
The Empire Within

Consumption in Lisbon in Eighteenth Century and First Half of the Nineteenth Century

L'Empire à la maison. Consommation à Lisbonne du XVIII^e siècle au début du XIX^e siècle

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Abstract. This paper analyses household consumption of colonial goods across the whole income spectrum, in Lisbon and its hinterland, during the eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. We focus on manufactured products from the Empire and objects made with overseas raw materials. The survey reveals the overwhelming presence of the Empire in Lisbon households. Evidence suggests that even the poorest owned manufactured objects or objects made with raw materials from the colonies. The percentage varies between 10% and 50%, according to the different types of objects. However, quantitative and qualitative differences must be considered, as groups on the lower end of the economic scale seem to have owned fewer items, of poorer quality. These findings are in line with the international trend of lower and mid-dling strata acquiring luxury goods.

Résumé. L'Empire à la maison. Consommation à Lisbonne du XVIII^e siècle au début du XIX^e siècle

Cet article analyse les modes de consommation domestique de marchandises coloniales dans toutes les classes de revenus, à Lisbonne et dans ses environs, au XVIII^e siècle et au début du XIX^e siècle. L'accent est mis sur la consommation de produits manufacturés issus de l'Empire, mais aussi d'objets fabriqués à partir de matières premières coloniales. L'analyse révèle une importante pénétration des produits en provenance de l'Empire dans les intérieurs lisboètes, y compris chez les ménages les plus pauvres. Les données suggèrent que même les catégories les plus pauvres possédaient de tels articles. Le pourcentage varie entre 10 % et 50 %, selon le type d'objets le type d'objets. Toutefois des différences quantitatives et qualitatives apparaissent, les catégories les moins fortunées possédant moins d'articles, et de moins bonne qualité. Ces résultats confirment la tendance générale d'une diffusion de l'accès aux produits de luxe dans toutes les catégories sociales.

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It has become increasingly clear that economic prosperity during the late seventeenth century led to a change in the consumption behaviour of western Europeans¹. Daniel Roche summarises this process as a transition from a traditional “economy of salvation, scarcity and morality to an economy aiming happiness on earth, relative abundance and utility”². Freeing themselves from the stranglehold of scarcity that had long defined their material world, individuals began to consume goods in a previously unthinkable scale.

What fuelled the movement towards the accumulation of greater quantities as well as bigger variety of material goods? Many historians emphasized the role of social emulation. Consumption was an answer to a social need. As Veblen demonstrated, consumption is oriented to the pursuit of status and competition³. The growth of the consumption of luxury goods among the very wealthy, often manufactured objects (silks, mirrors, furniture, etc.) replaced earlier ways of expressing status. But, these assets translated into status only when deployed according to canons of taste. These canons, which began to change more rapidly, were partly a defence by older elites against a too simple translation on wealth into status and dictated that even those consumers who already owned luxury goods felt the pressure to acquire newer and better commodities⁴. Putting the matter differently, to create and change fashions became part of entrepreneurship, self-perpetuating the process⁵. It was the demand for purchased goods that drove individuals to work more and for the market that established the conditions for the industrial revolution⁶. Historians also stressed that this process also had its roots in the availability of new kinds of goods, in new marketing techniques that advertised and displayed goods in ways that appealed to consumers; and also in the establishment of a distribution system that enabled these goods to reach broad markets⁷.

Meanwhile, new ways of thinking about consumption arose. In fact, during the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century, many British and French apologists of luxury sought to legitimate what moralists denounced as the pernicious birth of consumer society. New political and moral philosophies suggested that the pursuit of material betterment was natural and, therefore,

1. See, for example, N. McKENDRICK, 1982, p. 9-33; L. WEATHERILL, 1988; D. ROCHE, 1998; M. OVERTON *et al.*, 2004.

2. D. ROCHE, 1998, p. 15.

3. T. VEBLEN, 1965.

4. K. POMERANZ, 2001, p. 114.

5. L. G. CARR & L. S. WALSH, 1988, p. 142.

6. J. DE VRIES, 2008.

7. L. G. CARR & L. S. WALSH, 1988, p. 142 and J. FOURIE & J. UYS, 2011, p. 3.

legitimate, and that the human desire for riches and their consumption was inexorable⁸. Luxury apologists developed a theory of material pleasure and happiness based on the Enlightenment notion of sense experience, thus rearranging the categories that organized the world of goods. The boundaries between need, luxury and ostentation were redefined: the first narrowed, the second expanded and the third devalued⁹.

It is important to stress that an increased desire to own luxury goods was not confined to high social ranks; lower and middling strata of European urban centres, followed by their rural counterparts developed a taste for luxury items¹⁰. Neither were those changes limited to the European continent, as they can also be observed in the consumption patterns of Chinese, Japanese and Indian societies from the 1400s until 1800s. The ‘Great Divergence’ between East and West in economic growth and material change occurred only in the early nineteenth century¹¹. Also, Western colonies in North America expanded the desire for goods and consumption¹² that in turn provided a quantitative and qualitative stimulus to English industries¹³.

The main source of these studies about consumer behaviour constitutes their common denominator, as most of them used probate inventories. As Jan de Vries pointed out, an inventory gives a static image, a snapshot of the world of goods at the time of the owner’s death¹⁴. The source registers the property of a family at a given moment and, consequently, offers specific and consistent reports on the consumption habits and wealth of the households.

Portuguese historiography has registered a significant number of probate studies over the past three decades. Many authors, like Maria Manuela Rocha and Jorge Pedreira, used them in order to study levels and composition of wealth within a single geographical area or social group¹⁵. Nuno Madureira

8. P. SLACK, 2009, p. 591.

9. M. KWASS, 2003.

10. K. POMERANZ, 2001, p. 114; A. E. C. McCANTS, 2007, p. 461; and J. FOURIE & J. UYS, 2011.

11. K. POMERANZ, 2001.

12. L. G. CARR & L. S. WALSH, 1988, p. 137. Ana Luíza de Castro Pereira studied consumption, influx and dissemination of overseas goods in a Portuguese colonial space, Minas Gerais in Brazil, during the eighteenth century, and her main findings confirm this trend. A. L. C. PEREIRA, 2010.

13. N. ZAHEDIEH, 1994.

14. J. DE VRIES, 1993, p. 102.

15. M. M. ROCHA, 1994 and J. M. PEDREIRA, 1995.

studied consumption and material culture in Lisbon at the end of Ancient Regime, although he focused exclusively on its urban context¹⁶. Hélder A. Fonseca published his work on the Portuguese village of Montemor-o-Novo in 1991, and in 2002, Maria Armanda Ribeiro studied Vila do Conde¹⁷.

This article uses data obtained in 116 inventories in order to portray consumption behaviour related to the house across the whole income *spectrum*, confronting rural and urban contexts through the comparison between Lisbon and its *termo* (the Portuguese designation for hinterland) during the eighteenth century and first half of the nineteenth century¹⁸. Our main goal is to see the impact of the Empire on households within these two contexts. We will focus on objects made with overseas raw materials and also on the diffusion of non-essential consumer goods normally related to social status such as manufactured products from the Empire (furniture, textiles, tapestries, Chinese porcelain, lacquer objects). We are interested in a quantitative approach, but also in some qualitative aspects (typologies, uses, etc.). Through material evidence of their use we will also try to draw some conclusions about the consumption of sugar, tea, coffee and chocolate. From the methodological point of view, the study follows a comparative approach, comparing the consumption of the higher, intermediate and lower strata, in order to detect differences, patterns and eventually phenomena of social emulation.

