

Alda Mourão Filipe  
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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IDENTITY and DEVELOPMENT

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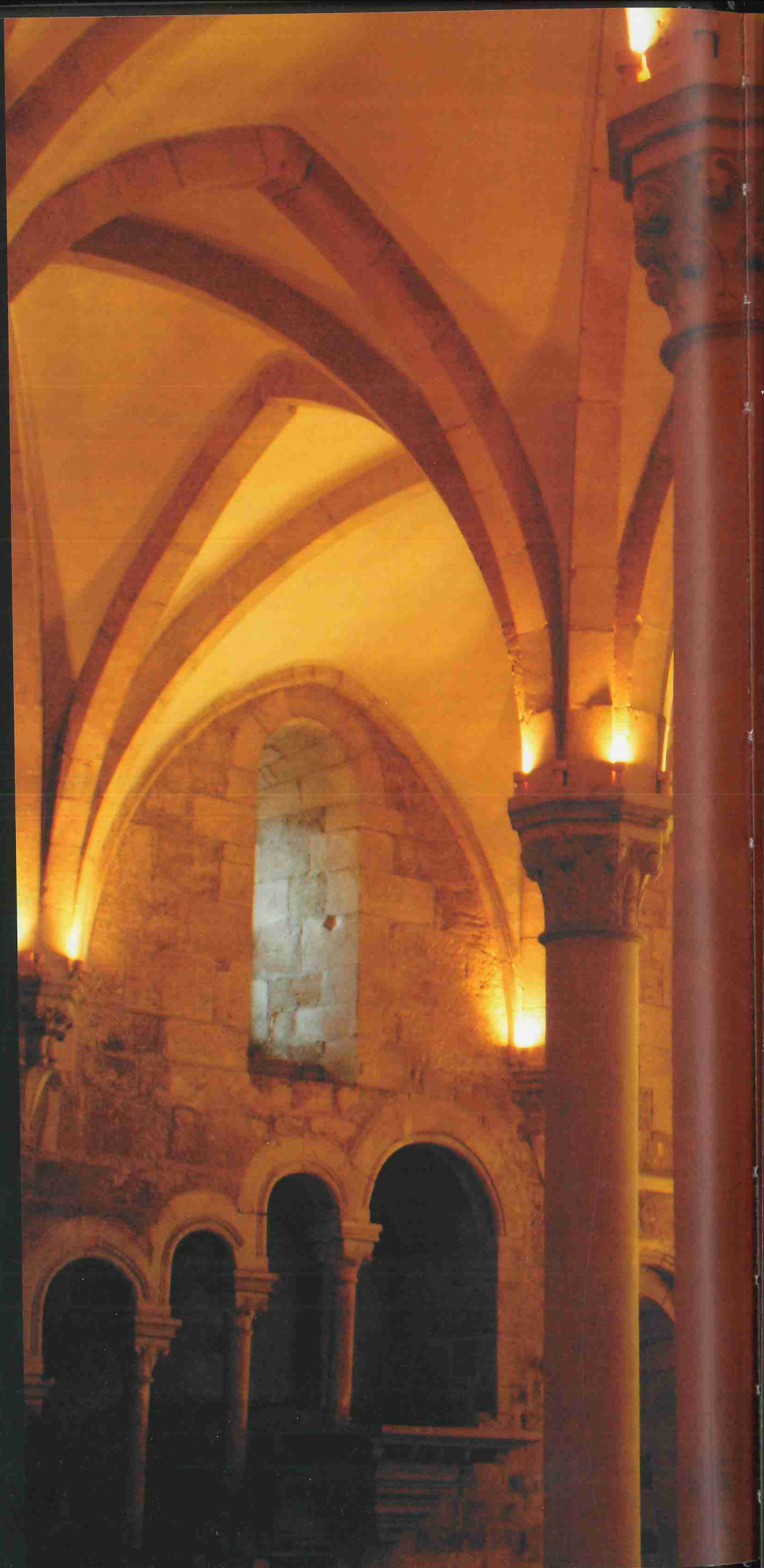
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A view of Leiria from the Castle



# EDUCATION IN THE REGION OF LEIRIA (FROM THE MIDDLE AGES TO THE PRESENT DAY)

## The Evolution of Education in Portugal

Education, in the broad sense of teaching provided in a building set aside for the purpose, with assessment schemes, has not always been a matter of interest either to rulers or to a largely illiterate population. This population was not only made up of underprivileged social groups, i.e. 'the people'. On the contrary, for many centuries this was a feature shared by the nobility and the people alike. Only the clergy had access to instruction and the domain of writing, since this was necessary for their training and for the proper performance of their duties. However, in the Middle Ages, this privileged group did not escape criticism relating to their training, which was sometimes regarded as wholly inadequate for the exercise of such important functions in society, given that they were responsible for the spiritual and moral life of their parishioners.

The Monastic Schools in convents and monasteries were not good enough preparation for a secular clergy, since their main aim was to train for the regular clergy. Having noted the failings in the training of the secular clergy, the Church's hierarchy stepped in to deal with it. In the 3<sup>rd</sup> Lateran Council, in 1179, it was ruled that a benefice for the master, *Magister Scholae*, should be instituted in cathedrals, which was to provide free teaching for admission to the priesthood<sup>1</sup>. This led to the establishment of Episcopal Schools in the larger cities and towns of the kingdom. Even so, the instruction available still do not match the needs of the country, especially at a time when great socio-economic and political changes were taking place. As the kingdom was at peace, after the Algarve had been definitively conquered, it needed an effective administration. But there were not enough qualified laymen people to satisfy these administrative needs.

In fact there was no university in Portugal until 1290. This meant that Portuguese students who wanted to pursue studies at a higher level had to go to the universities that were emerging little by little throughout Christian Europe. However this was both unsafe and costly. It was D. Dinis who, together with some Portuguese clerics, including the Abbot of the Monastery of Alcobaça, request papal permission to found a General Instruction in Portugal, in 1288. The reply was delayed, and so the king, in 1290, created a General Instruction in Lisbon, on his own initiative. So now Portugal had an institution that tried to satisfy the needs of training at the level of Canon Law, Law and, later, Medicine and Theology, with Arts being required for admission to the higher faculties.

Latin, the official language of the Church, was also the language of instruction, and it was only much later that national languages became part of the curriculum. The teaching method was based on holy texts which were read and explained according to scholastic method. Instruction was oral and there were no written exams, nor was there any kind of contestation - it was dogmatic teaching. Education continued in the Monasteries and Sees, along with the university education, with little opening up to the outside world.

