



**“A Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário”
Another way of doing politics: on the reform of school services (1924-1935)¹**

A Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário
Outra forma de fazer política: a propósito da reforma dos serviços escolares (1924-1935)

“A Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário”
Otra forma de hacer política: sobre la reforma de los servicios escolares (1924-1935)

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ABSTRACT

This article is part of a project about *schools and experiences of reference in Portugal in the 20th century*. It focuses on the study of *Voz do Operário*, an institution that developed educational activities for the lower classes in an associative context. We opted for a descriptive presentation with the intention of arguing that the adoption and application of an educational model — inspired by the *New Education (Educação Nova)* and aimed at a specific audience — was based in a socio-political strategy, which emerged both from the historical conditions of workers’ associativism in the first half of the 20th century, and from the situation Portugal was living due to the crisis of the First Republic, which would lead to the *New State (Estado Novo)*. In the article, we explain the reform process which was undertaken in the educational services of *Voz do Operário* between 1924 and 1935. Beforehand, we present a brief history of Portuguese society from the end of the 19th century until the 1950s, to give a representation of the worker's association in its dimension, activity and social meaning.

Keywords: Worker’s Associativism. New Education. Portugal.

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RESUMO

Este artigo insere-se num projeto sobre *Escolas e experiências de referência em Portugal no século XX* e centra-se no estudo de uma instituição que desenvolve atividades educativas num quadro associativo e para as classes populares. Optámos por uma apresentação descritiva com a intenção de argumentar que a adoção e aplicação de um modelo educativo, inspirado na Educação Nova e conformado a um público específico, assentou numa estratégia sociopolítica, emergente das condições históricas do associativismo operário na primeira metade do século XX e da situação vivida no País com a crise da Primeira República, que desembocou no Estado Novo. No artigo explanamos o processo de reforma dos serviços escolares da Voz do Operário entre 1924-1935, não sem antes apresentarmos uma história sumária da Sociedade, desde o fim do século XIX até à década de 1950, com o objetivo de representar a associação na sua dimensão, atividade e significado social.

Palavras-chave: Associativismo operário. Educação Nova. Portugal.

RESUMEN

Este artículo es parte de un proyecto de investigación sobre el tema *Itinerarios de innovación pedagógica: escuelas y experiencias de referencia en Portugal en el siglo XX*. Se centra en el estudio de una institución que desarrolló actividades educativas en un marco asociativo dirigido a las clases populares. A través de la descripción de esta institución argumentamos que la adopción y aplicación de un modelo educativo, inspirado en la Escuela Nueva y dirigido a un público específico, se basó en una estrategia sociopolítica surgida de las condiciones históricas del asociacionismo obrero en la primera mitad del siglo XX, así como de la situación vivida en el país con la crisis de la Primera República y el advenimiento del *Estado Novo*. En el artículo exploramos el proceso de reforma de los servicios escolares de la *Voz do Operário* [Voz del Obrero] desde 1924 hasta 1935, incluyendo previamente una historia sucinta de la Sociedad de Instrucción y Beneficência desde finales del siglo XIX hasta la década de 1950. Con ello pretendemos mostrar a la asociación en su dimensión, actividad e importancia social.

Palabras clave: Asociacionismo obrero. Escuela Nueva. Portugal.



*A VOZ DO OPERÁRIO*²

Introduction

The association, *Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário*, is at the heart of this paper. It was founded in the last decade of the 19th century and has carried out its activity, uninterruptedly, since then up to today. Its action was diffused by its headquarters, in the neighbourhood of *Graça*, Lisbon, where it was housed from 1924, in the street already called *A Voz do Operário* [Voice of the Worker], and in the building whose construction it had commissioned to be a large “Casa dos Trabalhadores” [Workers House]. Yet under the constancy of action and a long-lived trajectory, multiple interwoven problems have been revived, which are of relevance for the knowledge and interpretation of this institution. Its trajectory is not linear or without tension, struggles and commitment, regardless of the angles adopted for its observation: that of the associative movement; of educational experiences; and that of the types of social welfare.

The research which gave rise to this paper is part of a broader project, namely INOVAR, which brings together several research groups belonging to different Portuguese universities, whose work focuses on the study of experimental, innovative and alternative education models. To this end, a number of school institutions and pedagogical experiences that have taken shape in our contemporary society and fall under the afore-mentioned criteria were selected.

In the case of *A Voz do Operário*, the analysis is not dissociated by the angle of the curriculum and educational practices (one of the intervention strands of the association), as might have been expected, but rather a dynamic articulation is established at its centre among: the association, as a form of organisation, with decision-making processes conferred upon a general assembly of members; education, seeking to identify curricular options in relation to the educational goals and how an innovative pedagogical model was, or was not convoked; and social welfare, particularly in the analysis of the types of school support devised to facilitate access to education.

² AHS-ICS: Espólio Pinto Quartin, s.d. [193--], PT-AHS-ICS-PQ-DOC-335.

In modern, liberal, industrialised and urban societies, new sociability practices have emerged which are expressed through associativism, « forms of organization of interests and civic participation of the new political order» (Lousada 2017, 97). *A Voz do Operário* participated in this movement which was particularly active in the late 19th century and in the First Republic. Within a universe composed of different types of associations (educational, scientific, cultural, mutual and professional or class) linked to ideological and political trends, *A Voz do Operário* was part of an associativism that defended the interests of professional worker groups, from a class perspective, which although not politically assumed, was where socialist, anarchist, syndicalist and Republican sensitivity and activism converged. Amongst all of them, there were members who belonged to the Freemason organisation. Within the scope of defence of class interests, whether as a form of awareness raising of social phenomena, as a strategy to combat illiteracy or for access to schooling, or even as the professional qualification of the worker, education emerged as an investment on the part of associations, based on types of social support. These are the elements that frame the research. As for the chronological period, the years between 1924/25 and 1935, coinciding with the period of the end of the First Republic and beginning of the *Estado Novo* were chosen, a time when the debate around the reform of educational services and the design of a pedagogical curriculum for the educational structure of the Association [*Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário*] were configured under the premises of the project. As will be seen, this period was characterised by a bubbling of ideas and experiences taken from *Educação Nova* [New Education], which mobilized worker organisations, republican and libertarian popular educational institutions, educational and teacher associations, governmental and municipal initiatives that contaminated the educational project of the Association, in an original synthesis, as it was controlled by a workers' association with a sense of social transformation. The analysis extends up to the early 1950s, so as to examine the application of the curriculum and approved regulations within a new framework of state regulation of the institution.

Institutional chronicles and academic narratives

At the turn of the decade from 1920 to 1930, *A Voz do Operário* was preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary with a particularly heedful programme of celebrations. In acknowledgement of the fact that the Association did not have a written history, it was decided in the General Assembly of 1929, that a monograph would be written. It was the aim of its Board of Administration to go beyond the occasional notes, of a memoirist nature, and based on oral tradition, generally produced in speeches or articles published in the journal of the Association to celebrate its anniversary, to invest in historical research, « based on an in-depth study of the minutes, journal collection, correspondence and documents in its archive ». In other words, research based on documental sources «from which the historical truth would spring forth» on «the greatest accomplishment of Portuguese workers» (Santos 1938, 97), would take precedence over oral tradition, adulterated by the passage of time.

This initiative was thwarted. However, the administration of 1930-1931 took it up again, and the then president of the supervisory board, Raúl Esteves dos Santos³, was entrusted with the study, the writing and dissemination of the history of *A Voz do Operário*: to this end, he took home the «book of minutes of the Administrative Committee, Supervisory

³ Public writer Raúl Esteves dos Santos (1889-1954), member of *A Voz do Operário*, began to collaborate with the governing bodies of the association in 1925, the year he drew up a reform plan for the institution. In 1929-1930, he was elected for the Supervisory Board, and between 1931 and 1937, for the positions of President of the Administrative Committee and President of the Board of the General Assembly. Other services followed, in the same positions between 1941 and 1948 (SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, Livro de Atas da, para os anos 1925-1950).

Board and General Assembly, in addition to any other documents that might provide enlightenment and the voluminous journal collection » (Santos 1938, 98). Between 1931 and 1944, he never stopped writing and producing texts on the history of the Association⁴.

Raúl Esteves dos Santos was its institutional and official chronicler. He established facts and characterised periods, he identified protagonists (Esteves 1936b), enlightened difficulties and combats and referenced documents proving the situations described. For the more recent phases in the life of the Association, particularly from 1925 onwards, Raúl Esteves dos Santos included his own experience in the historical chronicle, related to the administration of the Association with a programme of action set on revitalizing *A Voz do Operário* (Esteves 1933b). With the recovery of memory and the construction of a history of the work accomplished by workers for workers, in the name of social justice and progress, the identity of *A Voz do Operário* was substantiated with a powerful sense of image: *Catedral do Bem, Colmeia, Seara de Luz e Epopeia dos Humildes*.⁵

Interpretation of the history of the association was naturally guided by the institution itself, and by one of its own, with positions tied to the defence of workers' associativism and the ability of the workers to take leadership, in a discourse sown with romanticism. This romanticism became increasingly more accentuated the further back the author went in the history of the Association (to the times of its foundation). All these texts were published, the majority of them under *A Voz do Operário*, and actually assumed themselves as «the greatest and best propaganda instruments» of the Association (Brocas, 1938, 34). Effectively, in order to maintain its programme and activities, especially when the association's population began to decrease (1930s), it had to attract members, justify the increased subscription cost and seek public and private subsidies.

