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The Development of Industrial Activity in Tomar: a Study on the Unpublished Document of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes Requirement
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ABSTRACT

The exploration of the Nabão River in Tomar, Portugal, and its resources was an exclusive right of the Order of Christ, and it was constantly evoked by the religious of this order when there were disputes over the right to build water wheels, mills, and other structures along the river. This singular relation of power over the territory led to also a unique urban occupation in the Portuguese panorama. These interactions of power were documented in the unpublished manuscript of “Bernardo Daniel de Moraes’ Requirement” of the year 1799. The manuscript allows to cross boundaries between the political, economic and social context and the Order of Christ and their impact on the use of the Nabão River. Therefore, with this document as main source for this paper, we seek to demonstrate the relations between industrial activity, the Nabão River and the development of the city of Tomar in the turn to the nineteenth century, having the Order of Christ as a constant and structuring element in this gear.

Keywords: Water Devices; Tomar; Order of Christ; Nabão River; Industrial Activity

ARTICLE
Introduction

Focusing on the urban and industrial evolution of Tomar, a city in the center of Portugal, this paper seeks to demonstrate the relations between industrial activity, the Nabão River and the development of the city of Tomar in the turn to the nineteenth century, having the Order of Christ as a constant and structuring element in this gear¹.

The development of Tomar is closely linked to the history of the Order of Christ, successor to the extinct Order of the Temple in Portugal. The Knights Templar established their headquarters in the area by constructing a Castle and defense fortress during medieval times, which would later become the Convent of Christ during Renaissance, headquarters of the Order of Christ until the extinction of religious orders in Portugal in 1834.

¹ This paper was elaborated in the context of the project “AQUA HORTO SALUTAREM: water wise management in gardens in the early modern period”. It stands as part of a further research carried on during the preparation of Clara Marques’ Master thesis.

This paper argues that the Order of Christ, associated with the Portuguese Maritime expansion of the sixteenth century, also played a fundamental role in Tomar's evolution process by carrying out works that enabled the expansion of the urban fabric in the locality, as well as improving the use of water resources of the Nabão River in Tomar. By retaining the rights to exploit the river, the Order of Christ contributed to sustaining the dependence of the local population. Moreover, the Nabão River acted not only as an element of attraction for the settlement of populations in the area, but also allowed the economic and industrial development on the locality through the use of its waters for the operation of devices placed along its course. Initially, for the small-scale workshop production. In Tomar, primitive casters and various types of water wheels were used in pre-industrial mills. Later, for the operation of the machinery of the various industries installed on the site since the eighteenth century. When hydraulic wheels were used for industrial purposes, they acted as central motors and operated machinery and mechanized systems.

This paper aims to cross boundaries between the history of technology, urban history and the history of architecture. Due to its importance, the Convent of Christ has been widely studied, although most of the works are focused on its architecture from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries.² Publications on the Order of Christ, addressing several of its historical issues, are also focused on this period.³ The Order's history is explored by several authors, who emphasize its role in the organization and development of Tomar and the country. Locally, it had the power to control the city's water resources and dictate rules for urban expansion. Nationally, it financed and actively participated in the overseas expansion, protecting the interests of the Portuguese Court.⁴

The urban evolution of Tomar is the result of a set of interdependent actions and events involving the Order of Christ and the Nabão River. Medievalist historiography dedicated to urban evolution covered the consolidation of the city's urban fabric, analysing the events that led to the urban expansion of Tomar, highlighting the importance of the Order of Christ had in the regularization of the physical space of the locality.⁵ However, most of the studies on the topic concentrate on the urban evolution during the fifteenth, sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.⁶ Studies that frame later centuries are less frequent.⁷

The Nabão River stands as a relevant topic within several thematic areas, such as geography, hydrography, biology,

2 See: FRANÇA, José Augusto (1994). *Tomar*. Lisbon: Editorial Presença; MOREIRA, Rafael. (1995). *Arquitectura, Renascimento e Classicismo. História da Arte Portuguesa*. Lisbon: Circulo dos Leitores; MOREIRA, Rafael. (1991). *A Arquitectura do Renascimento no Sul de Portugal: A Encomenda Régia entre o Moderno e o Romano*. (Doctoral dissertation, Universidade Nova de Lisboa, Lisbon, Portugal); PEREIRA, Paulo. (2003). *De Aurea Aetate – O Coro do Convento de Cristo em Tomar*. Lisbon: Instituto Português do Património Arquitectónico (IPPAR); PEREIRA, Paulo. (2009). *Roteiro do Convento de Cristo*. Lisbon: IGESPAR; BENTO, Maria José Travassos. (2013). *O Convento de Cristo em Tomar: do Infante D. Henrique às empreitadas manuelinas*. Lisbon: Direção Geral de Património Cultural (DGPC); BENTO, Maria José Travassos (2014). *Convento de Cristo – 1420/1521 – Mais do que um século*. (Doctoral Thesis, University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal).

