



Pedagogy with personality by Pierre Faure: reception in Portugal and case study¹

A Pedagogia com Personalidade de Pierre Faure: receção em Portugal e estudo de caso

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Abstract

The main purpose of this article is to reflect on the reception of Pierre Faure's personalized and community pedagogy in Portugal from the 1960s onwards. We will use the case of the College of S. Miguel, founded in Fátima in 1962, and the trajectory of its first director, Father Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura. It was Faure's pedagogical principles that served as a source of inspiration for the construction of the educational project of this school, making possible its affirmation as a paradigm of “Catholic school” and as a reference for innovation in the Portuguese educational context.

Keywords: Personalized and community pedagogy. Pierre Faure. Reception in Portugal.

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Resumo

O presente artigo tem como principal finalidade refletir sobre a receção da pedagogia personalizada e comunitária de Pierre Faure em Portugal a partir dos anos 60 do século XX. Usaremos para tal o caso do colégio de S. Miguel, fundado em Fátima em 1962, e a trajetória do seu primeiro diretor, o padre Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura. Foi o ideário pedagógico de Faure que serviu de fonte de inspiração à construção do projeto educativo do colégio, possibilitando a sua afirmação como paradigma de “escola católica” e como referência de inovação no panorama educativo português.

Palavras-chave: Pedagogia personalizada e comunitária. Pierre Faure. Receção em Portugal.

Resumen

El objetivo principal de este artículo es reflexionar sobre la acogida de la pedagogía personalizada y comunitaria de Pierre Faure en Portugal desde la década de 1960 en adelante. Utilizaremos el caso del colegio de S. Miguel, fundado en Fátima en 1962, y la trayectoria de su primer director, el padre Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura. Fueron las ideas pedagógicas de Faure las que sirvieron de inspiración para la construcción del proyecto educativo del colegio, permitiendo afirmarlo como paradigma de “escuela católica” y como referente de innovación en el panorama educativo portugués.

Palabras clave: Pedagogía personalizada y comunitaria. Pierre Faure. Recepción en Portugal.

Introduction

The main purpose of this article is to reflect on the reception of Pierre Faure's personalized and community pedagogy in Portugal from the 1960s onwards. For this purpose, we will use, in particular, the case of the College of S. Miguel, founded in Fátima in 1962, and the trajectory of its first director, Father Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura, who attended a course at the Higher Institute of Pedagogy in Paris, from 1962 to 1965, where he was a pupil of Pierre Faure. It was the pedagogical ideas of his Parisian master that served as a source of inspiration for the construction of the school's educational project, enabling its paradigm as a “Catholic school” and as a reference for innovation in the Portuguese educational landscape.

We will first analyze the international context that made possible the creation of conditions for the development, within the Catholic educational field after the Second Vatican Council, of a plural movement of pedagogical renewal. This had a strong expression within the Society of Jesus, from where the pedagogical proposals of Pierre Faure, himself a Jesuit, emerged. In Portugal, this cultural and educational renewal also had Jesuit Father Manuel Antunes as a reference. Finally, before the case study, embodied in Joaquim Ventura and in the College of S. Miguel, we need to understand the appropriation of Pierre Faure's ideas. Thus, we systematize the main pillars of personalized and community pedagogy.

We will take into account, with regard to the temporal delimitation of this study, the period that elapses between the foundation of the College of S. Miguel and the end of the mandate of Joaquim Ventura as its director (1962-2012). We will use as sources, among others, works by Pierre Faure, documentation and publications from the school, an autobiographical book by Joaquim Ventura, and interviews granted by him.

Pedagogical renewal processes in the Catholic context

If the nineteenth century was the century of the utopia of total education as a means of regenerating society, the twentieth century was the pedagogical century. It was the century of pedagogies developed from the perspective of the most different ideological, religious, political, and anthropological social currents. They exacerbated the idea of the 1800s regarding the education of the new man as the foundation for a new society.

From the Marxist ideological currents to religious pedagogical movements, namely of Catholic and of Protestant origin, there was a proliferation of methods and ideas during the twentieth century. There was increased massification of schools, especially in societies with democratic regimes, towards an universal education.

If the total democratization of education was the fulfillment of a utopia from the previous century, the consequences arising from the mass education process had less positive effects. In particular the depersonalization of the large mass of students who were uniformly instructed with the same methods, curricula, strategies and goals without a more humanized differentiation of personalities, rhythms, and intelligences. Practically, all the renovating currents of contemporary pedagogy aimed to combat the disastrous effects of mass education and to propose attention to the individuality of each student.

The unevenness of results, the degrees of school failure, the marginalization of those less prepared to thrive in the mass education system, and school dropout accentuated a dystopian rift between the ideal of generalized education and the desirable uniformity of its successful outcomes. Furthermore, education was a very attractive field for ideological, religious and political

intervention, as it was known of its potential to build new societal projects. Thus, different proposals emerged to respond to the possibilities and difficulties of the educational field that had become the priority of political concerns in contemporary societies.

Within the Catholic Church and its multiple educational institutions with a centuries-old tradition of dedication to the educational mission, some of them holding true global educational networks such as the Society of Jesus and other Religious Orders, there was the emergence, throughout of the twentieth century, of new pedagogical currents. Some of them were inspired by charismatic pedagogues. These currents of pedagogical renewal gained a special impulse and renewed scope following the Second Vatican Council and the movement it generated for the *aggiornamento* of the Catholic Church as a whole. They were open to contemporary pedagogical currents and thought. In fact, for the first time in the history of the great assemblies of the Catholic Church, in charge of updating doctrine, there was a document exclusively dedicated to education. It assessed its centrality and priority for the Church, as it was being increasingly more important to the more progressive contemporary societies. The following is stated in the Council's *Gravissimum educationis - Declaration on the Christian education of young people*:

The sacred Ecumenical Council has carefully considered the utmost importance of education in the life of man and its ever-increasing influence on the social progress of our time. In fact, the education of young people, and even a certain continuing education of adults, becomes, under present circumstances, not only easier but also more urgent. Indeed, people are more fully aware of their own dignity and their duty, and are eager to take an ever more active part in social life, especially in economic and political life. The admirable advances in technique and scientific research and the new media give men the opportunity, sometimes enjoying more free time, to achieve intellectual and moral culture more easily and to improve each other, thanks to the bonds of closer union, both with groups and even with peoples. (Vatican Ecumenical Council II, 1987, p. 203).