In section one we focus on the Empire and colonial goods that intercontinental trade made accessible to individuals. Section two discusses the uses and limitations of the Portuguese probate inventories, comparing them with other European documental traditions. Section three and four describes methodological aspects of the paper and the fifth, sixth and seventh presents our results and main findings.

16. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989 and 1992.

17. J. A. FONSECA, 1991; M. A. RIBEIRO, 2002. More recently, Olanda Vilaça is preparing her PhD on material culture in the rural context of Northwest Portugal.

18. It might be objected that comparing the capital city to its immediate hinterland could lead to a biased perspective of a “real” rural consumption pattern because many upper strata families (aristocracy, high officials) lived in Lisbon’s *termo* and kept close contact with the urban way of life. However, we would like to stress that Lisbon’s hinterland inventories cover a wide geographical area that includes places far from Lisbon (some of them, more than 30 km) and the majority reflect a rural way of life since inventories pertain to individuals related to primary activities, such as farming and milling.

1. The Empire and exotic goods

The Portuguese overseas expansion began in 1415 with the conquest of Ceuta in North Africa. Afterwards, African coastal waters were explored from the commercial point of view, thereby creating *feitorias* (trading posts) to store gold, ivory, slaves and chilli pepper. The discovery of the maritime route to India in 1498 led to an intense trade with Southeast Asia. During the sixteenth century, Portugal was hegemonic concerning the maritime trade of that area; products from its Eastern seaborne Empire arrived in Lisbon through the *Carreira da Índia*, a regular flow of cargo ships between Goa and Lisbon¹⁹.

If spices (mainly pepper) held a significant role at the beginning of the *Carreira da Índia*, by the end of the seventeenth century the Portuguese had already been outshaded by the Dutch and the English trade in the East, and had concentrated their colonial efforts in Brazil, and thus the Portuguese Empire became mainly Atlantic. By the eighteenth century, the presence of the Portuguese in Asia was reduced to Goa, Daman, Diu, Macau and Timor²⁰. *Carreira da Índia* lost profitability; although the acquisition of spices and other substances persisted, the commercial emphasis was now placed on the demand for a wide typology of Asian manufactured objects, mainly luxurious products²¹. Portugal received pearls, diamonds, crafted ivory, perfumes, inlaid precious furniture, exotic woods from India, Persian carpets, porcelain, lacquer, mother of pearl and tea from China, Ceylon jewellery, lacquered objects and furniture from Japan²². The import of a wide variety of textiles was also important, from cotton textiles such as calico, and other cheap cloth, to the more expensive such as embroidered silk from China. Meanwhile, Brazil provided gold, diamonds and also traditional agricultural goods such as sugar, tobacco, leather, cotton, coffee, cocoa, ivory, turtle and precious woods like jacaranda and brazil-wood²³. Africa, on the other hand, was a priority of Portuguese overseas trade only in what concerns the supply of slaves that was of primary importance to

19. C. R. BOXER, 1981, p. 59-80.

20. A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998, p. 198-199; A. F. MENESES, 2001, p. 314; C. R. BOXER, 1981, p. 136-154.

21. A. F. MENESES, 2001, p. 304 and 313-314.

22. A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998, p. 197-198 and 207. N. VASSALLO E SILVA & A. JORDAN (eds.), 1996; Portugal e o Mundo nos séculos XVI e XVII, Exhibition catalogue, 2009; A. F. MENESES, 2001, p. 304 and 313; J. R. MAGALHÃES, 2005, p. 315-320.

23. A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998, p. 199; A. F. MENESES, 2001, p. 312 and J. R. MAGALHÃES, 2005, p. 306-307.

the Brazilian sugar plantation economy²⁴. On the other hand, commerce in Eastern Africa was subordinated to trade interests with India, providing gold, ivory and ebony²⁵.

It is important to have an idea of the prices of exotic and luxurious goods in order to understand consumption behaviour in Lisbon; we used data from the inventories in order to draw a reliable list of prices. In order to minimize the variability of its monetary values we selected assets described as “new” or “in good use” and merchandise assessment of stored products in shops, and recorded its minimum and maximum values. With a few exceptions, the prices established date from before 1800, as their values tended to rise after that date. As can be seen in Appendix A colonial tea seems to be the most expensive exotic commodity, followed by coffee, chocolate and finally, sugar. In what concerns manufactured goods, it must be stressed the prohibitive price of an embroidery quilt, followed by lacquered objects, manufactured furniture from East, calico bedcovers and finally, considering the price of one piece, porcelain. Depending on its typology and raw material, furniture using exotic wood could be quite relevant in terms of its monetary value.

This information is meaningless unless compared with more common and non-luxurious goods and, above all, with salaries. Nuno Madureira elaborated a list of salaries in Lisbon from 1766 until 1829; in 1766 a master carpenter earned 400 *réis*, a carpenter, 300 *réis* and a, less specialised worker in building would earn 200 *réis* a day. It must be stressed that salaries remained stable until 1798, and then went on the rise, albeit in a discontinuous way²⁶.

2. The source: *post-mortem* inventories

It is important to highlight the strengths and also the weaknesses of our main source and as such, the conditions in which *post-mortem* inventories were produced, as well as their nature and characteristics need to be examined. As Anton Schuurman warned, “the word inventory remains the same, while the object that it reflects may change²⁷”; that is, the same sources from other countries or regions are not necessarily identical. We

24. A. F. MENESES, 2001, p. 304-305 and 313; J. R. MAGALHÃES, 2005, p. 310.

25. A. J. R. RUSSELL-WOOD, 1998, p. 197-205; J. R. MAGALHÃES, 2005, p. 312-315.

26. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1997, p. 274-302.

27. A. SCHUURMAN, 1980a, p. 31.

should therefore compare the Portuguese inventories with identical sources from other countries or regions.

The majority of the inventories studied in this article are orphan inventories, which were mandatory whenever a deceased person left an under-age child of 25 years or younger. It is important to notice that the existence of under-aged children at the time of the death of one parent was not the only legal condition to determine the drawing of an inventory. Other situations made them compulsory, such as the existence of absent heirs or the remarriage of the surviving spouse. Whenever the heirs were adults, a process similar to the one concerning the orphan inventory occurred, but monitored by another institution, the *Correição do Cível*²⁸.

The documental corpus is stereotyped in its formal aspects, since inventories obeyed an internal common structure that included an *auto de juramento* (oath); the inventory of all assets possessed by the deceased at the time of his death; a term of foreclosure; the estate's value; a list of rebates; the liquid estate value; the registration of the amount due to each heir; and finally, the registration of the distribution of assets according to each one's *legítima* (share of the inheritance ascribed by laws of succession).

The ultimate purpose of all these procedures was the safeguard of the orphans' interests. In fact, it would be the task of the orphan's tutor to administrate the share he or she had inherited and to make sure that it would be delivered intact (or eventually augmented) by the time the orphans came of age²⁹. The stability of the inheritance would therefore be ensured at the intergenerational transmission moment³⁰. The law stated that the inventory must encompass all assets, movable and non-movable, left by the deceased at the time of his/her death, as well as all debts, either active or passive³¹. This explains why Portuguese inventories provide the historian with an accurate image of the household from the material point of view. As far as the formal organization of the inventory is concerned, our source fits into the German model because the description follows a logical order³² that, in the present case, matches the sequence of information ascribed by the law. It takes into account the fundamental triad: movable assets, non-movable

28. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989, p. 15.

