

The speeches about children's education and hygienization on the newspapers printed in Piauí, Brazil (1930-1960)¹

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Abstract

During the first half of the twentieth century Piauí, Brazil, was expanding its modernization process. In order to display a picture of full development, it was necessary to educate and take care of children, who were considered the nation's future, because, due to neglect, there was a growth in rates of child mortality. The goal of this study focuses on highlighting the measures adopted by the state to educate and care for children. Considering this context, this study highlights the childhood in Piauí, with the 1930's being the starting point, which is a period in which there great evidence to infancy, and the ending being in 1960, when there were discussions focused on the child-problem, discourses circulated in printed newspapers at that time in Piauí (*O Piauí*, *Diário Oficial* e *O Dia*). To perform this study, while considering the historical nature of the work, the theoretical research is based on the New Cultural History, which privileges the life history of common people, their daily lives, and their mindsets. The results indicate that social policies were created to improve this framework. The awareness of mothers in the care of their children was held in campaigns promoted by the state, such as robustness contests, courses in childcare, hygiene and nutrition for mothers, as well as advertisements of products that included guidance of this kind of care, in order to improve the vision of development in Piauí.

Keywords: Education, Childhood, Newspapers, Piauí.

In Piauí, Brazil, in the 1930s, the emphasis given to children was a matter of highlight regarding their health, hygiene and nutrition, which are key factors in the struggle against infant mortality. This care was underscored in 1933 by the Statute of the Geneva Conference, which established the Declaration of the Rights of the Child³, as the principles that rule this declaration concerning children care. are taken as a foundation.

Based on the aforementioned, we aim to highlight the measures taken by the state that had the purpose of curbing infant mortality and improving education given to society to enable it to adjust to more modern processes⁴. For this reason, the established time frame spans from 1930, a period of great evidence of children care announced in the press of the time (*O Piauí*, *Diário Oficial* and *O Dia*), to

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3 "The Declaration of the Rights of the Child enshrines the following principles: I - The child should be placed in a position to normally enable their physical and spiritual development. II - A hungry child should be fed; A sick child should be given assistance; Any child beginning his/her education should be encouraged to pursue it; Children diverted from a good path should be redirected to it; Abandoned orphans and should be collected and helped. III - The child must be the first to receive aid in all occasions public calamity. IV - The child must be educated, instilling a sense of duty, which will assists the child to put its best qualities to its brethren service. These are all the condensed rights of children, as are the obligations of family and society". (INSTALAÇÃO..., 1943, p. 2).

4 Modernity makes an umbrella to shelter a set of social distributions related to different conditions out of the denomination of childhood: social classes, age groups, cultural groups, race and gender; and to different situations: disability, abandonment and life at home, at school (children and students) and on the street (as a space for survival and / or living / play). It is that distribution that childhood conceptions are designed in specific conditions that result in the inclusion and exclusion of feelings, values and rights. (KUHLMANN JR., 2004).

1960, when discourses changed the focus to the children-problem, the victim of social vulnerability.

For this study, we chose to work with the New Cultural History, which focuses on the life story of ordinary people, their daily lives, their mindsets. “The new history began to be interested in virtually all human history” (Burke, 1992, p. 11), making the subject an active builder of history, omitted before the traditional story.

We also highlight the contribution of studies from Ariès (1981) and Kuhlmann Jr. (2010) for childhood. The pioneer Philippe Ariès points out that childhood was not always considered a stage that deserved greater attention; It was considered only as the weakest period, a path children take soon before adult life. Interpretations of feelings during childhood, even in studies that highlight the history of ordinary people, are based on the history of great names in history (Diary of Louis XIII)⁵, considering that the perception of childhood by the upper classes, for a long time, lead their conception to lower classes in a unilateral way.

