

IN SEARCH OF NOCTURNAL CHARACTERS IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LISBON

EM BUSCA DE PERSONAGENS DA NOITE NA LISBOA DO SÉCULO XVIII

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Abstract

The history of Lisbon in the second half of the 18th century is marked by an unprecedented event: the 1755 earthquake that destroyed most of the city. After this catastrophe, the city began its reconstruction under Pombaline plans and – in the process – the city, during the day but mainly at night, was thrown back into a dark and dangerous age of criminality and mythical beliefs. This article aims to identify and describe the characters that (in fact or theory) inhabited the city by night, in a mixture of popular tales, superstition and real danger. Our research takes into account security at night, religious rituals and mythical beliefs in werewolves and witches. The historiographical frame is set by the work on the history of the night by Roger Ekirch (2005), Alain Cabantous (2009), Craig Koslofsky (2011), Brian D. Palmer (2000). Analysing and comparing the sources, it is possible to see how the night was a space of freedom and fear but was also becoming a social space.

Keywords: holy inquisition, lighting, supernatural, security

Resumo

A história de Lisboa na segunda metade do século XVIII é marcada por um acontecimento incontornável: o terramoto de 1755 que destruiu a maior parte da cidade. Depois desta catástrofe a cidade começou a ser reconstruída sob a figura e a liderança de Marquês de Pombal. Entretanto, antes e durante o processo de reconstrução da cidade, principalmente durante a noite, regrediu a um estado de insegurança e de superstições antigas. Este artigo tem o objetivo de identificar e descrever as personagens que povoavam as noites lisboetas de setecentos, entrecruzando mitos populares, superstições e perigos reais. A linha historiográfica seguida é a mesma de Roger Ekirch (2005), Alain Cabantous (2009), Craig Koslofsky (2011), Brian D. Palmer (2000), Metodologicamente, analisando e comparando as fontes, é possível verificar como a noite que era tradicionalmente um espaço de liberdade e de medo, começa nesta altura lentamente a tornar-se um espaço de sociabilidade.

Palavras-chave: santa inquisição, iluminação pública, sobrenatural, segurança

Amid the thousand rancid smells of the city, the evening breeze brought to her nostrils that of charred flesh. Crowds were milling around the Church of St. Dominic amid the torches, black smoke, and bonfires. Blimunda pushed her way through until she reached the front

row, Who are they, she asked a woman holding a baby in her arms, I only know three of them, that man there and the woman beside him are father and daughter who have been found guilty of Judaism and are to burn, and the one at the end is a fellow who wrote comedies for

puppet shows named António José da Silva, but I know nothing about the others.

Eleven people have been sentenced. The stake is already ablaze and the faces of the victims are barely distinguishable. The last man to be burned has his left hand missing. Perhaps because of his blackened beard, a miraculous transformation caused by the soot, he looks much younger. And there is a dark cloud in the centre of his body. Then Blimunda said, Come. The will of Baltasar Sete-Sóis broke free from his body, but did not ascend to the stars, for it belonged to the earth and to Blimunda. (Saramago, 1998, p. 343)

This is how José Saramago, the Portuguese Nobel laureate in Literature, chose to end *Baltasar & Blimunda*, one of his best-known novels. It is a historical novel, inspired by historical events and real people who lived in eighteenth-century Lisbon, during the reign of D. João V (1706–1750). Nevertheless, the two main characters, Baltasar and Blimunda, are fictional. He is a soldier who lost a hand in the war and later became a blacksmith. She is a mysterious girl with the power to see and collect any person's will and whose mother was burned to death on the charge of being a witch. The chosen excerpt is rather long, but it serves as a thorough illustration of one side of the Portuguese capital in the eighteenth century: the strong hand of the Inquisition persecuting alleged witches, Jews, and audacious writers. One of the most common sentences for these crimes was death by burning in the grim scenario of an *auto-de-fé*. Thus, from our perspective, it is a different and yet very well-informed way to present the city of Lisbon in the 1700s. Historians have proved how thorough Saramago's research on the eighteenth century must have been in order to write this novel. He created a fictional plot entangled with historical events. The third protagonist is a historical figure, Bartolomeu Lourenço de Gusmão (1685–1724), a Jesuit priest who invented an alleged flying machine, and was aided in this quest by another historical figure, Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757), a Neapolitan musician and composer living in Lisbon at the time. As a result, it is an interesting and unexpected literary nightscape as a departure point to discover the city of Lisbon in the eighteenth century.

