



FAUP, 7 DE MAIO 2019

Affordable housing. The 20th century legacy - International Congress

TOPIC 2: THE SOCIAL DIMENSION OF THE HOUSING PROBLEM. The Society and Cities Reorganization in Modernity Context.

Although frequently repeated, the statements that highlight the problematic nature of the relation that societies establish with housing, as well as its definition as a social construct, not always give origin to actively reflexive analyses about the collective and political configurations underlying the genesis of these processes. Convening the study of the relations that are established between modalities of housing structuration, different social groups and State's action, this section of the conference invites scholars to specify those relations and to reflexively put into perspective the socio-political tensions inscribed in the reorganization, through housing, of modern societies.

Le Play's school in Portugal.* **Architecture and national statement on single-family housing*

ELISEU GONÇALVES

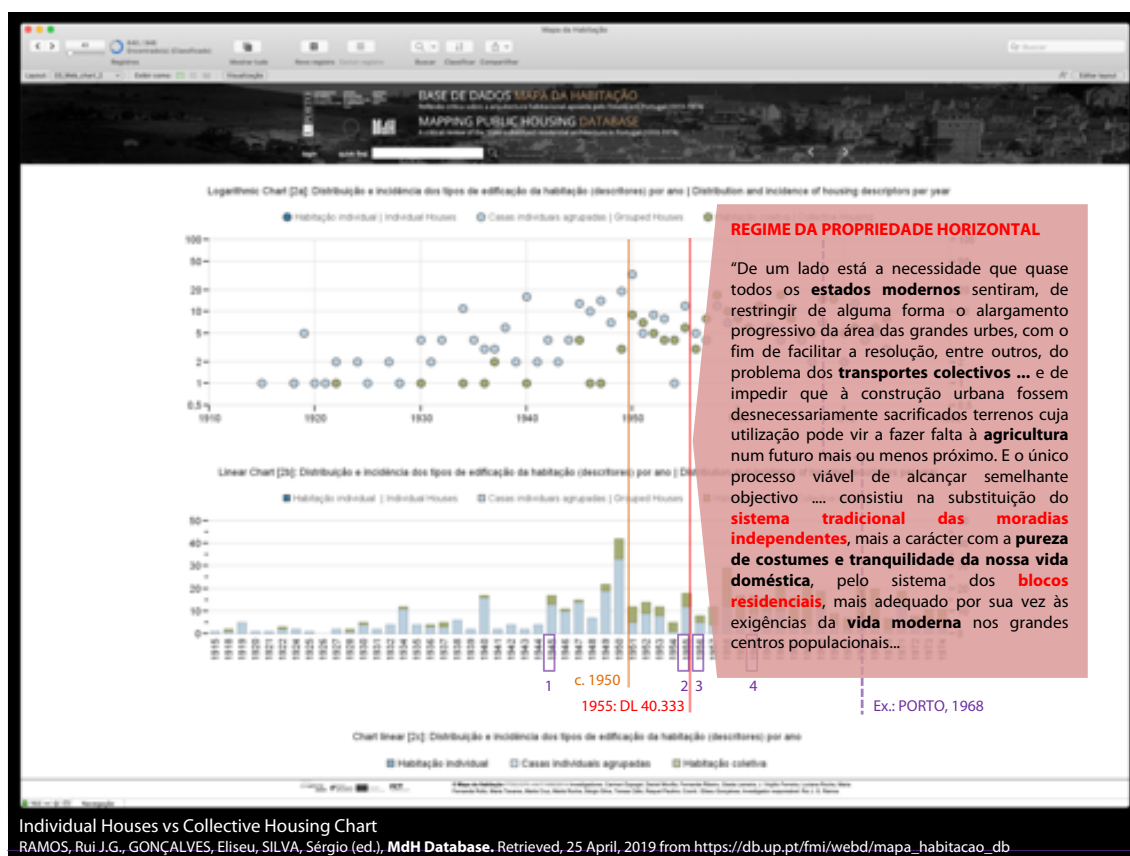
Universidade do Porto – MdH/ CEAU

In the 19th century, according to Frederic Le Play, the collective effort to social and economic harmonization had to be carried out through an organic order inspired by certain rural and secular communities of medieval origin. With the aim of achieving social peace and economic progress, a new rural morality would be applied to urban communities under the hierarchical play between Church, industrial patronage and the working-class. It was a social engineering propose, gradually updated with hygienists' observations, to control daily practices and domestic space. Among others, the individual ownership, the guarantee of transferable heritage, individual housing with gardens as complement for livelihood and playful, were base conditions to the strengthening, sedentary life, and perpetuation of the family group and, consequently, the physical and emotional stability of the individual. Le Play's sociology school arrived in Portugal in 1908 through his disciple Léon Poinsard at the invitation of the University of Coimbra and the King D. Manuel II.

At the beginning of the 20th century, one of the main doubts concerning housing policies was related about the dialectic between single-family homes and collective housing models. Through the last years of the monarchy, the whole republic, and the foundation of the dictatorship, the great majority of the politicians supported detached houses for ideological reasons. But, on the other hand, technicians and people linked to local grim urban problems chose massive solutions in order to solve working-class accommodation properly and quickly. - Who loses and who wins? What were the political orientations and its housing models? What objectives they pursue and how they were implemented? How the opposition between field and city had structured the thinking? What was the relationship between power and architecture? What kind of buildings came up from this long-lasting historical process?