3 It is important to note that there are few publications that report on the period between the creation of the Order of Christ (1319) and the regency of the Infant D. Henrique (1420-1460) and the centuries following the seventeenth. See: FRANÇA, José Augusto (1994). *Tomar*. Lisbon: Editorial Presença; SILVA, Pedro (2007). *Dos Templários à Ordem de Cristo*. Coimbra: Via Occidentallis; SUCENA, Eduardo (2008). *A Epopeia Templária e Portugal*. Lisbon: Nova Vega

4 The power of the Order of Christ in the development of Tomar and Portugal is affirmed, pointing out the control over the water resources of the Nabão River and its financial and political power, which made it possible to finance expeditions in the plan of the Discoveries. See: VIEIRA, Alberto (2015). *O (RE)DESCOBRIMENTO/ (RE)CONHECIMENTO DA MADEIRA. Em torno da História, de alguns conceitos e imprecisões*. Cadernos de Divulgação do CEHA, Nº 6, 2015, pp. 2-41. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/310951354>?

5 It should be taken into account that initially, there was a higher town, located within the walls of the Templar Castle, and another, the lower town, which appeared in the flat area between the Castle hill and the Nabão River. Later, during the 16th century, Vila de Cima ceased to exist. This process took place from the religious reforms imposed by D. Manuel I and D. João III, who sought the closure of the friars of the Order of Christ. See: TRINDADE, Luísa. (2014). *Urbanismo na composição de Portugal*. (Doctoral Thesis, University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal).

6 This scenario is probably due to the importance of Infant D. Henrique, King D. Manuel I and King D. João III in the consolidation of the urban network of Tomar. See: FRANÇA, José Augusto (1994). *Tomar*. Lisbon: Editorial Presença; and the work "TRINDADE, Luísa. (2014). *Urbanismo na composição de Portugal*. (Doctoral Thesis, University of Coimbra, Coimbra, Portugal)" is an important contribution to the topic and contributes to the understanding of the urban morphology of Tomar.

7 For a complete reading about the evolution of Tomar until the twentieth century, see: DIAS, José Cabral. (2017). *A evolução urbana de Tomar: de Sellium a Carlos Ramos*. Porto: Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade do Porto.

and agronomy. The fertility of its banks is highlighted by several works due to the potential of the Nabão River for the supply of energy, which enabled the construction of water devices along its course and, ultimately, the beginning of industrial activity in Tomar.⁸

In this article, water is understood as fundamental in the city's development in the context of the tripartite interconnections comprising the Convent of Christ, the hydraulic structures developed along the Nabão River, and the evolution of the city plan. At the same time, the article aims to contribute to the geographic and urban comprehension of the area, as it allows exploring the correlation between the establishment of industries and the development of Tomar's urban fabric. It is important to highlight that the Order of Christ opposed to the establishment of several industries along the Nabão River, being the exceptions, the ones determined by the King of Portugal, also the Grand Master of the Order.

We are going to show this interplay between urban history and the history of technology through the analysis of the unpublished manuscript of “Bernardo Daniel de Moraes's Requirement” of the year 1799.⁹ This document allows to cross boundaries between the political, economic and social context and the Order of Christ and its impact on the use of the Nabão River. The use of its waters as a source of energy was a fundamental element in the modernization of the city of Tomar. Considering the emergence of several factories along the Nabão River in the area in this period, the Requirement presented by the entrepreneur Moraes contains vital information that demonstrates the Order of Christ's domain on the water resources there in the late eighteenth century.

To unfold our arguments, we divided this paper into two parts. The first part is dedicated to the history of the city, contextualizing the place in the period in which the examined text was formulated. Subsequently, this paper analyses Bernardo Daniel Moraes' request for the establishment of a paper industry in Tomar.¹⁰ This document allows us to identify and confirm the power relations existing in Tomar regarding the development of the locality, mainly in the use of water resources and the industrial advance initiated there in the late eighteenth century. Furthermore, we elaborated a map containing the identification of the factories and hydraulic structures existing in Tomar in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, allowing the understanding of the relations between industrial activity and the development of the locality.

To sum, the Tomar of the late eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century witnessed an industrial blooming, and the unpublished document analysed will contribute to the understanding of the social and economic relations existing in Tomar, as it exposes the context and the process necessary to launch industry in the locality in this period. Thus, it also supplies information that assists in the comprehension of the urban development of the locality.

Tomar: brief history and contextualization

Tomar is a city in the Center Region of Portugal. Its history goes back to ancient times, and the Nabão River has always been at the heart of its development.¹¹ The word Tomar derives from the word “Tamaramá”, of a Arabic

8 See: FRANÇA, José Augusto (1994); VALLA, Margarida (2016). Cultural Landscape of the City of Tomar. The Nabão River as an Urban Identity. *Confins*, Nº 31, 2016. <https://journals.openedition.org/confins/12074>.

