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Coordinator

THE REGION of

LEIRIA

IDENTITY and DEVELOPMENT

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Alda Mourão Filipe

Coordenadora

THE REGION of

LEIRIA

IDENTITY and DEVELOPMENT

A historical and geographical
journey



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REGION OF LEIRIA
IDENTITY and DEVELOPMENT

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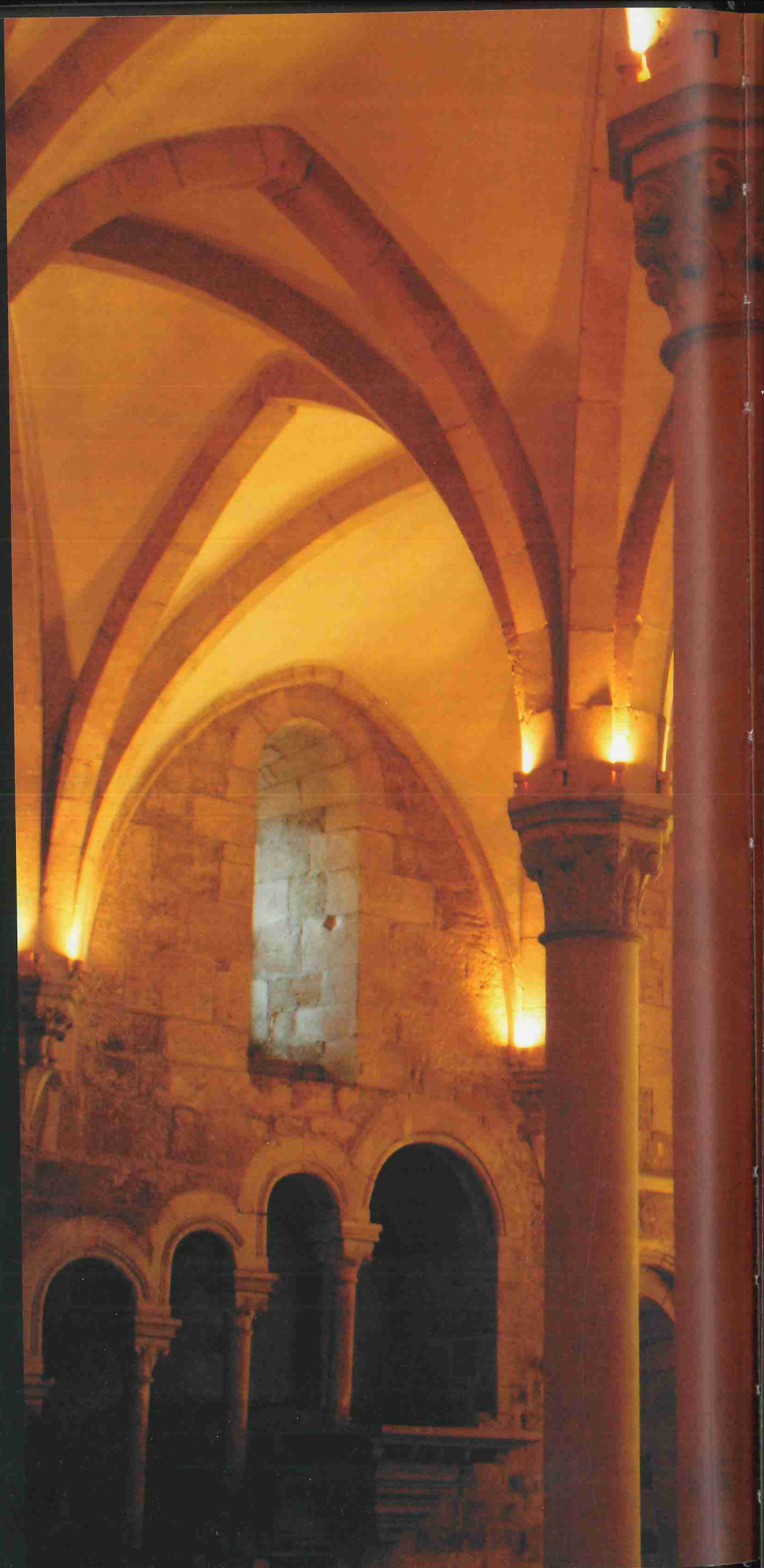
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A view of Leiria from the Castle



CONTEMPORARY IDENTITY (19TH-20TH CENTURIES)

The structure of the economy

Natural resources

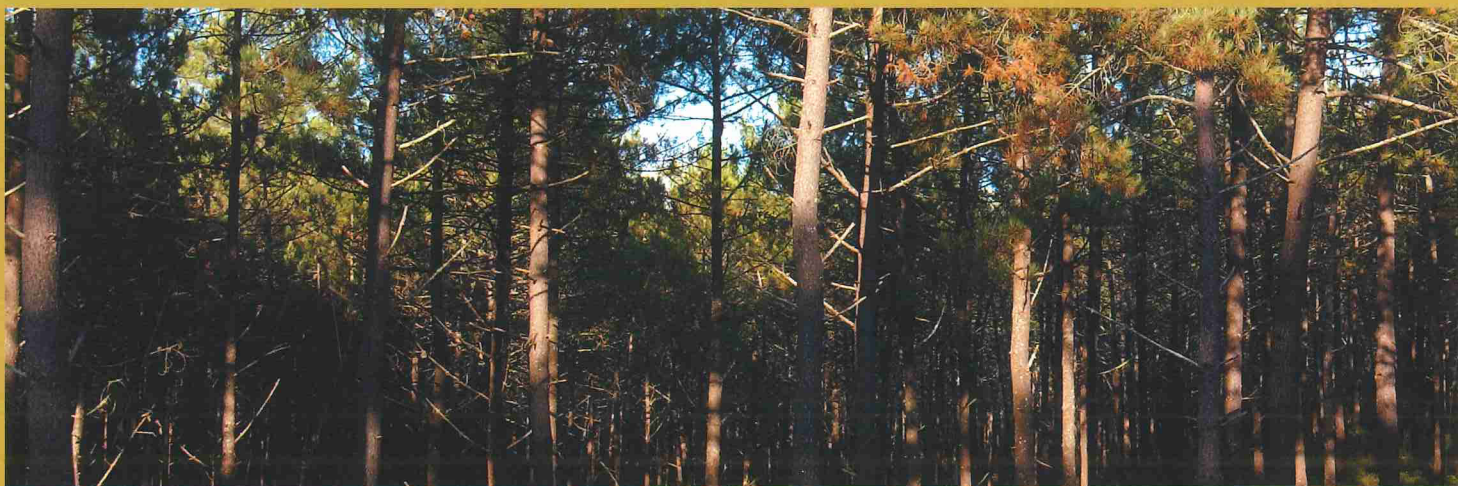
Within the national economic space, the region of Leiria is recognised as a centre that is full of potential, where production and marketing levels are remarkable. The evolution of the Portuguese economy in the period since the second world war saw its most positive effects here in the early 1960s. Trade developed, various industrial sectors gained strength and others adapted to the new needs of the market.