The economic, social and cultural changes in the modern period, made possible by the intensification of trading relations, the multiplying of public offices and the policy of centralising government, led to an ever-increasing demand for "masters of reading", recruited from students, bachelors, and clerics<sup>2</sup>. The social elevation of certain strata of society was sustained on cultural promotion through instruction, facilitated by the press, more and more necessary: a written form of the national language was being steadily established.

Learning was not only a prerogative of the convents, churches or the (rare) parish schools: it also took place at court, in the houses of the nobility and the bourgeoisie, in classes given by private tutors in their own homes or rented premises. These private classes were mostly attended by males, while the teaching of women was largely confined to the upper echelons or to those who adopted a convent life<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Joaquim Ferreira Gomes, *História da Educação*, Coimbra, 1967.

<sup>2</sup> Rui Grácio, "Ensino Primário e Analfabetismo" in *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, vol. II, Direcção de Joel Serrão, Livraria Figueirinhas, Porto, s.d., pp. 392-397.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibidem*.

In the 16<sup>th</sup> century the Company of Jesus, whose devotion to education was one of its main features, with its Lower and Higher Colleges and its University in Évora, introduced a new method of education. It was based on the constant review of contents, the division of classes by age, the encouragement of competition and constant supervision of the students, and also on the use of written exercises. Their motto, *it is better to learn a little well than a lot superficially*, was found to be extremely effective and they dominated education in Portugal until they were expelled by the Marquês de Pombal in 1759.

After their expulsion, first letters (*primeiras letras*) was deprived of instructors, and so the Marquês de Pombal undertook a series of reforms with the aim of filling the gap left by the Jesuits. It was under the Marquês de Pombal that the first official concern with teaching the people was aired when, in 1772, the first attempt was made to institute primary education, leading to the blossoming of the first letters, towards the end of the 18th century. The schools of "Reading, Writing and Arithmetic" emerged and expanded under his government. In 1779 there were almost 720 first letters schools in Portugal. It was during his rule that Royal Schools (*Escolas Régias*) were set up and the Reform of the University of Coimbra was undertaken, providing it with infrastructures to allow a more useful education that accorded with European pedagogical courses and teaching methods. After that, the State took control of education and this tendency was accentuated in the succeeding centuries, although there was a certain amount of stagnation in the encouragement of education in the reigns of Maria I and João VI, for several reasons<sup>4</sup>.

Once liberalism took hold, education received a new impetus. This guaranteed education for everyone and freedom in teaching, with the 1826 Constitutional Charter decreeing that education should be free and a citizen's right. Efforts were therefore made to foster educational advances in various domains, by expanding the network of schools and by training teachers, with the creation in 1860 of the Normal Schools (*Escolas Normais*). These measures led to a slight drop in illiteracy from 90% in 1834 to 74.1% in 1900.

However, primary education was not the level that the liberals focused on. Based as it was on the support of the middle classes, whose access to the first letters was fairly well assured, liberal interest was directed at Secondary Education, since it was of concern to the social group that backed and nurtured the regime.

So, with Septemberism, Secondary Education was reformed after 1836, under Manuel Passos government. This reform was very progressive, creating Secondary Schools (Liceus) in the District capitals with a curriculum that included the Humanities (History, Geography and Literature), Living Languages (French, German and English), the Sciences (Chemistry, Physics, Algebra, Geometry and Natural Sciences) and the traditional subjects of Classical Languages, Rhetoric and Philosophy. Subsequent governments made some changes to the Secondary Education curriculum, but these were based on the Passos Manuel reform.

Another novelty introduced by the liberal regime was the establishment of Technical Education in Portugal, as it became necessary to provide the nation with experts in industry and commerce. Although it was the Passos Manuel government which introduced Technical Education in Portugal, with the creation of the Arts and Works Laboratory (*Laboratório de Artes e Ofícios*) in Lisbon and Porto, this aspect only really developed after 1850, in the Regeneration period. Fontes Pereira de Melo, seeing the need to train skilled technicians for industry, the development of which his government was encouraging, established Industrial Schools in Lisbon and Porto. In 1880, Emídio Navarro created the Commercial Schools, which spread throughout Portugal in the decades that followed.

Another manifestation of liberal interest in education was the creation of Higher Education in the form of 8 colleges established in Lisbon and Porto, including the Polytechnic School of Lisbon and the Polytechnic Academy of Porto. University education was largely left alone under the liberal regime, which mistrusted the University which it saw as a centre of tradition and refuge of absolutism in Portugal. The most important change at this level of education was the merging of the Faculties of Canon Law and Law to form the Faculty of Law, and the inclusion of various new subjects in Science. In the domain of knowledge, the University was consigned to a modest role as a school for the training of future administrators and government officials (middle classes and aristocracy).

The monarchy, moribund since the 1890s, was the target preferred by the republican party and its propaganda, which focused on the need to educate the people so that they could freely and conscientiously choose their rulers. After the Revolution of the 5<sup>th</sup> of October 1910, the new republican regime took a number of measures to democratize education, which was now fully controlled by the State. The complete secularisation of the State and education was thus undertaken.

<sup>4</sup> Among these factors, special emphasis is given to the French Invasions and the political, social and economic upheaval that was to lead to the Liberal Revolution of 1829, and the victory of liberalism in 1834.



The 16 years of the republican regime were marked by countless reforms, as well as by great instability in government, which prevented the full implementation of the proposed reforms. Among the measures taken then, special mention should be made of Infant Education for children aged between 4 and 7<sup>5</sup>. This was promoted with the appearance of the João de Deus Kindergartens, first in Coimbra, then in Figueira da Foz and the third in Alcobaça, gradually spreading countrywide.

In terms of Primary Education, a three-year compulsory education system was established, divided into three levels: elementary (3 years), complementary (2 years) and higher (3 years). In 1914, the organisation and supervision of Primary Instruction was decentralised and it was handed over to the municipalities, but, in 1919, Decree-Law no. 5787-A, of 10th May, entrusted the responsibility for running schools to School Boards (*Juntas Escolares*), composed by teachers, councillors, a schools inspector and a municipal financial secretary. Compulsory education was extended from 3 to 5 years - General Primary Education.

Undergoing a series of reforms, secondary education saw its network of schools increase significantly. The Decree-Law of 17th November 1914 created female sections in the Secondary Schools, consolidating the principle of co-education. In 1918, Secondary Education was completely overhauled, with the introduction of more subjects and longer hours, and this remained in place until 1926<sup>6</sup>.

Although the republican regime tried hard to encourage education, the results were not as significant as might have been expected, considering the efforts made.