These are some of the questions that the lecture intends to enunciate having, as leitmotif, the presence in Portugal of Le Play's ethics and social methodology.

Culminating a decade of studies conducted by the MdH researchers (FCT research project - Mapping Public Housing), now it is relatively easy to observe in our database some behaviours of the housing policies between 1910 and 1974 in Portugal. Although other issues may be raised, for this presentation I want focus attention on the success of single-family housing for a long time running until 1950.



In this chart [distribution and incidence of housing descriptors per year] we can see the ratio between the number of individual houses neighbourhood's (blue colour) and collective housing (green colour). Until the fifties, prevail the construction of single-family houses while after 1960 the phenomena were reversed. This happened due to the convergence of several events like, for example:

1 – In 1945 was published the Law “Programa de Casas de Renda Económica” (Low-income Houses) which provided rental regime and consider buildings of collective housing without limitation in the number of floors;

2/3 – In 1955/6. Municipalities (Lisbon and Porto) had its own housing policies. They develop plans for urban improvements.

4 – The Intensification of the war in the Portuguese colonies caused changes in the hierarchy of political and economic problems.

And yet, in 1955, a diploma, that has been forgotten by historiography, the Regime of Horizontal Property that introduces the possibility not only to lease an apartment but also ownership in the context of collective buildings. This is an important aspect because the intimate relationship between SINGLE FAMILY HOUSING/PROPERTY/COLLECTIVE HOUSING will fade.

After 1956, the divergence between the ideological option to build small - and the real need for more dwellings - leads to be accepted the construction of collective housing. However, this does not mean the total suspension of independents houses, which continued to represented a social control tool and a way of exalting the rural ideal. In the next photo from Porto illustrated in 1968 the journal article entitled it as “O Porto Moderno”.



We can remark cumulative processes of installing estates through different public promotion interventions:

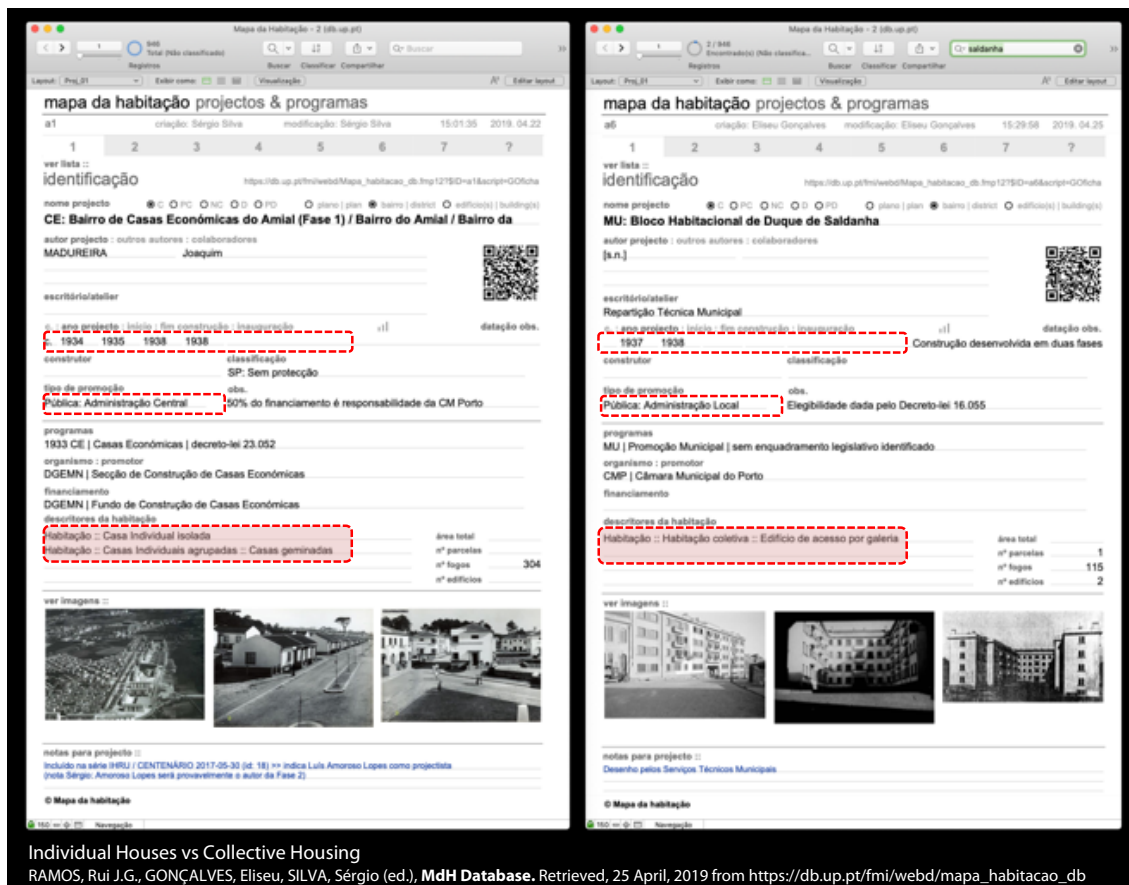


In 1934, the first phase of Amial Housing Estate, one of the first operation based on the Decree-Law 23052, 1933, “Affordable Houses Programme”. The architect responsible was Joaquim Madureira - the same technician that you will see on one of the following slides. In the background, built at the same time, the Azenha Affordable Houses Estate, also with detached and semi-detached houses. Ever, the use of very simple constructive forms with tile roofs and small regional ornaments.

Fifteen years after, the second phase of Amial Affordable Houses, making at those moment the Porto larger estate with four hundred dwellings. In 1958, as a result of the Council Improvements Planning, the Agra do Amial housing blocks. This policy of collective housing carries on in Carriçal - upper left corner in the image (1959). Finally, built between 1962 and 64, the modernist Regado residential set with seven hundred dwellings. This kind of stratification to host middle and poor classes, apparently, didn't obey to any general plan or another frame like transportation networks or any other urban infrastructure. The city grown up based on cheap land circumstances, using different models according to the holder's interests.

To underline this tension between ideology, reality and typology, it's important to refer an episode that opposed in 1937 the Porto Council to the Fascist Regime. The reason was the premature construction in Portugal of the Block of Saldanha - at the time, nicknamed red phalanstery. (right table in the next image from MdH DATABASE). The block was built. The same did not happen with another proposal, just as interesting as Saldanha Block, that did not pass-through Salazar's filter. I bring this other case because it illustrates exemplarily:

- 1) Social housing as an instrument for modern renovation of the historic city.
- 2) The correctness of the forms that some important architects used at the time, directly relating styles to programs.