Therefore, we agree with the position taken by Kuhlmann Jr. (2010) when he makes it clear that the story of ordinary classes can not be based on the history of the bourgeois classes, as in all societies and social levels it could be applied in a linear way - although we should consider that the sources were scarce and the conceptions of this phase of life were made in different ways. Thus, we do not disregard the studies of Ariès (1981) about the feeling of childhood, but make it clear that this is not the only possibility that we should consider in its regard.

In studies of Assistance to Children and Hygienism, we take Moncorvo Filho (1915), who is known as the great defender of childhood causes, as a basis. For Kuhlmann Jr. “the history of assistance, along with the family history and education are the main aspects that have contributed to numerous studies for the history of childhood, from various approaches, focuses and methods” (KUHLMANN, 2010, p. 17). And from the theoretical references of childhood studies at the local level, we highlight Queiroz (1995) and Castelo Branco (2009), which underlined the modernizing action of childhood notions in Piauí in the twentieth century.

In dialogue with the above writers, we have the newspapers from Piauí as the object and source of study of the writings of History of Education and Hygiene of Children from 1930 to 1960. According to Catani and Bastos (2002), newspapers are broadcast information vehicles and a documentary corpus, which enriches the analysis of History of Education.

In addition, these vehicles are considered non-neutral instruments that make public opinion and reach people, thereby influencing society. In this regard, Nóvoa (2002) points out the following:

Indeed, the press reveals the many facets of the educational processes, within an internal perspective of the education system (courses, programs, curricula, etc.), but also with regard to the role played by families and by various levels of socialization of children and young people. The press is one of the best illustrations of the extraordinary diversity running through the educational field (NÓVOA, 2002, p. 13).

Therefore, analyzing printed newspapers has become essential to gaining historical knowledge of the time, because in this particular study they revealed discourses

5 Ariès (1981).

made by state authorities, with the aim of spreading the basic principles of child hygiene and health as a factor of modernization and progress in Brazil.

The role of mothers and child care

The press in Piauí, in the first half of the twentieth century, pointed to the lack of care regarding children, and most of the discourses attributed to mothers the role of ensuring that their children improve their health conditions. An article published by the *Diário Oficial* in 1937 discusses hygiene and childhood illnesses and states that “mothers should be educated on the precepts dictated by hygiene and childcare⁶. On the day that at least most mothers have knowledge of these matters, disease and, consequently, infant mortality will be reduced to a minimum “(A HYGIENE..., 1937).

Poor nutrition would be the main cause of illness in childhood, which causes intestinal disorders. Hygiene and child care would free children from this problem, by pointing out the rules for adequate eating habits and mothers being responsible for obtaining the knowledge through books or child care institutions in order to receive the necessary instructions, so that, as well-oriented mothers, their children would grow stronger and look healthier.

According to Moncorvo Filho (1915), science would be the promoter of prevention against diseases that affect children; and mothers, in collaboration with doctors, would be the propagators of elementary notions of child care.

Woman almost always kind and sweet - with a penchant for good – such as charming sweetness in their eyes fixed on the children, lavishing her affection, cuddles, education and good feelings, regularly turning into a real-life angel in the house! (MONCORVO FILHO, 1915, p. 7).

Hygiene notions used to be taught to children at schools. For older girls there were special courses on housekeeping and childcare, which began with lessons on maternal care. According to White Castle (2009), “school should prepare children to understand hygiene and health habits, and then assume a multiplier role of these new habits in the family space” (Castelo Branco, 2009, p. 14).

