



Alianzas resilientes: movimiento cooperativo portugués en la transición a los tiempos modernos (1867-1933)

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Resumen. Este artículo analiza la emergencia del movimiento cooperativo en Portugal a fines del siglo XIX y principios del XX, enfocando el legado premoderno revelado en el origen social de sus promotores, así como en los valores morales y objetivos propuestos. Se basa en una revisión exhaustiva de los actos y estatutos fundacionales de las sociedades cooperativas y en la comparación entre estos últimos y las normas escritas de las instituciones premodernas para la acción colectiva: los regimientos de los gremios de oficios y las posturas municipales de las comunidades rurales.

Los datos disponibles permiten sostener que las primeras cooperativas, después de las sociedades de ayuda mutua, fueron creadas principalmente por la comunidad artesanal, que utilizaba la cooperación para asegurar la continuidad de las antiguas prácticas. Las funciones cumplidas por los gremios artesanales, las hermandades, los comunes y otras instituciones premodernas fueron superadas por sus contrapartes modernas en un proceso de ajuste institucional al nuevo marco político y legal. De esta manera, se argumenta que, a pesar de la naturaleza diferente del movimiento de asociaciones voluntarias decimonónicas, la resiliencia del autogobierno, la mutualidad y el control social tiene que estar relacionada con la previa acción colectiva corporativa multiseccular.

Palabras clave: Análisis a largo plazo; Instituciones premodernas para la acción colectiva; Datos empíricos históricos; Legado histórico; Movimiento cooperativo portugués.

Claves Econlit: N00; N01; 035.

[en] Resilient alliances: portuguese cooperative movement in the transition to modern times (1867-1933)

Abstract. This article analyses the cooperative movement emergency in Portugal on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, focusing the pre-modern legacy revealed in their promoters' social origin, as well as in the moral values and purposed objectives. It is based on a comprehensive review of cooperative societies' foundation acts and statutes and in the comparison between these latter with the pre-modern institutions for collective action written norms – the craft guilds regimentos (regulations) and the rural communities posturas (municipal ordinances).

The available data allows one to sustain that the earliest cooperatives, following mutual-aid societies, were mainly created by the craft community, which was making use of cooperation to assure the continuity of ancient practices. The functions fulfilled by the craft guilds, the brotherhoods, the commons and other pre-modern institutions were overtaken by their modern counterparts in a process of institutional adjustment to the new political and legal framework. In this way, is argued that, despite the different nature of nineteen century voluntary associations movement, the resilience

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of self-governance, mutuality and social control has to be related to the previous centuries of corporate collective action.

Keywords: Long-term analysis; Pre-modern institutions for collective action; Historical empirical data; Historical legacy; Portuguese Cooperative Movement.

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1. Introduction

The concept of *path dependence* on institutional theory, and the broad consensus concerning the idea that *history matters* (Mahoney, 2000), have encouraged historians to explore the continuities perceived in the institutional frameworks and their role in the historical process. The return of the commons and guilds' studies was stimulated by this notion. Recently, within this trend of research the similarities between the medieval and the contemporary wave of new institutions for collective action are being explored (De Moor, 2013).

This article intends to highlight the pre-modern historical inheritance perceived on the emergent Portuguese Cooperative movement, since its legal recognition until the end of the liberal period. Although cooperatives were founded before and after this period, legal and political constrains did not allowed for a significant diffusion and development of cooperatives, both before the basilar law of July 2, 1867 and during the authoritarian regime, from 1933 until 1974.

Considering these historical endurances, it has to be remembered E. P. Thompson's thesis stressing how artisan ethics, centred on the exaltation of skilled labour, autonomy and solidarity, was at the roots of the labour movement (Thompson, 1963). The same author argued that the moral economy of the *Ancien Régime* deeply shaped contemporary mass movements, namely the cooperative movement (Thompson, 1971). Moreover, Antony Black has shown how self-determination and mutual values were carried over from the guilds to utopian socialism, especially by Proudhon, himself an apprenticed printer and a *compagnon* from the Jura (Black, 1988). Robert Putnam's statement that 'mutual-aid societies were built on the razed foundations of the old guilds, and cooperatives and mass political parties on the experience of mutual-aid societies' strengthened this argument (Putnam et al, 1993: 174).

Putnam's work encouraged historians to trace the line that connects traditional solidarities with the nineteenth-century popular associations, highlighting continuity between pre-modern and modern organizations (Rotberg, 2001: 8). More recently, and following other authors arguing that some prior experience with self-help organization and in self-governing institutions was especially valuable when starting a cooperative, Francisco Beltrán Tapia highlights social capital has a casual mechanism to explain the coincidence between the location of pre-existent commons and rural cooperatives (Beltrán Tapia, 2014).

In fact, continuity it is stressed almost as much as rupture on nineteenth century voluntary associations' historiography, which highlights how corporate collective action - considered as exclusive, self-enforced and autonomous (De Moor, 2008) and based on professional bonds continued to characterize the institutions emerging after the liberal revolutions (Maillary, 1990).