INTRODUCTION

This article aims to depict how two vastly different imaginaries that contributed to the city's nightscapes coexisted in eighteenth-century Lisbon. First, the ancient one was magical, evil, and fueled by superstition, with the Inquisition instilling fear and discipline into the people, as depicted in Saramago's novel. However, from the mid-century onward, the

Enlightenment cast its first lights over Lisbon, literally and metaphorically, slowly changing first the institutions and then people's minds. Drawing the city nightscapes from these two imaginaries will show how the cultural transformation that occurred in the eighteenth century was also enabled by the night and how the city's inhabitants dealt with both its real and metaphoric threats. Analysing the different aspects of the night in the city, the conviviality, the fears, the characters, the public lighting and the security, will enable a far deeper grasp of the time and the place.

The article's historiographical frame is set by and draws on the work on the history of the night by Roger Ekirch (2005), Alain Cabantous (2009), Craig Koslofsky (2011), Brian D. Palmer (2000) and Rosa Fina (2016), the latter for the specific Portuguese case, regarding the most important references. Thus, the research and consequent arguments in this article were supported by these previous works.

On the other hand, the sources consulted were of two distinct types: 18th-century contemporary documents (newspapers, journals, memoirs) and oral tradition compilations from the 19th and early 20th centuries. These varied documents allowed for quite a broad perspective of the time, as well as a clearer comprehension of nocturnal life.

The purpose of this article is to depict the Lisbon nightscape at the time, from a historical point of view as a fictional/superstitious place. By comparing these apparently opposite viewpoints it is possible to obtain a more thorough depiction of the 18th century Lisbon night.

In order to pursue our research into night characters, we aim (Fina, 2021, 2022) to study in depth the nineteenth century in Lisbon, namely the marginal characters that inhabited the city at night, with the aim of drawing as truthful a picture as possible of what the city was like at this time.

A GEOHISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE LISBON NIGHT IN THE 1700S

The reconstruction following the November 1755 earthquake, following plans by King José I and his minister, Sebastião de Carvalho e Melo, Marquis of Pombal, led to radical change in both the city and the country. Among the many political and economic endeavours they proposed and enacted, their anti-Jesuit policies weakened the Holy Inquisition and imposed an internal reorganisation, in which Pombal played a key role (Franco, 2006).

Pombal's direct intervention in the Inquisition and King José I's policy, in general, called into question both the power of the Holy Court, which was led chiefly by Jesuits and the fact that it derived from the fear of the unknown and divine punishment. Eighteenth-century Lisbon reflected these contras-

ting and conflicting ideologies, which resulted in a slower development of the Portuguese capital city in contrast with its European counterparts, particularly at the cultural level. Despite the destruction caused by the 1755 earthquake and the ensuing tsunami and fires, as well as the thousands of deaths in the city of Lisbon, Pombal and D. José I viewed the catastrophe as an opportunity not to rebuild the old city but to erect a new one that would reflect the ideals of the Enlightenment and be on par with other European capitals. Thus, there is the Lisbon before the earthquake, in the first half of the eighteenth century, and the Lisbon after the earthquake, slowly rising from the destruction and transforming into a new city. Although these two imaginaries coexisted – likely until the end of the nineteenth century –, the more modern of the two inevitably gained ground over the older one. Night, much more so than day, would be the most affected by these changes.