29. Adulthood was reached at 25 years old or earlier by marriage, but it could also be obtained by royal permission, through a *Carta Régia de Emancipação*.

30. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989, p. 12.

31. *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, Tít. 88.

32. About the types of inventories, see M. BAULANT, 1980a, p. 39-40.

assets and debts, but it complements itself, as far as the movable assets are concerned, by a logical organization that considers both raw materials and the nature of the objects. Assets were usually registered by the following order: money, pieces of gold and silver, furniture, clothes, pottery, working tools, merchandise and livestock. Debts were grouped into active, always registered first, and passive. One should remark that the absence of registration of non-movable assets has been singled out by many authors as one of the most important absences in the inventories of other countries, such as England and France³³. As far as Portugal is concerned, inventories offer a good source for the study of credit, in opposition to legitimate doubts that arise on their validity for many European regions³⁴. Debts resulting from money loans, purchase of goods, salaries, rents, etc., are well registered, because the legal framework dictated this practice.

The law also stipulated that an inventory of all assets must declare the confrontations of the non-movable assets and their locations; movable assets should be described accurately so that they might be recognized at all times without leaving room for doubt³⁵. As such, movable assets were almost always described individually and in great detail. Objects were in general described according to their typology, material, colour, condition and monetary value. The level of detail of the description is directly proportional to value: the smaller and more insignificant the object, the lesser the detail³⁶. The fact that all objects are listed and described exhaustively transforms inventories into a crucial historical source, especially when we want to study material culture. However, Micheline Baulant and Nuno Madureira highlighted the neglect to which the objects of little value are systematically voted to. Although under registration has no major impact to the calculation of the global wealth, it leads to some distortion³⁷.

33. For English inventories, L. WEATHERILL, 1988, p. 2; M. OVERTON *et al.*, 2004, p. 14 and for French inventories, J. CORNETTE, 1989, p. 481; and M. BAULANT, 1980b, p. 146.

34. For Spain, B. MORENO CLAVERÍAS, 2001, p. 4; for England, L. WEATHERILL, 1988, p. 2 and for France, J. CORNETTE, 1989, p. 481. Micheline Baulant refers that, in the case of Meaux, the registration of the debts is quite complete in the eighteenth century and significantly less in the seventeenth century. M. BAULANT, 1980b, p. 146.

35. *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, Tít. 88, §4.

36. The same has been observed by M. BAULANT, 1980b, p. 145.

37. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989, p. 14; M. BAULANT, 1988, p. 14; 1980a, p. 34; and 1980b, p. 146.

The registration of the monetary value of the objects is an important element that must be taken under consideration³⁸. According to the law, the evaluation of the objects was the result of the intention to protect the orphans' best interests³⁹. Although it is not stated in the law, it is plausible that the evaluation aimed, firstly and most of all, to speed up the division of the property amongst the heirs. From the historian's point of view, this evaluation amplifies its potential as historical source, since it provides crucial information regarding the global wealth of the deceased. The monetary value of the objects provides information on how contemporaries valued them, allows for comparisons, and is essential to the understanding of hierarchies or changing "fashions". As far as prices are concerned, the movable assets, after being evaluated by the appraisers, were sometimes auctioned, and sales recorded. The analysis of one of these auctions shows that the objects reached higher prices than their evaluation, sometimes more than the double⁴⁰, suggesting that there was a clear tendency for under-evaluation. If this hypothesis is confirmed, this practice is consonant with what happened in other countries⁴¹.

One of the weaknesses of our source stems from the ineffectiveness of the law concerning the deadlines established for the drawing of inventories. As Olanda Vilaça has warned, once we engage in the analysis of inventories, we must consider the gap between the legal framework and the practices of the populations⁴². As a matter of fact, the law defined that the time period between the death and the beginning of the inventory procedures should not exceed one month⁴³. However, several authors have reported that the process was systematically delayed, thus compromising the integrity of the family's property⁴⁴.

38. Micheline Baulant pointed out that values generally do not figure in the Dutch, English, French and North American inventories. M. BAULANT, 1980a, p. 39. Moreno Claverías, for example, does not have them in the inventories of Penedés in the seventeenth century. B. MORENO CLAVERÍAS, 2001. Johan Fourie and Jolandi Uys also face this problem in a substantial number of inventories. J. FOURIE & J. UYS, 2011.

39. *Ordenações Filipinas*, Liv. I, Tít. 88, §5.

40. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (hereby A.N.T.T.), Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V, Mç. 24, n. 11.

41. See, for example, M. BAULANT, 1980a, p. 41 and J. CORNETTE, 1989, p. 480. Laurent Bourquin estimates in circa 20% the under-evaluation of the objects. L. BOURQUIN, 1989, p. 466.

42. O. VILAÇA, 2010, p. 239.

43. *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, Tít. 88, §4 and 6. Law also defined the sanctions to be applied when the deadlines were not satisfied.

44. Nuno Madureira refers that infractions concerning the observation of deadlines were frequent and no sanctions predicted in the law applied. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989, p. 279;

3. Sample and methodological aspects

One of the most important questions concerning probate inventories relates to representativeness. In fact, as we have seen, inventories were not compulsory for all individuals, but elaborated only in specific situations. Furthermore, not all inventories survived. In the case of Lisbon and, to a lesser scale, its hinterland, the number of processes before 1750 is quite limited. As Jan de Vries remarked, the problem of representativeness is quite complex and must consider three major dimensions: “the relationship between those deceased persons leaving inventories and all the deceased, the relationship between the deceased and the living and the adequacy of the inventories selected for study to represent the target populations of the deceased”⁴⁵. The discussion of the first two dimensions is not possible at the moment for the Lisbon inventories, as the cataloguing process in the National Archive of Lisbon is still in progress. The inventories are not organized according to chronological or geographical criteria, but grouped in alphabetical order, by the Christian names of the deceased. Given the existence of several thousand inventories and the rudimentary nature of the existing index, it would be necessary to consult all available inventories in order to assess their total number for a certain period.

The organization of the inventories left its mark on the criteria used in the selection of our sample. We decided to survey all the inventories catalogued under the letter ‘V’ first, because they were not used in previous studies. Moreover, their number is sufficiently large to enable a first approach to the source. We excluded all inventories that do not mention the address of the deceased, those that do not refer to Lisbon’s households (either within the city or the hinterland) and all truncated files. On the other hand, we considered all inventories in which the names of the deceased do not start with the letter V but have been classified as such, such as those attached to another inventory, in most cases belonging to a previously deceased spouse.

A total of 156 inventories were surveyed and 116 used, as we confined our research to the period between 1700 and 1836. Also, the inventories that did not list movable assets were excluded.

Olanda Vilaça faces the same scenario in the towns of Barcelos and Guimarães. O. VILAÇA, 2010, p. 238-241 and p. 246; M. A. RIBEIRO, 2002, p. 32-33.

