

## Chapter 4

### THE *ORQUESTRA GERAÇÃO* PROJECT – A PERSPECTIVE BASED ON MULTIPLE NARRATIVES

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#### Introduction

This chapter covers some of the questions that represented central concerns of the team since we began researching *Orquestra Geração* (OG) and that, over the course of study development, proved determinant to our perceptions of this multifaceted and rich project: determining the profile of the OG music teachers (questionnaire), hearing all of the key figures involved in the construction of the project in order to identify the terms of its origins and subsequent development (interviews) and giving a voice to the parents and guardians of the children and young persons playing in the orchestra (focus group interviews). As described in the introductory chapter, the most significant actors in this project, the young musicians, were subject to particular attention from the research team through the construction of the sociological portraits that feature in chapter 8.

#### Teachers general profiles – The Questionnaire

##### *Constructing the sample*

The questionnaire, as one of our initial information collecting instruments, targeted a specific group of OG music teachers. The questionnaire contained a total of 37 questions<sup>28</sup> (with *closed*, *open* and *dual* questions) on a diversity of topics – *gender*, *age*, *personal and family level of education*, *academic training*, *complementary training*, *professional experience*, *pedagogical practices*, *musical tastes and practices*, *functions in the project*, and *opinions on the pedagogical methods*, *repertoires and the overall project*.

The questionnaire script, made available online, was distributed through a personal email sent to each teacher and the various orchestra coordinators, making up

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<sup>28</sup> See appendix I.

a total of 94 music teachers (total universe) undertaking educational roles at 13 of the 17 OG nuclei operational in the 2012/13 academic year. This did not include the nuclei located in Coimbra, Lisboa 3, Mirandela and Murça as they were just at the beginning of the implementation process<sup>29</sup>. Throughout an approximate three month period, the OG music teachers had the opportunity to complete the aforementioned questionnaire. There was a total of 49 questionnaires completed (no questionnaires rejected or annulled), corresponding to 52.1% of the universe in question. The different data collected (both quantitative and qualitative) were processed/analysed through IBM SPSS Statistics software and a content analysis process.

This instrument enabled the observation of, among other aspects<sup>30</sup>, the following two features: 1. the profile of OG music teachers (sex and age; musical qualifications and OG teaching experience; instrumental practices and musical preferences) and 2. their opinions about the didactic materials and the repertoire, as well as their considerations about the positive and negative aspects of the project itself.

#### *Summary of the most relevant data*

Of the 49 OG music teachers who completed the questionnaire, 30 taught the subjects of instrument, orchestra and section (61.2%), 11 of instrument and section (22.4%), 3 of instrument (6.1%), 1 of instrument, orchestra, section and ear training and sight singing (2%) and 4 of ear training and sight singing (8.2%).

As may be seen in Figures 1 and 2, there was a broadly equal distribution among the male and female teachers with their ages falling in the majority into the twenty-four to thirty five year old age group (83.7% of teachers who responded to the questionnaire). The OG music teachers were predominantly young in age.

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Table 2 in chapter 2.

<sup>30</sup> To access the document with full analysis of every questionnaire item, please go to: <https://cipem.files.wordpress.com/2007/01/04-anc3a1lise-do-inquc3a9rito.pdf>

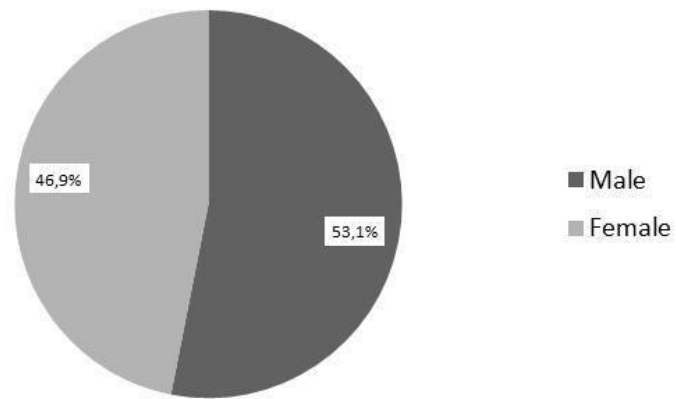


Figure 1. Distribution of teachers by sex

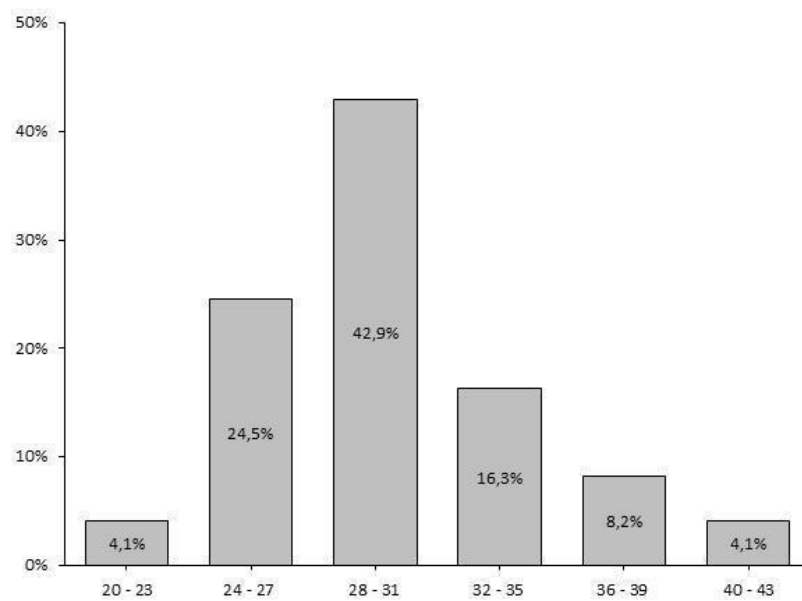


Figure 2. Distribution of teachers by age group

Over 90% of the teacher sample presented higher education academic qualifications (Figure 3). As regards the qualification type, these were mostly either in instrumental performance or in instrument teaching.

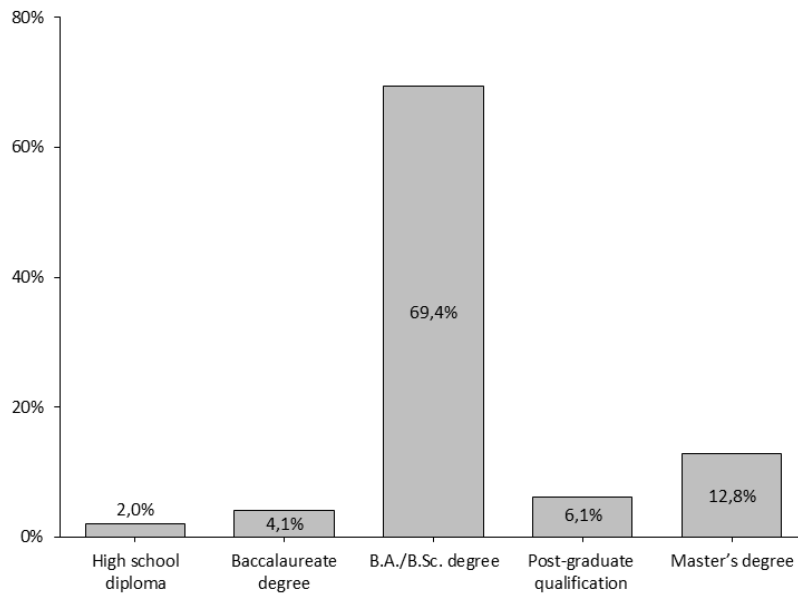


Figure 3. Distribution of teachers by level of education

On the date of completing the questionnaire, 32.7% of music teachers, in fact the most relevant group, had worked at the OG for three years, which corresponds to half of the project's own duration (see Figure 4).

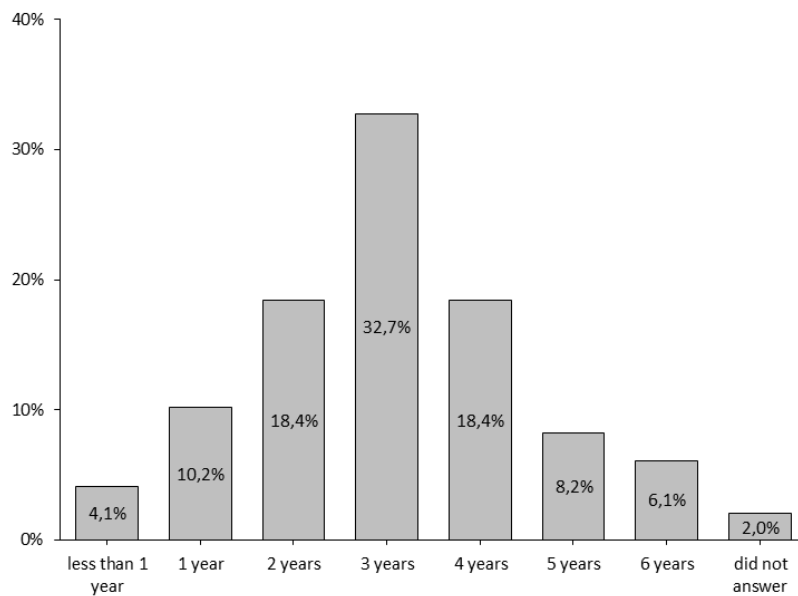


Figure 4. Length of service at OG

A large majority of teachers, around 88%, did not have full timetables (see Figure 5). This implied the need to look for work in various other schools thus preventing a full time commitment to the project. Presently, this situation remains unchanged<sup>31</sup>.