If the Second Vatican Council was an epicenter that, at the highest level, placed education at the forefront of the priorities of the Church's renewal, it is important to remember that, at the official level, there was a previous pontifical document that established educational guidelines for the universal Church, in the first half of the twentieth century. This document was in force as a pedagogical doctrine until the 1960s, and was entirely dedicated to educational issues. This was the important encyclical of Pope Pius XI, published in December 31, 1929, named *Divini Illius Magistri* (The Divine Master), entirely dedicated to education. This document can be considered the most complete and clear instruction on education of the Magisterium of the Church. Until the Second Vatican Council, this was the official Church doctrine on this matter.

It contains elements of great interest to frame the Catholic understanding of education, profoundly conditioning the Church's pedagogical thinking during the first three decades of the political regime of the Estado Novo in Portugal, and also internationally, in other countries with Catholic influence. This papal document is really a finished product, a synthesis of the Catholic debate on education. It stated that education is not a spontaneous process, nor the result of a despotic imposition. Rather, it is at the intersection of the child's freedom and the existential

environment created by the family, the Church or the school. It reinforces the need to promote an education in strict consonance with the Church's doctrine in the various levels of training of the individual: physical, intellectual and religious.

There is a first theoretical moment characterized by the apology of the primordial rights of the Church and the family in education vis-à-vis the State and other instances of educational order well represented in the aforementioned encyclical by Pius XI. And then there is a second moment, fruitful and innovative, among the most advanced lines of Catholic thought and particularly among the Jesuits, represented in Portugal by the central figure of Manuel Antunes.

Father Manuel Antunes was director of the influential *Revista Brotéria* periodical, a member of the Society of Jesus and Professor at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon. In the years immediately following the Second Vatican Council, he made a reflection on the renovating spirit of the Church. Particularly about the Order of Saint Ignatius, which was rethinking its ideas, methods and pedagogical objectives in the light of a basic idea of education based on *paideia*, which intimately links a cultural project with a pedagogical project. The following excerpt is very significant in relation to the understanding of education as a total project:

it concerns 'the whole man and every man'. The whole man: from the cradle to the grave and in all dimensions of the human personality, from the physical to the mental and encompassing the affective, the professional (or technical), the scientific, the aesthetic, the moral and the religious. The whole man is the one who has the ability to relate to the whole, the only being in nature endowed with such a capacity. The whole man is a being who has been open to the possibility of apprehending the whole, of aiming for the whole, of 'intentioning' the whole, of 'feeling the whole', of having horizons as wide as the Universe itself and as deep as the Infinite itself. [...] Every man: no one can or should be excluded. There are no valid reasons, neither of age, nor of sex, nor of fortune, nor of sufficient intrinsic condition to deny man this fundamental right. Because it comes from the very fact that he is a man, that he is part of a historical world in continuous renewal, that he is and should be co-responsible for the 'common adventure' of the human race. (Franco, 2008, pp. 110-111)

Manuel Antunes presents a theory justifying the basics while providing a definition of Education that should always be, in his view, permanent and unfinished, after carrying out a critical analysis of the theoretical proposals of some of its main theorists².

Indeed, the new pedagogical paths provided by Catholic pedagogues in the conciliar and post-conciliar period invested heavily in educational projects focused on the training of the student in an integral and personalized perspective, centered on human and Christian values, as well as in a life-long project. It is worth remembering that this pedagogical shift of personalist pedagogy had already made its way through the philosophical thinking that became a reference in the educational field, as the historian of education Franco Cambi writes:

² These are some of the documents mentioned and critically analyzed by the author in his articles on educational issues: Guiding documents and reports from the Council of Europe, OECD and UNESCO, particularly the aforementioned "Faure Report" by UNESCO, published in 1972, under the title "Apprendre à être", the "Recurrent Education: A Strategy for Lifelong Learning" of the OECD, 1973. He also mentions Marschal Macluhan, critic Ivan Illich and his defense of deschooling, Henri Janne, B. Schwartz.

in the most important and organic effort, to assert itself as characterized by a strong theoretical autonomy and with a view to a superior synthesis in relation to the currents of contemporary pedagogy, it was carried out by Christian pedagogy with 'personalism'. This pedagogical orientation intends to develop a 'total conception' of the educational experience, placing at its center the dimension of 'values', objectives and transcendentals, with the concrete unity between experience and value in the 'person'. (Cambi, 1999, p. 568)³

This theorization marks a radically humanist turn in education, based on a theory of culture centered on the dignity of the person and on the *fulfillment* of his rights towards individual and collective human fulfillment. The pedagogical thinking of a personalist basis adopted by Antunes is, therefore, conceptualized in this line based on a reflection of an anthropopedagogical type with a humanizing basis and Christian references. Thus, the renewal of educational structures must be oriented towards the training of the human person, fully integrated in a society which, ultimately, should ideally be entirely educational. Many other authors contributed to the Portuguese cultural press, such as *Revista Brotéria* from the Society of Jesus. This was their vehicle for promoting a new pedagogical vision, and authors such as Hervé Carrier and António Simões are examples of this. They defended a developmental education guided by humanization and interdisciplinarity against specialism and depersonalizing technicality. An education based on openness to reflect on the problems and educational needs in today's society and attentive to the needs of men in this new and questioning time. Leading a prospective reflection on university education, these intellectuals valued a personalist and personalized pedagogy, capable of promoting the development of the whole man against the degeneration of a post-modern society dominated by the empire of consumerism.

