



## ÁLVARO SIZA AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF A TREND SCHOOL

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### ARTICLE HISTORY

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### ABSTRACT

The Portuguese architect Álvaro Siza (1933) was a student of the “Oporto School” between 1949 and 1965. In 1966, he began a teaching career there. He would play a key role in the school’s reputation and witnessed, as a student and as an educator, crucial changes in the teaching of architecture. He graduated in the transition from the “beaux-arts” system to the “modern” form of teaching architecture, and later, as a teacher, witnessed the transition from arts-school to college. As a teacher and as a practitioner, he was an example. He was actively involved in the struggle and debate for curricular, pedagogical and disciplinary autonomy of both school and architecture. At key moments, he left testimony of frank positions. With the transition of the arts-school to college, he would design, already in a period of great international recognition, the new facilities, of the now Faculty of Architecture. This article retraces Siza’s period of greater involvement in the “Oporto School”, between 1966 and 1990, allowing us to understand his contribution in the construction of the school’s pedagogical project, as well as his position and practice as an architecture teacher.

Keywords: Álvaro Siza. Oporto School. Teaching.

### RESUMO

O arquiteto português Álvaro Siza (1933) formou-se na “escola do Porto” entre 1949-1965. Em 1966, inicia carreira de docente na escola. Desempenharia um papel fundamental na reputação da escola e testemunhou, como aluno e como educador, mudanças cruciais no ensino da arquitetura. Formou-se na transição do sistema “beaux-arts” para a forma “moderna” de ensino da arquitetura e, mais tarde, como docente, participou da passagem de escola a faculdade. Como professor e como projetista, foi um exemplo. Envolveu-se ativamente na luta e no debate pela autonomia curricular, pedagógica e disciplinar, da “escola” e da arquitetura. Em momentos-chave, deixou testemunho de posições desassombradas. Com a passagem de escola para faculdade desenharia, já em um período de grande reconhecimento internacional, as novas instalações, da agora Faculdade de Arquitetura, coroando um período de intenso envolvimento com a “escola”. Este artigo refaz o período de maior envolvimento de Siza na “escola do Porto”, entre 1966 e 1990, permitindo entender a sua participação na construção do projeto pedagógico da escola, assim como a sua posição e sua prática perante o ensino da arquitetura.

Palavras-chave: Álvaro Siza. Escola do Porto. Ensino.

## INTRODUCTION: ÁLVARO SIZA AND THE OPORTO SCHOOL

Álvaro Siza (1933) began his training in the Architecture Section of the School of Fine Arts of Porto (EBAP) in 1949, one year after the 1st Congress of Portuguese Architects (1948), the congress of “modern architects”<sup>1</sup>. At that time, there were two schools of fine arts in Portugal: Porto and Lisbon (EBAP and EBAL), where architecture was inserted as an “autonomous section”. Both had an equivalent curriculum, coordinated by the nationalist regime<sup>2</sup>. Siza joined during the “beaux-arts” matrix study plan of 1932<sup>3</sup>, concluding the curricular part of the course in 1955, already with the new “modern” plan of artistic education in Portugal (1952-57) under implementation.<sup>4</sup> Collaborator of Fernando Távora (1923-2005) between 1955 and 1958, he started the Quinta da Conceição Pools design in Porto in 1958 and, in the early 1960s, he conceived, among other designs, the Leça da Palmeira Pools, classified in 2011 as a national monument<sup>5</sup>.

In 1965, Siza presented his project for the “competition to obtain the diploma of architect” (CODA), obtaining the classification of 20/20 values. In 1966, he started his career as an assistant at the school in Porto. This would have several different moments, including a self-withdrawal, between 1969 and 1976, in protest against the contractual and pedagogical conditions of the school and from the 1980s onwards, for the benefit of his design career. However, it would be a distance with proximity, because even if absent, he would participate in the fundamental moments of consolidation of the School.

In this article, we approach Álvaro Siza’s journey as a teacher and defender of a pedagogical idea for the Oporto School, reconstructing a history that is registered in an indirect and fragmented way, among various documents and essays on the history of the institution. The article includes an introduction to the teaching of Constructions by Álvaro Siza, who remained studying and relating the pedagogical idea of the School with the design of the buildings of the Faculty of Architecture of Porto (FAUP). Methodologically, it is articulated in a series of chronological moments, which reflect different relations between Álvaro Siza and the school: 1996-1969; 1969-1974; 1975-1980 and after 1980 (Tables 1 and 2).

## 1966-69: DESIGN AS DESIRE OF REASON

Álvaro Siza’s teaching career started in 1965-66, with his admission as assistant professor of Architecture Composition II in the 4th curricular year of the architecture course at the ESBAP.