Water and wood have been a constant presence here for hundreds of years, in a setting and climate that are far from harsh. While the rivers are not particularly large, except for the River Liz in certain periods, timber occupies a very significant strip, with pine predominating.

In the words written in 1855 by António da Costa de Sousa Macedo, who was the Secretary General of Leiria District, here "the capital of pine forest is located, the monument of agriculture"¹. Besides timber being used for various purposes its resins also yield pitch and tar. Naval and merchant shipbuilding had an excellent supply base here.

There was a whole swathe of occupations based on the forest, including sawyers, carters, labourers, *carrasqueiros* (collectors of bark chippings), pitch-makers, resin tappers and charcoal burners. It provided a source of fuel that enabled many industries to establish themselves. The pine forest was thus a driving force for Leiria's industrialisation. By the end of the 1940s, a tourist itinerary of the District of Leiria was showing that its potential spanned quite distinct periods. Mention was made of the importance of firewood from the pine forest as a replacement for pit coal, especially in war time².

For centuries, small rivers and streams used to feed the mills that turned corn into the local staple food. Leiria not only had the lay-owned mills along the banks of the Lis, but from early on it also welcomed those that belonged to the Monastery of Alcobaça³. These rivers also provided sites for small buildings that housed industries that relied on the water. Such as paper production.



¹ D. António Sousa Macedo, *Estatística do Distrito de Leiria*, 1855, p.33. This writer prepared "the first statistical work produced in Portugal founded on scientific bases", according to the view expressed in *Portugal Pittoresco*.

² Cf. Pedro Muralha, *Roteiro Turístico do Distrito de Leiria*, n.d.

³ Cf. Pedro F. Gomes Barbosa, "O Mosteiro de Alcobaça e os Moinhos de Leiria, no século XII", *Coloquio sobre a História de Leiria e da sua Região*, Câmara Municipal de Leiria, 1991, p. 402-409. This author expanded this information in a more important work (*Povoamento e estrutura agrícola na Estremadura Central*, col. "História Medieval", no. 6, I.N.I.C., Lisboa, 1992).

As A. Teodoro de Matos recalls, the River Liz used to be navigable, but gradually became unsuitable for shipping in the nineteenth-hundreds. For him “the wood leaves the Leiria Pine Forest for the port of Vieira, whence it leaves for its destinations”⁴. The richness of the Leiria subsoil was not as unanimously accepted as the value of its forest was acknowledged. In the early 20th century, concluding a study on the geology of the region, Tito Larcher recorded and analysed some of the mines and quarries found there. He commented: “The region is poor in minerals and stones”⁵. Actually, the history of iron and coal mining goes back to the Roman occupation, to the time of *Collipo*. History and tradition present a considered discourse which often portrays reality very vividly. In 1884, a description of the town of Leiria contained some details that are worth remembering. It said: “Within its limits there are large iron mines, fossil coal mines, stone and fine marble quarries, limestone and excellent clay for the pottery industry”⁶. This opinion was based on the more or less sensationalist news of discoveries that were being made there. Years earlier, in 1855, the magazine *O Panorama* ran an article on iron and coal mines in Portugal⁷. It said: “Between Porto de Mós and Leiria some iron and coal mines have just been discovered which, according to the experts, are extremely important [...]”

The building of the railway will therefore cost a lot less, if we have the iron for the tracks and the coal to fuel the locomotives here in the kingdom. It is asserted that the coal and iron from these mines are of the finest quality.”

But the idea that there were significant deposits in the region was discredited at the end of the 19th and early 20th century. The following item appeared in the local press: “[...] the supposed coal mine in Pinhal de Leiria has not yielded anything, and neither have the others.”. Apart from this, the high number of rural workers was called into question, now left without jobs as most of the mines were abandoned. In practical terms, we can conclude that the silica sands, kaolin, clays and ochre were the real gifts that the economic area of Leiria contributed to some of the industries in the region, such as glass-making, pottery, cement, and fertilizer.

The many quarries, found throughout the district, enabled the mining of another natural treasure. In 1855, António de Sousa Macedo listed a total of 85 quarries in the district, of which 66 (77.6%) were in the Leiria region.

The clay limestone used to make hydraulic lime since the distant past, were especially abundant in S. Pedro de Moel and Pataias, as Gil Braz de Oliveira notes in his account of Portugal’s cement industry (1955:363, vol.I). The long tradition of lime production, and the subsequent production of white cement, shows us the importance of this natural resource from the Leiria region. They undoubtedly represented a significant activity that supported the building industry and “material improvements”. At the end of the 19th century, the last industrial survey (1891) revealed that Lisbon was using a considerable amount of the limestone quarried, searching for distant quarries[...]”⁸.

⁴ A. Teodoro de Matos, *Transportes e Comunicações. Portugal, Açores e Madeira (1750-1850)*, 1980.

⁵ *Leiria Ilustrada*, 19 August 1911. His articles on this topic were also published in this magazine on 9 and 30 November.

⁶ *Portugal Pittoresco*, 2a série, nº 13, 1884.

⁷ *O Panorama*, vol. II, 1855, p.152.

⁸ *Inquérito Industrial*, 1890, vol. I, p.223.





