original Spanish contribution, or a simply implicit translation of the writing of a French or German author. Most of the time, we are faced with implicit translations that provide us with useful comments and applications regarding concrete Spanish examples.

One example of this is the translation by Domingo de la Torre of von Bielfeld's *Institutions Politiques*, published in The Hague in 1760. The Spanish translation appeared in Madrid in six volumes between 1767 and 1801, and contained a detailed introduction by de la Torre himself highlighting the importance that German knowledge would have for the rational organization and government of the monarchy. Another book of this kind, whose author also recognized the influence of German thought in his work, *Las senales de la felicidad de Espana y medios para hacerlas eficaces*, was written by the Catalan jurist Francisco Rom Rosell and published in Madrid in 1768. In this respect, there are two more works that must join these editions of proper "policy science" treatises in Spain. On the one hand, there is the translation by the architect Benito Bails of the innovative work regarding earthquakes by the Portuguese Antonio Ribeiro Sanchez, *Tratado de la conservacion de la salud de los pueblos y consideraciones sobre los terremotos*, published in Madrid in 1781. On the other hand, there is also Catalan Antonio Francisco Puig Gelabert's translation of J. H.G. von Justi, *Elementos Generales de Policia*, published in Barcelona in 1784.

The most important contributions to the development of "policy science" in Spain are found in even later works, such as *Cartas sobre la Policia* (1801) by Valentin Foronda, published in Madrid. In this context, Tomas de Valeriola's *Idea General de la Policia o Tratado de Policia* is considered to be the best example of this kind of work in Spain.[7] Published in Valencia between 1798 and 1805, it is clearly underlined by Pedro Fraile (even if not mentioned by the author himself) as a partial translation of Nicolas Delamare's *Traite de la Police*. Interesting, Valeriola replaced the examples of Paris provided by Delamare, with ones of Valencia, his own city.

After the review of the most important Spanish contributions to "policy science" treatises, Pedro Fraile turns to the analysis of the structure of these works, paying special attention to its urban political, economic and morphological sides, and social control. The effects of economic thought in urban organization during the period

covered by these treatises was underpinned by some of the current economic ideas of the time, specially the one of mercantilism. That is, although much of the opinions expressed in these works were conceived within a strong religious background in which economic profit should be disguised, it is also possible to realize the intellectual imprint of thinkers such as Malthus, Bentham or Adam Smith in the structure of these books.

The principal references to urban economic organization that are presented in these books, are the ones relating the specificity of the city as a place for the displaying and consumption of luxury goods. The city, especially the capital city, is viewed as the place of luxury but also the place of poverty and of economic inequality. In this sense, the measures proposed by the authors even if they did not censure the exhibition of wealth, are related to public investments in order to provide the urban space with the basic features needed to the development of common life. Stressing the different economic nature of the individual and the State, there is a strong involvement in these texts underlining the advantages in the redistribution of some income, specially related to the creation of urban infrastructures and the territorial organization of the city.

However, of importance Pedro Fraile's devotion to the issue of social control, which is easily isolated within the context of the other issues devoted to the economic, political or territorial reflection. It is specially the political reflection that provides the major source for the study of social control from the treatises of "policy science." The first striking point raised by these texts in the discussion of social control policies is based in the development of a "policy of details," that is to began to shape an ordered urban space from the everyday aspects of urban life. This habit-forming policy has to be found in the creation of norms provided by a continuous action upon the social body of the city and the customs of the population. In this sense the health of the population, or the cleaning and sanitation of the streets, were imposed on the whole body of city dwellers.

In the disciplinary elements represented in the discourses of "policy science" treatises, there are plenty of analogies taken from military organization. However, like Fraile points out, the principles contained in the texts are far more difficult to implement within an urban environment than in an army. In this context, the city was understood as something to be fragmented in order to be controlled. It was not by accident that the first orders to divide urban space into several districts and quar-

ters came during this time. The construction of hospitals, cemeteries, prisons or markets was another proposal that needs to be taken into account in the review of this eighteenth-century literature. The principal outcome produced by these studies was the intention of preserving an ordered urban space inhabited by a disciplined population.