Here we have a new educational thought represented by educational theorists, of which Manuel Antunes has become a reference in the Catholic milieu. He is also in dialogue with the secular milieu: a theory of education based on anthropology, an anthropopedagogy with a universal and communitarian bent, justified in the recognition of a pedagogy rooted in the contingent condition of the historical-existential becoming of the human being. (Patrício, 1985, pp. 540-554)

This is a theory of education that underlies a *transformative* and *progressive* notion of man, whose dynamism must be permanently education oriented. It is the main right of the person, decisive for his fulfillment in the world. It is a pedagogical thought with utopian contours that the author himself recognizes as a long road, a “never attainable goal, a world project - an educational society, a utopia”. (Franco, 2008, p.112)

It is this renewing spirit that is instilled in Catholic intellectuals in Portugal. They envisaged a revolution in the educational field with a taste of utopia. This shows that, during the 1960s and 1970s, critical reflection had already been sown in Catholic circles in Portugal. It fermented the

³ Franco Cambi stresses, however, that, even in its fundamental basis, the personalist pedagogy had plural and multiform approaches: “It was characterized by a neo-Kantian orientation, in Friedrich W. Forster (1869-1966) and Sergei Hessen (1887-1950); neo-Thomist, in Jacques Maritain (1882-1973); existentialist, in Emmanuel Mounier (1905-1950); and, more eclectic, in the Italian representatives, from Stefanini to Catalfamo, from Casotti to Flores d'Arcais.” (Cambi, 1999, pp. 568-569)

ground for a pedagogical renewal that became very permeable to the influence of international currents, an opening that was stimulated, in turn, because of the also revolutionary political changes that were taking place in Portuguese society.

Pierre Faure's Personalized and Community Pedagogy

By the end of the 1940s, in the post-war period, the French Jesuit Pierre Faure (1904-1988) showed great dismay at the initiatives of various European countries to reorganize their education systems, imposing a single school model. In this pedagogue's opinion, it was an expression of an abyss between school and life. The goals of pedagogical renewal⁴ that he so longed for, "cannot be restricted to mere reformulations of knowledge programs to be transmitted to the child, but rather aim at the means to help him to reach them and thus build himself" (Klein, 1998, p.1). Thus, there was no concern with the integral training of students, something that would be very expressive in the Faurian approach. In this way, Faure encouraged his students in the Pedagogy course and in his centre for pedagogical studies to use active methods of teaching and learning. For that purpose, he created a small school in Paris in 1947. These proposals for pedagogical renewal were reflected in three teacher training centers promoted by Faure. These were the main way of disseminating these ideas, followed by the publication of articles in the periodicals *Pédagogie* and *Recherche et Animation Pédagogiques*, and the pedagogical sessions held in different countries. It was in this context that a pedagogical renewal movement emerged and expanded, inside and outside France. It was based on Personalized and Community Pedagogy, and had a great expression in Spain, Brazil and in some Latin American countries.

In the bibliographical collection left by Pierre Faure, of about ten books and more than a hundred articles, it is possible to identify three presuppositions of his pedagogical approach. Firstly, the anthropological-religious basis that is supported by the documents of the Catholic Church, namely the Second Vatican Council, by the Ignatian spirituality of the Spiritual Exercises⁵ and by the thought of Emmanuel Mounier⁶, Hélène Lubienska de Lenval⁷ and Maria Montessori⁸. On the other hand, the support of the biopsychological assumption, which is corroborated by the research work of scientific pedagogues, such as Jean Itard, Désiré-Magloire Bourneville, Édouard Séguin⁹ and Jean Piaget¹⁰. And, finally, in the pedagogical sphere, Faure was inspired by classic authors, by the pedagogical "code" of the Society of Jesus entitled *Ratio Studiorum*, by the New School movement and its pedagogues¹¹, namely Célestin Freinet¹², and by the Dalton Plan¹³ (Klein, 1997).

⁴ Pierre Faure's personalist and community pedagogy would benefit from the utopian horizon cultivated around education and the ongoing pedagogical renewal movement within the Church and shares the renovating ideology of the Jesuit pedagogical tradition.

⁵ Pierre Faure's pedagogical spirit shares the renovating ideology of the Jesuit pedagogical tradition centered on the training of the person and his identity building, seeking to fully transform the human being through interior conversion in line with the Spiritual Exercises established by its founder Saint Ignatius (Lopes, 2002).

⁶ Conception of the person, emphasizing personalism and the community aspect, by Emmanuel Mounier; See footnote 10.

⁷ Spiritual vision of the human being by Lubienska de Lenval.

⁸ Maria Montessori's active learning method.

⁹ Édouard Séguin defended that the child, in order to learn to 'become', needed interior silence and mastery of the body.

¹⁰ Jean Piaget's Constructivist Theory of Learning.

¹¹ The New School Movement defended that traditional education was inadequate in contemporary times.

¹² From Freinet's pedagogy, Faure only valued the work instruments that put the child in activity.

¹³ From the Dalton Plan, Faure takes advantage of the schedule, the modification of school hours, the organization of classes by subject rather than by age and class, and also the work plan.