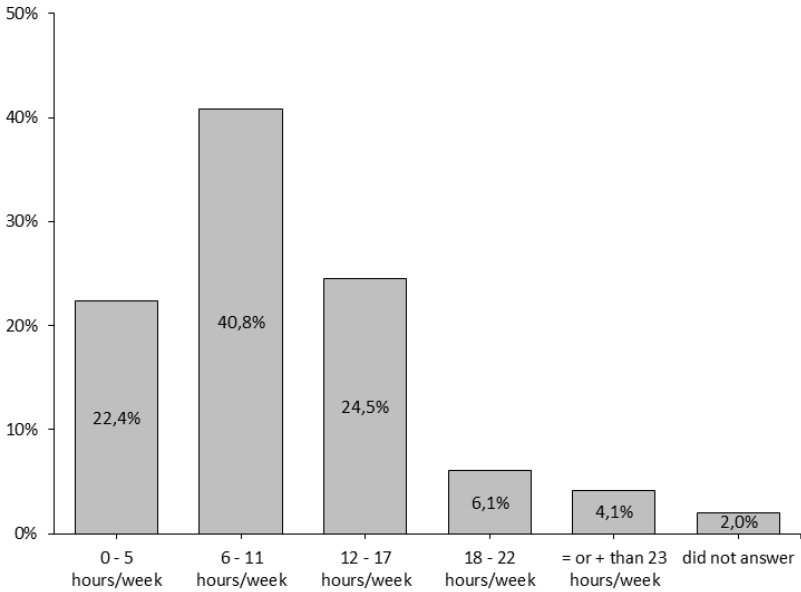


Figure 5. Number of OG hours taught weekly

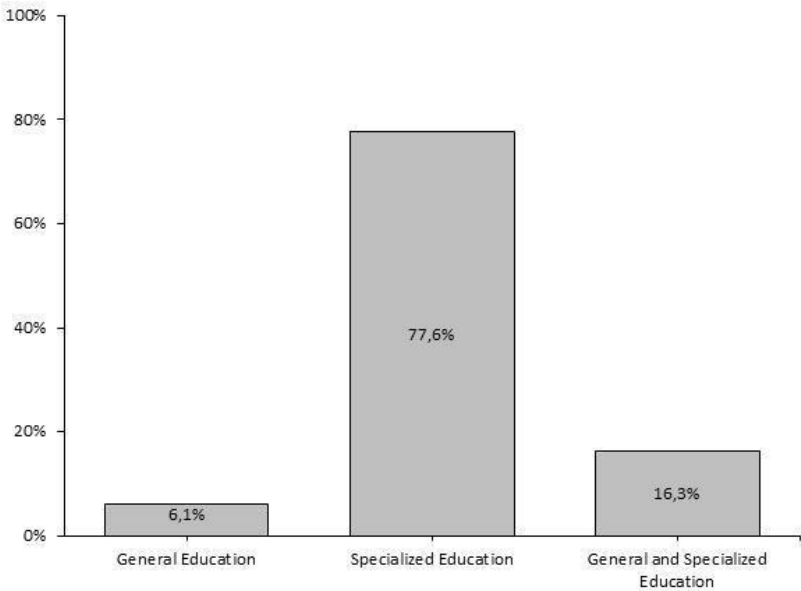


Figure 6. Type of teaching environment

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Chapter 2.

The OG music teachers were in the majority specialist music teachers, 77.6%, and with only 6.1% coming from general teaching backgrounds. The remainder, 16.3%, taught both types of class (Figure 6).

As regards the *musical habits* of the OG music teachers, where listening and performing emerge on identical terms in a sort of *ceremony of pleasure*<sup>32</sup>, we may observe the following.

In terms of instrumental practice outside of the OG project, 75.5% responded affirmatively. Figure 7 sets out the respective distribution by type of musical group.

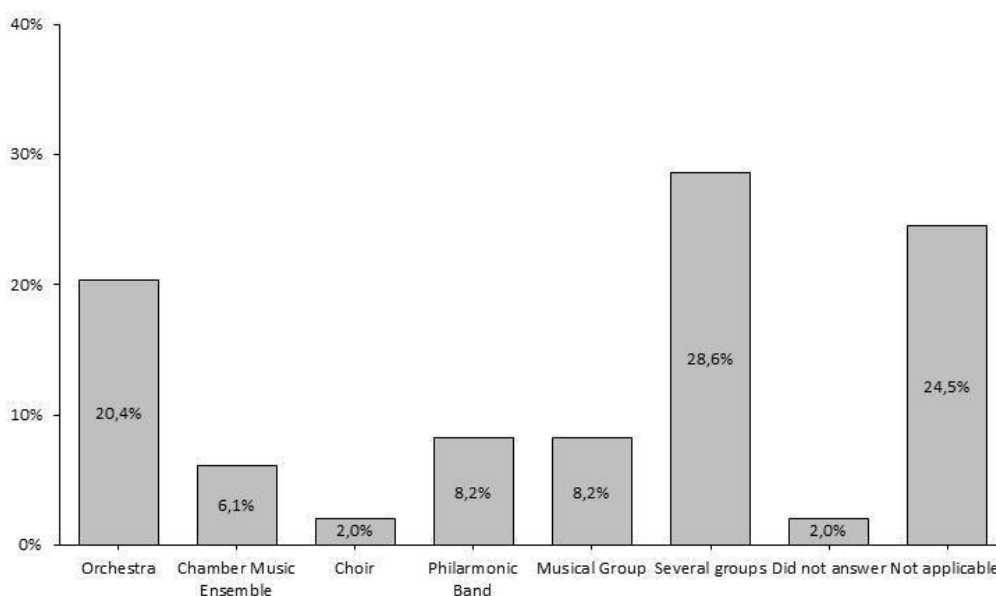


Figure 7. Type of musical group

The OG music teachers expressed a preference for playing high art music (89.7%), with 30.5% referring to *proximate*<sup>33</sup> musical genres (jazz and world music) and 12.1% *distant* musical genres (pop, rock and others). As regards their listening habits,

<sup>32</sup> On this issue, see the work by Antoine Hennion *Music Lovers. Taste as Performance*, published in the journal *Theory, Culture & Society* in October 2001.

<sup>33</sup> The designations of *proximate* and *distant* do not contain any hierarchical intent and only seek to highlight genres that, in keeping with the complexity of their oral and written musical codes are either approximate to or distanced from erudite music.

98% of teachers stated they listened to erudite music, 95.9% referred to *proximate* and 71.4% to *distant* musical genres.

Such results would suggest that OG teachers tend to be more eclectic in relation to the music they listen to than the music they play.

As regards the second relevant facet detailed above, namely the quality and appropriateness of the teaching materials to the teaching contexts and the repertoire, we may note that the percentages for the quality and the appropriateness of the didactic materials are broadly the same (see Table 1).

The percentage of teachers who do not have any opinions about the quality of the didactic materials (35%) also proves the same as those holding no opinions about their appropriateness (35%). Furthermore, the percentage of teachers stating that the didactic materials hold interest (35%) borders on the same number terming them as appropriate (37%).

	not of interest	little interest	no opinion	interesting	very interesting
	inappropriate	poorly appropriate	no opinion	appropriate	very appropriate
teaching books and methods [interest]	3 (6%)	9 (18%)	17 (35%)	17 (35%)	3 (6%)
teaching books and methods [appropriateness]	6 (10%)	6 (12%)	17 (35%)	18 (37%)	3 (6%)
orchestra repertoire [interest]	0	5 (10%)	4 (8%)	35 (71%)	5 (10%)
orchestra repertoire [appropriateness]	0	11 (22%)	4 (8%)	32 (65%)	2 (4%)

Table 1. Interest and appropriateness of the teaching materials and repertoire

A similar situation emerges in terms of the relationship between the quality of the repertoire and its appropriateness. We may here observe a small difference between the category *very interesting* (on 10%) and *very appropriate* (on 4%). The OG music teachers thus expressed better opinions about the repertoire played by the OG than about the didactic materials in usage.

Finally, the question about the positive aspects of the OG project, these teachers above all emphasised: the importance of issues around social inclusion; the importance of promoting personal and collective values – the attitudes dimension; and the idea that the children might thereby gain access to another type of musical repertoire and thereby expand their musical preferences.

As regards the negative aspects of the OG project, the teachers highlighted: difficulties in the capacity to involve children in the project in terms of accepting greater levels of responsibility; problems with coordinating all of the human and organisational components of the project; and the lack of time dedicated to musical teaching. However, this last aspect proved to be somewhat ambiguous given that there is a lack of clarity over whether the reference is to improvements in terms of instrumental performance or to the orchestral competences that are effectively the major target of this project.

### **Outlines for a possible pedagogical profile**

As the music teacher questionnaire confirmed, in order to develop a team working dynamic, the OG employs young teachers, recent graduates and with little experience, a joint option by both the management and the pedagogical coordination: “we have the advantage of hiring very young people, that have just finished their graduate degrees and are open minded” (Wagner Dinis, Director, 02-05-2012). Despite such efforts, not all of the teachers display a suitable profile for the social and methodological characteristics of the project. As regards this issue, the sub-director stated that these young teachers “are not minimally prepared to teach group classes but, in the OG, they have to assume the role of a conductor. Many things get learned through experience” (Helena Lima, sub-director, 25-03-2014).