The movement of people and goods

Located on a traditional dividing line between north and south, the region of Leiria has been crossed by people and merchandise since time immemorial.

Focusing on the overland trade in the Leiria region in the mid-19th century, it was held that: “There are no travellers in Portugal, there are sufferers who are transported”⁹. The poor state of the road, which were often no more than tracks, transport was dear, slow and laborious. These were just one of the obstacles to the region’s progress. As Damião Peres observes, improving the roads was an old intention, proclaimed in 1821 and 1822¹⁰. But the protracted victory of liberalism meant that this only happened in the late 1830s.

In the mid-nineteenth century, as before, animals were mostly used for journeys overland. The traveller could use a horse or mule, if he had one, otherwise he could hire one. He would have to go to a trader in beasts of burden for this. Beasts of burden dealers could be found in most places. They were of limited scope in terms of the number of animals available, and the number of carriers - usually the same person was both owner and driver.

Until the end of the 19th century, horse- or ox-drawn transport was regulated under the district and under another, more restricted level: municipal. In 1878 the Leiria District General Council published forty-eight articles regulating the transit of hire vehicles for carrying people and goods. Carriages, stagecoaches or carts had to undergo a prior inspection before being registered, providing “safety, strength, decency”¹¹. The profession of coachman was dignified with a code of ethics for the guidance of the professionals, who were expected to drive well and safely, as well as the right way to treat passengers and the draught animals.

Not everything in the region was speedy. It is enough to consider the route taken by the mail coach, which also carried passengers, on its journey between Porto de Mós and Leiria. If the intention was to make it easier for people to get to the town, this was jeopardised when the time-table was changed, in June 1910. The coach would leave Porto de Mós at 6.30 pm and arrive at Leiria three and a half hours later, at 10 pm. The next day it would leave town at 8 in the morning, to complete its journey at 11.30 am. “So you couldn’t go to Leiria to do business without renting a coach for the purpose”¹². Leiria was still a long way away!

⁹ This was the opinion of D. António Sousa Macedo, *Estatística do Distrito...*, p. 110.

¹⁰ D. Peres, *História de Portugal*, vol. VII, p.642.

¹¹ *Regulamento para a Polícia e Transito de Vehiculos no Distrito de Leiria*, 1878, art. 3, p.4.

¹² *Correio de Porto de Mós*, n.º. 34, de Junho de 1910.

While road improvements and the establishment of the railway line were awaited, the region's economy was benefiting from the three seaports available to it: S. Martinho, Pederneira and Vieira. The proximity of the sea thus created alternatives to travelling by land.

It actually offered an additional resource to the existing roads. S. Martinho was called at by merchant vessels from Lisbon, Porto, Setúbal, Peniche, Aveiro, Figueira da Foz, Sesimbra and Algarve.

And this was how sugar, cod, leather, cloth and iron reached the region. These were the goods that came in the biggest quantities. Followed by rice, potash and soda. Trade, as well as local industry, were thus fed by products not available in the area. On the other hand, coal, glass, window panes and aguardente were surplus to local requirements. Farming also yielded surpluses of potatoes, cereals and fruit¹³.

A regional form found to get to S. Martinho, the unloading port, from the centre of the tree-felling, to Marinha Grande, was the conception of the American railroad.

Mostly to transport timber, but for other products from the pine forest, too, it was proposed in an official letter from the General Administrator of Forests dated 28 January 1853, "to construct a timber rail to the port of S. Martinho"¹⁴.

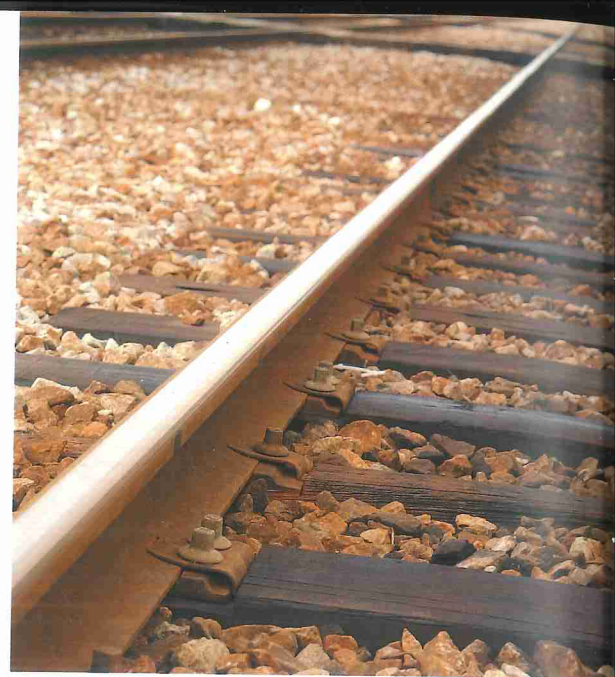
The following announcement was made in 1860: "the railroad from the Leiria pine forests to S. Martinho will be finished and will open shortly; it will make it easier to bring the products cleaned and pruned from this vast property to the major centres of consumption".

The journey, basically made through the pine woods, started in Pedreanes and ended in S. Martinho do Porto, covering 37 km¹⁵. Along the way was the Marinha Grande station, stopping next to the Royal Glass Factory to unload sand and lime and take on board glass, and the stations of Matingança, Valado and Mouchinha.

Towed up the hills by oxen, it used its own weight to go downhill. It ran on a bed "made from sand with pine or other foliage, to prevent the animals from tiring and stop them from stumbling on the sleepers"¹⁶. It usually consisted of nine goods wagons and one passenger carriage, which clearly shows it was meant to carry goods, rather than people. The two trains would meet at Valado station, every working day, one having started from Pedreanes at nine o'clock and the other leaving S. Martinho at eight o'clock. The first took six hours and the other one took eight "because the draught animals were used more in this direction". It could reach a speed of 40 km per hour on the downhill slopes. It travelled much more slowly on the rest of the trip. The passengers could therefore not only observe Nature, but also enjoy a spot of hunting¹⁷.