The methodology adopted in this article to highlight the historical inheritance of pre-modern institutions on the Portuguese Cooperative Movement foundation was to trace the evolution of collective action after the liberal revolution and to compare the purposes and the moral values revealed in the written norms of both the ancient and the new types of institutions. The first chapter, based on the most relevant literature on the subject, briefly focus the liberal regime challenge to the pre-modern social norms, how the craft and rural communities tried to replicate the ancient institutional designs in parallel with the diffusion of new types of associations encouraged by the utopian socialism and the liberal philanthropism.

In the second chapter, the historical data collected on cooperatives is compared with the acknowledged information on the pre-modern institutions for collective action. It as to be underlined that there are some significant limits in terms of historical empirical data. Only the *regimentos* (regulations) of Lisbon craft-guilds were collected and published and commons written rules do not exist at all. To surpass this restrictions, it was performed an exhaustive research on the *posturas municipais* (municipal ordinances) published at the beginning of the eighteen century, in which a set of rules concerning trades and common property are still detailed.

Concerning cooperatives, the larger set of historical sources are the foundation acts' and the statutes of all the 851 cooperatives legally recognized from the basilar law of 1867 to the imposition of an authoritarian regime in 1933, which were published on the *Diário do Governo* (government gazette). This documents provides relevant data concerning the pioneers' social origin, the social alliances enhancing the movement's emergency, its purposes and related moral values.

Despite its limits, the available data allows one to sustain that the functions fulfilled by pre-modern institutions for collective action were overtook by their modern counterparts in a process of institutional adaptation to the new political and legal framework in which it is perceived the resilience of the ancient regime moral values constraining the economic change (NORTH, 1990).

2. Resilient alliances: institutions for collective action between the *ancién* regime and modernity

Before the liberal regime consolidation in 1834, the corporative organisation of Arts and Crafts, as well as the municipalities, played a prominent role in Portuguese society. As the medievalist António Hespanha argued: 'The most important result of corporate organization was to succeed in changing the external regulation of craft work - on price, quality, quotes to produce, distribution of raw materials - to a self-regulation done by the craftsmen and therefore more favourable to their interests' (1982: 195). To belong to these institutions, i.e. to acquire the qualification and authorisation to pursue a trade, craftsmen were also

obliged to belong to the craft brotherhood. These latter played an important role in the sphere of social protection and public health through mutual-aid and an extensive network of hospitals (Pereira, 2012b). Craft guilds also ensured artisans' political participation, being represented in the municipal councils and an active voice regarding the government of the mechanical trades, but also the supply and price of foodstuffs (Langhans, 1942).

Rural communities also enjoyed self-government powers, expressed in the capacity to choose magistrates and local officials and to exercise government over common-pool resources. User groups, such as *concelhos de vizinhos*, survived in the mountain areas until the end of the twentieth century but in most of the country their functions were taken over by the municipalities. Nevertheless, decisions concerning these assets entailed broad consensus obtained in extended meetings (Neto, 2010). In the countryside, brotherhoods and fraternities were responsible for social and spiritual protection (Lousada, 1999) and also for schools, medical assistance and agricultural credit (Lopes, 2010).

According to Portuguese historiography, at the end of the *Ancien Régime*, the rules and traditions constraining economic activity were challenged by market expansion. This process culminated in the liberal revolution, followed by the craft guilds extinction (Pereira, 2012b). At the same time, through successive administrative reforms, the autonomy of the rural populations was progressively subjugated to that of the central government (Oliveira, 1995), whilst common-pool resources were encroached upon by the expansion of private property resulting from population pressure and changes in livestock systems (Neto, 2010). The decline of the brotherhoods and fraternities from the late eighteenth century onwards was intensified by the government's oversight and property confiscation (Lopes, 2010).

However, corporate and communitarian bonds proved to be resilient, enhancing a set of new institutions for collective action. The first forms of association to arise in the liberal period were the mutual-aid societies and the mutual cattle insurance associations. Based on ancestral practices of reciprocity, both sought to avert the risks associated with the fragile livelihoods of artisans and farmers.

The first, mainly pursued by craftsmen, were intended to replace the old forms of social protection, clearly inheriting the corporate institutional norms and codes that were reflected in their professional composition, internal hierarchies, training functions, and religious behaviour, among other features (Pereira, 2012b). These primordial associations were characterised, above all, by their multi-functionality, sometimes combining mutual-aid with economic cooperation by organising collective work for their jobless partners and by investing their profits in insurance funds (Goodolphim, 1889).

Mutual Cattle Insurance Associations spread out among rural communities replacing ancestral conventions present in the municipal ordinances, under which farmers allocate the value of any ox or cow that died of disease or disaster (Langhans, 1938). The mutual cattle insurance associations tended to assume a small size - an average of one hundred members managing a mutual fund that would ensure compensation for the loss of large animals. According to Bugalho Pinto, a contemporary scholar studying these associations, these practices were promoted by floating populations which, in his view 'have a superior intellectual

level and illustration ... due to the well-known circumstances of a large number of farmers who are or have been city workers ...' (Pinto, 1920: 464).

Prior to the legal recognition of economic cooperation, a number of mutual banks appeared, replacing a function previously performed by brotherhoods and fraternities. *Montepio Geral* was founded in Lisbon in 1840, followed by some rural banks such as the ones in Serpa (1840) and in Angra do Heroísmo (1845). The latter remained connected to a brotherhood -*Misericórdia*- transferring its profits into social assistance and protection (Rosendo, 1996).