The Personalized and Community Pedagogy is a pedagogical focus, as its creator Father Pierre Faure preferred to call it¹⁴, opposed to traditional, massive and standardized teaching. Thus, the first principle defended in his teaching model was “personalization”¹⁵. In his writings, Faure emphasizes that the option for personalized education was motivated by the spirituality of St. Ignatius of Loyola, namely with regard to interiority (Faure, 1972). However, Faure considered that a pure personalist education could lead students to isolation. Thus, he introduced a community aspect to the teaching-learning process. He explained that

it is a question of pedagogy whose essential rule can no longer be silence and queues, silence at work, the predominance of writing over speech, of teachers' presentations over students' [...], If you want social education, learning community life in various forms, other techniques must be applied. (Klein, 1988, p. 4)

According to Klein (2014) “the Faurean pedagogical approach is based on six principles, as 'non-negotiable' elements that should illuminate the pedagogical path” (p.11). The first, that gives the name to the proposal, is the personalization that implies, on the one hand, the student's work to raise awareness and identify the calls to be more¹⁶ and to define and situate themselves in their own way in the world. And, on the other hand, the teacher's work so that teaching was “centered on the student and programmed based on their educational needs” (Faure, 1993, p.19). The second principle involved autonomy and freedom, which materialized in a student's exercise of refusing actions and contexts that corrupted his dignity, while doing everything that promoted and exercised his potential. The next one is activity, which arises from within the person, either spontaneously or at someone's suggestion, and whose importance in learning is recognized by autogenesis¹⁷. Underlying the principle of creativity was the ability of students to innovate or change paths, solutions or answers and solve problems. The fifth principle is sociability, which leads the student to engage in situations of interaction with his peers, as this is an innate aspect of the human being and essential for personal enrichment. Finally, we have the principle of transcendence/spirituality, through which the exercise of spiritual intelligence

would have the dimension of achieving freedom and self-discipline, in order to [...] respond to the deep aspiration of the person who, by instinct, wants to progress ever more in his explanations and in his discovery of the world, because his spirit, his mental initiatives, tends to want to learn everything, understand everything, without limits. This is the characteristic of the spirit. (Faure, 1993, p.48)

¹⁴ Faure resisted presenting himself as the author of a pedagogical method, preferring to call his pedagogical contribution the pedagogical approach (Klein, 1997, p. 16).

¹⁵ Emmanuel Mounier was a French philosopher who marked the movements of young Christians in favor of democracy in the Catholic Church in the 1930s, and defended the concept of Personalism, which Pierre Faure appropriated to characterize his pedagogical proposal.

¹⁶ It refers to the Ignatian concept of *magis*, the domain of excellence, contrary to any superficial and inconsistent attitude.

¹⁷ The concept of autogenesis refers to something that is self-created, created by the self. It is in this sense that the activity, which comes from within the student, leads them to learn. Underlying this idea is Piaget's constructivism, which defends that the student, in interaction with the environment and objects, provides his learning.

In his work *Personalized and Community Education* (1993), Pierre Faure emphasizes that the combination of these principles in educational practice is a challenge, as it involves placing students in cooperation networks. Thus, personalization and community education would not be the same, but interdependent. They “go hand in hand as they provide mutual support. One cannot aspire to one without relying on the other. This is one of the main secrets of education” (Faure, 1993, p.19).

Although Faure did not outline didactic elements underlying his pedagogical proposal, Luiz Fernando Klein, in his doctoral thesis entitled *Personalized Education. Challenges and Perspectives* (1998), states that by analyzing the scientific production and the contents of the lectures and pedagogical sessions held by Fr. Pierre Faure it is possible to identify an “an order, a framework with pedagogical instruments and resources and didactic moments with seven steps” (p.90). Thus, from the perspective of Klein (2014), the didactic moments can be subdivided as follows: 1) Student's independent work from the programming, work plan and work guidelines; 2) Group work, scheduled or spontaneous, to be carried out by the whole class or by small groups; 3) Sharing in a large group about knowledge and/or feelings inherent to the learning situation; 4) Student's personal synthesis using memorization, records, drafting documents, overview, among others; 5) Oral and written exposition resulting from the presentation of the work done, either to the class itself, to other classes or to the educational community; 6) Evaluation of the process through self- and/or hetero-evaluation, personal and collective moments, and self-correction; 7) Awareness of the whole class or animation groups about the advances, challenges and impasses for improving the learning process (p.14).

Independent Work¹⁸, also known as Personal Work, made it possible to personalize learning. Faure supposed that the student would need, in order to assimilate knowledge, moments of silence, interiorization and, faced with this knowledge, he could feel it and interiorize it. The student arrived at school every day knowing what he would dedicate himself to, according to the Work Plan¹⁹ he had prepared the day before, based on the Course Schedule²⁰ and the Work Guidelines suggested by the teacher. In this way, the student exercised autonomy, updating his motivation to learn, demonstrating his ability to analyze the didactic units, organize tasks, and the hierarchy of means. For each theme or subject of the Programming, the older students had periods of one and a half to two hours, supported by the material available. In the classrooms there was a form²¹ or a work guide²² so that the student could undertake his learning process autonomously. He would carry out not only written work, but also research, experiments and book consultations.

Considering the importance of the community aspect, personalization sought to ensure Group Work based on a theme offered to everyone or to their choice. However, it was essential that

¹⁸ Influence of Maria Montessori.

¹⁹ The work plan should be carried out by the students, accompanied by the tutors. This plan contemplated the subjects that the students would have previously chosen, the dates of Sharing, Awareness, etc., as well as the contents that they would need to deepen within deadlines set by themselves.

²⁰ Scheduling was a selection and logical and psychological organization of contents. Faure was inspired by the Dalton Plan to create a schedule that could help students to study independently. It would be up to the teachers to explain what would be taught during the week, month or bimester, so that students could walk 'alone', and only mediated by teachers in moments of doubt or for sharing some knowledge. This schedule would be given to the students beforehand and, based on it, they could elaborate their work plans.