As it was not converted into a shortened railway, as was requested, it was removed from service in 1885, in favour of the West line. With the American railway there came to an end an era in which transport technology linked tradition to aspects of modernity, to be finally condemned to be replaced by faster and more convenient means of getting around.

The age of the train was starting in the region. The time for the locomotive had come! Support for it emerged in 1875. A shorter line was planned which would connect the town to the port of S. Martinho via the south of the district of Leiria. The arguments advanced were based on the circumstances: the region's produce (forest, agricultural and manufactured products) were greatly jeopardised by the problems encountered in transporting them.



In 1911 the importance of connecting Leiria to the North Line, at Chão de Maças was still under discussion¹⁸.

But the conditions for moving around the region, not to mention the cult for a particular urban leadership, meant that Leiria had not got closer to communities further afield. In 1906, a movement started in Pombal, represented by a committee and backed by local traders which made its displeasure at being abandoned felt in Leiria's corridors of power and through the newspapers. It was even suggested that the municipalities in the north of the district be incorporated into Coimbra, where people could get to more quickly¹⁹. The extreme of the communication era illustrated by the journey between Pedrógão Grande and the district capital: it took five days.

To the south, relations were facilitated by more accessible communication and so became quite a lot friendlier, as revealed in the exchanges of praise and displays of appreciation carried in local magazines in Leiria and Alcobça.

¹³ Cf. D. António Macedo, *op. cit.*, p. 110-113; p. 342-343.

¹⁴ *Boletim do Ministério das Obras Publicas, Comercio e Industria*, 1856, p. 246.

¹⁵ Cf. Pedro Inácio Lopes, *Projecto de um caminho de ferro de via reduzida entre a Ponte de Sant'Anna e o Porto de S. Martinho*, Imprensa Nacional, 1875, p. 12.

¹⁶ *Boletim do Ministério das Obras Publicas, Comercio e Industria*, 1857, 1 semestre, p. 332.

¹⁷ The slower speed meant that people sometimes took rifles with them and did some hunting on the stretches where the train was pulled by oxen. Cf. Arala Pinto, *O Pinhal do Rei*, vol. I, p. 382.

¹⁸ *Linhas ferreas complementares da região da Extremadura. Petição apresentada ao Ex. mo Ministro do Fomento pela Comissão de Melhoramentos da cidade de Leiria* (Complementary railway lines in the Extremadura region. Petition presented to the Minister for Development by the Committee for the Improvement of Leiria town), 1911.

¹⁹ "Transport is expensive for people from Pombal, and it is only five and a half leagues, whereas they are in Coimbra in one hour" (*Leiria Ilustrada*, of 8 March 1906).

Economic sectors

In the dying years of the 19th century, the district of Leiria was presented as having a significant population with potential for “industrial and commercial development that it should enjoy in a few years”, in the words of the local branch of the Bank of Portugal²⁰, the first bank to set up in Leiria, in 1893.

At a time when local agriculture was recovering from the severe blow caused by the devastation of the vineyards, better economic times were hoped for, with industry playing a leading role. For this, the region of Leiria could offer abundant labour and the Linha do Oeste (Western railway line). It was hoped that the loan service offered by the Bank of Portugal would enable local resources to be utilised, expanding the industrial scene beyond “fabric from Castanheira and Alcobaça, pottery from Caldas... and glass from Marinha Grande”.

In the more dispassionate and, perhaps, more prejudiced view of the inspector who visited the Leiria branch in 1901, from the commercial standpoint the town is of “scant importance”, in a spatial setting that was sustained by its nearest neighbours²¹. At any rate, it would not extend beyond shipping farm produce, animal husbandry and eggs. Wood is mentioned as the most important export product, especially for England. The only industry mentioned was glass, with Marinha Grande being named as the centre for some of the sector’s producers.

At the time of its closure, in 1944, the following was said about Leiria’s branch of the Bank of Portugal: “It has learned how to cope with difficulties and handle the granting of loans with shrewdness, over the past 101 years”²².

In terms of commerce in the urban environments, towards the end of the 19th century, the activity was “professionalizing”, introducing considerable improvements in the size and quality of establishments. The goods available to a more demanding,



²⁰ *Relatório, Balanço e Desenvolvimentos do Agência do Banco do Portugal em Leiria*, 1893.

²¹ *Relatório de inspeção às agências*, ano de 1901, fl. 2v.

²² *Revista*, Banco de Portugal publication, no. 39, September, 1994, p. 17-18.

informed public were becoming more diverse. Specialist stores were opening their doors: dairies, bookshops, cafés. In the rural world, change did not necessarily come in the same period: it happened quite a lot later.

Leiria was openly different, in the commercial sector, in the variety, specialisation and quality of its establishments.

Competition proclaimed perfectionism and creativity. The use of local newspapers to advertise what was on offer, was marking out a commercial area that was quite distinct from the amalgam in which it had founded itself.

Competing with and complementary to the fixed trade, markets and fairs were also playing an essential part in the regional supply system, and this has continued almost up to today.

With reference to the industrial sector, we should begin by remembering Bacelar Chichorro who, in the last few years of the 18th century, complying with royal instructions of 17th January 1793, gathered information on the economy of the Province of Estremadura, which was published two years later²³. He has thus given us the results of the inquiries he undertook in relation to trade, agriculture and crafts in the Estremadura districts. He was looking at a province which, as he saw it, was the “best equipped” with useful establishments, which were the factories. Because of their excessive concentration in Lisbon, which was in Estremadura, the area as a whole was unable to reflect the benefits of manufacturing development. He argued for the diversification of sites where they should be set up, which would be very good for the national economy: owners would make more profits, the population would grow, farming would benefit with more investment. This was the model brought to Marinha Grande, with the establishment of the Royal Glass Factory, the “factory of factories” in the entire region of Leiria.

In the early 20th century, Bento Carqueja (1916) observed that industry can be a stimulus for all other forms of production. He said that “it specialises and expands the articles traded; in view of its great capacity for capitalisation, it provides an entry for all forms of activity”. It could be added that it would motivate the production of its own raw materials, essential for its activity.