9 Its transcription is to be published in Clara Marques' Master Thesis (forthcoming 2020). For the original document, consult “ANTT, Ministério do Reino, mç. 687, proc. 37”.

10 This is the second attempt by Bernardo Daniel de Moraes (Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement for the opening of Paper Industry in Tomar, 1799, ANTT, Ministério do Reino, mç. 687, proc. 37).

11 Tomar was founded in 480 BC by the Turduli, being subsequently occupied, in sequence, by the Romans, Visigoths and Arabs, but few elements remain in the city of these past occupations (França, 1994: 10).

origin, meaning water with the taste of date (“tâmara” in Portuguese), therefore sweet (FRANÇA, 1994: 10). On the other hand, the word “Nabão” derives from “*Nabância*”, a Roman village near “Sellium” (Roman title for the current Tomar). It is also important to highlight that the Nabão River was once called the Great River of Tomar.

The fertility of the Nabão Riverbanks, the annual floods and its fertile alluviums, were widely acknowledged since ancient times, impacting the settling of diverse populations in the locality.¹²

Hydraulic technical innovations stand out as yet another Arab heritage, which presence can be traced in the whole Iberian Peninsula, and specifically in this region.¹³ For example, the Mouchão Water Wheel, located next to Mouchão Park and rebuilt in 1976 in pine wood, follows the Syrian model (RODRIGUES & ROMERO, 2020: 341).



Fig. 1. Mouchão Water Wheel in the city of Tomar. Photograph by the author, 2021.

During Medieval times, Tomar became very famous as it was one at the core of the Templar Order, and the Knights Templar settled their castle¹⁴ in the right bank of the Nabão River, contrary to former occupations.¹⁵ The right bank of the river was considered unsuitable for human occupation in view of the marshy aspect that would hinder urban expansion on this side of the Nabão. However, the defensive character of the area prevailed. The security offered by the castle on the top of a hill, and the presence of the Knights Templar became especially attractive in a period of dispute over the Iberian territory between Christians and Muslims. Therefore, the lower town was founded on the right bank of the Nabão River, despite the harmful conditions for human settlement. The lower town was then defined by the Templar’s influence area and delimited between the foot of the Castle hill and the Nabão River (TRINDADE, 2009: 504).

12 Several authors attest to the importance of the Nabão River in this process: FRANÇA (1994) and DIAS (2017).

13 RODRIGUES, Ana Duarte, & ROMERO, Magdalena Merlos. (Eds.) (2020). *The History of Water Management in the Iberian Peninsula: Between the 16th and 19th centuries*. Trends in the History of Science. Basileia: Birkauer, Cham.

14 The construction of the Templar Castle was initiated in 1160. The right bank of the Nabão River was chosen because of the strategic and defence character of the hill situated in this side of the river, which enabled the Knights Templars to control the region without having to resort to the construction of walls on the foot of the Castle Hill (TRINDADE, 2009: 503). However, it is important to highlight that the Templars constructed the temple of Santa Maria dos Olivais, the Pantheon of the Order of the Temple.

15 Traces of occupations prior to that of the Templars were found on the left bank of the Nabão River (FREITAS, 2018: 89). This side of the river has characteristics more favourable to human occupation, such as more daily hours of sunlight, than the other bank, shaded by the hill chosen to house the Templar Castle. However, traces of other military structures from prior occupations were also found in Templar Castle Hill.



Fig. 2. The Templar Castle (actual Convent of Christ). Photograph by the author, 2021.

The Templar occupation in the region was part of the strategy of King D. Afonso Henriques (1106, 1109 or 1111 - December 6, 1185)¹⁶ for the defense settlement and bestowal. In view of the role played by the Templars on the conquests of the cities of Santarém and Lisbon (1147) over the Muslims, the first King of Portugal donated to the Order of the Temple the vast territory that would come to be known as Tomar to house their new castle and headquarters. The Knights Templar remained there until the extinction of the Order of Solomon's Temple in the fourteenth century. This was followed by the creation Order of the Cavalry of Jesus Christ, better known as the Order of Christ, established there in 1357.¹⁷

Following the creation of the Order of Christ, King D. Dinis (October 9, 1261 - January 7, 1325) managed to keep the assets of the extinct Order of the Temple on Portuguese soil, converting it into a national order, as attested by the papal bull *Ad and the ex quibus*¹⁸. Unlike an international order such as that of the Templars, the Order of Christ served national interests and was thus an instrument of the kingdom policy. First, the Order of Christ played a fundamental role in the consolidation and defense of the Kingdom of Portugal since its origin, being protected by the Crown and the Clergy. Adding such rewards to the goods inherited from the Order of the Temple and its own income, the Order of Christ gained significant economic power. Therefore, it was a sort of nationalization, placing it at the service of the Royal House.

