

BOOK REVIEW

Tiago Saraiva and Marta Macedo (eds.).
*Capital Científica. Práticas da Ciência em
Lisboa e a História Contemporânea de
Portugal*. Lisboa: Imprensa de Ciências
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The investigations in the book *Capital Científica. Práticas da Ciência em Lisboa e a História Contemporânea de Portugal* (*Scientific Capital. Practices of Science in Lisbon and the Contemporary History of Portugal*) are the result of two projects conducted over the past few years at the Instituto de Ciências Sociais and the Centro Interuniversitário de História das Ciências e da Tecnologia on “The Spaces of Portuguese Technoscience (1837-1947)” and “The Making of a Technoscientific Capital (1870-1940).” However, the book can also be read as a synthesis of the advances in the history of science and technology in Portugal during the last decades. This field of research has been particularly active, and the book demonstrates the maturity and the great coherence of historiographies in which the editors have occupied a central position, either in connection with urban history (Tiago Saraiva), or the history of the construction of the national state (Marta Macedo).

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Following a methodology widely used internationally, the book is composed of independent case studies, each centred generally on one institution or a set of institutions, which discuss various scientific practices in their contexts and spaces and reconstruct the role of networks of social actors at the city, national, and transnational levels.

The book's main objective is to demonstrate the "importance of science for the construction of Lisbon as a capital" (p. 29) in a number of historical and institutional settings. The link with the contemporary history of Portugal affirmed in the subtitle is established via a continuous dialogue between the international agenda of social studies of science and technology and the classical issues of contemporary Portuguese historiography. In general, and within the limits pointed out in the book's introduction (that is, the lack of a comparative analysis with institutions such as the Universidade de Coimbra or the Faculdade de Engenharia do Porto, or the absence of institutions linked to the colonial project), the book's objectives are fully achieved.

Capital Científica is organised into three sections. They correspond to the three regimes that governed Portugal between the second half of the nineteenth century and the 1970s: the parliamentary monarchy during the Regeneration, the First Republic, and the Estado Novo. However, this periodisation is not strictly adhered to, and undergoes several welcomed adaptations. For example, the chapter on the history of the Instituto Bento da Rocha Cabral between 1921 and 1953 is not limited to the republican period (Chapter 6, by Isabel Amaral and Ana Carneiro). The broad chronological approach privileges the analysis of political evolution and the relation between state and science. One of the book's strong points is to show how the three political regimes were influenced by developments in science and the social organisation of the scientific field: the impact of Saint-Simonianism during the Regeneration (Chapter 1, by Marta Macedo, which deals with the Escola Politécnica and the Escola do Exército); the creation of the "new man" during the First Republic (Chapter 5, by Marta Macedo and Tiago Saraiva, which looks at the Hospital de Rilhafoles, the Instituto Bacteriológico Câmara Pestana, and the Faculdade de Medicina de Lisboa; Chapter 7, by Ana Simões and Maria Paula Diogo, on higher education for adults, with the examples of the Universidade Popular Portuguesa, the Universidade Livre, and the Faculdade de Ciências da Universidade de Lisboa). The Estado Novo emerges as a more complex period, when the rhetoric of "ruralism" coexisted with the active participation of engineers in the definition of the regime's public policies (Chapter 8, by Tiago Saraiva and Maria Paula Diogo, on the Instituto Superior Técnico and the Laboratório Nacional de Engenharia Civil) or with forms of "political experimentation" that broadened the state's field of action (Chapter 9, by Tiago Saraiva, on the Instituto Português de Oncologia).

Capital Científica also highlights the continuities between these three political regimes, not only in terms of the role of elites and institutions, but also of forms of governance (see for

example the programme of the Junta de Educação Nacional in the early 1930s, the subject of Chapter 9). The term “scientific elites” is mentioned several times, following the classical readings of Portuguese historiography, but this merited further discussion. The focus on the institutional scientific universe of the capital does not really allow us to explore the complexity of the political sociology of the regimes, especially their evolution over several decades. In the end, the international circulation of practices and their accompanying scientific agendas are also restored (French model towards the close of the nineteenth century and American one after the Second World War).

Finally, the city scale is always considered. The urban dimension of this history of science and technology is apparent in the spatial approach, and is complemented by the attention given to the sources and iconography (photographs, maps) that feature in most of the chapters. In Lisbon, the history of scientific practices goes hand in hand with the great phases of the capital’s development (from the “capitalist expansion” of Cotovia and Campo de Santa Ana, to the “modernist monument” of the Instituto Superior Técnico). The urban dimension is all the more evident when the institutional framework is partly dismantled, as is shown in a very original chapter on the Instituto Industrial de Lisboa, where the connections between scientific and cultural spaces in Lisbon in the second half of the nineteenth century are explored (Chapter 4, by Tiago Saraiva and Ana Cardoso de Matos).

To conclude, *Capital Científica* provides a benchmark for the contemporary history of science and technology in Portugal. It also opens up a series of proposals for the revision of other fields of contemporary history, for example Portuguese urban history, which, comparatively, is still quite fragmented and lacking structure.