Siza succeeds a series of assistants who were dear to the architect Carlos Ramos (1897-1969), director (1952-1967) and reformer of the ESBAP, such as Fernando Távora (1960-62), Arnaldo Araújo (1962-63) and José Carlos Loureiro (1963-65) (CANTO MONIZ, 2011:481). It was a new generation of architects, contemporaries of the 1952-57 education reform and influenced by the search for modernity promoted by the management of Carlos Ramos, who would enter the school, in his management, in the 1960s (CANTO MONIZ, 2011:269).

<sup>1</sup> First National Congress of Architecture, held in May-June 1948 in Lisbon. Organized by the National Union of Portuguese Architects and from which emerged the defense of the principles of modern architecture and the need for a technical and social appreciation of architecture and the teaching of architecture.

<sup>2</sup> Estado Novo (1933-1974), single-party, nationalist, authoritarian and corporatist political regime, with strong Catholic influence, which dominated Portugal until the April 1974 revolution.

<sup>3</sup> Reform of Artistic Teaching of 1930-32. It modified the teaching structure, introducing the figure of “emulation contests”, similar to that traditionally practiced at the École de Paris, with training organized in a first cycle (“Special Course”), with a duration of four years and annual basis, qualifying for the “Superior Course”, consisting of composition contests and theoretical courses. A two-year internship was required, followed by a design report, known as the Competition for Obtaining the Diploma of Architect (CODA).

<sup>4</sup> With the Reform of Artistic Teaching of 1952-57, it rose to the category of Superior, changing from EBAP to ESBAP. CODA, emulation contests and artistic teaching chairs for the benefit of the social and exact sciences have been abolished. The course was structured in three learning cycles: a first of two years and of a propaedeutic character, with disciplines of fine arts and social and human sciences; a second of three years of greater architectural specificity; and a last, of one year, for the elaboration of a “great composition”, after which there was a six-month internship and internship report (replacing CODA).

<sup>5</sup> Decree No 16/2011, DR, 1st series, No. 101, of 25 May 2011/ZEP, Ordinance No. 608/2012, DR, 2nd series, No. 206, of 24 October 2012.

The Teaching of Architecture in Portugal	1930	Álvaro Siza (Biography)
1932		1933 (N)
Artistic Education Reform (30-32: Beuax-Arts Reform)	1940	
		1949
	1950	Beginning in the Architecture course (EBAP)
1952		
		1955
1957		Completes the Curricular Part (ESBAP)
Artistic Education Reform (52-57: Modern Reform)	1960	
		1965 : CODA
		1966-1969
1969		ESBAP Project Assistant
Political and Cultural Crisis	1970	1969: Resignation
	1974	
Revolutionary Period	25 Abril	1976-79
Leaving of Fine Arts		ESBAP Constructions Assistant
Transition to University	1980	Teacher without schedule
FAUP		Carlos Ramos Pavilion
(Curricular Stability)		FAUP Buildings
	1990	
		Teacher without schedule
	2000	
		2003
		Retired
Suitability for Bologna (Convergence European Higher Education Area)	2010	
	2019	

Table 1: *The Teaching of Architecture in Portugal and Álvaro Siza's Journey*  
Table Sources: *Gonçado do Canto Moniz (2011); Raquel Paulino (2013); Álvaro Siza (2020)*

	Oporto Teaching	Oporto Positions	Others Teaching	Texts Teaching	Oporto Buildings	Awards Practice	Honoris Causa
1965		1					
1970		2 3					
1974 25 April		4					
1980				A			
1985				B		MvD Rohe	
1990				C		Pritzker	• •
				D			
1995						A. Aalto	• • •
2000							• •
2005							• • •
2010							• • • •
2015							•

Table 2: Álvaro Siza, Practice and Teaching at the Oporto School

Table Sources: Gonçalves do Canto Moniz (2011); Raquel Paulino (2013); Álvaro Siza (2020).

Caption: Oporto Teaching: Assistant of “Composition III” (1966- 1969); Assistant of “Construction I, II” (1976/77); “Construction II, III” and “Structures II, III” (1977/78); Oporto Positions: (1) Letter of “Resignation” (1969); (2) Communication to the School “Guiding Principles for a Thought Scheme” (1970); (3) Letter to the Principal of the ESBAP (1971); (4) Declaration to the ESBAP Assembly of Representatives (1978). Other Schools: EPFL Lausanne (1980); U. of Pennsylvania; U. de Los Andes, Bogotá; Harvard GSD. Teaching Texts: Eight Points (1983); The importance of drawing (1987); FAUP: exterior image (1991); About Pedagogy (1995). Oporto Buildings: Carlos Ramos Pavilion (1985-86); FAUP buildings (1986-1992). Awards Practice: Mies Van der Rohe (1989); Pritzker (1992); Aalvar Aalto (1998). Honoris Causa, see note<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Honoris Causa de Álvaro Siza: 1992, Universidade Politécnica de Valência; 1993, École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne; 1995, Universidade de Palermo/Universidad Internacional Menéndez Pelayo/Universidad Nacional de Ingeniería; 1997, Universidade de Coimbra; 1999, Universidade Lusíada do Porto; 2000, Universidade Federal da Paraíba; 2004, Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II; 2005, Universidade de Arquitetura e Urbanismo Ion Mincu; 2007, Università degli Studi di Pavia; 2008, Universidad de Palermo; 2010, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa; 2011, Universidade de Aveiro/Universidade de Sevilha; 2013, Politecnico di Milano; 2014, Universidade de Granada; 2015, Universidade de Évora.

