

Lisbon, a city in movement: a review of *O Livro de Lisboa*, coordinated by Irisalva Moita

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Lisbon was the European Capital of Culture in 1994. The company sponsoring the initiative supported the publication of a book that has become a classic, *O Livro de Lisboa* (The Book of Lisbon), "a solid, competent and rigorous synthesis of the history of a capital older than its own nationality", in the words of Elísio Summavielle, Administrator of Lisbon 94 (p.6).

The *Livro de Lisboa* offers us a star-shaped city, with many points from a historical, social and artistic perspective, and also one with long drawn political borders. A sliced but integrated city, a living entity whose rhythm has been maintained since time immemorial, with cherries on the top, as attested by the analysis of monuments such as the Belém Tower and the Águas-Livres Aqueduct, among others, the observation of mentalities, for example, the National Theatre of São Carlos, the experience of the public space like the Public Promenade and Avenida da Liberdade, and with urbanistic perspectives, like the Alvalade District.

What is imposing and visible at a distance – through the eyes and time – goes hand in hand with what can be seen close up: the doors of the monasteries, the altars of the churches, the facades of the palaces, the monumental stairs, from which one descends to observe a detail in the tiles, the inscription in a building, or the details of the period drawings. The small is balanced with the large, enabling multiple and varied interpretations, elevating aesthetic values of different historical periods that coexist until today for us to treasure.

Carving, stone, wood, clay, tile, metal, and also the mentalities, are materials which, already shaped and polished, show the different historical periods, where they align and fit themselves in the form of objects, gardens, streets, monuments, but also behaviours and attitudes that dictated the routes of the city of Lisbon, whether through legislation or dynastic or republican determination.

O Livro de Lisboa presents a true Lisbon, which is to say many and varied forms of Lisbon, coloured, mulatto, a puzzle still under construction, but very well defined and current. A Lisbon that is always on the road, where people and ways of thinking converge, a conquering Lisbon that returns different and becomes diluted in the city that was left behind, a capital that welcomes people and ideas, an amalgam of comings and goings, own and those of others, of influences and prestige, a city committed to growing with disparate synergies and associations. *O Livro de Lisboa* shows that in this city everything has always found a place.

The book travels from prehistory to the twentieth century, and is divided into eleven chapters. These are amply illustrated with photographs, maps, models and reproductions of documents, the result of laborious work achieved through the collaboration of archives, libraries and private owners, and with contributions of twenty-three enlightened authors, coordinated by the renowned heritage expert and for more than two decades director of the Municipal Museums of Lisbon, Irisalva Moita: A.H. de Oliveira Marques, Ana Tostões, António Borges Coelho, Cláudio Torres, Clementino Amaro, Fernando Batista Pereira, Fernando Castelo-Branco, Irisalva Moita, João Fagundes, Joaquim Oliveira Caetano, Jorge Custódio, Jorge Gaspar, José Manuel Fernandes, José Meco, José-Augusto França, Leonor Ferrão, M. Maia Ataíde, Miguel Soromenho, Nuno Saldanha, Paulo Pereira, Rafael Moreira, Raquel Henriques da Silva, and Vítor Serrão.

The success of this book was also thanks to Eduardo Moura's graphic design and the experienced publisher Livros Horizonte. A copy is available copy in the Library of Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa.

MOITA, Irisalva, (coord.) (2004) – *O Livro de Lisboa*. Lisboa: Lisboa 94; Livros Horizonte.

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