These principles became obvious in the complicated system of tasks developed under the responsibility, organisation and needs of the Royal Glass Factory. Besides producing glass and crystal, the factory engaged in a whole series of activities that complemented the production. Outside the factory, a variety of activities was encouraged, with the aim of supplying what was missing. The first and possibly the most important, was related to the supply of firewood. Felling, cutting and transporting wood from the pine forest, justified work that involved considerable manpower, all year round. The many activities generated by the glass factory were quite obvious. The Royal Glass Factory depended on supplies of sand, seashells, pebbles, limestone, lime, tiles, bricks, clay, planks, charcoal, wooden boxes²⁴. Behind all these materials seethed a multitude of activities that enhanced the image of the Royal Glass Factory. In fact, this large factory fulfilled a social task by fostering the creation of jobs.



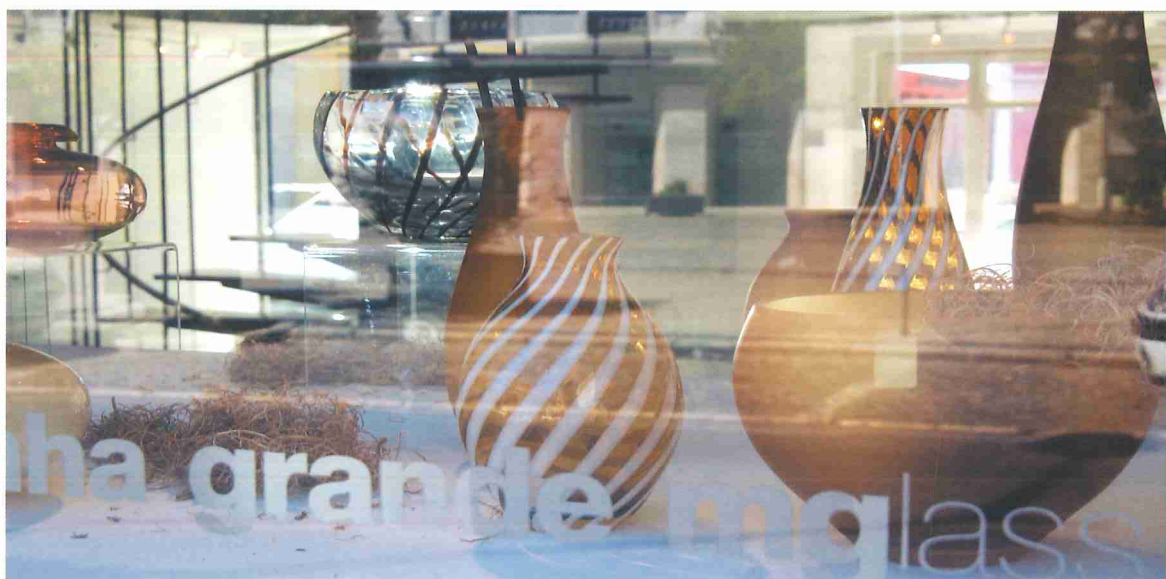
²³ *Memoria Económico Política da Província da Estremadura. Traçada sobre as instruções régias de 17 de Janeiro de 1793, as it was called. Last published in 1943, by Bensabat Amzalak. José Luís Cardoso reveals in this work the influence of the writings of Guimarães Moreira, District Governor (Corregedor) of Leiria, at the end of the 18th century. See *Memórias económicas inéditas, 1780-1808*, with preface by J. L. Cardoso, Academia de Ciências de Lisboa, 1987.*

²⁴ *ADL - Livros Notariais* no. 41 and 45, ff.48-49v; 8-12. Contracts from January 1880, unspecified day, and of 2 February 1882, respectively.

Notarial deeds confirm the development of a range of workshop and industrial activities at the end of the 18th century²⁵. On the whole, the scale and organisation of production units tended to be simple, where a small number of workers absorbed the wisdom of the master, usually the owner. They were receivers and transmitters of the knowledge handed down by tradition, from which the future would benefit. Taking the region of Leiria as a whole, an industrial scenario that perfectly matched the national economic fabric was recorded. At the start of the 19th century, the register of industries established in the Leiria region was quite modest: apart from the glass and crystal factory, threads were woven in two “factories” not far from the town, stockings and fabric, in Alcobaça.

Industrial output from the region was divided between that which arose exclusively from internal needs, like glass, and that which stimulated colonial trade, mostly in Brazil, like hats and cotton fabric.

The town of Leiria also had a system of economic communication routes, which included neighbouring villages. The



²⁵ Cf. Saul Gomes, “A industrialização da Alta-Estremadura no final do Antigo regime – breves notas”, *Revista Portuguesa de História*, volume XXXII, 1997/1998, p.225-241. Jorge Pedreira describes this situation in more detail for the Leiria region (*Estrutura industrial e mercado colonial. Portugal e Brasil, 1780-1830*), especially Chap. II, p.65-137.

backbone, which links the country's towns and cities to one another, opening bigger and more demanding markets, had not yet been sketched out. This failure played its part in the feeble process of industrialisation here, as in the rest of the country. The first decades of the 19th century reflected the effects of the crisis subsequent to the French invasions, from the industrial point of view. The region of Leiria was not to be an exception. As an urban centre, it was to remain detached from a non-existent network of towns; as a predominantly farming region, it was to witness the apathy that marginalised the potential benefits brought by modernisation. Except for the glass-making sector, there was no training of skilled worker and industrial initiatives were in the hands of a labour force that had recently left farm work. But it did have the advantage of being on the coast. More than an organised market, the coast offered accessibility. And this introduced dynamics which locally spurred the utilisation and optimisation of the natural conditions.

At local level, Leiria region was an area where business initiative, influenced by the Pombaline legacy, adapted to the new circumstances of the late seventeen-hundreds and the start of the next century. Here, as elsewhere in the country, industrialisation made only modest, slow progress, but it still had the essence for creating, throughout the 19th century and early 20th century, the economic, social, mental and cultural structures needed for the strong thrusts that followed.

From the early 20th century, and most noticeably with the coming of the republic, growing involvement with industrial activity was observed. There remained a great many small production units, run by individuals and of limited operations. One corner stood out for its local traditions, and that was Marinha Grande, with others beginning to join it.