Considering how the information is organised in the diachrony, from its foundation up to «its» present – basically the late 1930s, Raúl Esteves dos Santos focuses on four distinct periods in the history of the Association.

The founding period - 1879-1883: restricted to the creation of the journal by the tobacco workers and the overcoming of the first financing crisis, with the constitution of the Cooperative, and the first battle with the other professional classes for control of the journal and the association.

The second period - 1883-1890: corresponding to the construction of the foundations of the future *Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário*. After discovery of the «elixir of long life» (Santos 1932 a, 27), with the decision taken by the association to provide support for the funerals of its members – a measure that guaranteed the rapid growth of the associative population⁶ - *A Voz do Operário* launched its programme for the creation of schools for its members.

The third period - 1890-1924/25: limited to the period between the publication of the statutes of the *Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência* and the intervention of the Administrative and Inquiry Committee, appointed by the Civil Governor of Lisbon. This period corresponds to the expansionist phase of the association, in members and schools, serving to project the Association at a social level so that it enjoyed legitimacy on the part of the monarchic governments and the Republican State, and acknowledgement on the part of political figures, intellectuals, teachers and public writers attentive to experiences in the field of popular education. However, in post World War I, the crisis affecting the Association, faced with the costly construction of its headquarters, beset by internal conflicts, tension and

⁴ A referenced chronological list is published in Santos 1938, 97-99 and Brocas 1938, 34.

⁵ Corresponding to titles or title add-ons of articles or monographs. *Vide.* full references, with the exception of «A Voz do Operário - Grande Catedral do Bem», published in the *Revista Portuguesa de Comunicações*, between 1931 and 1935. It was not possible to locate these texts in any public library.

⁶ In a study on the purposes of mutual societies/associations, as instruments of social welfare in liberal societies, « support as a result of a member's death [constitutes] a constant ideal» (Baptista 2016, 103), which explains the success of such a provision to the members of *A Voz do Operário*.

poor management, led to the intervention of the civil governor of Lisbon, who appointed a committee to reorganise the administration of *A Voz do Operário*.

The fourth period – 1926-1935: is the phase of reorganisation of the Association, marked upstream by the revision of the statutes, and downstream by the approval of the Pedagogical Curriculum and Regulation of the School Services. This period saw the emergence of a new generation in the managing bodies, where Raúl Esteves dos Santos and Domingos da Cruz gained prominence, in addition to the completion of the headquarters building and the move to the new premises, and the creation of proposals that reformed the various services of *A Voz do Operário*, particularly the school services.

The research on *A Voz do Operário* focused more extensively on the period from 1890 to 1935, interpreted in its fundamental articulation – associativism, education and welfare – by Ramiro Lopes (1995). With detailed research, focusing on the journal as a documental source, and supported by the scrutiny of other printed sources produced by and on the Association, this author stresses the importance of «Instruction» in the curriculum of the Institution, and shows how the debate on the pedagogical renovation/innovation of the schools of *A Voz do Operário* was occasionally resumed in the decades 1910-1920, without any position being taken, any plan drawn up and any model adopted. The literacy of the highest number of children and adults, with recourse to contracts with undifferentiated schools in order to meet the needs of the State in its support of the most needy and underprivileged, prevailed as a need over the criticism of «instruction, seen to be dogmatic, bookish and metaphysical», as opposed to «liberal, secular, positive and rationalist instruction». The idea of an «alternative model to that of the official education of the state was dispersed and emerged occasionally [...], and was more the expression of a desire, the affirmation of an ideal than the proposition of a consistent and sustained project » (Lopes 1995, 129). This situation changed as of 1924, when the reform of the school services began to be regarded differently. The author analyses this process and ends the chapters on «Instruction» on this note (Lopes 1995, 100-173). As far as the reform of school services and the approval process of the Pedagogical Curriculum (1929-1935) are concerned, this paper complements the analysis of Ramiro Lopes, although it adopts a different approach, which has been made possible mainly by resorting to new documental sources from the archive of the Association⁷ and the personal archives of figures connected to *A Voz do Operário*⁸.

In the chapter given to the study of the school activities of the Association, the articles of Mesquita (1987) and Tavares & Pimenta (1987, 363-374) are worthy of mention, underpinned by the analysis of information and data collected in the journal, *A Voz do Operário*. Both depart from the connections between education and the workers' movement during the First Republic and question whether the education of the *Voz do Operário* was an alternative to the official education of the state. The first author concludes that «with its educational model, *A Voz* did not constitute an alternative to state education, however its compensatory role [given the number of schools and pupils] was worthy of mention» (Mesquita, 385). The second authors, who note the divergence of the schools of *A Voz* from alternative models that were well received by worker, syndical and libertarian elites, such as the *Escola Oficina n.º 1* [Workshop-School] and the rational schools of Francisco Ferrer, conclude that due to the «alignment with the state curriculum», a social promotion strategy of the members was at play (Tavares & Pimenta 1987, 374).

There are not many more works on *A Voz do Operário*. Despite the fact that it is an omnipresent institution, invariably referenced in articles on associativism, popular education

⁷ ANTT: archive of the *Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário* (abbreviated below to ANTT: SIBVO).

⁸ *Arquivo de História Social* [Social History Archive] -ICS (abbreviated below to AHS-ICS); BNP: *Arquivo Histórico Social* [Social Historical Archive] /Projeto MOSCA (abbreviated below to AHS/Projeto MOSCA).

and literacy⁹, architecture and urbanism¹⁰, and also in initiatives organised to oppose the regime of the *Estado Novo*¹¹, and despite the news features in a number of thematic dictionaries¹², there is no in-depth knowledge on this institution. The most significant lack of studies is related to the period of the *Estado Novo*. For recent years, the work of Pascoal Paulus on the School of *Ajuda* should be noted, since it sheds light upon the post 25 April period by studying the presence of the Modern Movement in the schools of the Association (Paulus, 2013).

Finally, a reference to some editions of the initiative of *A Voz do Operário* regarding its history, produced in a commemorative context (Santos 1983; Galhordas and Damas 1993). On the basis of this historical and institutional spirit, the Association also instigated the promotion of a monograph on the history of the institution, published in 2018, and written by Alfredo Franco. This work covers the entire history of the institution, from the foundation of the Journal up to the present day, including its expansion projects for the future. It systematizes the information available in the afore-mentioned works, contextualises, from a political and social perspective, the different phases that characterised the history of the Association, and provides detail in notes, through transcripts of the journal *A Voz do Operário* and various observations of the events, initiatives and figures that marked the life of the Association.

The institution (1890 - 1950s)

The *Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário* emerged enmeshed in a number of associative initiatives led by the workers of the tobacco industry, geared towards defending the class in the 1880s. This fight had begun with the publication of a journal in 1879. However, its designation is the result of the statutes approved in 1890, to grant the association, already open to the participation of other professional classes, the educational and welfare dimension its leaders and members had sought to develop (Lopes 1995, 28-43). In the formulation of its statutes, the goals of the institution were laid down in a clear and synthetic manner: to keep the journal *A Voz do Operário*; to create day and evening classes and a reading room; to support the members and their families with the provision of funerals. Thus, a functioning model was inaugurated which, despite its transformations across the various curriculum and practices processes, stood firm in its guiding principles throughout the 20th century.

In order to provide a brief presentation that covers its evolution, the 1920s to 1930s have been taken as a reference to highlight a “before” and “after”. In fact, these decades represent a turning-point in the history of the Association since they correspond to a renovating impulse, woven over the former experience of the association (as of the late 19th century), which activated the initiatives that marked its scope and later action which, in this analysis, extends up to the early 1950s¹³.

⁹ As examples: Candeias 2013; Pintassilgo 2011, 2012; Melo 2008.

¹⁰ The emblematic headquarters of the association, the project of architect Norte Júnior in 1912, placed *A Voz do Operário* in the general history of 20th century Portuguese art. And also in more specific thematic approaches related to architecture (Fernandes 1990; Galvão and Mendes 2011; Martín López 2014; Folgado 2016).

¹¹ The Association hosted public meetings and conferences organised by the Movement for Democratic Unity (MUD, 1945-1948) and the candidacy commission of Norton de Matos (1949) and Arlindo Vicente (1958) for President of the Republic in its assembly room. For a repertoire of photographic images, *vide* FMS: Casa Comum, fundos Alberto Pedroso, Manuel Mendes e Mário Soares <http://casacomum.org/cc/arquivos>.

¹² For example, on the First Republic (Carvalho 2013), the history of Lisbon (Santana 1994) or the urban memory connected to figures and spaces of «libertarians and the like» (Freire and Lousada 2013).

¹³ This brief synthesis resorted to the texts of Raúl Esteves dos Santos on the history of *A Voz do Operário* based on documental research, particularly that collected from the minutes of the Administrative Committee and General Assembly sessions (referring to the 1920s to the 1950s), and the institution’s annual reports (1935-1960) - *vide* full documental references.

A Voz do Operário was a large institution that was founded, run and supported by workers belonging to different professional classes. All the activities developed within the Association were for these workers, the members and their families. The Association served as a reference among the associative body in the city of Lisbon, and its headquarters were located in the populated and popular *Graça-São Vicente* neighbourhood. It brought together a vast community, made up of thousands of members¹⁴.