45. J. DE VRIES, 1993, p. 104.

The fact that the inventories are the result of a specific type of situation has raised the question of the representativeness of this source at other levels, such as: they might represent only some age cohorts; and they might tend to over-represent males and specific social strata. The first issue arose from a specific case study and, according to Maria Manuela Rocha, do not apply to the Portuguese case⁴⁶. Gender is also not an issue in Portuguese inventories, because the law forced both widows and widowers to proceed to inventory⁴⁷. On the other hand, social representativeness requires further thought. Inventories might not be a proportional translation of the different layers that exist in the society at a given time; what is important, according to Maria Manuela Rocha, is that we are able to grasp the whole social spectrum, albeit not mirroring the existing proportions of each group⁴⁸. As we will discuss later, this seems to be the case of our sample.

4. Methodological considerations

Inventories were grouped according to the estimate of the fortunes (overall monetary value of estates). This classification obeyed to the six levels of wealth defined by the 1759 *alvará* (royal decree), which sought at establishing the proportional fees paid to the *partidor* (partitioner)⁴⁹. This appears to be a valid criterion since it rests on a classification in use at the time and in close relationship with the source itself. Table 1 represents the segments to be considered, hereby named by the letters A, B, C, D, E and F, as well as the fees ascribed by the law. It is important to note that such fees were indexed to the “value of goods”, that we presume to correspond to the *soma da fazenda* (the property’s value) and not to the *fazenda líquida* (the liquid estate value) in which the initial value could be cut by the payments of debts and other liabilities. We believe that the first level of analysis is more

46. The question reported to the specific case of Dijon in the fifteenth century. M. BAULANT, 1980a, p. 35; M. M. ROCHA, 1994, p. 91 and 116.

47. *Ordenações Filipinas*, Liv. I, Tít. 88, §4 and 6. On the contrary, inventories studied by Moreno Claverías and Weatherill show a scarce representation of women. B. MORENO CLAVERÍAS, 2001, p. 3; L. Weatherill, 1988.

48. M. M. ROCHA, 1994, p. 91-92. In his study, Anton Schuurmam concluded that inventories “reflect – although not uniformly – the whole range of population” and described some methodological solutions to overcome this problem. A. SCHUURMAM, 1980b, p. 183-189.

49. This *alvará* intended to put an end to disparate criteria used by the Juízos dos Órfãos of the city of Lisbon; it distinguished between the role of the appraisers and the partitioner, and defined the criteria in the calculation of their fees. The former were paid in working days, whereas the partitioner’s fee was indexed to the global value of the property. A. D. DA SILVA, 1830, p. 669-670.

consistent with the content of the law. Nonetheless, had we chosen the second, the conclusions of this work would be similar, but somewhat mitigated.

Table 1. *Levels of wealth according to the “Alvará” of 1759*

<i>Value in reis</i>	<i>Fees</i>	<i>Cohort</i>	<i>N. of inventories</i>
30,000-100,000	600	A	4
100,000-400,000	1,000	B	17
400,000-960,000	1,600	C	28
960,000-2,400,000	2,400	D	22
2,400,000-4,800,000	4,800	E	18
> 4,800,000	6,400	F	27

Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

The work of Maria Manuela Rocha about the rural town of Monsaraz during the first half of the nineteenth century is suggestive about the way in which contemporaries perceived these categories⁵⁰. Thus, a person with a wealth estimated below 400,000 *réis* (categories A and B) was considered poor, whilst an individual with a fortune around 2,000,000 *réis* was considered rich (categories E and F). According to this logic, categories C and D corresponded to intermediate groups whose inputs allowed for lifestyles above the poverty line, even if modest.

It is important to look at socio-professional identification of the individuals in order to check if inventories portray the whole social spectrum. Crossing the variables occupation and wealth enables us to realize if the whole society is represented. It must be stressed that we worked with a sample where the socio-professional identification of the deceased was possible in most of the inventories considered (70%)⁵¹. The analysis of the

50. Through the crossing with lists taxes payment, the author concluded that the individuals with estates estimated around 2,000,000 *réis* were classified in the lists drawn for council elections as rich and those whose wealth was evaluated in 335,000 *réis* were considered poor. M. M. ROCHA, 1994, p. 94-97. These values have been taken as reference by Nuno Madureira in his study of Lisbon inventories from the second half of the eighteenth to the beginning of the nineteenth century. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989, p. 18.

51. One has to note, however, that such information is often conveyed in documents attached to the process (wills, registers of sale and purchase, marriage contracts, judicial sentences, etc.) and not in the inventory itself. In this percentage we considered all the inventories belonging to married women or widows whose husband's occupation is identified. In 7% of the cases, the occupation was inferred through the inventoried instruments or debts. If we consider the national reality, the socio professional identification of 70% of the individuals in our sample is atypical. Maria Manuela Rocha, for example, in her study of Reguengos

occupations allows two main conclusions: first, all kind of professions are represented, and second, they are related to wealth. As far as we go up the hierarchy, wealth tends to grow. In fact, categories A, B, C and D include mainly farmers, artisans and shopkeepers. In the categories E and F, we find merchants (8), judges (2), nobles (3) and also various rich artisans (4). Among the latter, we find a carpenter of coaches, a master painter of the royal coaches, a master gilder and a master painter. Also in the categories E and F, we can find two high dignitaries and three individuals designated as *vivendo de suas fazendas* (supported by their estate and rents). These findings are consistent with previous studies about the relation between wealth and occupation. Carole Shammas, for instance, studied the determinants of personal wealth for seventeenth-century Englishmen living in three very different environments and concluded that occupation was the most important variable, followed by age, education and region⁵².

Albeit portraying the social spectrum, our sample apparently distorts the proportions of some groups, since the richer group alone (F) and both E and F respectively, represent 23% and 38% of the population. These groups seem to be over-represented comparing to the poorest one (A), manifestly under-represented (corresponding to 3% of total inventories). Therefore, in order to prevent distortions, we will use mostly average values rather than the absolute ones for each group.

5. Wealth and objects

The first remark concerns the obvious fact that the number and variety of objects, as well as the global amount invested in the house is in close relationship with the wealth level (cf. Table 2). The same can be said about the number of objects proceeding from the Empire and their value.

during the first half of the nineteenth century, found this information only in rare inventories and had to consult other sources in order to overcome this difficulty. M. M. ROCHA, 1994, p. 98. Nuno Madureira faced the same problem and had to use the same procedure (succeeding in the identification of the occupation in 88% of the cases). However, we are far from identifying all the occupations of the deceased, as Moreno Claverías obtained in his Catalanian case study. B. MORENO CLAVERÍAS, 2001.

52. C. SHAMMAS, 1977, p. 675-689. Maria Manuela Rocha, in her study of Monsaraz, also showed that occupation is potentially more determinant of the wealth level than age. M. M. ROCHA, 1994, p. 98-102.