In order to offset this lack of pedagogical experience, the management has been holding and promoting a range of training opportunities for the teachers:

*We have been investing in teacher training, particularly in group teaching, orchestral and section teaching but also very much in the individual classes, how to captivate the pupils (...). We must have that capacity to captivate young*



*children with this representing our prime objective and, hence, the importance of improving teacher training. (Wagner Dinis, director, 02-05-2012)*

The context of the nuclei, the student characteristics and the orchestra focused teaching methodology on occasion ended up playing a role of natural selection of the teachers, favouring those who best adapt to the project's social objectives and to team work:

*I have a lot of pride in my team... our team of teachers. (...) We were the first in the project, we did not know anything about it, we simply had to improvise (...) All of the decisions were always jointly taken, with the help of Helena Lima. Without her, this simply would not have been possible. We work here as a team and there is no other way for this to function. (...) Of course, there's always one teacher who has a slightly different manner of thinking but... but the bulk of the team works for the same cause... Those who saw that this was not quite what they wanted to be doing, left and made a place for others. (Miguel Torga Coordinator, 26-03-2014)*

The national coordinator defines the ideal profile of an OG teacher closely in keeping with the Venezuelan reality. This teacher must hold leadership and initiative capacities and not be limited to the role of an instrument teacher. He or she must be available for performing different tasks and in full awareness of what such a teaching-learning process involves:

*We all have to be maestros, that is, the masters of our classes and we must know how to lead a rehearsal, how to manage a team, how to speak, how to take decisions (...), we have to be very active, we have to be capable of doing everything (...). The ideal is that the teacher is an orchestra conductor, a section teacher, a violin teacher and an ear training and sight singing teacher. If you have all that in a teacher, then you've got a fantastic teacher. (National Coordinator, 7-05-2013)*

### **Motivations and objectives of the OG project | Duality: musical excellence vs. social inclusion**

Within the framework of the original Geração project, there were no initial plans to deploy music for social intervention. As mentioned in chapter 2, the opportunity ended up emerging on the suggestion of the former president of the executive council of the National Conservatory School of Music (EMCN). Furthermore,

the conjunction of the Amadora Municipal Council, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation (FCG) and the EMCN proved determinant to the project success:

*There were three key roles here. First, the relationship that the Council [of Amadora] had, at the time, [with the community]. (...) This relationship created a socially favourable environment to these things. Therefore, the role of the Council was central. After that came the knowledge, knowing about music, because all of this is very pretty, I tell you: it has to be the music in the service of social transformation, but it has to be music, this cannot be trash. (...) There has to be excellence. Really, this is what Wagner, Helena Lima, the Conservatory brought (...). And after there was another input with the institutional commitment and the excellence that the Gulbenkian also has (...) and that made us able to reach further. (Jorge Miranda, mentor, 9-05-2013)*

The discourses of the mentor, coordinators and sponsors all highlight some of the ideas that regulated the development of the OG and that reflect a certain ambivalence about the way the two major objectives of the project – social inclusion and musical excellence – are assumed. Sometimes, these two objectives would seem distant or even opposing, highlighting the primacy of the social and educational character of the project in relation to which musical development appears as a secondary objective:

*In terms of education, we are acting on the knowing how to be, knowing how to behave. (...) We are acting in a structuring way. (...) We are talking about adolescents and we are dealing with people who have not closed their processes of socialisation or the development of their personalities. (...) Doing this at a time when these two things are under construction is for them profoundly transformative. We don't intervene in who they are because it is they who do or do not make this transformation. Therefore, this is the great space of freedom in which we are here intervening, clearly working on social mobility, (...) improving the educational path, the competences of persons and above all we are fostering people who are citizens. And that can be done, now, with music, with the orchestra. (Jorge Miranda, mentor, 9-05-2013)*

*In an initial phase, we are not teaching music, we are creating structures, strengthening values, nurturing strong ties with the kids... In this collective practice, we strongly boosted just what are the values of self-esteem, of security, of companionship and creating a great family which is a great community that is, in itself, the orchestra... This is a complete transformation of a system that helps to develop not only great musicians but especially great persons. (National Coordinator, 7-05-2013)*

*We understand, here at the Gulbenkian Foundation, that artistic practices, taught, worked in the care of good professionals, are able to bring us, for the children and for publics in traditionally repetitive cycles of vulnerability and exclusion, some competences, specifically team working, discipline, respect for timetables, which may contribute to these kids then becoming better students and better professionals one day later on. (Luisa Valle, representative of FCG, sponsor, 27-03-2014)*

*It's very difficult to be perfect: there is always something left behind, either artistic excellence or social excellence. What do we opt for as the right posture? If this is a social inclusion project, well then our priority has to be social inclusion – irrespective of whether or not we are able to attain artistic excellence, irrespective of the child getting into OG being able to become or not a great musician! (...) In the projects we support, we want to see excellence in social resolution and not in artistic performance. (Margarida Pinto Correia, representative of EDP, sponsor, 13-03-2015)*

On other occasions, these two objectives – social inclusion and musical excellence – get described as complementary, assuming that, in order to achieve social inclusion through music, there has to be musical development and, eventually, musical excellence:

*Music is music, it is not any old rubbish. Therefore, if we wish to use music [for social development] so then it must be music, mustn't it? It cannot just be... nonsense, a sub-product, it cannot be noise, it cannot be anything that is not controlled (...). It has to be real, it has to be true. (...) If it's not true, if it's not something that really seriously motivates the students, it loses them. (Jorge Miranda, mentor, 9-05-2013)*

*The fact of being a project dedicated to unfavourable backgrounds does not mean that the musical level has to be low. No, it has to be to the contrary... the kids have to have an opportunity to access teaching of the very highest standard... (National Coordinator, 7-05-2013)*

*We perceive how the artistic practices may have an absolutely fundamental role in an education process. (...) We also realize that if we want them to be truly effective, people have to work with professionals and not in any logic of free time occupation. (Luísa Valle, representative of FCG, sponsor, 27-03-2014)*

*Obviously, as this takes place through musical learning, the better they become, the more tools we are giving them to be something in life. (Margarida Pinto Correia, representative of EDP, sponsor, 13-02-2015)*

*It's complicated... because, firstly, we must never forget, and Wagner always makes a point of reminding us (...): 'Oh, don't go forgetting that this is a job of social inclusion!' (...) However, on the other side: 'You have to play really well in Porto.' Well... how do we go about managing this? (...) We always have to be working with both, with the social integration dimension and the musical dimension, together. I, at least, do so. (...) I can only be proud of my students, and proud of the work we have been doing! Because this is a work of excellence across two points: because we are changing the lives of these children, both personally and musically, and there are students that are studying music and they're no longer just a handful in number either. (Miguel Torga Coordinator, 26-03-2014)*

### **The (re)construction of an identity**

In order to CONSTRUCT its identity, the OG has made recourse to the guiding principles of the *Venezuelan National System of Youth and Children's Orchestras (El Sistema)*. *El Sistema* (ES) frequently gets raised in the discourses of the founders: as an inspiration, as a pedagogical reference and as a model to be attained. This presence also takes effect through the ES connected musicians that collaborate with the project (whether continuously or sporadically). They have been cooperating with the OG from the beginning both in teacher training, and in the coordination and supervision of teaching and orchestral activities, as well as in the adaptation of pedagogical materials. These musicians identify themselves completely with the ES, where they acquired a large part of their musical training:

*I did all my training in Venezuela, in the Sistema, I began in the Symphonic Youth Orchestra of Caracas... This is a fantastic orchestra, I began there (...) Really, my strongest training took place in Venezuela. I am very grateful to Venezuela for this training that is fantastic and give us many grounds to believe in our dreams, in our future. It really is a fantastic environment, an environment that is so very productive and above all constructive in every aspect. (National Coordinator, 7-05-2013)*

It is interesting to note how the ES is present in the discourses not only as a pedagogical *praxis* but also as a model to be attained, especially at the level of the

project board and coordination, as becomes clear in the following statement from the national coordinator:

*We have had meetings, have shown [to the teachers] the video of Venezuela, in which they see the reality and, step by step, they get to understand what it's like.*

*Now, we will visit Venezuela, (...) with the ten coordinators. (...) It is important that they all go so that they see just what this reality is like. (...) For me, it is a privilege to work with the [Venezuelan] teachers as everything we can learn from them contributes to our own growing process.*

*We have a handbook that is all very well produced (...) organized by levels; (...), the music pieces are chosen so that one can start a group music class from scratch. (National Coordinator, 7-05-2013)*

While there is the unavoidable influence of the ES, the discourses nevertheless reflect the existence of a latent conflict between the Venezuelan project and the conditions and realities of the Portuguese project: financial limitations; shorter timetables; dispersion/low levels of interactions between the different nuclei; smaller number of students per nucleus; teachers with different backgrounds and with different teaching timetables, which fosters not only the potential for divergences in practices but also diverse levels of involvement with the project (Figure 8).

