

Cooperativism, making students workers, workers who can, in turn, be students at any stage of their lives (Ib. 211), is “on the threshold of a new type of society without classes or castes, without lords or inconsiderately marginalized” (Ib. 208). “There are some who are due something more than aspirations of cultural and academic advancement; they must be able to avail themselves of it with behaviors and attitudes that can be a guarantee for a more promising tomorrow, in which an effective solidarity regime seems neither heroic nor uncomfortable to them. Others, who today manage the scarce resources allocated to indiscriminate and accredited advancement, must also know how to adopt management methods consistent with the nature of social funds and maximizing demands of training action; they must know how to help those who know how to help with what they have, money or time, and above all, those who know that work, in any form, is a means of both self-actualization and social witness and collaboration” (Ibid. 208-209).

For the establishment of a new order, it is not enough to have new men; new structures are required. And whoever wants to transform structures encounters the unlovely but historically confirmed reality that “power precedes reason,” power that “is the determinant for a position of economic, cultural, or social strength, which reduces them to a common denominator of effective power” (FC, III, 98).

In cooperative practice that contemplates the establishment of a new order, a new world, a new man, we must not overlook this resource for the realization of our final goals and objectives. Today, we could explain it more by adding another observation, which is also true, that the strength of the reason of the means derived from the application of the elements derived from our reason, are those that could actually serve to measure our degree of effective development or organization. It is true that we remain in organizational underdevelopment as long as we do not give way and course to these means of reason in our organization, which means the adoption of foresight and, consequently, of planning as a providence and indispensable record of advancement” (Ib.). If we add to this what current cooperative consciousness can never leave out, such as the awareness of freedom and justice and solidarity actively exercised, we already have the chart of optimal measures to energize the cooperative movement, on the way to a real new order. “Socialized knowledge is possible to democratize power” (Ib.), i.e., power can belong to everyone, without being monopolized by the classes that have a monopoly on culture.

Arizmendiarieta believes that with the cooperative movement, the new order is already established. Reason is already there, it must come to power, and has already begun to do so. “We already have men with sensitivity and personal capacity so that their meeting and their combination lend

themselves to the widest range of participation, succession, and projection in conditions of fluid coexistence”, etc. “Given these conditions, there is nothing special about reproducing the singular phenomenon of the past, in which there is a transformation and radical change brought about without violent revolution, when, as a class, the bourgeoisie replaces and leaves behind the aristocracy, its entire world of structures created to suit it, when with its great spirit of work, which is the powerful creative resource of man, and its effective cultural and technical development, it has been able to leave it behind. It is a fact, the bourgeoisie succeeded the aristocracy and set up structures consistent with its spirit and aspirations, to the extent that the bourgeoisie reconstituted itself with work and culture. Now what is needed is for the proletariat to be able to do the same with the bourgeoisie to make way for a fluid and dynamic, social and human world” (Ibid. 99).

9. Educational leisure

“If we are on an economic-social trajectory that has a goal in view, not far away, which is the conquest and civilization of leisure, through a greater fruitfulness of our work by means the decisive application of technical progress, we know that this route requires us equally to enjoy work and leisure, decorously and worthily, a better cultivation of our higher faculties (...)” (EP, I, 130).

Leisure, as a space to satisfy so many and such endearing desires, interests, and even whims, is within reach. “But leisure by itself, lacking options and discretionary active capacity, tends to paralyze, rather than to challenge and stimulate man. Its perspective should move us to give a broader and more forward-looking content for work and leisure to training, by awakening, cultivating, and channeling human concerns.

It constitutes a good challenge for our creativity and managerial capacity to face the new problems represented by the evolved human subject for the purpose of advancing new conditions consistent with its sensibility and needs” (CLP, I, 267-268).

We will try to summarize below Arizmendiarieta’s most notable thoughts on leisure.

9.1. Amusements for youth

Arizmendiarieta’s two writings dealing with the amusements of youth date from 1945. “In the industrial area,” he tells us, “there is the problem of idleness, which can often only be solved by promoting sports. The fact that every day, so many men and young people, from six or six thirty, are unemployed and don’t know what to do, is a very bad temptation for them. It is partly solved with professional education and night classes, but there is

always a mass of those who do not know what to do” (PR, I, 87).

The three great amusements offered to young people, three great problems, are the cinema, the tavern, and the dance hall. The young person needs to expand, not only physically, but socially and emotionally. Arizmendiarieta does not consider it advisable to present the young person with a code of prohibitions: “with young people, it is necessary to adopt a positive, affirmative position” (CAS, 121). This does not mean that we should give up demanding compliance with legal regulations in establishments for the amusement or recreation of young people: light conditions in movie theaters, regulations regarding minors, etc. But the only real solution can be to offer alternative activities.