Table 2. *Indicators of consumption concerning the house, in urban and rural contexts*

Cohort	Avg. number of objects (in reis)		Avg. total value of objects (in reis)		Avg. number of objects from the Empire		Avg. total value of the objects from the Empire (in reis)		Relationship between the investment in the house/total value of the fortune (%)	
Location	City	Termo	City	Termo	City	Termo	City	Termo	City	Termo
A	69	28	39,017	5,240	3	0	11,680	0	42	7
B	107	30	112,760	32,765	21	2	27,592	11,171	48	14
C	100	84	75,810	77,780	19	6	19,782	18,515	12	12
D	138	84	124,128	103,372	19	5	27,245	21,419	8	8
E	357	67	348,807	85,091	66	17	53,737	25,965	9	3
F	449	960	553,834	2,009,085	99	106	112,366	2,09,322	4	14

Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

As such, in what concerns the consumption related to the house, the world of goods is strongly connected with wealth, because, as we can see in Table 2, the investment is channelled into the private space of the house. However, the relationship between wealth and objects requires discussion and needs to be analysed in its complexity and ambivalence. The key factor to explain the increase in the number, variety and value of household objects is not the amount of family income, but families’ decisions to spend their income in certain commodities – and, if necessary, to work more to improve purchasing power and disposable income⁵³. Either conscious or unconscious family decisions explain the continuous movement towards a richer domestic environment.

When we proceed to a comparison between the extent of the phenomenon in the city and the rural area figures speak for themselves. The number of objects and their value in the rural houses is almost always inferior to the urban ones. The only exception is the group of higher economic standing, which in the *termo* (hinterland) corresponds to four inventories: one judge, one miller and two members of the titled nobility. The same can be said about the interest for intercontinental goods. The comparison between city and country also confirms that to similar levels of wealth may not correspond the same pattern of consumption. In other words, the same economic level does not imply the same (sometimes not even a similar) number of objects. Between

53. J. DE VRIES, 1993, p. 102 and 2008; W. D. SMITH, 2002, p. 182.

wealth and objects intervenes a fundamental actor: the active subject inserted in a context, economic as well as social and cultural, who makes choices, and decides to work or invest in order to buy more, choosing some things and rejecting others. When we analyse the difference between the country and the city in terms of consumption, various factors have to be taken into account, as the organization of production and the distribution of goods. Access to products was easier in the city owing to the concentration of trade⁵⁴. However, the problem has to be take into account not only differences in lifestyle, but also in the role of consumption and objects in the definition of group identities.

Inversely, when we analyse the weight of the house in the global fortune, we verify that it decreases in the direct proportion of the level of fortune. In effect, as we go up the hierarchy of economic power, there is an increase in the value of jewels, active debts and means of production, and above all, non-movable goods.

6. Patterns of consumption

If we look at Table 3, we can see that some social groups saved in certain areas in order to invest in others. If we take into account the relative importance of the tools, linen and furniture categories in the total expenditure related to the house, we find a coherent pattern. To each economic segment corresponds a specific behaviour in consumption that can be distinguished from the others.

Table 3. *The structure of consumption according to the categories tools, furniture and household linen*

Cohort	Tools		Furniture		Linen	
	Avg. sum expended (in reis)	% in the total household (avg. value)	Avg. value expended (in reis)	% in the total household (avg. value)	Avg. sum expended (in reis)	% in the total household (avg. Value)
A	3,234	11	16,485	38	11,662	51
B	24,400	24	42,624	45	17,785	31
C	21,288	20	33,129	50	24,917	30
D	41,595	24	46,674	47	37,372	29
E	117,421	35	99,951	43	72,830	22
F	295,556	40	231,526	34	242,345	26

Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

54. R. SARTI, 2001, p. 184.

In the category ‘tools’ we have included all items related with tableware, storage and preparation of food, lighting and hygiene. The cooking utensils strike for the increase in number, but above all, for their specialization⁵⁵. The serving set, if existing, can be defined by the diversification and specificity of objects, responding to the new consumption habits, which require new instruments (tea spoons, chocolate pans, teapots, etc.). We should consider, as Daniel Roche notes, that the table now met many social situations, being surrounded by a growing number of furniture and accessories, dishes, cutlery, cloths, in which food was transfigured into social relationships⁵⁶. On the other hand, tableware materials tend to diversify. The use of porcelain, glass and silver takes over the use of other materials such as pewter and earthenware. The number of items related with hygiene and lighting also multiplies as the hygienist concerns increase.

‘If we analyse the relative weight of this category within each wealth group (A to F), we can conclude that the average value of tools and the economic level are correlative. This tendency can be partly explained taking into consideration that this category includes silverware, which, besides its utility at table, is also related with prestige, and with the desire to hoard.

‘On the other hand, with the exception of cohort F, the higher the economic level, the lower the investment in household linen. We do not observe the decrease of the importance of this item in our richest category (cohort F) because we have included carpets, an object of desire in this segment. The inventory of viscount of Barbacena is a good case in point, because only the carpets themselves correspond to a higher value than the sum of the *fazenda* of 12 inventories considered in this study⁵⁷. Furniture has not a linear evolution along the economic groups. Its weight is inferior among the poorest group (A) and the richest one (F) corresponding to a secondary consumption area in relation with clothing (for the poorer) and tools (to the richer). It is in the intermediate categories (B, C, D and E) but especially in the third and fourth that a clear tendency to invest in furniture is detected, one of the issues directly concerned with the cult of domesticity, intimacy and comfort. We should see it as evidence to the construction of respectability and “private life”, an important issue for elites and lesser elites in this period. This tendency might be related to the spread of two new social acquisitions that occurred in Europe during the seventeenth century: taste and family

55. Paul Servais has called attention to this phenomenon and also to the decrease in size of the objects. P. SERVAIS, 1988, p. 29-39.

56. D. ROCHE, 1998, p. 233.

57. A.N.T.T., Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V, Mç. 28, n.º 10.

life, impacting on the increasing value of interior domestic space⁵⁸. In fact, the chronological span of our research is situated between the two periods that, according to Philippe Ariès, mark two paradigms in sociability: the low Middle Ages and the nineteenth century⁵⁹. This transformation involved retreating into the family, which became the centre of private life⁶⁰. Ultimately, this tendency should be framed in the context of construction of ‘separate spheres’, according to Woodruff Smith, “the formula that held that males should dominate a family’s relationship to the outside or public world while adult women properly should take direction of the domestic world”⁶¹.

7. Colonial Goods

Colonial Goods: Chinese porcelain

The special care in the description of utensils provides us important information concerning the presence of colonial materials and manufactured products. It is the case of tableware, where in most cases we have information on typology, colour, state of conservation, and, frequently, origin. As such, we can infer the general diffusion of porcelain imported from Asia. An attentive observation of Table 4 shows the presence of Chinese porcelain even in humble houses.

Table 4. *Presence of Chinese porcelain*

Group	Percentage of inventories including at least one item	Avg. number of items
A	-	-
B	11	15
C	21	25
D	31	23
E	33	101
F	66	82

Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

58. J. J. CABIDO, 1994, p. 15. About the development of taste and family life see P. ARIÈS, 1990, p. 12-13; J.-L. FLANDRIN, 1976, p. 143-169.

59. P. ARIÈS, 1990, p. 7-8.

60. P. ARIÈS, 1990, p. 7-15; J.-L. FLANDRIN, 1990, p. 267-309.

61. W. D. SMITH, 2002, p. 175.

The presence of these goods among a population with modest income is surprising, considering the fact that porcelain was more expensive than earthenware or even pewter, but more susceptible to breakage than the former, and as such, unlikely to pass from one generation to the next.

These objects had daily use in all groups considered, being described as “used”. Some are even noted as ‘cracked’, ‘broken’ or mended (*gatados*)⁶². Damaged pieces are transversal to all the cohorts, but a preponderance of them among the wealthier can be noted. The same can be said about faulty items, although we do not know if they corresponded to manufacturing defects or some minor damage owing to use.