As of the end of the 19th century, the Association offered a primary school network to its associates, with schools across the city, including evening classes for adults. The network was organised by the Association, consisting of four private schools, with premises and teaching staff who were recruited and paid by the Association itself. One of the schools was located in the headquarters of the association – the first to be inaugurated, in 1891. The other schools were housed in rented buildings, and established in the following years (1892-1895). In addition to this stable nucleus, there were also a number of private school establishments with which the Association had contracts. On the basis of a monthly payment, these schools would receive pupils who were the children of its members under the same conditions. This option was taken in 1895 in order to accommodate the explosion of demand. By 1905, there were already one hundred schools, and at the beginning of the First Republic, this figure had dropped to 84 (Tavares & Pimenta 1987). Contracts were entered into and terminated, according to the evaluation carried out by the Association's School Commission on the quality of the facilities and the teaching provided by these private establishments. The pertinence of the location was also taken into consideration, and neighbourhoods with a large concentration of workers were sought. Despite these variations, the number of contract-based day schools tended not to surpass four dozen between the 1930s and 1950s¹⁵. The evening classes, limited to the school of the headquarters (private no.1), saw increased demand and, thus, were extended during this period to other private schools, as the Association understood that «giving value to its workers» was its «main mission»¹⁶.

The educational diversification, which was extensive to children (child's class) and females (needlework and dressmaker course), and included other levels of education, such as professional (commercial course), began to take shape at the end of the 1920s¹⁷.

From this period on, other practices were also gradually incorporated into the educational programmes with the aim of qualifying education, such as medical-pedagogical

¹⁴ The associative population grew exponentially in the late 19th century and first decade of the 20th century, reaching 50 thousand members. This figure went on to increase after 1910, reaching 70 thousand associates in 1910, (Tavares & Pimenta 1987, 368). With the end of the First Republic, this trend became reversed, and the problem attracted the special attention of the managing bodies from the mid 1930s onwards: 63 514 members in 1936; 52 683, in 1940; 48 962, in 1945; 40 092, in 1950; 33 814, in 1955; and 23 647, in 1965 (*Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário, Relatório e Contas da gerência [Annual Report]...* for the specified years and regarding the members at 31 December).

¹⁵ Statistical data analysis collected from the *Relatório e Contas da gerência... 1934/35 to 1960*.

¹⁶ In 1930, head of School Services, Adolfo Lima, referred to the great abundance of pupils attending the primary evening course (over 300) (SIBVO, *Comissão Administrativa*, minutes 60, 18.06.1930, p. 383). Seven years later, the private school of *Estrela* (no. 2) also began to offer evening courses which extended, in 1944, to a further two establishments (private nos. 3 and 4) (*Relatórios e contas... 1944*, 14). Attendance increased to approximately 600 pupils. Owing to the official same-sex school ruling (1937), the classes for females ceased to function in the headquarters. Only in 1946 did a course open in contract-based school no. 22. However, it was only attended by less than fifty pupils. In 1953, with the Popular Education Plan, established by the State, and the subsequent adult literacy campaign, the demand for evening classes in the Association began to increase again, with «hundreds of new pupils» (*Relatório e contas... 1946 to 1953*).

¹⁷ Santos 1933b, and AHS: Domingos CRUZ, *Retalhos para um livro de memórias que não escreverei...1959*. The first children's class (kindergarten program) was opened at the headquarters, next to the Private School No. 1, on 12.02.1931 (ANTT: SIBVO, *Livro de ocorrências...*).

observation and supervision (school doctor),¹⁸ holiday camps (the first was held in the summer of 1938), school excursions and field trips,¹⁹ the teaching of physical education and the constitution of fixed and mobile children's libraries (as of 1938). This experience was highly successful and was entirely funded by a benefactor member, Fernando Rau. In 1939, the Children's Library had four reading rooms, one in each private school and nine circulating libraries for the contract-based schools. Its collection consisted of 2 000 volumes, chosen for children and displayed on shelves for such purpose. The educational dynamization of this initiative also included lessons, projections, the reading of stories and the manual work section, accompanied by teachers²⁰.

The educational dimension of the Association expanded further to include practices targeting adults, within the scope of intellectual, artistic, social and civic education and training, organised according to a programme with pedagogical and didactic concerns: these included lectures, conference programmes, theatre shows, concerts and cinema, although the recreational factor was not excluded (use of the Assembly Hall and open terrace, for less committed programmes)²¹. In 1943, the Museum of Work was founded, and also had an educational function. Organised around photographs and graphs showing the «Calvary of Man and the progressive evolution of industries» (Santos 1948, 9), it was backed by conferences on work-related themes.²²

Finally, the Social Library, with a reading room in the headquarters and open to the public. As of 1943, it offered a book loan service.²³ The library was the result of increased development, albeit arrhythmic, of one of the first initiatives of the tobacco workers in favour of the education of workers, embodied in the reading room (Franco 2018, 43). Its collections derived from regular purchases and donations, in addition to collections or libraries that were granted to the Association at different points in time by various entities that were complicit with world of workers, associativism and popular education, such as Boto Machado – a republican MP who fought in parliament for the social rights of workers, the Association of Pedagogical Studies (1910-1935) – a scientific association with particular activity in the reflection and dissemination of new pedagogical trends, and committed to the reform of education and national education (Pintassilgo 2007, 2) - and the *Universidade Popular Portuguesa* [Portuguese University of the People] (1919-1950) – one of the most important and long-lasting experiences within this social education model, designed for “the people” and promoted by the republican progressive and worker elites (Bandeira 1994)²⁴.

¹⁸ A practice that proved to be difficult to apply to all the Association's schools, and even in that of the headquarters, it did not function regularly in the 1930s and 1940s 1940 (AHS-ICS, Domingos da Cruz, «Retalhos para um livro de memórias que não escreverei (sofrimentos e saudades)», 1959, fl. 1-3. PT-AHS-ICS-PQ-CP-062-4.

¹⁹ They were generally held at the end of the academic year and did not accommodate pupils from all the schools. These trips occurred on a regular basis during the period under study, and consisted of a programme of visits to museums and historical heritage (*Relatório e contas...relative to 1934 to 1965*).

²⁰ ANTT: SIBVO, *Relatórios e contas...1939*, 16; *Biblioteca Infantil*, 1937-1939.

²¹ The «Proposal for instructive use of the Hall», approved by the Sub-Committee of Instruction, Education and Art in 1929 (AHS: Pinto Quartin Collection, PT-AHS-PQ-DOC-337), was a programme that was typical of a popular university, within the scope of the Universidade Popular Portuguesa model (Bandeira 1994). It was partially executed.

²² It reopened on several occasions between 1944 and 1948 but was unable to develop further, even with the support of the «friends of the Association», Fernando Rau and Diamantino Tojal (*Relatório e contas...*, 1944, 8). As of the Museum's constitution, it was common practice for the workers to send their work tools (SIBVO: *Comissão Administrativa*, minutes 167, 14.11.1946, fp. 197).

²³ In 1937, the library had a collection of 12 000 volumes and the reading room recorded an annual number of approximately 5000 readers (Brocas 1937, 28-33). The number of readers began to decrease progressively in 1946-1948. The library was renovated and the idea of organizing «monthly sessions with reading commentaries and recitals» was launched (*Relatório e contas...1948*, 9-10).

²⁴ SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes 760, 10.12.1950, pp. 160-161.

In the field of its members' welfare, the Association broadened its support network: in the case of death, it widened the funeral services implemented in the late 19th century²⁵. It distributed trousseaux for the newborns of underprivileged families (1928) and provided general and specialized health care through the organization of a policlinic (1926). This welfare support also covered school activity through the provision of meals (school canteen)²⁶, distribution of clothing, footwear and school material to the most needy children. It promoted the *caixas escolares* [school box with funds] and even awarded grants to the pupils who wished to continue their education at secondary school or through technical education. Financial support, in the form of school awards granted on a yearly basis, was also a practised method²⁷.

As an institution, it sustained itself with its own funds – contributions and its own revenue –, but its «instructive» and «charitable» action allowed it to attract other resources, whether by means of public support, in the form of occasional subsidies, the granting of concessions or exemptions, in the form of donations from companies or individuals, and it also benefited from other forms of collaboration on the part of intellectuals, teachers, doctors, public writers, traders and businessmen (creation of awards for pupils, free provision of services, which could include the design of a building project, construction of a pavilion, the staging of conferences or a concert, the donation of books, foodstuff, and other assets or equipment, sometimes in the form of will inheritances)²⁸. It also had a monthly journal which was distributed free of charge to members in its own typography, which kept the community informed about matters related to the Association, especially its management and administration.

An association designed within these moulds called for a structured organization of services, guaranteed by the managing bodies, elected every year in the General Assembly, supported by specialized committees (the sub-committees of a permanent nature or temporary committees), and by a paid workforce, admitted through documental tender. It also called for the fostering of a network of relations with both political authorities and legal and natural persons, and also the management of sensitivities and alignments, both within the Association and among the members. Many established relations with the Association by means of charitable action, but under distinct creeds. It should also be understood that they too expected to contribute to different results. Departing from this possibility, it may be considered that there were several goals in this social participation: as a type of social regulation, with a view to integrating the masses in the social order; as an inter-class conciliation strategy, with reformist objectives; or as a class strategy, seeking a shift away from the established political

²⁵ From transport in a truck and a funeral pall in 1884, it evolved to the granting of subsidies as a result of death in the mid 20s, to the constitution of a service (funeral directors) with the possibility of a full funeral for members and their families.

²⁶ The school canteen was confined to the headquarters school (1930). Only from 1936, this type of assistance begins to extend to other schools. Still, that year, only in two private schools were distributed 9 209 meals (first meal) and 60 550 (half day), 12 000 free (*Relatórios e contas...1936*, 23, 38-39 e ANTT: SIBVO, *Relatório do Chefe dos Serviços Escolares*, 1938, fl. 3-4).