Arizmendiarieta does not hold the cinema or dancing in high esteem, but it is the tavern that he really dislikes. “Is there anyone who believes that the flame of idealism can be maintained within that environment?” (Ib. 124). Arizmendiarieta proposes, as an alternative, the creation of clubs, well-equipped centers that, while places to congregate and talk, would also be places of recreation and elevation or improvement. “Centers with a bar, with a restaurant, with a game room, with a reading room, with a radio. Centers with pool tables, table tennis, table football, checkers, dominoes, magazines, books, bowling,” *ranas*,” etc. Complete, well-ventilated, and clean centers, where even the very cleanliness and light contribute to elevate man” (Ibid. 126). These centers will bring together the best, will encourage them to excel, with the example of those who are scholarly or curious; young people will be offered a margin of initiative for the organization and maintenance of the center itself, so that they can assume responsibilities. From these centers, art, music, and regional dances will be encouraged; ensembles, choirs, and artistic groups will be formed. And, above all, sport will be encouraged” (ibid. 127), because it serves for the best development of the body, but it also serves, and above all, for the development of the most beautiful natural virtues: courage, loyalty, spirit of discipline, spirit of sacrifice, fraternity, and generosity. Arizmendiarieta considers soccer, “*pelota*,” and bowling as the most appropriate sports in the summer; in the winter, billiards. He attaches great importance to mountaineering, “for which a special preference is felt in these industrial areas” (PR, I, 87-88).

For girls, he does not seem to have many alternatives to offer: artistic groups or choirs, organization of raffles, etc., which will also help them to assume responsibilities, learning to organize with seriousness and order, etc. He sees theatrical performances by young people as a great disadvantage, a waste of time that could be used in better causes. (In spite of this, Arizmendiarieta organized numerous theatrical performances, perhaps because, in this way, it was possible at least to occupy time that would otherwise be irretrievably lost). “The problem of girls’ distractions is more

difficult to solve, although, on the other hand, it is not as urgent as that of boys” (Ib. 88).

9.2. Preparation for Leisure

Arizmendiarieta has the impression that all those immense possibilities of leisure catch us unprepared; we are not prepared for the so-called “civilization of leisure.”

“Whether leisure crushes us or provides us with a valuable space for our improvement depends on what we are able to discover in life: if we do not know how to see and feel more than an animal, the civilization of leisure will not contribute to improving human fate significantly, just as good pastures or full pantries do not raise them to higher planes than animals” (FC, II, 206).

Leisure preparation should start in the educational phase. For leisure to be a favorable circumstance for human development, for the cultivation of man as man, in the phase of preparation for life, the young person not only needs to acquire technical knowledge, immediately aimed at performance at work, but also to cultivate his superior faculties so that, later, he is able to apply them in the most wide-ranging fields of spiritual advancement, aesthetics, etc., so that he becomes more and more human, and a more perfect being, more sensitive to his peers and capable of desiring a close and fruitful coexistence in all aspects (Ib. 205).

Young people must also be “demassified;” they must be warned against the risks of inhibitions or passivity in the enjoyment of the means that civilization and progress put at our disposal; they must be constantly coaxed to initiative and the exercise of responsibility in the domains of the small world that surrounds each one of them; their spirits must be made capable of actively tuning in to the infinite messages and concerts that cross our vital spaces (Ib. 206).

9.3. Work-Calendar Reform

To optimize the time dedicated to both leisure and work, Arizmendiarieta believes that it is necessary to reform the traditional calendar and our customs related to time. He recognizes that tradition and routine weigh heavily in this field; there is a social inertia that is not easy to overcome.

“However, since the world has been given to us not so much to contemplate it as to transform it and adapt it to our needs and conditions, we must activate our consciences and think about all the complexity of problems that vacation entails” (FC, II, 205).

Some suggestions that Arizmendiarieta dared to specify were: that vaca-

tion days, instead of all being in August and at the same time for everyone, could be divided, at least for those who prefer it in this way, “between the second half of December and the first half of January and August, absorbing some other dates and rounding off the number of days eligible to qualify as vacation days” (FC, IV, 240); and transfer to Saturday, which has generally become a free and family day, everything that could lend itself to better scheduling and wider participation of all, to the extent that it benefits the home. This measure could even contribute to revitalizing the traditional “*azokak*,” or fairs.

It is about doing a better job anticipating and planning activity, to give way to a broader, more rational, and more humane participation of men in life. In relation to the Church, Arizmendiarieta asks: “When, or through what Council or Synod, should the Church try to adapt its calendar to the world of work, when so much is said about the dignity of the latter and the honor and glory of God shown by the man who strives to improve or complement the nature he has inherited?” (Ib. 242).