Walking the streets of Lisbon in the first half of the eighteenth century was still a challenge. Whatever little security existed was thanks to the so-called “Quadrilheiros”, a group of civilians who did rounds at night. These “officers” were given “a staff painted green with the Royal Arms” as a weapon and the duty to appoint “twenty neighbours” of the same “quadrilha” (neighbourhood) to assist them without fail whenever needed. In addition to intervening whenever an incident occurred, this security force was charged with the duty of prevention (“Regimento dos quadrilheyros”, 1689). The description contained in the *Rules* was quite clear about this aspect: the “Quadrilheiros” had to be on the lookout for any irregularities that existed in their neighbourhood and report them if they deemed them pertinent. Since these groups, known as “quadrilhas”, did their watches mainly at night, they were also known as “nocturnos” (nocturnal), “sisudos” (serious), or “morcegos” (bats) (Oliveira, 2000, p. 458). These popular names pertained mainly to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Only during the eighteenth century did security become more established, with the first police corps organised by Queen Mary I in 1801 (1777–1816).

The eighteenth-century city at night was for some a dangerous place, although there must have been some nocturnal activities for the inhabitants of Lisbon. In palaces and courts in general, we know that literary salons started to appear. These were courtly social gatherings where people discussed the arts, literature, and music. These literary salons flourished during the second half of the 18th century, mainly led and organised by women such as Marquise de Alorna and Viscountess Catarina de Lencastre. These gatherings were one of the most important cultural advances, inspired by the French “esprit forts”, where among other things, women gained social protagonism (Fina, 2016, p. 105).

However, most of the inhabitants of Lisbon were underprivileged, not nobles. How, then, did they spend their evenings? According to *Folheto de Ambas as Lisboas*, a satirical pamphlet published periodically in Lisbon about twenty-five years before the earthquake (1730–1731), the residents of the Alfama, Bairro Alto, and Graça neighbourhoods engaged in summertime nocturnal amusements, mainly on the street (Távora, 1730–1731). These activities ranged from watching fireworks organised by the underprivileged – “In this place, there was a remarkable fire tonight: many were those who went to see it” – to open-air theatre shows performed by the neighbourhood companies. The pamphlet also records the acoustic environment of these celebrations: “the loud sound of Carnival instruments [though the news report is from August] and trumpets in the air.” Even during the winter, the nocturnal activities continued: “At night there was Music from a six-string bass fiddle (*rabecão*) played in the dark”, and groups of underprivileged people “in good spirits and engaged in their daily conference of games, conversation, and music...will spend many a good night with their amusements.” (Távora, 1730–1731, fls. 3, 5 and 8) The *Folheto* is full of mentions of how practically all the nocturnal leisure activities took place on the street, in more or less spontaneous gatherings where people played music, danced, acted, played games, and even fought. The same *Folheto* also tells of the rivalries between neighbourhoods and several mass brawls or duels to avenge some dispute.

The public space belonged to everyone, and the boundaries between home and the street were frequently ignored by the lower classes, whose lack of social space within their houses inevitably prompted them to extend their conviviality to family and friends out into the streets (Lousada, 2004). In response to this social reality, the new ideas of the Enlightenment that started to appear aimed to organise the urban space in the form of new street ordinances or public lighting. There was a crucial need to make the street more pleasant and welcoming to everyone, not just those who made it an extension of their homes. The General Intendancy of the Police was the body in charge of dictating the new rules through public notices forbidding certain types of street peddling, establishing a schedule for the “beware of the water” ritual, and banning the killing and cooking of animals on the public street, among other measures. All these activities were common throughout the city as they were old habits, hard to restrict or change. The new urban plans, however, were to be followed, and those who did not obey the new rules and schedules were fined by the General Intendancy of the Police. There were stipulated schedules and restricted areas for all activities in the public space (“beware of the water”, killing

animals, trading of all kinds), in order to make the city's public space more organised. Not surprisingly, the night became a more tempting escape for these activities, as it was harder to be caught. As a result, the night became increasingly more supervised, not only by "quadrilheiros", or other Intendency staff but also by lighting more oil lamps across the city, especially where disciplinary problems might arise (Borsay, 1977).