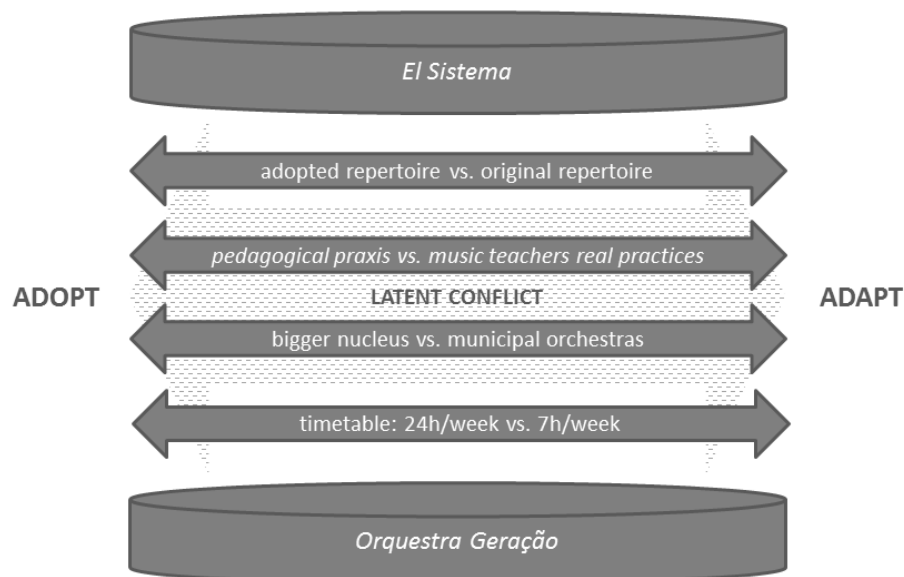


Figure 8. Between adoption and adaptation: Latent conflict between El Sistema and the real conditions faced by the Portuguese OG project

For those perceiving the ES as ‘the reality’ to be attained, the OG project lacks: intensity and coordination of the pedagogical work and the orchestral scale of the nuclei, facets deemed essential to boosting the motivation and the ambition of the children. One good example of this comes with the opinions of a former national coordinator:

*Clearly, many of the things (...) that they do over there [in Venezuela] were not possible to do here as the timetable load did not allow for it (...). It was a very great struggle to make all this more intense. At the beginning [there were] and there still are many dropouts. We discuss this a lot, in the good sense, why this happens and I insist that there was not the motivation necessary as there was not the right kind of intensity appropriate to stimulate the students. (...) Our nucleus [ES] is made in a way in which the students all go to the nucleus and then form a great nucleus. Here, it’s a bit different as the nuclei are in the schools where there are groups of twenty five to thirty persons. Well then, I always said (...), and the Sistema says, that the number, the orchestral mass is where the ambition begins, where the stimulus first comes. (Former National Coordinator, 11-10-2013)*

The approach implemented by the OG board sought some flexibility and adaptation to the Portuguese reality and the contexts faced by each respective nucleus as indeed the project director explained:

*For example, the methodology that is followed in Venezuela, they are extremely intense there and... sometimes, to us, it makes a bit of impression the way that they teach (...). We also have some flexibility, when we arrive in the school, in analysing the situations in the schools, the subjects and needs of the kids rather than starting out from the traditional grid format, we are able to adapt to the situation as we have done in some school in which it is purely and simply impossible to get 30 kids together. So then, we started out with a strategy of groups of five or whatever the circumstances determine and, bit by bit, we go about adding on until able to do the 'tutti'. (Wagner Dinis, director, 21-05-2012)*

Between any possible adoption and adaptation of the ES pedagogical praxis, there are shared axes among all of the nuclei that ensure the cohesion of the project: an orchestra focused curricular plan, the same orchestral repertoire for all the nuclei and the holding of intensive training camps bringing together teachers and students from various nuclei, generally organised into levels, for the preparation of the final joint concerts. The following was the comment from the OG national coordinator on this matter:

*We work together, we maintain a program and that is important (...) in every school there is a feeling of a network, there is the same methodology. (...) It's important that there is a line, that there is a criterion. When we get together for the internships, there has to be a result, a particular way of working. This is the most important facet, creating a model, thus, a common strategy. (National Coordinator, 7-05-2013)*

### **The impact of the project: some data, evidences and questions**

Beyond the global impact of this project in terms of its media coverage and its preponderant role within the scope of a current, broadly consensual trend towards a relationship between music and social inclusion<sup>34</sup>, the OG, as it began to become unveiled over the course of the analysis of the research data, also reveals some important aspects that deserve highlighting.

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<sup>34</sup> See chapter 1 on this issue.

### *Community involvement in the project*

One aspect referred to by the interviewees, when questioned about the project impact, is an improvement in the family integration of participants as a consequence of the involvement of their families, particularly when participating in auditions and concerts, moments in which the OG educational role also ends up embracing the surrounding community:

*The Concert Hall was packed with uncles and aunts, grandparents of little children, of unlikely people (...). The families are present and they feel, well then, I don't know exactly what they understand but they do feel that there is some kind of valuation, both personally, for the students, and for themselves, and there is a great sense of community in the fact that their children are there in this place, being seen and being recognised in that way. There, this all gives fact to this notion of stability. (Miguel Torga School Group director, 3-12-2013)*

*The children were the targets, the students were the target of accusations and suddenly became the target of pride: they became those who held privilege in the family, they became those who took the family to things where the community was there that applauded and the family began having a place in this community. And, therefore, there is here a belonging of the children to their families that changes radically and then there is a belonging of the family to the community that also changes. (Margarida Pinto Correia, representative of EDP, sponsor, 13-02-2015)*

*It's not only the children who participate in this project who get this training. We end up having to educate the parents and guardians in a number of issues... Because the parents had never been to concerts before! The parents do not know that they should not clap their hands, that they should not talk, that they should not eat... At the beginning, this is an intense job that needs doing. (...) So, this is a job that is done not only for those who are here. I see the work as always going a little further, to all of the family and all of the community because Vialonga does not have just one orchestra, Vialonga has five orchestras! (...) Some people still don't know this but we have already held an opera on the site where the fair is held! (Vialonga teacher, 21-03-2014)*

### *Improving school integration (behaviours and attitudes)*

When questioned about evidence regarding any eventual impact of orchestra participation on the academic performances of the children and youths involved, the



majority of the school directors preferred to highlight the improvements observed in behaviours and attitudes, coupled with the development of habits of concentration and discipline, while expressing doubts both in relation to the existence of a direct improvement in the academic results of students and, when existing, whether this may be unequivocally attributed to orchestra participation:

*We do not have any perception of whether in fact there is an improvement in this improvement [in education] and, if I may say so, whether this in fact matters. Indeed, to me, it's enough that there is the feeling, both on behalf of the students and those who see them perform that there is a team. I only regret that such spirit has not yet been transferred to other dynamics within the school because it is a fact that a cohesive team like this one really brings added value - there is already knowledge and a culture of discipline and performance that proves of importance to their own lives. (Miguel Torga group director, 03-12-2013)*

*I recall how complicated this all was at the beginning, (...) bringing together twenty, all of a sudden, twenty of the worst, or rather those with the most complicated behaviours in the school, getting them together in a room, that really was pretty difficult. With time, with two, three, four or five months, you got pleasure from entering the room, the same room with the same teacher, as now happens, and seeing how their behaviours are so very, very, very different and so very much more concentrated (...) In an initial phase, you did not note this immediately but afterwards this began emerging in terms of attendance, in terms of learning, there was then noted and continues to be noted a great deal of development in relation to these students. (Amadeo de Souza-Cardoso group director, Amarante, 24-01-2014)*

*I have seen educational results, clearly, but for academic results I cannot yet make that connection. (...) I cannot do that also because we have insisted strongly here that there is to be no selection of the best students for Orquestra Geração, therefore we have attempted to place the students with most difficulties in Orquestra Geração. (...) Orquestra Geração is a more structural work that implies a set of more refined competences. (...) They are subject to a different culture and that is also good for them. (...) The fact that they are constantly getting called on to play at festivities, at commemorations, therefore regularly attending what we may call serious situations (...), people there go over and congratulate them and this immediately boosts their self-esteem. (...) The effects are far broader than just the academic results. (Apelação group director, 08-05-2013)*

However, there are also other actors who more clearly pronounce in favour of evidence of improvements in the academic learning of students or that the results obtained by orchestra students are better than those of their peer school students:

*In relation to the results, in fact, we have a very heterogeneous work in terms of the groups. We have excellent kids who, from the outset, would be excellent in any situation, (...) we have kids with difficulties across all levels, whether the social point of view, the behavioural point of view or that of the availability for learning... and that have been able to achieve. The kids who are in the Orchestra, who remain in the orchestra, do not fail years, (...) they are able to overcome difficulties and make it through (...) and they get results, some very good and some others reasonable but better than their colleagues who are there [in the class] and who are not involved with music. (former Vialonga group director, 25-03-2014)*

In fact, over the course of the data collection process, the research team encountered fairly assertive affirmations on various occasions by OG members (nucleus coordinators and teachers) about the improvements made to the academic performances of students when compared with other students in the respective school hosting the OG. To this end, and following a suggestion from the project consultant, we advanced with the data collection necessary for a quasi-experimental study on the academic performance of the Vialonga nucleus given that this is the only school with integrated teaching and therefore homogenous classes of OG students. In these classes, the music subject is integrated into the curriculum and correspondingly undergoes formal evaluation.

#### *Quasi-experimental study of academic performance in Vialonga*

We gathered data on the academic results (grades and failure to pass rates) for five years (2009/10 to 2013/14) and for two classes belonging to the OG and two classes that did not belong.

Analysis of this data conveys how both groups underwent alterations over the course of the five years with the departure of some students – due to failing the year, transferring school or other unidentified reasons – and the arrival of new students.

Classes A – with students belonging to the OG – started out with 38 students and ended with 24 and were combined into a single class. Out of the original 38 students, only 20 made it into the 9<sup>th</sup> year (group A). Over this five-year period, 50 students attended these OG classes for at least one year of whom 20% failed to pass the year and 40% left the classes either by transfer or for unknown reasons (see Figure 9 and Table 2).

Classes B – not belonging to the OG – started out with 54 students and finished the period with 36. Of the original 54, only 19 students attained the 9<sup>th</sup> year (group B). Over these five years, a total of 89 students attended B classes for a period of at least one year, of whom 26% failed the year and 39% left the class via transfer or other unknown reason (Figure 10 and Table 3).

The flux in students (the number of students who entered and left the classes over the course of these five years) was greater in the B classes than in the A classes, which may convey a greater level of instability in the former. This may furthermore represent a key reason for the year failure rate being slightly higher in the B classes (26%, compared with 20% in classes A).