²⁷ In 1935, it was voted in the General Assembly that the yearly sum of 2 000\$00 would be used to subsidize the secondary education of pupils who had completed primary education in the schools of the Association (*Relatórios e contas ... 1934-1935*, 5). During that same year grants were awarded to eight pupils. School awards were also awarded, established for the same purposes by benefactor members such as Ricardo Covões, businessman of the *Coliseu dos Recreios*, the *Liga Pró Moral*, the *Associação dos Antigos Alunos de A Voz do Operário*, the *Sindicato Nacional dos Construtores Civis*, builder Diamantino Tojal, teachers, etc., with nominal values ranging from 500\$00 to 100\$00. In 1947, there were nine awards in place and by 1960, they had increased to 17 (*Relatórios e contas...1947 and 1960*). This did not prevent occasional financial support from the Association such as, in 1946, the decision to grant a pupil, who had benefited from a scholarship since primary education, the sum of 500\$00 in order to sit the «preparatory exams in the Faculty of Medicine» (SIBVO, *Comissão administrativa*, minutes 168, 21.11.1946, p. 198 vs.).

²⁸ Based on the analysis of the annual reports in which donations and support provided to the Association are listed.

system (LÉON, 1983). «*Une façon de faire la politique autrement*» [A way of doing politics differently] (Christen & Besse 2017, 11-32).

Between the end of the 19th century and the early 1930s, the republicans, freemasons, libertarians, syndicalists and socialists were part of this force, organised into associations of different natures. Among them, there were competition and convergence strategies, depending on the political context. With the Military Dictatorship (1926-1933), followed by institutional standardisation, resulting from the approval of the constitution of the *Estado Novo* (1933), the action of these political groups was, naturally, constrained. The associative movement saw new rules, and many of them closed down. A new organisation was established by the *Estado Novo*. The political and social context changed. Precisely between 1924 – in a context of decline of the First Republic and of social and political confrontations, which undermined the associative movement and the worker organizations, and 1932 – the year when the political orientations were defined and the legal framework established under the Military Dictatorship, which would go on to result in the constitution of an authoritarian and cooperative political system - the *Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário* tried to launch an educational project, which went beyond what had been its usual practice- schooling, with limited social support, and social education through the fostering of reading (journal and library) and conferences – to focus on a far broader educational curriculum for the working class in which, another socio-political strategy came to light and is worthy of further research.

Reform of the school services – 1924/25 – 1935

The great venture of the Association, from the early 20th century, was the construction of its headquarters. The ambition of the project, accomplished in a monumental, large-scale building, suffered the consequences of the post-war social and economic crisis, causing the works to be delayed, costs to be increased and unrest among its associates. The construction of the headquarters, «considered by the most prudent to be madness» (Santos 1944, 4), was seen by the most critical as the result of a rash decision, which had led to «the sacrifice of the instruction services and other goals of the Association»²⁹. Only at the end of 1923 did the services of the Association move to the new premises, but the building was not yet finished and only part of it could be occupied, and in adverse conditions. The classrooms had 80 pupils, and the fence around the playground needed to be bulldozed, and thus could not be used by the children, the terraces, on the upper surfaces, did not yet have protective railings, placing the pupils at risk, among other problems that affected the security and operability of the building³⁰. Additionally, the managing bodies were confronted with salary complaints on the part of the Association's employees, and a commission of auxiliary members had to be nominated in order to analyse the problem, and the administrative committees had not presented annual reports to the General Assembly for approval since 1919³¹. Within this context, the civil governor of Lisbon suspended the elected managing bodies and appointed an Administrative and Inquiry Committee, which had the two-fold duty of reorganising the administration of the Association, and of investigating the institution, counting also on the intervention of the police authorities.

²⁹ SIBVO: *Comissão Administrativa*, minutes no. 7, 07.08.1924, p. 42.

³⁰ *Idem*, minutes no. 9, 21.08.1924, p. 50-51.

³¹ *Idem*, *Assembleia Geral*, 24.04.1924, p.182.

The Administrative and Inquiry Committee, 1924-1925

The committee consisted of a president, the representative of the civil governor, and seven board members, who were given their own areas of responsibility: instruction matters were attributed to Domingos da Cruz and general administration to José Maria Gonçalves³². The committee became effective on July 15 1924 and concluded its work on January 3 1925³³.

As Domingos da Cruz recalled later, “ we had to dig deep into the life and activities of the Association, especially the educational activities »³⁴. However, at the root of the work he developed, in agreement with J. M. Gonçalves, as all proposals were approved by the Committee, was a new pedagogical orientation, seeking to define the « educational and instructive aims [for] the community» and to combat the «uncontrolled automatism» instituted in the schools and throughout the school services.³⁵ In a few months, Domingos da Cruz drew up a plan with the architect to finish the works, proposed changes to the occupation of the space in order to rationalise the services, and managed to obtain a bank loan, authorised by the civil governor, to proceed with the works. In the pedagogical chapter, he invested primarily in pupil registration and observation methods, from the establishment of school statistics (attendance and performance, control of distributed materials) to school medical inspection (which included anthropometry, clinical testing, screening for diseases and abnormalities, special needs and socio-family evaluation) with the objective of better adapting the child to education. The filling in of these files, which were part of the pupil’s individual booklet, was conducted on the basis of the doctor’s coordinated observation with the contribution of teachers and family.

Domingos da Cruz also took many other measures so that the Association’s schools could once again function, from recruiting teachers, dividing classes, disciplining teacher practices, namely in the contract-based schools, to controlling observance of the pedagogical orientation, through regular inspections, for which he appointed a teacher. Finally, he invested in new educational methods which were added to the curricular programmes and were given equal importance: organisation of school excursions; establishment of *caixas escolares* [school fund boxes] managed by the pupils; constitution of a school museum; adoption of children’s songs and games in school practice, with a selection already made and approved to be distributed amongst the teachers. In the instructions to teachers issued by Domingos da Cruz, all these activities were justified since as a whole, they promoted physical, intellectual, moral, social and civic education, in addition to strengthening character and a sense of duty and solidarity. He also created mechanisms so that this curriculum could be effectively extended to all the private and contract-based schools of the Association³⁶.

Normalisation after the inquiry: adjustments to the balance of power and new administrative structure

Two major issues raised by the Administrative and Inquiry Committee into the Society's management, for which a solution was necessary, continued to feature in the debates that engaged the members' attention at the general assemblies in 1925 and 1926: moves to challenge the

³² SIBVO: *Comissão Administrativa*, Minutes of deposit of values, 15.07.1924, p. 22-23.

³³ *Idem*, minutes no. 1, 15.07.1924 – no. 33, 3.01.1925, p. 22-134.

³⁴ AHS: Domingos da Cruz, «Retalhos para um livro de memórias que não escreverei», 1959, p. 11.

³⁵ AHS: «*Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário*, Service order no. 33», 10.11.1924, PT-AHS-ICS-PQ-DOC-359.

³⁶ The report submitted by the Committee to the Civil Governor was not presented in the General Assembly which led to large scale demonstrations. Therefore, there is no information on the content of this document. Attempts were made to locate this report, or other related documentation in the archive of the Civil Government of Lisbon, but to no avail.

supremacy of tobacco workers in the running of the Society, as established in the articles of association, limiting the participation of other groups or professional classes, and the neglect of educational and charitable work, seen as an abandonment of the founding aims of the association. These issues were debated in a climate of sharp internal divisions in the association.

It is important to note the levels of participation and representation of members. Only a relatively limited group attended meetings, comprising those members who were most militant in espousing the associationist cause. There were rarely more than fifty members present, including full and auxiliary members (who could speak, but without the right to vote), and attendance only climbed to around one hundred for elections. But measured against other organisations at the time, this was a substantial number. At one of the general assemblies, attended by only 30 members, the chronic nature of this problem was the object of comment: "things are what they always have been: a debate about goat's wool will fill a hall, but when questions of principle are at stake, no one turns up"³⁷. And those most critical of this lack of participation argued that the number of members attending was not actually enough for the meeting to proceed, because otherwise "it looked like a stitch-up"³⁸.

The ideological clashes, political mistrust and power struggles that emerge from reading the general assembly minutes are never openly discussed, but although they are always under the surface and emerge only in asides, they are nevertheless significant. For example, at one session it is stated that the "the delegation of officers from the Voz do Operário who went to speak to António Maria da Silva (1872-1950)³⁹ told him that the Confederação Geral do Trabalho [General Confederation of Labour, an anarchist inspired grouping] wanted to take control of the Voz to spread its pernicious propaganda within the organisation"⁴⁰. At another session, the tobacco workers present are accused of wanting to turn the Society into a "socialist stronghold"⁴¹. The caution in supporting *O Socorro Vermelho* (Red Aid)⁴², without first finding out about the organisation's aim led to a critical remark from a member about the "fear" that permeated the Society in relation to anything "red"⁴³. And prior to this, the organisation has reacted with great firmness to reports published in a Catholic newspaper that the Voz do Operário's schools were recruiting children for the *Legião Vermelha* (Red Legion)⁴⁴. The Tobacco Workers' Association had voiced vehement protests and the Society's directors decided to send a printed denial to all the "liberal associations in the country", in order to counter the effects of press criticism. The Society also gave its backing to an article in *A Batalha* – the journal of the Confederação Geral do Trabalho – denouncing the reports as untrue⁴⁵.