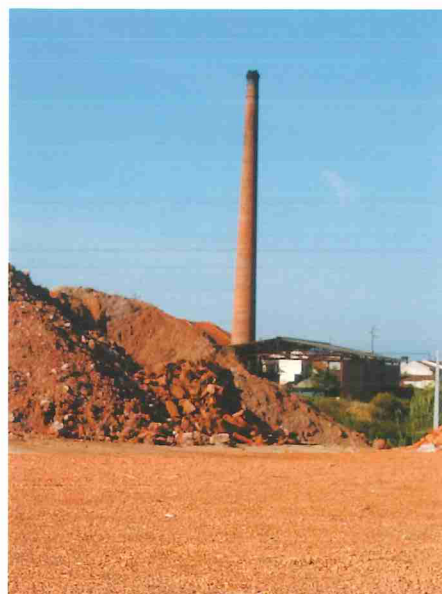
We were seeing the gradual dismantling of a traditional, pre-industrial society. After 1905 the process of change took a clearer route and became more important in the first few years of the republican regime. It does not appear that the political change had any influence on Leiria's industrial path. The information available suggests it was the continuation of a pre-1910 process, which, in fact, was António Telo's conclusion for the country as a whole²⁶.

Regarding Leiria, this, of all the municipal seats, that was most known for its factories, with a total of 23, compared with Alcobaça, with 3, and Pombal, with 4. There are some points of interest about the town. First, the urban area was overlooked in favour of its periphery in relation to the siting of factories.

Second, zones attractive to industry were defined : such as Maceira and Souto da Carpalhosa. While Maceira was to "specialise" in chemicals (fertilisers and matches), taking advantage of local resources (ochre, gypsum), it also tried to compete with Marinha Grande with a glass and window pane factory. Souto da Carpalhosa, meanwhile, flagged as an "industrial centre", on a local dimension, and Maceira was to change its entire landscape, its traditional and economic scenario, benefiting from the railway links to welcome the cement industry, still there today.



²⁶ Cf. António Telo, "A busca frustrada do desenvolvimento", in *Portugal Contemporâneo*, vol. 3, p. 135. Sobre a região em apreço, vide A. Mourão Filipe, *A Formação do Tecido Empresarial da Área Económica de Leiria (1836-1914)*, tese de doutoramento, 2000.



Finally, attention should be paid to Marinha Grande. The glass industry created a tradition based on successful production and on the establishment of a life regulated by factory work. The periods of considerable precariousness it knew seem to have stimulated the entrepreneurial spirit of those who, thanks to some assets, invested in setting up their own company. The families in the glass business were trained, keeping alive the interest, the energy and the determination needed to pursue the activity.



CONTEMPORARY IDENTITY (19TH-20TH CENTURIES)

The forming of the industrial fabric

Business

Economic life is organised on individual initiative and through the creation of companies, formed by two or more individuals. These give rise to a more complex form of economic intervention and take the written form of a legal deed.

The next Table summarises the rate of company creation between 1830 and 1914, in the different municipalities in the Leiria region. To properly interpret the data, we should remember that, in the period under consideration, the present day municipality of Marinha Grande was part of that of Leiria, and that of Nazaré belonged to Alcobaça.

The first decade of the 20th century saw the most active period in terms of formally and legally created companies. The movement started very hesitantly, from 1840, and this changed in the 1860s. It gathered pace in the 1870s, and reached its peak, with 60.5% of all effective formalisations, after 1900. To better understand the situation created after 1910, and for which the figures have their real value, it should be remembered that the amounts found refer exactly to half the time accounted for the previous classes: we go no further than the year 1914.

In the context of business initiative, Alcobaça achieved its good positioning thanks to its coastal zone.

The area generally called Nazaré, which includes Sítio, Pederneira and Praia, played a unique part in the region. Its society formalised the dominant, and almost exclusive, activity: fishing. Although the fishing enterprises began to assert themselves in the 1880s, it was in the early 1900s that they were at their greatest volume.

In the municipality of Leiria, Marinha Grande's propensity for business investment led to the setting up of companies at a rate very similar to that in Alcobaça. Moreover, the glass-making community was foremost in some municipal seats, like Batalha and Porto de Mós, which showed a minimal vocation for creating structures that would cover centres for producing or marketing goods according to a modern code of precepts.

What happened in Leiria town seems to reflect economic movements that differed from those everywhere else. It has the first legally registered company in the locality, but the timidity of its business drive persisted until the end of the 1880s. The international recession in the early 1890s, mostly the reaction of Leiria's market to the decline in emigrants' remittances, led to the interruption of this movement, which only recovered at the turn of the century.

The early years of the 1st Republic established its leadership within the region. Of the other municipal seats, Alcobaça and Pombal reacted most favourably to the economicist appeals of the new regime, and the highest number of companies formed between 1910 and 1914 were located there. Overall, while the small town of Alcobaça was completely overwhelmed by the dynamism in the neighbouring coastal zone of Nazaré, Pombal completely led the way in its municipality.

The businessman

MUNICIPAL	1830	1840	1850	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900	1910	TOTAL
Alcobaça		1	3	2	2	5	7	36	19	75
Batalha				1	2		1		1	5
Leiria	1	4	2	1	12	13	9	24	26	92
Pombal		1			2	2	8	8	13	34
Porto Mós					1	1	2			4
TOTAL	1	6	5	4	19	21	27	68	59	210

Table 3 - CREATED SOCIETIES per municipal and per decade (1830-1919)

Source - Notarial books (from 1836 to 1914)



The late 19th/early 20th century businessman was regarded by some as a weaker kind of explorer and exalted by others for his participation in 'communities' socio-economic development. He created his own social space that was not based on fortune, birth or academic titles.

In the Leiria region, as in the business world in general at the end of the eighteen-hundreds and the early nineteen-hundreds, the family was the key to moulding businessmen.

Of the industrialists who would set up larger firms, like those in the area of glass manufacturing and even ceramics, there is a tendency for them to originate in a small workshop. As employees or small producers, they acquired the know-how, the will and the need to invest in a larger scale project. They created a new kind of businessman: that of the boss who has a thorough knowledge of the job, who shares knowledge and works side by side with his employees, among whom he has placed his own sons. Many of them trained themselves, corresponding completely to the profile of the 'self-made man'. Others reproduced the "business climate" started by the family, or which the boss had given them. They were no less meritorious, because they too consolidated the spirit of change.