Such practices help future mothers, and, because of these attitudes, a significant improvement in dealing with the children could already be noticed, despite the argument that the campaign should continue, especially among the lower classes, with clear and understandable publications and lectures given by visiting nurses. The emphasis on low-income families was justified by the lack of knowledge about the treatment of children's peculiarities, as was reported by the newspaper *O Dia* in 1956:

Away from the big city centers, there is still a great deal of primitivism in the

6 Between 1910 and 1930, child care was institutionalized, embodied in laws, to public health proposals and pediatric practice. In the period under American influence, health education was strengthened, going towards being held directly with the population at health centers. Other childcare guidelines are created, which are now developed with preschoolers and schoolchildren. In the 1930s, even greater emphasis was given on childcare, which is recognized as fundamental for the construction of a great nation. The political breakthrough in child care was accompanied by scientific advance, since its concept was enlarged, failing to engage only prevention against disease and child mortality and thus offering healthy development in all aspects, including psychological. For more information, see (BONILHA; RIVORÉDO, 2005).

way people understand children. Children are cared for by curious people and healers. They are treated with disgusting, inappropriate and dangerous drugs. They eat very poor food nutrients. They are wrongly educated from a psychological point of view. Sometimes they grow up like animals, as though they are among pigs. It is not that they are not beloved by their parents. They are deeply loved. It is that parents do not know what to do with them ... and they grow thin, stunted, pale and skeletal. (DÊ..., 1956, p.3).

In this sense, the institution of the Children's Week, which has been held every year since October 1934, by the Divisão de Amparo à Maternidade e a Infância, at the Ministério da Educação e Saúde, under the direction of Professor Olinto de Oliveira, aimed to raise consciousness of affection and love for children, which is already spreading nationwide. Through the press and lectures, a new awareness of child care has gradually emerged. The spread of sanitary precepts, intended to highlight "the family's condition", as being nefarious. As it is harmful for children, it must be removed from their influence "(Queiroz, 1995, p. 23).

Thus, Children's Week would have been highly beneficial to the diffusion of norms and principles related to basic health problems, informing parents about adequate care for children. The successive Children's Weeks have provided this new sense of care for the children. And, through this perception, some associations have been created; however, they soon ceased working due to lack of financial resources for their maintenance, as can be seen by the following quote:

In 1938, in several cities, some protective associations to childhood and motherhood were opened, in order to commemorate Children's Week. Among them, the only one still working, though poor and unassisted, is the "Associação de Proteção à Criança Darci Vargas" in Florianópolis. (A Criança ..., 1943, p.3).

As a result, people demanded the creation of the "Departamento Nacional da Criança", for being an entity that would be aimed at child protection and defense of their rights. Thus, the institution would be in charge of considering children as the future of the nation, who are deserving of the efforts of all society, including the government, to live up to a patriotic obligation to work, which magnifies the country. This department was consolidated in 1940, reporting directly to the Ministry of Education and Health.

With the creation of the "Departamento Nacional da Criança", along with the State Divisions of institution, the mobilization of Brazilian awareness in child advocacy intensified, which was manifested through campaigns promoted on radio stations that broadcast hygiene procedures, conduct civil registration of births and discourages the practices of healers, taking a commendable action for the destination of Brazilian children.

Giving children a prominent place in 1924, the government decided to institute Children's Day, through a decree made by the President Artur Bernardes, celebrated on the 12th October each year, but the idea was only spawned between 1950 and 1960 when companies Johnson & Johnson and Estrela launched Robust Baby Week, the purpose of which being to increase toy sales.

According to Wadsworth (1999), Dr. Moncorvo Filho held in Rio de Janeiro, along with the ladies of social Assistance, on Children's Day celebration, a Child Robustness competition, which was seen as the most important event to commemorate

the date, which focused particularly on poor children and mothers. Children, under one year of age and who were breastfed for at least six months, were evaluated by a physician according to criteria such as health, vigor and beauty. The lucky mothers received cash prizes.

In Piauí, in commemoration of the date, campaigns were held for buying gifts and toys for children, stating that, this way, their day would be unforgettable, which would open doors for their happiness. Several advertisements were launched with the intention of linking this feeling of child protection to their products; however, much was referring mainly to the fight against diseases that affected children.

Robustness was a factor highlighted by the advertisements that raised the effect of health improvements to the physical development of children and to combat disease in their first years of life. The most prominent advertisements intended to protect children from diseases referring to the medicine Emulsão Scott, as can be seen in the following images (Figures 1 and 2):

Picture 1 – Emulsão Scott



Source: Emulsão ... (1929, p. 5)

Picture 2 – Emulsão Scott

Source: Emulsão ... (1930, p. 4).