Individual Houses vs Collective Housing

RAMOS, Rui J.G., GONÇALVES, Eliseu, SILVA, Sérgio (ed.), **MdH Database**. Retrieved, 25 April, 2019 from https://db.up.pt/fmi/webd/mapa_habitacao_db

It seems that the modern program of the blocks required "modern style", while the cultural and historical rooting of the single-house required the application of the "traditional style".

Another two projects produced in the same state service administration - the DGEMN – by some author at the same time – 1937. But, with distinct ways of understood the social, urban and architectonic problem of housing.

I will focus on a single question: why for almost half a century the option for the single family was exclusive? – And, what force justified this model when, from the second decade, all European states implemented massive solutions following the most advanced studies: mostly blocks. Salazar's belief on the perfect relation between ideal home and the “individualistic character of the Portuguese people”, or the importance given to family as ownership of a piece of land, were enough to explain the phenomena?

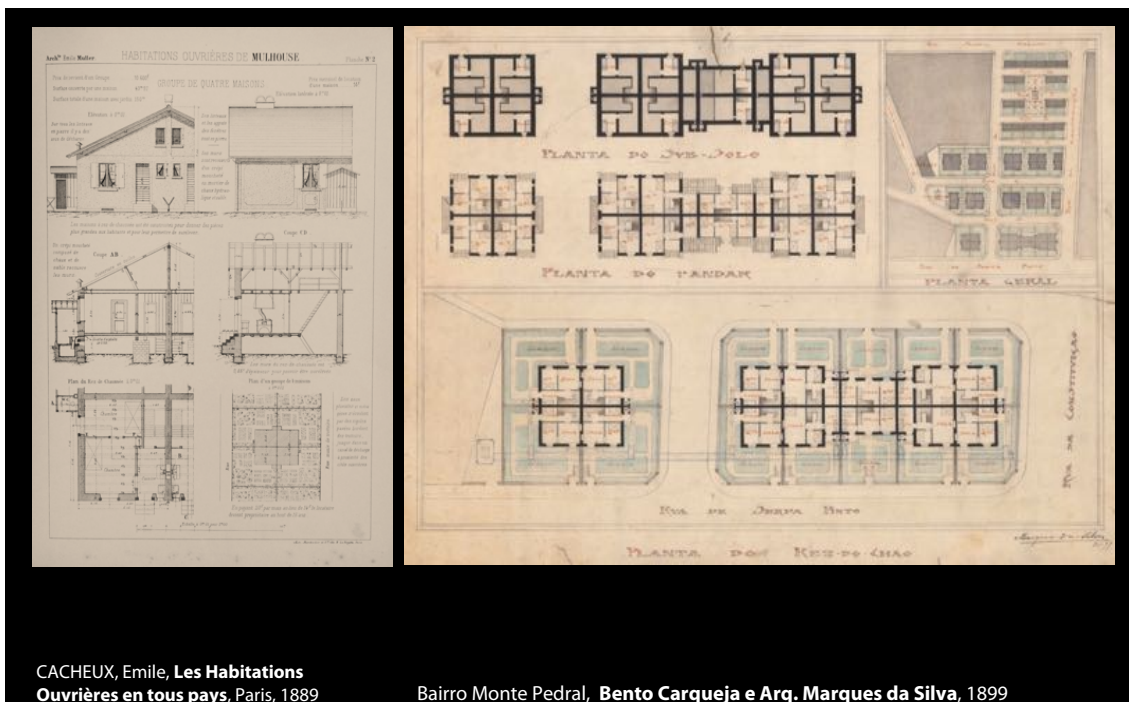
Frederick Le Play (1806-1882) was a French Catholic engineer –saint-simonist. He used the naturalists taxonomy methodology, applied it to the observation of certain communities, to develop a method of scientific analysis - Science Social. His reform program for society was supported in the statistical treatment of the data that can be consulted in his first book "Les Ouvriers Européens" (1855). The map above indicates the typology of families and the location that he enquiry.