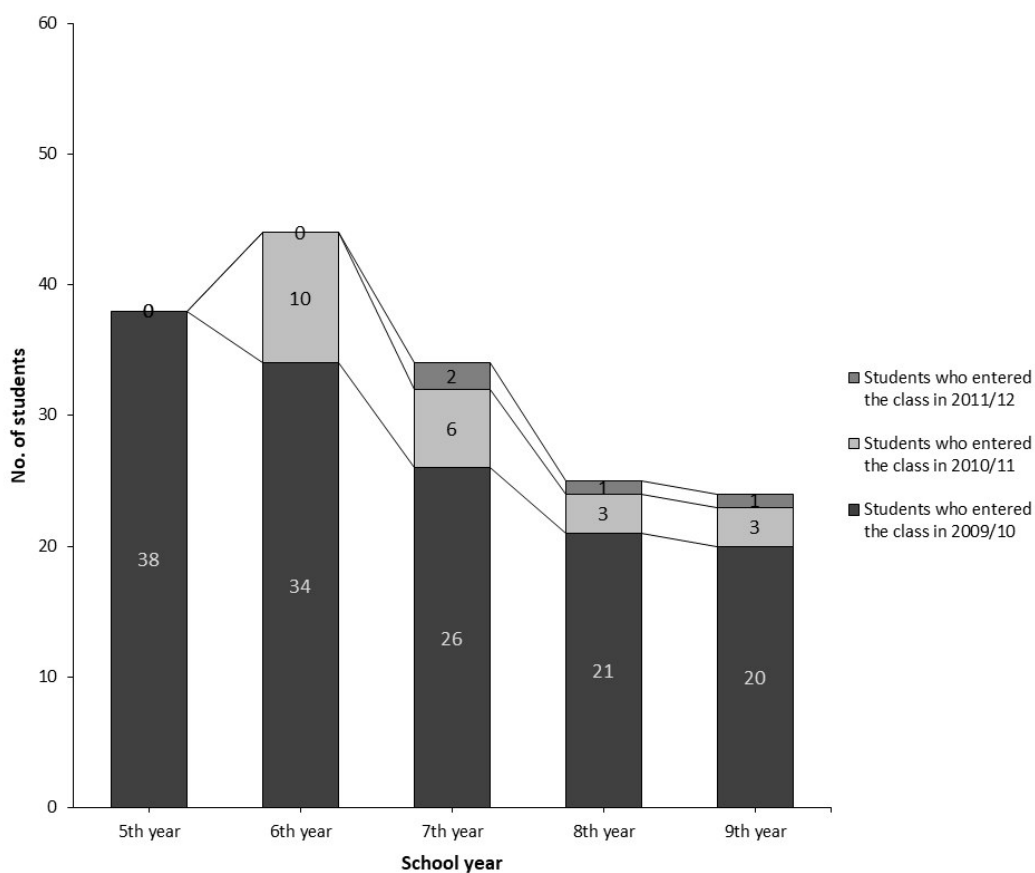


Figure 9. Evolution of A classes (Integrated Music Teaching) between 2009/2010 and 2013/14

	5th year	6th year	7th year	8th year	9th year	% total
No. of new students	38	10	2	0	0	
No. of students failing annually	0	1	4	1	4	
% of failures	0%	2%	12%	4%	17%	20%
No. of students transferred (a)	1	2	3	0	0	
No. of students leaving the class (b)	3	9	2	0	0	
% of class departures (a+b)	11%	25%	15%	0%	0%	40%
<b>TOTAL NO. OF STUDENTS [class/year]</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>24</b>	

Table 2. Evolution of A classes (Integrated Music Teaching) between 2009/2010 and 2013/14

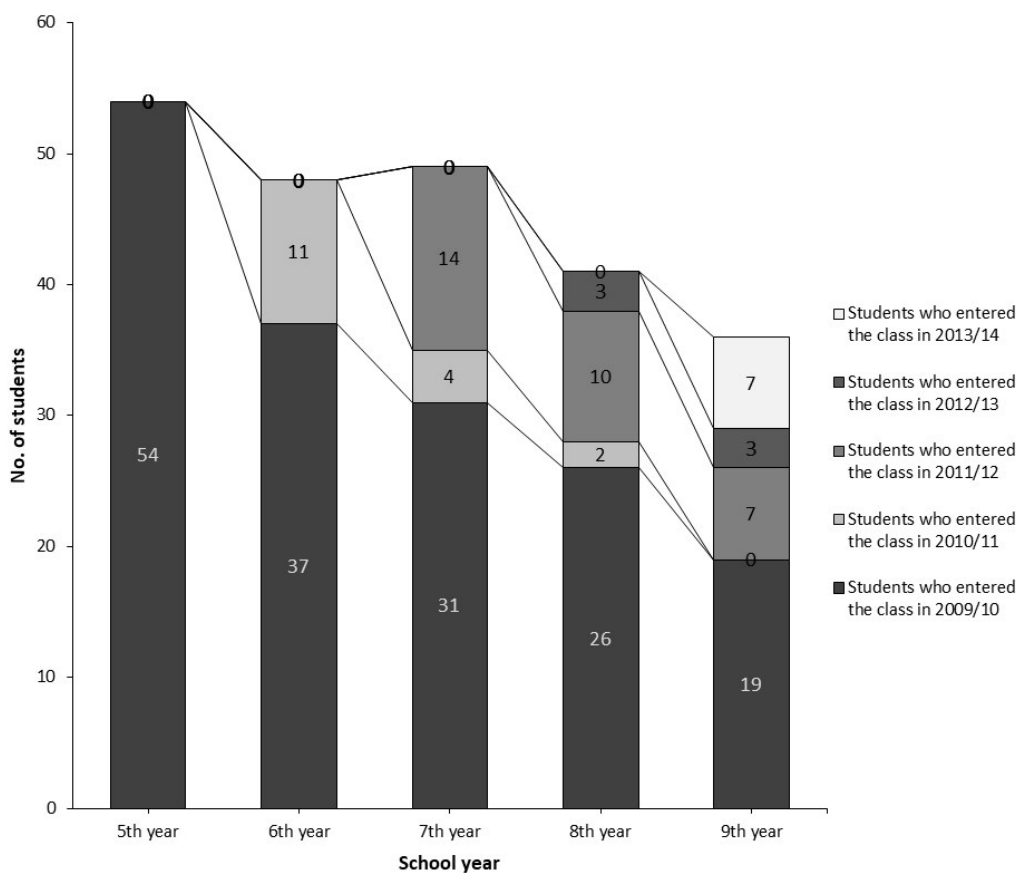


Figure 10. Evolution of B classes (Regular Teaching) between 2009/2010 and 2013/14

	5th year	6th year	7th year	8th year	9th year	% total
No. of new students	54	11	14	3	7	
No. of students failing annually	3	2	6	7	5	
% of failures	6%	4%	12%	17%	14%	26%
No. of students transferred (a)	5	4	4	0	0	
No. of students leaving the class (b)	9	7	1	5	0	
% of class departures (a+b)	26%	23%	10%	12%	0%	39%
<b>TOTAL NO. OF STUDENTS [class/year]</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>36</b>	

Table 3. Evolution of B classes (Regular Teaching) between 2009/2010 and 2013/14

When comparing the averages for the A classes with group A and the B classes with group B, we find that in both cases the group (students attending classes A and B from the 5th to the 9th year) report better averages than the corresponding classes (Figures 11 and 12).

The B classes report average evaluations similar to the A classes (Figure 13). However, while the A and B groups report similar average evaluations in the 5th year, some differences do emerge over the course of the following years with the B group turning in slightly higher average evaluation results (Figure 14). In general terms, the average grades display a descending trajectory over the five years considered both in the classes as in the groups.

Considering only group A, we may observe how the average grades received from the general curriculum studies are below the averages received on musical curriculum subjects and hence the musical grades positively boost the final group average (Figure 15).

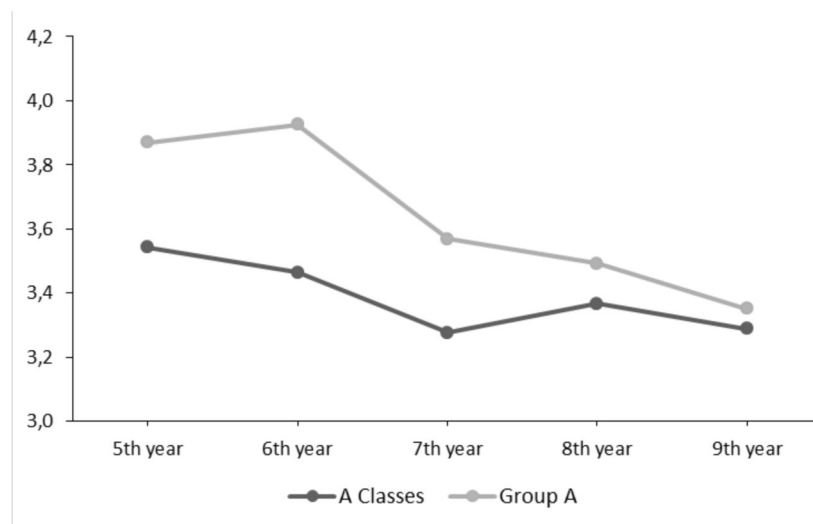


Figure 11. Average evaluation results for A classes (Integrated Music Teaching)