These are just a few examples of many such instances, and point to a fundamental issue: the tobacco workers, who held socialist beliefs, aimed to maintain political control of the Society, and so they sought to limit the possibilities for involvement by anarchist groups, who had the upper hand in workers' movements, and to avoid contamination by Bolshevik ideas (the Portuguese Communist Party had been founded in 1921). In some ways, this re-

³⁷ ANTT: SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meeting no. 427, 12.11.1925, p. 106.

³⁸ AHS-ICS: Domingos da Cruz, «Retalhos para um livro de memórias...», 1959, p. 14.

³⁹ Republican politician, a prominent Freemason and a leading figure in the Republican (Democratic) Party. He held several ministerial posts and served as president of the government during the First Republic (1910-1926).

⁴⁰ ANTT: SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meeting no. 390, 25.02.1924, p. 177.

⁴¹ *Idem*, minutes of meeting no. 425, 7.10.1925, p. 89.

⁴² Recently formed, it sought to support the families of the first political deportees, victims of the severe repressive measures that were used against Republican, anarchist, communist and workers' organisations. The first large deportation took place in the wake of the military revolt of 3-7 February 1927 against the military dictatorship, in which civilian members of some of those organisations were involved.

⁴³ ANTT: SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meeting no. 483, 16.09.1927, p. 350.

⁴⁴ Underground radical movement, set up in 1919 and practically dismantled in 1925, after organising the attack on the police chief, Ferreira do Amaral. Thought to be responsible for several bomb attacks.

⁴⁵ *Idem*, minutes of meeting no. 464, 26.08.1926, p. 267-268.

enacted the struggle between socialists and anarchists in the trade union movement, when the influence of the former came under attack, in 1909, and the socialists were then driven out by the anarchists in 1917/1919 (Freire 1992, 193-197; Pereira 2009, 421-440). In this difficult balancing act, the tobacco workers' representatives preferred a strategy of closer relations with Republicans, and also with Republican governments. And we may infer that, in the management of the social question, this moderating force was favourable to the policy of Republican governments, whether of more conservative or progressive leanings. But the changes that opened up the membership of the Society to other classes and groups, allowing auxiliary members (all those not belonging to the tobacco industry) to register as full members (who had sole rights to vote and be elected, when male and of age), not only allayed internal tensions and ensured the organisation's sustainability, because of the need to refresh its leadership and officers, but also allowed reformist and Republican-leaning groups to take a more active part in the Society. These were able to integrate the working masses, open to more radical political ideas, in Republican political and social endeavours. This is a possible reading if we look at how the question of auxiliary members' status was eventually resolved.

The demands of auxiliary members pre-dated the work of the Administrative and Inquiry Committee. In its report submitted to the civil governor of Lisbon, the Committee proposed ending the "strange privilege" enjoyed by tobacco workers, "allowing many thousands of auxiliary members to vote and be eligible for elections, as compared to just a few hundred" workers employed in the tobacco industry⁴⁶. In practice, this change was imposed on the tobacco workers and the Minister for Labour was obliged to intervene to secure a compromise. The minister called the president of the general assembly to his office because "he found himself being harried by both sides" and wanted to know whether the tobacco workers remained intransigent. He reasserted the need to admit as many voting members as possible and appealed for a consensus: "you sort it out, they [the auxiliary members] settle, what more do you want?" The response from the leaders was clear: they wanted to resolve the matter, but one question worried them – "the working class is divided into groups who could tomorrow turn on each other within the Society"⁴⁷. The lists of auxiliary members for promotion to full membership were drawn up on the basis of political calculation⁴⁸; the number of members was small, and both the auxiliary members and the minister were dissatisfied. It was then proposed that full membership be acquired on the basis of length of membership. And it was the minister who brokered the final solution: auxiliary members would acquire full membership after being members for fifteen years⁴⁹.

This change was important for renewal of the association's leadership. It opened the door to influences more radical than the tobacco workers' orderly socialism and also to initiatives by Republican leaders, with a reforming and inter-class vision.

The new membership rights meant that the articles of association and internal regulations needed to be redrafted. But other changes were made, in particular to the administrative structure, and rules were established on new initiatives, mostly relating to the educational programme. We will deal very briefly with the changes made to the administration of the Educational and Arts Services (see diagram)⁵⁰.

⁴⁶ AHS-ICS: Domingos da Cruz, «Retalhos para um livro de memórias...», 1959, p. 11.

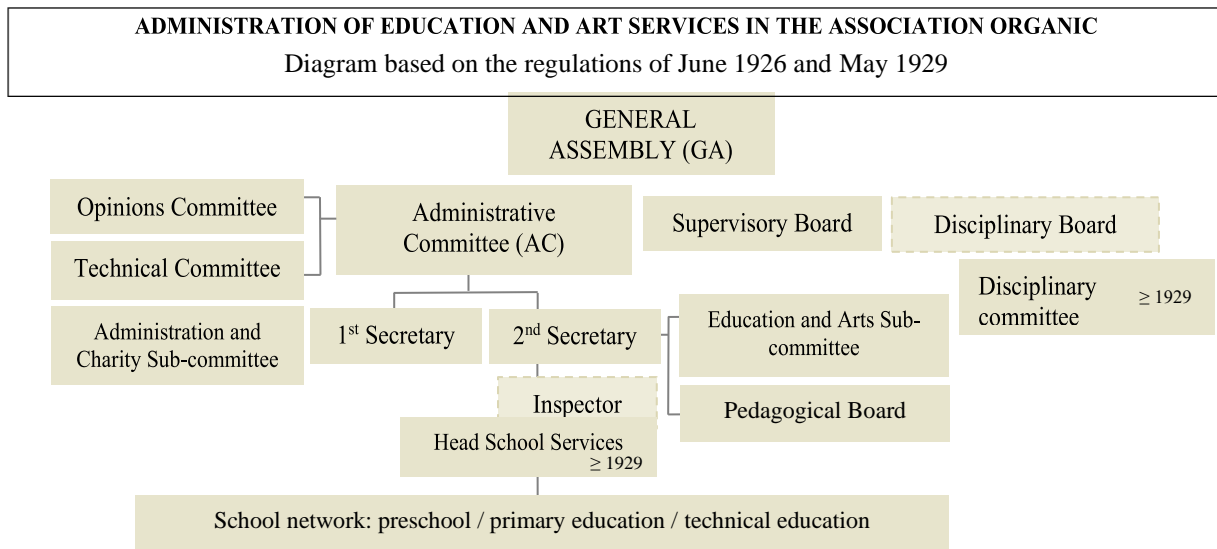
⁴⁷ ANTT: SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meeting no. 426, 15.10.1925, p. 91-92.

⁴⁸ One of the names put forward was that of Ramada Curto (1886-1961) (*Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meeting no. 426..., p. 90), a lawyer, Member of Parliament and one of the leading figures in the Socialist Party during the First Republic.

⁴⁹ *Idem*, minutes of meeting no. 427, 12.11.1925, p. 110.

⁵⁰ Articles of Association approved at the General Assembly of 25.11.1925, followed by the drafting of regulations, discussed and approved in the first half of 1926 (ANTT: SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meetings nos. 438 to 461, 12.03.1926-3.06.1926, pp. 173-245; Sociedade de Instrução... 1926, 1931).

The composition of the society's management bodies (the officers of the general assembly, the administrative committee and the supervisory board), elected annually, was unchanged, but they were backed up by new specialist bodies. Responsibility for educational and arts services lay with the 2nd secretary of the administrative committee (abbreviated below to AC)⁵¹ who chaired the education and arts sub-committee. This sub-committee comprised eight members, recruited from among the full and auxiliary members and approved each year at the General Assembly (below, GA), on the basis of a proposal from the AC. This body was responsible for studying the general thrust of educational activities, making contact with the "illustrious" teachers, with a view to "slow and progressive reform of educational methods", including the creation of new schools, using more up-to-date teaching methods and geared mainly to vocational education, equipping students for life;⁵² it was also required to study,



propose or organise a range of complementary educational activities (celebrations, talks, school visits to museums, factories and workshops, recreational excursions and school funds) and cultural activities (exhibitions, concerts, lectures, artistic and cultural events and festivals designed to educate the taste of members and their families).

Supervisory duties were assigned to a schools inspector, in permanent contact with all the Society's schools, whose task was to standardise the teaching methods, to monitor school activities on a regular basis, organising the administration of the entire network of private and contract schools, and also submitting a monthly report for the consideration of the 2nd secretary, to whom he was answerable for his work. The inspector attended meetings of the sub-committee. This post was filled through a competitive application procedure and applicants were required to hold a diploma from "normal schools" (training schools for primary school teachers)⁵³.

The final element in this structure was a pedagogical board, with an advisory role, also chaired by the 2nd secretary and comprising teachers (three principals of private schools and four private and contract teachers) elected by the teaching staff at all of Voz do Operário's schools. The board met at the start of each school year, and also whenever called by the chairman or two thirds of the teachers. The pedagogical board was involved in planning timetables, choosing educational materials, planning celebrations and excursions and also

⁵¹ The consisted of seven members: a chairman, two secretaries, two treasurers and two members. The 1st secretary was responsible for administration and charitable work (Sociedade Instrução... 1926, Article 31 of the *Articles of Association*).

⁵² Sociedade de Instrução... 1926, Article 137 of the *Regulations*.