Le Play promotes a medievalist religious ethic, based on the organization of work, family and moral education. Under a strong hierarchical organization triangulated between church - worker - boss, a rural morality will be applied to urban communities with the aim of achieving social peace and economic progress. Among others, the prescriptions of Le Play were the condition of the durable family and the individual ownership as a legacy. The strengthening, sedentary life and perpetuation of the family group and, consequently, the physical and emotional stability of the individuals it was in the interest of the great industrialists. Because of this, the individualized housing was the ideal solution to solve the precariousness of the workers housing. This positivist philosophy allowed strategies of reproduction of the labour force integrated in mechanisms of adjustment, moderation and control of the social space. Some industrials settled their business expansion in this kind of issues.

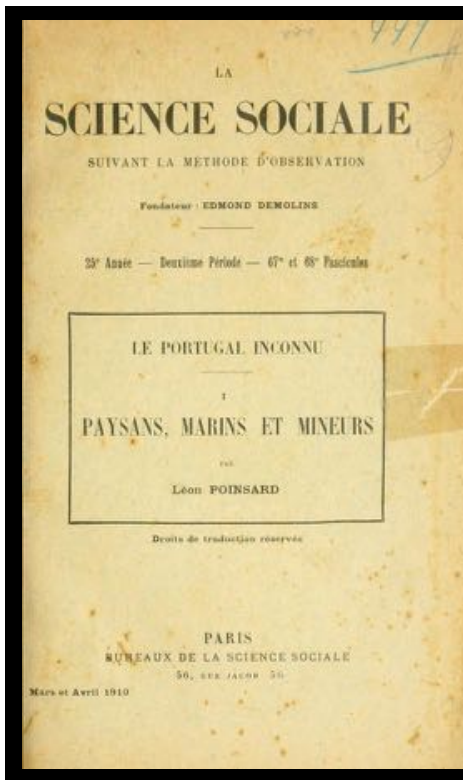
Was the case of Mulhouse – one of the great French textile pole. The architect Émile Muller – a polytechnic, lead the process and, we know he was a reader of the social-Christian texts of Le Play, Émile Muller re-evaluates the housing worker program in light of the simple native constructive forms. Muller's solution integrates technological innovations and constructive efficiency (comfortable- healthy – economic). Its success came to Paris Exhibition of 1889 where the Social Economy Group published it as a model to follow. It is also worth mentioning that, through the cultural and political influence that France had, some of the decisions of this group will be linked to the history of urban renewal, such as the famous Habitations à Bon Marche –HBM. The preference for the individual was explained in the eighteenth resolution of the Congrès International des Habitations à Bon Marché.

This information was mentioned, for example, by the editor of “A Construção Moderna” engineer Melo de Matos and others. But, what was the effective influence in Portugal of Le Play and, consequently, of the instrumentalization of the single-family house with garden?

In 1917, the Portuguese Society of Social Science was founded in Porto bring together enthusiasts of Le Play, among others, Mendes Correia (Professor of the University of Porto and future president of the Council) and Bento Carqueja, economist and administrator of the newspaper "O Comércio do Porto" - main responsible for the Monte Pedral Estate designed by architect Marques da Silva. The strong connection between Mulhouse and Monte Pedral affordable houses is known.



It's important refer that in 1909, before the fall of the Monarchy, the Social Science of Le Play constituted a reference for Portuguese Catholic sectors with, particularly influence in the Coimbra university through the Political Economy course. This academia and the king D. Manuel II himself invited Léon Poincard, disciple of Le Play, to do a research about workers families in Portugal. The study was published a year later with the First Republic regime already implemented.



“Les Portugais sont animés pour plutart d’un patriotisme à la fois très vif, très désintéressé et très liberal. [...] Si la sotte et niaise manie de ce qu’in pourrat nommer la **patriophobie** a gagné des adeptes en Portugal, leur propagande est encore fort discrète et ná que bien peu chances de succès. [...] Le roi **Dom Manuel II**, qui cherche avec ardeur tous les moyens d’être utile à son pays, voulut bien s’y intéresser lui-même.”

In, POINSARD, Léon - *Le Portugal inconnu*. Volume II. Paris: Bibliothèque de la Science Sociale, 1910, p. 4 e 5.