THE SUPERNATURAL AND THE FEAR OF THE NIGHT: WITCHES AND WEREWOLVES

Superstitions and belief in non-human entities are intimately connected with the fear of the unknown. Fear will create superstition, a sort of fictitious ritual performed to avoid misfortune; it is at once a kind of religious feeling that projects responsibility and the protection of humankind onto God or another divine or superhuman being (Braga, 1986, p. 40). The night becomes the most favourable ground for fueling the emotion of fear. In fact, night fright is one of the oldest fears and the cause of many others, such as the fear of nocturnal creatures from the natural and supernatural worlds (Delumeau, 1989, p. 99). Witches and werewolves, for example, were two creatures from the supernatural world that appeared in eighteenth-century Portuguese popular narratives (Pedroso, 1988). First, a distinction must be drawn between "witch" and "sorceress" because, in Portuguese legends, these are two different beings, though the former may be an evolution of the latter. The fundamental difference is that "the sorceress is a woman, generally old and hideous, who maintains communication and a pact with the Devil, but without losing human form or possessing unlimited or extra-human powers" (Pedroso, 1988, p. 100). The witch belongs to a further stage of development, in which the contact with the Devil is even closer: "According to tradition, witches began as sorceresses, and after communicating with the Devil he leads them with false promises to becoming witches", adopting more violent behaviour and putting at risk the lives of those around them, mainly children. Additionally, sorceresses are associated with natural medicine and healing through plants and incantations or spells (Pedroso, 1988, p. 100).

Curiously enough, in Portuguese traditional folk tales and legends whose protagonists are witches or sorceresses, the horrible deeds are attributed to neither. These stories, spread mainly through oral tradition, explore the mysterious aspect of the magical powers bestowed upon these female characters, their nocturnal meetings with the Devil, or their transfiguration into small lights that flickered in clusters at night. (Pedroso, 1988, p. 101) In some episodes, the witches even become protectors of the weak. A common point in several tales was how the

witches travelled to meet the Devil: "Fly, fly, over every leaf". The following transcription details with precision how the summoning occurred:

The days when they join the devil are Wednesdays (or Thursdays, in other places)... At night, when the clock strikes ten, or before that, they rub certain ointments on their skins and stand by the window, saying: 'Fly, fly, / over every leaf !...The instant such words are uttered, the Devil takes them through windows, chimneys, or any other hole, and in a moment and flying through the air, he places them in certain fields whose name they do not know. (Pedroso, 1988, pp. 101-102)

Witches, however, were not the most feared threat in Portuguese folklore. Their presence in the supernatural night imagery is linked to women and their mysteries, their relation to the earth, the moon, the seasons, and even the Devil, just like Saramago's character, Blimunda, a mysterious woman with strange powers, but who harmed no one (Federici, 2004).

José Pedro Paiva emphasises how there never really was a "witch-hunt" in Portugal like in other European countries such as the United Kingdom, Germany, or Denmark, where civil and religious movements existed with that sole purpose (Paiva, 2002). The witch's image existed mainly in rural areas due to the influence of the Catholic Church's demonization of women since the Middle Ages, and her activities invariably occurred at night. In any case, the fact that the Portuguese religious school was essentially Thomist, as Paiva argues, is likely to have contributed significantly to the modest dissemination of this form of misogyny, since the postulate of Saint Thomas Aquinas did not allude to "sabbaths or deaths caused by witches", nor to "ceremonies of adoration of the Devil" (Paiva, 2002, p. 339). As a result, the legends of witches and sorceresses in Portugal were mainly fueled by the people and their superstitions, often to ostracise suspicious individuals from the community. Many legends contain only a few signs of supernatural forces. In addition to popular tradition, the supernatural was an extremely useful tool for generating fear and respect for anything not blessed by God, such as the nocturnal world. On numerous occasions, the Court of the Inquisition arrested and convicted women accused of witchcraft or other similar arts.

