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Amílcar Guerra · Hermenegildo Fernandes
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הַכֹּל רֵאָתָה עֵינַי
OS MEUS OLHOS
VIRAM TODAS ESSAS COISAS

ESTUDOS EM HOMENAGEM
A JOSÉ AUGUSTO RAMOS

TOMO II

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הוֹ-כֵּל רְאֵתָה עֵינַי

Os meus olhos viram todas essas coisas

Estudos em Homenagem a José Augusto Ramos

TOMO II

Organizadores:

Amílcar Guerra
Hermenegildo Fernandes
Nuno Simões Rodrigues
Martim Aires Horta



Centro de História da Universidade de Lisboa

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אמר הרבי מרז'ין:

כשם שהאותיות הקדושות בלי הנקודות אין להן קול והנקודות בלי האותיות אין להן קיום, כך תלויים הצדיקים והחסידים אלו באלו. הצדיקים הם האותיות, והחסידים הנוסעים אליהם הם הנקודות, החסידים צריכים לצדיק, אבל לא פחות מזה צריך הוא להם, שעל־ידיהם יוכל להתעלות, ועל־ידיהם יוכל חס ושלום לרדת; הם נושאים את קולו, הם מפיצים את מעשיו בעולם.

O Rabi de Ruzhyn disse:

Tal como as consoantes sem sinais massoréticos não têm som, e os sinais sem letras não têm onde se agarrar, assim também os mestres (*Tsadikim*) e discípulos (*Hassidim*) se penduram uns nos outros. Os mestres são as letras e os discípulos que vão ter com eles são os diacríticos. Os discípulos necessitam do mestre não menos do que este mesmo deles precisa: com eles se eleva e com eles, Deus o impeça, pode cair. Eles carregam a sua voz, eles ressoam o seu trabalho por todo o cosmos.

“Ditos de Israel de Ruzhyn (1796-1850)”

recolhidos por Martin Buber
para *Contos dos Hassidim* (1946)



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Mordecai Ardon, Ribeira de Kidron (נהל קדרון), 1942
Museu de Israel, Jerusalém - © Ardon Estate
Fotografia © The Israel Museum, Jerusalem por Yoram Lehman

diante de si, só porque já não temos dinheiro?"

16 José dizia-lhes: " Se vocês não têm dinheiro, tragam-me os vossos gados, que eu dou-vos ~~trigo~~ trigo em troca dos animais." 17 Eles levavam os seus rebanhos a José e ele distribuía-lhes trigo em troca de cavalos, de rebanhos de ovelhas e vacas e de burros e, durante aquele ano, foi-lhes distribuindo ^{mantimentos} ~~trigo~~ em troca dos seus gados.

No ano seguinte,
18 ~~Passado aquele ano,~~ foram de novo ter com ele ~~no ano seguinte,~~ e disseram-lhe: " Não podemos negar que se nos acabou o dinheiro e que o gado já está também em seu poder. Nada mais nos resta a não ser o nosso corpo e as nossas terras. 19 Será que temos de morrer diante de si? Aceite-nos a nós e aos nossos campos em troca de trigo. Assim seremos nós escravos e os nossos campos propriedade do faraó. Mas dá-nos a semente, para que possamos sobreviver e para que a nossa terra não fique em perda."

20 Assim José comprou as terras do Egipto para o faraó, pois os egípcios foram vendendo todos os seus campos, porque a fome era grande. Mas as terras dos sacerdotes não foram vendidas, porque eles tinham de ser propriedade do faraó. 21 Quanto ao povo, dum extremo ao outro do Egipto, obrigou-o a emigrar para as cidades.

22 Só as propriedades dos sacerdotes é que ele não comprou, porque os sacerdotes, tinham recebido do faraó ~~trigo~~ em grãos alimentados ~~do faraó~~ o faraó destinava uma certa porção de mantimentos e eles foram comendo disso ~~o que~~ lhes dava o faraó e não tinham necessidade de vender as suas terras.

23 José disse então ao povo: " Desde agora, vocês e as vossas terras ficam a ser propriedade do faraó. Aqui têm semente, para semear as terras. 24 Mas devem dar a quinta parte das colheitas ao faraó. As outras quatro partes ficam para vocês, para comerem com os vossos filhos e com todos os que vivem em vossa casa."

a/ O texto Samaritano e a versão dos Setenta dizem " fez deles escravos".

Creating a portuguese biblical network:

The British and Foreign Bible Society in Portugal in the transition between
the 19th and the 20th century

Criar uma rede bíblica portuguesa:

A Sociedade Bíblica Britânica e Estrangeira em Portugal na transição dos séculos XIX e XX

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Abstract: The pioneering work of the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS) in Portugal, the first institution to promote a broad movement of biblical circulation in the country, was developed as a dynamic of social, cultural and religious division in a mostly Roman Catholic environment, where the relationship with the Bible was substantially different from that within the evangelical religious universe. Our study aims to reflect on that process through the analysis of the progressive inclusion of the Bible Society, an institution of British origin – and consequently seen as a “foreign” and “protestant” influence – in the network of Portuguese bookstores and fairs, and in the scope of events and dynamics such as the Book Fair in Lisbon and Porto or public conferences all over the country, throughout the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, a decisive period in the history of the institution in Portugal. The analysis of that pathway will allow us to reflect on the Bible Society’s declared purpose to rethink the cultural and religious boundaries of Portuguese society – essentially through the promotion of the free access to Scripture and biblical study – and on the role it played in the process of religious recomposition taking place in Portugal at the time.

Key-words: religious differentiation; Bible; book; Protestantism; Roman Catholicism.

Resumo: O trabalho pioneiro da Sociedade Bíblica Britânica e Estrangeira (SBBE) em Portugal, a primeira instituição a promover um movimento de circulação bíblica no país, foi implementado como uma dinâmica de clivagem social, cultural e religiosa num país maioritariamente católico romano, onde a relação com a Bíblia era substancialmente diferente daquela desenvolvida em universos religiosos ditos evangélicos. O nosso estudo pretende refletir sobre esse processo através da análise da inclusão progressiva da Sociedade Bíblica, uma instituição de origem britânica – e consequentemente percecionada como de influência “estrangeira” e “protestante” – na rede das livrarias e feiras portuguesas e no âmbito de eventos e dinâmicas como as Feiras do Livro de Lisboa e do Porto ou as conferências públicas levadas a cabo por todo o país, ao longo dos finais do século XIX e inícios do século XX, um período decisivo na história da instituição em Portugal. A análise desse percurso permitir-nos-á refletir sobre o propósito declarado da Sociedade Bíblica de repensar as fronteiras culturais e religiosas da sociedade portuguesa – essencialmente através da promoção do livre acesso às Escrituras e do estudo bíblico – e sobre o seu papel no processo de recomposição religiosa em curso no país nesse período.

Palavras-chave: diferenciação religiosa; Bíblia; livro; protestantismo; catolicismo romano.