The broadcasting of these advertisements with the intention of making their products sellable said the drug was indispensable in maintaining health and improving the performance of children at play. It also pointed out that doctors recommended the food tonic, using this argument so that consumers would trust the product and then buy it.

Products intended for children brought in their indications ads for mothers to take care of their children; these artifices were used to promote the goods and convince customer of their qualities. The advertisements of some products highlighted, in addition to concerns towards health, their relation to games and toys as being essential to the development of a healthy and happy childhood. “For the newspaper readers, some advertisements may fulfill the function of medical teaching on the body and health” (GIRARDELLO; DIONÍSIO, 2009, p. 199).

Children’s Week continued its campaign, and in 1943, the issue under concern was the abandoned, and the least wayward and delinquent child. It was considered one of the most difficult and expensive ones, compared to previous editions that focused on good nutrition and improving the care and protection services given to mother’s and their children.

The absence of water treatment was also a factor of childhood diseases, as the Parnaíba river took impurities to its tributaries during flood season, which caused dysentery and child death. According to information from the Diário Oficial, 1943, “in Teresina, in 1942, 266 children under 2 years of age died only because of diarrhea and enteritis. In these figures there are no records of deaths due to other causes, totaling up to 990 children in the general obituary” (A Criança ..., 1943, p. 4).

The Casa da Criança, which was aimed at combating child mortality, was inaugurated in 1943. Despite having makeshift accommodation and equipment only to start child care, the institution had the support of the organization of the Legião Brasileira de Assistência⁷ – institution created by D. Darci Vargas, the wife of then president, Getúlio Vargas. This institution, “to fill its complex purpose, offers a screening service, a pediatric clinic and childcare, nursery, a breastfeeding room, kindergarten and auxiliary services” (INSTALAÇÃO, 1943, p.1).

Because of the creation of the Casa da Criança, in 1943, there was the delivery of gifts to poor children in the capital at its premises. This was also one of welfare practices undertaken for the benefit of children during Children's Week, as

Picture 3 - Installation of the Casa da Criança



Source: Instalação ... (1943, p. 1)

Picture 3 shows the Interventor Mr. Leonidas Melo assisted by Dr. Benedito Lopes distributing donations of clothing and food to children, who are waiting in large

⁷ Created in 1942, the LBA (Legião Brasileira de Assistência) was organized as a result of Brazil's engagement in World War II. Its goal was to provide for the needs of families who had been mobilized for war. Such a situation favored its creation, since there was a significant reduction in the purchasing power of the proletariat and the small urban bourgeoisie. Despite the availability of trained technicians to the function, the LBA had always been under the command of the first ladies, featuring the philanthropic aspect of clientelistic action, conforming with the interests of existing governments. Since its origin, the LBA was constituted in a strengthened structure, the state and municipal structures and political dictates being dependent of the institution's funding and its centralized programs that were managed in Brasília. More information at: SERVIÇO Social e Assistência Social no Brasil. Available at: <http://www2.dbd.pucRio.br/tesesabertas/051067_07_cap_03.pdf>. Access on: 24 Nov. 2013.

numbers. During these ceremonies, delivering the gifts was normally the responsibility of political authorities, leading members of the State Central Committee of the *Legião Brasileira de Assistência* and doctors.

The Honorable Mrs. Maria do Carmo Melo, the Interventor's wife, who was participating in the celebration, distributed about 300 feeding bottles to children under the care of by institution's lactation center, as shown in the following image (Picture 4):

Picture 4 – Casa da Criança



Source: Casa ... (1943, p. 1)

It was the wives of representatives of childcare institutions and of political authorities who had the role of encouraging mothers to care for the health of their children, as reported by Kuhlmann Jr. (2010, p. 91):

Women's participation in care was established in a line of men's intervention support. The bourgeois mothers, wives and relatives of the promoters of the welfare associations were placed as allies of doctors in the task of broadcasting the new behaviors required for the maternal role, who acted as role models among the working mothers (KUHLMANN JR., 2010, p. 91).