9.4. Organizing and humanizing leisure

As if the things of this world only made sense by pursuing specific ends, with a certain organization, Arizmendiarieta would also like to organize leisure.

If man is born for activity, Arizmendiarieta argues, it cannot be said that leisure in itself constitutes an appetizing state. Leisure should therefore consist of changing activities, rather than leaving behind all activity. The “problem of leisure in need of humanistic organization” is new; that is why we must be the promoters of new leisure conditions, which result in the cultivation and improvement of the personality (FC, III, 12-13). Personal advancement can be oriented either towards broader and more deeply shared forms of coexistence, or towards the cultivation of our intellectual or professional faculties.

It would be desirable if vacations, and leisure in general, could constitute days of reflection. “If man differs fundamentally from other animals by his ability to reflect, we must take advantage of vacations to think about our particular mission in life” (Ibid. 207).

In work time, a good percentage of people “give up their ability to think to the bosses”; outside the factory we find, in the consumer society, that “some clever people create needs to end up with money earned by sweat.” In short, outside and inside the factory, man is a passive entity to whom others dictate what he should do and not do. Propaganda imposes on him how he should use his leisure: summering here, drinking such-and-such soda, visiting this party hall.

For the rest, “something is wrong with us in our society when a genuinely human task such as work is not considered many times as a creative activity of man. Perhaps we have the mentality that work is something imposed on us by others, when it should be our personal will to work to build a better world” (Ibid. 206).

9.5. Leisure and community solidarity

Our society has a serious problem of imbalance between personal and public expenditures. The citizen with certain possibilities solves his transport problem by buying a private car; his children’s studies, by sending them to an expensive school; the problem of rest by renting or buying a country house. Citizens of lesser means try to do the same on a smaller scale. Meanwhile, we have very poor public transport services, public schools without sufficient means, not to mention the municipal services of public parks, etc. “Individualism is a characteristic of our society” (Ib. 207).

Rather than “individualism,” it would be better to say “selfishness.” While the holidays are becoming a blowout party once a year, as we like to do, the advancement of centers and means of recreation or growth for children and the elderly is neglected throughout the year (ib. 14).

We should think about being able to apply more options over the many months for enjoyment, more solidarity, and community. The construction of the necessary parks, swimming pools, and recreational areas, so that the entire populations of our urban centers could have magnificent options over the course of twelve months, would not mean much more in economic terms than what we spend on an individualistic and solitary plan in a few weeks (FC, II, 211). How ugly and poor are more few of our peoples, exclaims Arizmendiarieta, what stinginess with green spaces, so little sense of community demands! And what shame should it give us to live as wealthy individuals, without stopping to think that at the public level, there are no provisions or budgets to provide children with shelter, games, or adequate options, or that, at the other end of life, those who have the right to enjoy something in return for a lifetime dedicated to work barely find a space to enjoy peace and quiet! (Ib. 209-210).

10. Education and personality

Education constitutes the basis of both the development of the individual personality and social progress, both aspects that, in Arizmendiarieta’s thought, are inseparable. “Man is made human by education. Civilization always progresses rapidly through formative or educational action in line with the search for human and social values” (EP, II, 258).

The goal of education is to shape transformers of the world. You will meet this goal “when you help put in an idea for service, because training is serving. The world moves forward because of the people who have worked and left a slightly better world” (ibid. 220). That is why vocational schools must help the students to know their skills, so that they know how to choose the job that best suits their personality; they must teach them that work is service. What these schools should never do is prepare individualistic technicians, who do not have ideas of solidarity. The school must “help every student to develop his personality; therefore, study and work must serve to train responsible and constant men, who leave with a mentality of building a more just world” (ibid. 221).

These texts already reveal the most outstanding characteristics of what Arizmendiarieta means by a personality: willingness to build a new world, sense of work as a service, responsibility and constancy, solidarity.

A striking note is that in the background, Arizmendiarieta seems to identify the well-developed, mature personality that is intended to be achieved in the educational process with the leader, fully committed to his ideals, who carries the people behind him. Perhaps because he found himself in a climate so often accused of being apathetic, whether due to the post-war situation, or as a result of the absorbing State, Arizmendiarieta sets as an objective of education the awakening in young people the constant desire to overcome, not for selfish reasons or interests, but with a view to generosity and nobility.

“Conscious and courageous peoples quickly overcome the potholes of wars and calamities” (FC, I, 320). Education must create in young people that spirit of improvement that is the path to both individual and community maturity.