The desire for these objects even among the lower groups and the fact that they tended to be kept in spite of defects or damage prove their importance in the Portuguese culture of consumption during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Concerning typology, dishes and tea items predominated. Most pieces were blue and white although those decorated with gold and blue, red and white or apricot, were also significant. In terms of decoration multiple references note vegetable motives.

Household linen

We grouped together clothes for the bed and the table, as well as other textile household items, such as curtains or carpets. The first step was to consider all manufactured objects whose origin, if stated, was situated in the colonies. The origin of 287 among the 4,812 objects that integrate this category has been identified with precision.

Supremacy belongs to bedclothes, followed by table linen, and, at a lesser scale, curtains. Among bedclothes the primacy goes to bedcovers, often a valuable item, which is in perfect consonance with the importance of the bed as domestic space⁶³. Various elements allow us to understand that bedcovers were desired and appreciated. The first indicator is, as previously

62. A process hereby cracked and broken china is held with the help of wires.

63. P. DIBIE, 1989; R. SARTI, 2001, p. 204-205. João Carlos Oliveira mentions the formal development of the bed during the sixteenth century. Its height increased, canopies and curtains were increasingly used, conferring pomp and allowing for intimacy. These elements, according to Raffaella Sarti, contributed to ascribe an increasing architectural character to the bed, which became a ‘house inside the house’. J. C. OLIVEIRA, 1987, p. 636; R. SARTI, 2001, p. 204-205.

referred to, their economic value. When we compare the price of an Indian bedcover with that of Portuguese or English ones the difference is striking. It is not casual that bedcovers are not listed together with other objects, as are sheets or blankets. The inventories seem to ascribe them a special place. The fact that many of them are referred to as being 'antique' confirms the same idea; it means they were transmitted from generation to generation, and as such held symbolic value⁶⁴. The materials used were mostly calico, and, among the richer, satin, silk and damask.

At this point, the question is: what shall we do with objects made with non-European materials such as cotton and silk? How should we consider a calico bedcover whose place of production is not identified? It would be simplistic to restrict analysis to the objects where mention is made of their origin. If we take into consideration the result of the economic studies about commerce and industry in Portugal, we would be incurring in a mistake if we limited our analysis to them. It is the case of cotton and calicoes, for instance. The Portuguese, having been in contact with India since 1498, acquired a precocious knowledge of printed cotton fabrics. However, according to Jorge Pedreira, the printing of cotton was introduced in Portuguese manufactures only in 1775; thus, direct import from Bengal satisfied the demand of national consumers until then⁶⁵. In 1797, the scenery does not appear to have radically changed⁶⁶. In effect, national textile industry did not develop enough. Imperial trade and, in particular, Bengal continued to play an important role satisfying national demand⁶⁷. We considered all the cotton included in house clothes as colonial, not referred has having an European origin, because in all likelihood its provenance was India⁶⁸. We included the few bedcovers referred to as *colchas de chita da terra* (local calico bedcovers) as also proceeding from the Empire, because most probably only the last phase of production occurred in Portugal. Even presuming they were manufactured in Portugal, in all probability they used cotton from Brazil, by the time a producer of this material. The risk is thus man-

64. As Raffaella Sarti refers to, when the heritage is preserved and transmitted, the origins, and, in a certain way, the identity of the family are also transmitted. R. SARTI, 2001, p. 216.

65. According to Pedreira, the number of licences issued for the installation of units of production of such goods was above fifty between 1788 and 1800. J. M. PEDREIRA, 1991, p. 442-443.

66. J. M. PEDREIRA, 1991, p. 443.

67. J. M. PEDREIRA, 1991, p. 457.

68. This presupposition is reinforced by the fact that all information points to the weak diffusion of English calicoes in the national market. J. M. PEDREIRA, 1991, p. 454.

ageable; we have preferred over-assessment to underrating because we think that the latter would be more distorting than the former.

As to silk, we adopted the same criteria, although the probability of the silk items being produced in Asia is lesser when compared with cotton pieces. In the first place, the national policies for the development of manufactures seem to have had some impact on the increase of the production of silk; second, we have to take into consideration the various European centres of production.

Table 5. *House linen originating from the colonies
(manufactured products or materials)*

<i>Cohorts</i>	<i>% inventories including at least one item</i>	<i>Avg. number of objects</i>
A	50	1
B	47	6
C	39	4
D	45	4
E	66	10
F	92	23

Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

We can see in Table 5 that these objects were spread among the poor or modest households, as was the case of utensils. Between 39 to 50% of these families declared such goods (cohorts A, B, C and D). Two important remarks concerning the distribution of these materials in space and time must be made. Their diffusion in the countryside is quite inferior to the city: the overwhelming majority of the inventories including them belong to the city of Lisbon. The *cotton revolution* started earlier in the city than at the countryside. The majority of the inventories where these objects are mentioned belonged to the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth century. This is the moment when, according to Nuno Madureira, cotton entered irreversibly into material culture and became indispensable to the Lisboner's everyday life⁶⁹.

69. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1989, p. 102.

Furniture

The overwhelming majority of furniture had its origin in the East; on the other hand, two typologies predominate, the box and the counter. Although the percentage of households including at least one of these types oscillates between 10% and 66% according to the six categories considered in this study, its ownership is not exclusive to any of them. The desire for this type of goods is transversal to the socio-economic spectrum. However, quantitative and qualitative differences must be considered. In the first place, and as expected, the number of items varies between 1 and 4 in categories A, B, C and D; 1 and 7, in E and 1 to 37, in the F category. For instance, the inventories from the viscount of Barbacena and his wife account for more objects than the total of all the other categories globally considered. Thus we understand James Murphy's comment about his visit to Portugal:

"The main rooms in the homes of *fidalgos* [aristocrats] and merchants are lavishly furnished. Items from India and China are more common in these houses than elsewhere in Europe".⁷⁰

In what concerns typologies, in the more modest categories we find mostly caskets, big and small, and *mafamedes* (boxes in *angelim*, an Indian hardwood)⁷¹; among the richer they are also present, although typologies tend to diversify: stalls, small boxes, but, above all, counters.

The number of furnishings using exotic woods and materials in their manufacturing or decoration is even more impressive. Their origin is predominantly Brazil, the East and Africa. From Brazil *jacaranda* (*pau santo* wood)⁷², *vinhático*⁷³, *mahogany*⁷⁴, ebony, *angelim*⁷⁵, *violeta*, rosewood, *pau-amarelo* (yellow hardwood) and 'box wood' (*madeira de caixa*) or sugar box wood (*madeira de caixa de assucar*)⁷⁶ In fact, the boxes used to

70. "Os aposentos principais em casa dos *fidalgos* o [sic] comerciantes estão mobilados magnificamente. Os artigos da Índia e da China são mais vulgares nestas casas do que nas de qualquer outra parte da Europa". J. MURPHY, 1998, p. 9-10.

71. *Angelim* box from India. R. BLUTEAU, 1712-1728, tomo v, p. 245.

72. Brazil-wood is the same as jacaranda, and can be found in Brazil, where two species exist, one black and the other white. R. BLUTEAU, tomo VI, p. 229; and A. M. SILVA, 1813, tomo II, p. 185.