There is a final important aspect in the work of these authors. In Pedro Fraile's opinion, they represented a pre-modern understanding of the city, but did prefigure several aspects of the modern organization of the urban space. The regularization of the city acquired at that point the attention of the reflection developed by "policy science" writers in order to establish a minimum of homogeneity in building and planning streets and squares.[8] The most important contribution developed in this sense is located in Delamare's *Traite de la Police*, which was systematically copied and translated by most of the authors reviewed by Pedro Fraile in this book. Delamare's *Traite* contained a volume entitled 'De la voirie,' where he gave advice concerning the building of the city, with important insights regarding the differences between the public and the private space.

Even if the ideas expressed in Delamare's treatise borrowed from an idealized view of Paris, the analysis and proposals provides us with the most important eighteenth-century ideas about the organization of the urban space. The point of departure was a strong "organic" conception of the city, current at that time, that treats its diseases as belonging to a living body. The results were based in the idea of freeing the public space from any kind of individual appropriation, in terms of domestic or economic activities outside the regulation. This strong regulation of the urban space and its buildings strongly influenced the image of the city, and modern developments in town planning, mainly in the nineteenth-century.

In fact, we are faced with a knowledge that is indebted with some aspects of medieval and renaissance ideals of urban organization, the developments of which are at the base of some of our modern understandings of city regulation. As Pedro Fraile points out, during the nineteenth century most of the elements that characterized "policy science" were fragmented into more concrete forms of policing and administration. On the one hand the reinforcement of municipal administration gave way to a more emphatic intervention of public powers over the city. On the other, the development of modern town planning provided the basis for a more global conception

of urban problems and organization.

Notes:

[1]. The english speaking reader may find an article containing some of the ideas developed in this book in Fraile, Pedro. "Putting order into the cities: the evolution of 'policy science' in eighteenth-century Spain", *Urban History* 25, n.1 (1998): 22-35.

[2]. See Fraile, Pedro. *Un espacio para castigar: La carcel y la ciencia penitenciaria en Espana (siglos XVIII-XIX)*. Barcelona: Ediciones del Serbal, 1987.

[3]. The complete title of Delamare's treatise is: *Traite de la Police, ou l'on trouvera l'Histoire de son etablissement, les fonctions et les prerogatives de ses magistrats; toutes les lois et tous les reglements qui la concernent: On y joint une description historique et topographique de Paris, et huit plans gravez, qui represent son ancien Etat et ses divers accroissements, avec un recueil de tous les status et reglements de six corps de marchands et de toutes les Communautez des Arts et Metiers* (Paris, 1705-1738).

[4]. In Germany this emphasis in administrative rational organization developed during the eighteenth century was known by the name of "cameralism". See RA-EFF, Marc. *The well-ordered police state: social and institutional change through law in the Germanies and Russia, 1600-1800*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983.

[5]. Again it is important to rewrite the full citation of this book for giving some idea of its contents: *Politica para Corregidores y Senores de vasallos, en tiempos de paz y de guerra: y para preladados en lo espiritual, y temporal entre los legos, Jueces de Comision, Regidores, Abogados, y otros Oficiales publicos: y de Jurisdicciones, Preeminencias, Residencias y salarios de ellos: y de lo tocante a las Ordenes y Caballeros de ellas* (Madrid, 1597).

[6]. See Piasenza, Paolo. "Juges, lieutenants de police et bourgeois a Paris aux XVIIe. et XVIIIe. siecles". *Annales. Economies, Societes, Civilisations*, n.5 (1990): 1189-1215, and also his *Polizia e Citta: Strategie d'ordine, conflitti e rivolte a Parigi tra Sei e Settecento*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 1990.

[7]. See also Lluch, Ernest. "La 'Idea General de la Policia' de Tomas Valeriola", *Recerques. Historia, Economia, Cultura*, n.10 (1980): 125-135.

[8]. This issue have been recently the object of an interesting Ph.D research in Spain, see Anguita Cantero, Ricardo. *Ordenanza y policia urbana: los origenes de la reglamentacion edificatoria en Espana (1750-1900)*.

Granada: Universidad de Granada/Junta de Andalucia, 1997.

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