To be able to transform the world, or to be able to overcome the potholes of wars and calamities, ideals are needed, a solid conscience is needed. In order for workers to appear as adults, owners of their own destinies, in the new world to be built, they must have culture, not just technical knowledge. But, first of all, mentalities need to be reformed. We need a new, open mindset, moving towards new horizons. “We must renew tools and machines, but above all, we must renew the mentality of the men who are destined to exercise lordship over these elements. The methods of organizing work must be updated so that the application of the achievements of technical progress is fluid (...). Men and their customs do not have to be obstacles to obtaining results that, after all, we all want” (FC, II, 77).

Routine is one of those evils that hinders the development of men and institutions, and is regularly accepted by both as if it were a harmless formula of coexistence; for many, it offers nothing but advantages, regardless

of which side it is seen from. History, which often jealously records tensions and revolutions, which not infrequently seem to have had greater negative than positive balances, overlooks without mention the negative, fatal consequences of the paralysis involved in human coexistence imposed by the force of simple routine, of custom. Routine stifles social life.

To awaken the masses from their lethargy and uproot them from their routine requires leaders. That is why the true personality, in Arizmendiarieta's thought, is called to be a leader. "It is usually a minority who repudiate routine as an obstacle to the constant development of resources and human resources for the progressive promotion of the entire community; we do not include pathological nonconformists or recalcitrant individualists with utopian or narrow horizons in this minority. Progress requires the collaboration of the many, but counts on the creative and innovative drive of the few. It is, therefore, in their interest that their collaboration be capable of overcoming the weight of inertia, of habit; it must be revitalized with the assimilation and circulation of the innovative energies of the few capable of seeing further and of discovering and applying new formulas" (ibid.).

10.1. A new mindset

In all times, there have been men and peoples who have given in to the temptation of discouragement, lacking initiative or rhythm to integrate themselves into a world full of life and opportunities. They have accepted the world as they have found it, preferring to live with the feeling that the world was made and finished. "Our problem is closed men" (FC, I, 320).

This attitude has always been sterile, if not harmful, for both the individual and the community. But in our days, Arizmendiarieta says, it is all the more harmful, since we live in a world of accelerated changes. The course of economic, social, and technological events is such that there is no room for waiting, as perhaps could be done in times past. Today, things and circumstances change in ten years more than before in a hundred. We cannot deceive ourselves by thinking that this evolutionary rhythm is a passing phenomenon, and that we will soon return to calm: it is a process that is synonymous with life that has new mechanisms.

"For a people who want to improve their lot, the revolution that destroys is practically as fatal as the conservatism that prevents evolution and, therefore, adaptation to the varying needs of each moment" (PR, I, 95). Everything that is made, once it comes into being, is subject to the inflexible law of change, subjected by it to the process of adaptation, under penalty of self-destruction. "Stagnant water becomes putrid" (ib.).

"There is no doubt that the first things that both a man and a people need, both a person and a society, when it comes to developing well in life,

are clear ideas, an agile and flexible mentality, and an inner disposition that comes from the way of thinking and feeling of each one capable of adapting to the constantly evolving demands of life.

The greatest obstacle that slows the progress of peoples are those intimate barriers, which we call the culture, ideology, mentality, or spirit of each one.

In this regard, history has much to teach us. Today, the experts sent by the United Nations to various underdeveloped countries to promote the raising of living standards, with the available capital at their discretion, confess that what they cannot overcome is precisely the mental attitude of these populations that resists their plans.

Windmills took two centuries to be accepted and applied because those peoples and men took that time to evolve in their ideas, to overcome their routine, to overcome the inertia of a society in which the advantages offered by windmills were veiled by the disadvantages represented by those other men who feared being left without their usual work of pushing stones.

The first task that we cooperative members have to accept is to rise to the occasion in our way of thinking, judging, or feeling to avoid time passing without us resolving to adopt the measures required by our enterprise” (FC, I, 44).

In our civilization, there are two factors that have not intervened in the past, or have had only a relative influence: scientific experience and production techniques. These two instruments have contributed to expanding a limited, relatively stable world with immense possibilities. But it cannot be forgotten that, as has been said, there is nothing less technical than the causes of technical progress itself: men are capable of adopting new techniques only for the realization of previously conceived ideals (Ib. 321-322). Hence the need for a well-rounded education, which allows men to position themselves properly in a world in perpetual change. “Education, understood as the complex of ideas and conceptions that a man adopts, is the key to the development and growth of a people” (Ib. 322).

How do you forge an agile and vigorous present, with a sure promise of a fortunate future, without coldly sacrificing a respectable past? “To live in the day, there is nothing a people or a man needs to do more than update their spiritual or institutional baggage to the demands of the present and the future” (PR, I, 96).