The collapse of the republican regime with the Military Coup of 1926 and the consequent rise to power of António de Oliveira Salazar gave rise to profound changes in education. Although education was not one of the main preoccupations of the new regime - the *Estado Novo* - neither was it ignored. Two measures marked this process which, "in their apparent insignificance, illustrate the close ties between the scholastic institution and social dynamics: the reduction of compulsory education to three years (1930) and the expansion of compulsory

<sup>5</sup> António Nóvoa, "A «Educação Nacional»", in *Nova História de Portugal*, vol. XII, Dir. Joel Serrão e A. H. de Oliveira Marques, Editorial Presença, Lisboa, 1992.

<sup>6</sup> *Idem*.



schooling for both sexes to four years (1960)<sup>7</sup>. Whereas in the first phase the goal was to quickly reduce illiteracy, given the existing institutional capacity, the second phase considered the social demand for education, at the same time as the school network was growing significantly, covering most of the country. The education system helped to internalise a model of society and culture. The stability of the *Estado Novo* and its education policies is explained by a capacity for totalisation and social integration<sup>8</sup>.

The new regime started off by passing legislation against the republican school: compartmentalisation of education, separating the sexes and social groups, acting against the principles of co-education and single school of the republicans, the dumbing-down of learning (reducing compulsory education and cutting back the curriculum), adapting the institutional supply to the social demand for education, imposing an authoritarian and centralist administration on the education system by controlling teachers and strengthening the inspection system, and through an attitude of deprofessionalisation of teachers, devaluing their professional and academic bases by appointing school trustees (*regentes escolares*)<sup>9</sup> with no academic or professional qualifications.

The second phase, from 1936 to the post-war period, was notable for the attempt to build a nationalistic school, based on a strong element of ideological inculcation and moral indoctrination: school was not meant to pass on knowledge but to train the consciousness along the lines of the *Estado Novo*, with the institution of the Official Book (*Livro Único*), the perfect vehicle for transmitting the State ideology. This nationalism imposed the supremacy of education on instruction.

After 1947, a third phase undertook a reform of Secondary Education (the secondary schools) and Technical Education to accommodate the education system to the social and economic realities of the post-war period. This involved steps to increase compulsory schooling that set education policy within the economic needs and the industrialisation of the country, with the aim of training qualified human resources.

The administration of education, with its strong centralising and bureaucratic tradition, despite the timid efforts of republicanism to decentralise the system, was reinforced by the *Estado Novo*, which installed a real administrative dictatorship in education.

Between 1930 and 1960, the illiteracy rate fell from 61.8% to 30.3%<sup>10</sup>: in fact, the *Estado Novo*'s illiteracy strategy worked for the regime, since, as it declined, it simultaneously instilled nationalist ideals from a tender age.

People had primary education without any great social expectations being aroused in them. This level of teaching was available to all, based on minimal, controlled, course contents. In terms of compulsory education, this was being increased so that the Government could meet new challenges. In 1930 it was three years, and in 1964 it had expanded to 6 years. To cover the whole country, ensuring an education for everyone, the Government built new schools (as part of the Centenary Plans - *Planos Centenários*) by bringing education to small communities. In 1967, Preparatory Education was established, expressing a significant change in current education policy.

Growth in technical education in the post-war period helped to meet existing industrialisation plans, training workers and technicians aware of their role in society. They mostly aimed to train the middle classes, especially the local leadership elites, and so this level of education was also considered by the regime.

<sup>7</sup> António Nóvoa, *Ob. cit.*, p. 455.

<sup>8</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>9</sup> *Idem.*

<sup>10</sup> *Idem.*

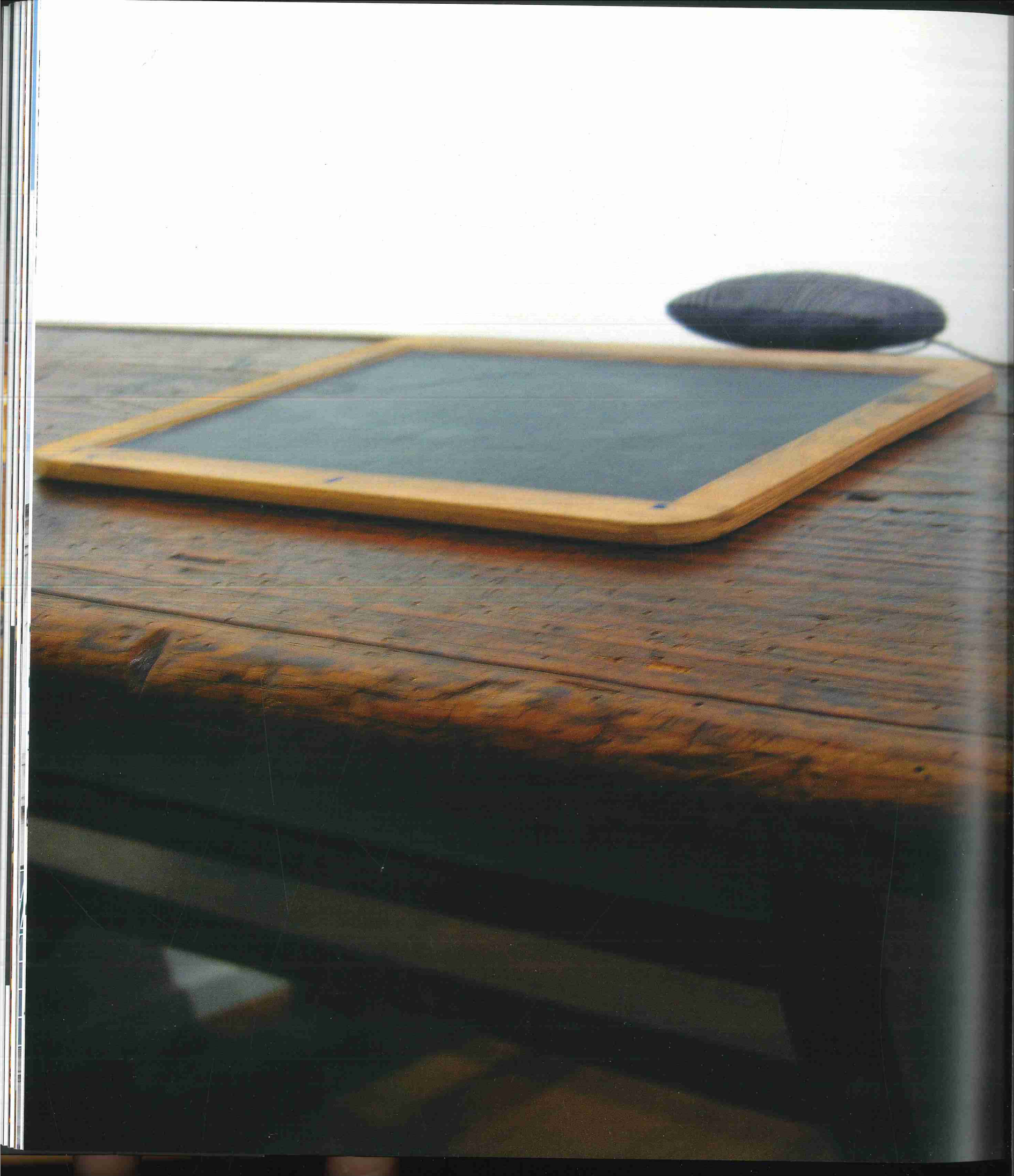
In 1960, there were four universities teaching at this level (two in Lisbon, one in Porto and one in Coimbra), and a number of institutions offering non-university higher education. The university population was quite small and did not correspond to the true needs of the country. A significant point is the fact that the number of female students in higher education was growing, and this trend was consolidated in subsequent years. In 1940, the proportion of female students was 18.9%, and in 1960 it was 31.1%<sup>11</sup>, representing significant growth in 20 years. The higher education system did not enjoy high productivity, and this aggravated some of the problems already noticed, which would find their greatest expression in the student movements that heralded the crisis in the universities in the 1960s.