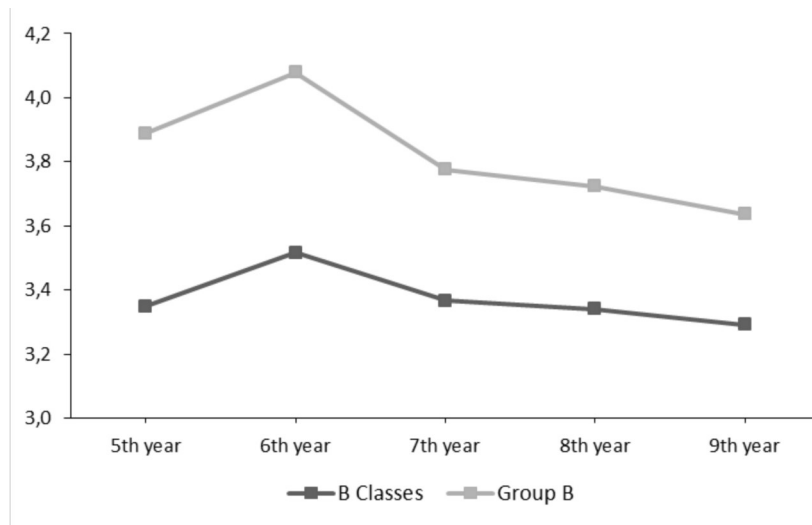


Figure 12. Average evaluation results for B classes (Regular Teaching)

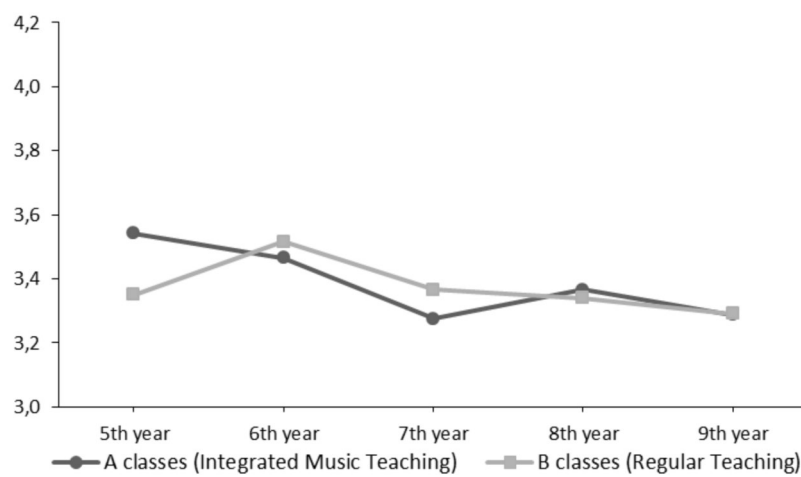


Figure 13. Comparison of average evaluation grades for the A and B classes

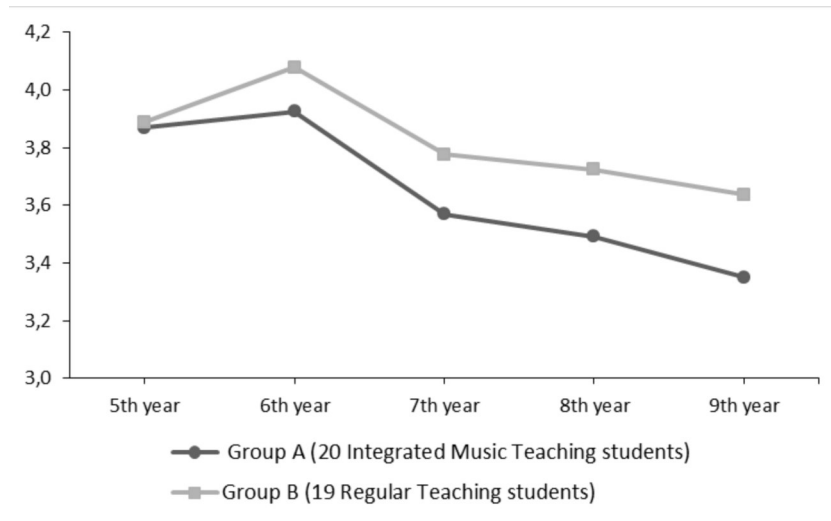


Figure 14. Comparison of average evaluation grades for the A and B groups

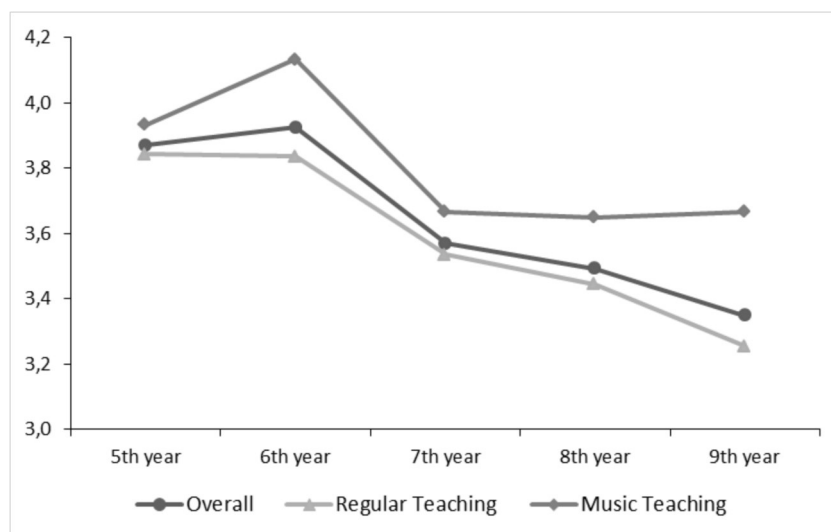


Figure 15. Comparison of the average annual evaluation grades for group A in Regular Teaching, in Musical Teaching and Overall.

Based upon these results, we cannot consider that OG students turn in better academic results in comparison with other students in the same school that do not attend the orchestra. However, while the project was only able to implement this



quasi-experimental study on a very small sample of the set of OG participants, it does also seem that there are strong indications of a significant change in attitudes and behaviours, systematically referred to across all the discourses analysed, that easily lead onto extrapolations as regards success in terms of the obtained academic results. Once again, and similar to that suggested by the findings of various international studies on the relationships between studying music, cognitive competences and academic success (Mehr *et al*, 2013; Schellenberg, 2011), there seems to be no ground for making such affirmations. The number of variables at play would require a large scale longitudinal study that falls beyond the scope of this research project.

We would nevertheless record with pleasure that the indicators for advancing in musical studies, even while in still relatively small percentages, encapsulates a trend worth following with every possible interest.

#### *Continuing with musical studies*

The enrolment of OG students in Specialised Music Teaching Programs is identified by teachers and boards as evidence of the social mobility brought about by the project even while not everybody shares a positive evaluation of this dimension:

*[Social mobility/inclusion] is already happening. (...) We already have students from some groups and here [Vialonga] also has cases of those entering professional music school, and therefore they are already being welcomed by all. Nobody is excluding them. (Miguel Torga and Vialonga teacher, 31-03-2014)*

*If you want to talk about integration, to me, (...) it cannot only be the students who come here out of their liking for a particular instrument (...) I see the project and any activity even when perceived as extracurricular, as a moment for learning and for the acquisition of competences. If they are here in classes, or in the orchestra, they should learn the instrument and should, following a particular path, be capable of overcoming those objectives, (...) in the case of 9<sup>th</sup> year students, they should be able to play any 5<sup>th</sup> [grade] piece, get approval, in sum, get a diploma (...) In fact, the entrance [in specialized music schools] of the majority of students... does not take place. They arrive for the auditions and they fail, they do not get in. (...) The majority of students after arriving there don't even go to the auditions. And I think that this is one of the*

*problems, one of the greatest shortcomings...* (Miguel Torga and Vialonga teacher, 04-02-2014)

In fact, not even the entrance of students into Specialist Music Programs has been easy (some students are not able to pass the entrance exam) nor has this always been a synonym for success – some students have also expressed problems over adapting to the Secondary School Music context<sup>35</sup>.

In general terms, taking into account the quantity of students that have spent time with the OG project since 2007, the numbers entering Specialist Music Teaching is not especially high (see Table 4).

		No. students
Applied to Specialist Music Teaching but were not accepted		9
Applied to Specialist Music Teaching, were accepted but did not enrol		4
Attended Specialist Music Teaching but “left” (moved country)		2
Attended Specialist Music Teaching but dropped out		3
Concluded Specialist Teaching but did not proceed to Higher Education		5
Attending Specialist Teaching	Primary	8 <sup>36</sup>
	Secondary	25
	Higher	2
Attending / attended Specialist Music Teaching (TOTAL)		45

Table 4. OG students who attend /attended Specialist Music Teaching<sup>37</sup>

### *Drop outs*

As referenced by some teachers, the dropout rate, especially in the early years of attendance, calls into question the impact that the project seeks to generate in terms of the school and the social integration of students who engage with the orchestra:

<sup>35</sup> On this matter, see the Sociological Portraits in chapter 8.

<sup>36</sup> These eight students include three who, due to decisions by their family, did not continue to attend the OG project.

<sup>37</sup> Table made based on data provided by Helena Lima, OG subdirector and by the Vialonga Coordinator in October 2015.