Progressively, the Order changed its focus from military and religious to political and economic functions, becoming a force of great influence in the Portuguese territory (BENTO, 2014: 28). A relationship of loyalty and intimacy between the Order of Christ and the Crown prevailed throughout time. As a way of making sure that the power was concentrated on the Royal House, King D. João I (1357 - 1433) established that a member of the Royal family should be the head of the Order of Christ. His son, Infant D. Henrique (1394 – 1460), renowned as

16 King Afonso Henriques was the first King of Portugal, reigning from 1139 until his death.

17 Following the persecution of the Templars by Pope Clement V (1264 – April 20, 1314) and Philip IV of France (1268 – November 29, 1314), King Dom Dinis (October 9, 1261 – January 7, 1325) created in 1319, in a political move attested by Pope John XXII's (1244 - December 4, 1334) papal bull, the Order of the Cavalry of Jesus Christ, or Order of Christ as it is commonly referred to, that would come to inherit the assets of the extinct Order of the Temple in Portugal. Its first headquarters was situated in Castro Marim, and only by 1357 that the Order was established in Tomar, where it hosted its headquarters until the end of religious orders in Portugal in the nineteenth century.

18 Bull of the foundation of the Order of Christ that established, among other duties and impositions, that all goods belonging to the extinct Order of the Temple in Portugal were transferred to the newly created Order of the Knights of Jesus Christ (BENTO, 2014: 25).

the leading figure of the Portuguese Maritime Expansion, became its administrator and, therefore, he transformed the Convent of Tomar into an operational center for Portuguese overseas expansion by financing expeditions.

King D. Manuel I¹⁹ promoted the union between the Portuguese Crown and the Order of Christ, as he maintained the order's regency in his name when he became the monarch of Portugal. Ahead of the nation's greatest economic powers, D. Manuel strengthened the power of the Order of Christ. Following the rise of the power of the Order of Christ, the development of the urban layout of Tomar took place in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. We highlight the hydraulic works carried out in the Nabão River that allowed the stabilization of swampy and flooded lands that once limited the urban growth of the lower town of Tomar. Following the deepening of the "Levada de Tomar" (hereafter Tomar Channel),²⁰ opened by the Templars, on the Nabão River, a series of water devices along the Nabão River, such water wheels, mills, and oil presses, were constructed.²¹ These works performed by D. Henrique, King D. Manuel I, and later continued by orders of King D. João III, were fundamental for the urban and industrial development in Tomar (BARBOSA & GENIN, 2018: 585).



Fig. 3. The Nabão River and the Friars' Weir. Photograph by the author, 2021.

Also, it is important to highlight that King D. Manuel I initiated the process that would end the dual urbanity of Tomar by ending the functions of the walled village as a population center, removing all lay people from the interior of the conventual fence in 1499 (FREITAS, 2018: 101). The cloister of the friars began with D. Manuel I and was concluded in the reign of D. João III, who, following in the footsteps of his predecessor, initiated a religious reform. This movement had physical consequences: it was necessary to build a space suitable for the new life of the Order of Christ. Thus, the expansion of the Convent of Christ began. It also generated an urban expansion in the lower town, which started to house the lay population that once occupied the higher town and the outskirts of São Martinho, expropriated to give way to the Convent of Christ.

19 D. Manuel I was the King of Portugal and Algarves from 1495 until his death in 1521. He continued the Portuguese maritime explorations and is remembered for the discovery of the sea route to India, the discovery of Brazil, and of the Moluccas, fundamental for the expansion of the Portuguese empire.

20 It is not just a simple water channel, but a power supply system for the water wheels located in this industrial site.

21 The existence of several water devices is confirmed in the compilation of the annals of the municipality of Tomar by Rosa Amorim (*Anais do Município de Tomar: crónica dos acontecimentos cívicos*. Tomar: Edição da Câmara Municipal de Tomar, Vol. I – IX). Also, other works stand out: Rosa, A. (1971) *História de Tomar*. 2 vol. Tomar: Gabinete de Estudos Tomarenses; Ferreira, F. (1976). *Coisas simples da terra tomarense: o rio, os açudes e as rodas*. Santarém: Junta Distrital; Rosa, A. (1964) *Achegas para uma história de Tomar: os Lagares e Moinhos da Ribeira da Vila*. Tomar: O Templário.