Following the inauguration of the institution, Dr. Olavo Correia Lima, a pediatrician in Teresina, wrote to the *Diário Oficial* attributing the achievements made for the child to an initiative from President Getúlio Vargas.

Before the Revolution, nothing concrete was made in favor of Brazilian children. Only in 1932, during his Christmas message, President Vargas laid the foundations of the current National Department of the Child, addressing the Interveners. It is then when in Piauí, the first initiative came, which was an adaptation of a small room, old laundry room of Santa Casa, in the maternity section, under the direction of Dr. João Emilio Costa and the management of Lieutenant Landri Sales. In May 1941, the Hospital Getulio Vargas was inaugurated, that alone justified an administration with three children's sections, which represented invaluable technical exchanges with other clinics: - pediatric clinic,

a section of children's hospital, a maternity section. (SEMANA..., 1943, p.1).

The large highlight on the interventions attributed to President Vargas is due to the pioneering spirit, which paved the way and gave a commanding voice to the stakeholders to help to change the situation in which infancy found itself in Brazil. In 1944, the state Department of Children was created, in the government of Leonidas Melo. That same year, in October, the Children's Week was celebrated, which, among the promoted activities, held the Robustness Children Contest⁸.

This event took place at the same time, at the headquarters of the Casa da Criança and the Escola Normal Oficial. Candidates ranged from one to two years of age and were judged by a committee of three doctors. In evaluating candidates, age, height and weight were taken into account. Around 200 children attended the contest competing for cash prizes.

The first received Cr\$ 500.00 Cruzeiros; second, 300.00; and third, 100.00 - all amounts were held in bank accounts at the Agricultural Bank. Five other rated candidates received 50.00 each. "These contests, which attracted great interest, were attended by numerous gentlemen, ladies and ladies of society" (SEMANA..., 1944a, p. 2).

Picture 5 shows the classified and awarded candidates in the laps of their mothers in the competition held at the headquarters of the Casa da Criança and the Escola Normal Oficial, together with the authorities of the Legião Brasileira de Assistência, doctors, nurses and other event organizers.

Picture 5 - Robustness Children Competition



Source: Semana... (1944a, p. 3)

The Children's Robustness Competition was not only held in Teresina. The contest also happened in the city of Parnaíba, sponsored by the Rotary Club at the Suzanne Jacob lactation center in 1942.

8 The Children's Robustness contests tried to impose child health concepts from the elite, encouraging poor mothers to conform to hygienic conditions that they had difficulty putting into practice. The competition sought to reaffirm, before the poor population, the need to adopt the precepts of hygiene when dealing with children, and the good results that this could bring to Brazil. Moncorvo Filho used his institute to educate and train poor women in order to make them better mothers. As part of its educational program, he published leaflets distributed through the institution and the Museum of Childhood, advising poor mothers in raising their children according to modern hygiene practices. (WADSWORTH, 1999).

The 1944 Children's Week also took place in other cities in the state by municipal leaders of the Legião Brasileira de Assistência. According to the State Commission of the Legião Brasileira de Assistência, Children's Week took place in Amarante, Barras, Berlingas⁹, Marvão, Oeiras, Picos, Piracuruca, União and Parnaíba.

In Amarante, Children's Week saw a parade of students from all schools. There were speeches made by local authorities on children's health, the importance of primary education and the newly opened Children's Health Post. There was also the distribution of shoes, uniforms, medicines and sweets to the poor students.

In the city of Barras, there were medical conferences on the 14th and 17th of the month and the distribution of prizes, lunch and school goods to students of the Grupo Escolar and the 13 de Maio Municipal School.