There was a very in-depth study of analyzing the problems of a project, which was followed by a synthesis phase, with this idea that knowing all the problems in question, it was the time to start the project. And I took a first course like that, very committed. (...) I concluded,

after a year, that the work was very balanced, that is to say they were correct, there was no nonsense, but they were frustrating, most of them. There were differences, but the average was sad, not much interest. I thought it was not the right method and the following year I did a completely different experiment, in the sense that the solution hypothesis, in global terms, was both a starting point and a study that gradually increased the density of all kinds of problems and, therefore, the design followed the deepening of the problems and was flexible and moldable enough to accompany this gradual deepening” (SIZA, apud PAULINO, 2013:96).

Siza would continue, from 1966-67, a method of natural and simultaneous convergence between analysis and exploration of transformation hypotheses, which was developed through the parallel and non-hierarchical use of rigorous and intuitive means of representation, where the “exhaustive study was simultaneous with the development of an idea, with a somewhat instinctive component and of immediate enthusiasm and soon subjected to criticism” (SIZA, apud CANTO MONIZ, 2011:499). The interpretive and critical construction was developed continuously by the project, where “absorption, the understanding of everything that was at stake, accompanied the development of the drawing and bombarded the drawing with criticism and consequent alteration” (idem). A process that Siza identifies with the natural practice of the project and with the influence of Alvar Aalto’s texts when he “proposes projection not as a linear process, from analysis to synthesis, but as a continuous, open, complex and comprehensive process”, because “one does not learn to draw how to warp a ball, nor, to draw, knowledge has an order number” (SIZA, apud ALVES COSTA, 1979: 4, 5).

Siza privileges problems and programs close to his studio practice, proposing to students works similar

to what he was developing, or that he had developed in practice.<sup>8</sup> Pedagogically and methodologically, he benefited from his own empirical experience.

## 1969-74: DESIGN AS DESIRE OF INTELLIGENCE

In 1969, following a collective (and political) challenge against the situation of contractual uncertainty in which the assistants found themselves, Siza resigns<sup>9</sup>. Carlos Ramos (1897-1969) had left the school board in 1967, replaced by António Cândido de Brito (1904-1989), closer to the tutelage of Salazar<sup>10</sup>. In 1968 and 1969, student revolts broke out in Europe and Portugal and at school, the “rationality” imposed by the 1957 Reformation was progressively identified with the “reactionary” tutelage”.

The climate of general contestation and the removal of teaching assistants would provoke a deep crisis, jeopardizing the continuity of the school. This turbulence would lead to the concession, on the part of the tutelage, that the schools of Porto and Lisbon implement their own “experimental regimes”, curricular and pedagogical. This situation occurred in Porto between 1970 and 1973, being interrupted by the tutelage on the eve of the democratic revolution of April 1974.

Right at the beginning of the “experimental regime” process, at the end of January 1970, the ministry would authorize the reinstatement of former teachers. Shortly afterwards, the resigning teachers, including Álvaro Siza, presented a statement addressed to the school (TÁVORA et al, 1971), commonly called “guiding principles for a thought scheme”, in which they placed a set of conditions necessary for an “experimental regime”, of which we highlight:

<sup>8</sup> Offering students work, for example, for a consumer cooperative in Regado neighborhood (Porto, 1966), a parish church (Aldoar, 1967) and for a motel (Coimbra, 1968) which were programs that reflected works from his own office. Namely, the Centro Paroquial Antunes Guimarães in Matosinhos (1959), the Cooperativa de Lordelo (1963) and the design not built for a Motel in Coimbra (1967).

<sup>9</sup> Namely Alfredo Viana de Lima, Álvaro Siza, Arnaldo Araújo, Cristiano Moreira, Duarte Castel Branco, Fernando Távora, Jorge Gigante, José Carlos Loureiro and Pedro Ramalho. Siza presents with Ramalho.

<sup>10</sup> António Oliveira Salazar, head of state between 1932 and 1968.