It is imperative to report that the exploration of the river and its resources was an exclusive right of the Order of Christ. This relationship of power over the Nabão River was established during the reign of D. Dinis I (1261 - 1325), who understood that it was the role of the friars, and not of the population, to build mills and oil presses that used the waters of the river as a driving force. In the eighteenth century, this was remembered by the religious of the Order of Christ whenever there were disputes over the right to build mills along the Nabão River. Therefore, the population was not authorized to build mills or oil presses along the Nabão River in the region of Tomar. In consequence, there was a strong dependence of the population on the hydraulic devices built by the Order of Christ. Until 1834, when the extinction of the religious orders occurred, the construction of hydraulic devices and the use of the waters of the Nabão River by other parties were subject to the interests of the Order of Christ.

The overruling of the Order of Christ in Tomar was total during the early modern period, and it was disputed during the absolutist reign of King D. João V (1689 – 1750) as he did not include the city in his great program of public works.²² When the industrial activity was initiated in Tomar, the use of water as a source of energy for the production of manufactures of flour and oil was linked to mechanisms such as the waterwheel.

But only the Marquis of Pombal (1699 – 1782),²³ who acted as prime minister during King D. José I's reign, intended to transform Tomar into an industrial center.²⁴ He challenged the supremacy of the Order of Christ over the Nabão river, as important factories were established in the Nabão valley, such as Tomar Royal Spinning Mill, founded by Jácome Raton (1736 – 1822) and Thimotheo Verdier (1754 – 1831)²⁵ in 1789, as consequence of the Marquis' actions. For the establishment of this industry and others, it was necessary to build a weir and other structures, such as “levadas” (channels), altering the Nabão River landscape.



Fig. 4. “Levada de Tomar” (Tomar Channel). Fig. 5. Ruins of the Tomar Royal Spinning Mill. Photographs by the author, 2021.

This encouraged the establishment of a Paper Industry in Prado's Site, more precisely in the place where the old bloomery furnace was located. The entrepreneur Bernardo Daniel, whose Requirement we are going to address in the second part of this paper, requested to establish a paper industry in the same place mentioned by the Marquis

22 King D. João V endeavoured to consecrate Portugal as an international power. The main projects of his reign include the Mafra Palace, the Joanine Library of the Coimbra University, the Aqueduct of the Free Waters in Lisbon and the extinct Royal Academy of Portuguese History. He also endeavoured to implement the Madrid Treaty of 1750, which established Brazil's modern borders.

23 Marquis of Pombal was Secretary of State of the Kingdom during the reign of King D. José I (1750-1777). He was a controversial and fundamental figure for the reconstruction of Lisbon after the 1755 earthquake. Influenced by the Enlightenment, the government of the Marquis of Pombal was characterized by the so-called Pombaline Reforms, which sought Portugal's economic independence and improvement of the educational system.

24 Transcript of the Board Trade's document for the creation of the Prado Paper Industry (Barbosa and Genin, 2018: 587).

25 Jácome Raton and Thimotheo Verdier were both French entrepreneurs and successful businessmen.

of Pombal, using the abandoned structures of the old bloomery furnace in the Prados's Site, the same place previously intended by the Marquis of Pombal to built another paper factory decades before.

The map created allows the visualization of the relation between the use of the Nabão River, the establishment of industries along its course and the development of human occupations, such as Tomar. As supporting material for understanding the aspects included in this paper, the map in question represents elements acknowledged in the analyzed document and others of equal importance in the configuration of the territory.

We chose to represent the industries mentioned in the analyzed document, in addition to others that are known to have occupied the region, although not necessarily built in the same period of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement. It is important to note that Prado Paper Company is not the same paper industry intended by the applicant.

It is noteworthy that the industries represented continue to occupy important spots in the territory and constitute objects of reference along the Nabão River and in Tomar urban fabric. The establishment of these industrial structures took place according to the conditions of the river, taking advantage of the rapids of the Nabão River, being noticeable the proximity of the factories to the weirs identified, which were constructed and used to meet the industrial demands. In this sense, new water channels appear, connecting the Nabão River and the weirs to the industries represented. The construction of these structures and the occupation of the territory refers to the hydraulic experience acquired linked to the traditions of the established mills along the Nabão River.