“Being up to date is more than living in the day; life is not the pages of the calendar, which follow one another and can be dispersed without each moment losing its interest. Life implies a continuity of deep roots;

the conquests of each day are stepping stones that rest on each other; this is how inheritances are carved, called to be firm points of support for indefinite and fruitful progress” (Ibid. 95). The updating and revitalizing of certain material elements, such as housing, tools, etc., is something that is achieved relatively easily, and fairly spontaneously, “but the domain of ideas and the institutions that support them is a different story. The social mentality is something that is very difficult to bring up to date” (Ibid. 96). It requires deep and constant educational work.

“Peoples advance to the extent that they are empowered in both aspects of the deployment and cultivation of intelligence and the development of the associative spirit. — The best providence they can adopt for the future is, therefore, in those two fields: the preparation of the new generations, and the constant fine-tuning of the workforce through their adequate cultural and social advancement” (Ibid. 98).

The fundamental reason why different countries are not at the same degree of technical development today is not geographic, etc., but, in Arizmendiarieta’s opinion, the conception of life and the spirit of the inhabitants of each region. “That is what we call here the mentality of each people, and that is what needs to be open, that is, admit human perfectibility, the possibility of modifying social context, cooperation with others, and a wide range of initiatives” (FC, I, 322).

It should be stressed that there is nothing less technical than the causes of technical progress. Indeed, the reform of mentality that Arizmendiarieta urges does not refer so much to the relatively easy willingness to accept the most modern technology and even be willing to carry out the necessary studies for its good use. This technology cannot come if there is no spirit of cooperation, development of initiatives, modification of the social context, i.e., it cannot come from “Americanitos”, but only from unity and unselfish, generous cooperation. “There is no doubt that the most hopeful sign of a community is knowing how to unite to build, to build what is in its interest, and to look to the future” (Ibid.). This is the secret that the working masses eager for emancipation have to discover; their emancipation will be realized when they have made this effort. The key that definitively unlocks the closed world, making it open and progressive, is undoubtedly scientific and technical activity. But first, “the conflict between the finished, closed world and the open world is fundamentally located in the field of education” (Ib. 323).

“A radical change of mentality is needed” (ibid. 321), which helps to develop dialogue, coexistence, the spirit of generous cooperation, new initiatives, and adaptation to the changes implied by constant evolution. “We should be concerned about underdeveloped areas wherever they may exist, but especially those covered by hats or caps” (Ib.).

“The key to our future is not revolution, nor is it conservatism; it is a generous opening to the demands of the times, through the promotion of a broad educational action and a process of pooling, which, in any field of application, integrates men as brothers” (PR, I, 98).

There is a serious danger of understanding technical professional education in a very restricted sense, forgetting that the vigor and energy of a society, or an entity - such as cooperatives - does not lie in its investment rates or its production capacity, or in its technology, understood materially, but in its wealth of ideas and its social spirit, which constitute the true engine of all progress. Everyone knows the statement that man is made to live in society. Whether he intends to dispense with others by isolating himself, or whether he mixes in his life into the collective soul to the point of letting his own personality dissolve, he cannot evade this internal demand of his nature either way. From his social environment, he acquires his most precious gifts and, on the other hand, “in communion with others, man finds his true benefit; by making them the gift of his person, he acquires his own personality, since true growth lies in leaving himself behind, that is, in the destruction of selfishness” (FC, I, 232). “The social spirit requires self-forgetfulness. Every formation that combats selfishness, therefore, favors the expansion of social virtues. The role of education should be approached in this way, from this angle” (Ibid. 233).

A danger to our civilization lies precisely in the fact that the dominion that we are achieving over the goods and energies of external nature does not go hand in hand with the subjugation of the elemental and zoological aspects that exist in our own human nature. Thus, we find the dangerous phenomenon that “modern society has not developed, intellectually and morally, in proportion to the energy it has brought forth through science and technology. Therefore, the vital problem of our society is whether we have sufficient strength to subordinate technical civilization to spiritual and moral forces, which, in other words, is the question of whether there will be a way, form, or instrument to achieve this balance through a rapid development and cultivation of man’s moral and spiritual forces (EP, I, 75). We live in a century of gigantic progress and, at the same time, of the greatest human tragedies. That story, Arizmendiarieta says, has splashed onto us all. But, to avoid repeating them, it is not enough to condemn abuses and crimes, or to trust in the spontaneous generation of virtue. On the other hand, it has been well proven that external means alone, and human precautions, and political expedients are not enough either. “Iron,” said one sage, “may be used to reap a harvest or to kill, for human reason may serve the most generous ends or the most abominable evils. The study of science (...), disciplined with a view to domination, can include a civilization of selfishness and materialism, which is nothing more than a wise barbarism” (Ibid.).