The origins of the Bible Society in Portugal are closely linked to the movement boosted by the British and Foreign Bible Society (BFBS), itself part of the *religious awakening* that took place in Britain in the transition between the 18th and the 19th century which was endorsed by a number of institutions created for the “social and moral improvement of mankind”¹ through projects such as missions, the promotion of education and the dissemination of religious publications. Founded in 1804 in London with the exclusive purpose of distributing the biblical texts, the BFBS assumed since its creation a double nature – domestic and international, based on three fundamental objectives: the provision of Scripture in its diverse typology (the complete Bible, New Testament and Portions, i.e. separate publication of specific books of the Bible); the “universal” distribution of those volumes, seeking to encourage editions in as many languages and dialects as possible; and the superintendence of that circulation, largely guaranteed through correspondence with individuals and societies all over the world and the presence of official agents on all five continents.

The Portuguese language and Portugal were included early in the BFBS plan. The relevance of the reprinting in London of João Ferreira de Almeida’s² New Testament translation as early as 1809 was presented as a direct result of the circumstances provided by the course of the Peninsular War, associated with the importance of the Portuguese presence in port cities in England and the growth of the British influence on Portuguese territories. From 1821, the BFBS would also circulate the translation of António Pereira de Figueiredo³ and the two versions of the Bible (commonly referred to as the “Protestant version” of Almeida and the “Catholic version” of Figueiredo) would be used simultaneously by the BFBS according to the preferences and demand of each region and community in Portugal.

The pioneering work of the Bible Society in Portugal, the first institution to promote a broad movement of biblical circulation in the country, was developed as a true instrument of social, cultural and religious divide in a mostly Roman Catholic environment, where the relationship with the Bible was substantially different from that of the Protestant universe.⁴ The first references in the BFBS Archive to the distribution of the biblical texts in Portugal are from August 1810,⁵ and the positive tone of its reception, publicised in the BFBS Annual Report of 1811,⁶ implied a judgement on the need to make the Bible known in the country, accompanied by an acknowledgement of the need for human resources to make this plan possible. Over the following decades the BFBS would recruit the support of several correspondents in Portugal and in the Atlantic archipelagos, with whom it started to structure

1 Browne 1859, 1.

2 João Ferreira de Almeida (1628-91), a Protestant pastor, was responsible for the first translation of the Bible into the Portuguese language, in a process begun in 1681, largely developed by himself (who translated the complete New Testament and later the Old Testament into the Book of Ezekiel), but completed only in 1753, therefore after his death.

3 António Pereira de Figueiredo (1725-97), Oratorian priest, translated the Bible into Portuguese from the Latin Vulgate in a process that took place between 1778 and 1790.

4 For the detailed analysis of the long and complex history of the Bible Society in Portugal, see the result of our doctoral research around the theme, see Leite 2019.

5 Cf. Thomas Willmott. Letter from Lisbon 25th August 1810. Correspondence Books (Home and Foreign), BSA/D1/5/4.

6 Cf. *Reports of the BFBS* 1813, 34.

a network of interlocutors, one that would be decisively consolidated with the establishment of an Agency in the city of Lisbon in 1864.

In the BFBS' decision to appoint an Agent for Portugal, two key factors were considered. On the one hand, the interpretation of the political context as conducive to religious tolerance, as a result of a growth in "liberal sentiments in Portugal",⁷ seen as opposed to the more conservative claims of the Roman Catholic clergy. The development of BFBS operations was thus perceived as more viable. On the other hand, there existed a need to circumvent the legislation that limited the import of books printed abroad, namely the BFBS editions which, in the recent years, had been repeatedly retained in some of the Portuguese port customs. From 1864 onwards, the activity of the BFBS would be dynamized under the coordination of this "Agent" (later also called "Superintendent"), a position which, until the autonomization of the *Sociedade Bíblica de Portugal*, in 1989, then instituted as a national interconfessional association, would be held by seven men: Francis Roughton (1864-69), James Tugman (1869-76), Robert Stewart (1876-1902), Robert Moreton (1902-35), Guido Waldemar de Oliveira (1935), Paul Edouard Vallon (1935-68) and Augusto Esperança (1969-89).

From the 1860s onwards, the adoption of a system of circulation of the Scriptures by street hawkers specifically dedicated to this activity – the "colporteurs" – quickly became the main instrument for the circulation of the Bible in Portugal, as a result of the effective work of a variable number of men (and some women, the so-called "Biblewomen") who led the work of daily, systematic and comprehensive distribution of Bible texts throughout the country. The direct contact with the population and the reaction to the circulated product, deeply divided between cases of openness and welcomeness and the movement of opposition and persecution, produced an idea about Portuguese society and a programmatic plan where the colporteurs intended to be agents of change and an active part in the process of religious recomposition that was by then taking place in Portugal. From the 1880s onwards, the Bible Society also bet on the opening of fixed selling points – the "Depôts" – which, with considerably different routes and, above all, diverse longevity and efficiency levels, were established in the cities of Lisbon, Porto, Funchal (Madeira), Ponta Delgada (Azores) and São Vicente (Cape Verde).

Fundamentally structured in those two axes, BFBS activity in Portugal also sought to consolidate itself through complementary paths that functioned as important integration mechanisms in the context of the Portuguese society and culture. In this context, the cooperation with the book market – that even preceded the implementation of the colportage system and the dynamics of the Depôts – stands out. During the 1830s, the distribution of Scripture promoted by figures such as Edward Whiteley, an anglican chaplain in Porto, was partially achieved precisely through the establishment of agreements with booksellers to

7 *The Sixty-First Report...*1865, 103.

include BFBS volumes in their shops,⁸ receiving in return a commission on those sales and agreeing to conditions that actually seemed to benefit both the booksellers – who, according to Whiteley, were “very glad to sell them”⁹ – and the BFBS, of which the Committee valued this type of initiative, being duly advertised in its annual Reports.

With the establishment of the Agency and the almost simultaneous adoption of colportage as a preferential selling method, the Bible Society sought to maintain that cooperation with the booksellers,¹⁰ which would nevertheless be used as a secondary resource when compared to the degree of adaptability and effectiveness of the colporteurs and the functions attributed in the meantime to the Biblical Depôts. During that period of implementation, the book market was further hampered by the fact that, in many of the places where the Society intended to establish itself, there simply were no bookshops.¹¹ In other places, where the connection to the booksellers was made easier by the Agent’s contacts, such as bookbinders or prominent local figures, the potential of each of the cities was duly taken into account by the Agent, who, in 1869, referred to Coimbra as follows:

May 12th, I started for Coimbra, with the intention of establishing a small Depot with a bookseller to whom I obtained a letter of introduction from my Binder. On arriving at Coimbra, I also obtained the kind assistance of an Englishman, who is superintendent of the gas works. The next day (May 13th) I went with this person to the bookseller, and found him quite ready to receive and sell Bibles and Testaments, on terms of 20% discount. This I think is reasonable, and is what is usually allowed. I expected he would require more on account of the low price of the books. He also proposed advertising in the papers, and sending them to his Agents in different parts of the country, the Society bearing the expense. To this I readily agreed and I hope the experiment may answer, and that the students will thus be induced to purchase the Word of God.¹²

That experience in Coimbra not only gave an account of the progressive establishment of the network of contacts that would support the work of the BFBS in Portugal, but, in that specific case, also represented the first phase of an important journey in the work of biblical diffusion in that university environment, exemplifying the way through which cooperation with the book market would not be restricted to a depository nature, of storing the BFBS volumes in a particular city, but would rather be involved a successive expansion of its sphere

8 Whiteley mentioned in 1835: “I have induced the Booksellers to sell the Bibles, ... Four Bookseller have them in their Shops. Blessed be God for this mighty change” (Edward Whiteley. Letter to the BFBS [Oporto, 24th April 1835]. Foreign Correspondents ‘W’...). Months later, he would further state that he already an agreement with six booksellers (Letter to the Revd. Andrew Brandram [Oporto, 10th August 1835]. Foreign Correspondents ‘W’...). That cooperation was not restricted to the region of Porto, where Whiteley worked, but also took place in Coimbra, where three of the booksellers concerned were located (Cf. Letter to Andrew Brandram [Oporto, 11th November 1836]. Foreign Correspondents ‘W’...). George Borrow, a well known agent of the BFBS in the Iberian Peninsula also established contacts with booksellers in Évora and Elvas in 1835 (Borrow, Letter to Andrew Brandram [Madrid, 13th February 1836]. In Darlow 1911, 144-45).