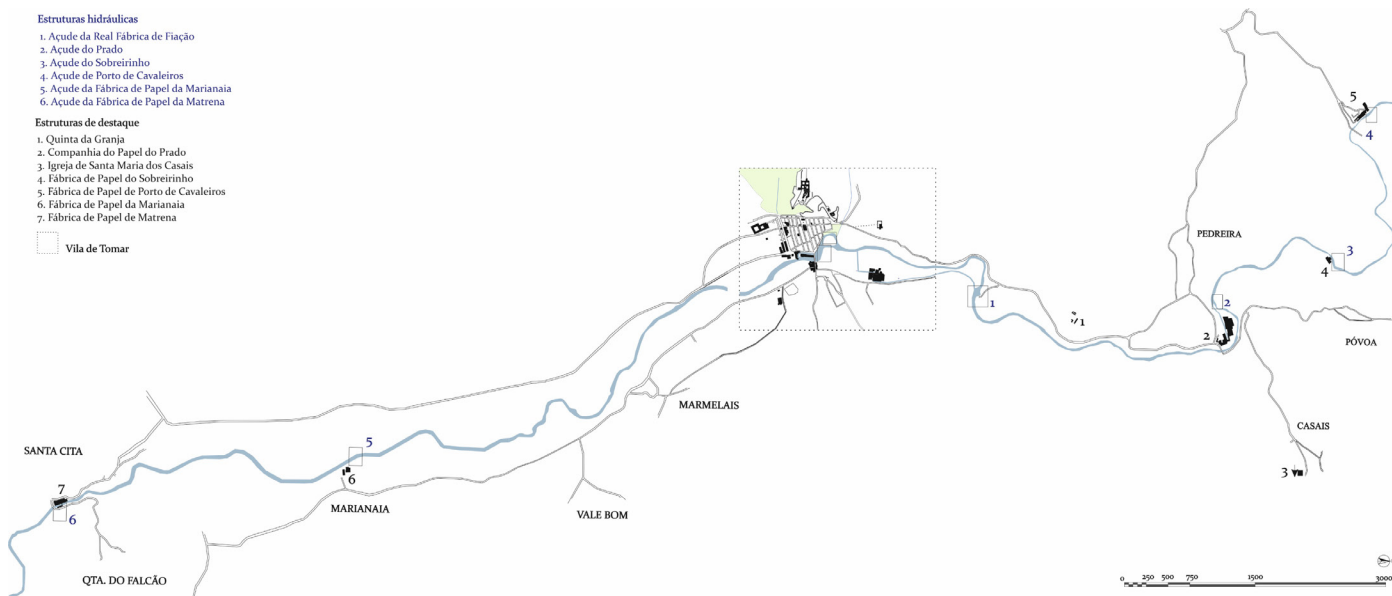


Fig 6. Map of Tomar, industries and villages in the region. Map made by the author.

Other occupations, of smaller scale than Tomar, are located close to these industries. It is possible that the existence of these structures enabled and boosted the emergence, or development, of villages, as is the case of the locations of Pedreira, Casais and Póvoa. Therefore, it is clear that the water devices and industrial structures constructed along the Nabão River acted as a driving force for urban development in the territory beyond Tomar, were important landmarks for the organization of a wider area.

The growth of industrial activity was interrupted at the beginning of the nineteenth century with the escape of the imperial family to Brazil and the Napoleonic invasion of Portugal. These events impacted enormously Tomar. Moreover, following the French blockade and the English maritime counter-blockade, Portugal found itself isolated, reducing exports considerably, limiting itself, above all, to transactions by land (PEDREIRA, 1987: 571).

Since exports diminished, the factories installed in Tomar, such as the Royal Spinning Industry, faced several crises. At the end of the Napoleonic wars, Portugal found itself in a scenario of great technological and industrial backwardness.

Tomar, however, with the extinction of religious orders, witnessed the arrival of new factories in the region, driven by the possibility of acquiring goods and properties previously owned by the Order of Christ (BARBOSA & GENIN, 2019: 587). With the emergence of electricity in Portugal, the traditional use of water as a driving force for the devices operating along the Nabão River were gradually replaced. These processes ended up transforming the landscape and dynamics in the city of Tomar.

Bernardo Daniel de Moraes's Requirement for the opening of paper industry on the banks of the Nabão River (1799)

The document here analysed follows the request of the entrepreneur Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' to open a white and brown paper industry on the banks of the Nabão River in 1799.²⁶ By then, Tomar was going through a process of increasing industrial activity that would eventually consolidate the locality as an industrial power in Portugal. The manuscript includes a set of official reports from the different parties involved in the process, which convey their positions and considerations regarding the possibility of opening the industry proposed by the applicant. In view of the location chosen by the applicant to settle his Industry and the expected use of the weir waters, responses were needed by the administrator of the Royal Spinning Industry, which also depended on these same waters, and by the Order of Christ, the great land owner and ruler in Tomar. In the absence of answers, the applicant had to resort to royal intervention. Despite all the influence of the Order of Christ, the King had the final word, as made clear in the document.



Fig. 7. The city of Tomar (panoramic picture) from the Convent of Christ. Photographs by the author, 2021.

The text is not clear about who Bernardo Daniel de Moraes was. It only states that the applicant, from the extinct Town of Punhete, current city of Constância, intended to open a paper industry at Prado Site, in Tomar, where once housed a bloomery furnace. In view of this, the applicant proposed the use of the water channel belonging to the Granja's Farm²⁷ and the weir at the Prado Site. The waters of this weir were the source of energy for the operation of the Royal Spinning Industry, mills and oil presses belonging to the friars of the Convent of Christ, in addition to watering the lands of Prado Site and Granja's Farm:

26 Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement for the opening of a Paper Industry in Tomar, 1799, ANTT, Ministério do Reino, mc. 687, proc. 37.