10.2. Culture

“A training center must be, above all, an information center, since training is not so much leading people by the hand. Rather, people, knowing their own concerns, need documentation to satisfy their hunger for culture and responsibility” (FC, III, 266). Training must make men, rather than leaders (FC, I, 233) and for this, it is not enough to transmit mere technical knowledge, it must put the learner on paths of culture, in the broadest sense, and of responsibility. Education must attend to the whole wealth of possibilities and needs that make men’s hearts beat.

The person has roots from which he feeds (history, community he is a part of) and a multitude of needs to satisfy: education must address both aspects, seeking a complete advancement of man. “We designate the imperative need for this versatility and multifacetedness with the generic description of culture” (EP, II, 188).

It is about educating young people, or men, without stripping them of what already defines them, i.e., their experience, their history, or position in life. On the contrary, education must combine what nature or history has provided us with the most appropriate elements to advance into the future (Ib. 188-189).

Culture in Arizmendiarieta seems to contrast with mere technical, professional knowledge, having two aspects, one intellectual and one moral: “once and for all we will say that the meaning we are giving to the word culture is that of intellectual and moral training” (CAS, 156).

Arizmendiarieta never stopped insisting on the aspect of intellectual training: “Intelligence is the higher faculty that must guide man. Man’s greatest risk is that which comes from the lack of cultivation of his higher faculties” (FC, I, 321). But he has always insisted much more on integral training, and this carries with it more moral than intellectual connotations, because, in his opinion, “individual moral training must remain the foundation of social training” (ibid. 233).

Without a solid foundation of human and Christian qualities, social training will be much like to a house built on sand, it will be reduced to formulas meant to be superimposed onto the personality, radically selfish, with rather utilitarian and superficial attitudes, which might be useful in public relations, but which cannot withstand the onslaught of selfishness. “To only teach how men should behave towards one another, without attacking their selfishness, is to plow the sea (...). Before teaching them public relations and courtesy, they must be accustomed to forgetting themselves” (ibid.).

Education must therefore be well-rounded, including “professional training, inspiring the spirit of teamwork, solidarity, initiative, service; physical

culture, moved by the spirit of teamwork and solidarity; moral training, creating Christian habits of obedience, order, discipline, respect for others, and educating the sense of effort, truthfulness, responsibility, work, and fidelity to the duty of state; religious formation, placing the foundations of the social spirit in the soul” (ibid.). The training period should not be understood “as a simple phase of preparation for a young person to be a more productive machine” (EP, I, 241). It is indispensable and urgent, Arizmendiarieta says, that our apprentices leave the School with a clear vision of what the world can and should be in light of Christian principles applied to the world of work and its relationships. They must leave prepared and knowing that they will encounter surmountable economic and social realities, with transformable structures and, therefore, rather than with a resigned spirit, with a temperate spirit to be able to fight for the establishment of a more humane and just social order. “The young man who today plunges into the world of work without a clear and positive social ideology is a castaway from his religious life, or a coward, or a traitor to the labor movement” (ibid. 247). Which is very understandable, Arizmendiarieta says, given the atmosphere that reigns in the factories.

“The social training that we have to give them must aspire to create in them an open and restless state of mind, so that for them, religious and moral training is not reduced simply to the resigned acceptance of the temporal or social realities presented to them, but rather, they have the capacity to interpret them for what they are, circumstances or phases of an evolution to whose faster realization men must contribute” (Ibid. 246).

We could, therefore, conclude that, although Arizmendiarieta was mainly concerned with professional education in an industrial and laboring environment, both the concepts of education and of culture have a predominantly moral meaning for him. Even in this aspect, two elements stand out clearly: ideals, which feed the spirit of constant improvement, and the selfless and generous spirit of dedication to the common good. A progressive society needs men with the ambition to take command and the vocation to lead. But, “he who aspires to command and wants to exercise command in a cultivated society, has no better formula than to stand out precisely for his generosity and disposition towards others” (FC, I, 234). On the other hand, progressive society is one that is willing to follow such leaders. “The members of a community who learn to fix their eyes on those who stand out for their nobility and generosity, will not be mistaken or disappointed” (ib.).

10.3. Leaders

Arizmendiarieta dreams of a kind of Development Plan that encourages “the people’s march towards human greatness” (FC, II, 25). Modern society has enormous tools to shape the personality of its members: press, radio,

TV, etc., and the varied fabric of institutions such as schools, companies, etc. Everything that might be a deforming element must be eliminated from them. Arizmendiarrieta will never stop being a puritan in this sense.