9 Letter to Andrew Brandram (Oporto, 3rd October 1835). Foreign Correspondents ‘W’....

10 Cf. Francis H. Roughton. Letter to J. B. Bergne (Lisbon, 16th June 1869). Agent Book for Spain and Portugal, BSA/D1/7/126; and James E. Tugman. Letter to J. B. Bergne (Lisbon, 7th July 1873). Agent Book for Spain and Portugal, BSA/D1/7/150.

11 Roughton described these kinds of obstacles in relation to cities like Santarém: “I was in hopes at Santarém to have found a bookseller who would receive Bibles and Testaments on Commission, but on enquiry I was told there was not a book seller in the place. I was exceedingly surprised at this, for tho’ it is a small town, there is a Jesuit University there.” (Letter to the Revd. J. B. Bergne [Madrid, 29th April 1869]. Agent Book for Spain and Portugal, vol. 126, BSA/D1/7/126); and Faro: “Faro being the capital of the Algarves, it is of course the proper place to have a depot however small. I searched the place for a bookseller, but could not find one, and Manoel did not know of the existence of such a shop! A strong proof of the Portuguese not being a reading people.” (Letter to J. B. Bergne [Lisbon, 16th June 1869]. Agent Book for Spain and Portugal, BSA/D1/7/126).

12 Francis H. Roughton. Letter J. B. Bergne (Lisbon, 16th June 1869). Agent Book for Spain and Portugal, BSA/D1/7/126.

of action, provided by the connection of those booksellers to their collaborators in the rest of the country and by the circulation of those traders in the national market.

It was precisely in this way that the BFBS came into contact with the trade fair circuit, in which the booksellers progressively sought to occupy a space and the Bible Society slowly gained a specific and autonomous place. With sporadic references to the work of colporteurs in that area throughout the 19th century, the Society would assume, mostly from the 1910's onwards, an assiduous presence in the different and multiple fairs held at a regional and national level.

This participation was largely the result of the analysis of that circuit as a potential ground for the Bible dissemination project, an evaluation that was corroborated over the following decades on the basis of the appreciation of several factors: the access to a large public; the ability to reach hundreds of people in the same place over the course of just a few days; the integration into an environment of circulation of goods and people from various parts of the country;¹³ the contact with families and school children;¹⁴ the opportunity to present a specific and distinct item compared with the universe of products made available in the context of the fairs, and thus to strengthen the appealing component of the volumes;¹⁵ and, finally, the possibility of working with a high degree of efficiency, with very substantial sales in a short amount of time.¹⁶

The execution of this participation initially involved the setting up of a sales table in the name of the Bible Society, which rapidly evolved into an investment in the use of the so-called "Bible Tent",¹⁷ whose function became more complex over the years. Initially supplied with BFBS volumes and decorated with articles and statistics on the circulation of the Bible in Portugal and around the world,¹⁸ the Bible tent, also known as the "biblical barrack",¹⁹ would gain prominence with bright and attractive colours complemented by the use of small flags and canvases with advertisements,²⁰ essential in its development as an instrument of publicity, about which the BFBS Agent in Portugal explained: "such a tent is quite a novelty, crowds have been attracted ... We have worked these fairs before, but the tent is quite different from the stands previously used, and can certainly prove of great value to us."²¹ Progressively, the

13 BFBS valued those fairs as important "meeting-places" and repeatedly explained in the Annual reports: "Some of these fairs last several days, and thus our colporteurs get into touch with hundreds and perhaps thousands of people who otherwise would not have the opportunity of buying the Scriptures." (*The Hundred and Sixteenth Report...* 1920, 52).

14 As described in the 1927 Report: "Quite a feature of the work is the number of school-children, both boys and girls, who flock round and buy Gospels" (*The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 55).

15 Since, according to the reports of the colporteurs and Agent, the book market was by then less active in the trade fair circuit and the Bible Society played a singular role in that area, because: "Usually there is no other bookstall at these fairs, although almost every other conceivable article is on sale, and the interest stirred up is very great." (*The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 55).

16 An aspect extremely valued by the BFBS and duly publicized in its Reports during those years (Cf. *The Hundred and Ninth Report...* 1913, 115, *The Hundred and Tenth Report...* 1914, 87, *The Hundred and Sixteenth Report...* 1920, 52, *The Hundred and Seventeenth Report...* 1921, 41-42. As an example, in 1922, colporteur Abílio d'Almeida sold about 7,000 volumes in 18 fairs, an average of 388 volumes per fair (*The Hundred and Nineteenth Report...* 1923, 59).

17 Mentioned for the first time in 1880. Cf. *The Seventieth-Sixth Report...* 1880, 86. But recovered as a method and regular subject only from the 1910s onward.

18 *The Hundred and Eighth...* 1912, 104.

19 Cf. "Barraca Bíblica." In *O Cristão Baptista...* 1921, 4.

20 Cf. *The Hundred and Seventeenth Report...* 1921, 41-42. Some of the flags had the inscription "Good News" (*Boas Novas*) as would the wagon and the van of the Bible Society. Cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 55.

21 *The Hundred and Ninth Report...* 1913, 114. An important function which has continued over the years with repeated reference to the fact that "Thousands of farmers, from wide areas, come together on these occasions, which present opportunities for extensive propaganda." (*The Hundred and Twentieth...* 1924, 57).

tent also functioned as a sheltered structure for the colporteurs, and its portability allowed the men to transport it from fair to fair and to protect themselves from the sun and rain, and even to spend the night inside, avoiding additional expenses with lodging.²² The BFBS would acquire during those years several tents with those characteristics in order to continue that work in the different fairs periodically held across the country and, in consequence, the place occupied by the Bible Society became consolidated and easily recognized.²³

In the 1920s, this was already considered an “important field of operations”,²⁴ which even justified the specialisation of some colporteurs in that particular area. One of them – Abílio d’Almeida – stood out in that context and was designated as an expert:

Colporteur Almeida is a specialist in working at fairs, and with his tent has done excellent service. Selling Scriptures in the great gatherings of country people requires patience and perseverance, as well as tact. The colporteur must never lose his temper, even in the face of great provocation; must have a smile and ready word for everybody, even though he may himself feel dull and spiritless. He has to sleep in his tent in order to guard his property, and cook his own meals there during the daytime. Yet there is a great compensation for all this: he has the opportunity of introducing many people to the Christ of the Scriptures, and will probably sell several hundred copies a day, principally portions and New Testaments.²⁵

