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“Welfare” Policies in the Portuguese Empire in Africa (1960s)

As políticas do “bem-estar” no império português em África (Anos 1960)

MIGUEL BANDEIRA JERÓNIMO*

ABSTRACT Following World War II (1939-1945), in different ways and to different extents, European imperial and colonial endeavors manifested dynamics of institutional, administrative, and ideological innovation, aimed at addressing the multiple obstacles to their legitimacy and continuity. Critical scrutiny of their *modi operandi* intensified, involving a growing number of individuals, groups, and networks, each operating in different contexts, with varying motivations and objectives. Pressures to renew or dismantle imperial and colonial solutions multiplied. As these changes unfolded, sometimes proactively and at other times reactively, imperial and colonial authorities conceived and developed new languages and repertoires of administration. These approaches were marked by arguments and plans for development and societal modernization, as well as new policies of difference, producing renewed mechanisms of regulation, and social, political, and economic inclusion and exclusion. This article analyzes a specific aspect of these

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transformations, namely, the emergence of “welfare colonialism” in the Portuguese colonial empire. It contextualizes this phenomenon within an international framework, which includes inter-imperial dynamics. The text mainly focuses on the “overseas province” of Angola, particularly on the field of labor, showing how developmentalist and “welfare” orientations were deeply conditioned by (and thus became useful for) security concerns.

KEYWORDS Colonialism, decolonization, development

RESUMO Após a Segunda Guerra Mundial (1939-1945), com modos e alcances diversos, os projectos imperiais e coloniais europeus revelaram dinâmicas de inovação institucional, administrativa e ideológica, visando responder aos múltiplos obstáculos que se colocavam à sua legitimidade e continuidade. O escrutínio crítico dos seus *modi operandi* intensificou-se, envolvendo um número crescente de indivíduos, grupos e redes operando em contextos diversos, com motivações e objectivos distintos. As pressões para a renovação ou para o desmantelamento das soluções imperiais e coloniais multiplicaram-se. Acompanhando essas transformações, por vezes antecipando-as, em outras agindo de um modo essencialmente reactivo, as autoridades imperiais e coloniais imaginaram e desenvolveram novos idiomas e repertórios de administração. Estes foram marcados por argumentários e planos de desenvolvimento e modernização societal e, ainda, por novas políticas da diferença, produzindo renovados mecanismos de regulação, inclusão e exclusão social, política e económica. Este texto analisa uma dessas manifestações, a emergência do “colonialismo de bem-estar” no império colonial português, colocando-o num contexto internacional relevante, incluindo de cariz interimperial. O texto aborda sobretudo a “província ultramarina” de Angola e foca-se, no essencial, no domínio do trabalho, mostrando como as orientações desenvolvimentistas e de “bem-estar” foram profundamente condicionadas por (e assim se tornaram úteis para) preocupações securitárias.

PALAVRAS-CHAVE Colonialismo, descolonização, desenvolvimento

REINVENTING COLONIALISM

In the period following World War II (1939-1945), in different ways and to varying extents, the various European imperial projects embarked on institutional, administrative, and ideological innovation processes, which aimed to respond to the multiple and growing challenges to their legitimacy at the colonial, metropolitan, and international levels (THOMAS; MOORE; BUTLER, 2008; THOMPSON; THOMAS, 2018). Already visible in the interwar period, albeit less intensely (MANELA, 2007; JERÓNIMO, 2015), the dynamics of surveillance and contestation of imperial *modi operandi* intensified after 1945. Clearly associated with previous manifestations of ethical and humanitarian denunciation of colonialism's "civilized savagery" (GRANT, 2005), these dynamics involved a growing number of individuals, groups, and networks operating in different contexts (colonial, metropolitan, transnational, and international) and with varying inspirations and objectives. As a result, numerous trans-territorial solidarity connections were forged, stretching from Algiers to Paris or from Bandung to London (BYRNE, 2016; GOEBEL, 2015; MATERA, 2015), reaching, of course, New York and Geneva, the capitals of internationalism. Trying to keep up with these transformations, sometimes anticipating them, sometimes acting in an essentially reactive way, the imperial and colonial authorities imagined and developed new languages and repertoires of administration, which were marked by arguments and plans for development and societal modernization (JERÓNIMO; PINTO, 2015), more often idealized than realized, and also by new policies of difference, producing renewed mechanisms of regulation and points of balance in the tension between social, political, cultural, and economic inclusion and exclusion that characterized all colonial situations (BURBANK; COOPER, 2010).

Varying according to particular administrative and political traditions and cultures, including colonial geographies, local circumstances and contingencies, and the often scarce human, institutional, and material resources, all European colonial empires undertook political, social, or economic restructuring projects. This process was in part

related to the post-war reconstruction of European societies (WHITE, 2011) and to the growing global competition stimulated by the emerging Cold War and the new challenges posed by the so-called Third World (WESTAD, 2005). The effects were felt in the metropolis, firstly in the colonial ministries, in the foreign affairs corridors, but also in a growing number of institutions, including those of academic nature, interested in colonial affairs. Naturally, they were also reflected in the overseas territories, where the “late colonial state” (DARWIN, 1999) promoted countless forms of intervention in local societies and interaction with their populations, some without precedent. On both levels, authorities sought to reinvent the languages and repertoires of domination, not necessarily resulting in a mitigation of the mechanisms of symbolic and material violence that historically marked modern European colonialism (THOMAS; CURLESS, 2018). This significant political reorientation of European colonial empires included a variation in perceptions, valuations, and expectations regarding the meaning and value of colonial projects (SHIPWAY, 2008, p. 12-17). Therefore, this was also reflected in the reformulation of foreign policies and the production of new ideologies of imperial justification, sometimes in an orchestrated manner, largely for consumption in international forums (JERÓNIMO; MONTEIRO, 2020a).

To an important extent, the (re)legitimization of imperial projects depended on the ability to forge colonial *ententes* (KENT, 1992) of varying geometry and cohesion, covering a considerable range of subjects. From this inter-imperial concertation, alternative visions of the concept of political self-determination would emerge (MONTEIRO, 2023). The same happened with new policies and models for education (JERÓNIMO; DORES, 2020), health (PEARSON, 2018), science (MATASCI, 2020; CASTELO; ÁGOAS, 2021) or social “welfare”, in a significant effort to influence the international parameters and standards that regulated these matters (JERÓNIMO, 2023).

One of the most obvious expressions of the above-mentioned historical dynamics, which decisively shaped the historical trajectory of late colonialism, was the valorization of development as a process,

indicator, and core end of imperial forms of government during those times (HODGE; HÖDL; KOPF, 2014). Late colonial developmentalism manifested itself on an eminently economic level but also in its specifically social, cultural, and (geo)political dimensions. Its historical course was closely linked to international contexts, dynamics, and institutions (UNGER, 2018), including those arising from the Cold War (LORENZINI, 2019). The period that some authors have termed the “development century” (MACEKURA; MANELA, 2018) was notoriously marked by colonial realities, policies, and situations, visible in discourses, programs, and imaginaries or in the profusion of development plans created by imperial and colonial administrations. The gradual, albeit bumpy, and increasingly intrusive inclusion of colonial or “non-autonomous” territories in the scope of the United Nations and its specialized agencies, from the International Labor Organization (ILO) (MAUL, 2019; PLATA-STENGER, 2020) to the World Health Organization (WHO) (BONOHO, 2022), has both reflected and contributed to this relationship between colonialism and development.