Among the outbreak of voluntary associations, the *Sociedade dos Artistas Lisbonenses* stood out. It was founded by a heterogeneous set of artisans on January 17, 1838. Under the guise of a mutual-aid association, according to the new political and legal framework, it established an institutional design very similar to the ancient corporative organisation. As the original statutes from 1838 illustrate, the main objective was to replace the House of Twenty-Four², managing apprenticeships and skills.

However, in parallel with the ancient regime institutions resilience, new ideas and proposals were introduced in Portugal, such as the idea of social control over the means of production and distribution as a way to achieve a collective independence (Thompson, 1963). In the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1848, the views of Louis Blanc, Proudhon and Fourier were widely disseminated by progressive intellectuals in the national context. These philanthropists advertised associations as a way to mitigate the harmful effects of liberalism, namely the concentration of capital and speculation (Brandão, 1850). They were the founders of the newspaper *Ecco dos Operários* (Workers' echo) and played a major role in the origin of the *Centro Promotor de Melhoramentos das Classes Laboriosas* (Centre for the Promotion for Improvements of the Working Classes) in 1852.

This new structure, founded in the living room of the old *Sociedade dos Artistas Lisbonenses*, and gathering together Lisbon's mutual-aid associations, however, was not much different from its predecessor, reflecting once more the House of the Twenty-Four institutional design. As revealed by the statutes project, published on the *Ecco dos Operários* on July 16, 1850, the association aimed: to control apprenticeship and skills management by replicating the corporative practices; to enable access to credit by creating a savings bank; to satisfy the requirements for education and modernisation by promoting art studies, a library, and a museum of machines; to organise mutual-aid in sickness and old age through a *Montepio*; and to provide raw materials and markets for members' products through its own agency.

Meanwhile, *Ecco dos Operários* and the newspaper *Centro Promotor de Melhoramentos das Classes Laboriosas* were performing an important role in spreading new ideas and international experiences. They publicised cross-border innovation and success within collective action spheres, such as the Parisian workers' associations. Access to this information was enabled by transnational

² The Lisbon's House of the Twenty-Four was composed of two representatives from each of the twelve crafts guilds and was established in 1383 in order to allow artisans to participate in the city government. This model was replicated in all major urban centres and in the smaller clusters was named the Houses of the Twelve.

contacts with similar movements. These early experiences and proposals played a key role in enacting one of the necessary conditions for institutionalised collective action - legal recognition. The legislator himself, Andrade Corvo, was part of this philanthropic movement sponsoring working-class self-help in accordance with the nineteenth-century liberal spirit³.

The cooperatives' basilar law of July 2, 1867 was deeply influenced by the Provident Societies Act of 1852 and the Rochdale principles, as the legislator underlines. It conceived cooperatives as associations (...) instituted in order to mutually assist partners in the development of their industry, credit and domestic economy', based on the principle of mutual cooperation between 'classes living of their labour' or 'those who work in small industry'⁴. This characteristic distinguished the first legal framework from its successor, the commercial code of 1888, according to which cooperatives were defined simply as 'specialized societies due to the variability of their capital and number of members'⁵, perverting "the essential nature of the institution, by not respecting 'the practice of solidarity' (Andrade, 1981:16).

In short, the current state of knowledge on the period between the guilds extinction and the cooperative movement emergence allow one to conclude that immediately after the compulsory abolition of the craftsmen's formal institutions, the pre-modern social networks gave rise to new associations, tolerated by the new political and legal framework, such as mutual-aid associations. In Lisbon, the main craft and industrial centre, artisans created a structure that met exactly the same purposes and united the same professional groups as the ancient corporative organization. This federation never ceased to exist throughout the nineteenth century and early twentieth century and played an important role promoting the cooperative ideal. The legal recognition of this grassroots movement emphasises the specificity of this societies, based on mutuality, framing these ancient practices in the liberal principles of *self-help*.

Nevertheless, and despite the links bridging the pre-modern craft-guilds and the first wave of cooperatives' creation in Portugal, it was unambiguous the rejection of the regression to ancient corporations. On the contrary, the legislators aimed to promote 'spontaneous and free association supported by the conscience of the collective value of the will and cooperation of individual strengths, based on mutuality or reciprocity'⁶.

3. Cooperative movement emergency: pioneers, purposes and moral values

From 1867, cooperatives start to be created, first on Lisbon and Porto industrial clusters, and afterwards across the country. By comparing urban population growth with cooperatives diffusion, using the locations listed in the foundation acts, is

³ Coleção legislação régia, Livro 1867: 539-442.