This commitment, translated into long working hours, also produced substantial results, with considerable growth in sales achieved by these means over the years.²⁶

In performing those functions, the BFBS colporteurs did not fail to face some opposition, not from the civil authorities, whose action successively legitimized the institution’s participation in the market,²⁷ but from the Roman Catholic clergy, whose reaction was often described as violent.²⁸

Punctuated by those episodes, the relatively peaceful development of BFBS activity in the fairs was largely the result of the fact that the investment in that field was truly protected in the post-Republic period, a context to which neither the BFBS nor the population in general was indifferent, as shown in the following passage concerning the work of a colporteur at the Vila Real Fair in 1911:

Two students were much exercised at the Bible Society having a stall at the fair, and said that “if this had been in the old times the stall would have been closed down by now.” Colporteur Arduino [Correia] answered that he thanked God for the liberty that came with the republic, but one of the students rejoined that if it had been in the time of the monarchy he would have burnt the books and had the colporteur arrested.²⁹

22 Cf. *The Hundred and Sixteenth Report*... 1920, 52; *The Hundred and Seventeenth Report*... 1921, 41.

23 It being declared: “Our tent is a well-known feature of almost every big fair, and with its bright flags flying in the breeze is very conspicuous.” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report*... 1927, 55).

24 *The Hundred and Nineteenth Report*... 1923, 59.

25 *The Hundred and Twenty-Second Report*... 1926, 55-56.

26 During 1927, that colporteur sold a total of 15,561 volumes, an average of 1296 copies per month. Cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Report*... 1928, 52.

27 It being referred early on: “The authorities have made no objection to the tent being pitched at the fairs.” (*The Hundred and Ninth Report*... 1913, 114).

28 As described, for example, in the 1927 Report: “At Coimbra this year the seminarists and some students from the University threatened to throw [Abílio d’] Almeida into the river and break up his stall if he did not leave the fair.” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report*... 1927, 55).

29 *The Hundred and Eighth Report*... 1912, 103-4.

In that process of integration, improved by the new political conditions, the Lisbon Agency Superintendents also played an important role, occasionally accompanying the colporteurs during their visits to the fairs.³⁰ Under the same terms, and with similar objectives, they would also actively participate in consolidating BFBS presence in a specific and symbolically important event: the Book Fair in Lisbon and Porto.

Looking to participate in this project, that, in line with other European countries, aimed to make national literature better known by making it accessible to a wider public through reduced prices, the Bible Society became present in the initiative since its inauguration in June 1931, being one of the eighteen stands authorized by the municipal organization to integrate the first Book Fair in Lisbon, held then at Praça do Rossio.³¹ At that time, the Society highlighted the fact that all stands were “built on the same plan and artistically decorated”.³² This translated and recognised an equalisation among all booksellers in material and symbolic terms that the BFBS naturally valued.³³ With the development and growth of that dynamic, the BFBS remained a regular presence, participating in all Lisbon Book Fairs thereafter.

The first reactions to BFBS participation in the Fair were repeatedly described as very positive, producing a result said to be “more gratifying than was expected”.³⁴ This justified the Bible Society to invest actively in the consolidation of that place, the maintenance of which served different purposes.

First, to encourage the inscription of the Bible in the list of the great works of national literature, and, revealingly, highlighting not the João Ferreira de Almeida’s translation (i.e. the “Protestant” one), but that of António Pereira de Figueiredo (i.e. the “Catholic” one), declaring for several times and in different ways, but always with the same clarity:

Two weeks in May are dedicated to this great national effort to make Portuguese literature known. The Bible of Figueiredo, published by our Society, is a classic of the Portuguese language and has an honoured place at all such gatherings.³⁵

It is clear that, although Almeida’s translation was the first choice of the BFBS, Figueiredo’s version not only fulfilled a fundamental function in the circulation of biblical texts in Portugal, but was also recognised by the Bible Society as playing a specific and important role in that context, to which was added the recognition of the value of the same translation.

30 In the case of Robert Moreton, he was the one to report on this experience to the BFBS’ Committee. Cf. *The Hundred and Nineteenth Report...* 1923, 59; and in the case of Paul Vallon it even happens that the first references to his name in the BFBS’ Reports relate precisely to his participation in the circulation of the BFBS’ volumes in the context of trade fairs: “Missionary colportage – At Portuguese Fairs. – Monsieur P. Vallon, of the *Action Biblique*, writing from Faro ... sends an interesting account of his work at the local fairs.” (*The Hundred and Thirty-First Report...* 1935, 44); an activity which he would continue after he took up his duties in the BFBS’ Agency.

31 Which the British called “the Trafalgar Square of Lisbon” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth...* 1932, 38). It should be noted that, like the BFBS, the Religious Tract Society was also present in the initiative since its first edition. The National Bible Society of Scotland would also join the Fair years later. Cf. *The Hundred and Thirty-Third Report...* 1937, 38.

32 *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 38.

33 It is interesting that, with a distinct objective, in the following Report, the BFBS also valued the fact that there were more favourable locations than others in the spatial arrangement of the Fair mentioning: “The Bible Society again took in this fair and rented a stall in a prominent position.” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Report...* 1933, 45).

34 *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 38-39.

35 *The Hundred and Thirty-Sixth Report...* 1940, 28.

Secondly, to promote the stand as an instrument of publicity. In addition to making biblical volumes available in that space, the Agency also proceeded during that initiative with the free distribution of thousands of leaflets on the Bible and on the national and international activity of the BFBS.³⁶ It was considered difficult “to overestimate the value of such abundant and far-reaching propaganda”,³⁷ the scale of which was in fact hard to reproduce in another type of environment. In that context, the biblical circulation developed in a small space but was in contact with a diverse public, originating from different parts of the country, not strictly Lisbon, and most importantly composed of members of all social classes. In 1936, the Agent Paul Vallon, of Swiss origin, valued this very fact as the great added value of participation in the Book Fair:

Jamais encore comme pendant cette dernière Foire du Livre nous avons réalisé autant le commun désir et l'approche de toutes les classes sociales, depuis les plus humbles jusqu'aux plus élevés pour se procurer le Livre qui demeure et qui aide. Tantôt les uns tantôt les autres venaient, humbles ouvriers en habits de travail, professeurs, ministres, officiers, prêtres mêmes, feuilletant le Livre et l'emportant sous le bras, le faisant sien.³⁸

The consolidation of the BFBS stand at the Book Fair as a “centre of attraction”³⁹ was further strengthened and assisted by resources other than those absolutely dependent on its action, such as the periodical press,⁴⁰ the publication of catalogues⁴¹ and the cooperation of the Evangelical Churches.⁴²

Thirdly, the maintenance of the position at the Book Fair also acted as a legitimisation forum for the BFBS within Portuguese society and culture. In this context, in addition to the essential role of the colporteurs whose work supported the operation of the stand, the frequent presence of the Agency's Superintendent – Robert Moreton and later Paul Vallon – and the more occasional visit of the Secretary of BFBS' Western Europe Agency also played an important role.⁴³

Participating in the dynamization of business in a stricter sense, those representatives of the BFBS functioned above all as the preferential interlocutors in the relationship with the political universe enhanced by the specific organisation of that type of events. As a rule, the Book Fair was opened by the President of the Republic, and the presence of General Óscar

36 About 15,000 leaflets were distributed per edition. Cf. *The Hundred and Thirty-Second Report...* 1936, 39.

37 *The Hundred and Thirty-Third Report...* 1937, 38. That propagandistic function was repeatedly referred to in the BFBS' Reports, with various allusions to a “very wide publicity” *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 39) or to the “opportunity to advertise the work” (*The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 44).