73. Yellow Brazil-wood. R. BLUTEAU, 1712-1728, Tomo VIII, p. 502.

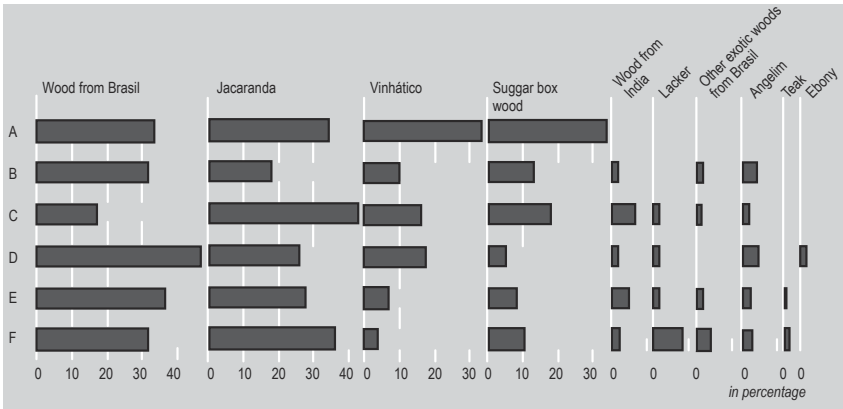
74. Although its origin can also be attributed to Africa.

75. *Angelim* is a tree from Brazil and Asia, whose wood is very compact and resistant. A. M. SILVA, 1813, tomo I, p. 134.

76. It is possible that the designation '*madeira de tara*' corresponds to '*madeira de caixa*' (box wood), but in doubt it has not been considered.

transport sugar from Brazil were reused in the manufacturing of furniture⁷⁷. From the East, we have teak⁷⁸, ebony and *angelim da Índia*. As we have seen, ivory, often used in sacred imagery, came from Africa but tended to be carved in Asia. However, the use of generic designations as ‘wood from Brazil’ and ‘wood from India’ on the part of the appraisers, although it allows us to locate the origin of the materials, does not enable us to know which specific material they are referring to. The graphic representation of the materials of furniture originating in the colonies demonstrates that there are a very significant number of objects in this situation. Figure 1 allows other important remarks.

Figure 1. *Exotic wood in furniture*



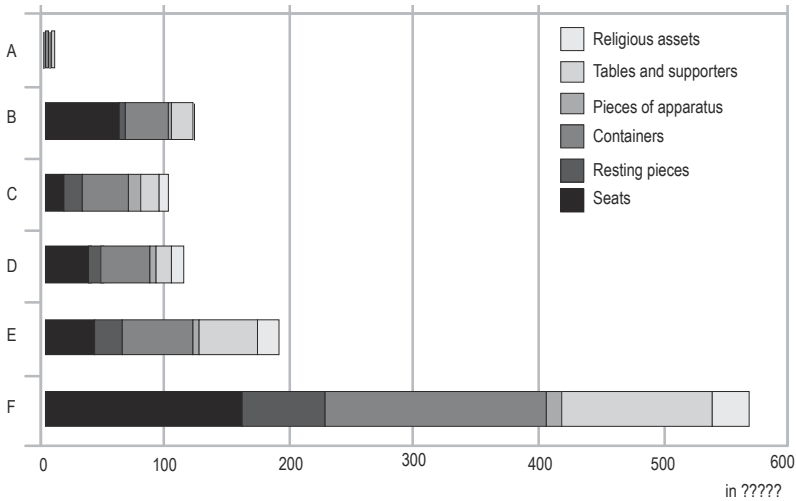
Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

The first one is the hegemony of Brazilian wood in all the cohorts. Moreover, the percentage of exotic woods from the East increases with wealth. This can be partially explained with the weight of the pieces of furniture imported from the East. Among these, lacquer is exclusive to four categories, F in particular. On the other hand, 30% of Brazilian wood in the poorer group (A) and about 12% to 20% in categories B and C, corresponded to wood recycled from sugar boxes, used as containers for sugar. The use of lesser materials, as in this case, could be a form of emulation. The taste for the exotic is copied, but adapted to income.

77. N. L. MADUREIRA, 1992, p. 188; R. M. Veiga, 2007, p. 183.
78. Teak is an Indian wood. According to dictionarist Bluteau the “best wood that exists in the world” (“a melhor madeira, que no Mundo há”). R. BLUTEAU, 1712-1728, tomo II, p. 242.

Furniture items were grouped into five categories according to their use: containers or storage; sideboards or supporters; seats or resting pieces; pieces of apparatus and objects related to private religious cult, where we included oratories, crosses and sacred images⁷⁹.

Figure 2. Furniture made with exotic wood and its use



Source. A.N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

The majority of pieces of furniture using exotic materials from intercontinental trade were designed to contain or to store (Figure 2). This is valid for all categories considered, although differences in number and typology are significant. The tendency was to diversify and specify typologies. If among the less wealthy the simple and multi-functional casket predominated, the richer owned chests of drawers, bureaus (*papeleiras*), cupboards, wardrobes, safes, dressing tables, etc. Expensive wardrobes and cupboards appeared only in the nineteenth century, in most cases made with *vinhático* and remained an urban phenomenon confined to the higher cohorts (E and F). Only two such items could be found in the other cohorts (1 in B and 1 in D). Their prohibitive price, oscillating from 6,000 réis to most frequently 24,000 réis, could explain its small diffusion. The same tendency can be observed in supporting furniture (*móveis de pousar*): in groups E and F, the number of tea and game boards is very significant,

79. We have added the category 'religious cult' to the typology developed by Carlos Franco. C. FRANCO, 2007.

reminding us of an important dimension of consumption, consisting of the non-productive use of time as an important status symbol, such as it was defined by Veblen at the end of the nineteenth century⁸⁰.

The number of objects related to private religious cult also increases with wealth. Among these, the most common objects were undoubtedly the ivory Christ crucified on a Brazil-wood cross. According to Bernardo Ferrão, it was usual in the eighteenth century to place an ivory Christ imported from India on a locally made wooden cross of Brazil-wood, and decorate it with silver nails and aureole⁸¹. This combination of materials uniting Africa, India and Brazil in the manufacturing of Indo-Portuguese images of crucified Christ is typical of Portuguese interiors.

The penetration of imported furniture in the rural areas was very different. Although the same pattern of consumption can be observed, there are significant differences in scale and chronology.

New drinks: tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar

The import of tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar is known to have increased during the Early Modern period. It is important to uncover how the consumption of such products increased in Lisbon during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

There are no mentions to equipment for making tea, coffee and chocolate in inventories dating from the seventeenth century, regardless of social class and space, but by 1720 this picture had radically changed in urban households. Until 1780, 37% of modest households (cohorts A, B, C and D) include at least one item relating to the preparation or consumption of tea, coffee or chocolate, rising to 79% for the richer (cohorts E and F). After 1780, equipment for tea, coffee and chocolate making became almost ubiquitous (76% for the lower groups and 86% for the richer)⁸². Data suggest that

80. T. VEBLEN, 1965.

81. B. FERRÃO, 1983, p. LIX.

82. These data fully agree with those of the studies developed for other parts of Europe that had identified the first and second quarters of the eighteenth century as the critical ones for the mass consumption of tea and coffee. For this subject see A. E. C. McCANTS, 2007, p. 445-447. Also, we must admit that items related to the consumption of tea, coffee, chocolate and sugar may be under registered, as its small value prevented them from being inventoried. We can give the example of one inventory where the daughter of the deceased listed all the objects left by her mother. If we confront this list with the inventory, only 16 of the 23 objects mentioned were evaluated, and consequently divided among the heirs. A table, an oratory

tea was the most popular of these beverages, which is surprising considering that it was the most expensive of these commodities. We realized that tea was often combined with another commodity. In other words, families that drank tea normally also drank chocolate or coffee, and sometimes, both. These drinks were widespread across the urban social landscape after 1780. In the rural areas, however, these products were exclusive to a small elite even after 1780. Only the richer (cohort F) seem to use those drinks. Wine must have continued to be the main drink in rural environments.