²¹ The forms could consist of exercises to reinforce learning and/or deepen some knowledge. They could be divided into five stages or more, with different degrees of difficulty.

²² The guides were instruments that teachers prepared so that students could, with autonomy, go deeper into new knowledge. The teachers started a new subject or continued with a knowledge already explained and the guides aimed to indicate the paths and propose a bibliography.

these moments were always preceded by a time of personal reflection, in order to allow each student to develop his own thoughts and position on the subject that they would confront with the group.

Among Faure's original elements, the one of Sharing stands out, in which students at the end of a section or work unit could present their knowledge of the researched contents to teachers and colleagues. To do so, they would set a date in the Work Plan and these moments were so significant that they could replace formal assessments. Faure questioned that "when manifesting what they learned, would they need to do tests?" (Faure, 1993, p.30). It could also be used to express feelings about what they were studying, as well as talking about aspects of their life. It is a learning experience of listening to the other, valuing the work of colleagues, mental and verbal articulation, argumentation. This moment finds its root in the Spiritual Exercises, when the practitioner contacts the mentor to give him an account of his daily work, on how he felt in the exercises performed, on the points where he experienced more or less light and consolation, or disturbance and desolation. It is a moment par excellence for social and community involvement. The *Ratio Studiorum* is also reflected in Faure's proposal, namely in moments such as Synthesis and Personal Record. These moments allowed the student to consolidate the personal appropriation of his work to reference it with previous knowledge, to avoid fragmentation. The student acquires an overview of what he studied when he prepares his own synthesis and notes and seeks to memorize it. Works are stored in archives or dossiers to witness the students' trajectory and remind them of the importance of their efforts.

Oral and Written Expression is another didactic moment of great importance in Faure's pedagogical proposal. It is about the student socializing the constructed knowledge, the researched work, sharing it with colleagues and with the teacher. This could be done in internal or public sessions, exhibitions, declamations, artistic presentations, among others.

Faure insisted on self-correction²³ and self-assessment as educational instruments of autonomy. The assessment method most in tune with personalized teaching was continuous assessment, through constant and attentive observation of the process and the result of the student's work by the teacher. In this way, it was possible to detect the students who showed difficulties in complying with a schedule and offer them short-term participation in an improvement class. In the context of implementing his proposal, Faure rejects school failure, which he considers "an indication of the school's inability to adapt to the needs of students" (Faure, 1973, p. 24).

The Awareness Raising, also known as Animation Group, was a specific moment in which students were invited to reflect on their learning journey, identifying their obstacles and reinforcing their progress. This moment was used to draw the attention of students who had difficulties with normalization²⁴, the absence of study moments, as well as to establish rules and discuss problems that affected the class. According to Faure, this meeting – another moment of socialization –

²³ The Self-Corrective Material develops the student's autonomy, reflection, personal verification of successes and errors, scientific rigor and global appreciation of the work performed.

²⁴ Normalization is the condition for the subject to find a way to move within the school spaces that would not interfere with the study of their colleagues. Normalization, he thought, was an apprenticeship that the school should provide students, so that they could find the necessary balance to act in society. Faure defines the pedagogical aspect of normalization, describing a school day: "children [are] in activities that come and go in class, according to the needs of the moment, that is, according to what their work and activities require... handling educational and school material, researching and documenting library books, consulting colleagues or the teacher, exercises on the board or table, going around in the floor or in the hallway, sorting what has been discovered or preparing exhibitions... even tidying up or cleaning, taking care of plants or animals... Students... of any age... work and act without constraint, without apprehension... with no other concern than doing what they have to do, in the most natural way in the world... One also acquires the habit of speaking softly, of moving around without noise" (Faure, 1976).

proved to be necessary to bring together students who, by following their Work Plan, were normally dispersed in libraries, laboratories and thematic classrooms. In this space they had the opportunity to speak and be heard by their teachers. This moment was also marked in the Work Plan so that students could prepare. The personalizing focus also came from the self-corrective material because it developed the student's autonomy, reflection, personal verification of their own successes and mistakes and the global appreciation of the work performed.

Inspired by several authors and pedagogical sources, the didactic moments, according to Faure, were not linear and did not have to be fully verified during a class, as they could be alternated according to the students' performance. Its conception of a personalized and community classroom presents didactic moments that promote meaningful, adequate, autonomous, creative and interactive learning, with the role of the teacher being essential. Pierre Faure emphasizes that "the attitude required of teachers is the fundamental attitude of trust in the student's capacity for personal development, similar to the Rogerian concept of 'empathy', is to believe in the dignity, capacity and activity of the student" (Faure, 1987, p. 50). It is, above all, a teacher-tutor, a counselor, a companion, and their role is to guide the student's learning, observe his performance, point the best path, elaborate work instruments appropriate to the types, rhythms and specific needs of different students; and, finally, get to know their history and life context. "The role of the educator is that of opening horizons, instead of transmitting content" (Silva & Dallabrida, 2020, p. 3), striving to help them achieve their full development.

Father Joaquim Ventura and the reception of Pierre Faure's personalized and community pedagogy at the College of S. Miguel (Fátima, Portugal)

The creation of the College of S. Miguel, in 1962, was the initiative of the Bishop of Leiria, D. João Pereira Venâncio. He decided to continue a modest previous educational experience of the parish priest of Fátima, Father Manuel António Henriques, which was the seed of a much more ambitious educational project. Father Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura was appointed to direct the new diocesan college. He prepared for this mission by attending a course abroad²⁵. Émile Planchard's advice was decisive for his choice of the Higher Institute of Pedagogy, belonging to the Catholic Institute of Paris, which offered "a specific preparation for the directors of Catholic schools" (Ventura, 2016, p. 87).