38 Rapport Annuel de 1936. Country Correspondence. Portugal (Correspondence, III), BSA/F2/5/2/3/20.

39 *The Hundred and Thirty-Third Report...* 1937, 38.

40 Both in the evangelical press, where BFBS' participation in the event was widely publicized, and in the generalist press, as reported in 1933: “An Oporto newspaper called *Primiero* [sic] de Janeiro published a leading article on the Book Fair, in which the author, a lawyer, expressed his surprise at seeing a stall devoted to the sale of the Bible and such crowds of people surrounding it. ‘And this,’ he exclaims, ‘in heretical Lisbon, where the public shows its most emphatic disapproval of any religious films shown in the cinemas.’ He attributed this interest to the eternal truth contained in the Bible.” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Report...* 1933, 45-46).

41 In 1936, Vallon explained: “Un catalogue général des exposants édité par le Comité d'organisation de la Foire et dans lequel notre Société figurait avec 3 pages a beaucoup contribué pour ce succès dans les ventes des Ecritures que nous avons enregistré avec tant de satisfaction et de reconnaissance.” (Rapport Annuel de 1936. Country Correspondence. Portugal [Correspondence, III], BSA/F2/5/2/3/20).

42 Regarding which it was referred: “The Evangelical Churches of Lisbon follow this annual event with great interest, and special prayers were offered on behalf of M. Vallon and his workers.” (*The Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Report...* 1939, 32).

43 Cf. *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 39, *The Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Report...* 1938, 34.

Carmona at the Fair on that occasion included a visit to all the stands. The walk through the space occupied by the BFBS, usually involving a short conversation with the Superintendent, was duly valued and advertised by the institution.⁴⁴ In the cases where this route did not occur, the BFBS representative himself addressed the President of the Republic, seeking to stand out among the other booksellers, as reported in 1933

The Fair was opened by General Carmona, the president of the Republic. He did not visit each stall as on previous occasions, but Mr. Moreton went forward and presented him with a pocket Bible with a thumb-index. The General was much interested in this novelty. In the course of the conversation he mentioned that he kept in his library the beautifully bound copy of the Scriptures presented to him on the occasion of the celebration of the fourth [sic] centenary of the translator of the Portuguese Bible, d'Almeida.⁴⁵

That specimen had been gifted by the BFBS to the President of the Republic on the occasion of the third centenary of the birth of João Ferreira de Almeida, in November of 1928,⁴⁶ and naturally its preservation and, above all, the public reference to it held an important symbolic charge within the scope of the Society's activity in Portugal.

Focusing on that important figure in the regime, the references to the interconnection with the political universe also included contact with "other important personages": the Minister of Education, who was also a regular presence in that event, the Mayor of Lisbon and several government officials.⁴⁷ In this context, episodes such as that of the 1937 Fair were referred to when, in reaction to the exhibition at the BFBS stand of the Scripture editions in twenty-one languages used by the missionaries in the Portuguese colonies, one of those government representatives expressed "his gratitude at this service rendered to the nation".⁴⁸ That kind of statement, like the general attitude of political representatives in that environment, legitimized not only the presence of BFBS in the Fair, but also its action in Portugal. This did not necessarily result in the absence of opposition to the work of the BFBS in that area, which was very occasionally denounced by the colporteurs in the context of the Book Fair,⁴⁹ but the colporteurs' prudent attitude contributed positively to limiting that phenomenon.

The results obtained by the BFBS in that context tend to demonstrate that those purposes were efficiently carried out, the Agency achieved a substantial volume of sales throughout the various editions of the Fair, here represented between 1931 and 1938:

44 Regarding the first edition of the Fair we know that "The General talked with Mr. Moreton and said a few appreciative words about the Bible Society's publications." (*The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 38); and ten years later it was also reported that "As in the preceding years, H.E. the president of the Portuguese Republic honored the Fair (the 12th) with a visit, and once again, as he passed our stall, he lifted his hat and bowed with a cordial smile." (*The Hundred and Thirty-Eight and -Ninth Reports...* 1943, 18).

45 *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 44.

46 Cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Report...* 1929, 27.

47 Cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Report...* 1932, 38, *The Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Report...* 1933, 45; *The Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Report...* 1939, 32.

48 *The Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Report...* 1938, 34.

49 Regarding 1933 it was referred: "Instances of opposition were not lacking, but the crowds were good humored and stood for freedom of speech and equal opportunity for all." (*The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 41).

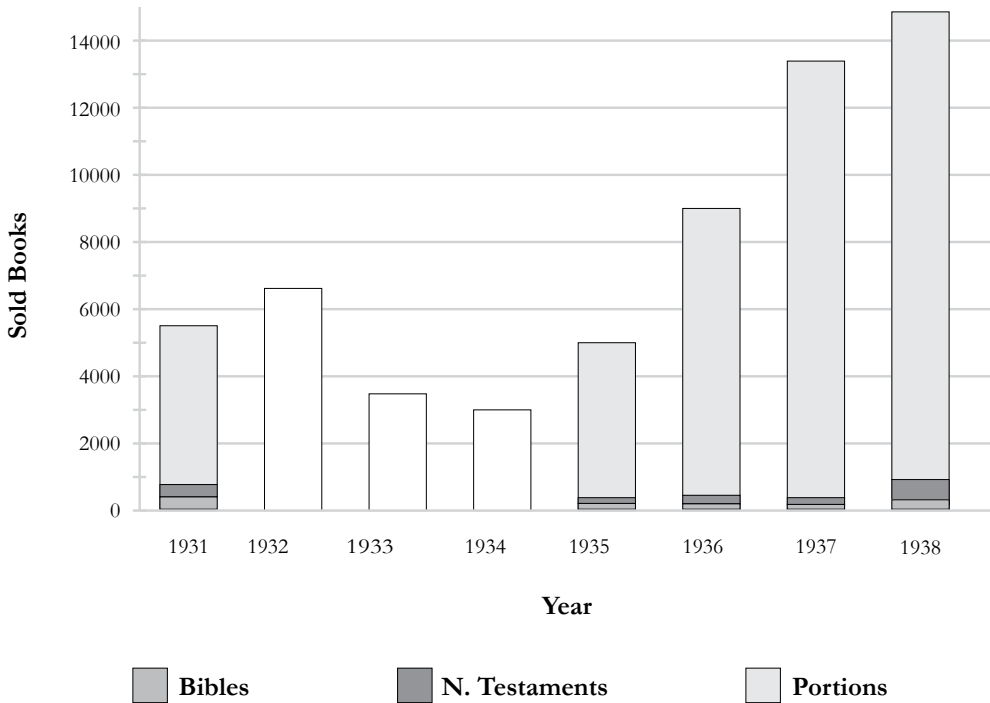


Fig. 1. BFBS sales at the Lisbon Book Fair (1931 – 1938).