There is a notable commitment to planning developmental interventions in colonial contexts in this period. Although the genealogy of these phenomena goes back to at least the inter-war period (HODGE, 2007), with a conspicuous international dimension, especially around the League of Nations (RODRÍGUEZ GARCÍA; RODOGNO; KOZMA, 2016), their importance increased in the post-war period. It manifests itself in London, with the Colonial Development and Welfare Acts (1940 and 1945); in Paris, with the Fonds d’Investissement pour le Développement Économique et Social [Investment Fund for Economic and Social Development] and the Fonds d’Équipement Rural et de Développement Économique et Social [Rural Equipment and Economic and Social Development Fund] (1946 and 1949); in Brussels, with the Plan décennal du Congo belge [Ten-Year Plan for Belgian Congo] (since 1949). The same happened in Lisbon with the successive Planos do Fomento [Plans for Development] (since 1953). There were several planned schemes for interventions and economic and social engineering. These were more imagined than implemented, more ambitious on paper than in practice,

generating countless unforeseen consequences. However, they were an essential component of the history of late colonialism. These programs inspired the form in which the authorities anticipated or responded to the challenges of the post-war period, be it those arising from the unfolding and intensification of international critical scrutiny or resulting from the explosion of social and political demands in local contexts on the outskirts of empires, sometimes leading to open and organized forms of conflict.

One of the notorious consequences of the coexistence of conflictual dynamics, sometimes of a violent aspect, and developmental policies was the emergence of manifestations and modalities of repressive developmentalism. The cross-fertilization of security and development languages and repertoires was remarkable and had repercussions in all the European colonial empires. The ways of thinking about order and security in colonial contexts, whether related to violent and widespread conflicts or not, were characterized by the growing mobilization of developmentalist arguments, especially at the rhetorical level, but also at the practical level. In a similar sense, albeit with differences, the ways of thinking about development, as a plural project not reducible to economic dimensions, were also shaped by security considerations. In specific contexts, these dynamics significantly conditioned military decisions (JERÓNIMO, 2018). This was visible in the Portuguese case (JERÓNIMO, 2017), as in the French and British cases (FEICHTINGER, 2017).

The emergence of languages and policies of a certain “welfare colonialism”, slow in some cases, more accelerated in others, was thus one of the defining aspects of late colonialism (MIDGLEY; PIACHAUD, 2011), intersecting and relating with other logics and concerns, from imagining ways of managing “difference” and inequality to formulating security and repressive strategies. Far beyond the generic meaning attributed to it by James Scott (1998, p. 97), this emergence refers to a diverse set of individuals and institutions who, with varying and sometimes contrasting motivations and purposes, formulated social policies and services, avowedly aimed at transforming the conditions of existence of colonial populations, especially the so-called “indigenous” ones.

While the actions of “social uplift” and the provision of social services did not live up to the enthusiastic rhetoric that promoted them, the gradual institutionalization, in the public administration and beyond, of a “welfare colonialism” did not fail to significantly mark the political and bureaucratic life of the European empires in their final phase.

As has been written about the British case – but it can easily be applied to other empires – the idea of “welfare” became one of the “ruling compassions” of late colonialism (LEWIS, 2001). In certain aspects, this was an extension of debates that had marked European society since at least the late 1800s, associated with an idea of the welfare state and the redefinition of its relations with ecclesiastical and missionary care structures. The old and new debates were always conditioned by arguments about the need to adjust norms and expectations to local conditions, in a process strongly marked by discriminatory considerations of a racial or cultural nature, sometimes perceived as expressing unbridgeable differences. The rhetoric and promises of universality have always had limited application in a colonial context, as have the resources available to implement social policies and services. Colonial clauses – the set of restrictions on the application of “universal” norms and rules to colonial contexts due to their alleged societal characteristics – were abundant, greatly restricting the application scope of various social and economic policies, from work to education and health, and limiting the exercise and claiming of certain political and social rights. The globalization of those rights was highly circumscribed and selective (KOTT; DROUX, 2013).

The issue of “welfare” in colonial situations was no exception, in such that the policies designed for this purpose, while reproducing some features discussed and applied in the metropolises, were subject to numerous adaptations to what were considered the specificities of the local contexts, limiting their scope. In any case, “welfare” policies focusing on colonial areas grew in number and range. On the one hand, as noticed above, they aimed to mitigate internal and external contestation by seeking a renewed legitimization of colonial empires. For this purpose, the formal alignment of colonial “welfare” norms and policies with international standards could be beneficial. On the other

hand, they dragged on longer, albeit significantly transforming, previously formulated responses to the multiple “social problems” that had marked Western societies decades earlier. Based on a teleological reading of social change, in line with the historical trajectory of Western societies, colonial contexts were seen as witnessing dynamics of accelerated transformation, aiming to respond to the undesirable effects of urbanization (e.g., “de-tribalization” or “juvenile delinquency”) or (proto)industrialization (e.g., the transformation of the labor sphere and contractual relations). Thus, “welfare” policies acquired a second purpose of stabilizing the local social and political order, enhancing the strategies for preserving imperial projects.

As with other aspects of late colonialism history, these “welfare” policies were shaped by increasingly institutionalized and regular inter-imperial and inter-colonial cooperation processes. In this regard, the role of the Commission for Technical Cooperation in Africa South of the Sahara (CCTA) and the Institut International des Civilisations Différentes [International Institute of Differing Civilizations] (INCIDI) (WAGNER, 2022) should be highlighted. The Inter-African Conferences of 1953, in Lourenço Marques (Mozambique), and 1957, in Tananarive (Madagascar), are just two examples of initiatives organized by the CCTA (COMISSÃO DE COOPERAÇÃO TÉCNICA NA ÁFRICA AO SUL DO SAARA, 1953; 1957). Along with numerous intergovernmental meetings and internal debates, these initiatives placed the problem of “welfare” at the center of the colonial (and imperial) political and social imagination. Mobilizing a growing number of specialists and institutions, the debates on the concept of “welfare” concept and its usefulness promoted by the CCTA were important in the formulation of concrete policies by each imperial and colonial administration. These debates dealt with topics as diverse as medical and social care, nutrition and home economics, mutual and cooperative associations, the role of women in society, social service institutions, housing, and working conditions. INCIDI was also relevant in this regard. Following previous debates, an INCIDI meeting in 1951 sought to compile various

“cultural, economic and social development plans for insufficiently developed territories” (colonial territories, in other words) to facilitate forms of technical cooperation and standard solutions (INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DES CIVILISATIONS DIFFÉRENTES, 1951). Two years later, the issue of development in rural contexts brought together numerous experts and authorities with a shared purpose: intensifying the circulation, comparison, and transfer of ideas, data, and intervention repertoires (INSTITUT INTERNATIONAL DES CIVILISATIONS DIFFÉRENTES, 1953). In both cases, along with others that could be mentioned, the “welfare” issue was evaluated, compared, and thought of from multiple perspectives: social and economic, for sure, but also political and diplomatic (JERÓNIMO, 2023).

This text explores some of these problems and historical processes, focusing on the Portuguese case, especially Angola, at a particular moment, to highlight how the Portuguese imperial and colonial authorities interacted with the arguments and repertoires of “welfare colonialism”. The main focus of analysis is the field of labor, especially so-called “rural labor” and “migrant labor”. The respective institutions and regulatory mechanisms are addressed, showing how developmentalism and “welfare” orientations were deeply conditioned by security concerns, thus increasing their usefulness for political and military decision-makers bent on making the empire persevere. The respective institutions and regulatory mechanisms are addressed, showing how developmentalism and “welfare” orientations were deeply conditioned by security concerns, thus increasing their usefulness for political and military decision-makers bent on making the empire persevere. Firstly, the plural uses of “welfare” in late Portuguese colonialism will be briefly discussed. Secondly, the empirical core of this text will show how the labor issue offered various opportunities for the cross-fertilization of security, economic, and social purposes, including those related to the concept of “welfare”.

