

Migration Systems in Nineteenth-Century North-Western Portugal: The Case of Vila do Conde

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SUMMARY: This article aims to identify migration systems in north-western nineteenth-century Portugal to contribute to the understanding of the puzzle that is Portuguese migration dynamics. Through the analysis of the passport and parish registers from the *concelho* of Vila do Conde, it was possible to determine three systems, the Atlantic, the Lisbon, and the local. The occurrence and characteristics of the systems varied according to socio-economic contexts, both in the sending and receiving areas, and also according to the emigrants' life cycles.

INTRODUCTION

On 28th April 1840, Joaquim Vila Verde, a fifteen-year-old boy, obtained his passport document allowing him to travel from Porto, Portugal, to the province of Pernambuco, Brazil. He was the second oldest of four siblings, and the only male. His father died a poor man in 1830, just after his youngest daughter was born in 1829 when Joaquim was only five years old. As a teenager, Joaquim decided to depart alone to the New World. Eleven other men from his town shipped to Brazil in that same year. Among those were a forty-five-year-old merchant, a twenty-one-year-old locksmith, a fifteen-year-old carpenter, and eight boys under the age of sixteen with no defined occupation.¹ Overseas emigration of this type was an action undertaken by thousands of Portuguese individuals during the nineteenth century. Can Joaquim Vila Verde be seen as a typical emigrant? Was there any pattern to the migration? Was emigration associated with socio-economic class, family structure, or gender? Did the migratory flow

1. Information taken from the databases built with information obtained from registers of baptisms, marriages, burials, and passports from the parish of Vila do Conde. This specific case links information taken from baptism register ID6607, burial register ID1113, and passport register ID169.

maintain its pattern throughout the whole nineteenth century? Could this specific case be part of a broader migration system?

Joaquim Vila Verde's emigration life trajectory was one followed by several others who were born in the town of Vila do Conde, and probably by many other Portuguese youngsters throughout the Minho region. International migration had an important impact on Portuguese demographic dynamics at least until the 1970s. Hundreds of thousands of people went abroad in search of opportunities for a "better life". From the European occupation of the Americas until the beginning of the twentieth century, Brazil was the most important overseas destination for the Portuguese people. Indeed, this movement was so ever-present in Lusitanian daily life that some historians consider migration as a key feature in defining Portuguese culture. However, the transatlantic emigration was not of one kind, and not the only route to be taken. Multiple circuits of labour migration were taking place in nineteenth-century Portugal, with changes over the period as a result of adaptation in labour strategies. For instance, skilled and married workers preferred to look for opportunities closer to home, in Portugal itself or in neighbouring countries. In this case the emigrants were not characteristically young boys, as in the case of the transatlantic migration, but mainly married workers who would leave their parishes for a determined period of time, returning afterwards to their family homes.

Different parts of Portugal presented particular migration behaviours, which were mainly a consequence of regional socio-economic specificities associated with a larger context of Portuguese migration systems, or even with human mobility worldwide. This approach to migration studies, that takes into consideration not only the local historical process, but also the study of local migrations from a global perspective, is well represented by the analytical framework provided by the "migration-systems approach". It takes into account the historical context, changes across space and time, as well as the relationship between local, regional, national, and international migrations.

In this context, this article attempts to contribute to the analysis of migration systems in Portugal, through the analysis of migration patterns in the *concelho*² of Vila do Conde over the nineteenth century. The idea is to investigate the characteristics of the emigrants from this area situated in the north-western part of Portugal, also known as the Minho region, to observe permanence and changes over the nineteenth century. It is an attempt to explore the dynamics of internal and transatlantic migrations, and their place in the Portuguese migration systems.

The systems approach has been used by historians since the late 1980s, when Jan Lucassen,³ studying patterns of migrant labour in the North Sea

2. The *concelhos* have similar characteristics to the Spanish municipalities and to Italian *comuni*.

3. Jan Lucassen, *Migrant Labour in Europe, 1600–1900: The Drift to the North Sea* (London, 1987).

region, applied the perspective of human migration as part of global flows. This was the starting point for the analysis of human migration from past populations as part of a general movement of not only people, but also goods, services, and information. In this new perspective, the human movement started to be considered within a set of circuits forming distinct geographical migration systems. Following Lucassen, several authors applied the systems approach in their analysis, especially in research concerning Europe and the North Atlantic,⁴ but much is still to be done for a clear understanding of global circuits of migration.

The “migration-systems” approach considers migration as a “socially constructed, self-perpetuating system that includes home and destination – a responsive system that expands, contracts, and changes according to circumstances”.⁵ In this perspective, migration is not regarded as only a consequence of economic pull-and-push factors, or of demographic pressure, but as a complex movement that is a result of socio-economic, demographic, political, cultural, and historical processes of local, national, and global spaces. According to Leslie Page Moch,⁶ “migration was far more than purely economic phenomenon that merely reflected changes in the labor force. It was a manifestation of family systems, social connections, and regional solidarities”.