In the county of Berlingas, there was school parade, medical lectures at the headquarters of City Hall and in schools, picnic, recreational afternoon and concerts at the theater.

In Marvão, clothes were distributed to poor children.

In Oeiras, in turn, benefits were distributed to 234 children, in amounts greater than Cr\$ 2000.00. There were shows at schools, the opening of a popular library and speeches made on the Brazilian children. The chairman of the Trade Association held a speech about abandoned children and signed a list of members as an aid to the construction of the Child Care and Maternity Post.

Picos festivities were held for the benefit of poor children, with the distribution of 200 outfits, treats and toys. The event was attended by all schools and leading authorities, and its closure took place with a Church Celebration and communion on 300 children.

In the city of Piracuruca, the mayor handed a letter of invitation to some graduates of the city, so that they could help in the organization of Children's Week, which occurred with the distribution of uniforms, clothing, shoes and lunch, as well as children's parties that were intended for poor children.

In União, the event relied on the collaboration of local authorities, where there was the distribution of meals to children throughout the week, conferences and lectures by professors and doctors with varied themes such as the social value of children, child care, Brazilian youth, the child towards school and pedagogical teachings. High mass and sermon commemorating the child made up the closing of the event.

Parnaíba was visited by one of the directors of the Legião Brasileira de Assistência, who attended the whole event. In other counties, Children's Week took place with the same enthusiasm and patriotism as the aforementioned cities (SEMANA ..., 1944b).

Children's Week focused care related to the serious problem of child mortality in its discussions and conferences as a means to propagate them permanently, advising everyone to hygiene and pregnant women and their babies' eating habits.

The campaigns carried out by the Children's Week, with support from the National Department and the State Departments, along with the Legião Brasileira de Assistência, played an important role in combating infant mortality in Brazil, which advertized the factors that should be fought, such as hunger, poor diet of pregnant

9 The State Law 128 of July 26, 1948, the city of Berlingas was renamed Valença do Piauí. Information available at: <<http://biblioteca.ibge.gov.br/visualizacao/dtbs/piaui/valencadopiaui.pdf>> Access on: 15th Nov. 2013.

women, illiteracy, lack of hygiene, absence of breastfeeding and of transport for families living in the suburbs.

In the city of Parnaíba, the Children's Robustness Competition, sponsored by the Rotary Club, received a large number of children who were enrolled in the club and in representative authorities. The doctor from the lactation center gave advice, through lectures, to mothers on child nutrition. On this occasion, awards sponsored by Nestlé were distributed to the winners.

Many mothers attended the contest with their overweight and well colored babies, which showed that they were learning how to take care of their children based on the training they received on proper nutrition, with emphasis on the use of notions of hygiene and breastfeeding in resistance to infection - conditions for maintaining children's health. Another reason was the award, as a policy to give prizes to those mothers. If the mothers wanted their children to be awarded, they should strive to make them more robust.

In the photographic below (Picture 6), members of the Rotary Club are at the top; and mothers with boys classified in the first positions at the bottom of the photograph.

Picture 6 – Children's Robustness Competition



Source: Rotary ... (1942, p. 1)

Childcare, a subject at the Escola Normal was offered on weekends, only to the Escola Normal students. This offer to these students, all girls, was justified by the fact that the course was not only designed to train teachers, but also mothers responsible for their duties. In it, students received basic training of care concepts with

early childhood, which included guidance on the children's games and leisure time. According to Kuhlmann Jr. (2010), "besides childcare, which became part of the mainstream curricula of normal schools, studies on children psychology and teaching methods for young children were developed" (KUHLMANN JR., 2010, p. 88).

Only in the 1940s would this course be aimed at all women, as determined by the Departamento Nacional da Criança, established under the responsibility of the State Department of Children. Nevertheless, the State Department of Children, established in 1944, was closed in 1945, due to a lack of financial resources for its maintenance. However, to prevent society from being deprived of the services provided, it was replaced by the Maternity and Childhood Assistance Service, which is linked to the National Department of the Child.