ON THE INSPIRATIONS AND USES OF “WELFARE”

As in other empires, the emergence, institutionalization, and development of “welfare colonialism” in the Portuguese colonial empire resulted partly from the need to respond to specific challenges. These included the need to control and “conquer” populations, including in the war context, from 1961 onwards, or to manage the marked socio-economic and ethnic-racial asymmetries that characterized colonial societies, whether in cities or rural areas. Besides these challenges, there was growing international pressure to bring the Portuguese empire-state aligned with international norms and inter-imperial parameters. Although the first Plano de Fomento, from 1953, did not pay special attention to social and “welfare” issues, this gradually changed in the following plans. Even in the years regarding the first plan, other signs of interest in “welfare” issues can be identified. In January 1956, a “rural welfare” commission was set up in Angola. In the same year, the Centro de Estudos Políticos e Sociais da Junta de Investigações do Ultramar [Center for Political and Social Studies of the Overseas Research Board] (CEPS-JIU) was established, within which a Missão de Estudos de Atracção das Grandes Cidades e do Bem-Estar Rural no Ultramar [Mission for the Study of the Attraction of Big Cities and Rural Welfare Overseas] was carried out (CASTELO, 2014, p. 525-527). The unforeseen and unwanted effects of urban “attraction” and the dynamics of “de-tribalization” were feared (CURTO; CRUZ, 2013), reproducing old concerns and the fears of foreign colonial administrations.

Solutions aimed at mitigating some of the gravest aspects of these social dynamics, promoting “welfare”, both in urban and rural contexts, were gaining ground and merited considerable research (SOARES, 1961). In the rural context, the formulation of “welfare” policies sought to limit the exodus to the cities and prevent or respond to manifestations of local “social instability”, some of which might be channeled into more structured and politically relevant forms of protest. The solution also focused on controlling the workforce by hindering workers from migrating to other colonies, not just the cities, and “stabilizing” the recruitment

of human resources. The scarcity and volatility of available labor was a constant problem, and “global social action” was urgent. Guidelines in this regard were frequently discussed and promoted in the CCTA, which was explicitly recognized by the Portuguese authorities. A suitable and selectively appropriated model could be found in the Belgian Congo, where the issue had long occupied local leaders and studies had been carried out. Both the guidelines and the studies that served as references had to be adapted to the ethnic differences and “different types and degrees of civilization”¹ existing in Portuguese territories, as the report of the study mission stated (CENTRO DE ESTUDOS POLÍTICOS E SOCIAIS DA JUNTA DE INVESTIGAÇÕES DO ULTRAMAR, 1958, p. i-iii). Despite the invocation of supposed reformist progressivism, in the Portuguese case, the gradual affirmation of “welfare colonialism” was still strongly marked by the persistence of a racialized politics of difference, which found relatively efficient legal support in the indigenous regime until 1961, when it was abolished. However, its end did not entail the disappearance of these same politics of difference, but their reconfiguration based on diverse concepts and norms.

Despite the obvious limits to the effective implementation of “welfare colonialism”, which could either be the result of scarce resources and little institutional determination or the persistence of racist worldviews, it did not fail to permeate the political and social visions (and imaginations) of the Portuguese administration. In part, this was due to a gradual appropriation – selective and instrumental, to be sure – of developmentalism and welfare arguments circulating internationally amid the growing institutionalization of colonial *ententes* especially. The CCTA’s initiatives had various effects. At the 1953 conference on “rural welfare” in Lourenço Marques, mentioned above, the Portuguese representatives addressed topics such as the “economic factors of rural welfare”, credit and social assistance, or “indigenous” rural housing. The controversies over the methods and objectives of “rural welfare” also echoed examples debated in an inter-imperial context since the

1 Freely translated: “ação social global”; “diferentes tipos e graus de civilização”.

late 1940s (in some cases revisiting old discussions), such as the virtues of “basic education”, “community development”, or solutions such as *paysannats*, schemes for reorganizing agrarian spaces promoted in the Belgian Congo (COMISSÃO DE COOPERAÇÃO TÉCNICA NA ÁFRICA AO SUL DO SAARA, 1953).

At other CCTA events, dealing with work, education, or health issues, concerns about “welfare” also proliferated and constituted a further incentive for the Portuguese representatives. By way of example, the debates that marked the inter-African conferences on work and their significant report were characterized by reflections on “well-being”: on accommodation quality, the hygienic conditions of workplaces, the compensation paid or not to women workers, pensions, trade unionism, “psychosocial” orientations or “the human factors of productivity” (COMISSÃO DE COOPERAÇÃO TÉCNICA NA ÁFRICA AO SUL DO SAARA, 1958; COOPER, 1996, p. 361-382). To think about colonial labor was to think about the question of “well-being”. And vice versa. With all the political calculations that such an operation required and allowed.

Integration into interimperial organizations, which was fruitful in many cases, was accompanied by a marked interest in the languages and proposals debated at the United Nations and some of its specialized agencies, especially after Portugal joined that international organization in 1955. This interest was partially stimulated by the need to adapt to a growing set of institutional responsibilities. On the other hand, it was sparked by a series of critical situations related to concrete colonial realities, invoked in the realm of discussions on racial issues or economic inequality, including the labor issue or even broadly the legitimacy of human rights. The discrepancy between the rhetoric and propaganda used by the authorities and the realities that could be witnessed and demonstrated in the colonies was patent. The same happened with the relationship between the existing legal frameworks and various international standards, starting with the proper indigenous regime (JERÓNIMO; MONTEIRO, 2020b). The dialogue with languages and proposals around development and “welfare”, even if solely instrumental, was meaningful in many ways.

Spending on education, health, and “welfare” rose considerably with the second Plano de Fomento between 1959 and 1964: 14% and 6% of the total budget in Mozambique and Angola, respectively. Of course, this did not mean that criticism of the lack of investment in social issues died down. In the 1950s, comparisons with other colonial situations did not favor the Portuguese territories: for example, in the British colonies, in 1951, the relative amount devoted to this type of expenditure was around 43%, and in the French colonial territories, between 1954 and 1957, it was 20.5%. The Belgian Plan Décennal in the Congo projected similar figures to the French (UNITED NATIONS, 1959, p. 245-246; HAILEY, 1957, p. 1325-1326). The unfavorable comparison was still a reality but was gradually attenuated (without disregarding the ongoing wave of decolonization). Despite the meager investment, which was not always clearly and consistently applied, concerns about social issues, “welfare”, and development intensified. The growing turbulence resulting from the events of 1961 in Angola (CURTO; CRUZ; FURTADO, 2016) and the international repercussions they generated, including the UN General Assembly subcommittee set up that year to study the situation in the territory (SANTOS, 2017), certainly contributed to this. The very next year, an inspector from the Ministry of Overseas Territories considered that successful “social action” was a necessary and fundamental condition for the “existence” of the Portuguese state, which since the Constitutional Revision of 1951 had been considered a “pluricontinental” and “multiracial” political unit, without colonies, only “overseas provinces” [“*províncias ultramarinas*”] (NETO, 1962, p. 57).

Arguments about “welfare” and development had become ubiquitous. Doctrines and proposals on “rural welfare”, “community development”, “social promotion”, or “rural development” were bandied about, echoing, not always accurately, debates in other latitudes. Despite identifiable differences, these doctrines and proposals combined relevant aspects beneficial for preserving and governing the colonial empire. Firstly, for example, they facilitated technical and scientific interventions in economic and social matters seen as very useful for increasing agricultural productivity or fostering new forms of production

and organization (e.g., cooperativism). Secondly, they promoted “social education”, that is, the education of rural populations in matters concerning individual and collective social responsibilities, contributing to the desired process of acceptance and facilitation of socio-economic change, “progress”, and “development”. In societies usually dominated by “tradition”, social engineering was a challenge to be approached cautiously, not least for fear of its unpredictable consequences. Thirdly, such doctrines and proposals were seen as fundamental to the effectiveness of policies aimed at political, economic, and social “integration”. In addition, they had a “preventive nature”, reducing the likelihood of manifestations against the established order, or even a palliative one, mitigating existing dissatisfaction. In all of them, “scientific and systematic” psychological intervention was seen as crucial. The combination of economic advantages, social influence and control, and political convenience made each of these doctrines and proposals very appealing to many players in different sectors of the Portuguese administration (SOARES, 1961, p. 17; ARAÚJO, 1964, p. 143; SOUSA, 1964, p. 294).