There is also literature, mainly ecclesiastical, on how to recognize this type of woman, such as the *Art of knowing and confessing sorceresses* (1745) by Father Domingos Barroso Pereira. The main intent of this book was to serve as a manual for the religious interested in fighting the crime of witchcraft. To that end, it indicated the main methods to recognize its

practitioners as well as related practices: "a small and resourceful work very useful for any priest in the holy sacrament of penance to find out if the people who confess have or do not have a pact with the devil, whether or not they are witches and sorceresses" (Pereira, 1745, fl.1).

However, it is interesting how over the course of the eighteenth century, the Inquisition started to change its position regarding these beings who were supposedly in contact with the supernatural, treating them not as threats but as victims of popular and outdated superstitions:

In the second half of the eighteenth century, a significant number of titles started to emerge, some of them translations with prefaces added by the Portuguese translators, in which the impossibility of witchcraft is affirmed, and it is claimed that witch stories were part of a popular world that was ignorant and backward. (Paiva, 1997, p. 87)

The Enlightenment was starting to have an effect, and a more rational perspective was also expected of the Church. Witchcraft was from the ignorant and dark past, and the light of Reason obliged the religious to explain these phenomena only as popular superstitions. According to José Pedro Paiva, the few legends and superstitions in Portugal related to witchcraft were mainly the result of a kind of "cultural fusion" of influences from other European countries:

[...] the most stereotypical accounts I know of « Sabbath » narratives date from the eighteenth century, when there had already been sufficient time for the shape of that myth to be amply disseminated. On the other hand, the more time and « cultural colonisation » campaigns undertaken by learned people moved forward, the rarer, fragmented, and distorted the references to ancestral beliefs in contact with the world of the dead and nocturnal witches became. (Paiva, 1997, p. 159)

Werewolves, in contrast, are relatively present in the Portuguese popular imaginary. Although most legends and superstitions correspond to the countryside, several references can be found in oral tradition and literature in Lisbon as well. Let us begin with the female form of the werewolf, much less common in popular culture but still extant. Ethnographers have collected some testimonies about the origin of this creature. According to one account, the female werewolf is the result of a genetic anomaly afflicting a couple's seventh consecutive daughter if nothing is done to prevent it: "In a house with seven sisters, the seventh will become a wolf fairy (*peira dos*

lobos). She will live seven years among the wolves; she will sleep with them and will be fed by them." It is clear that "the female werewolf is much rarer in the tradition of our people" since it appears in very few of the legends spread across the country (Pedroso, 1988, p. 197 and 200).

Though written in the nineteenth century, John Latouche records several legends and superstitions in his memoirs that refer to the previous century and earlier. He offers, for example, a complete transcription of a legend told in the northern region of Portugal about a female werewolf who, after being taken in by a rural family to work for them, murders the family's newborn baby on a full-moon night when she metamorphosed into a wolf: "At this very instant the moon rose, and we saw a huge brown wolf standing over the body of the child, his fangs bloody, and his eyes looking like fire." (Latouche, 1878, p. 32) According to the ethnographic studies by Consiglieri Pedroso, there are two rare elements in this legend. First, the woman did not merely "run with wolves", but rather she metamorphosed into an animal, specifically a wolf, not a donkey. Second, the conclusion of the legend coincides with similar ones: if a werewolf tasted the newborn's blood, his "fate" would cease. The tale closes with the death of the woman by gunfire, still in her animal form:

They buried her where she lay, and the 'wise woman' who came to look at her said she had the mark of the *lupis-homem* [wolf-man] quite plainly on her breast and was evidently a servant of the Evil One. The woman said that if she had seen the girl's eyes, she could have told at once what she was, for the *lupis-homems* [wolf-men] all have the long, narrow eyes and savage look of the wolf. (Latouche, 1878, p. 33)

There are different versions of the male werewolf legend throughout Portugal, but they coincide in their treatment of the metamorphic ritual and the details of the "fate." Usually, the fate was a "run" between eleven and midnight, or during the hours of dawn, though werewolves were also "seen" "at dusk in dark places; escaping through villages making a great noise on the street, a noise that was heard particularly by the people whom they wish to influence" (Pedroso, 1988, p. 189). Most descriptions draw attention to the noise they made, not only their screaming but also the destruction of objects in their wake while "running their fate." These descriptions explain the nocturnal noises that echoed in the rural inhabitants' frightened hearts. Ultimately, when strange noises were heard, these stories of werewolves running their fate emerged spontaneously to explain and frighten the most reckless against the perils and horrors that inhabi-

ted the night. Indeed, legends about supernatural creatures are woven around scientific evidence, such that they persist over time. To that effect, some accounts assert that werewolves have an adverse or possibly allergic reaction to artificial light since moonlight nourishes them. The fact that the werewolf could not be in the proximity of humans or artificial light is especially favourable to the non-verification of its truthfulness (or at least likelihood), as only the diffuse and deceiving light of the moon may fall upon him:

The sight of a light produces extraordinary effects on the werewolf, even physical pain. Therefore, when escaping down a path, they put out the lights they find along the way with a blow...When they pass a house where a light is on, they start kicking at the door and only retire once the light is put out. (Pedroso, 1988, p. 189)

The ritual was always very similar, regardless of where the legend was told. Usually, it would be nighttime, and the transformation would occur mostly after coming into contact with the place where an animal had "rubbed" before. Already metamorphosed, the werewolf would run loudly around the place, often cursing people, or simply crying out to be saved from his "fate", as the following description of this phenomenon in Lisbon highlights:

As the clock struck midnight, upon the last strike being heard, even if he were asleep, he would rise and wallow in Beco do Mirante, in the place where the neighbours' donkey usually wallowed. He immediately turned into a donkey and ran his fate, shouting at the people he passed: *touch me, for you will rid me of my fate.* (Pedroso, 1988, p. 187)

Alexandre Herculano, in line with his well-known interest in Portuguese legends, also talks about the topic of werewolves in the mid-nineteenth-century magazine *Panorama*:

Wolfmen are those whose fate or destiny it is to undress at night in the middle of a path, especially at a crossroads, turn five times rubbing on the ground in the place where some animal has rubbed before and thus transform into the shape of the animal that had rubbed there. These poor people harm no one; they merely obey their destiny, in which they show a very courteous stubbornness, since they pass no path or street where there are lights and they blow and whistle greatly so that these are put out. (Herculano, 1840, p. 164)

In this way, Alexandre Herculano tries to demystify the threat that the werewolf might pose, emphasising that they "harm no one" and will even show a "very courteous stubbornness."

In his memoirs, Francisco Xavier de Oliveira, who was a striking figure in eighteenth-century Portugal, primarily for his libertine adventures, often hints at the presence of the supernatural in the very centre of Lisbon. One experience that stands out among the many that Oliveira records about the time he lived in Lisbon before the earthquake is the attempt to hunt a werewolf in the city streets and the packs of street hounds that roamed them:

More than once, I came across between thirty and forty dogs fighting with one another, with no way to set them apart no matter how mercilessly I struck them with my sword. Given my presumption, finding among these poor animals one more robust and extraordinary than the rest, which bit me the hardest, I was even more led to strike. Though I injured many, I have never had the pleasure of witnessing the wondrous transformation. They remained what they were before, animals and demons, not a hint of a werewolf. (Oliveira, 1966, p. 260)