Joaquim Ventura traveled to Paris in November 1962 with the intention of attending a degree in Pedagogy at the aforementioned Institute. Pierre Faure – "the great teacher" (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 217), as he called him in an interview – was the figure of the Institute whose influence seems to have been most striking in his pedagogical training. At the end of his second year in Paris, to complete his degree, Joaquim Ventura wrote a thesis entitled "The Catholic school in today's world" where he systematized the thought that would guide him in the direction of the College of S. Miguel. The third year was dedicated to his doctoral project in pedagogy. The thesis would be supervised by another distinguished pedagogue at the Institute, Antoine de La Garanderie, about "the secondary school in Portugal in times of planning educational action". Joaquim Ventura

²⁵ Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura was born in Juncal, Porto de Mós, on February 4, 1929. He attended the Leiria Seminary, where he completed his philosophical and theological studies. He was ordained a priest on June 20, 1952. He began his activity in the area of assistance to pilgrims at the Shrine of Fátima. He served as parish priest in the newly created parish of Atouguia, Ourém, later becoming the first chaplain at the Aerial Base No. 5 in Monte Real. It is then that the Bishop of Leiria nominates him to direct the projected College of S. Miguel, which would be the great project of his life. He held the position of director between 1965 and 2012, dedicating himself from then onwards to the activities of the Arca da Aliança Foundation created by him (Ventura, 2016).

obtained his doctoral certificate, but he did not pursue his research as he had to return to Portugal, in October 1965, by orders from the Bishop of Leiria. He finally became the director of the college, a place until then occupied by the aforementioned parish priest of Fátima. The college had obtained a provisional authorization in 1962, and its operation was definitively approved by the Ministry of Education in 1966. From its original location, in a building close to the parish church, the college had been transferred to premises belonging to the former diocesan seminary, in both cases precarious (Livro comemorativo do cinquentenário do colégio de S. Miguel, 2012).

In his three years in Paris, his attendance at the Pedagogical Institute and his contact with Pierre Faure left visible marks on Joaquim Ventura's pedagogical thinking. In interviews conducted between 2007 and 2009, within the scope of Jorge Cotovio's doctoral thesis, when explaining his convictions regarding the "Catholic School", the priest states that they came "from that great world" and adds the following: "Therefore my conviction of the Catholic school comes above all from my three-year stay in France, where I received much from my teachers and colleagues" (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 217). In another moment, the then student tells how Pierre Faure regularly challenged him to visit schools that followed his pedagogical proposals so that he could see, in practice, how they worked. Interestingly, one of the institutions he visited was the most mythical of the new French schools, the "École des Roches", which reflects his concern in getting to know one of the main roots of the renovating thought. These visits, according to Joaquim Ventura, allowed him to access "an amount of information, verification and testimonies" that convinced him that it would be worth it, in his own words, to "dedicate my life to Catholic School" (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 217). The Paris experience thus appears, in his eyes, as a true revelation that leads him to adhere to a certain interpretation of Christianity: "One of my achievements in Paris was the integration of values, Christian humanism" (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 222).

It is this identity of the "Catholic School" that the director would try to instil in the educational project of the College of S. Miguel. Joaquim Ventura is skeptical in relation to most of the existing schools that claimed Catholicism, both congregationalist and diocesan. In his opinion, they did not have "a program for life" or a "teaching content" impregnated with "religious culture" (Cotovio, 2011, II, pp. 216-217). The difference is that this school "was 'Catholic' from the ground up". The director uses this expression to give an account of the spirit that inspired its entire organization and functioning, "a Christian spirit of service", a true "Christian humanism", making it a "Catholic School in its fundamental essence". This would allow it, as far as its students are concerned, "to build personalities with a Christian bent". This Catholicism was manifested in the practices of the school under the guise of "reflections" or "retreats" rather than "celebrations" (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 222). Although it had a space for religious worship, the school didn't exactly have a chapel, which inspired some reactions. For its director, significantly, "the entire school is a chapel" and "the Church is a living person" (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 222). This identity is fully assumed by the school's educational project, formally systematized in a document in the early 1980s: "The College of S. Miguel is a Catholic confessional school" (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 6). The education it provides is "based on the Gospel and respectful of every conscience" (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 4), based on a "Christian vision of man and the world" and seeks to promote a "synthesis between culture and faith" (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 7).

Another concern since the beginning of the project, in the 1960s, is for the school to be different and innovative in the national landscape. In the interpretation of its director, this was already the intention of the Bishop of Leiria when he decided to create the college, appointed him and sent him to Paris. As he says in his autobiographical work: "In his mind, it was much more

than a traditional school” (Ventura, 2016, p. 84). And in an interview, he adds: “[In Paris] I would find convictions and paths to establish a school in Fátima that would become a paradigm for Portugal. And that was really the objective: to make a new school, with new methods” (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 216). With the school already in operation, the director reports the visits made with professors to various Spanish institutions “to detect and implement the best methods, following and experimenting with pedagogical innovations” (Ventura, 2016, p. 137). When following the creation of the architectural project for the new building, which provoked some controversy with the Church hierarchy, and its construction, which took place between 1970 and 1972, and respective equipment, Joaquim Ventura notes that these were spaces and equipment “suitable for a new pedagogy”. It was a building with interconnected pavilions, open spaces and filled with light. The furniture was appropriate to the size of the students and arranged in an unconventional way, that is, “in the form of an assembly, not in a single line” (Ventura, 2016, p. 125). This “new pedagogy” had a clear source of inspiration, as he notes: “In view of a new pedagogy, mainly applied to personalized teaching” (Ventura, 2016, p. 136). Asked in an interview about the concern with innovation, which would become one of the school's trademarks, the priest replies: “Yes, there was this concern for years and even today this spirit remains” (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 232). The educational project itself calls for a continuous review of the “techniques used” and the “methods used” in order to “avoid routine” and allow for the “progress” of the school (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 14).