*There is no justification for, in one year [the first] students only work by imitation and in the following year they have to know how to read scores (...), whoever does not know how to read simply cannot. This makes the students give up. Which then leads onto another question which is: why is there such a high rate of dropouts at the nuclei? Why in fact is there this enormous dropout rate. (...) Quitting is always fairly substantial in the first year. (...) Afterwards, as students advance, there are few dropouts. What we also find is that later, when they reach the final year, many drag on an on, force themselves and push themselves but are still not able to... enrol, that is, they do not even have the courage, or... they simply do not go and register for the auditions (Miguel Torga and Vialonga teacher, 04-02-2014)*

*Unfortunately, here in our school [Vialonga], there has been a trend for dropouts over the years. Students who cannot get along or cannot get along particularly well or because of the heavy workload or because they can't keep up with all of this and their school work. For these kids, it's difficult, more difficult than for a kid at a normal conservatory. And, there is sometimes a level of dropouts that would be a bit above that what you get or would expect at a normal conservatory. (Vialonga teacher, 06-06-2014)*

These teacher statements are further backed up by the data on the numbers of students quitting from the four nuclei approached in this study (see Tables 5 to 8), reporting high withdrawal levels, especially in the first year of participation in the project, and tending to decline over the following years.

		<b>No. students</b>	
TOTAL from 2007/08 to 2013/14		206	
Drop outs by the end of year 1		43 (21%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 2		34 (17%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 3		16 (8%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 4		7 (3%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 5		13 (6%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 6		1 (0,5%)	
Attending in 2013/14	for 1 year	19 (21%)	92 (45%)
	for 2 years	29 (32%)	
	for 3 years	5 (5%)	
	for 4 years	14 (15%)	
	for 5 years	7 (8%)	
	for 6 years	11 (12%)	
	for 7 years	7 (8%)	

Table 5. Miguel Torga Nucleus dropout rate [from 2007/08 to 2013/14]

		<b>No. students</b>	
TOTAL from 2008/09 to 2013/14		468	
Drop outs by the end of year 1		157 (34%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 2		38 (8%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 3		25 (5%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 4		16 (3%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 5		1 (0,2%)	
Leaving in 2012/13 (completion of 9th year)		21 (4%)	
Attending in 2013/14	for 1 year	62 (30%)	210 (45%)
	for 2 years	49 (23%)	
	for 3 years	40 (19%)	
	for 4 years	20 (10%)	
	for 5 years	5 (2%)	
	for 6 years	34 (16%)	

Table 6. Vialonga Nucleus abandonment rate [from 2008/09 to 2013/14]

		<b>No. students</b>	
TOTAL from 2009/10 to 2013/14		143	
Drop outs by the end of year 1		48 (34%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 2		22 (15%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 3		12 (8%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 4		5 (3%)	
Attending in 2013/14	for 1 year	33 (59%)	56 (39%)
	for 2 years	13 (23%)	
	for 3 years	2 (4%)	
	for 4 years	2 (4%)	
	for 5 years	6 (11%)	

Table 7. Apelação Nucleus abandonment rate [from 2009/10 to 2013/14]

		<b>No. students</b>	
TOTAL from 2010/11 to 2013/14		71	
Drop outs by the end of year 1		24 (34%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 2		7 (10%)	
Drop outs by the end of year 3		3 (4%)	
Attending in 2013/14	for 1 year	12 (32%)	37 (52%)
	for 2 years	5 (14%)	
	for 3 years	13 (35%)	
	for 4 years	7 (19%)	

Table 8. Amarante Nucleus abandonment rate [from 2010/11 to 2013/14]

The dropout rates vary from nucleus to nucleus thus reflecting different levels of attendance among participants and consequently the stability of the respective nucleus. High levels of drop outs in the first year of project attendance (21% in Miguel Torga and 34% in Vialonga, Apelação and Amarante) reflect on the higher numbers of new students joining each academic year and ensuring that around 50% of nucleus

members consist of children and young persons attending the project for two or fewer years (53% in Miguel Torga, 53% in Vialonga, 82% in Apelação<sup>38</sup> and 46% in Amarante, in the 2013/14 academic year).

### **Parents and guardians: a crucial dimension**

In chapter 1, when discussing the democratisation of the *field* of cultural production, we departed from the assumption that the OG, through teaching music and musical practice, strives to be a catalysing focus and a driver of democratic citizenship and correspondingly of the right to equality in accessing culture. This furthermore references how crucial are the implicit and explicit alliances among families, schools, the local social environment and the OG.

Therefore, sounding out the parents and guardians of young OG musicians generates insights into the outreach of core dimensions such as aspirations and the glimpse of other social horizons that may open up windows of opportunities to their children even while perhaps very different from their own.

In this section, we set out some of these dimensions that we categorise in general terms according to: i) *the overall perception of the OG*, ii) *their own and their children's personal relationships with music*, iii) *perceptions of change by means of OG membership and integration*, iv) *projections for the future* and v) *feelings of pride as regards the visibility of the project*.

#### *Overall OG perceptions*

Two questions stand out about the image that the parents and guardians hold of the OG – the value of the project and the evaluation made of the music teachers.

*I define it as a big, big project. They really struggle so that this project does not come to an end. Every year, I note that they are always with that heavy weight that they don't have any sponsors and that the Orquestra Geração will have to end because there aren't the funds to continue and they need instruments and*

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<sup>38</sup> According to the information supplied by the Apelação school group director and coordinators at this nucleus, this rate may have been inflated due to the scale of emigration of families from the neighbourhood in 2013.

*they need money. And they really struggle a lot, really a lot for this project. I see this and my daughter has only been there for the last four years or so. (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*I have a good image. This is a job done. I really like it when it reaches the end of the school year, that they have those days when they go and do the internship and after bring together schools from all over the country. The Gulbenkian is always packed and it's not only the parents but also other people who also go there to see and I think it's a really good image that they get, the year that they've spent working. It's the success of working for the whole year round. (Apelação parent/guardian, 7-06-2015)*

*The Orchestra represents a dream and I would like the dream to continue. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

*They are tireless. Always very concerned. I think they give their very best. Really, even more than they can give. Very concerned. And I speak here for myself as, well G., as I said, missed a rehearsal and M. called me to find out what had happened because G. had not gone. So, I think there are so many students but that they take care of them all, all and with their commitment and their attention and concern. Both for the project and for the teachers, I don't think I've got any bad words. (Apelação parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*I would just like to add one thing that I think that the feeling of responsibility within the orchestra is also the result of the great motivation that they get from the teachers that they have. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

### *Relationship with music*

In this category, we portray not only the way parents and guardians perceive changes in their own relationship with music, based upon the repertoire worked on at the OG, but also their perceptions of this relationship in their children.

*From the moment that she joined the orchestra, she began listening to another type of music, didn't she? In addition to orchestras, the violins, that vibrato that she tells me that I have to understand even if I don't. Sure, even my husband, we began going to concerts here in Amarante, even the Orquestra do Norte, which is generally what plays here, we always have to go. And I even like it, even we like it and I'm being sincere. Sometimes there is an introduction to an opera along with the orchestra and that's very pleasing. So, this changed.*

*Music began getting seen in a different way... Before, I thought that Mozart or I don't know who... [sound/grimace of disapproval] and now we like to listen to it. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

*For us, who were not connected to the music, for myself and my husband, for example, going to a classical music concert was something that we had never done before. It simply did not awake a minimum of interest. And we began when it was our son as we go everywhere and are always present. And it is impressive to have our own interest in music triggered and looking on it with a different view. We who did not listen to classical music, and in my family we didn't, now everybody listens and appreciates classical music. And this dimension is also... is also really interesting. (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*And well, this has... has... helped a lot... there at home with the music. He: 'Mum, I can already play this! Oh Mum, I'm already playing this like that, the F played up there, the F played down below.' And me: 'That's great, son.' (laughter) This is important and he now even brings the instrument: 'Mum, have a go, see if you can also play.' He gets me there trying to play but I cannot. (laughter) Well then... it's almost as if the sun has come out and in his life, especially in the life of my son because... this has filled in a lot of his life and has worked really well. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

*Sure, F. really likes kuduro<sup>39</sup> a lot but I always... I always put on other types of music. I've already said: it's not just orchestra and kuduro, there are also other songs that you have to know how to listen to. He sometimes asks me to put on some classical music from the internet. He listens to every type of music because I listen to every type and that's good, isn't it? (Apelação parent/guardian, 07-06-2015).*

### *Perceptions of change*

This category approaches the changes perceived in the lives of their children, brought about by participation in the OG, and also conveys what they consider to be the collateral effects on the areas of attitudes and motivation. In the same way, they recognise their own roles as supporters of the aspirations of their children and the potential future professional opportunities within the field of music.

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<sup>39</sup> **Kuduro** (or **kuduru**) is a type of music and dance that originally developed in Angola in the 1980s. It is characterized as uptempo, energetic, and danceable.



*And I don't know whether my daughter grew up more or whether I did. Because she is an only child... at the age of eleven, her going away for a week... or about that, to Lisbon. It really cost me to let her go that first time. There have also been some trips... They have already been to France and I... have grown up and she has grown up. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

*And one day [my daughter] arrived at school and said to Ms Armandina<sup>40</sup>: 'I want to but my mother does not want to.' I arrived here and Armandina told me: 'You do not have to want to, you have to sign the paper, the authorisation, and you then have to support your daughter.' 'Okay. I'll sign the paper but I'm not going to call you every morning. You have to get up on your own.' I never called her. Whatever the time might be, she's always ready, waking up alone. And she loved it! Still does today. Now, she's in the Conservatory. (Vialonga parent/guardian, 06-06-2015)*

*My sister here, my sister has already said 'we have to get together and buy a violin for him'. Well, I thought that it's not with growing older that is going to make him quit. (Apelação parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*I think that they also learn a lot from working in a group and that's very important, not only now but also for their future, this knowing how to work in a group. They know that they have to help their companions, they have to know how to sort things out themselves but also having another person by their side, they cannot just leave them alone. And this, at this phase, is very important to them, for their lives now and something that is going to be important for the rest of their lives. (Apelação parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*Perhaps the parents, at least those in this region, I think that they need to be educated because tomorrow or after, instead of going to see our children playing, we're going to see our children in prison. I think that's something to make us all sad. And I really like the Orchestra because many children are perhaps here instead of being there and perhaps doing I don't know what, and this part is really important because they later have a lot of pride in playing. But, later, there is that part when, if the dad is not accompanying, then tomorrow or later, he's going to quit and head elsewhere... (Apelação parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

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<sup>40</sup> Maria Armandina da Costa Soares, former-director of Vialonga School and the great driver of the initial violin project, both integrating the school into the OG and into the national integrated music teaching system.