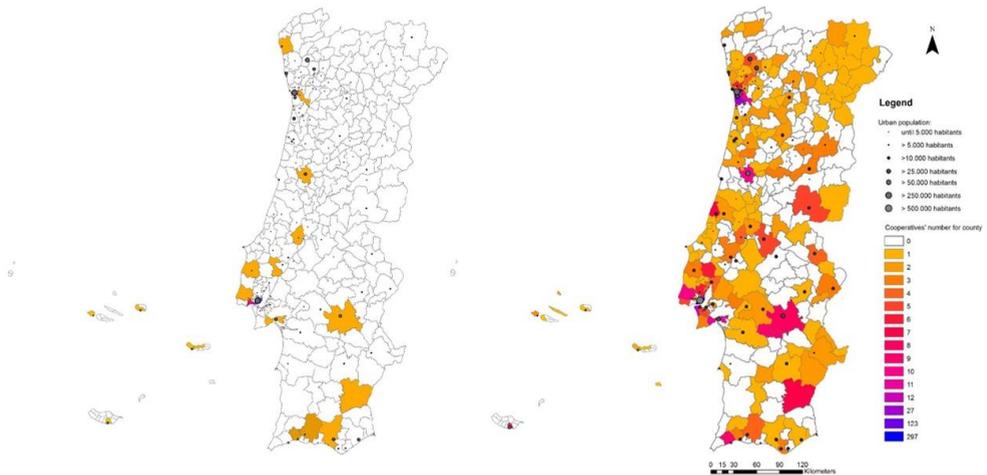
⁴ Coleção de documentos acerca de sociedades cooperativas. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1871.

⁵ Carta de lei de 28 de Junho de 1888. Coleção legislação régia, Livro 1888: 223.

⁶ Parecer dado pelas Comissões de Comércio e Artes e de Legislação, reunidas sobre a proposta de lei de sociedades cooperativas. Coleção de documentos acerca de sociedades cooperativas. Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1871: p17-18.

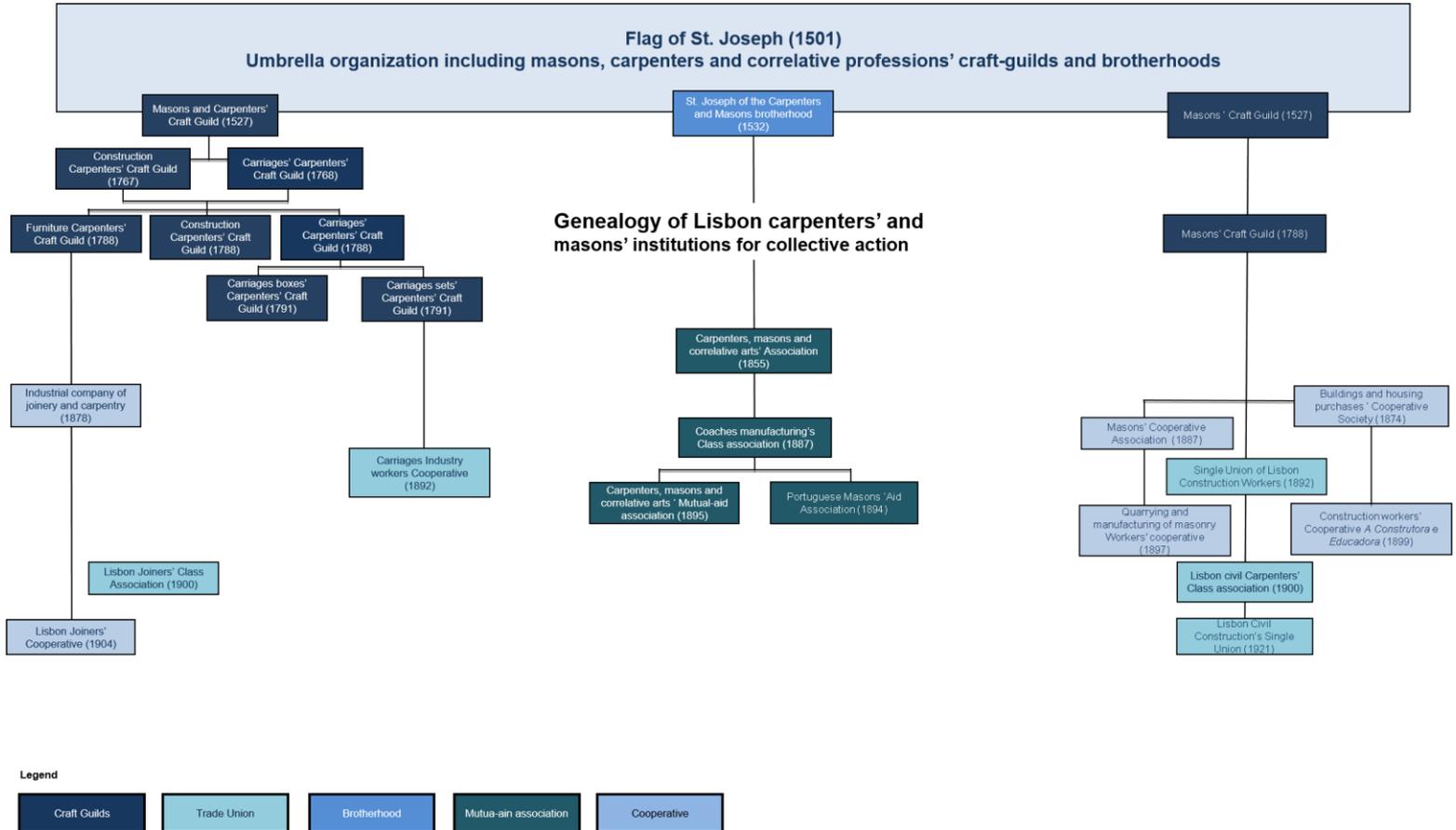
possible to glimpse a progressive dissemination of these societies alongside urbanization process. The cooperatives diffusion, as happened with craft-guilds (De Moor, 2006), seem to confirm the important role of the artisans' and urban workers' movement on cooperatives emergency.