The appropriation, by Joaquim Ventura, of the presuppositions of Pierre Faure's pedagogy seems to us unequivocal, taking into account both the words of the director and the way in which he tried to implement it in school. In the aforementioned interview, he states, for example, the following: “I remember when I arrived, in 1965, I wanted to do different things at that school. I brought new ideas. I was already doing personalized teaching” (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 220). The educational project is visibly impregnated in the slogans associated with this pedagogy. The chapter dedicated to the “style of education” begins by reaffirming the idea that “personalized education” is one of the mainstays of his ideal, considering, accordingly, that “the student is the true center of all educational activity” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 9). In the work commemorating the college's 50th anniversary, this same idea is conveyed by stating that “the educational proposal of the College is based on the awareness of oneself as a person, a masterpiece of all creation” (Livro comemorativo do cinquentenário do Colégio de S. Miguel, 2012, p. 28). But how was it possible to put into practice this “personalized teaching, tailored to each student”, Joaquim Ventura rhetorically asks. Its implementation, also inspired by the proposals of Pierre Faure and the experience of some of the schools he visited, was based on the elaboration of a system of learning, assessment, correction and other forms, which is explained by the director: “We had to create sheets, some for evaluation, others with content, then evaluate at different times, and the students were the ones who had to say they wanted to be evaluated” (Cotovio, 2011, II, p. 231). After the assessment, the students moved on to another work unit, to be developed in the next fortnight, all this based on autonomous work and respecting the pace of development of each student.

In another topic of the educational project, related to pedagogical guidelines and their implementation, the school provides an “active, personalized and community education” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 19). The demand for active teaching refers to the appropriation that Pierre Faure himself makes of the New Education tradition. In his best-known work, intended to publicize his proposal, the French Jesuit priest lists nineteenth-century scientific pedagogy, the new schools and Freinet among his precursors. The educational project of S. Miguel

meets this idea when, for example, the following is stated: “Active teaching, that is, inspired by the renovating movement of the new schools” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 4). Equally very present is another idea that seems inspired by the motto of Decroly pedagogy - an education “for life and towards life” - and which is presented as follows: “[the college] prepares its students [...] to fully live their lives, present and future. On the other hand, the college does not exhaust the students' lives. It projects itself out of it and beyond it” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 11).

The aforementioned idea of community education is the second of the slogans made popular by this pedagogical proposal. References to the “educational community”, integrating students, parents, teachers, non-teaching staff and alumni, are abundant throughout the educational project. Seeking to give it substance, it says: “all education is carried out, therefore, in relation to the community, since it is only in the heart of the community that a personal talent can be exercised”. Also: “The college will promote as much as possible the community aspect, openness to others, a sense of brotherhood, generosity, the practice of charity” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 11). The successive affirmations that “the college is a family” or that “the family of the College of S. Miguel marked my life” (Livro comemorativo do cinquentenário do Colégio de S. Miguel, 2012, pp. 29 and 33), in the testimonies of former students, corroborate this very idea. The college has, therefore, a strong identity provided by a “bundle of convictions and dispositions of the soul” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 13) shared by all its members of this symbolic community.

Another ideal that permeates the school's educational project is that of promoting “integral” or “global” education among its students. It is based, albeit with relatively different meanings, both in progressive pedagogical traditions and in the pedagogical traditions inspired by Catholicism. As stated in the book of the 50th anniversary, the College of S. Miguel “is committed to the integral training of each student, not only in curriculum but also with values, seen as a person with personal characteristics” (Livro comemorativo do cinquentenário do Colégio de S. Miguel, 2012, p. 29). In the school's educational project, this purpose regarding “comprehensive training”, the “harmonious development of all the capacities and aptitudes” of its young students is reaffirmed numerous times:

There is a proposal towards a global education, taking into account the potential and aspirations of every human being [...]. The global education that the College claims will be carried out through the proposal and the acceptance of a set of values that, integrated into the personality itself, distinguish and define a certain type of man. (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, pp. 4-6)

The profile outlined for this “certain type of man” implies the assumption of an axiological framework made of “Christian values”. It also includes a humanist conception of the world such as life, freedom, responsibility, justice, solidarity, respect, friendship, love, trust, sharing, dialogue, forgiveness, truth, work, imagination, critical sense, among others. In the interpretation of the educational project, these are “global values that constitute the cultural heritage of the Nation and of Humanity” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 7).

The college's motto is, in this regard, very significant. The initial motto, according to Joaquim Ventura, was the affirmation “men should be men”, inspired by the visit of Pope Paul VI to Fátima. This would seek to reaffirm the Christian humanism as the inspiring source of the school's project,

besides using one of the key words of Pierre Faure's pedagogy - personalized education. The motto that ended up being consecrated, to this day, is the one corresponding to the trio “Friendship - Truth - Exigency”, which in Portuguese has the acronym AVE. According to the educational project, these three “virtues” fully characterize “the style of the educational community” that the college represents. The explanation considers friendship, truth and exigency as essential elements for the construction of a true community. Community education is the other key word of the pedagogy inspired by the school project. Young people should deeply respect one another and be fraternal; they should have a horror of lies and inconsistency. They should have character, self-control and fulfil their moral and social duties. In an attempt to synthesize the main features of the educational project, “of a Christian and humanist nature”, of the College of S. Miguel, the following is stated in the book of the 50th anniversary: “To speak of the College of S. Miguel is to speak about personalized relationships and methods, active teaching, close collaboration with families in the creation of an integral and responsible young person, using the message of the Gospel” (Livro comemorativo do cinquentenário do Colégio de S. Miguel, 2012, p. 7).