The school should “be based on the principle of teamwork, in which criticism will be the norm of a creativity process”, which would encompass teachers and students, with “functional autonomy” and “secession in the Fine Arts system”;

The resumption of the course should include two bases: (i) “the foundation of the pedagogical work”; (ii) “the group structure”. The pedagogical work would be refined based on the existing structure, in successive annual adjustments, and the “group” should organize the teachers and students in «joint commissions”.

With the experimental reform, several teachers were reinstated, but not immediately Álvaro Siza, who, with Alexandre Alves Costa, Manuel Fernandes de Sá and Mário Brito refuse re-entry due to the lack of guarantees, denouncing, in a letter of April 1971, the bankruptcy of initial ambition of the experimental regime, due to the interference by the tutelage.

The first year of the experimental regime would implement suggestions from “guiding principles”, such as shared management between students and teachers, exemption from registration of absences, schedules and curricular structure in school years, for the benefit of a system organized in “groups and themes” (PAULINO, 2013:191), with the “integration of several materials structured around a central nucleus: the architecture design” (BANDEIRA, 2014:11). However, the “experience” would gradually collect internal opposition and the tutelage would come to block several structural points.

With the progressive limitation, instability increased, with divisions between teachers and between teachers and students. There was a climate of political contestation, “where all struggles, including disciplinary ones, were political struggles” (FIGUEIRA, 2002:58). About these years, Eduardo Souto de Moura (student between 1970 and 1980) wrote in his internship

report (1980): “the political learning of the system, the response of the Student Movement, May 68, make the simple conception of architecture as an artifact surpassed by a broader political-ideological analysis (...) projecting then becomes a complex cultural phenomenon. Drawing, passes the judgment that ‘the whole culture after Auschwitz is uncomfortable... it is the conviction that reality can be used for the most brutal irrationality’. It is fear, it is the ‘silence of the poets,’ it is the legitimate despair of not drawing” (BANDEIRA, 2014:15).

## 1975-80: CONSTRUCTION AS INTELLIGENCE OF DESIRE

The Carnation Revolution, from April 25, 1974, ended the authoritarian political regime, in force since 1932, and the school, like the country, embraced freedom and advanced to the elections.

Two lists were formed: the “yellow” list, supported by Álvaro Siza, who advocated a diversified formation in the 4th and 5th years of the course, which won the February 1975 election by two votes, but which abdicated to the “gray” list, supported among others by Fernando Távora and Alexandre Alves Costa. The latter defended a globally hierarchical curriculum, based on the project and an effective insertion in social reality<sup>11</sup>. The resignation of the winning list is explained by the urgency of the school community’s commitment to the SAAL Process (1974-1976)<sup>12</sup>, which provided an opportunity for revolutionary involvement in the “right to housing” issue of underserved populations. In this sense, in January 1975, the “Brigade of S. Vítor”, made up of Álvaro Siza, Domingos Tavares, Francisco Guedes and the students Adalberto Dias, Eduardo Souto Moura, Graça Nieto, Manuela Sambade and Paula Cabral, proposed to the SAAL Coordinating Committee the participation of teachers and students in the Technical Brigades (S. VÍCTOR, 1976).

<sup>11</sup> On the electoral process and the impact of the democratic transition on the ESBAP, see Raquel Paulino (2013) and Pedro Bandeira (2014).

<sup>12</sup> SAAL Process, or Ambulatory Service of Local Support, created a few months after April 25, 1974, aimed to address the housing shortage for underserved populations, involving teams of architects in processes of direct participation with the populations.

This direct involvement in mediation and construction processes, would lead to a reconciliation with the values of project and design, a situation for which Siza's action, with a firm defense of the means and disciplinary knowledge, would be exemplary.

The abrupt extinction of the SAAL in 1976 coincided with Siza's formal return to school, to be, at his option, assistant professor of the discipline of Constructions<sup>13</sup>. This return takes place at a time of institutional re-foundation and the implementation of a new study plan<sup>14</sup>. There is a vertical and horizontal hierarchical articulation, between years and chairs and areas, with a direct relationship between Project and Design, while History and Constructions also become "participants in the design process" and not merely "support instruments", as mentioned Manuel Fernandes de Sá (CANTO MONIZ, 2011:53). In this way, the discipline of Construction referred to project work and assessments could be discussed in class, year or learning cycle.

Siza's teaching in Constructions was paradigmatic of this approach to the design. Construction was not necessarily approached as technology in expository classes, but in a practical way, as a design exercise and as a question of design: in the "concretization of an idea there is a simultaneous process in the material definition of a work in its form, in its construction and in its organization of space" (PAULINO, 2010). For Siza, an architectural idea "must contain all the alternatives for its realization. An idea must not be abstract; it must have a floor, walls, openings" and in his classes, the emphasis was not on teaching "all techniques", but on the principle and experience of developing a "process of authorial reflection of an idea and its images, its realization, the ability to imagine materials" (SIZA, 1980, see Figure 2).