Map. 1. Cooperatives founded until 1890 and until 1933 versus urban population according to the census of 1890 and 1930.



Cooperatives' genealogy, taking the pioneers' profession as criteria, also suggests that nineteenth century cooperatives were part of a powerful movement of professional reorganization within craft community. Taking the Portuguese capital as a case study, a significant number of cooperatives joined trades that were previously united on the corporate organisation. This applies to at least 49 cooperative societies bringing together tailors, shoemakers, coopers, and weavers, among others crafts. This process occurred in parallel with the dissemination of other types of formal institutions such as mutual-aid and trade unions, within which ancient artisans' networks were also reactivated (Mónica, 1979; Pereira, 2012b).

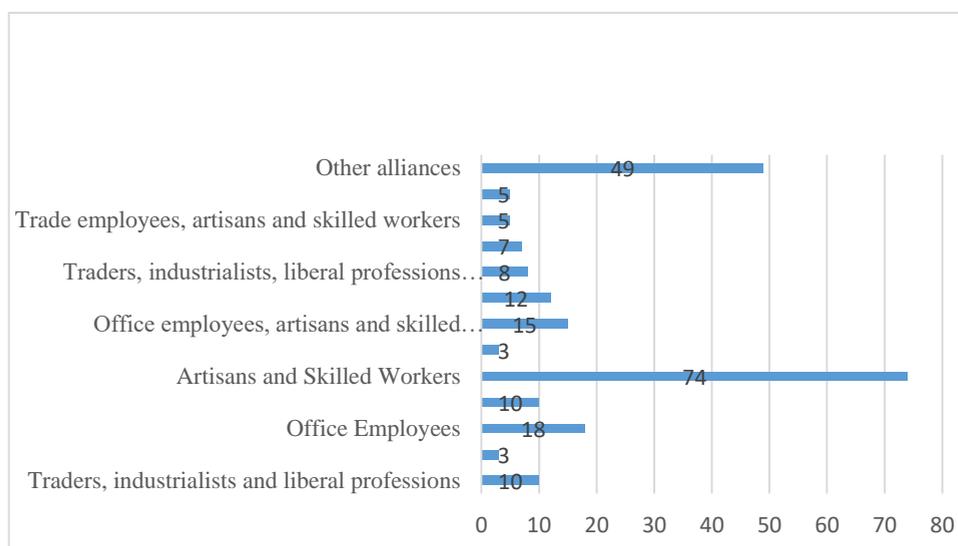
Figure. 1. Genealogy of Lisbon carpenters' and masons' institutions for collective action.



Adapting the historical categories listed by William Sewell (1985), to the set of professions stated in the same sources⁷, is possible to deep the analysis on the strata and social alliances promoting these cooperative experiences in the two main cities as in the countryside⁸. Despite the country's dominant rurality, cooperative pioneers were mainly craftsmen evidencing the strength of the ancient networks connecting this professional community.

In Lisbon, as Graph 1 shows, these strata were responsible for the foundation of 33% of all cooperatives. Artisans and skilled workers were also present in 65% of the inter-professional groups promoting these projects. In Porto, the craft community was the sole promoter of 30% of all cooperatives and was involved in over 22% of the projects carried out by different social alliances.

Graph. 1. Professions and social alliances as stated by the Lisbon cooperative founders (1867-1933).

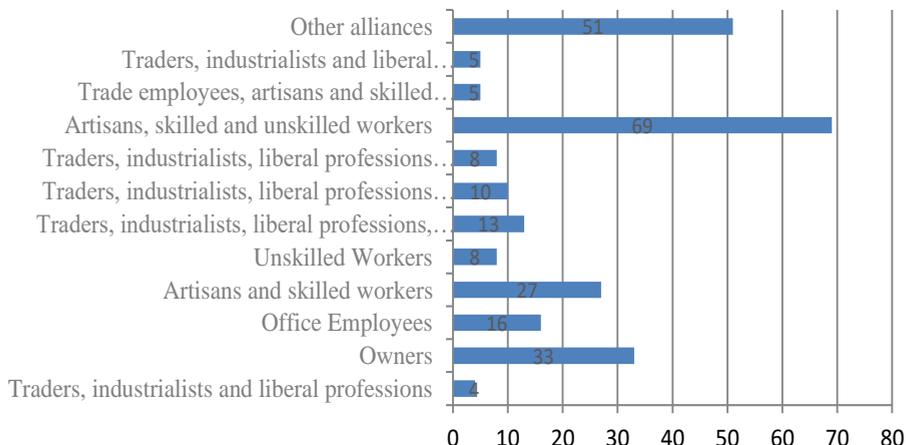


As in the major cities, countryside cooperatives were primarily promoted by artisans and skilled workers. Graph 2 show that, apart from 12.8% which were founded by proprietários (owners) - an undefined concept that includes everyone from peasant to landlord - 10.8% of rural cooperatives were exclusively founded by craftsmen and they were involved in 46% of the inter-professional alliances in the original cooperative experiences.