THE UTILITIES OF WORK

Following the already mentioned historical dynamics, namely the intensification of critical scrutiny and international pressure on the *modus operandi* of Portuguese late colonialism, the authorities passed a series of laws aimed at reshaping colonial policies in September 1961 (KEESE, 2003; CURTO; CRUZ, 2015; JERÓNIMO; MONTEIRO, 2023). The legislation mandated the suppression of the indigenous regime and the creation of the Juntas Provinciais de Povoamento [Provincial Settlement Boards]. The latter involved concerns about socio-spatial control and the socio-economic development of the colonial, settler, and “indigenous” populations. In December of the same year and April 1962, other measures were taken along the same lines. Firstly, the Institutos do Trabalho, Previdência e Acção Social [Institutes of Labor, Welfare and Social Action] (ITPAS) in Angola and Mozambique replaced the administrative bodies of the “indigenous affairs” in operation. Secondly,

the publication of the new Rural Labor Code brought an end, *de jure*, to forms of forced labor – one of the most important causes of local protest and international criticism (MONTEIRO, 2018).

The law creating the institutes established a new approach to working conditions and relations, especially regarding social security and “welfare”. Among other responsibilities, the ITPAS’s labor department had to investigate living conditions, working relationships, hygiene, and safety of workers and their families. The social action services – another department of ITPAS – had to propose measures to guarantee and boost “social standards” and to protect workers from the challenges associated with the labor market and those arising from ongoing social changes. In turn, the welfare section was supposed to coordinate and supervise the “welfare” and social security instruments (e.g., pensions) in operation. The legislation also set up a labor and welfare inspectorate, which, among other tasks, had to check that the practices of companies, both public and private, complied with the new legislation and the new objectives, going obviously beyond the strict field of labor. As the decree made explicit, the “success of colonial social policy” depended on the new administrative framework. On paper, the consequent concern with “welfare”, in *lato sensu* and *stricto sensu*, was decisive.²

The new Rural Labor Code was regarded as a set of tools for “social justice” in the so-called “overseas provinces”. Its main objective was to supervise the “psychological evolution” of African workers. The disruptive impact on the “spirit of the worker” of the “regularity of salaried work” and the “terrible notion of time” needed to be closely monitored, prevented, or mitigated. “Real social engineering” efforts were needed, which required “social workers”, who were crucial to the success of the new social and labor policies and, consequently, the desired political and

2 PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 44.111, de 21 de dezembro de 1961. Institui nas províncias ultramarinas institutos do trabalho, previdência e acção social; Cria os Institutos do Trabalho, Previdência e Acção Social de Angola e Moçambique. Available at: <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto/44111-1961-184483>. Access on: 25 Sep. 2023.

diplomatic gains.³ On the other hand, as indicated by the President of the ITPAS of the Province of Mozambique, Manuel M. Neves, regarding the new rural labor code, “certain difficulties of interpretation were to be expected, some real, others apparent, of some precepts contained therein”, and it was essential to “indicate simple rules of procedure” that would not create “any difficulties for employers”, including those of a bureaucratic nature.⁴ For example, the clarification of the law concerning medical care issues for workers and their families was not forgotten. Years later, in 1970 and 1971, at the height of the military conflict, a summary of speeches at the Legislative Council of Mozambique stated that the “improvements in salaries for social supplements” had not resulted in “a counterpart in productivity”, and “family allowances” had had “antagonistic effects” and should be borne by entities other than employers.⁵ It is important to emphasize that much remains to be done in this regard, that of a finer and more documented understanding of the different uses and effects of the new legal framework, which certainly

3 PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 44.309, de 27 de abril de 1962. Aprova o Código do Trabalho Rural, para vigorar nas províncias de Cabo Verde, Guiné, S. Tomé e Príncipe, Angola, Moçambique e Timor; Revoga o Código do Trabalho Indígena, aprovado pelo Decreto nº 16.199, e os regulamentos provinciais do mesmo código, assim como todos os regulamentos, portarias e demais diplomas publicados em cada uma das mencionadas províncias em regulamentação complementar daquele código e as instruções e toda a mais legislação em contrário. Available at: <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto/44309-1962-575768>. Access on: 25 Sept. 2023. Freely translated: “justiça social”; “províncias ultramarinas”; “evolução psicológica”; “espírito do trabalhador”; “regularidade do trabalho assalariado”; “terrível noção do tempo”; “verdadeira engenharia social”; “trabalhadores sociais”.

4 FUNDAÇÃO MÁRIO SOARES (FMS), Lisbon. *Circular do Instituto do Trabalho, Previdência e Acção Social da Província de Moçambique*, 24 Oct. 1962. Fundo António Rita-Ferreira, Actividade Profissional, pasta 10474.035. Available at: <http://www.casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=10474.035>. Access on: 25 Sept. 2023. Freely translated: “certas dificuldades de interpretação, reais umas, outras aparentes, de alguns preceitos nele contidos”; “indicar regras simples de procedimento”; “quaisquer dificuldades às entidades empregadoras”.

5 FMS, Lisbon. *Conselho Legislativo: Intervenções sobre problemas de trabalho*, 4 Mar. 1971. Fundo António Rita-Ferreira, Actividade Profissional, pasta 10474.027. Available at: <http://www.casacomum.org/cc/visualizador?pasta=10474.027>. Access on: 25 Sept. 2023. Freely translated: “melhorias em salários de complementos sociais”; “contrapartida na produtividade”; “abonos de família”; “efeitos antagónicos”.

varies from colony to colony. Therefore, crucial attention should be directed to the not-always-so-obvious forms of impact of such measures or lack thereof (GUTHRIE, 2018, p. 128-148).

“Social workers” were in short supply. In Angola, only the Instituto de Educação e Serviço Social – Pio XII [Institute of Education and Social Service – Pius XII], created in November 1961, could significantly contribute to training and providing minimally qualified technicians. The need for “social” technicians intensified greatly with the effects of the events of March 1961, marked by the uprising in northern Angola. In the aftermath, several professionals were mobilized from the metropolis by the Comissão Provincial de Auxílio às Populações Deslocadas [Provincial Commission for Aid to Displaced Populations], created in May 1961. As can be read in the decree that encouraged the creation of institutes of education and social service in official or private education in the overseas provinces, it was this Commission that had formulated an “instant request” for the formation of “schools to prepare social action agents” in Angola, capable of dealing with the situation. An “immediate solution” was considered so “urgent” that an “emergency social action course for social work agents, family agents, and child education agents” was set up, lasting just one year, and constituting the embryo for the institute.⁶ Strongly linked to Catholic circles (including the Union Catholique de Service Social [Catholic Union of Social Service]), the institute aimed to provide the most qualified social workers to various public and private institutions and organizations, from the Mocidade Portuguesa [Portuguese Youth] and the Juntas Provinciais de

6 PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 44.159, de 18 janeiro de 1962. Permite e regula a criação, dentro dos quadros do ensino oficial ou particular das províncias ultramarinas, de institutos de educação e serviço social. Available at: <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto/44159-1962-520198>. Access on: 25 Sept. 2023; ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO ULTRAMARINO (AHU), Lisbon. *Instituto de Educação e Serviço Social Pio XII: 10 Anos de actividade, 1963-1973*. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067. Freely translated: “solicitação instante”; “escolas de preparação de agentes de acção social”; “solução imediata”; “premente”; “curso de emergência de acção social para agentes de trabalho social, agentes familiares e agentes de educação infantil”.