These institutions had the same goals: caring for the health of mothers and babies by providing health education to the mothers, so that they would provide their children with a better quality of life. Under President Getulio Vargas's government, the campaign for poor children and mothers protection was carried out on with very hard work, therefore he is considered as the best friend of children. During his administration he gave priority to maternity and child care, as he believed it to be the most important factor for the development of Brazil.

The commitment of the President was aired in the local press, which revealed that the leader worked in favor of social benefit, which can be seen in the following quotation:

President Vargas, who was engaged in solving serious national problems, did not forget the protection of poor children and their mothers. He was strongly affected by the child abandonment and mortality, seeking to organize maternity and child care as a social function of greater importance (A Criança ..., 1943, p. 5).

Along with the actions taken by his wife, Darci Vargas, towards the Legião Brasileira de Assistência, he produced a public image as a good ruler, which was because of the attention given to poor children. Picture 7 shows the president Vargas holding a child, showing happiness in this action.

Picture 7 - President Getulio with a child



Source: *Semana...* (1944a, p. 1)

The picture published by the press showed that to run a country in full development, it was necessary to act in the present, but also to take care of the future, which is represented by children.

Despite the efforts made by government institutions, most of the donations for the children came from private sectors. In order to assist the poor children of the capital, the Sociedade de Amparo à Criança Marechal Pires Ferreira was established in 1946 – a Civil institution maintained by monthly donations which aimed to make clothing for newborns and poor children.

This institution was established through a statute which directed the actions taken by the body, but what stands out is the fact that these institutions generally worked for a short period. Because of this, it was stipulated in its statutes the term of duration as intended by its members, decided through votes, as can be seen in its first chapter:

Chapter I

Of foundation, headquarter name, purpose and deadline

Art. 1 - Under the name of Sociedade de Amparo à Infância “Marechal Pires Ferreira”, today a civil institution is introduced, which aims to make clothing for newborn and poor children.

Art. 2 - The Institution shall have its administration department and its headquarters, for all purposes of law, in Teresina, state capital.

Art. 3 - The term of duration of the company is undetermined and may verify its dissolution at any time, provided it is decided upon during assembly by a majority vote by its members. (ESTATUTO..., 1946, p.13).

The institution, besides being maintained by the associated fees, received grants, and the money collected was deposited monthly in the Agricultural Bank of Piauí. If the company were to be dissolved, its assets would be given to institutions of the same nature.

In the absence of these institutions being present in the state, the assets would be returned to the State Treasury, which would serve as a deposit for delivering heritage institutions with the same goals and purposes.

Other measures were taken in order to preserve the childlike nature of events in the capital such as the Carnival dances. By an ordinance, enacted by the Law Judge of the 2nd Teresina Minor jurisdiction, some measures are appropriately prescribed to protect minors, thereby safeguarding their physical and mental health.

Preventive measures intended to curb abusive practices and which also refer to adult dances. Precautions in children's dances are as follows:

In Childdances:

I - Children under 5 years of age are allowed to watch in halls or separate rooms when accompanied, the festivities without their real participation, having to be withdrawn at 6pm at the least.

II - Children aged from 5 to 14 years of age may take part in the festivities, when accompanied by a parent or tutor.

III - Minors aged between 14 and 18 years of age can take part in the festivities, but in a hall or separate room for children aged from 5 to 14 years.

IV – Maillot or bikini costumes will not be allowed.

V - Perfume launchers and the sale of alcoholic beverages will not be permitted. (OS MENORES..., 1957, p.1)

Compliance with the determinations that refer to public dances and highlighted the ride of children in corso cars, paying attention to the prevention of accidents. In private dances, the entry in residences was regulated, children were not permitted to participate in the festival along with teenagers, wear bikinis and swimsuits, take perfume launchers or ingest alcohol. Parents should be sober to enable them to give special attention to the children.