⁷ Businessmen and professionals; rentiers; sales and clerical employees; small businessmen; artisans; service workers; maritime workers; agriculturalists; miscellaneous. In this analysis, taking into consideration the Portuguese social structure at the dawn of the twentieth century, I grouped: 1) traders, industrialists and liberal professions; 2) Owners and tenants; 3) Military; 4) Office Employees; 5) Trade Employees; 6) Artisans and skilled workers; 7) Maritime and fishermen; 8) unskilled workers.

⁸ It as to be noticed, that the literature on nineteenth century Portuguese social movements only excludes from the rural context the urban areas of Lisbon and Porto, considering that in the other cities, like Coimbra, Évora or Braga, the surrounding countryside was dominant (Tengarrinha, 1992).

Graph. 2. Professions and social alliances as stated by the countryside cooperative founders (1867-1933).



Artisans and their fellows, however, had to adapt their strategies to the new regime and legal framework. According to the basilar law of July 2, 1867, cooperatives could: buy to sell to the members and outsiders all the necessities, seeds, fertilizers and raw materials; buy to rent only to members' machines and tools necessary to work; organise workshops and sell its products; sell by commission the members' products; build houses to the members; and to perform credit operations.

This legal framework allowed for the foundation of 851 cooperative societies in Portugal with different goals. By comparing cooperative purposes with the acknowledged pre-modern institutions for collective action functions and practices, one can infer that the corporate strategies were being adapted to the new political and legal framework.

Urban cooperatives, like their pre-modern predecessors, were characterised by their multi-functionality. Only 27.5% specialised in only one activity. Cooperation purposes in the sphere of production were present in 44% of all societies. By promoting the collective ownership of the means of production, cooperatives sought to replace the collective management of another common-pool resource - skills (De Moor, 2008), and to perpetuate the indissoluble union between craftsmen and their means of production (Pereira, 2012); something that corporate regulations prevented by limiting the number of apprentices and officers that each master could employ as well as the number of *lojas* (shops) they could manage.

This strategy was adopted by individuals that continued to self-organise in societies in which the specific condition to obtain membership of belonging was to be part of the 'class' - meaning a trade. Furthermore, the ancient strategies regarding apprenticeship control were not neglected since 17% of cooperatives had

professional instruction as one of their purposes. It was the case of *Indústria Social* (Social Industry), founded by Lisbon metalworkers in 1871, intending to provide 'industrial schools to professionally train partners and employees in manufacturing'. (*Diário do Governo*, September 11, 1873).

Table. 1. Comparison between pre-modern and modern institutionalized collective action in urban context.

Pre-modern ICAs functions and practices	Nineteen and early twenty centuries urban cooperatives' purposes, according to the statutes published on the Government Gazette (1867-1933)
Craft-Guilds	Cooperation in the sphere of production
Collective management of common-pool resources, including apprenticeship and skills (De Moor, 2008; Halpern Pereira, 2012)	Collective ownership (44%) Professional training (17%)
Wholesale acquisition and distribution of raw material (Langhans, 1938)	Raw materials supply (28%)
Municipalities	Cooperation on the sphere of consumption
Price-fixing (Langhans, 1938)	To establish affordable prices (52%)
Quality and weight control of Food Products (Langhans, 1938)	To provide their members with foodstuffs of good quality and exact weight (52%)
Brotherhoods and confraternities	Cooperation on the sphere of credit, assistance and providence
Assistance in case of poverty (Lopes, 2010)	To create mutual-aid funds (30%)
Hospitals management (Lopes, 2010)	To support hospitals and pharmacies (22%)
Credit operations (Lopes, 2010)	Credit operations (37%)

Alongside 'production cooperatives', a number of societies were formed to acquire raw materials and the instruments necessary for work - a purpose present in 29% of the statutes. This goal was normally related to the possibility of small producers jointly selling their products - which includes 27% of the objectives statutorily recognised. These strategies reflect the artisans' reaction to the spheres of production and trade dismantling, something that corporate standards constrained to avoid competition and speculation. As a petition letter from 9 de Janeiro de 1634 of the Lisbon *algibebe*s argued, 'all the craft guilds in the city had *compradores de ofício* (trade buyers), elected all the years ...'. In the absence of this mechanisms 'the richer masters may sell their products at any price'⁹.

In fact, as E. P. Thompson already emphasised, pre-modern values of common good and fair price could also be at the origins of the nineteenth century cooperatives (1971). Actually, 52% of the Lisbon and Oporto consumer societies had as their purpose, to 'provide their members with foodstuffs and ordinary commodities of good quality, exact weight and affordable price'. The reference to quality and exact weight cannot be dissociated from the municipalities' functions, in particular those normally required by the guilds representatives, such as the

⁹ The *Algibebe* official's petition letter, 9 de Janeiro de 1634. *Livro 3º do Registo dos Regimentos*, p331.

creation of special institutions aimed at controlling the products weight and quality¹⁰.