Povoamento to large companies such as Diamang and Companhia Mineira do Lobito [Lobito Mining Company].

Naturally, ITPAS was one of the institutions with which the Institute had to collaborate actively, perhaps even the most important one. From the outset, one of the institute's most important aims was to participate decisively in the pursuit of community development programs and in monitoring the social dimensions of work. The future "social workers" had to take several fundamental modules, starting with a course in behavioral psychology, while short courses for Family Assistants were also offered alongside more comprehensive training. These were to prepare professionals to promote the "rural family", working mainly by educating women and offering classes on health education, notions of welfare and domestic economy, the status of women in African society, childcare, and ancient beliefs that hinder community development, among others. Some of these courses were associated with the lasting belief in the importance of investing in native staff training. As one of the institute's activity reports declared: "the specific situations of the overseas territories" required "specific, local preparation". It also promoted sessions about "audiovisual methods" to transmit values and ideas more effectively. Needles, pencils, sewing and embroidery threads, rulers, erasers, and ballpoint pens were some of the items sold to the students.⁷

As the Rural Labor Code declared, guaranteeing "sufficient and rational food, hygienic and comfortable housing, a fair wage in line with the possibilities of the company and the family needs of the worker"⁸ was not enough. Psychosocial interventions were indispensable. Creating itinerant teams to offer such services was another measure adopted

7 AHU, Lisbon. *Instituto Pio XII para ITPAS*, June. 1963. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Acção Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965; *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1968. Cx. 411, anexos de AHU-ACL-MU-DGEDU-RCM-A17. Freely translated: "a especificidade de situações dos territórios ultramarinos"; "uma preparação específica"; "métodos audiovisuais".

8 PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 44.309, de 27 de abril de 1962. Freely translated: "alimento suficiente e racional, habitação higiénica e confortável, salário justo e equacionado com as possibilidades das empresas e as necessidades familiares do trabalhador".

then. Providing information on “modern” home economics and family hygiene procedures, disseminating new agricultural techniques and productivity plans, and offering a modicum of education in rural areas (which had virtually no educational services), these teams would, in theory, play a decisive role, including in the labor sphere (JERÓNIMO; PINTO, 2015, p. 67). “Social workers” were also considered crucial in facilitating the desired collaboration of rural populations, without which “social promotion, or rural well-being, or community development” were unattainable. In the absence of these and other measures, which guaranteed “freedom of work and its fair remuneration” and “the best possible working conditions and social security”, one of the greatest needs and one of the most difficult challenges of the colonial project – ensuring that “the workforce comes spontaneously” – was difficult to achieve.⁹ Without such workforce, economic prosperity was unfeasible. But these measures were also aimed at managing the potentially damaging effects of the socio-economic changes underway, including in the labor sphere. Eventually, the consequences of legally abolishing several forms of forced labor were perceived as problematic in a context marked by numerous pressures, and the possible negative social, economic, and political consequences were evident.

Therefore, the 1962 Code laid down various obligations and rights relating to health, housing, hygiene, nutrition, and clothing issues. Companies had several responsibilities about these topics, and, on paper, they were, or should have been, under the disciplinary reach of ITPAS. Article 304 of the Code was clear about the need to routinely reinforce such obligations and rights, which had to be systematically scrutinized. Regarding the chapter on “workers’ welfare”, the instructions pointed to the compulsory combat against alcoholism, venereal diseases, tuberculosis, and the practice of games of chance. The imperative need

9 PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 44.309, de 27 de abril de 1962. Freely translated: “trabalhadores sociais”; “promoção social, ou o bem-estar rural, ou o desenvolvimento comunitário”; “liberdade do trabalho”; “justa remuneração”; “melhores condições possíveis de trabalho e segurança social”; “a mão de obra aflua espontaneamente”.

to ensure individual hygiene, medical care, sports, and “attendance at official schools” was also decreed.¹⁰ As was often the case, there was a marked lack of synchrony between the decree and concrete practice due to a shortage of resources and determination or various forms of resistance, starting with many bosses. The scale of the territory, the number of cases to be regulated and supervised, and the weaknesses of the colonial state’s administrative implementation did not help either. Nonetheless, the possibility of demonstrating this discrepancy was another tool that could be used to criticize and even denounce the regime in a context of accentuated internationalization of the colonial question (JERÓNIMO; MONTEIRO, 2020c).

In June and July 1962, the creation of the Fundo de Acção Social no Trabalho [Social Action at Work Fund] (FAST) was legislated in Angola and Mozambique, and the measure was extended to the other “provinces” in 1964. The budget should be used to promote educational, socio-economic, and recreational activities that would improve workers’ living standards.¹¹ A 1964 report on FAST’s activities in Angola summarized the main problems and results since its creation:¹² if, on the one hand, the scarcity of financial resources and income decrease hampered specific projects, on the other hand, the gradual achievement of some fundamental objectives was celebrated, at least according to those in charge. The “propaganda and mentalization” efforts of the workers continued as planned, with four social centers in urban, suburban, and rural contexts already up and running. The financing of housing for workers had also begun, mainly through the provision of loans to improve

10 PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 44.309, de 27 de abril de 1962. Freely translated: “bem-estar dos trabalhadores”; “frequência de escolas oficiais”.

11 For Angola: Portaria Ministerial nº 4, de 30 de junho de 1962. For Moçambique: Portaria Ministerial nº 2, de 19 de julho de 1962. See: PORTUGAL. Decreto nº 45.928, de 16 de setembro de 1964. Regula o funcionamento e atribuições do Fundo de Acção Social no Trabalho a criar nas províncias ultramarinas. Available at: <https://diariodarepublica.pt/dr/detalhe/decreto/45928-1964-537653>. Access on: 25 Sept. 2023.

12 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Rodrigo José Baião*, 5 Feb. 1965. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Acção Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965. Freely translated: “propaganda e mentalização”; “social, político e económico”; “cantinas-refeitórios”; “política alimentar”.

existing buildings, with a “social, political and economic” impact that was considered broad, even generating income. Two workers’ hostels with a capacity for 200 people (including workers and their families) were already up and running, one in Salazar (Cazengo, in Cuanza Norte province) and another in Quibala (Cuanza Sul province). The inns were also seen as a rewarding experience, even from a financial point of view, which is why three more were already planned for 1965. Two existing “canteen-refectories” were also valued, showing that collaboration with companies in a “food policy” should be further stimulated. Finally, social action initiatives aimed at the workers’ children were underway through various subsidies and the operation of a nursery and a milk dispensary. An additional plan was to hold summer camps in 1965.

As for the “social workers” on the job, the Instituto Pio XII had already made 22 technicians available, instructed at courses organized and financed by FAST. Four of them had been placed at the Companhia de Açúcar de Angola [Angola Sugar Company], near the recruitment areas for “indigenous” workers, six at the Companhia do Manganês de Angola [Angola Manganese Company], and eight were directly linked to projects under FAST’s responsibility – for example, the course for child monitors at the Instituto Pio XII or in social centers. Also highlighted was the purchase of a 35-mm filming equipment, which was fundamental to the “mentalization” policy, alongside the creation of libraries. By 1964, there would be 30 of them, with 5,160 volumes. Two “films” had already been produced, one on food policy and the other on housing policy. When the report was written, the camera was on loan to the Liga Nacional Africana [African National League], a key institution in the history of Angola’s nationalism. As the rapporteur, head of ITPAS’ social action services, stated, the strategic priorities were economic promotion, institutional integration, and cultural training. “Recreational action” was awaiting more funding.¹³

13 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Rodrigo José Baião*, 5 Feb. 1965. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Acção Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965. Freely translated: “acção recreativa”.