But, “the true mold of man is another man” (ibid.): hence the importance and educational value of human relationships (the calls can easily ring hollow and hypocritical) and, hence also, the need for exemplary leaders. The people will not follow “if they are not moved by a man who is ahead on the road to human greatness” (ib; cf. CAS, 104-105).

The education of man by man is not limited only to leaders: “every person has something to teach others” (FC, III, 266); all human contact can be enriching, if we have an open and receptive attitude. There is no doubt that those who have more knowledge because of age or studies have greater possibilities, but every person has something to give, and we must take advantage of the full capacity of people who want to give something. That does not rule out, however, certain people assuming a more prominent educational role, as is the case with leaders.

“A society that tries seriously to plan the development of human greatness needs to have a sufficient staff of competent men willing to carry the positions of greater responsibility and quality without demanding a higher standard of individual and family life than the rest of the people” (FC, II, 25). This will be the only way to overcome the extractive mentality, according to which greater responsibility or higher quality of work automatically corresponds to greater remuneration, and to try to organize human relationships by higher values, always understanding responsibility as a service.

Recalling the figure of John XXIII, Arizmendiarrieta will tell us (1964) that a servant and non-dominant Church, dialoguing and non-anathematizing, living simply as a shepherd in the midst of his sheep, with functional cadres that are served by poor men, without a careerist spirit, could be a formidable mold to make a society in his image and likeness. “It would be a living example that it is possible to structure a society in which one tends to live that principle of ‘ask of each according to his possibilities, and to give to each according to his needs’; a principle that the first Christians of Jerusalem tried to live out, and later sent off to convents, and which modern socialist movements have tried to make into a basic principle for the structuring of worldly society” (ibid. 26).

Cooperativism is the result of a crystallization of generous attitudes and aspirations, poured out towards human greatness, and aspires to become a nucleus around which other similar attitudes crystallize. The responsibility of its heads and leaders, visible and hidden, is to highly embody the attitude of selfless service, oblivious to the desires of the individual in domination over others in the economic sphere, to turn the cooperative movement into

a wide path through which the people can enter. “Man is a great energy. He needs to be channeled, to be offered enterprises that are made to fit, within reach, and exciting to him, and men who convince him with their lives” (FC, II, 26).

When there is a favorable climate and adequate channels, the decisions that seemed heroic cease to be rare phenomena, or typical only of the gifted, and come to belong to a great many. “Human and Christian summits are within the reach of men of good will” (ibid. 27).

Arizmendiarieta confesses that, having defended the principle of “demanding from each according to his possibilities and giving according to his needs,” there have been those who have called him a utopian. And indeed, it would be absurd, he says, to try to apply that principle overnight and one hundred percent. “But it is not absurd, but urgent, to apply a progressive Plan of Development of the spirit enclosed in that principle” (ib.). History advances in this direction, in Arizmendiarieta’s opinion, and the French Revolution and the modern social revolution represent a great advance in this process. “He who is able to believe more and harbor greater hope in man’s possibilities is the one who will be able to keep pushing humanity forward” (ibid.).

“It is enough for a few, in each locality, in each structure, to live out that principle, so that the climate of that locality, of that institution, rises, and that same attitude spreads to varying degrees” (ibid.).

10.4. Passions

We all carry, in Arizmendiarieta’s view, a beast within which we have to constantly fight (SS, II, 157), basing ourselves for this on the light of faith, but also on the light of reason (SS, II, 68). “Appealing more to reflection than to instincts must be in the mind of everyone who genuinely wants to count on man, or, in other words, respecting more the dictates of conscience than of passions. The most profound and authentically human thing is thinking and the capacity for reflection” (FC, III, 196).

Arizmendiarieta, especially in his pastoral writings and in those dedicated to the training of youth, never stopped painting passions, temptation, and danger with the somber colors typical of the Basque Church, sometimes described as Jansenist. But his fundamentally optimistic vision of even the passions is striking, even without ignoring their negative aspects. Wanting to kill the passions, he says, is equivalent to mutilating man: it is about knowing how to orient them and take advantage of them. To pretend that man, created in the image and likeness of God, but destined to live in the world, in a world that is hostile to him (FC, I, 32-33) and which he must transform with his work, is pure spirit and will, is angelism. Having a body

also means being equipped “with passions, by desires, by natural stimuli of action”, which must be recognized and reciprocated (FC, I, 239). “Man need not extinguish his passions, but tame them. Man must not set aside his aspirations to overcome, but impose discipline and hierarchy on them. Man must not come to the cooperative to exercise contemplation, but to channel and combine his action in the context of his sacrifices and compensations (Ibid. 240).” “There are passions in the human heart that cannot be drowned or annihilated and must be guided and channeled” (PR, II, 2).