Another important detail to read the political importance of the single family house is allied to the fact that the future dictator António de Oliveira Salazar was professor at Coimbra and knew the research work of Poinsard. The portuguese historiographer Luís Torjal reports that Poinsard, the Christian sociologist, with his diagnosis of a mediocre provincial Portugal, "showed Salazar the way forward. He who protested against past, against fatalism ... against the crisis in which the Republic had left the country, defended the necessity of waking up the "sleeping race" through a "people's policy", where it was necessary to count on the 'new', the 'young men', in particular in the field of culture, the 'politics of the spirit' ".

In the period of the Military Dictatorship to the first years of the "Estado Novo", the Faculty of Law of Coimbra, in 1930, addressed a new invitation to Paul Descamps – another disciple of Le Play with the support of Oliveira Salazar, to teach a course on social method to complete the work of Poinsard.

In the fifties, the magazine "Les etudes Sociales" dedicated some notes about Salazar measures as we can see in some journal’s cuts.

To end the cycle of this presentation, I will back to the early analysis. For example, in the Caselas Estate (1933), near Lisbon, the church occupies the centre of the neighbourhood and its visible the preference for single houses with garden, displaced in the rural periphery.

In Portugal, the Monarchy ended, the Republic was implanted, and the corporatist regime of Estado Novo grow up. Although this troubled scenario of power struggles and political and economic changes - we observed a successively renewed affirmation of the single-family house as a value for moral and social balance.



Bibliografia:

- BAPTISTA, Luís Vicente – “Casa, família, ideologia: a emergência da política de ‘moradias unifamiliares’ em Portugal nos anos 30”. *Ler História*. Nº34. Lisboa: Associação de Actividades Científicas ISCTE, 1998
- CHOAY, Françoise – *L’urbanisme, utopies et réalités. Une anthologie*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1979 [1965]
- LAUWE, Paul-Henry Chombart de – *Famille et Habitation. I Sciences Humaines et Conceptions de l’Habitation*. Paris: Centre National de la Recherche, 1967 [1960]
- MOLEY, Christian – *Entre ville et logement. En quête d’espaces intermédiaires*. Paris: Ecole d’architecture de Paris - La Villette, 2003
- POINSARD, Léon - *Le Portugal inconnu. Volume II*. Paris: Bibliothèque de la Science Sociale, 1910



- RAYMOND, Henri – L'Architecture, les aventures spatiales de la Raison. Paris: CCI/ Centre Georges Pompidou, 1984
- TORJAL, Luís Reis – Estados Novos, Estado Novo. Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade de Coimbra, 2009

Nota biográfica:

Eliseu Gonçalves is an architect (Faculty of Architecture, University of Porto – FAUP 1994) and PHD in Architecture (FAUP 2015). António de Almeida Foundation Award in 1994.

Since 1999 he teaches at FAUP and, currently, he is Assistant Professor in the Integrated Master in Architecture.

He has been worked in Architecture and Urbanism, highlighting the requalification of the riverside fronts of Porto and Vila do Conde and the construction and rehabilitation of some residential buildings located mainly in the north of Portugal.

Within the scope of his interests and academic research, he has given special attention to the relationship between the Architecture and Construction from the following themes: Portuguese industrial architecture; the specialization of knowledge - architects and engineers in the passage from 'culture of compression' to 'culture of traction'; social housing, home infrastructures and modern comforts in the first half of the 20th century; energy, climate and architectural form within the framework of the "well-tempered house".

His PhD thesis was about working-class housing in Porto in the beginning of the last century (FCT Scholarship – Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia). Part of the research has been presented at conferences and journals.

Since 2009 he is a member of the research group Atlas da Casa - Housing architectural design and forms of dwelling - from the Architectural and Urbanism Research Center, CEAU/ FAUP. Currently he is the coordinator of the research project "Mapping Public Housing: a critical review of the State-subsidized residential architecture in Portugal (1910-1974)" – I&D/FCT: P2020-PTDC/CPC-HAT/1688/2014.