In the same year of 1964, another report by the Director of ITPAS, Afonso Mendes, indicated that, despite the “scantiness” of revenues, they were studying how to intensify the policies underway, for example, by creating more social centers in urban, suburban and rural areas, but also in association with companies. Concerning the work done by the Fundação Nacional para a Alegria no Trabalho [National Foundation for Joy at Work] (FNAT) in the metropolis, Afonso Mendes stated that social centers were fundamental to building “a pro-corporatist institutional order” among workers, fostering “common interests” and the “satisfaction of various needs”, including the “desire for association”, all in a controlled context. Despite the notorious weaknesses regarding human and financial resources, the report also celebrated the results already achieved in housing and inns for workers, canteens (the one in Luanda was expected to approach 4,000 meals a day), and summer camps. The availability of more qualified workers from the Instituto Pio XII was another appreciated factor.¹⁴

However, the management of the Instituto Pio XII often stressed the shortage of students and future players in the social sphere in a colonial context. “We are still at a pioneering stage”, they wrote in 1968, eight years after the institute’s creation. That situation justified the dependence on “loans” from the metropolis, in other words, the use of human resources from mainland Portugal, who were less prepared to deal with the demands of the colonial situation (in 1969/1970 no metropolitan staff were employed, despite the glaring lack of psychologists). The board also highlighted the enormous challenges facing trained “social workers”, from the scarcity of resources from a “technical, economic and human point of view” to, crucially, the ethnic and geographical diversity, but also the cultural and economic differences, of the target

14 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Afonso Mendes*, 30 Jan. 1965. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Acção Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965. Freely translated: “exiguidade”; “um ordenamento institucional pro-corporativo”; “interesses comuns”; “satisfação de diversas necessidades”; “desejo associativo”.

populations, who were generally not “socially integrated” and were seen as more challenging and problematic.¹⁵

The course for social educators, with two consecutive years of internship, was fundamental in this respect, as it aimed to prepare technicians for working in the human and social advancement of these communities, promoting initiatives in community development, educational tasks in industrial and agricultural companies (in urban and rural contexts, very different universes) and providing various “assistance, social security, and social action” services, including to private and official entities. These courses were requested and funded by the organizations according to their specific needs, including the case of ITPAS, as we have seen. The role of “family assistants”, the subject of another course, was also relevant in this sense and was much in demand (until 1967, they topped the list of those trained by the institute). This course focused mainly on providing technical and moral tools to work with local “women and girls” in various contexts, disseminating, among other things, principles of domestic economy and moral norms strongly marked by the Catholic guidelines that guided the institute and its professionals, despite the existence of collaborations with the Bishop of the Methodist Church.¹⁶ Concerns about the intersections, in various senses, between social policy, family planning, and reproduction policies were visible and translated into participation in relevant congresses of the time, such as the one held in Kiljava (Finland) in May 1971, on the theme of *Family planning and social policy in Europe*, sponsored by the United Nations.¹⁷

15 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1968. Cx. 411, anexos de AHU-ACL-MU-DGEDU-RCM-A17. Freely translated: “Estamos ainda numa hora de pioneirismo”; “empréstimos”; “trabalhadores sociais”; “ponto de vista técnico, económico e humano”; “socialmente integradas”.

16 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1968. Cx. 411, anexos de AHU-ACL-MU-DGEDU-RCM-A17; *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1967. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067; *Informação sobre o relatório do Instituto de Educação e Serviço Social Pio XII (1969-1970)*, 11 Nov. 1972. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067. Freely translated: “auxiliares familiares”; “mulher e da rapariga”.

17 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1970-1971. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067.

However, the importance of these activities and tasks was not matched by enough candidates and graduates due to existing challenges. As noted in a 1967 report, requests for “social action” in the colony were constantly increasing, needing to adapt to different purposes and varying geographical and professional contexts – even though qualified staff were not keeping pace, not even close. In 1968, attendance at the institute, which had 26 teachers (only 10 of which worked full-time), included 142 pupils. Aiming at reinforcing training in line with the perceived social and political needs of the time, external speakers were invited to address topics such as “problems of prostitution” (by the director of the Dispensário de Higiene Social de Luana [Luanda’s Social Hygiene Dispensary]), “problems of delinquency” (by the director of Serviços Prisionais de Luanda [Luanda’s Prison Services]), “problems of rural development”, “human rights” and “corporatism”. The link between the Church and missions was natural, with seminars on the “social doctrine of the Church”, for example.¹⁸

Attempts to establish fruitful relations with the bureaucratic apparatus and the colonial social fabric were evident. Study visits to ITPAS and the Institutos do Café e do Algodão [Coffee and Cotton Institutes] were recurrent. The same happened with visits to “the indigenous”¹⁹ market, *musseques*,²⁰ rehousing and urban redevelopment neighborhoods, the Viana’s Bureau,²¹ among other privileged spaces for social intervention, but certainly with other interconnected purposes. The aim was to prepare the technicians for the places where they had to work, allowing them to understand the social contours, besides the political

18 Freely translated: “problemas de prostituição”; “problemas de delinquência”; “problemas de fomento rural”; “direitos do homem”; “corporativismo”; “doutrina social da Igreja”.

19 In the report, a superior crossed out the term “indigenous” and wrote “native”, less politically charged.

20 Poor neighborhoods, usually composed of precarious buildings, in the outskirts of Angolan cities.

21 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1967. Cx. 046, anexos de AH-U-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067. Freely translated: “ao mercado indígena, musseques, bairros de realojamento e reordenamento urbano, regedoria de Viana”.

and economic effects of their activity. These could either be seen as urgent due to the war context or as the result of the relative acceleration of development during that period. The compulsory internships reinforced this purpose. Some places chosen were the Centro Social do Instituto do Trabalho [Labor Institute Social Center], the Instituto de Assistência Social de Angola [Angola Social Assistance Institute], and the Regedoria de Viana [Viana’s Bureau]. The so-called outreach activities went in the same direction, focusing on working-class and “redevelopment” neighborhoods or industrial zones, such as Boavista. In the latter case, the activities were developed by supporting local companies, which financed the trainees’ work. The social services thus aimed to monitor and improve “social life” and “working conditions”, generating intervention proposals that were very much in line with the multifaceted objectives of ITPAS and FAST. A very relevant example at the time was the construction of a “removable” canteen on land acquired by ITPAS in Angola.²²

The development of a research sector within the institute reinforced these dynamics, both by using the institution’s activities to gather information for the “study of populations” (a member of the department took part in the survey of Luanda’s *musseques*, carried out in March 1971), and promoting specific research, on topics such as “Multiracial society”, “Community development in Angola”, “The minimum wage needed for a typical family”, “The work of minors”, “Qualification of metropolitan labor coming to Angola”, “Human relations in the company”, “Absenteeism in the three largest textile companies in Luanda”, “The evolution of the aspirations of rural workers in the municipality of Viana”, “Worker pay in Angola”, or “Migrations in Angola”. Concerns about producing information that could be used beyond the strict limits of the proper social action and work of the research office (and of the trainees) were evident, gaining increasing importance within the

22 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1967. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067; *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII*, 1968. Cx. 411, anexos de AHU-ACL-MU-DGEDU-RCM-A17. Freely translated: “desmontável”.