Restricted to the usual typology – Bible, New Testament and Portions⁵⁰ – the volumes that circulated were available in several languages,⁵¹ responding to the specificities of the Lisbon market and the Book Fair itself. Having achieved substantial sales in the first editions of the Fair, the years 1933 and 1934 were marked by a slight decrease, determined by the overcoming of the novelty factor, but above all by the financial crisis that the country was going through, an element that influenced the general sales. However, from 1935 onwards, a growth trend had recovered, as is clearly evident in Fig. 1, a volume that translates over the last two years into an average in sales of around one thousand volumes per day.⁵² Editorial releases played a key role in that growth, with a new edition of the Gospels and Acts of the Apostles being put on sale in separate volumes in 1937,⁵³ which had a direct translation in the great increase

50 The breakdown of total sales is available in the BFBS’ Reports for 1931, 1935, 1937 and 1938 only, and in the protestant press for 1936. Cf. “A Feira do Livro em Lisboa” in *Portugal Novo...* 1936, 4, which is why in Fig.1 the remaining years appear blank and without typological division, representing only the total sales volume.

51 In his annual report for 1936, Vallon states that volumes were sold in 11 different languages (Cf. Rapport Annuel de 1936. Country Correspondence. Portugal [Correspondence, III], BSA/F2/5/2/3/20); and the 1939 BFBS’ Report specifies 9 in addition to Portuguese: English, German, Chinese, Italian, Russian, Greek, Castilian, Latin and Esperanto. *The Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Report...* 1939, 32.

52 The Book Fair lasted for two weeks.

53 Which, sold “in an attractive cardboard case, proved very popular and were in constant demand.” (*The Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Report...* 1938, 34).

in the total sales volume; and in 1938 new versions of both Almeida's and Figueiredo's Bible were edited with revised spelling, which resulted in the doubling of the number of Bibles sold at the Book Fair. This growth trend would continue until the end of the 1940's.⁵⁴

Present at the Lisbon Book Fair from an early stage, the booksellers of Porto would organise from 1938 onwards an autonomous fair in that city, dedicated exclusively to the publishers and bookstores in that part of the country. Through cooperation with a local bookseller, the BFBS would also be present at the Porto's Book Fair from that date on, occupying a part of that collaborator's stand.⁵⁵ The two fairs would take place simultaneously and the BFBS would participate in both, achieving lower sales in Porto that also denounce a stronger opposition in the latter city, often characterized as being more "conservative".⁵⁶

Still in the context of BFBS's integration in public events to promote national products, we would highlight the most particular, but still revealing, case of the participation of the Bible Society in the Great Portuguese Industrial Exhibition (*Grande Exposição Industrial Portuguesa*) of 1932-33, held in two cycles at Parque Eduardo VII, in Lisbon. In the cycle of October to December 1932, the BFBS had an indirect participation. Another institution – *the Alliance Biblique* – negotiating with the exhibition's organization, was able to get a licence to sell volumes within its scope, which was granted on the condition that its stand be set up outside the main pavilion, since the event was not intended for the sale of goods, but rather for the display of national production and industry.

The Bible Society participated in that event by supplying the biblical volumes that were sold in that stand, which were restricted to Portuguese editions, printed and bound in Portugal, seeking to meet the requirements imposed by the nature of the exhibition.⁵⁷ In spite of this, that work was interrupted a few weeks before the end of the first cycle, with the removal from the stand of the *Alliance Biblique* as a result of the opposition promoted by some representatives of the Roman Catholic Church who, according to the BFBS's Agent Robert Moreton, circulated through the main organs of the Catholic press "mad references to the books and to the work being carried on, [stating] that the books were American, Swiss and German."⁵⁸ The argument of denationalisation, repeatedly used in the anti-protestant discourse in Portugal,⁵⁹ was also repeatedly raised in the context of opposition to the work of the Bible Society, as in the activity of biblical dissemination in general when promoted by organisations of foreign origin. Following that campaign, which Moreton interpreted as a

54 The BFBS' Reports do not provide the sales figures for the Book Fair after 1938, but the 1942/43 Report mentions in relation to the 1942 Book Fair: "It was our record Fair for the number of Bibles and Testaments sold." (*The Hundred and Thirty-Eight and -Ninth Reports...* 1943, 18).

55 Cf. *The Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Report...* 1939, 33.

56 In 1938, BFBS sold 142 Bibles, 299 New Testaments and 2,701 Portions at the Porto Book Fair, a total of 3,142 volumes. Cf. *The Hundred and Thirty-Fifth Report...* 1939, 33. In that same year, in Lisbon, it sold a total of 14,732 books.

57 Cf. Report for Portugal 1932. Country Correspondence. Portugal (Correspondence, III), BSA/F2/5/2/3/20. The *Alliance Biblique* also invited the BFBS to take direct responsibility for the Stand and the business carried out in that context, but Superintendent Moreton considered that it would be difficult to give up two colporteurs for a period of two months to dedicate themselves exclusively to that work, which is why he decided in that cycle to cooperate via supply, with a total of 3,500 volumes sold in that context.

58 Report for Portugal 1932. Country Correspondence. Portugal (Correspondence, III), BSA/F2/5/2/3/20.

59 About the representations on the "protestant" and their influence in the Portuguese society. Leite 2009.

translation of the fact that the Catholic Church was against the public circulation of the Bible, and that the BFBS Report would evaluate as resulting from the “envy of certain ill-disposed people”,⁶⁰ the sales of the *Alliance Biblique* at the Exhibition were then discontinued.

In the cycle from June to October 1933, considering that the BFBS’ reputation had been questioned by that previous episode, and recognizing in that initiative a new opportunity to publicize its activity, the Bible Society directly ran for a place in the Exhibition, doing so as a member of the Booksellers’ Class Association of Portugal (*Associação de Classe dos Livreiros de Portugal*).⁶¹ This participation was authorized and the Bible Society was responsible for the opening of its own Stand next to the main Pavilion in order to exhibit and sell the biblical texts in Portuguese. This presence was described as the Bible “returning”⁶² to the Industrial Exhibition, a comeback encouraged throughout that cycle by the positive reaction of the visitors and general press.

Still within the framework of the activities that were progressively developed as support structures for the work of biblical propagation, we should highlight the fundamental place of the “Lantern lectures”. Robert Moreton played an important role in the application of this instrument to the service of the BFBS in Portugal, since he was the one who, still as an Assistant Agent, started that practice. Initially used as an accessory in the context of travelling conferences all over the country,⁶³ the Lantern lectures would eventually consolidate themselves as one of Moreton’s brand images and, during his superintendence, as a brand of the Bible Society itself, the “lantern work” becoming an indispensable item in the *Reports* on Portugal throughout the 1930s.

The use of the slides with images had two immediate objectives: to operate as an instrument of attraction for the general public, either by means of the images themselves or by the novelty that their mode of projection represented; and to develop itself as a means of access to the non-literate and illiterate public, reinforcing the potential of public conferences whose objectives already included this enlargement of the BFBS’ target public, since most strategies of biblical dissemination naturally implied the requirement of literacy.⁶⁴

To that purpose, which the Lantern effectively operationalized, a more comprehensive set of objectives was juxtaposed. In the first place, to spread the work of the Bible Society, with a strong appreciation of the international component of this activity, in order to spread what the “Society was doing towards taking the Word of God to all nations”.⁶⁵ Secondly, the diffusion of the Bible itself and the strengthening of this dissemination among the evangelical

60 Cf. Report for Portugal 1932. Country Correspondence. Portugal (Correspondence, III), BSA/F2/5/2/3/20; and *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report*... 1934, 41.