The businessman in the industrial sector, more than anyone else, maintained strong ties with the rural world. The complementarity between the two activities was consummated in areas that were hard to autonomize. This was true of milling, wine and brandy distilling, fruit and vegetable preservation. The sharing of physical spaces and seasonality with other apparently unrelated activities became an invitation to forge such a relationship. This occurred with the paper industry, tanning and fertiliser production. Mobility between the two sectors can be seen as a factor of stability, balance and investment security. But is also undoubtedly meant the accommodation of old-fashioned technologies, strongly based in tradition.

Production limitations shaped the limitations of the market. Which is to say, things were produced for local consumption. In the countryside, consumption matched the farming calendar, reducing the development of production capacity. The supply and demand cycles, which obviously coincided, became obstacles to production. Given this background, there was no quantitatively significant training of real businessmen. In terms of quality, and even though they were not a homogeneous group, these were the people responsible for the business climate that was gradually taking shape in the Leiria region.

There is very little information to help us pinpoint the social origins of these men. Information has been built up on the most notable ones that suggests the first generation was of humble birth. Rather than heading for the industrial sector, some were involved with activities linked to trade. Three prominent Leirian businessmen come to mind, all connected with the glass industry: Dâmaso Luís dos Santos, Carlos Salgueiro Gallo and José dos Santos Barosa. When they became glass making industrialists, they concentrated solely on production. Elsewhere, trade remained a supplementary activity in a perfectly harmonious and compatible relationship with industry. The energy and risk the latter required was balanced by the stability and security of the former.

The trade sector was not particularly demanding in terms of specialist knowledge. The relative ease with which it was possible to enter the business world through this route resulted in there being a very broad group, generally called traders or businessmen. Many of them never achieved the status of entrepreneurship. Those that did so overcame demanding levels so that only the best stand out.

Leiria region had some fine businessmen operating in the commercial sector. Establishing themselves, using family assets or backed by a boss, any of these routes was taken in the second half of the 19th and in the 20th centuries.

The economic area of Leiria began an early experiment in large-scale industry, in the national context, through Marinha Grande. The business model developed there showed that it was ahead of its time. Social and cultural concerns like those emerging in the first phase of the Royal Glass Factory did not dominate the mind of those responsible for production or distribution establishments many decades later. The English pattern, so dear to the Pombaline government, was adopted and showed its worth. It created a gap between



the reality it brought to Marinha Grande and the rest that was put into practice afterwards, in other economic sectors. It was not just the size of the company that made it different. The interest in encouraging the workers, by means of culture, training, defined the distance.

At the same time, the first entrepreneurs from the Royal Glass Factory in Marinha Grande drew attention to the participation of foreigners in shaping Leiria's business fabric. They were among the pioneers, and many of them settled down here and established families. They were also among the specialist workers who shared their expertise with colleagues, and replicated it through succeeding generations. There were the Gallos, for example, studied recently, who demonstrated this convergence of origins of some of our businessmen.

Despite the presence of foreigners, Leiria's entrepreneurship was basically endogenous, as elsewhere, even elsewhere in Europe²⁷. In the industrial sector, the two largest factories, up to the end of the 19th century (which came to be known as National, associated with the New Glass Factory of Marinha Grande, and the Fábrica de Fiação e Tecelagem de Alcobaça) benefited from outside investment. Shortly afterwards, the same thing happened with the installation of the cement factory in Maceira. Apart from these firms, there were very few examples that we can find. Leiria received most of its investment from local sources of capital. The economic capacity of its entrepreneurs was in harmony with local wealth, since it was here that the means were found to accumulate capital. From this angle, we can see that there was a blocking factor which prevented the appearance of important companies, in terms of size and technology. Financing, over which we find a veil of silence has been drawn, rarely involved people or institutions from outside the region until the early 20th century. The family was the main source.

From the social point of view, there are no references to the origins of the great majority of businessmen in the Leiria economic area²⁸. Various documental sources have provided indirect information which has led to a certain homogeneity in terms of birth. In the industrial sector and commercial sector alike we come across men of humble origin: sons of small property owners, of petty traders, of labourers. In some cases they team up with a self-employed professional, a doctor or lawyer. They mostly started out by setting up on their own; some of them gained experience and ambition from being involved in larger projects that extended beyond the family setting. They found partners with whom they shared ideas and interests. They established firms. Others expanded their company on their own and survived thanks to their skills and the support and backing of their family.

The second generation did not greatly change this model, but it benefited from a birth that made things easier than the course taken by the father. Access to education was being extended and came to be an added value for firms. Two levels of knowledge converged in the new businessman: that from school and that from the shop or workshop. The Leiria region showed that the ideological representation of the third generation "law" exhibits considerable weakness²⁹. When some of the younger members of the family break with the relative stability of the father/son succession, reproducing a widespread business practice, this was due to the attraction of professions which required a university education. They symbolised the economic and social power of the parents. Some of the lawyers, doctors and engineers in the early 20th century, in Leiria region, were the offspring of local businessmen. They did not always leave the business world, a clear illustration of the influence exerted by the entrepreneurial climate and culture that had been growing there. In the absence of children, other relatives, or even workers, were admitted to this chain of inheritance.

Not all the businessmen were successful. Of those who did succeed, some attained powerful positions in Leiria's social structure. They mostly came from the commercial sector. But, contrary to what happened in Porto in the 19th century, as Manuel C. Teixeira (1996) described, in Leiria's economic area industrialists also occupied distinguished positions. On the whole, they formed a small group, but they left their mark on local civic life. In associations, in local government, in party political organisations, cultural and leisure activities, businessmen were involved as driving forces. The level of their standing was directly related to the importance of the position taken in these other spheres of activity. Leaders of economic life were given more responsibility.