Institute's internal and external activities. Its social reach and relevance increased, as did its political and economic usefulness, particularly regarding labor issues.²³

In any case, despite the weaknesses and political challenges, to Mendes, it was essential to continue to respond to widespread "material needs". Only thus would the "spirit of the workers" be more open "to other fields of social action", and FAST would have an effect on them. A significant aspect of his reflection was related to the income generated by FAST policies in Angola, namely those resulting from the policy on inns, seen as fundamental for managing the workforce on the move in several directions and for various purposes. The case of the inn in Salazar was cited as an example because its gross income had been substantial. The aim was to increase the number of inns to five, distributed "at points of the greatest movement of migrant labor", representing an increase both in revenue and in the capacity to oversee one of the (economic and social, but also, of course, political) problems deemed most relevant by the colonial authorities.²⁴

These issues were also a cause for concern due to international commitments and, as we have noted, the multiplication of external pressures that demanded that Portuguese colonial policy be brought into line with international normative frameworks. A mid-1965 report on Convention nº 105 of the International Labor Organization to abolish

23 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Actividades do Instituto Pio XII, 1970-1971*. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067; *Instituto de Educação e Serviço Social Pio XII: 10 Anos de actividade, 1963-1973*. Cx. 046, anexos de AHU-MU-DGEDU-RE-P067. Freely translated: "estudo das populações"; "Sociedade multiracial"; "Desenvolvimento comunitário em Angola"; "O salário mínimo necessário a uma família tipo"; "O trabalho de menores"; "Qualificação da mão de obra metropolitana vinda para Angola"; "Relações humanas na empresa"; "Absentismo nas três maiores empresas têxteis de Luanda"; "A evolução das aspirações do trabalhador rural do concelho de Viana"; "Remuneração do trabalhador em angola"; "Migrações em Angola".

24 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Afonso Mendes*, 30 Jan. 1965. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Acção Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965. Freely translated: "carências materiais"; "espírito dos trabalhadores"; "a outros campos de acção social"; "pelos pontos de maior movimento de passagem da mão-de-obra migrante".

forced labor²⁵ was revealing in this respect. Beyond issues related to contracts, wages, or the involvement of public authorities in the recruitment and distribution of workers in colonial contexts, the inns for workers on the move and for “social workers” were valued as being in line with defined international precepts.²⁶ Another dutifully appointed “achievement” was the purchase of an offset printing press, which was crucial to effectively develop the institution’s social, cultural, and, consequently, political initiatives. The possibility of expanding and controlling the editorial dimension of ITPAS and FAST – printing posters, pamphlets, the *Jornal do Trabalhador* [Worker’s Newspaper], and the quarterly bulletin *Trabalho* [Labor] – was seen as a gain that could not be overlooked in ITPAS’s general strategy and for consolidating its relevance beyond its most direct area of intervention. The “psychological action” of the institute and its departments was strengthened.²⁷ The “economic, political, and social scope” of ITPAS’s activity was reinforced. It was not just a question of spreading the virtues of work or alleviating the impact of the “regularity of salaried work” or the “terrible notion of time” in colonial societies.²⁸ In the context of armed conflict in Angola (and two other “overseas provinces”), the ability to propagandize development and “welfare” in an area as sensitive as labor brought clear political (and diplomatic) and security benefits. At the same time, such ability could be mobilized to demonstrate growing conformity with international benchmarks and a positive difference with other multi-ethnic states, especially the newly independent African states.

25 INTERNATIONAL LABOR ORGANIZATION. C105 – Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (nº 105). Available at: https://www.ilo.org/dyn/normlex/en/f?p=1000:12100:0::NO::P12100_ILO_CODE:C105. Access on: 25 Sept. 2023.

26 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Rodrigo José Baião*, 20 Aug. 1965. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Ação Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965.

27 AHU, Lisbon. *Relatório de Afonso Mendes*, 30 Jan. 1965. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Ação Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965. Freely translated: “conquista”; “ação psicológica”.

28 Freely translated: “regularidade do trabalho assalariado”; “terrível noção do tempo”.

The case of the inns created and run by ITPAS is particularly illustrative of the multidimensional nature of discussions on the question of “welfare”. It related to specific labor issues but had clear political and security resonance. Article 112 of the Rural Labor Code established that the inspectorate should check whether the compulsory construction of camps for workers on the move had been carried out by the companies, which were also responsible for maintaining them in acceptable operating and sanitary conditions. In Angola, while the companies were adapting to the new obligations and facing difficulties concerning the associated costs, ITPAS and FAST saw the inns for rural workers and workers on the move (with their families) as “experiments” that would help find a “solid and realistic” way of dealing with the problem, bearing the associated costs. According to Afonso Mendes,²⁹ moreover, the colonial administration had to take full responsibility due to the high probability of limited collaboration of the companies, which could result from the “unpredictable fluctuations in recruitment”. This condition also prevented private investment. Given the various uses of the inns, the colonial administration could, and should, according to the director of ITPAS, take responsibility, demanding a cost from the companies per worker who used them. Besides, in cases where there were no workers to house, these structures could be used for other purposes of the desired “social” (and psychosocial) action. For example, their cafeterias could and should be used for theater sessions, folklore shows, conferences, and film screenings (a highlighted aspect), all aimed at the “working classes”. They were, therefore, supposed to be spaces for cultural and political indoctrination while disseminating “welfare” concerns and promoting economic ambitions.

Due to economic and security considerations, the management of worker mobility – labor “stabilization”, a topic systematically discussed at international, inter-imperial, and colonial meetings, as well

29 AHU, Lisbon. *Circular de Afonso Mendes*, [1965]. Sr. 135, Angola, Questões de: Trabalho, Previdência, Acção Social e Ordenamento Rural, 1963-1965. Freely translated: “unpredictable fluctuations in recruitment”; “acção social”; “classes trabalhadoras”.

as a long-standing concern of the colonial authorities – was an urgent problem. The “instability” of the workforce made economic planning difficult and decisively affected productivity in specific economic sectors. It was also seen as facilitating the spread of “subversive” agendas, becoming a significant obstacle to ongoing “psychological action” efforts, partly associated with development and “welfare” projects, which were thus clearly linked to security concerns. The fact that the issue of “indigenous labor” had long been a recurring cause of local dissent and discontent and a reason for international criticism made the topic of the inns even more pertinent. In 1969, Afonso Mendes clarified the problem in two very relevant reports. On the one hand, out of the estimated 531,153 salaried workers in the private sector, around 173,200 spent less than a year in their workplace, and about 50,000 did not even make it half a year. On the other, 7 years after the abolition of forced labor, with the entry into force of the Rural Labor Code, land expropriation continued, and the discrepancies in living standards, working conditions, and paychecks between Europeans and Africans remained indisputable. These conditions favored the “expansion of subversive action”, besides generating social and economic effects. Therefore, the reform of the labor sphere and “welfare” promotion, in tandem with the creation of proceedings of cultural and political indoctrination, could be powerful instruments for thwarting questioning inclinations and expressions of protest and revolt, which was no small feat, given the circumstances.³⁰

According to Mendes, the problems of mobility and the “instability” of the “native” workforce constituted a perfect opportunity to boost “psychosocial” interventions with clear economic and political advantages. If well controlled and directed, migrant populations could be excellent channels for the Portuguese “doctrine and cause”.

30 ARQUIVO HISTÓRICO-DIPLOMÁTICO (AHD), Lisbon. MENDES, Afonso. *Contra-subversão/Ação Psicológica*, Reservado, 10 Apr. 1969. Anexos de AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0440/008; *Simpósio de Contra-Subversão: Comissão de Estudo da Secção I. Plano de Contra-Subversão – Relatórios*. Anexos de AHD/PT/AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0570/01234. Freely translated: “estabilização”; “instabilidade”; “subversivas”; “acção psicológica”; “trabalho indígena”; “expansão da acção subversiva”.