61 Cf. *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report*... 1934, 41; and *Grande Exposição Industrial 1932*, xxx. The *Associação de Classe dos Livreiros de Portugal* had been created on the 23rd July 1927, replacing the *Associação de Livreiros de Lisboa* and being linked to the organisation of the Book Fair. In 1939 the Association would become the *Grémio Nacional dos Editores e Livreiros*.

62 *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report*... 1934, 41.

63 The first reference to its use dates from 1908. Cf. *The Hundred and Fifth Report*... 1909, 116.

64 On that subject, the BFBS report declared in 1915: “One of the best ways to get at the people in this country is through public addresses, as they are poor readers or else cannot read at all. A set of slides proves a double attraction.” (*The Hundred and Eleventh Report*... 1915, 85-6).

65 *The Hundred and Fifth Report*... 1909, 116.

communities in the process of implementation or consolidation in Portugal, to which the BFBS referred to explicitly:

During the last few years Mr. Moreton has been extending his activity and has given lantern lectures in some of the chief commercial centre of commerce, where no Evangelical work has been carried on among certain classes of the population. Such centres are magnificent fields. Many in Portugal know nothing of what the Bible is or what its effects have been among the peoples of the world.⁶⁶

This dissemination component was directly associated with an objective of clarifying the role that the Bible Society aimed to play in the Portuguese societal and cultural context, essentially defined as the promotion of the access to Scripture and Bible study, a work in which the BFBS continued to consider itself a pioneer even in the 1930s in Portugal.⁶⁷ The slide lectures were structured in the following decades as “one of the finest methods of making known the Bible and the Bible Society”⁶⁸ and found room to grow.

Thirdly, and underlying the last question, we find the objective of stimulating the sale of the Bible, which resulted both from: the interest aroused by the themes addressed and illustrated at the conferences – regarding which it was said: “It is interesting when a lecture on Mongolia, delivered in Portuguese to a Portuguese audience in a theatre, results in the sale of many Portuguese Bibles” –;⁶⁹ and the connection with the preparation of the colportage work, since “This publicity work has been very helpful to the colporteurs, and large sales usually follow a campaign along these lines”.⁷⁰ The reception of colportage visits following such initiatives was repeatedly reported to have improved exponentially through increased contacts and sales.⁷¹ In view of the effectiveness of these conferences, the presence of a colporteur was gradually included in the organisation of those activities. Following the closure of the initiative, the colporteur would set up a small table at the exit to sell the biblical volumes.⁷² Fourthly, and finally, that wide work plan also included the gathering of collections for the BFBS, whose origin tended to be almost exclusively linked to the evangelical communities present or that were purposefully visiting during that tour.⁷³

The advertising objective that ultimately structured that plan was then reinforced through specific support mechanisms. On the one hand, as in the case of trade fairs, the annual visit of the Secretary of the BFBS’ Western Europe Agency, regularly implemented through the beginning of the 20th century and generally lasting a few weeks, also resulted in Moreton being accompanied on the conference circuit, and on these occasions the Secretary

66 *The Hundred and Thirteenth Report...* 1917, 62-63.

67 As Moreton repeatedly made explicit in relation to that work, declaring: “The meetings themselves served to break down prejudice and suspicion as to the object we pursue” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50-1), and reporting that work did: “much to dissipate the ... ignorance that still exist concerning the Scriptures. By this means many men and women have been brought into contact with Jesus Christ for the first time.” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 37).

68 *The Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Report...* 1931, 40.

69 *The Hundred and Eighteenth Report...* 1922, 56-7.

70 *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 37.

71 Cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-First Report...* 1925, 50, *The Hundred and Twenty-Fourth Report...* 1928, 49, *The Hundred and Twenty-Ninth Report...* 1933, 45.

72 Cf. *The Hundred and Eighteenth Report...* 1922, 56-57, *The Hundred and Nineteenth Report...* 1923, 56, *The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50.

73 Cf. *The Hundred and Eleventh Report...* 1915, 85, *The Hundred and Twelfth Report...* 1916, 73.

– W. H. Rainey, at the time – traditionally gave one of the lectures himself.⁷⁴ On the other hand, external mechanisms, such as the general press, especially the local press, were referred to by the BFBS itself as an important instrument for the circulation of the themes that dealt with that field and, of course, the Bible Society’s activities in general, doing so with mostly “very favourable comments”.⁷⁵

With a significant geographical breadth, the dynamics of the conferences with projections produced indeed a considerable impact, benefiting from a very positive reception. This openness is clear right from the beginning by the fact that buildings were made available to host these initiatives. Occasionally taking place in the evangelical Churches, the conferences were generally organized in public spaces, provided by the owners or local authorities for this purpose, and were held in various types of halls,⁷⁶ in theatres and cinemas,⁷⁷ in schools⁷⁸ and even in the Council Halls of some cities.⁷⁹ Spaces which in most cases were made available without any financial counterpart, reflecting not only openness but also an interest in the movement. The case of a conference in Elvas in 1915 illustrated this well:

Here Mr. Moreton held several good meetings in a small hall. Then the directors of the picture palace, which holds about 1,200 people, kindly granted us the use of the building free of charge, but stated that they paid a ground rent to the municipality for each show they gave. The mayor, however, cordially agreed with Mr. Moreton to forgo this rent, and let him announce a lecture on Bible work in Africa.⁸⁰

The audiences were repeatedly described by the hundreds,⁸¹ sometimes even thousands, often being stated that the provided space was not sufficient to accommodate all the interested public.⁸² Characterized by Moreton as “very encouraging”,⁸³ that activity motivated little or no opposition, and even allowed methods such as payment to a town crier to announce the conferences⁸⁴ and cases such as a petition addressed to the Bible Society’s Agent “asking that regular meetings should be held”.⁸⁵ Initially more sporadic, the conferences were gradually

74 In 1925 he accompanied Moreton to Viseu, where he spoke about “The Bible in Italy” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Second Report...* 1926, 52); in 1928 he was with the Superintendent in the Algarve. (Cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Fifth Report...* 1929, 27-28); and in 1930, gave, together with Moreton, conferences in Lisbon and Porto. (*The Hundred and Twenty-Seventh Report...* 1931, 40).

75 *The Hundred and Ninth Report...* 1913, 113. A trend that continued over the years, with references in the late 1920s to the opportunity to “advertise widely our work in the reports that appeared in the local newspaper.” *The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50-51).

76 From small meeting rooms to the spaces used by local Philharmonic Bands (cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Second of the BFBS* 1926, 51-2, *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report of the BFBS* 1934, 40).

77 Cf. *The Hundred and Twelfth Report...* 1916, 73, *The Hundred and Thirteenth Report...* 1917, 63, *The Hundred and Eighteenth Report...* 1922, 56-7, *The Hundred and Twenty-Second Report...* 1926, 51-52.

78 Cf. *The Hundred and Nineteenth Report...* 1923, 56.

79 Cf. *The Hundred and Eleventh Report...* 1915, 85-86.

80 *The Hundred and Twelfth Report...* 1916, 73.