Teacher training was always a sensitive area of the education system. More than a place to gain knowledge and techniques, teacher training was a fundamental element in the configuration of the teaching profession. The *Estado Novo* carried out important reforms in the sphere of teacher training. In 1930 the Primary Teacher Schools (*Escolas do Magistério Primário*) were established to replace the Normal Primary Schools (*Escolas Normais Primárias*), which were republican in character, and the Higher Normal Schools (*Escolas Normais Superiores*) were abolished, thereby achieving the complete demolition of the structure put in place by the previous regime.

In 1936, the newly-created Primary Teacher Schools (*Escolas do Magistério Primário*) were closed down, showing the failure and inability to prevail in this vital area of the education system. These schools were re-opened in 1942, the republican ghost having been finally laid to rest. Teacher training courses lasted 2 years in 1930, and 3 semesters in 1942, when these schools were re-opened. In academic and intellectual terms the demands were also lower and lower. The appointment of school trustees offset this lower qualification of teacher training to a certain extent.



<sup>11</sup> António Nóvoa, *Ob. cit.*



With the Revolution of 25<sup>th</sup> April 1974, and the consequent democratisation of a country that had survived almost 50 years of an oppressive dictatorship, teaching too was released from the chains of the Salazar regime. In the dying years of the regime, with Marcelo Caetano presiding over the destiny of a nation eager for change, efforts were made to make changes in education, notably in the Education Reform envisaged by Veiga Simão. But the Carnation Revolution frustrated these efforts.

Democracy brought in its wake freedom, secularisation and democratisation in education. Co-education, already tried in the First Republic, came back to schools. Reforms in education ensued until the publication in 1986 of the The Basic Education Law (Lei de Bases do Sistema Educativo – LBSE)<sup>12</sup> which established the overall framework of the education system. This law, and the amendments introduced by Law no. 115/97, of 19 September, form the basis of Portugal's education system, in strict compliance with the provisions established in the Constitution of the Portuguese Republic.

According to this law, the “education system is the set of means by which the right to education is established, as expressed by the guarantee of a permanent training action directed at fostering the global development of the personality, social progress and the democratisation of society”<sup>13</sup>, developing on the basis of a set of organised structures and range of actions, the initiative and responsibility for which are entrusted to different public, private and cooperative institutions and bodies.

The scope of the education system is likewise defined, embracing Portuguese territory in its entirety, with all Portuguese being entitled to education and culture, as enshrined in the Constitution. The State is responsible for promoting and democratising education and ensuring the right to equal opportunities, in both admission to and success in education. It further guarantees the freedom and tolerance for those with different choices, being secular, itself<sup>14</sup>. Mindful of the needs deriving from social circumstances, the education system



<sup>12</sup> Law no. 46/86, of 14<sup>th</sup> October.

<sup>13</sup> Law no. 46/86, Article 1, no. 2.

<sup>14</sup> Law no. 46/86.



aims to promote the development of a pluralist democratic spirit, in respect to democratic values. It is also stipulated that this is student-oriented, aiming at students' cognitive, moral and civic preparation, so that they can adopt a reflective and critical attitude to society, and may later make their contribution to the advancement of society as active citizens.

The Portuguese education system includes pre-school, school and extra-school education. The first, pre-school, is optional and complementary to families' own educational activity. The second, school education, involves basic, secondary and higher education. The third, extra-school education, concerns activities like literacy programmes, cultural improvement and updating, and may be formal or otherwise. Universal Basic Education, compulsory and free, comprises 9 years of schooling in three cycles<sup>15</sup>, and is completed at the age of 15<sup>16</sup>, ensuring the training and balanced development of everyone, and encouraging an open and tolerant awareness, in the spirit of universalist humanism. At the same time, it provides for children with special educational needs, giving them suitable conditions to develop fully. Secondary Education, open to everyone who has completed basic education, lasts for three years, covering various areas of knowledge, and it aims to prepare students either to enter higher education or for work.

<sup>15</sup> The 1<sup>st</sup> Cycle, 4 years, is basically taught by just one teacher; the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle, 2 years, is organised by subject area with one teacher per area; the 3<sup>rd</sup> Cycle, 3 years, has a unified curriculum with one teacher per subject.

<sup>16</sup> Law no. 46/86, Article 6<sup>o</sup>.

## Education in Leiria and its Region

The region of Leiria has struggled for an intense pedagogical activity since the earliest days of nationhood, to teach its people. It was a different education, taught in convents and monasteries, of which the Monasteries of Alcobaça and Santa Maria da Vitória are two of its dearest sons.

The Monastic School of Alcobaça, and that of Santa Cruz in Coimbra, were two of the chief centres of teaching in the region, providing instruction to their members since the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The Monastery of Santa Maria da Vitória in Batalha, was another important centre of learning in the region, together with the education provided to some extent by all the convents in the region. But these institutions only taught their own, that is, they taught future members of the clergy. We should not overlook the fact that, until the Pombaline Education Reform, the State had no responsibility for education, which rested solely in the hands of the Church and private tutors.

With the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759, education, which had been one of their main activities, was left without teachers. To overcome this problem, the Marquês de Pombal undertook a Reform of Primary Education (*Estudos Menores*). This reform started with the attempt to place teachers of Latin Grammar in every town and village of the kingdom. Thirteen years after the start of the reform, it gained a new impetus. In order to provide more effective educational cover, "837 teaching posts" were created "and 479 places for 'reading, writing and Arithmetic masters', 236 for Latin Grammar teachers, 38 for Greek Language, 49 for Rhetoric and 35 for Philosophy. Every town and village would have at least one master of first letters. The heads of the Judicial District (*Comarca*) and more important communities were also given Latin Grammar instruction"<sup>17</sup>.