Sugar was one of the first exotic commodities used in Portugal, although it was used as fruit preserve. It was first produced in the islands of Madeira from the 1470s onwards, and after the sixteenth century in Brazil. This commodity is not represented in our inventories through the presence of specific containers. Only 12% of the households indicate the existence of a sugar bowl or sugar spoon before 1780 and only 37% after that date. Considering its low price (compared to tea, chocolate and coffee) and its availability in grocery stores, we should conclude that presumably a wide variety of more generic dishes, boxes, or tins could have been used to store and serve it⁸³.

*

Our proposal was to analyse the consumption of products from the Empire in relation to the living standards and also comparing town and country, within an approach aiming to link the micro to the macro levels, the first represented by the household, the second by the colonial Empire.

The Empire found its way to most Lisbon houses, in spite of differences in quantity and quality. As far as we could enter them, and observe the presence of the Empire in their interiors, we can say that their doors were open to all kinds of goods. Even the humble owned products from the colonies during the late eighteenth century and the beginning of the nineteenth century. As we have seen, 10% of inventoried individuals in one of poorest wealth groups (category B) owned Chinese porcelain, and 50% and 47% in categories A and B, listed items household linen manufactured or made with overseas raw materials. The overwhelming majority manufactured furniture imported from the colonies had its origin in the East and the percentage of households including at least one of these types oscillates between

with its images of saints, a shelf, and old bench, an old little mirror, an old carped and a tin chocolate pan, also worn out. A.N.T.T., Inventários Orfanológicos, letra V, Mç. 32, n.º 7.

83. A. E. C. McCANTS, 2007, p. 449.

10% and 66% according to the six categories considered in this study. The ownership of these objects is not exclusive to any of the cohorts. The diffusion of furniture made with exotic woods is even more impressive. However, quantitative and qualitative differences must be considered, as groups in the lower economic scale seem to possess less items and lesser quality ones.

There are no mentions of equipment for making tea, coffee and chocolate in inventories dating from the seventeenth century, regardless of social class and space, but by 1720 this picture had radically changed for the urban households. Until 1780, 37% of modest households (cohorts A, B, C and D) include at least one item relating to the preparation or consumption of tea, coffee or chocolate, rising to 79% of the richer (cohorts E and F). After 1780, tea, coffee and chocolate equipment advanced quite spectacularly and became almost ubiquitous (76% for the poorer groups and 86% for the richer).

The eighteenth and nineteenth century Portuguese culture of consumption was based on colonial goods. Even a small sample like the one studied in this article mirrors the overwhelming presence of the Empire in mainland Portugal. These findings are in line with the international trend of ‘lesser folk’ acquiring luxury goods⁸⁴. Urbanization led to the concentration of markets and further stimulated the imitation of high status consumption patterns. Luxuries became more accessible to various types of individuals and new conceptions of the self and increased fluidity in social structure fuelled imitation.

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Appendix A. Monetary values of colonial

<i>Colonial goods</i>			
	<i>Goods</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Monetary value (réis) min./max.</i>
Groceries in 1823	Sugar	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	56/87
	Chocolate	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	100
	Coffee	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	200
	Tea	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	600/1,000
	Chinese porcelain	1 table set with 138 pieces	1 set (with 138 pieces)
		1 Chinese porcelain cup	25,000 (about 181 each piece) 200
	House linen	1 Satin quilt embroidered from China	48,000
		1 damask canopy and curtains for the bed	43,200
		1 silk blanket	25,000
		1 damask blanket	9,600/12,000
		1 Indian quilt	8,000/50,000
		1 calico bedcover from India	4,000
		1 calico bedcover	1,800/7,200
		1 cotton tablecloth from India with 6 napkins	7,000
		1 cotton table cloth	1,440
		1 cotton sheet	700/1,700
		1 cotton bedcover from India	1,000
		1 embroidered cotton bedcover	3,200
		1 cotton napkin	60
	Manufactured goods	1 lacquered bureau from India	40,000
		1 lacquered table game from India	7,200
		1 lacquered dressing table from India	3,200
		1 lacquered table from India	4,800
		1 ivory Christ in a wood cross wand with silver aureole	14,400
		1 Indian casket	4,000/15,000
		1 Mozambique wood counter (with 16 drawers)	5,500
		1 wardrobe made with wood from Brazil	8,000
		1 box made with sugar box wood	800
		1 casked made with wood from Brazil	2,000
		1 box made with wood from Brazil	2,400
		1 pau santo wood buffet (sideboard)	4,800
	Furniture	1 pau santo wood table	2,000/4,800
		1 vinhático table game	3,000
		1 vinhático table for tea	3,000
		1 vinhático dressing table	5,000
		1 pau santo wood bedstead	2,000/16,000
		1 mahogany chest of drawers	28,000
		1 chest of drawers made with wood from Brazil	7,200
		12 stools made with Brazilian leather and walnut wood	25,000
		12 pau santo wood stools with damask seats and 1 settee	48,000
		6 vinhático chairs	3,600
		6 stools made with wood from Brazil	28,800
		12 vinhático stools	

<i>Common goods</i>			
	<i>Goods</i>	<i>Quantity</i>	<i>Monetary value (réis) min./max.</i>
Groceries in 1823	Rice	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	31
	Cod fish	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	137
	Smoked ham	1 pound (= 459 gr.)	150
	Wheat	1 bushel (about 13 litres)	480
	Potato	1 bushel (about 13 litres)	200
	Olive oil	1 almude (25 litres)	3,600
	Wine	1 almude (25 litres)	1,000
Manufactured goods	12 tin dishes		1,200
	Tableware		(100 each piece)
	1 earthenware dish		34
	1 English porcelain cup		80
	1 wollen cloth canopy and curtains for the bed		8,000
	1 linen canopy and curtains for the bed		4,000
	1 linen quilt		400/4,000
	1 linen sheet		900/1,600
	1 tow sheets		600
	1 linen tablecloth		480/2,000
	1 wool blanket		1,000/2,500
	1 linen hand towel		100/360
	1 linen napkin		50/70
	1 moscovia leather covered box		2,400
	1 moscovia leather covered bowed box		4,000/4,800
	1 pinewood casket		1,600/2,400
	1 pinewood table		1,000
	1 maple wood table		600/1,500
	1 pinewood wardrobe		7,200/9,600
	12 walnut chairs with damask seats and 1 settee		76,800
	6 walnut wood stool with leather seats		6,000
	5 chairs with moscovia leather seats and pinewood		1,500

Sources. N.T.T., 116 Inventários Orfanológicos, Letra V (1700-1832).