81 In 1908, Moreton reported the presence of more than 500 people in Portalegre (cf. *The Hundred and Fifth Report...* 1909, 116); in 1915, in Abrantes, there were more than 250 in the public, in Ponte de Sor and Portalegre around 200 and in Elvas more than 700 (cf. *The Hundred and Twelfth Report...*, 1916, 73); in 1916, in Porto, there were 400 people (*The Hundred and Thirteenth Report...* 1917, 62); in 1925, Moreton and Rainey in Viseu had an audience of more than 800 people (*The Hundred and Twenty-Second Report...* 1926, 51); in 1926, in the conferences in Portimão, Olhão, Lagos and Tavira, there were, respectively 800, 1400, 2000 and 1200 people (cf. *The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50); and in 1933 more than 500 in Alcácer do Sal (cf. *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report Report...* 1934, 40).

82 In 1914, in a conference held in the City Hall of Mouriscas: “Half of the audience listened from the road, as there was no room for more inside.” (*The Hundred and Eleventh Report...* 1915, 86); and in 1933 Moreton reported on the visit to Algarve: “It is extraordinary to see how the people pour in and listen with the deepest attention, although many have to stand, as there are not enough chairs for them all.” (*The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 40).

83 *The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50-51.

84 Cf. *The Hundred and Nineteenth Report...* 1923, 56.

85 Cf. *The Hundred and Eleventh Report...* 1915, 86.

consolidated with a regular rhythm, with some of the cities being visited annually, and several of them being held day and night forcing Moreton to repeat the same conference multiple times a day, all because there was no space in the first session for all the interested.⁸⁶

Awakening the interest of the lower classes, whose access to that type of content was actively facilitated through oral communication and the use of slides, the BFBS Conferences simultaneously strived to reach a more literate audience and higher classes. Thus, referring to the large number of members of the “working class”,⁸⁷ Moreton consistently highlighted the presence of officers and military personnel, members of the Republican Guard (*Guarda Nacional Republicana*), representatives of administrative power, government officials, with more generic, but very frequent, references to the presence of “leading families” and “most influential people of the town”.⁸⁸ Also promoting this presence through the distribution of invitations,⁸⁹ this desire to reach the upper classes, which had already been expressed with regard to other areas of BFBS’ work in Portugal, achieved significant effectiveness in this context.

At the same time, this diversity in terms of attendance was also sought at the age level, by holding conferences for adults but also exclusively for children. From the more specifically organised work for the younger classes, a regular cooperation with the evangelical schools emerged, namely the Sunday Schools,⁹⁰ where Moreton sometimes replaced the lantern with slate, in the so-called “chalk talks” or “blackboard talks”,⁹¹ developing a technique to which his name would be associated within the Agency. Specific work was also done in the context of prison visits, already an integral part of the colportage circuit, but reinforced by the work of the Superintendent during those years through the inclusion of the lantern lectures in his visits to the various detention facilities.⁹²

The 1937 BFBS *Annual Report*, drawn up following the death of Robert Moreton, took stock of all that work:

A feature of Mr. Moreton’s public work was the lantern lecture, given not only in Evangelical churches, but also in schools and theatres ... Many tens of thousands of people were brought to a knowledge of the Bible and the Bible Society by his method ... The children would watch fascinated as with lightning rapidity picture would follow picture. When it was finished a sigh of regret would go up from all present.⁹³

That essential part of Moreton’s legacy in the process of integrating the Bible Society’s influence into Portuguese culture was, at the end of the 1930s, pursued by Paul Vallon, whose

86 Cf. *The Hundred and Fifth Report...* 1909, 116, *The Hundred and Eighteenth Report...* 1922, 56-7, *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 37. In order to get an idea of the considerable weight of that dynamic in Moreton’s functions at the service of the Agency, it should be noted that in 1933, the Superintendent held 65 Conferences, a number which excluded those specifically dedicated to schools (cf. *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 40).

87 *The Hundred and Thirteenth Report...* 1917, 63.

88 *The Hundred and Twelfth Report...* 1916, 73, *The Hundred and Thirteenth Report...* 1917, 63, *The Hundred and Twenty-Second Report...* 1926, 52, *The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50.

89 As was the case of the Algarve tour in 1926, where: “invitation to the gatherings was by ticket, and in every case the chief seats were occupied by the authorities and members of the best families in the town.” (*The Hundred and Twenty-Third Report...* 1927, 50).

90 Cf. *The Hundred and Twelfth Report...* 1916, 73, *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 37; *The Hundred and Thirty-First Report...* 1935, 43.

91 *The Hundred and Twenty-Eighth Report...* 1932, 37, *The Hundred and Thirtieth Report...* 1934, 40.

92 Cf. *The Hundred and Thirty-First Report...* 1935, 43.

93 *The Hundred and Thirty-Third Report...* 1937, 37.

strategy tended to focus that type of dynamic in the country's main cities, namely Lisbon and Porto, benefiting from the cooperation of the Portuguese Evangelical Alliance (*Aliança Evangélica Portuguesa*),⁹⁴ but limiting that way both the geographical scope of the initiative and the diversity of the public it reached.

The progressive inclusion of the Bible Society, an institution of British origin, and so-called “protestant” influence in the scope of Portuguese bookstores and fairs and its prominent presence in events and dynamics such as the Book Fair, reflect a declared objective of militant dynamization of the cultural and religious boundaries of Portuguese society, essentially structured through the promotion of the free access to Scripture and biblical study. The origins of the first Portuguese Bible Congress (1940) and the important roots of the history of Portuguese Protestantism, whose communities and leaders grew in close interconnection with the history of Bible circulation in Portugal, are to be found in the fulfilment of this purpose.

The process of implementing the Bible Society as an interdenominational movement allowed it to create its own space within the global missionary reconfiguration of the 19th and 20th centuries and in the process of religious differentiation underway in Portugal over the same period. By presenting to the country the essential problem of the plurality of Bible translations, as well as the vulgarisation of biblical texts, with all the questions of legitimation and reasoning which they raise, the activity of the Bible Society produced an important cultural impact on Portuguese society, but it also played an important role in stimulating the debate on religious freedom as a principle to be valued and a right to conquer. The possibility of selling the Bible in Portuguese and seeking universal access to it through the availability of a diverse editorial typology and various translations and revisions of the text, the dynamization of resources such as the Colportage and the Depôts and, finally, the progressive implementation of the Bible in the Portuguese cultural circuit were the result of decades of work by the Bible Society and not a given when it arrived in Portugal the moment from which, and for more than a century, it faced a complex and cyclical movement of exclusion and integration. The analysis of the history of the Biblical Society as an engine of socio-cultural diversification therefore highlights the place of difference, conflict and the coexistence of various truths, in the long process of secularisation and construction of the Portuguese society, during which the demand and recognition of the principle of religious freedom constituted a fundamental level.

94 *The Hundred and Thirty-Fourth Report...* 1938, 36.

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A carreira do Professor José Augusto Ramos marcou, na paisagem académica do nosso país e da lusofonia, o panorama da História da Antiguidade e dos Estudos Bíblicos, assim como várias gerações de historiadores, tradutores, investigadores, professores, pensadores e leitores. Com ele, aprendemos a pensar, a traduzir, a historiar. Estes dois volumes recolhem textos dos seus amigos, colegas, discípulos e alunos, em tributo à generosidade e influência de um Mestre, e guardam a memória institucional de um percurso de uma importância única para a Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa e para os esforços multisseculares de tradução da Bíblia na nossa língua.

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