The region that we are concerned with, Leiria, benefited from the 1772 reform. It received a Greek Language teacher, one for Rhetoric, one for Philosophy and the villages of Alcobaça and Ourém each had a teacher of Rhetoric. Latin Grammar teachers were also provided in Pombal, Ansião, Leiria, Figueiró dos Vinhos, Pedrogão Grande, Ourém, Batalha, Aljubarrota, Alcobaça, Caldas da Rainha, Peniche and Óbidos. In the Judicial District of Leiria, Alfeizerão and Alvorninha received first letters masters. The region of Estremadura had 80 masters of reading, writing and Arithmetic, according to Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão<sup>18</sup>.

But with the arrival of liberalism, there came a period of instability and this had its impact on education. The triumph of liberalism and its ideals, in 1834, created the conditions leading to real progress in the sphere of education. This progress was certainly visible in Leiria, which sought to maintain Public Primary Education in the municipality.



<sup>17</sup> Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal*, vol. VI, 2<sup>a</sup> ed., Editorial Verbo, Lisboa, 1990, p. 257.

<sup>18</sup> *Idem*.

The first agitation to encourage this level of education in the municipality in the liberal period dates from 18 June 1836, when the town council presented the queen, D. Maria II, with a complaint through the General Directorate of Studies in which it was stated that the youth of the town were not receiving the first letters education, since there was no teacher<sup>19</sup>.

In 1846, the ruler was asked to provide an Normal Mutual School (*Escola de Ensino Mútuo Normal*)<sup>20</sup>. In the same year, the Civil Governor asked the Town Hall to reward a primary instruction teacher in Caranguejeira, saying that two more primary instruction places would be established in the municipality's parishes, to bring education to more people. The Council refused the request, saying that the Municipality had no income to reward new teachers.

Some years later, at a meeting in 1866, a sum of 30 000 *reis* was voted for the adult school in the town, with the Civil Governor providing two rooms for the purpose, occupied until then by the Civil Governor's Office.

The name of Joaquim Ferreira dos Santos will forever be linked to education in the town. Better known as the Conde de Ferreira, he was an eminent merchant from the north who, having no direct heirs, left provision in his will for the building of 120 primary schools, for both sexes, with houses for teachers in the municipality's chief villages.

Leiria, although a town, was also contemplated by the will, with the building of a primary school in front of the D. Manuel de Aguiar Hospital. The school was built with a donation of 1 200 000 *reis* from the late Conde de Ferreira, which the Council accepted in October 1866, with the Town Hall contributing a further 400 000 *reis* and furniture. The tender was awarded in August 1867, and it was completed in December of the same year. It was inaugurated in March 1871, and later the building was given to the Post Office (CTT).

Between 1882 and April 1888, besides the schools in the town, the municipality also had a boys school in Caranguejeira, an Elementary and Complementary Education school in the parish seat of Marinha, a girls school in Milagres and a school in the parish of Pousos. Education developed quite quickly in the municipality of Leiria: in 1856 there were only 10 Royal Schools (*Escolas Régias*), attended by 407 pupils and a private school attended by 23 pupils in the municipality. In 1882, however, the number had risen to 31 primary schools, 7 of which were for girls<sup>21</sup>. In 1853, there were 41 public primary schools in the district of Leiria, to which were added 11 private schools, attended by 3 476 pupils. By 1873 there were now 96 such schools, with a ratio of one school for every 1 877 inhabitants. In 20 years 55 new schools had been added, an increase of 134%<sup>22</sup>. These schools were mostly attended by boys. In 1853 there were 3 girls schools, ten years later there were 9 and ten years after that, in 1873, there were 13.

In relation to illiteracy, in Leiria the rate was 86%, in Caldas da Rainha it was 84%, Pedrógão Grande 85%, Pombal, the most populous municipality in the district, 91.5% and the figure for Batalha and Porto do Mós was 90%. Peniche, with 75%, was the furthest from the district average (86%) and was also lower than the national average, 79%<sup>23</sup>.

The municipal authorities wanted to teach the people. In 1903, in a minute from a council meeting, the council decided to set up night courses in primary education in Leiria and Marinha Grande. In 1908, the Instruction League (*Liga de Instrução*) was established in the town and in 1909 it asked the Town Hall to organise a primary night course in the town<sup>24</sup>.

On 26<sup>th</sup> October 1910, after the Implantation of the Republic, the Town Hall decided to seek the creation of an Central Primary School (*Escola Central Primária*), for both sexes (on a co-education basis) and the granting of the Santo Estêvão building for it to set up at once. This was given to the Town Hall the following year, on a temporary basis, to house a primary and secondary school. On 16<sup>th</sup> October 1912, the School was installed there and it operated for several years, despite suffering certain ups and downs. In 1930, the usefulness of night classes was recognised in the request that they should made permanent, because of the countless benefits they had brought in the reduction of illiteracy in the town.

During the time the *Estado Novo* was in power, the number of primary schools multiplied throughout the municipality and district of Leiria, as they were built in the parish seats and in the larger villages in these parishes. In 1972, after the reforms of the *Estado Novo*, there were 122 schools in the network of public schools in the municipality, with several rooms. The financial investment made by the Salazar government in establishing them was manifest<sup>25</sup>.

When it came to the secondary school level, one was established in Leiria in September 1844, in the wake of the education reform instigated by the Passos Manuel Septembrist government. However it was only in 1850 that teachers of Moral and Rational Philosophy,

<sup>19</sup> João Cabral, *Anais do Município de Leiria*, vol. I, Edição da Câmara Municipal de Leiria, Leiria, 1993.

<sup>20</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>21</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>22</sup> Alda Mourão Filipe, "Algumas reflexões sobre a implementação do Ensino Primário: Leiria na segunda metade do século XIX", in *Actas do II Colóquio sobre a História de Leiria e da sua região*, Câmara Municipal de Leiria, Leiria, 1995, pp. 247-254.

<sup>23</sup> *Idem*.

<sup>24</sup> João Cabral, *Ob. cit.*

<sup>25</sup> *Idem*.



Latin Grammar and Language were appointed. Later on, in 1858, an application was made to create a subject of the Principles Physics and Chemistry in the town's National Secondary Schools, and another for an Introduction to Natural History, which was agreed by the authority. In 1866, the town's Secondary School was considered to be first class, a category reserved for only a few. As the building steadily deteriorated, the Town Hall asked for a new building to be constructed for the Secondary Schools, and which happened in 1965.