Another element that brings the school's ideas closer to its main source of inspiration is the defense of a pedagogy according to objectives. This is a contemporary approach recognized by Pierre Faure as having many advantages, despite some risks, when he says that “no one should, when organizing pedagogies by objectives, neglect the objectives of pedagogy” (Faure, 1993, p. 43). This is a position that Joaquim Ventura clearly subscribes to. After his return from Paris, the director admits that “I wanted to put into practice what I learned and observed, such as, for example, pedagogy with objectives. I managed to use it in the years 67/68/69” (Cotovio, 2011, II, pp. 220-221). This need to define the learning objectives, to logically and coherently program the sequences of activities and to assign responsibilities to students with regard to their development, is another of the school's educational strategies, the so-called “learning itineraries” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 19).

But the influence of Pierre Faure is felt, above all, according to Joaquim Ventura, in the educational environment in the school. The harmony of spaces is coherently articulated with the way people work and relate to each other. “I think that much of the spirit of Fr. Pierre Faure will be here, the things he conveyed to his students. Both in architecture and in pedagogy, namely in the pedagogy of silence!” (Interview, October 9, 2020). According to the authors of the commemorating work, “silence is the golden rule in the school” (Livro comemorativo do cinquentenário do Colégio de S. Miguel, 2012, p. 30). It is not, however, imposed silence as a result of an authoritarian pedagogy, but rather the “constructive silence, the fruit of self-restraint” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 15). This is something that brings this proposal closer to the self-government defended in the context of New Education. This same source of inspiration is present in the activities that are entrusted to the students, such as cleaning the classrooms and the pantry service, in alternate turns. The call to participation is emphasized in the educational project: “Joyful, voluntary and progressive participation [...] is a requirement and a point of honor for all members of the educational community” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 17).

Regarding its pedagogical organization, we can list several other experiences developed by the college that contribute to the image of an innovative school that it seeks to build: the importance of teamwork both among students and among teachers; associations such as the so-called APPA's - Associations of Parents, Teachers, Students and Alumni -, that is, the community as the college

understands it; the publication of newspapers such as *Voz de S. Miguel* or *Espiral*; regular walks, called “Who like God”; cycle tourism; relevant cultural activities such as concerts and exhibitions. Also noteworthy are the attempts to reorganize the curriculum (with fewer subjects taught per year and its concentration in specific years), the defense of interdisciplinarity, continuous assessment or co-education in the educational project, and also the importance, within the educational offer, of professional training courses such as those developed in the areas of accounting and administration and design, ceramics and sculpture.

The training of its own teachers, similarly to what happens in many schools that aim to be different, was not forgotten at the College of S. Miguel. The director has this concern, related to the introduction of pedagogical work innovations: “I always provided a lot of training to teachers, both at the pedagogical and religious level”; and also: “there were training meetings to build valorization and trust” (Cotovio, 2011, II, pp. 222 and 231). The educational project outlines the desirable profile for the school teacher, corresponding to the ideal of a global educator, in which the religious aspect plays an important part. In this perspective, the “Catholic teacher” must “always bear in mind his quality of EDUCATOR, of someone who, by his example, advice and teaching, helps the student to grow in his triple dimension: personal, social and religious” (Colégio de S. Miguel. Projeto Educativo, 1982/83, p. 19).

Having started its activity in precarious facilities, the college moved, as already mentioned, in 1972, to a building of great architectural and pedagogical quality. It was built for this purpose, and in subsequent decades was expanded with new spaces and equipment, such as the sports pavilion, swimming pool, new pavilions for classes, workshops, etc. This expansion followed the growth in the number of students. In the year Father Joaquim Ventura returned from Paris and effectively assumed the direction of the college (1965), it had 84 students. In the 1968/69 school year, there were 133 students. The new building was designed for 360 students, but in 1980 there were already 600 students. In 1997, there were 1100 students (Livro comemorativo..., 2012). In 2012, coinciding with the evocation of the school's 50th anniversary, its “charismatic leader”, in the words of Father Querubim Silva, then president of the Portuguese Association of Catholic Schools (APEC), was succeeded by a new director. Thus began a new phase in this institution.

Conclusion

At the end of this journey, it is possible to conclude that the creation of the College of S. Miguel takes place in the period of intense renewal of Catholic education following the Second Vatican Council. This circumstance favors the renewal of the pedagogical model of the Society of Jesus. This is the context in which Pierre Faure's pedagogical proposals are elaborated, in dialogue with other alternative currents, and had a wide international circulation. Its reception in Portugal was mainly by Father Joaquim Rodrigues Ventura, disciple of Faure in Paris and director of the College of S. Miguel, created in Fátima in the early 1960s, on the initiative of the Diocese of Leiria. Since the beginning, the school has sought to present itself as a paradigm of what an intrinsically Catholic school should be, an exemplary institution in the field of pedagogical innovation. The school's educational project includes both the great principles and the didactic proposals of the French master. Its mainstays are, accordingly, the complementary ideas of “personalized pedagogy” and “community pedagogy”. The school's ideal is a complete education of its students, of Catholic and humanist inspiration. This pedagogy considers the student as a central figure in the educational

process and an active element in his learning. It encourages his participation, in a responsible way, in the life of the community. It seeks to build an educational environment, related to spaces and people, marked by silence and spirituality. Pedagogical-didactic instruments are put into practice with the aim of providing a learning path that is simultaneously autonomous and collaborative.

Although they have no place in this article, there are other influences in Portugal by Pierre Faure and his pedagogical thinking in the second half of the twentieth century. Namely, the participation of teachers from the Congregation of the Doroteias Sisters in pedagogical training days in Spain led by this French pedagogue in the early 1970s and Faure's three episodic trips to Northern Portugal in 1978 and 1979 to participate in a congress and in conferences of education, having given lectures at the now extinct College of Santa Mafalda. These historically documented references may deserve deepening in other case studies in further research.

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