These testimonies help to draft a 17th century city nightscape populated with all kinds of supernatural fears and superstitions, even among educated men and women. The presence of werewolves in the streets, or among social circles, was quite well accepted as a possibility, as the writings of Francisco Xavier de Oliveira demonstrate. In the same journal quoted above, the Portuguese intellectual claims that one of the highly regarded ambassadors of the Reign is one of "Lisbon's werewolves" (Oliveira, 1966, p. 261). Lisbon's landscape would soon be radically different. However, as Brian D. Palmer points out "Conceptions of monsters grew out of many sociocultural and political processes, including peasant superstition and attraction to the practices of the supernatural as well as ruling-class fears of social rebellions among the masses" (Palmer, 2000, p. 117).

AFTER THE EARTHQUAKE: NEW CITY, OLD HABITS

The eighteenth-century Portuguese mentality might have always been, even during the reign of D. José I (1750–1777), highly marked by superstition and fears regarding the night. Though there was a gradual decrease, popular beliefs succeeded in keeping them alive. The night was always a place of fear and the realm of demons. Hence, for example, the existence of the *Hail Mary* ritual, which for centuries continued to be performed at

dusk to scare evil spirits away. This nocturnal rite was a sort of communal prayer held in some of Lisbon's neighbourhoods. At around eight o'clock, people stood on the threshold of their doors with a lit candle or lamp, praying the rosary for approximately one hour and, in turn, illuminating the city's dark streets. Charles Dumouriez, a foreign visitor to post-catastrophe Lisbon, describes this ritual, which seemed like a truce between the residents and the criminals since, soon after, the city would plunge into the usual peculiarity:

At around eight at night, in the Winter, the entire bourgeoisie and the people stand at the threshold of their doors reciting the rosary in a sort of full chant; this clamour lasts about an hour, after which the streets are inundated by thieves, chamber pots, dogs, and people of the law. (Dumouriez, 2007, pp. 123-124)

In this sense, comparing the French and English position regarding the Church's relation to the night, Alain Cabantous mentions how the Church and State institutions worked together to keep people away from the night, creating and feeding fears of demonic possessions or visits to hell (Cabantous, 2009, pp. 131-158). Those who went out at night put themselves not only in danger but also under suspicion; therefore, the wisest option was to remain at home, as advised by the authorities in charge of security. Several stories were told about nocturnal adventurers, who were always associated with immorality, crime, or mere defiance of order, in contrast to those who returned early to the comfort and safety of their homes (Ekirch, 2005, pp. 31-56).

However, it is important to notice how this way of thinking was changing as the end of the eighteenth century approached. In Portugal, as in other European countries, a sort of self-mythification of the Enlightenment occurred, a discourse that legitimised its proponents and their reforms by associating their action with the metaphor of light (Czennia, 2010). Consequently, reason gradually triumphed over darkness: "From 1774 onward... disbelief regarding the Sabbath and the pacts with the Devil took hold of the religious and secular elites in Portugal," and that began to be noted in the registries of judgments of the Court of the Inquisition (Paiva, 2001, p. 100). Many sentences referred to the accused as an ill or ignorant person, fascinated by popular superstition, thus the accusation was not of witchcraft but of fabrication of lies and fictional stories about the devil and evil powers that obviously could not exist in a modern progressive society. As Koslofsky argues, "In this new era of the history of the night, women accused of witchcraft evoked pity rather than Satan's dark powers" (2011, p. 238).

In the second half of the eighteenth century, after the Marquis of Pombal took the reins of power in the State and the Holy Office, the Inquisition softened its harshest judgments, practically ceased the use of torture to obtain confessions, and discredited witchcraft and pacts with the Devil, considering all to be fabrication and lies. From that point onward, the Inquisition began convicting the doers of such practices not as agents of a pact with the Devil but for their belief in superstitions, inciting them to declare why they had "invented and plotted the pretences and impostures" of which they said themselves to be capable (Paiva, 1997, p. 88). It was a paradigm shift, reflective of the evolution in the Portuguese mentality during this period.