Leiria kept up with the education reforms and with economic and technological developments. In June 1888, therefore, the School of Industrial Design of Leiria (Escola de Desenho Industrial de Leiria) was founded and it was up and running two years later. In 1922 the School of Industrial and Comercial Domingos Sequeira (Escola Industrial e Comercial Domingos Sequeira), attached to the School of Industrial Design, was created by decree.





## POLYTECHNIC EDUCATION

Higher Education was initiated in 1973, with the publication of Law no. 5/73, of 25 July, incorporated in what has become known as the Veiga Simão Reform, which established that Higher Education would be the preserve of Universities, Polytechnic Institutes, Higher Normal Schools (*Escolas Normais Superiores*) and other similar establishments. Promoting vocational training, the courses provided by the Polytechnic Institutes and the Higher Normal Schools, lasting 3 years, lead to a Bachelor's degree and are designed to offer the conditions needed for certain professional occupations. The universities would be allowed to award Licentiate degrees. The Polytechnic Institutes, besides training technicians, also trained teachers for the Unified Secondary Education system, giving them a bachelor's degree which would subsequently be completed with an academic-pedagogic licentiate course in a university.

The Higher Normal Schools trained teachers for Preparatory Education, and could be attended by students holding a Secondary Education Complementary Course diploma, or who had taken the Primary Teaching course, and by students who had completed the first two years of Kindergarten Teacher training or Primary Teacher training. The changes brought by the 25<sup>th</sup> April 1974 meant that Decree-Law no. 5/73 was never implemented, leaving a gap that would be worsened later when middle-level technical education was abolished.

With the application of Decree-Laws nos 830/74, of 31<sup>st</sup> December, 316/76, of 29<sup>th</sup> April, and 327/76, of 6<sup>th</sup> May, middle-level technical training vanished, turning the former middle education into higher education. But the gap left by its abolition was never filled, leaving the country without any suitable training for the technicians needed for many socio-economic activities. The conversion failed to correct these flaws, since it merely altered the old study curricula, bringing them closer to a university education in terms of theory instruction, but not taking so long to complete. No care was taken to look at the relation between the country's actual needs and the number of graduates to be trained by the schools and institutes created by those decree-laws. The outcome was an imbalance whose social and economic repercussions have been incalculable.

There was an urgent need to establish purely practical higher education colleges designed to produce qualified technicians at an upper-intermediate level who could meet the nation's requirements. It was also imperative to produce properly qualified kindergarten and primary teachers, since, in a free and democratic society, these teachers would have new demands made on them that the existing schools could not satisfy, even though they had been modernised (though not as successfully as wished).

The extending of compulsory education and the new demands arising from social and scientific development required that a higher education be provided. And so, to plug this gap, Short-term Higher Education<sup>26</sup> was established by Decree-Law in 1977, which supplied a way to overcome the abolition of the middle-level technical courses. The objective behind their creation was to diversify Higher Education and meet requirements in various socio-economic sectors by training technicians qualified in areas where there was a glaring need for them, such as agriculture, livestock and vegetable production, industrial technology, health and in services, such as education.

The same decree established that Short-term Higher Education would be implemented in regional establishments, to be called Higher Technical Schools (*Escolas Superiores Técnicas*)<sup>27</sup> and Schools of Education (*Escolas Superiores de Educação*)<sup>28</sup>. The existing institutes and the Normal Schools for training kindergarten and primary school teachers would be converted into Schools of Education. The courses would last between 4 and 6 semesters, established and organised according to national and regional requirements, with the aim of tackling the lack of qualified technicians and teachers. Involving a strong practical component, these schools aimed at a swift insertion into working life. The Schools of Education gave specialist diplomas in Kindergarten and Primary School Teaching.

<sup>26</sup> Decree-Law no. 427-B/77, de 14<sup>th</sup> October.

<sup>27</sup> The Higher Technical Schools were meant to offer predominantly technical education, training qualified technicians for industry, agriculture, livestock and forestry production, health and services, in addition to refresher and booster courses.

<sup>28</sup> Schools of Education were meant to train Kindergarten and Primary Education teachers and to provide such teachers with in-service training support.

They also ran booster and refresher courses, and carried out research with a view to fostering the development of existing socio-economic activities<sup>29</sup>.

But these short-term courses were destined to have a very short life: Decree-Law no. 513-T/79, of 26 December put an end to their existence. In their place came the Polytechnic Education system, whose aim was to give the country the professionals it needed for development, and which it lacked.

Higher Education thus came to have a double function, with Polytechnic Education having a clearly vocational emphasis and University education being more conceptual and theoretical, in an effort to embody diversification in Higher Education that is adapted to the socio-economic structure to which it belongs.

This law entrusts the Polytechnic Education system with "training kindergarten, primary and preparatory teachers and technicians qualified in the domains of industrial technology, agriculture, livestock production and forestry, health and the services, with this training being given by Schools of Education and higher technical Schools, respectively"<sup>30</sup>, while the Schools of Education shall also provide in-service and refresher courses and recycle education professionals. The Schools of Education should also train teachers up to the 6<sup>th</sup> year of basic education, as well as primary teachers, thereby adapting current teachers. The Higher Normal Schools for Kindergarten Teachers and Primary Teacher Training would be defunct, since the Schools of Education would take their place.

The Schools of Education would be set up throughout the country, one per district capital<sup>31</sup>, in accordance with local needs for this kind of professional. Besides these, Higher Technical Schools would also be created and distributed around the country, according to the circumstances and requirements of each region. These schools would be grouped into Polytechnic Institutes<sup>32</sup>. It was in the wake of this law that the Schools of Education of Leiria was founded, in 1980<sup>33</sup>. But the law does not provide for the creation of a Polytechnic Institute in Leiria<sup>34</sup>.

In 1985, Decree-Law no. 46/85, of 22<sup>nd</sup> November, was aware that Polytechnic Education had to expand its Technology and Management areas. In response to these needs, therefore, a number of Schools of Management were set up around the country. The law also established that there should be 14 Polytechnic Institutes in Portugal, of which the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria is one.

In 1986, the pressing need to establish a framework of activities for the Higher Education Schools, whose main aim was the initial training of Basic Education teachers, led the government to legislate on the organisation and functioning of these courses<sup>35</sup>, which would last for 6 semesters, followed by one year of induction.

In the same year, Portaria no. 351, of 8<sup>th</sup> July, establishes the general framework for the Schools of Education with respect to the initial training of teachers. They could offer initial training courses for Kindergarten, Primary Education and Basic Education Teachers<sup>36</sup>. These courses led to the award of Bachelor's degree for the first two and a diploma in Basic Education Teacher in the respective branch, for the last category.