The pedagogical idea was to interconnect buildings and design, placing construction at the service of the design exercise and carrying out joint assessments. Not being possible a direct crossing, because the academic rhythms did not always coincide, the constructions developed their own project. For example, in 1978, Álvaro Siza and Alcino Soutinho (teachers of the Constructions discipline) presented students with a place and a small program. After visiting the site, the students had 4 hours to "sketch" a solution on opaque paper, which would then be questioned as architecture that is realized through the construction. They looked for an aggregating logic for the design: "it is thought that a very thorough teaching is indispensable to build in stone, wood or concrete. First of all, a logic is necessary" (SIZA, 1980).

Resuming their own initial training experience in a "beaux-arts" curriculum, Siza and Soutinho request an immediate "sketch" of a solution, simplifying the phases of the design for the benefit of greater development and concretization, valuing the ordered constructive matter, contextualizing the technological solution in the culture of the design. Design or construction teacher, Siza listened more than he spoke<sup>15</sup> and his role was to catalyze a critical question that would unlock an individual process: "avoiding the scythe" that could "cut what was still germinating" (SIZA, apud OLIVEIRA, 2017:9), he questioned, because when you have "an idea, it must contain all the alternatives for its realization" (SIZA, 1978).

In 1978, in view of the new threat to the school's autonomy by the central political power,<sup>16</sup> ESBAP's still architectural section is mobilized and Siza puts his position in writing, in a declaration of May 4,

<sup>13</sup> Siza mentions that teachers and construction classes were devalued in the school structure, having less importance as material and didactics with students. The beginning with the discipline of Constructions intended to counter this perception and reach the meeting with the Design (Siza, 2020).

<sup>14</sup> After revolution, 150 students enter the first year, tripling the previous limit. The increase in the scale leads to a return to more schooling, hierarchical, individualized teaching and organized with systems of absences and assessments.

<sup>15</sup> According to the testimony of the former student, architect professor Carlos Martins in May 2019.

<sup>16</sup> The 1978 crisis consists of the reaction to the intention of the ministerial tutelage to articulate the two schools in Lisbon and Porto in curricular terms and to the centralized initiative of passing the teaching of Architecture to the university scope.