In summary, although the Inquisition was an institution that traditionally fostered an environment of control and restraint, that power was getting weaker. Even in the twenty years during which it existed in the nineteenth century, both its presence, its influence, and its intervention in society went practically unnoticed. In addition, the weakening of the Inquisition, together with the expulsion of the Jesuits from the Kingdom of Portugal in 1759, served to strengthen Pombaline power and make way for his measures to be applied in the city of Lisbon. Among others, his policies prioritised improving conditions and opportunities for the entertainment, both daytime and nocturnal, of the residents of Lisbon. This improvement plan included the construction of theatres and the Public Promenade, the first public city park, in 1760, and the entire renewal and regulation of public space. These projects, through information and education, helped to demystify old superstitions and traditions related to the night.

Following the Pombaline government, during the reign of D. Maria I (1777-1815), the General Intendency of the Police was led by Diogo Inácio Pina Manique, the man who brought public lighting to the streets of Lisbon. Of all the duties of the General Intendency of the Police, security and lighting were those that Diogo Pina Manique considered necessary to achieve the improvements he envisioned for the city. From the moment he took office as the Intendant-General, his effort to illuminate Lisbon by night was met with resistance. The main objection was the steep cost of olive oil, which fueled the lamps. As the public treasury did not permit such an expense, the solution was to charge the sum to the population through a tax paid either in cash or with one *quartilho* of olive oil. Public lighting began in Lisbon on 17 December 1780, Queen D. Maria I's birthday, with 774 olive oil lamps lit across the city in honour of the Queen. The news was announced in the *Lisbon Gazette* two days before the event:

By way of a Notice of the General Intendant of the Police, affixed in the public places of this capital, it is announced that its main streets will be illuminated from the seventeenth of the current month. HM has decided to bear the expense for the lamps and the residents of each street contribute a *quartilho* of olive oil every twenty-seven days. (“Supplemento a Gazeta de Lisboa”, 1780)

This measure infuriated the residents: the number of lamps was insufficient, the light feeble, and olive oil quite expensive. In response, several lamps were immediately vandalised, thus putting an end to the unwanted expense.

The people’s discontent, the internal institutional opposition, and the high cost of the lamps led to Lisbon’s public lights being put out in 1792, after just twelve years, returning only in 1801. In this year, the “Guarda Real da Polícia” (Royal Police) was founded, the first official, organised police corporation, and public lighting was restored and enhanced by Queen Mary’s royal decree. The measures were part of a more rigorous security policy in the city of Lisbon, especially vigilant to the Jacobin influences from post-revolutionary France.

CONCLUSION

In Portugal, and specifically in Lisbon, the capital of the Kingdom and the empire, the eighteenth century was one of transition between the old and the modern world. This transition was reflected strongly in the meaning of the night. Security ordinances, attention to public space, legislative changes, the action of the Holy Inquisition, and street lighting all allow us to consider the night as the territory in which it was possible to test – most authentically – the measures that the royal administration sought to implement. In the Portuguese case, the Church and the Inquisition tangibly lost power and influence gradually throughout the eighteenth century, and reason and technology progressively prevailed, consequently weakening ancient myths and superstitions.

The extinction of the Court of the Inquisition in 1821, and the severe wave of anticlericalism that spread throughout Portugal during the second half of the nineteenth century, would confirm this eighteenth-century tendency. In Lisbon, mainly from the end of the eighteenth century onward, myths, which were often based on facts, were more associated with violence perpetrated by humans in the form of robberies, attacks, rapes, or even murders. The urban and technological imagery dictated as such well into the next century: the greatest threat was no longer the animal, the witch, or the supernatural monster but the criminal, the delinquent or in short, man.

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