27 Granja's Farm was a property of great inheritance value for the architecture of its main house and belonged to the Order of Christ until its extinction. It is located along the Nabão River.

“In a short distance, an old, well-built weir is found, which, damming most of the waters of the Nabão River, directs them through a ditch, and leaves to serve mills and oil presses owns by the Convent of Christ, and are directed to irrigate several lands of the same Convent: the remains of these waters are used by the Spinning Industry”.²⁸

Moraes requested the use of the river waters and the weir in that area, and the structure that previously served as a bloomery furnace. His goal was to establish a paper industry, correspondingly to the reduction end of white and brown paper²⁹ importation, thus being considered of public utility.

Moraes’ requirement was analysed by the “Mordomo Mor”³⁰(hereafter Lord Stewart), an important official of the Portuguese Court. His report informed that the applicant’s project involved the use of the building of the former bloomery furnace, as well as the water from the extant weir to move the water wheels necessary for this industry. Moreover, the Lord Stewart states that Moraes ensured that the water from the weir was sufficient for all intended uses and that, in case of wrong evaluation, it would be possible to raise the waters of the weir to solve the supply problem.

In view of the lack of response by the friars of the Convent of Christ and the administrator of the Royal Spinning Industry, Timotheo Verdier, the Lord Stewart demands, in fulfilment of the Royal Notice of August 29, 1799, that both parties should answer Bernardo Daniel de Moraes’ request. Earlier in the same year, the Lord Stewart had already reported on the resistance of these parties in responding to the same request.

Thereby, Timotheo Verdier excuses himself of giving a definite answer and presents successive and sometimes contradictory reasons for that. First, he stated that it is not his duty to offer an answer. Then, he claimed he had more capital than the other partners on the Royal Spinning Industry and, therefore, he could represent them.³¹ Finally, he concludes by stating that the King will decide what is better for everybody. He did not state his opinion on the matter.

However, the friars of the Convent of Christ stressed that they were against Moraes’ request. The friar Afonso de Castro Bento provided a historical account of the importance the Order had over the territory of Tomar since medieval times. As the entire area of Tomar was owned by the Templar Order and, consequently, by the Order of Christ, it was their duty to build mills and oil presses along the Nabão River. Thus, the population was unable to use the river’s water resources, being only allowed to build these structures inside their lands, away from the river banks. From time to time, the rights and privileges of the Order of Christ were resumed.³² For example, King D. João III reinforced their rights over the land on March 20, 1538, stating that “Prado Site, with all its assets, was incorporated in the Convent of Tomar for the sustenance stipend of its friars”.³³ Around 1540, the King ordered that a bloomery furnace should be built in the very same area incorporated by the Convent.

By February 18, 1750, the Real Fazenda (hereafter Royal Treasury)³⁴ ordered that the buildings that once served as

28 Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes’ Requirement (1799).

29 It is believed that the objective was the production of wrapping paper, which was known as brown paper in Portugal.

30 Lord Stewart (Mordomo-Mor in Portuguese) were the first official at the Portuguese Court. Within his functions, the Lord Stewart was responsible for the internal management of the royal house, advising the King on daughterings and their respective dispatches, for the resignations of offices and mercy permits after consultation with the monarch, and was directly involved with the financial matters of the court. It is not clear who acted as Lord Stewart in 1799, there are only records of his predecessor, D. João da Bemposta de Bragança (June 12, 1726 – October 23, 1780) and successor, João Carlos de Bragança Sousa e Ligne (March 6, 1719 – November 10, 1806), who served as Lord Stewart from 1801.

31 Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes’ Requirement (1799).

32 Such was the case of the Foral-Law given by King D. Manuel I, in: Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes’ Requirement (1799).

33 Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes’ Requirement (1799).

34 Portuguese State body designed to centralize the management of the public accounts in the country.

the bloomery furnace should be delivered to the Convent of Christ. For the friars, it was already clear by then that the water obtained from the weir could not meet the demand of the flour mills, oil presses and bloomery furnace existing in the Prado Site. However, by July 7, 1772, the friars lose their rights over the buildings of the bloomery furnace. Following the intention of the Marquis of Pombal, acting as prime minister of King D. José I, of transforming Tomar into an industrial centre, the Real Junta de Comércio (hereafter Royal Trade Board)³⁵ expropriated the mentioned buildings, aiming to use them for the paper industry. However, this paper industry was not built.³⁶ This event demonstrates the power of the Order of Christ in the decision-making processes on the management of the territory of Tomar.