As the above mentioned functions, the small capital mutuality to enable credit accessibility, a purpose of 37% of the Lisbon and Porto cooperatives, was also not a novelty. As mentioned in the previous section, brotherhoods and fraternities played this role during the *Ancient Régime*. The decline of these institutions, as stated by some professional group associations, justified the emergence of new associations for such purposes¹¹.

Finally, reciprocity in assistance and social protection, a purpose of 30% of Lisbon and Oporto cooperatives, can also be related to the brotherhoods functions, to which an artisan had to belong in order to have its place in the craft-guild. These societies intended to provide members with medical care, pharmaceutical products, and mutual-aid in case of illness, disability, unemployment and imprisonment. In some cases, pecuniary help included maternity allowance and lactation. Some associations also intended to create nurseries and sanatoriums, and progressively introduced the idea of a pension.

The relationship between economic cooperation and social protection can be observed in a broader scale in the creation of mutual banks by mutual-aid associations whose aim was to invest the profits in social protection¹². In 1916 this trend gave rise to the League of Mutual-Aid Associations, a cooperative aimed at developing the pharmaceutical industry to provide for its members¹³. This model was inspired by the Caixa Económica de Angra do Heroísmo, a mutual-bank whose profits were invested in the brotherhood civil hospital¹⁴, a practice dating back to the medieval fraternities which sustained hospitals and insurance with the partners' contributions but also with the profits from their credit operations (Lopes, 2010).

The main difference between urban and rural cooperatives during the liberal period was the fact that the latter intervened mainly in the sphere of consumption, an area of cooperation that many authors consider to be related to the new requirements of the urban populations (Hilson and Neusinger, 2017). However, looking at countryside municipal ordinances one can infer that the regulation of the quality, weight and measure of commercialised products was one of the municipalities' central functions, namely via *casas do peso* (weight houses), an institution designed to 'prevent fraud',¹⁵ *casas do Peixe* (fish houses), or *casas da Farinha* (flour houses), 'prohibiting the sale of corrupt products'¹⁶. The old municipal ordinances also encoded various measures against hoarding, limiting the amount and timing of foodstuffs acquisition, and ensuring that wholesale purchase

¹⁰ Regimento sobre atafoneiros e moleiros de 16 de Agosto de 1564. *Livro das posturas antigas* (Book of Ancient Postures), p212-218.

¹¹ Statutes of the *Confraria de Santo Eloy*. Porto: Typ. Do Commercio, 1869.

¹² Statutes of the *Caixa Económica Madeirense*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of July 29, 1912. Reform of the original statutes of 1907; Statutes of the *Caixa Económica Liberal*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of July 26, 1912.

¹³ Statutes of the *Liga das Associações de Socorros-Mútuos*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of February 5, 1916.

¹⁴ Statutes of the *Caixa Económica de Angra do Heroísmo*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of August 16, 1912.

¹⁵ Municipal ordinances of *Castelo de Vide*, 1840, Art. n.º 97.

¹⁶ Municipal ordinances of *Elvas*, 1853, Art. n.º 29 e 72.

could only take place after the 'people are stocked'¹⁷. In times of scarcity, as established in some municipal ordinances, 'the Chamber officials could take the bread from owners in order to distribute it between the people'.¹⁸

Table. 2. Comparison between pre-modern and modern institutionalized collective action in rural context.

Pre-modern ICAs functions and practices	Nineteen and early twenty centuries countryside cooperatives' purposes
Craft-Guilds	Cooperation in the sphere of production
Collective management of common-pool resources, including apprenticeship and skills (De Moor, 2008; Halpern Pereira, 2012)	Collective ownership (44%) Professional training (25%)
Wholesale acquisition and distribution of raw material (Langhans, 1938)	Raw materials supply (15.2%)
Municipalities	Cooperation on the sphere of consumption
Price-fixing (Langhans, 1938)	To establish affordable prices (88.5%)
Quality and weight control of Food Products (Langhans, 1938)	To provide their members with foodstuffs of good quality and exact weight (88.5%)
Brotherhoods and confraternities	Cooperation on the sphere of credit, assistance and providence
Assistance in case of poverty (Lopes, 2010)	To create mutual-aid funds (5.1%)
Hospitals management (Lopes, 2010)	To support other institutions (7.8%)
Credit operations (Lopes, 2010)	Credit operations (38%)

As in the cities, only 29% of these societies were investing in a single activity, being multi-functional was the main feature of the cooperative movement in rural settings. Among the different stated purposes were: credit and capitalisation - 38%; education - 25%; supply of necessities for production, either industrial or agricultural - 15%; collective work - 23%; collective trade - 6%; agricultural modernisation - 5%; mutual-aid - 16%; other institutional assistance -8%.

Despite the similarities between urban and rural cooperatives, there are some specific cooperation experiences outside the big cities that deserve to be mentioned. Among those that stand out are the cooperatives that included agricultural insurance, namely cattle. Although not a large number, they illustrate the contacts and transfers between organisations emerging directly from the rural community traditions and the new cooperative proposals. It may also be indicative of these transfers that the purpose to 'protect farmers against natural disasters',¹⁹ is a function that is also related to the traditional codes of rural communities²⁰.