This is a thesis with wide-ranging consequences for his social approaches, which will lead him, for example, to accept, to a large extent, the liberal doctrines, if not as ideals, at least as realities that correspond to human nature, thus accepting even selfishness (moderate, oriented) as ultimately positive for the community and for development. He will consider the desire for profit as something legitimate in itself, as “a powerful resource that acts in the economic field, and to which no small number give the status of something irreplaceable and insurmountable” (FC, I, 325). On the one hand, Arizmendiarieta criticizes the little attention paid to the negative aspects of the profit motive; but, on the other, he refuses to ignore its positive aspects.

In this way, passions and instincts contribute their dynamics and their strength to the global program of making man more man.

Obviously, “the drive and courage of instincts, legendary as they are, do not help to overcome shortcomings or to remedy impotence” (CLP, I, 284). Our struggle requires the strength and drive of the passions, but they must always be subject to reason, to conscience, which, when properly developed, could even supplant them. “It is obvious that without force, you do not get everything that conscience itself legitimizes and even demands. But, to the extent that we have a force rooted in the conscience, unity, and solidarity of humans, we give priority and prevalence to it over play and the explosion of instincts” (Ibid. 284). The function that the passions assume in his concept must, therefore, be understood as provisional, as a concession to the surrounding realities, but which man must always tend to overcome, guided in his action more by reason and conscience. “A man dominated by the instinct to win,” he said, addressing the workers of Ulgor, “is a natural product, condemned, as such, to be what wheat, a cow, or a fruit tree would be left to its laws and its fate. Petty, or stingy” (CLP, III, 28). He insists that this does not mean that the desire for profit is bad in all cases, or unnecessary and rejectable, “but simply that man and the world governed by such a natural resource do not reach the possibilities they could reach. They fall short of what they could give of themselves. That is, the resource of profit, the desire to win, must be subordinated to other values, to other goals, and only when they are exercised with that subjection that these springs give

good results, results in line with the category and dignity of man” (Ibid.). These observations are intimately linked to Arizmendiarrrieta’s view that virtues are even economically profitable. Work, development, can be motivated by the desire for profit; but more powerful resource than passions are the virtues, “the degree of responsibility that each one has put at stake by working without needing external vigilance, the fluidity of his spirit that has made coexistence pleasant, the generosity that always makes it easy to connect, the solidarity that induces him to look spontaneously for others, the sensitivity and delicacy that intuit the transcendence of small things; in a word, the honesty that is a credit to man” (FC, II, 67). The practice of such virtues, while difficult to quantify, is the best investment that can be made for the proper functioning and development of cooperatives (extendable to the entire field of work). “A larger dose of these virtues on the part of each of the cooperative members assures our cooperative companies a margin of safety and possibilities than could be achieved by simple investments and external organization of tasks” (ib. 68). The simple organization of tasks and successful investments on their own do not guarantee good development. On the contrary, where these virtues reign, neither organization nor investments will constitute any insurmountable problem, “since a good conception of spiritual or human values assumes the involvement of material or economic values” (ib.).

10.5. Chinese Fable of the Old Fool

Among the large body of Chinese “wisdom” - sayings, proverbs - that were, apparently, very much to Arizmendiarrrieta’s taste, there is the fable of the Old Fool who moved the mountains: a fable of faith in man, as Arizmendiarrrieta interprets it.

“It is the story of an Old Man who lived in ancient times in the north of China, known as the Old Fool of the North Mountain.

South of the door of his house were two mountains, one called Taijand and the other Wangwu, which obstructed his exit.

With great determination, he led his children to move the two mountains, armed with hoes.

Another old man, called the Wise Old Man, saw them and laughed, saying: How foolish of you to try! Moving two such large mountains is out of reach for you and your children.

The Foolish Old Man answered: When I die, my children will remain; when they die, my grandchildren will remain; and so on, to infinity. But those mountains, no matter how high they are, cannot grow. With each basket that is removed, they will shrink more and more. Why can’t we take them down?

This was how he refuted the mistaken idea of the Wise Old Man and decided to move the mountains day after day.

This ended up reaching the heart of the God of heaven, who sent two heavenly beings to earth, to carry the two mountains on their shoulders ” (FC, II, 27-28).

The (secularized) reading by Arizmendiarieta comes to this conclusion: “Faith ends up conquering the people who, inflamed by the testimony of the”Old Fools,” launch themselves, as beings sent by Heaven, to move the mountains on their powerful backs” (Ibid.).

This is the strength of the man in his work community.