### *Future projections*

Some parents and guardians reveal concerns over the future of their young, conveying a perspective of the lives of their children connected to music whether in terms of continuing their studies in academies and conservatories or continuing in the OG following completion of the 9<sup>th</sup> year.

*And he still continues to have that dream that tells him that he is going to study music and it is to Berlin that he has to go, to that particular orchestra. He's still convinced that... that that is what he wants. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

*So, she had been attending the Geração here for a year when she went to the Metropolitan. She made major progress and even her teacher who supported her here said yes that she should apply to the Metropolitan, that she had everything needed... furthermore... that she was capable. And then she was capable, she did the tests to get in and it has all been going well, continuing here in the Geração and in the Metropolitana<sup>41</sup> and she says that that is what she wants. (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*She discovered for herself that she no longer wanted to study Science, which she had wanted since very little... to go into medicine, and when she got into 11<sup>th</sup> year in Science, with a good achievement, she wanted to go back to the 10<sup>th</sup> year in the Metropolitana. Really, I have to back her up if that is what she wants. (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*There was an interview that he gave right at the beginning of joining the orchestra and he said: 'I want to be the best drummer in the world.' And that is what built his enthusiasm. He's been here for the last four years. In addition to the orchestra, he also joined the project Gerajazz, which really is his big objective, isn't it? It's about one day getting to play in the Hot Club or similar places. (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*When my daughter arrived home: 'Mum, I'm going to play violin.' Sure, daughter, you're going to do just what your mother was never able to do' because there were eleven of us and our parents put us to work at the age of twelve. (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

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<sup>41</sup> Specialized Music School.

### *Feelings of pride*

Various factors seem to jointly contribute towards parents and guardians feeling pride over the visibility of the OG. On the one hand, there is the satisfaction that this causes in their children, and on the other hand the visibility of the project in the public sphere.

*They would say: 'We are in a room just like in the Golden Globe awards, with red carpets and everything'. They would send messages: 'they are playing this, they are playing that, they're showing it on television on such a date. They were really glazed.' It's really emotional! (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)*

*The majority of my family is all in Cape Verde but I go to all of the performances, all of them... I always film them... And I send them to them: my mother, my brothers and sisters. I have some siblings here but they also never miss the concerts. Whenever there is the final one there in the Gulbenkian, they always go. (Apelação parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*It's true, they begin getting very high levels of self-control. And then comes the connotation that the orchestra now has: 'Ah, this is an Orquestra Geração girl'. Now, there is a lot of public exposure. I would note, even in my kid's school that there is this difference because of the girl being in the Orquestra Geração: 'do you see, you're getting top grades because you are there in the Orquestra Geração.' In the case of my daughter, it's not so much about being in the Orquestra Geração but there is already this connotation. (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*They have a notion that increasingly... the repertoires become more demanding. And that just has to be. And the first time that they played the 5<sup>th</sup> movement from I don't know what (laughter), well, I cried. Because a person listening to them play "O Grilito" ti-ti, ti-ti, and then listening to that! And then there was the time with that choir... with the choir of Lisbon. Oh, really, that was something ...! (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2015)*

*I, when it's like that... there was a time when I went to the São Luiz Theatre and she did not know that I was there. I'd been working and she arrived at home all sad and said: 'Mum, you didn't go.' And I told her: 'Yes, I did.' 'No, you didn't.' 'Yes, I did.' I showed her the pictures. She was so very happy (laughter) (Vialonga parent/guardian, 06-06-2015).*

While the favourable sentiments prevail, explicit in the discourses of the parents and guardians, there are also some criticisms about the way in which the OG gets presented by some media outlets. They also consider the way in which the young musicians are selected for foreign tours to be unfair in some nuclei.

*It's the way it is. When I see on television the reports that they show one thing that simply is not... I don't like it because it's that way, it's the orchestra of the poor kids. But it isn't! There are poor kids, there are rich kids, there's middle class, there is everything. And it all gets shown as the same... it seems like they're talking about some bad types who live I don't know where. Both those from here and those from Amadora. It's all the same, all the same. But it isn't!* (Vialonga parent/guardian, 06-06-2015)

*I think that they began as poor little things who were with the Orquestra Geração. (...) And now, they're the big ones who are from the Orquestra Geração. There you go, the portrayal [media].* (Miguel Torga parent/guardian, 07-06-2014)

*Yes,. I've... only been here for a while. Perhaps what seems to have happened is that we were not explained why it was that way rather than the criteria being... unclear. I think this reading is different. Perhaps it has not been clarified why it was this selection and even eventually why it got repeated leaving others out.* (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)

*And the only thing he is sad about in all of this..., in all of the project, was the fact that he never went out with the Orchestra. It was a difficult phase... of him being in the Orchestra when he saw his colleagues going off, especially when they went to Brazil and he stayed here. He got really very...very, very sad. It was the only occasion when I felt his demotivation.* (Amarante parent/guardian, 17-05-2015)

The revelations around the ways in which families get involved in the participation of their younger members in the OG project immediately recalls the importance of the connection between the community, the family, students and the project, especially in the nuclei as they get set up in the different schools. The OG board sought out persons who might be able to make this bridge in a meaningful way so as to foster communication among all intervening parties. However, it would appear that only the Apelação school encountered the ideal person to fill this role.

In the final part of this chapter, we provide a short witness account from Madalena, simultaneously an orchestra cellist and a mediator between the families, their young persons and the OG.

### **Madalena - 'I control everything from my window'**

Madalena lives in Apelação and plays in the OG. She is aged 23 and an Audiovisual and Multimedia graduate. She has always worked and studied in order to pay for her education. One day, by chance, she heard some sonatas for cello and piano by Beethoven and fell for the cello. She immediately set about getting some classes and, as she had 'a bit of cash', she purchased her own instrument. Meanwhile, with the arrival of the OG in the neighbourhood school, M. enrolled and, after a period when she also had another job and could only attend sporadically, she began participating in every class and playing in the orchestra.

*I began by coming to the weekly orchestra rehearsals that were on Thursdays. And I got to rehearse with them. My first rehearsal was already with them in the orchestra. I think that this was with maestro Olivetti or it may have been with professor Pedro Muñoz and it was a shock. I arrived, surrounded by kids, this was the first time that I had been in a room with them all, they put a score down in front of me. And they asked me 'Do you know how to read it?'. And I said 'Yes, yes, I know how to read a score'. I'd already learned. They set it all down in front of me and I was like 'wow, really'. And then I played and played and it went pretty much okay.<sup>42</sup>*

Madalena today holds the role of mediator, working full time for the OG. The director, Wagner Diniz, was thus able to fill a role that he had always dreamed about and, in this case, give it to a person in a truly privileged position to carry it out.<sup>43</sup> That's why M. states: "I control everything from my window". Effectively, she knows as well as anybody the neighbourhood and the families of the young persons in the OG and, on occasion, is better placed even than their parents to understand just what is happening with their children:

*This is more than just a question of watching out. Sometimes, it is... seeing if the kids are going to classes, what they're doing in classes. There's a lot of that*

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<sup>42</sup> All of the excerpts in this section are drawn from an interview held on 3 December 2013.

<sup>43</sup> On this matter, please see chapter 1, *Apelação Nucleus section*.

*involved and also helping out when needed and also sometimes providing motivation... Sometimes, by chance, I go to the window, it's not yet my working timetable, but I see a student who should be there in class and is just wandering by. Yes, it's very good as I begin yelling right there from the window 'What are you doing here? Shouldn't you be in school? You have classes now!' That dimension facilitates others, coming to the window and seeing somebody there, oh my, this guy should not be there. That part is great.*

And sometimes, it is about calming a worried mother:

*But on Tuesdays it's impossible for her to be dating because she comes out of the class and goes into ear training and sight singing. She really doesn't have time and after, when she leaves at 8, I wait with her at the bus stop until she gets on the bus to take her home.' Therefore, I explain this to the mother.*

Madalena has family in the neighbourhood and has been steadily understanding the value attributed to the participation of children in this project.

*My aunty, at least, when her kids play, she is very happy, all proud and I think that in the future she would not at all mind were her children to become musicians.*

To the young and even to the other members of the neighbourhoods, she is a rare species for having studied and for setting an example of a future with other opportunities. However, her life choices are not always understood due to the fact that she is 23 and not yet married and with kids.

*I remember a very little girl on an internship, she touched my breasts and said: 'Ah, you have breasts! You can be a mother!' and I just sat and stared at her without any reaction. Then I said: 'Yes, it's true, I can be a mother, I'm 23 and I can be a mother. But for now, I don't want to.' And she then stared at me as if I was some kind of ET...*

Madalena has life plans that also involve travelling abroad and perhaps doing volunteer work. However, she is happy in this role because she feels purposeful and is herself involved in a unique musical and human learning process. From our perspective, she is the best example of somebody able to grab life with her own hands while simultaneously totally identifying with her own people and the desire to step across borders to discover other horizons of life.

## References

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