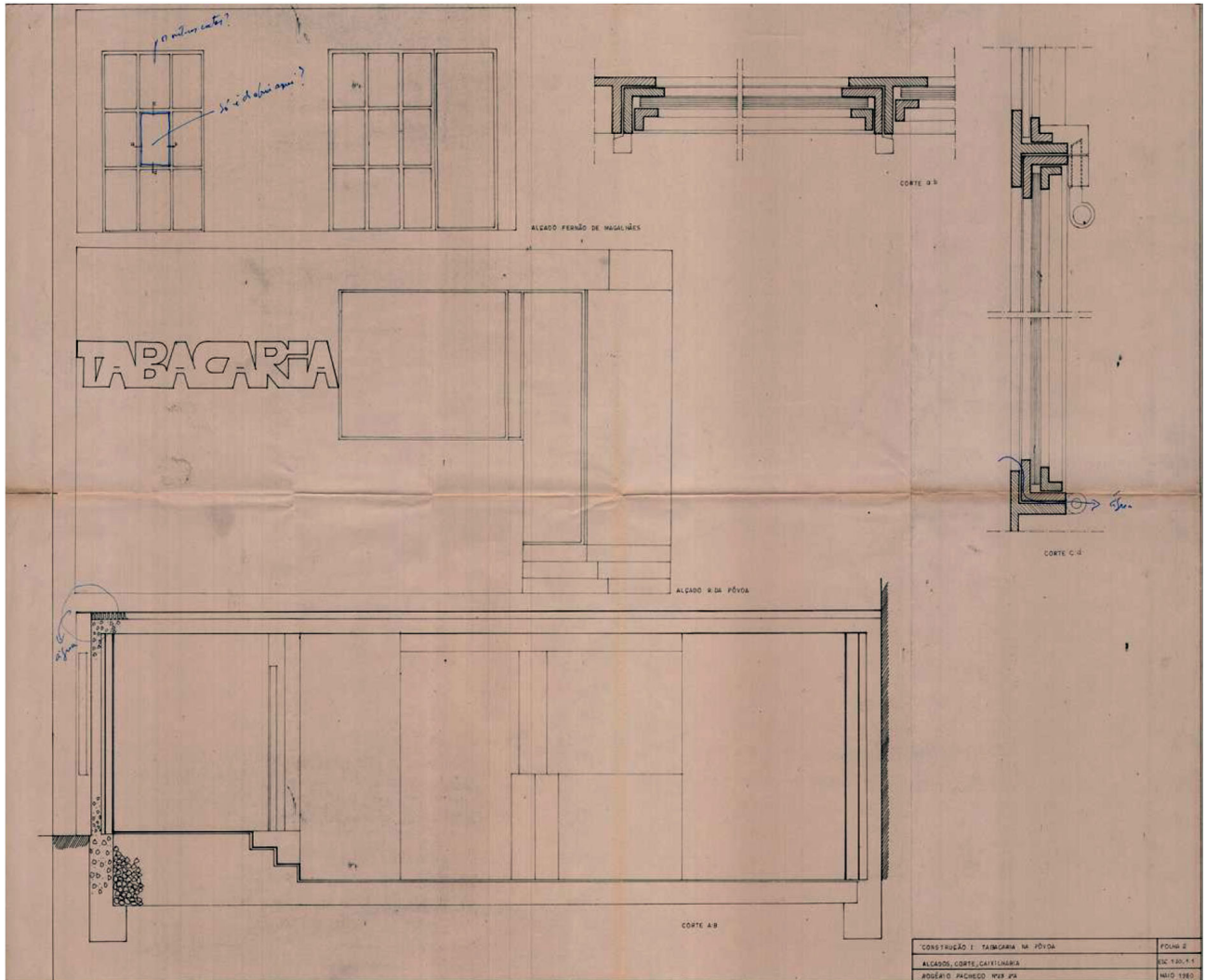


Figure 2: Rogério Pacheco, “Tabacaria na rua da Póvoa”, *Construções I*, 1979/80, Professores Álvaro Siza and Alcino Soutinho. Source: Archive CDUA-FAUP

1978, read at the assembly of representatives by Alexandre Alves Costa: he refuses the formation of “plastic syntheses based on the information that the knowledge of the human and exact sciences gives it”, demanding a “conscience of disciplinary autonomy”, where what is crucial to “understand and apprehend” is “the nucleus of disciplinary methodological instruments”. He refuses a curriculum with “massive and (literally) sleeping information” in favor of an initial “global and disciplinary approach, progressively made aware and informed”, where the acquisition of

knowledge will evolve from “fragments” guided by “a disciplinary will”, which reflects the “ability to build a continuous fabric of applicable knowledge”. This methodology would be crucial in the first years of the course, “where almost everything – not everything – is approached” (SIZA, 1978).

A design practice that is also a teaching method is renewed as a pedagogical centrality and becomes potentially distinctive from the school and the discipline.

Siza affirmed that there was a legacy in the school that embodied a “trend”, which demanded the defense and viability of all, against what he called decontextualized copies, “as technocratic and provincial caricatures”, which the central power wanted to impose. Whether in the Construction classes, where technology was associated with a cultural and aggregating idea of the design, developing a specific pedagogical method for the discipline; or in the defense of an idea of school, in which he refused imported models of realities and external disciplines, defending the pedagogical disciplinary autonomy, bearing in mind that this will implied the responsibility to point a way.

## 1980S: THE NEW SCHOOL BUILDINGS

Between 1979 and 1984, the architecture section was forced<sup>17</sup> was forced to separate from the Fine Arts and became a Faculty of Architecture (FA), integrated to the University of Porto (UP).

At this time, the increasing intensity of Siza’s practice progressively distances him from classes. However, at the same time, he will build the new school facilities, in a series of continuous actions: the restoration of the old house, annexes and garden of Quinta da Póvoa, on Rua do Gólgota (1983-86); the construction of the Carlos Ramos Pavilion (1985-86); the construction of the new faculty (1986-93).

With the separation of the Fine Arts, the school received the former farm of the Casa da Póvoa<sup>18</sup>. At first, next to the “invisible” recovery of the existing farm and garden,

a pavilion was built in the garden to accommodate immediate school needs, before the new facilities were actually built.

It was a multipurpose program for a temporary building, to accommodate pressing needs until the construction of the facilities of the newly formed Faculty, which was yet to be designed. Siza’s position and the circumstances of the design problem led to a definitive construction<sup>19</sup>, providing an interior patio and a succession of academic spaces in a reciprocal view, allowing a sensitive balance between the availability and quality of the internal area and the relationship with the garden and the historical memory of the place. The building closes in on itself; the work spaces are observed and separated through the glazed plans of the patio and the vertices- kneecaps of the U-shape. The size and scale of the building fit into the Quinta’s garden and the pavilion is comfortably intimate. The school, the classes, the students, recognize each other and share a place, as if everything were a single studio. The morphological arrangement and the spatial quality result from the exploration of a constellation of circumstances, with cultural and plastic resonances, which conform to the design’s mediation and are irrevocably validated as constructed matter, in a specific place.