⁵³ *Idem*, Articles 294-295 of the *Regulations*.

issued recommendations when requested by the AC or the inspector and proposed changes and new initiatives in educational matters.⁵⁴

The new bodies and officers were therefore intended to bring new ideas and to oversee activities, improving administrative efficiency and contributing new expertise. The Education and Arts services were also supported by two boards that assisted the Society's administrative departments: the recommendations board, which functioned as the final arbiter of any proposal subject to the GA's assessment, and the technical board, which consisted of members with training in engineering, architecture and civil construction, including tradesmen in these fields, who advised the Society on works to be carried on in its facilities and school buildings, both those already existing and others which were planned⁵⁵. In 1929, changes were made to the Society's General Regulations. The post of inspector changed its name to Head of Educational Services and, although the duties were unchanged, his work was recognised as that of "superintendent" of services, explicitly responsible for organisation and management of the educational division⁵⁶.

It should also be noted that the sub-committees, appointed annually by the GA on the basis of a proposal from the AC, did not necessarily have to be set up if the board felt they were not necessary⁵⁷. When the post was vacant, the head of Educational Services could also be appointed by the AC, dispensing with the competitive application procedure. The appointee could be one of the Society's teachers or someone from outside the Voz do Operário, provided he was "demonstrably knowledgeable of educational matters"⁵⁸. These rules provided the AC with sufficient flexibility to mark out its position and relieve pressures, allowing for a more direct management approach in the event of an impasse, crisis or dispute⁵⁹.

It was with this renewal of its organisational structure that the institution prepared to undertake the reform of its educational services.

Programmes and regulations – 1929, 1932, 1935

The first AC elected in the post-Inquiry period (the board of 1925/26) drew up a plan of action with measures to improve primary education, to develop educational support, introduce vocational courses, organise socio-cultural educational activities for members and to expand the welfare services for members (sanitary, maternity and childcare, and healthcare services) (Esteves 1933b, 9-10)⁶⁰. The plan set down guidelines which were then followed by the management boards of 1926/27 to 1928/29 – set up under the new Articles of Association of 1926 –, but with new objectives and leading to visible results: the Pedagogical Programme was approved in 1929, followed by new regulations for the Educational Services. All this formed a structure for the ensuing attempts to transform the education offered at the Voz do Operário's existing schools, and also to establish a new, much more wide-ranging educational programme. This was based on an educational model. Although the official programmes were complied with, the programme combined ideas from new pedagogical thinkers with the needs of its membership for whom it was intended. This involved aims that went beyond merely providing

⁵⁴ *Idem*, Articles 331 to 336 of the *Regulations*.

⁵⁵ *Idem*, Articles 138 to 141-142 of the *Regulations*.

⁵⁶ Sociedade de Instrução... 1931, Articles 296 and 299 of the *Regulations*.

⁵⁷ Sociedade de Instrução... 1926, Articles 134-135 of the *Regulations* and 34 and 10 of the *Articles of Association*.

⁵⁸ *Idem*, Article 297 of the *Regulations*.

⁵⁹ As happened in 1930, 1933 and 1934, with the successive resignations of the directors of educational services, and in 1930/31, 1937 and 1940, years marked by internal power struggles, when sub-committees were not appointed.

⁶⁰ The plan was drawn up by Esteves dos Santos, on the request of the chairman of the AC, José Maria de Barros, a tobacco industry worker. Previous to this, there is no known record of his active participation in the life of the Society.

primary-level education and the promotion of an associationist "ideology" through the Society's journal or rituals centred on fostering an identity, as had previously been the rule⁶¹.

The Pedagogical Programme, organised in 16 sections (Sociedade... 1935), laid down that the care to be provided to the Voz do Operário's children had a threefold objective: "instructional, educational and social" (Section 1). This started with general education (sections 2 to 6), comprising primary education, which was decidedly practical in its approach (handicrafts and modelling) and based on observation, medical records and supervision. Furthering the students' health was an essential element of the process, and regular and methodical observation was an essential part of this. Students were assessed by the school physician and divided into groups for physical education lessons accordingly. Free meals were provided for the neediest children, complemented by the provision of restorative medicines and advice for families on care (including clothing and diet). This concern with health was extended to the school facilities, with standards for buildings and furniture, designed to be educationally appropriate. School excursions were also planned to be beneficial for students' health, and along with drama, singing and choirs were intended to contribute to forming character and cultivation of the arts.

General schooling was followed by special training (sections 7 to 14), in order to assure an all-round education. Plans were to be drawn up for vocational schools, with theoretical and practical courses, covering elementary business studies and a range of trades. Also envisaged for the future was a people's technical university, offering further and higher education courses (in industry and commerce), and plans for future building work included a boarding school and a school with partial boarding facilities. The principles of the associationist and cooperative movement were built into all parts of the syllabus. This took practical form in school associations, administered by the students, and cooperatives for production and consumption, organised around the workshops set up for practical training in the vocational courses.

With this educational model, the Society planned to "prepare students for life" and to care for their welfare, which started with their health and ended with their being helped into the employment market. But the support for student would not end there. There was follow-up for their future development, both in society and in their private life. Because this was the only way to assess the social role of the Association "as the great conglomerate that it is and in its lofty mission of building Portuguese society" (Section 10).

One of the leading figures in the administration of the Society, who saw through the drafting of the Pedagogical Programme and secured its approval, was José Gregório de Almeida (1883-1954), chairman of the AC, re-elected on successive occasions. He was a bookkeeper, active trade unionist and socialist Member of Parliament⁶². Shortly before first taking up management office in the Society, in the wake of internal disputes, he proclaimed at a general assembly: "We are performing a lofty social mission, our achievements cause fear among the bourgeoisie"⁶³.

Individuals who served for two or more years on the Education and Arts sub-committee, appointed by these management bodies⁶⁴, included in particular: João Camoesas (1887-1951), doctor and politician, Member of Parliament for the Republican Party (1915-1926), Minister for Public Education (1923 and 1925); Manuel da Silva, primary teacher at the Casa Pia, union activist and anarchist sympathiser, member of the most important teachers' associations, such as

⁶¹ On the importance of the celebrations for the anniversary of the Society's founding, see Lopes 78-96. These celebrations included marching bands, talks, performances and parades, and continued in the 1930s and 1940s, in some years at added expense and with greater public visibility.

⁶² He represented the *Sindicato dos Caixeiros de Lisboa* [Lisbon Clerks Union] at the Workers' Congress of 1925 (Freire 2012) and was a Member of Parliament from 1919 to 1921, for the socialist minority that entered Parliament with the help of the Republican Party.

⁶³ ANTT: SIBVO, *Assembleia Geral*, minutes of meeting no. 454, 20.05.1926, p. 260.

⁶⁴ Biographical data for which no reference is given are taken from Freire 2012 and Nóvoa 2003.

the *União dos Professores Primários* and the *Associação dos Professores de Portugal*; Amílcar Costa, shop worker and republican; Alexandre Vieira (1888-1973), typesetter, revolutionary union activist and one of the most prominent union leaders under the First Republic; Maria O'Neill (1873-1932), author of children's books, involved in movements to advance children, women and education. And in 1928, these were joined by Domingos da Cruz (1880-1963), first lieutenant in the Navy, republican, Member of Parliament for the Republican Party (1915-1921), and Augusto Carlos Rodrigues, bookkeeper, anarchist.

This is a politically and socially very active group, both in Parliament and in trade unions. And they were all involved in the people's education movement, belonging to several institutions, where they sat on the committees or lectured. They also wrote in the associative press, generally on educational matters. All of them shared an active interest in education, were familiar with the latest experiments conducted in Portugal and abroad and, despite belonging to different political movements, were all committed to improving the lives of the working classes.

Domingos da Cruz, for example, was a member of various associations, such as Escola Oficina no. 1, the Asilo de São João and Centro Boto Machado, all linked to the freemasons, to which he belonged. He was also involved in the Universidade Popular Portuguesa, in which Alexandre Vieira and Augusto Carlos Rodrigues took a very active part, forming a bridge between the working class movement and anarchist tendencies with critical and reform-minded Republicans, represented by the Seara Nova Group (Bandeira 1994). As well as his career in the Navy, where he started as a nurse, D. Cruz also had a political career, as Member of Parliament and chief of staff to the Ministers for Labour and the Colonies (1919-1923). He was also appointed to public service boards on employment matters. In the Chamber of Deputies, in 1917, in a debate on draft tenancy legislation, he called for strict enforcement of the law that seeks to protect poorer classes against speculative landlords: "The people want building projects, they want the Republic to live up to what they very legitimately expect of it." And if this course is not taken, he warns that "debts will be contracted, that sooner or later will have to be paid"⁶⁵. But however just, he also considered that some of the demands of the working class movement were excessive, and if they were maintained would eventually "spell the end of the Republic and perhaps result in a major reverse in Democracy"⁶⁶. He was a reformist: he had regular contacts with union and anarchist leaders, and close relations with Alexandre Vieira, Emílio Costa, Campos Lima and Pinto Quartin, the last three of whom were intellectuals and the leading anarchist thinkers in Portugal⁶⁷. Domingos da Cruz had taken part in the Administrative and Inquiry Committee into Voz do Operário, in 1924. He returned, four years later, to complete the process of pedagogical renewal that he had begun, The Pedagogical Programme is all his work. And to apply it, Adolfo Lima (1874-1943) was appointed, on his suggestion as head of Educational Services. Lima also drafted the regulations for the services.

Lima was one those responsible for disseminating the New Education movement in Portugal, among associations, and in the fields of education and publishing. He was a teacher and principal of Escola Normal de Lisboa and Escola Oficina no. 1, he established the Portuguese section of the International League for New Education (1927), founded and edited the journal *Educação Social* and, from 1911 to 1930, sat on a series of committees appointed to draft legislation on primary education. He was one of the leading thinkers in the Portuguese anarchist movement and worked with trade unions on drafting theses, in particular on education.