¹⁷ Municipal ordinances of *Borba*, 1855, Art.º 77.

¹⁸ Municipal ordinances of *Pedrógão Grande*, 1858.

¹⁹ Statutes of *Cooperativa de Crédito Agrícola de Loulé*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of January 3, 1888.

²⁰ In fact, and again making use of municipal ordinances, in addition to the collectivisation of the risks related to cattle ownership, rural communities shared the responsibility regarding, for example, fires, with all

In addition to these examples, the experiences that took place on Madeira Island regarding the management of water flows is worth highlighting. The promoters of these cooperatives intended 'to increase the volume of water and ... to make possible for the Héreos to collectively achieve justice against any offenses made to their acquired rights'.²¹ These purposes clearly reflect Ancient Regime heritage when there were specific organisations managing water flows, named *assembleias de levadas* (water flows assemblies), whose components were the Héreos.

Finally, the proliferation of the so-called *Casas do Povo* (peoples' houses), although obviously connected to the transnational phenomenon linked to the labour movements, should also be related to the resilience of communitarian bonds. *Casas do Povo* and other cooperatives with similar characteristics were created in several countryside villages accounting for a wide range of functions, some of them inherited from communitarian institutions such as the 'ancient custom' of 'leading the dead to the grave'.²² They also maintained social assistance and protection, like the brotherhoods and fraternities, as well as schools and libraries.²³ These region-based institutions intended to 'gradually organize the municipal life under the basis of cooperation'.²⁴

This general resistance to the production and trade spheres dissolution, and the ambition to suppress intermediaries and to preserve independence, had its highest expression in the *Federação Nacional das Cooperativas* (National Federation of Cooperatives) foundation in 1920, in the *União Central de Abastecimentos* (Supplies' Central Union), created in 1922, and in the *União das Cooperativas do Norte de Portugal* (Northern Portugal Union of Cooperatives), dated from 1932.

4. Concluding remarks

This article intends to deep the current state of knowledge on the Portuguese cooperative movement emergency, highlighting the continuities within institutionalised collective action. By tracing the associative movement path after the liberal revolution, it was possible to reconstruct the cooperative societies' genealogy and to frame it in a broader process. As shown, artisans' ancient ties were giving rise to a new set of associations, with the same social basis and goals as craft guilds, brotherhoods and fraternities.

The basilar law of July 2, 1867 legally recognized pre-existing practices within mutual-aid associations, also called 'resistance associations', and reflects the ideas and proposals discussed among the craftsmen's social movement. It expresses the adaptation of the corporate organization social norms of self-government, common good or mutual-aid to the new liberal regime, seriously threatened not only by the

households' heads being required to fight them with all their human and material resources. Código de Peniche de 1843, art. n.º 51.

²¹ Statutes of *Cooperativa da Levada do Pico do Arvoredo, da freguesia do Caniço*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of October 31, 1877.

²² Municipal ordinances of *Barquinha*, 1837, Art.º 135.

²³ Statutes of *Casa do Povo de Guimarães*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of March 6, 1906.

²⁴ Statutes of *Casa do Povo da Marinha Grande*, published in the *Diário do Governo* of July 9, 1920.

dominant ideology of free competition but also by the ongoing industrialization process.

This diploma allowed for the creation or legalization of 851 societies. The objectives stated in the legal statutes, their predominance and combination on urban and rural settings, show clear parallels with the pre-modern normative frameworks. In the urban cooperatives, self-government was the response to the pressure of a new organization of work unravelling production and trade and untying the producer from his means of production. Furthermore, and as mutual-aid movement also proves, insecurity related to wage labour was being mitigated resorting to the model fashioned by medieval brotherhoods and fraternities. More significant, however, is the direct relationship recognised between economic cooperation and social assistance, required in pre-modern times to integrate craft guilds, replicated on a large number of cooperative societies, and latter advocated by the cooperative movement as a political proposal²⁵.

Countryside cooperative societies tried to respond mainly to the market and monoculture expansion, which resulted in the decline of subsistence economies and a growing cost of living. Rural communities took advantage of the possibilities created by 1867 legislation to restore the norms and values imposed by municipal ordinances concerning the quality, weight and food prices. They also combined this function with other services previously provided by the pre-modern networks, such as funeral or cattle insurance, and in some cases, called upon this legal framework to turn ancestral practices regarding common-pool resources into legal statutes.

The present research on cooperative movement emergency and expansion allow one to argue that the professional bonds and networks as well as part of the functions fulfilled by pre-modern institutions for collective action were overtaken by late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries cooperatives, suggesting that the same strategies were elected to respond to a similar condition - market expansion (De Moor, 2013).

Considering the Portuguese case study, it has to be stressed that more research is needed to support more insightful comparisons and to highlight the casual mechanisms explaining these processes of resilience and adjustment. Additional data and analysis on the period after the liberal revolution, namely on the origins of mutual-aid movement may clarify how pre-modern resilient alliances adapted to the new legal framework and how other types of institutions for collective action emerged from these coalitions. Historical investigation progress on these processes will inform institutional theory concerning adaptation and change.

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²⁵ After the first world war, the *Federação Nacional das Cooperativas* widely defended the direct correlation between economic cooperation and social protection.

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