Therefore, just as in 1772, the friars of the Convent of Christ were against Moraes' request. They considered that the weir and its waters were their own, and held the opinion that the construction of the industry would cause the mills to malfunction due to water shortage, being for that matter a serious damage for the public interest. They also argued that the irrigation of the lands of the Prado Site would also be impaired. Ultimately, they stated that the Crown itself would suffer from the loss of tithes. Furthermore, for the friars, the applicant was wrong to assume that the weir located next to the old bloomery furnace was owned by the Tomar Warehouse.³⁷

Moreover, contrary to Moraes' opinion on the raise of the waters to circumvent possible shortages, Bento considered this solution would ruin the floodplains of the Prado Site. To support his point, the friar brought up "The great flood of December 13, 1798, which flooded the weir of the new Spinning Industry, leaving without practice not only its workers, but also many families in the Town of Thomar".³⁸ In view of all the damage caused by this flood, the Order of Christ decided to lend the waters of its weir in the Prado's Site to Timotheo Verdier's administration.

Finally, as a last argument, Bento alleged the wishes of the local population. As reported, there was a great concern about the potential negative consequences of the industrial activities on the Nabão River, that could alter and corrupt its waters. However, as well as Timotheo Verdier, he expressed that the Crown would determine the most just.

Bento supported the Order of Christ's position on the matter with several documents.³⁹ In the set of documents, reports and information contained in Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement, the final decision on the construction of the White and Brown Paper Industry intended by the applicant was not informed. Despite the unreasonable refusal of the Order of Christ, as it had exclusive rights on the Nabão River's water resources, the friars' strategy was to undermine the attempts of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes and other entrepreneurs, as happened on previous episodes in Tomar.

CONCLUSION

The Nabão River was fundamental for the development of Tomar since the beginning of the Christian occupation. Over time, the masters of the Order of Christ performed several works along the river that made it possible

35 Portuguese State body responsible for regulating and promoting general trade of factories production.

36 The analyzed documents also mentions another attempt of establishing another factory at the Prado Site prior to Moraes' Requirement: Francisco José da Pedreira's Fabric Factory.

37 A large administrative area, whose headquarters were located in a town or city of importance, under the authority of the Almojarife, a royal official in charge of collecting taxes. In: Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement (1799).

38 Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement (1799).

39 1) Notice of 7 July 1772, signed by Marquis of Pombal; 2) Provision of 18 February 1750, signed by Marquis of Abranches; 3) Proxy Permit of July 13, 1772; 4) Pleading document by Helena Frizoni Verdier, Timotheo Verdier wife and legal representative, requesting assistance in face of the Great Flood. In: Transcription of Bernardo Daniel de Moraes' Requirement (1799).

to widen the urban fabric of Tomar, providing new occupations. The development of the geometric urban fabric characteristic of Tomar was a response to the economic development and the political protagonism that the city was experienced during Renaissance (TRINDADE, 2009: 510).

On the part of Timotheo Verdier, little was revealed about his position. It is assumed that he was against the requirement, since he only responded in view of the Royal Notice by the Lord Stewart, and for making use of the same waters requested by the applicant. Since the Great Flood of 1798, its industry was dependent on the weir in question and so even more dependent on the wishes of the Order of Christ.

The Order of Christ, exercised its power and evidenced its contributions, duties and privileges, reinforcing its exclusive right over the control of water devices installed along the Nabão River. Thus, the applicant was subjected to their good will. This indicates the power of the Order of Christ in the decision-making process in Tomar. As seen throughout the history of Tomar, the Order dictated the rules for its development.

In this sense, in order to sustain its position, the Order cited the damage caused by the Great Flood and placed itself in a position of savior, by allowing the use of the waters of the weir in question in favor of the continuation of the activities of the Royal Spinning Industry. The friars also reported, seeking to reinforce this role, that the Order continued to contribute to the population through the grinding and pressing of oil in its mills.

The manuscript does not inform if the intended industry by the applicant was erected as proposed in the document. However, no reports or mentions of its existence were found. Despite the interest of the Marquis of Pombal in establishing an industry with the same purpose and in the same place proposed by the applicant, we know, however, that this was not accomplished. The interests of the Order of Christ prevailed in this matter. It is assumed, therefore, that the request by Bernardo Daniel de Moraes received the same outcome.

The Order accumulated wealth and conquered a place of great power, directly influencing the political decision-making processes in the Kingdom and dictating the rules for the development of Tomar. Although the Order of Christ was already in the process of decay, it still retained its power in Tomar. Only with the end of the religious orders in the year of 1834 that a fast and concrete industrial development in the locality was possible. However, before the extinction, three important manufactures were introduced in the region: Noël Le Maître's Wool and cotton sock Factory, Gabriel de La Croix's Varnished Paper Box Factory and the previously mentioned Tomar Royal Spinning Mill.

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