In 1956, Children's Week had a theme directed to Tuberculosis during childhood - despite the claims regarding infant mortality still circulating in the newspapers

of the decade, which attributed the death of infants to the carelessness of public health, since most of these deaths were children in the suburbs of Teresina, which is dependent on the public health units.

Nevertheless, other actions taken were directed towards childhood, such as the Playground, located at Praça João Luiz Ferreira and built under the administration of Mayor Lindolfo Monteiro, who for some time did not work because of the carelessness of the authorities. During the mandate of the mayor Agenor Almeida, however, the park was refitted with new and appropriate toys for children of various ages, soon after the inauguration of the statue of Piauí pediatrician Dr. Helvidius Aguiar. The opening of the park happened at Christmas, 1958, a true gift from Santa Claus to the children of the city.

However, a fact that occurred constantly in the park caught the attention of the authorities. Visitors to the square took their pet dogs for a walk, and soon after, others joined this activity. The concern was that a child could be attacked by a hydrophobic dog. To emphasizing this issue, the mayor pointed out that the population frequenting the park should be made aware of this problem until it was solved, because the vaccine to combat the disease was not very accessible, as it had to come from São Paulo laboratories at a high price. The preventive measures were related to the lack of medicines and drugs, which came from the major centers for prices that poor families could not afford.

In 1960, the discourse published in the papers distanced themselves from the real causes of child mortality, as this would bring a concern for children in social vulnerability. They highlighted that the capital received funding for the cost and maintenance of services from the Associação de Amparo à Criança in large numbers in the state, while children were asking for charity in shop doors in Teresinae, helpless, they committed illicit actions, at the mercy of their own fate.

The discourses made it clear that this practice would continue due to the lack of state intervention and that its modification would depend on divine intervention. The rhetoric that God left the care of children's legacy was present in lectures given by doctors in the successive Children's Weeks, such as that by Dr. Anastacio Ribeiro Madeira fields who mentioned that

(...) The provision of care for the souls and the bodies of children is true because this is what God is all about. Jesus during his pilgrimage on earth gave a large part of his love to little children and the Catholic Church for its apostles and all other priests have done for these children lovely flowers seeds of greatness and for the future of humanity.

When Jesus Christ said to a group of little children who were trying to walk away from God "Let the little ones come to me because they are the reason why there is the kingdom of heaven" he wanted to teach that respect, love and care towards them is required. (PALESTRA..., 1945, p. 6).

During the lecture, the doctor pointed out that the state did its part - while other institutions, such as the church, needed to intervene to guarantee that most children benefited. He says:

The vast majority of charitable institutional initiatives from religious associations are in charge of those unlucky, unprotected who are left to abandonment or death by their fathers from the remoteness of their households, the vices or the nationality requirements by providing them with home, food, clothes, heal-

th care and education in the arts, crafts and letters. (PALESTRA..., 1945, p. 6).

The church worked in child care, despite the obligation of doing so was the responsibility of the state, and, without even getting resources to do so, the majority of child support came from charity. For this reason, in the 1960s, the press highlighted the inefficiency of the state, which was not doing its part, despite getting resources that were specifically allocated to child care .

Thus, the state oversight regarding the misery of boys and girls in the capital was contrary to Divine Law because God had left the teaching of children, future of seeds should be well-cared for. In this relationship, the state should act with zeal and fondness towards the men of tomorrow, otherwise they would be creating a society of angry beasts from a stepmother society, who puts stones on its way. But to do so, it should provide resources to institutions such as the Juvenile Court, which gives elementary conditions to help such children to get out of this ordeal.

Conclusion

We can conclude that welfare policies were created with the aim of improving the conditions in which the children of the state found themselves in. The awareness of mothers regarding the care of children was held in campaigns promoted by the state, such as robustness contests, childcare courses for mothers and health and nutrition concepts, as well as advertisements that broadcasted this type of care in their products, in order to improve the development prospects in Piauí.

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