⁶⁵ *Diário da Câmara do Deputados* (Journal of the Chamber of Deputies), session of 16 June 1917, 26.

⁶⁶ AHS-ICS: Domingos da Cruz, «Retalhos para um livro de memórias...», 1959, p. 13.

⁶⁷ Biographical data gathered from: AHS-ICS: Domingos da Cruz...1959, p. 2-16; FMS: Alexandre Vieira, "Figuras Gradadas", undated Folder 09769.142.

He sat on the management bodies of the Sociedade de Estudos Pedagógicos (Educational Studies Society) and the Universidade Popular Portuguesa (Portuguese People's University)⁶⁸.

The experiment at Voz do Operário proved a failure and Lima eventually resigned, in July 1930. At that date, the services were "in a state of disarray" and the teaching staff floundering "Because they had not understood the new form of education"⁶⁹. Critical voices within the AC considered that one of Lima's mistakes was to alter the educational system half way through the year and in classes that had started by using other methods. There were disagreements with teachers, who defied instructions and continued to teach as before, with parents, who could not understand why their children spent so much time in the playground, had no books to learn from, no tuition and no homework. Parents and teachers alike feared that students would fail to pass the final examination. Among other problems, the AC decided not to appoint another principal and instead to look into the possibility of implementing the pedagogical programme. The secretary responsible for education surrounded himself with people qualified to do this. During this period of appraisal and reflection, the schools returned to the old teaching methods and the innovative teaching activities set up by Lima (crafts, modelling and drawing) were then incorporated into the syllabus for primary level classes⁷⁰.

In the summer of 1929, shortly after being appointed as head of educational services, Adolfo Lima referred to the work he was involved in at the Society, expressing a degree of incredulity at the situation he encountered there: private school no. 1 (at the headquarters) alone had 612 students and 13 teachers, and there were more than 28 schools around the city, with close to 3000 children. He also pointed to the disorganised state of the administrative and pedagogical services (Candeias, Nóvoa and Figueira 1995, 127). This was very different from the situation at Escola Oficina no. 1, where Adolfo Lima became famous for organising a successful alternative model of education, long before this new experiment (1906-1915). When student numbers were greatest, enrolments at the start of the school year numbered around eighty (Mogarro e Andrade 2019, 191-192). Despite the difficulties, A. Lima confessed that he had already set up a modelling and drawing class and a craft workshop and expected that year to set up a physics room and a chemistry laboratory. He also stressed that the Society also offered evening classes for women and that he was extremely committed to their development and advancement. More than a year on, after tendering his resignation, Adolfo Lima confessed that, on accepting the appointment, he had suspected it would be impossible to achieve anything, but that he accepted the post for the benefit of the doubt. But it had been a mistake, he reckoned, because his work had not been useful and had been lost among the Society's routines, that blocked out any innovation:

"Behind the Voz do Operário lies the huge unmovable rock of the routine business of the symbolic 'funeral cart'.

They are concerned about the number of students and not the quality of the teaching and education. Their aim is for students to pass exams, and not for them to acquire knowledge and healthy minds. And however hard you row against the current, it's not possible to do anything useful. I was overwhelmed, and Domingos da Cruz was also overwhelmed [...].

What is more: if bourgeois employees are difficult to bear and drive us mad with their stupidity, working class employers are even harder to bear. When our 'good comrade' sets himself up as boss, he's a hundred

⁶⁸ AHS-ICS: Pinto Quartin Archive, "Curriculum Vitae de Adolfo Lima", undated [1942], PT-AHS-ICS-PQ-CP-201; Bandeira 1994, vol. 2, 138-139; Nóvoa 2003, 736-746.

⁶⁹ ANTT: SIBVO, *Comissão Administrativa*, minutes of meeting no. 14, 23.09.1930, p. 432.

⁷⁰ ANTT: SIBVO, *Comissão Administrativa*, minutes of meeting no. 14, 23.09.1930, p. 432-439 and Esteves 1933b, 46-53.

times more authoritarian and rude than the most bourgeois of the bourgeois!"⁷¹

The suspended regulations dealt only with primary education and applied to the existing schools. As established in the Pedagogical Programme, vocational education remained under consideration for the future, depending on the Society's resources (Section 16, par. 2.).

The management board of 1931/32 then drew up new draft regulations, submitted to the AC by the sub-committee, in 1932⁷². This was an ambitious draft text, organised in 20 titles and 662 articles, adhering to the ideas of the Pedagogical Programme. But it elaborated on these, clarified the aims and provided curricular and methodological details, creating a body of rules too vast to be examined in full here. We shall instead consider the main thrust of the document.

The starting point for these Regulations was an aspiration to educate young generations within the "Society's ideology" and following an overall plan that established the purpose of the varied activities. It accordingly required programmes, teacher recruitment and the education provide to students to "comply with the ideological principles of the Association"⁷³. To this end, it was necessary to remove children and young people from the influence of their families and to keep them under the Society's influence for the duration of their education. In order to achieve this, they proposed an education system organised by grades and age ranges, in line with an all-round educational approach, achieved using active methods and processes, built into the programme, combined with work to protect children and with sufficient years of schooling to prepare students for life.

This education started in nursery classes, intended to cater for children between one month and three years of age, during their mothers' working hours. This was followed by infant education, from the age of four, designed to allow children to acquire physical strength (care with diet and hygiene, physical exercise in the open air), and to learn habits and skills and to be subject to intellectual and social stimuli, graded in accordance with their age. With the aim of "providing children with the fundamentals of all knowledge and the basis of a general culture, preparing them for life in society"⁷⁴, primary education started at the age of seven, on a co-education basis, followed by complementary education, also organised on a co-educational basis, for children aged twelve to fourteen. This level of education was designed to help youngsters discover their skills and vocations, and was compulsory for all those then seeking to follow vocational courses. The final stage was education for a trade, divided into several courses lasting three or four years, attended between the ages of 14 and 16/18, in daytime hours, with girls and boys taught separately⁷⁵.

The regulations also provided for special education, to be offered at primary levels, with classes for the handicapped and retarded children, as well as university extension courses for adults, in social and cultural education.

The document was unanimously approved by the AC. Before being submitted for debate at the GA, the chairman of the AC decided to present it at a general assembly of management staff, to which he invited managers from other institutions⁷⁶. It was then forwarded to the recommendations board which, after listening the opinions of experts,

⁷¹ AHS-ICS: Letter to Pinto Quartin, dated 15.11.1930. PT-AHS-ICS-PQ-CP-201.

⁷² ANTT: SIBVO, *Relatório apresentado pela Subcomissão de Instrução e Beneficência em Março de 1932*.

⁷³ *Idem*, unnumbered page, preamble to regulations.

⁷⁴ *Idem*, Article 100.

⁷⁵ Courses to be created: governess, household economics and management, linen seamstress, haberdashery and dressmaking, for women's education. Courses for plasterers, locksmiths, cabinet makers, bookbinders, typesetters and printers for future industrial workers.

⁷⁶ ANTT: SIBVO, *Comissão Administrativa*, minutes of meeting no. 36, 23.03.1932, p. 137-138; *Corpos Gerentes*, minutes of meeting no. 4.04.1932, p. 10-11.

decided to put the text to the members, leaving several copies in the library. Seven months later, the regulations were still at the committee stage⁷⁷. They then disappeared from view.

It should be explained that the 1932 Regulations were drawn up by Mariano Roque Laia (1903-1996)⁷⁸, a lawyer, Republican and freemason, also a teacher at the Casa Pia, who as a young man had started to work with the *Voz do Operário*, as a teacher for evening primary classes, in the 1920s, rising to principal, until he left the institution in 1928. He was chosen to fill the vacancy left by Adolfo Lima. Work needed to continue on applying the Pedagogical Programme, and according to the chairman of the AC in 1931/32, Roque Laia fitted the requirements:

"Knowledge of new theories and ideas about teaching, capable of putting them into practice without undermining the smooth running of education. Someone who would neither get lost in theoretical ideas in his office, nor have an exclusively hands-on empirical approach, nor so ideologically backwards as to jeopardise the associations work, nor so strongly political as to put political ideals ahead of other considerations in his work." (Esteves 1933b, 54-55)

Roque Laia held the post of head of educational services from September 1931 to July 1933, when he resigned because of an open dispute with the administrators. He took a forceful approach to his work and, according to Esteves dos Santos, succeeded in securing resources and organising activities that brought about the desired renewal in the *Voz do Operário's* schools⁷⁹. And the 1932 Regulations reflect this forceful character, although the association was unable to keep up with the pace they set. He had the backing of Esteves dos Santos (1889-1954), a central figure in the administration of the Society, since 1929, when he was appointed as chairman of the Supervisory Board, until the 1940s, alternating between the chairmanship of the GA, the AC and the supervisory board.

Raúl Esteves dos Santos was born in Lisbon to a working class family, left school at ten and then educated himself. The earliest references to him in public office are in the years following World War I, as belonging to the moderate Republicans, and he worked in the office of José Relvas (1919) and was secretary to the Minister of Finance, Peres Trancoso (1921), to the civil governor, Agatão Lança (1921-1922) and to the Minister for Trade, Ferreira da Fonseca (1923-1924). He was an employee of Lisbon Municipal Council (1925) and held several posts in the state railways company (1925-1929). He was a prolific writer and lecturer. In addition to writings on the history of the *Voz do Operário*, as we have seen, he was interested in reflecting on the causes that led to the end of the Republic political experiment and on issues relating to labour (copyright, rest periods for workers and vocational education). From 1931 onwards, he delivered more than a hundred lectures up and down the country. At the time of his death, he was working on a volume on the associationist movement in Portugal and the extent of its civic participation, having worked with a variety of working class associations⁸⁰.