When it comes to trading, for instance, the businessman was in charge of a privileged place for exercising his influence: the shop. This sociable place joined up with others, because of the need to form a group identity. The Leiria Commercial Association, the Leiria Assembly, and clubs were among the organisations that became centres for the class to discuss issues and take decisions. This aspect of power was gradually being given visibility, and was manifesting itself in the collective, from the singular.

Businessmen led local economic life, but they went further. They became renowned as citizens, contributing both as a group and individually, to the development of the entire region of Leiria in the second half of the 19th and early 20th century.

²⁷ Cf. D. Barjot, *Les Patrons du Second Empire*, vol.1, p.19. This is about an example from Upper Normandy.

²⁸ A completely acceptable situation, from the number of authors who have noted this information gap, for Portugal, for European countries and for the United States.

²⁹ On the Gallo family, J. M. Amado Mendes and Manuel F. Rodrigues have another example to expand the number of exceptions (*Ricardo Gallo. Um século de tradição e inovação no vidro, 1899-1999*, p.39). We would add the Leitão and Barosa families, among others.



ATENEU

COOK

CONTEMPORARY IDENTITY (19TH-20TH CENTURIES)

Structuring of urban space and new forms of sociability

When organising the urban space, trade starts out by defining a centre, from which commercial peripheries are hierarchised. Services keep pace with the spatial layout decided by trade, according to an interactive model, justified by the flow of people there. But the trade justified the urban model, not only in terms of organising the town's internal space, but also the road network that would give it the best accesses.

In a recent study, the geographer Teresa Barata Salgueiro looked at the organisation of a city, as influenced by commerce, by making use of the current example afforded by the city of Leiria³⁰. Going back to the mid-twentieth century, we would find at the reinforcing of the monocentric urban model, exemplified by the Praça Rodrigues Lobo, where the city's main shopping area could be found. Apart from the various stores, the weekly markets are also held there. The various kinds of trade co-existed in an atmosphere of peaceful neighbourliness, from which everyone gained. The interests of anyone wanting to sell were protected not only by a code of professional ethics but by the balance sought between what buyers needed and the range of goods available to them each day. And so the variety of products did not result in a twofold supply, differentiated by where it was bought (shop or market stall). No complaints were made about this by traders with an open shop. The accessibility of the Praça Rodrigues Lobo made it easy for sellers and buyers alike. In addition to all this, the mobility of the latter was facilitated by the concentration of the suppliers and the friendly protection of the boundaries of the actual space.

As time passed, the town shifted from this monocentric trade and welcomed other units, which little by little began to develop into secondary centres. This did not coincide with the decline of the main centre, but with the growth of residential areas which were creating their own "consumption areas".



³⁰ Do comércio à distribuição. Roteiro de uma mudança, Celta Editora, 1996.

As we leave the town of Leiria in 1914, the primacy of the commercial area defined by the Praça Rodrigues Lobo and the streets nearby was still a fact. But there were signs foreshadowing the existence of peripheries that were likely to become secondary centres in relation to the older, more important one. Here, and round about, in addition to living there, the local bourgeoisie had their "social emblems": social centres of professional, cultural, humanitarian organisations, elegant leisure amenities, big stores, banks. The workshops and factories remained, but to the extent that they were being created, this was taking place in the suburbs. The administrative services were established nearby. The construction of a new municipal building would remove some public offices to the edge of the town, releasing space for the services and even for private housing.

The areas around the Praça Rodrigues Lobo soon benefited from the improvements in urban conditions, especially those linked to hygiene and public lighting.

The flipside of this situation of the down-town part of the town involved the River Lis. Its floodwaters regularly invaded the nearby streets, bursting into the establishments there.

It was necessary for the town, a place of markets and traders, to be flexible and adapt to the new conditions. The economic relations engaged in here did not always clarify the dichotomy between the urban and the rural. Quite the contrary. The limits were sometimes so diffuse that Leiria could have served as a pattern to support the idea of the wrong placing of the division between these two worlds.

There was a balanced relationship of interdependence in the trade between the town and the country areas.

The town centre, with its many commercial establishments, was not very keen to welcome industrial initiatives. It would make room for small craft workshops producing goods that catered for the immediate needs of the people, and these therefore acquired commercial functions.

The factories and workshops that needed more space and used more workers preferred to set up either on the edge of Leiria or in neighbouring parishes. The peripheral calling of industry, in the words of Maria Madalena Allegro Magalhães (1988), was being repeated here. The needs of a growing urban population was combined with the demand for cheap land and plentiful labour.

The doubling of activities that often occurred, due to the proximity with farming, meant that this labour force was fairly undemanding when it came to working conditions, benefits and wages. But the counterpart was that it became a perverted benefit, since it did not encourage the acquisition of new skills and knowledge. This situation only served to adversely affect industry.

From the intellectual and administrative standpoint, the town of Leiria, district capital, also occupied the centre of an extended area. The peripheral communities had to come here to use the services that regulated the political and administrative life of the country.

The town can enjoy a reputation as a "social elevator", bringing added value to its people by the simple fact that they are living there.

But the urban population was hierarchised by upward and downward social movement, in terms of professional successes and failures. There is the example arising from the publicity surrounding the bankruptcy proceedings of businesses, whose owners are quickly forgotten in the media, which, especially the local journals, follow the social ups and downs in the town. The weekly social contact they afforded with a particular citizen would come to an abrupt end when an economic setback became public. The ethics established by urban sophistication would prevent the journalist from making considered judgments in relation to the events to which the personages involved were related. But the local press, as a creation of a social - even cultural - elite, would give the picture of the social vicissitudes of their peers.

Some displays of solidarity, cemented by relations of neighbourliness, have persisted in the urban space, despite everything. The scale of Leiria's economic wealth was naturally considerably distant from the patterns of large towns and cities at the end of the 19th century, noted for being completely dehumanised, in spite of the excessive concentration of human resources³¹.

Like other Portuguese cities, Leiria allowed features of rural companionship to persist: when there was a fire in the house or shop of a wealthy trader, people would get together to help alleviate the damage. A lot of examples have been gathered, thanks to acknowledgment notices in the local press.

³¹ Cf. *História Económica e Social ...* (dir. P. Léon), vol.IV, tomo II, p.328.