Soon, the construction of the new building for 550 students began, supported by international guidelines for school programs<sup>20</sup> (SIZA, 2003). After a first solution, in a single building, close to the “school hall”, the project moves towards a more urban and fragmented morphology. Implantation, built profile, typology and built environment derive from an exploration of the circumstances of the place and are defined by the design

<sup>17</sup> The school is surprised by the passage to the Faculty. As per previous note. See about this process in Raquel Paulino, 2013.

<sup>18</sup> The plots and Casa do Gólgota were acquired by the State in 1984, and were handed over to the FAUP that same year. The plot and the intervention were integrated in the “General Planning Project for Polo 3 of the University of Porto”.

<sup>19</sup> According to António Madureira (2008: 30), “says, “it should be a building for classes but, on the other hand, it could in the future be reused as a design studio, study center, installation of student organizations, in short, anything from necessary and useful but not specific”. But: “It was a design with almost no program, almost without budget, almost without a future; in other hands, it would be a typical design case with almost no interest. Not in his hands”.

<sup>20</sup> The school would go from 350 to about 525 students, according to the Preliminary Program, defined by the Technical Support Group in 1983. It had as a supporting document the “Planning Standards for Higher Education Facilities” (UNESCO). The program generally comprised 8 classrooms for 15 students; 1 amphitheater for 160; 2 amphitheatres for 110; 34 classrooms with drawing boards for 15 students; 1 drawing room and model drawing of 100 seats; laboratories; Museum, Library, Reprography, Secretariat, Bar and Teachers’ Offices. See Siza 2003.

and the drawing, building a system of reciprocities, of mediation between elements not naturally similar, whether the historical, urban, typological and disciplinary memories or the functional and economic program, or the author's experimentation. In this process, the pedagogical space is rebuilt in greater mediation, which is the search for the poetic reason of the place.

In the new building, the separation into rooms denies the organization in "a large studio space, with almost no identification of school years or class", "Louis Khan, Artigas, Mies. Nobody thought it was right, we were in a time of recession: each studio must contain the number of students in a class and it must be an autonomous and closed space entity, although associated with a space for collective criticism of the works" (ALVES COSTA, 2003:29-30). The teaching spaces are the spaces of the design classes: one room per class and one building per school year. Drawing classes have their own place, symbolically at the top of the tallest tower. The History, Theory and Constructions units did not have specific

areas, using the Design classrooms. In addition, if the common spaces have a "baroque fluidity", the design rooms "are absolutely rigid" and "provocatively small" (TAVARES, 2003:40), contradicting the examples of large studio spaces, which were followed, at the same moment, in the building of the Lisbon faculty. Later, referring to this process, Siza stated "the examples of open space that I know... I couldn't agree less" (SIZA, 2001).

The morphology conditions the typology and crystallizes a program and a hierarchy, which is organized for academic years and around the rooms/studio, whose area would end up being smaller than the one defined in the reference program, having a capacity for about 15 students (Figure 3) and the work would be carried out on drawing tables whose implementation was clearly defined<sup>21</sup> in the space of the room.

The new building is primarily architecture. In addition, in this Being, it also assimilates the pedagogical project