In this context, geographic distance and good economic conditions are not considered as the main determinants of migration without taking into account social networks, which could “mentally” reduce geographic distances and cultural differences. In Dirk Hoerder’s words,⁷ “mental maps of migrants differed from geographical ones”. In addition, migration systems are also characterized by “clustered moves between a region of

4. For instance, see Samuel L. Baily and Franco Ramella (eds) *One Family, Two Worlds: An Italian Family's Correspondence across the Atlantic, 1901–1922* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1988); Marcelo J. Borges, “Migration Systems in Southern Portugal: Regional and Transatlantic Circuits of Labour Migration in the Algarve (Eighteenth–Twentieth Centuries)”, *International Review of Social History*, 45 (2000), pp. 171–208; Heinz Fassmann, “Emigration, Immigration and Internal Migration in the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy, 1910”, in Dirk Hoerder *et al.* (eds), *Roots of the Transplanted*, I (New York, 1994); Dirk Hoerder, “Migration in the Atlantic Economies: Regional European Origins and Worldwide Expansion”, in Dirk Hoerder and Leslie Page Moch (eds), *Global Moves, Local Contexts: European Migrants in International Perspective* (Boston, MA, 1996); Leslie Page Moch, *Moving Europeans: Migration in Western Europe Since 1650* (Bloomington, IN, 1992); Ewe Morawska, “Labor Migrations of Poles in the Atlantic World Economy, 1880–1914”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 31 (1989), pp. 237–272; Bruno Ramirez, *On the Move: French-Canadian and Italian Migrants in the North Atlantic Economy, 1860–1914* (Toronto, 1991).

5. James Jackson, Jr and Leslie Page Moch, “Migration and the Social History of Modern Europe”, *Historical Methods*, 22 (1989), pp. 27–36.

6. Page Moch, *Moving Europeans*, p. 16.

7. Dirk Hoerder, “From Immigration to Migration Systems: New Concepts in Migration History”, *OAH Magazine of History*, 14 (1999), pp. 5–11, 6.

origin and a receiving region [...] over time, and is distinct from non-clustered multi-directional moves".⁸ It is important to highlight that one-time migration flow cannot be considered as a system, and also that although one system might dominate in a specific space-time, several systems can overlap.

Several systems have already been explored in the literature, and most of them could be associated with one of the five main types described by Moch:⁹ local, circular, chain, career, and colonizing movements. *Local migration* can be described as a system that moved people within their home market, being either local or over long distances, but keeping home contacts. For instance, migrants from local systems who moved because of marriage, labour, and land markets could be considered as representing local migration.

Circular migration is characterized by people who would move short or long distances for temporary work and then return. Annual harvest work can be considered as circular migration. This type of flow can take place both at local level, when people move to neighbouring localities, but also as international movement such as the *golondrinas* (the swallows), the Italian emigrants who travelled to Argentina to work in the wheat or flax harvests during the southern hemisphere's summer time, and were back in Europe in time for the harvest season there.¹⁰

The system of *chain migration* involves social networks, in which people from the terminal destination would support migrants, helping them to find jobs and settle in the new place. It worked as a chain, with compatriots already established in the receiving areas helping those newcomers, and some years later doing the same for other compatriots. This type of migration could be observed at both local and international levels. It includes, for instance, migrants from the countryside going to large urban centres to work as servants, and also those crossing the oceans in search of better opportunities in the New World.

The *career migration* type is different from the others because it was related to the demand of hiring institutions and not to social network or family needs. The times and destinations of this type of migration flow were mainly related to the expansion of governments and churches.

Finally, *colonizing migration* was present in European colonies in Australia and in the Americas, and also in eastern Russia. It was characterized by the establishment of colonies of immigrants in the settlement areas, who would establish their cultures in the new land. This type is well

8. *Ibid.*

9. Page Moch, *Moving Europeans*, pp. 16–18.

10. See T.J. Hatton, and J.G. Williamson, *The Age of Mass Migration: Causes and Economic Impact* (Oxford, 1998), p. 102; Dudley Baines, *Migration in a Mature Economy: Emigration and Internal Migration in England and Wales, 1861–1900* (Cambridge, 1985), p. 30.

observed in the south of Brazil, for instance, where German and Italian groups still nowadays reproduce their traditions, even speaking their original dialects.

Concerning migration in Portugal, several works have already showed the distinct patterns of migration, the characteristics of the emigrants, and their changes over the nineteenth century according to area,¹¹ although most of them have not attempted to identify migration systems. Research concerning the Minho region, for instance, shows the massive contribution of its population to international emigration to Brazil, being mainly characterized by chain migration. The Alentejo area is regarded as the granary of Portugal, attracting seasonal migrants for harvesting (circular migration). In the Trás-os-Montes region emigration, both internal (to other parts of Portugal) and international, predominated, being largely characterized by local and chain migration, resulting in very low demographic growth. In addition to regional emigration, there was also internal migration towards the two main urban centres of the country (mainly local, circular, and chain migrations). Lisbon and Porto were points of attraction for internal migrants as well as for workers from Spanish Galicia.