The workers were mostly young (18-30 years old), available to receive “new ideas and knowledge”, and to be entertained with instrumentally selected themes. For example, the inns were only supposed to broadcast the official radio station Voz de Angola [The Voice of Angola], propagate previously chosen content, and have libraries full of “simple literature” characterized by the predominance of “photographic images” and “intentional” illustrations aimed at “doctrinal education”. Alongside clubs and social centers for rural workers on the move, already under the administration of ITPAS or a few medium-sized companies, the inns offered numerous “possibilities for propaganda and psychological action”. Their territorial dispersion favored the establishment of a “political propaganda circuit”, managed by qualified specialists, methodically trained in “techniques and tactics of contact” with rural populations and workers (one of the courses offered by the Instituto Pio XII). In this process, “political mentalization” was fundamental for spreading the urgent “countersubversion” agenda. Intensifying the publication of the two ITPAS periodicals – *Trabalho* and *Jornal do Trabalhador*, which had a print run of 3,000 and 10,000 copies, respectively – was another strategy that aimed to “immunize” the Angolan population to other political possibilities, along with the summer camps, already in operation in Lobito and about to open in Luanda and Nova Lisboa.³¹

Mendes’ proposals were not systematically put into practice. Nonetheless, his ideas were materialized by ITPAS, and it is fundamental to mention that they were considered in different contexts by other actors involved in “countersubversion” efforts. For example, a 1969 report produced as part of the activities of a working group focused on reflections on “psychological action through the image” – which had formed within the Conselho de Orientação da Acção Psicológica

31 AHD, Lisbon. MENDES, Afonso. *Contra-subversão/Acção Psicológica*, Reservado, 10 Apr. 1969. Anexos de AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/0440/008. Freely translated: “instabilidade”; “nativa”; “doutrina e causa”; “novas ideias e conhecimento”; “literatura simples”; “intencionais”; “educação doutrinária”; “possibilidades de propaganda e acção psicológica”; “circuito de propaganda política”; “técnicas e tácticas de contacto”; “mentalização política”; “contra-subversão”; “imunização”.

[Council for the Orientation of Psychological Action], created in 1968 in Angola – duly highlighted the importance of ITPAS, its structures, and scope. They were essential for the dissemination of “fundamental education” on health and hygiene, nutrition, agricultural production, cooperatives, livestock, or “social action in rural populations” through images. ITPAS was crucial for the numerous efforts of “propaganda and *aportuguesamento* [Portugueseization]” of African workers in Angola to be more effective. The authorities, institutions, and infrastructures related to the labor sphere were considered very useful in many ways and senses, including the strategies of repressive developmentalism that were consolidated as the war went on.³²

CONCLUSION

The study of Portuguese late colonialism and, consequently, of the associated decolonization trajectories, including an understanding of the possibilities and constraints that marked the period after the colonies’ independence, requires an in-depth analysis of many issues that this text has sought to address, albeit in a necessarily brief manner. The dynamics of the political “transition” triggered by decolonization were multifaceted and not quite linear, rarely entailing rapid, profound, and significant transformations of the political, social, and economic orders. As in any “transition”, these dynamics can hardly be understood without a thorough knowledge of the specificities of late colonialism. These include, for example, the promotion, in a partially instrumental manner, of a “welfare colonialism”, which involved mechanisms of intervention and social assistance, both individual and communal, denoting concerns with nutrition, housing, and health (HAVIK, 2017), or domestic economy issues. They also include the formulation of development plans

32 AHD, Lisbon. Relatório de *Actividades do Grupo de Trabalho de Acção Psicológica pela Imagem*, [1970]. Anexos de AHD/MU/GM/GNP/RNP/S056/UI013505. Freely translated: “contra-subversão”; “acção psicológica pela imagem”; “educação fundamental”; “acção social em populações rurais”; “propaganda e aportuguesamento”.

of varying dimensions, which essentially boosted infrastructure, but also included various social expenses or the implementation of new forms of organization of the labor market, marked by the redefinition of the role of public administration in the exaction of labor and the attempt to harmonize with world standards. The intensification of international and inter-imperial integration and diverse interaction with the respective institutions, from the specialized agencies of the United Nations, for example, the World Health Organization (HAVIK; MONTEIRO, 2021), to the European project (PINTO; TEIXEIRA, 2005) and the CCTA and INCIDI, sought to achieve legitimacy and preserve an increasingly disputed political order.

Among the specific features of late colonialism, we can also point to a renewed “political culture” based on multiple legal and administrative framework strategies (KEESE, 2007), which, while revealing its authoritarian traits, addressed various areas of governance in cities and rural areas, from rural reorganization to the promotion of rules of political participation and fiscal responsibility, also including renewed protocols and instruments of control and repression (STUCKI, 2019) and repressive developmentalism.

Since it was one of the most important causes of contestation within colonial worlds and of critical scrutiny in international arenas, the labor sphere associated with “indigenous” populations constitutes a privileged observatory of these processes, in the case of Portuguese colonies as in many others, as several studies have shown.³³ For various reasons, the “indigenous labor” question was fundamental in formulating Portuguese authorities’ civil and military strategies, and even diplomatic ones, in the colonial worlds before and during the wars of liberation (JERÓNIMO; MONTEIRO, 2023). It was a revealing example, among others, of how developmental and “welfare” orientations were deeply conditioned by (and thus became useful for) security concerns, thereby significantly shaping the trajectories of decolonization and the dynamics of “transition”, and the legacies of both. The legal, administrative, and

33 See, for instance, the classic contribution by Cooper (1996).

political restructuring of work in a colonial context, especially concerning the rural areas and African populations, aimed to reduce the occurrence of expressions of political instability or explicit and organized protest. On the one hand, through the provision, more *de jure* than *de facto*, of “welfare” mechanisms and social assistance services. On the other, through the implementation of fairer regulation, also more *de jure* than *de facto*, of how African labor was recruited and paid, including its mobility. In other contexts (think of the emblematic case of South Africa and its extractive industry), the control of labor migration was always related to political, security, and undoubtedly economic dimensions (PÉREZ NIÑO, 2019). The problem of mobility thus became a central aspect in the political imagination of late colonialism and, in this case, the question of “welfare” utilities proved to be decisive.³⁴ This concern was well reflected at one of the CCTA meetings in 1961 in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire (COMISSÃO DE COOPERAÇÃO TÉCNICA NA ÁFRICA AO SUL DO SAARA, 1962).

By building up various support infrastructures aimed at facilitating the guiding purposes of post-1962 labor policies (which the issue of the inns discussed in this text illustrates) and mobilizing a new group of “social service” specialists with particular methods of cultural, social and political communication, the administrative authorities wanted to “stabilize” the workforce, disseminate new production techniques, increase productivity, establish specific moral standards, redefine gender relations, offer “psychosocial guidance”, and politically indoctrinate, contributing to the ongoing military effort. (Geo)political and security motivations and calculations were incorporated into the definition of labor policies and the intervention strategies of its regulatory and supervisory agencies. At the same time, the various uses of the labor issue were clearly understood by many in positions of power: its potential for indoctrination, “psychosocial” intervention, social engineering, controlling mobility and associations, disciplining individuals and groups, minimizing social tensions, contributing to development and “welfare”.

34 Regarding the example of the Copperbelt in Central Africa, see Mususa (2012).

Nonetheless, telling apart the social, economic, political, military, and security issues was difficult for many political and administrative leaders. The result has been a growing interdependence between the historical trajectories of the public administration and its policies on difference, “indigenous labor”, redevelopment and “rural welfare”, social and economic development plans, international positions and dependencies, and military and security strategies, among other aspects. Without a relatively integrated analysis of the multifaceted characteristics of this interdependence – which are briefly addressed here regarding the field of labor, in a specific geography and chronology –, the understanding of the set of political “transitions” associated with Portuguese decolonization (and, of course, the disintegration of the authoritarian regime in the metropolis) is impoverished (JERÓNIMO; MONTEIRO, 2022).

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