Higher Education, as an inherent part of the education system, is also covered by the Basic Education Law<sup>37</sup>. This law establishes that Higher Education includes University and Polytechnic Education, aiming to train graduates in various areas of knowledge, rendering them capable of taking up professional positions, and so taking an active part in Portugal's development. This level of education also aims, according to the LBSE, to stimulate research and development work, to provide a better understanding of the environment and, at the same time, to disseminate this knowledge.

<sup>29</sup> Dores Escada Ladeira da Cruz, *Formar no Distrito de Leiria - Que Desenvolvimento?*, Edição da Autora, Leiria, 1995.

<sup>30</sup> Decree-Law no. 513-T/79, no. 2.

<sup>31</sup> The districts of Aveiro, Braga and Évora did not get new colleges.

<sup>32</sup> Decree-Law no. 513-T/79 created Polytechnic Institutes in Beja, Bragança, Castelo Branco, Coimbra, Faro, Lisbon, Porto, Santarém, Setúbal and Viseu.

<sup>33</sup> Decree-Law no. 513-T/79, Article 18.

<sup>34</sup> Higher Education in Leiria is dealt with elsewhere in this work.

<sup>35</sup> Decree-Law no. 59/86, of 21st March.

<sup>36</sup> Basic Education Teacher training courses offer: Portuguese, History and Social Sciences, Portuguese and French, Portuguese and English, Mathematics and Natural Sciences, Visual Education, Music, Physical Education and Handicrafts.

<sup>37</sup> Law no. 46/86, Article 11.



A clear division is also established between university and polytechnic education. The first “aims to provide a solid academic and cultural background and give technical training that qualifies for professional and cultural activities and encourages the development of conception, innovation and critical analysis capacities”<sup>38</sup>, while the second “aims to provide a solid cultural and technical training at a higher level, developing the capacity for innovation and critical analysis, and offering academic knowledge of a theoretical and practical nature, and its application in relation to the exercise of professional activities”<sup>39</sup>.

At first, under the LBSE<sup>40</sup>, Polytechnic Education could only confer a Bachelor’s degree. To earn a Licentiate degree, students would have to pursue Specialised Higher Studies, for which the Bachelor’s degree was a precondition. The award of licentiate degrees by Polytechnic Institutes thus followed a two-stage process. But Decree-Law no. 115/97, of 19<sup>th</sup> September, which contains amendments to the Basic Education Law, states that the Polytechnic Institutes may, through their schools, award the Licentiate degree. Polytechnic Education is carried out in specialist colleges in the spheres of technology, arts and education, among others.

Law no. 54/90 of 5<sup>th</sup> October, which sets forth the Statutes and Autonomy of Polytechnic Education Establishments, repealing all previous legislation relating to Polytechnic Education, regards Polytechnic Institutes as comprising two or more schools involved in Polytechnic Education in a region, in a concerted effort to optimise resources. Its Article 2 establishes that those schools are higher-level centres of cultural and technical

<sup>38</sup> Law no. 46/86, Article 11, no. 3.

<sup>39</sup> Law no. 46/86, Article 11, no. 4.

<sup>40</sup> Law no. 46/86, without the amendments introduced by Decree-Law no. 115/97, of 19 September.

training which may provide appropriate courses leading the exercise of qualified professional activities, aiming to promote the development of the regions to which they belong.

The schools are empowered to run courses leading to the award of a Bachelor's degree and a diploma in Specialised Higher Studies, and to hold short, but accredited, courses. These schools have a legal personality, and enjoy academic, pedagogic, administrative and financial autonomy. Among their specific goals are the initial training, continuous training and refresher courses, supporting regional development and research<sup>41</sup>.



<sup>41</sup> Law no. 46/86.

## Polytechnic Education in Leiria

The birth of Polytechnic Education in the district of Leiria dates back to 1979, with the creation of School Education in Leiria<sup>42</sup> to train kindergarten teachers. But the Decree-Law does not establish a Polytechnic Institute in Leiria, and so, by creating only the School of Education, higher education was restricted to teacher training. Nonetheless, the district still needed qualified technical professionals, given the growing economic and industrial development of the district. This situation was dealt with the following year by Decree-Law no. 303/80, of 16<sup>th</sup> August. The Polytechnic Institute of Leiria (Instituto Politécnico de Leiria - IPL) which started its activities on 20<sup>th</sup> April 1987, when its first Installation Committee took place. This institution was primarily destined to meet local/regional needs and coincided fully with the spirit that governed the creation of Polytechnic Education. Today there are around 10,000 students enrolled in its various Schools: the School of Education (ESEL) and the School of Technology and Management (ESTG), in Leiria, School of Fine Arts and Design (ESAD), in Caldas da Rainha, School of Maritime Technology (ESTM), in Peniche and the School of Health Sciences also in Leiria. Around 40 courses are taught in these schools leading to the award of the Bachelor's or Licentiate degree, specialisation courses, and further training and postgraduate courses that may or may not lead to a degree. The IPL is a Higher Education institution of national standing with a strong influence in its region: the region of Leiria, the West and Estremadura.

<sup>42</sup> Decree-Law no. 513-T/79, of 26th December.



In 1985, given the country's need for qualified professionals to work in Technology and Management, Decree-Law no. 46/85 of 22<sup>nd</sup> November established a number of Schools of Technology and Management all around the country. It was in this context that the School of Technology and Management (ESTG) was founded. This school and the School of Education were the first ones to be incorporated into the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria. The ESTG started its activities in the 1989/90 academic year, and is currently the largest Higher School in Leiria, with over 4,000 students attending around 14 courses. It offers engineering courses that seek to meet market needs of a region that is growing and evolving. Besides the engineering courses, the ESTG has preparatory courses in such areas as Commerce and Marketing, Accounting and Finance, Management and Public Administration, Business Management and Solicitorship.





Caldas da Rainha, a town more linked to the arts thanks to its cultural and artistic heritage in the domains of painting, sculpture and pottery, welcomed a school that fitted in with this setting when the School of Fine Arts and Design was set up there<sup>43</sup>. It started activity in 1990/91, with the first bachelor's courses starting in Industrial Design, Technology Design for Ceramics and Plastic Arts, aimed at improving quality and competitiveness and providing the skilled technicians that the ceramics industry lacked, especially in the area of Design and Arts. In 1994, it was called the School of Technology, Management, Art and Design (Escola Superior de Tecnologia, Gestão, Arte e Design). In 2003, however, its name was again changed to the one it enjoys today - School of Fine Art and Design (ESAD). This change made it possible to adjust the courses on offer, while remaining loyal to the principles and goals that led to its foundation. In 2002/03 it took another step by creating two courses, Sound and Image, and Cultural Animation, showing that the IPL believes in education in the arts, adding to the scarce vocational resources in this area.