The changes to the AC, after the power struggles that led to Esteves dos Santos (1933) resigning from his post, once again stalled the process of reform. But the following year, Emílio Costa (1877-1952) was contracted as head of educational services. He was another

⁷⁷ ANTT: SIBVO, *Corpos Gerentes*, minutes of meeting no. 20, 2.06.1932, p. 36; no. 23, 3.02.1933, p. 39-40.

⁷⁸ *Idem*, minutes of meeting of 4.04.1932, p. 10 vs.

⁷⁹ School timetables devised to avoid fatiguing students with demanding subjects, education by disciplines, with a prominent place for *object lessons*, physical education classes, drawing, music, modelling, crafts, choral singing and handiwork, playtime, children's and teaching library, school museum, school associations, purchase of collections and other materials for setting up science rooms, and medical examinations for students (1933b, 58-67).

⁸⁰ AHS-ICS: "Homenagem a Raul Esteves dos Santos", 1955. PT-AHS-ICS-PQ-DOC-445.

leading figure in the Portuguese anarchist movement, both as theorist and populariser, as well as a man of action, in particular in the field of working class education, both in anarchist institutions and in collaboration with Republicans, such as the Universidade Popular Portuguesa, as well as in association with the trade union movement. He was a teacher at secondary and technical schools, fully familiar with new currents in pedagogy, and an educational thinker and writer since his time in Belgium (New University of Brussels) and France, between 1903 and 1908, having worked as secretary to Francisco Ferrer. From 1927 onwards he was on the staff of the Instituto de Orientação Profissional (Vocational Guidance Institute). It was in the same year that Domingos da Cruz rejoined the Education and Arts Sub-committee (administration of 1934/35). Continuing the reforms entailed reintroducing the regulations that had been suspended in 1930. In his own words, the latter modelled the system devised by Adolfo Lima⁸¹. This took effect in December 1935 and remained in force until at least the 1950s, but not without countless difficulties and lacunae.

In effect, in 1947, the AC alluded to the need to review the Regulations of 1935 and the following year mention is made of "continuing moves to reform the educational services"⁸². In 1949, Domingos da Cruz took on the chairmanship of the AC. In the late 1950s, he wrote about his return and his experience at the *Voz do Operário* since he sat on the Administrative and Inquiry Committee:

"I was pained by the neglect that had crept into everything. The attempts at renewal in 1924-1925, the weary efforts in 1929 through to mid-1930, resumed in 1934 to 1936, but in these last two periods without management responsibilities, although I was not able to excuse myself from sitting on the Educational Board, due insistent and repeated requests, almost everything was lost. I found the Society in debt, not deficits, it should be noted, of tens of thousands of escudos, everything filthy inside, unsuitable furniture in a deplorable state, junior staff in worn out uniforms, all teachers poorly paid, etc., etc., as can be seen from my management reports. No educational welfare services, biometrics, records, a gymnasium that pretended to offer physical education to the children, the very devil."⁸³

Notes by way of conclusion

In the mid-1920s, the idea of educational reform was forced onto the agenda by a crisis in the Society and driven by the effects of intervention from outside the normal functioning of the institution, as the result of regulatory interference by the State in associations, especially when they were awarded public utility status and enjoyed State benefits. These regulatory interventions were administrative and financial in nature, but also entailed "remote" political control. As we have seen, the openness to multiple political influences made it possible to broaden the political spectrum and, alongside more damaging currents or those with more radical social aims, progressive republican ideas were also allowed in, with a reform-minded approach, seeking to integrate the working classes. With the renewal of the management boards of associations, it was hoped to renew policies and initiatives in the field of education and social welfare, viewed by the Republican State as complementing its government policies. Anarchist and trade union organisations, later joined

⁸¹ AHS-ICS: Domingos da Cruz, «Retalhos...», p. 13; Sociedade ... 1935.

⁸² ANTT: SIBVO, *Relatório e contas...* 1947 and 1948.

⁸³ AHS-Projeto MOSCA: Domingos da Cruz, "Algumas de entre tantíssimas outras peças de um misero processo, originado em vilíssimo relatório...", unnumbered page.

by the communists, were already using political, social, vocation and associationist education to prepare the working classes for the future social revolution.

In effect, with the administrative reform (1926), the Society was able to renew its boards, within an associative management and decision-making model, and at the same time to equip itself with the means to implement a different educational and social policy. In order to plan and assess this, it had members from all walks of life, recruited from the workers', intellectual and artistic elites and drawn from a varied social, political and cultural spectrum; in order to implement it, it had a body of teaching and administrative staff; in order to direct and approve its policies, it had a relatively limited group of more active members, with working class roots, who sat on the different management bodies on a rotating and alternating basis; to approve everything, it had a general assembly of members, also relatively small in size and mostly made up of the more militant and active members, grouped by personal, professional and political affiliations; and lastly, it had a membership of several thousand, although shrinking, whose subscriptions provided its basic revenues and whose number needed to be expanded by attracting new members, as well as by living up to their social expectations⁸⁴.

Despite the progress, setbacks and impasses, the educational model that was designed and partially put into practice was the work of a small group of members, with contrasting ideological influences, but who agreed on the importance they attributed to the associationist movement, as a form of civic organisation and participation, and to a new form of education, with organisational models, methods and practices to primary and vocational shape schooling and education, as well as adult education, using the people's university model.

This endeavour was aimed above all at the underprivileged working classes, and set out, upstream, to tackle the social ills of disease and poverty, and downstream to equip individuals with a trade, suited to their personal abilities and vocation. The connecting thread in the whole education process was the concept of a single school, for children aged 4 to 16, that sought to provide intellectual, social and cultural education, to create a spirit of enterprise and students initiated in the life of society, that the school reproduced, through the teaching of welfare practices and social solidarity. Lastly, it should be noted that the model designed was centred in particular on promoting the physical development of the student (diet, physical exercise, management of school time, play, holiday camps, health inspections, screening for diseases and disorders, matching school work to the pupil's abilities, skills assessment and vocational guidance), and placed the school doctor and medical-psycho-pedagogical at the heart of school life and education. Vocational courses represented the final link in this chain.

The model was not original. But it was innovative, because it was proposed by an association of workers and functioned in a closed circuit. It incorporated ideas from New Education which, in the late 1920s, were embraced by workers' movements and teachers' organisations sympathising with revolutionary trade unionism and anarchism, such as the *Associação de Professores de Portugal*, the *Liga de Ação Educativa* and the *União dos Professores Primários*. The associationist ideas also influenced republican initiatives, and even those of governments and municipalities. Examples of these included: the project for Public Educational Reform, presented by the minister João Camoesas in 1923, which was never debated in Parliament, but which rekindled the debate on the *école unique* and was warmly welcomed by those associations and by Adolfo Lima and Emílio Costa (Nóvoa 1986, 114-115); the project led by Alexandre Ferreira, as municipal

⁸⁴ Between 1934/35 and 1940, the membership subscriptions (from a membership of around sixty thousand) represented on average 74% of revenues (SIBVO, *Relatório e contas...1935 to 1940*). To put this briefly in context, the population of Lisbon in 1930 and 1940 totalled, respectively, 594 390 and 694 389. And in 1940, of these, 73 868 were aged 7 to 13 years, and 77 747 between 14 and 19 years (Instituto Nacional de Estatística [National Office of Statistics], 1940).

councillor, for setting up a model primary school⁸⁵; and the educational programme for public welfare educational establishments, on a boarding basis⁸⁶. All these programmes were devised by Faria de Vasconcelos, the Portuguese pedagogue, whose ideas were formed within the New Education Movement, a close associate of Ferrière, and the founder and director of the *Instituto de Orientação Profissional* (Vocational Guidance Institute) (1926)⁸⁷. All of these, in some cases explicitly in the supporting texts, exerted an influence on the programmes and regulations of the *Voz do Operário*. With the exception of Faria de Vasconcelos, the members of the sub-committees included, as we have seen, Camoesas, and also Alexandre Ferreira, a Republican, founder of a people's university and municipal councillor in the 1920s, in which post he is remembered for his achievements in education and welfare. This influence extended also to teachers, figures drawn from the social networks of professionals and academics, formed around the *Instituto de Orientação Profissional*, or the Casa Pia de Lisboa, a charitable institution for minors.

But more detailed research will be needed on how expertise in educational innovation circulated in Portugal, and in particular on how these ideas shaped the reform of the educational services of the Sociedade de Instrução e Beneficência A Voz do Operário.

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⁸⁵ Faria de Vasconcelos, "Bases para uma escola primária tipo municipal [inclui jardim de infância e campos de jogos]", programme drawn up on the request of Alexandre Ferreira, as a Lisbon municipal councillor. In *Obras Completas. Lisbon: FCG, 2006*, vol. III, 477-487).

⁸⁶ Decree no. 12911, *Diário do Governo*, no. 290, 28.12.1926.

⁸⁷ We cannot be certain that he was responsible for the programme for welfare boarding schools. But its contents, and Faria de Vasconcelos's connections with the Directorate-General for Welfare, to which the Vocational Guidance Institute belonged, and also his work for the Minors Jurisdictional Services, relating to the organisation of reform schools for juvenile offenders, all support our conviction that he was its author.

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