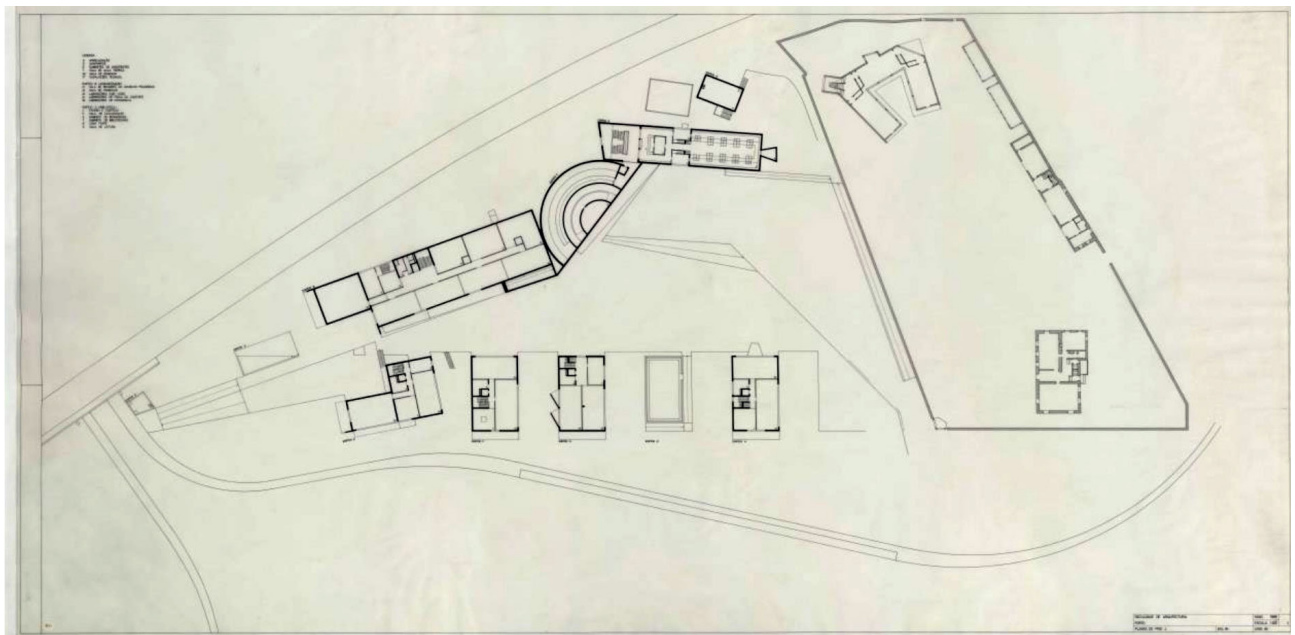


Figure 3: Álvaro Siza, Faculty of Architecture of the University of Porto, Porto, 1979-97 Floor plan 4, 05-1989. 1:200 Chinese ink on greaseproof paper 77,1 x 151,2 cm, Archive Arch. Álvaro Siza. Col. Foundation - Museum of Contemporary Art, Porto. Donation 2015. Image PT-FS-ASV-19-29-115-0007.

<sup>21</sup> According to Domingos Tavares (2003: 42), Siza proposed that the drawing boards should be screwed to the pavement.

and the didactic “trend”, mediating the gathering of work in small teams and the opening to large social spaces, including the city and the garden, where the debate is open and the playful dimension of the built form sublimates life in society.

## CONCLUSION: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRACTICE AND DIDACTICS

Álvaro Siza was present in more than half a century of the Oporto school’s existence, he was an important actor in times of crisis, taking clear positions in defense of the school’s autonomy and discipline. He experienced the transition from school to university and took a stand against imports from other areas of knowledge and other cultural places.

He defended the institutional autonomy of the school to build and manage its own path. He defended a disciplinary autonomy for architecture to find the methods and instruments necessary for its practice and teaching. He defended a critical local emancipation, in the sense that the responses to be given by the school should consider the specificity of its own process and historical circumstances, following the attitude that it assumed in its designs.

Likewise, his position in relation to teaching reflected his position in relation to practice.

He questioned imported processes (from the country and from the discipline) and rebuilt himself reflecting the practical experience of his close group. When he returned to school, after the April 1974 revolution, to teach Constructions, he culturalized technology, emphasizing the method, the logic of thought and the drawing, the representation, as specific instruments of research in architecture.

He argues that the teaching of architecture takes place around the design, a specific place for a synthetic way of thinking about architecture and for the re-signification of the multiple specialized knowledge that it belongs

to: the architect is a “specialist of non-specialization” (SIZA, 1998).

His design and teaching methodology is both rational and intuitive. It is the “authentic method”, which does not evolve linearly from analysis to synthesis, but “as a continuous, open, complex and comprehensive process” (SIZA, 2009). In it, the drawing takes on multiple forms, with a “constant exchange between the rigor of the layout and the sketches”, in a movement of “communication” between the rigor and the “ideas that constantly change with the progressive knowledge of the program and the context” (SIZA, 1978). Drawing, Theory, History and Construction are autonomous fields and tools for the synthesis of the design, so that when he teaches Constructions, he subordinates the technique to the culture, the specialization to the scope, placing the students to design.

In the design of school spaces for the new FAUP, he uses the same procedure for assimilating the conditions and values a morphological idea that surpasses them. The pedagogical legacy also resides in this quality and example. It also results in a concrete order, dimension, scale and environment, which refer to a school of small studios, closed in themselves, ranked by learning year and in didactics of great proximity. FAUP’s pedagogical example was crucial for the new schools in Coimbra (1989) and Minho (1996)<sup>22</sup>. In these, different contexts and circumstances provided other teaching spaces, the design maintained the didactic centrality and there are no “school hall”, but the spaces are linked in greater continuity and in larger rooms.

As we have seen, Siza defended in the late 1970s and early 1980s a specific trend for the school in Porto, but recognized that there would be others, in other contexts or with other interpretations. In Lisbon, at the same time, the path was different and the school too. However, time has changed conditions, but Siza’s proposals resonate significantly, especially with the full entry of architecture into the research university. In the face of

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<sup>22</sup> The Coimbra course started in 1988/89 and, since 1989, it occupies a part of the old Colégio de S. Jerónimo. The Minho course was created in 1996 and, since 2004, it occupies a building designed from scratch, designed by Fernando Távora and José Bernardo Távora.



yet another threat of importing external methodologies, fragmentation and reduction of disciplinary processes, including the design Referring to this scenario, he states in 2020 “the situation is dramatic” (SIZA, 2020).

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