The School of Maritime Technology was established in Peniche in 1999/2000. A scientific school that focuses its attention on the sea. The courses taught were Industrial and Naval Engineering and Tourist Management and Catering. More courses were offered the following year, with the creation of Marine Biology and Biotechnology and Tourism and the Sea courses and, in 2002/2003, the Biological and Food Engineering course was created. Given the kind of courses it offers, the ESTM is closely linked to its environment, paying attention to local problems and trying to discuss and resolve them in a commitment to developing the locality.

The School of Health Sciences of Leiria<sup>44</sup> (Escola Superior de Saúde de Leiria), despite being one of the first higher education schools in Leiria, was the last to become part of the IPL. Established in 1973 under the name of the School of Nursing (Escola Superior de Enfermagem de Leiria), it functioned for several years in temporary premises that were inadequate for its needs. It moved in 1993 to new premises that were better suited to the courses it taught. It currently offers a Licentiate degree in nursing, complementary training courses for qualified nurses (with a bachelor's degree) and other specialist training. The change of name allowed the school to widen the scope of its training.

<sup>43</sup> Decree-Law no. 45/88, of 14th December.

<sup>44</sup> Portaria no. 207/2005, of 22 February converted the Leiria College of Nursing into the Leiria Health College.

## The School of Education of Leiria

On 17<sup>th</sup> November 1980, the School of Education (Escola Superior de Educação – ESE) in Leiria initiated its activity when its first Installation Committee took office. Its teaching activities commenced in 1985/86, with the in-service training of teachers and, in the following year it began the training of basic education and kindergarten teachers.

In 1987 the School of Education joined the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria. In the same year, a campus of the school was set up in Caldas da Rainha, but this is now extinct.

Established in 1979 to train teachers, the ESE presently offers a variety of courses, exceeding the training goals originally programmed. In addition to the kindergarten and 1<sup>st</sup> cycle basic education teacher training courses, the school also provides courses in 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle basic education teacher training<sup>45</sup>, Human Relations and Communication in the Workplace, Tourism, Social Communication and Multimedia Education, Social Service and Social Education and Community Development. But ESE's activity extends beyond initial training. When the notion of continuing training and the need for it was finally accepted, ESE invested (and continues to invest) in Complementary Training and Qualification courses for people already working, so as to keep them up to date in academic and pedagogic terms. In addition, it also offers specialist courses in education related areas, postgraduate and masters courses in partnership with university institutions.

Although ESE has students from all over the country, Chart 1 shows that most of them come from the Leiria district, illustrating the wide influence that ESE and the Polytechnic Institute of Leiria have on the formation of young people in the region and for the region.

Among the students from the Leiria district, the great majority are from the Leiria municipality, as can be seen in Chart 2<sup>46</sup>.

Chart 3 shows the evolution of students registered in ESEL in the academic years from 1999/2000 to 2003/2004<sup>47</sup>. The growth observed is due to the creation of new courses, in particular in Social Communication and Multimedia Education and Social Service, since the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle basic education teacher training course has been losing students lately.

Of the students who enrol in ESEL, we have noted a large increase in the number of females compared with males<sup>48</sup>, as seen in Chart 4. Actually, only the 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle basic education teacher training course (Physical Education branch) has more men than women, and the numbers are closest in the music education branch.

Between the 1998/99 and 2002/2003 academic years, 1,104 students completed their studies here. As Chart 5 shows, more students completed courses after 2000/01, with the first students from some courses, like Tourism, finishing in that year.

<sup>45</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle Basic Education Teacher Training Course has branches in: Music; Visual Education and Technology; Physical Education; Portuguese/English, and Mathematics/Natural Sciences, but some of these have now closed.

<sup>46</sup> Students from the municipality of Ourém are included in this analysis since, being so close to Leiria, they are in the IPL catchment area.

<sup>47</sup> The data collected only go up to the end of the 2003/04 academic year, and so the recently-created Social Education and Community Development course is not included.

<sup>48</sup> This situation is by and large applicable to Higher Education in general.

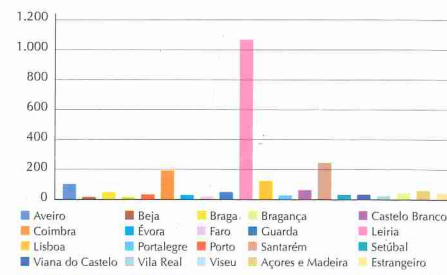


Chart 1 - Students geographical distribution (from the School of Education)

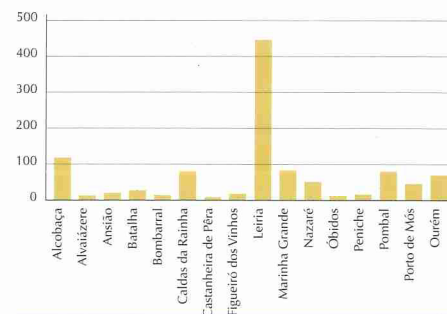


Chart 2 - STUDENTS FROM THE LEIRIA DISTRICT

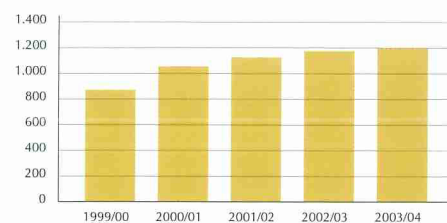


Chart 3 - STUDENTS ATTENDING COURSES IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION entre os anos lectivos de 1999/00 E 2003/04

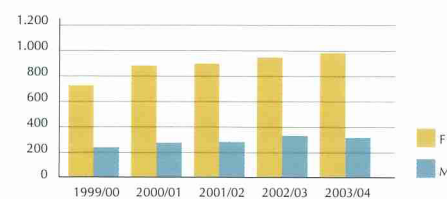


Chart 4 - SEX STUDENTS DISTRIBUTION IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

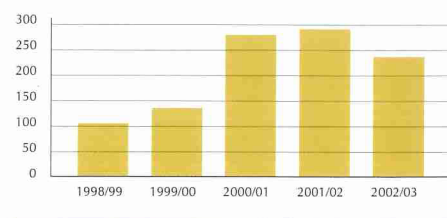


Chart 5 - STUDENTS CONCLUDED COURSES IN THE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION (1998-2003)

Source - Academic Services in the School of Education