Migration systems for the southern part of Portugal were identified by Borges,¹² who showed that the region presented two main systems over

11. For migration studies in Portugal, see, for instance: Jorge Fernandes Alves, *Os Brasileiros: emigração e retorno no Porto oitocentista* (Porto, 1994); Cristiana Viegas de Andrade, "Population in Nineteenth-Century Vila do Conde: The Demographic Dynamics of a Northwestern Portuguese Urban Parish" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of Cambridge, 2009); Maria Ioannis Benis Baganha, *Portuguese Emigration to the United States, 1820–1930* (New York, 1990); *idem*, "Portuguese Transatlantic Migration", in Samuel L. Baily and José Míguez (org.), *Mass Migration to Modern Latin America* (Wilmington, NC, 2003); Borges, "Migration Systems in Southern Portugal"; *idem*, "Portuguese in Two Worlds: A Historical Study of Migration from Algarve to Argentina" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Rutgers University, NJ, 1997); Caroline B. Brettell, *Men who Migrate, Women who Wait: Population and History in a Portuguese Parish* (Princeton, NJ, 1986); Maria Celeste Alves de Castro, "A emigração na paróquia de Santo André de Campeã (1848–1900)" (unpublished masters' thesis, Universidade do Minho, 2001); Margarida Durães, Emília Lagido, and Cristina Caridade, "Une population qui bouge: les migrations temporaires et saisonnières a partir de Viana do Castelo (XVIII–XIX siècles)", *Obradoiro de História Moderna*, 15, (2006), pp. 29–66; Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, "L'emigration portugaise (XV–XX siècles): une constante structurelle et les réponses aux changements du monde", *Revista de História Económica e Social*, 1 (1978), pp. 5–32; Joaquim da Costa Leite, "Portugal and Migration, 1855–1914" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, NY, 1994); Miguel Monteiro, "Migrantes, Emigrantes e Brasileiros (1834–1926)" (Fafe: NEPS/Universidade do Minho, 2000); Henrique Rodrigues, "Emigração e Emigrantes, Vale do Lima no século XIX" (Viana do Castelo, Edições CER, 2006); *idem*, *População, sociedade e emigrantes do Vale do Ancora no século XIX* (Porto, 2005); *idem*, *Emigração de Grupos Familiares com passaporte obtido em Viana do Castelo no século XIX* (Viana do Castelo, n.d.); *idem*, *Emigração e Alfabetização: o Alto-Minho e a miragem do Brasil* (Viana do Castelo, 1995); Joel Serrão, *A emigração portuguesa: sondagem histórica* (Lisbon, 1972).

12. Borges, "Migration Systems in Southern Portugal".

the nineteenth century. The first, called the southern Iberian migration system, was characterized by temporary migration of the labour force for harvesting, mining, fishing, craftsmanship, and building, towards Alentejo, southern Spain, Gibraltar, and Morocco (characterized mainly by circular migration), with variations in destination and the type of the emigrant over the period. The second system, the Atlantic migration system, was the transatlantic migration that involved many European populations in the end of the century. In the case of the Algarvians, they went mainly to Argentina, being temporary or permanent (family) migration (circular or chain migration).

In the case of the *concelho* of Vila do Conde, it is possible to observe the existence of two main migration systems taking place over the nineteenth century, with evidence of a third. The first is the Atlantic migration system, characterized mostly by chain and circular migration. It is the same system identified by Borges for the Algarvian region, although in Vila do Conde's case migration to the other side of the Atlantic can be observed from the beginning of the nineteenth century, and was mostly directed towards Brazil. It is important to note that the characteristics of migration within this system varied, changing its pattern over time, and assuming a very similar pattern to that found in the Algarve at the end of the century. The second system, called the Lisbon migration system, connected the *concelho* of Vila do Conde to some larger Portuguese urban areas, especially the city of Lisbon, being mainly characterized by circular migration. This system included mostly temporary skilled migration. Finally, there is evidence of a third migration system which was characterized by local emigration from rural areas or small villages into the urban town of Vila do Conde (local migration). It has been called the local migration system, characterized by the settlement of immigrants through marriage.

This system was indirectly observed through the analysis of marriage registers and marital fertility (family reconstitution method), which showed a high proportion of grooms/fathers originally from places other than Vila do Conde. The non-existence of passport registers for immigration makes the direct observation of local immigration difficult. Nonetheless, demographic studies have already shown the emigration impact on the sex ratios of several Portuguese districts, indicating internal migration as a way to balance the male deficit produced by international migration.¹³ In addition, other studies have already analysed local migration, showing that it was very important for the development of other systems of longer distance.¹⁴ Although the documents analysed in this research do not allow a direct understanding of

13. See, for instance, Teresa Rodrigues Veiga, *A população portuguesa no século XIX* (Porto, 2004); Viegas de Andrade, "Population in Nineteenth-Century Vila do Conde".

14. See, for instance, Michael P. Conzen, "Local Migration Systems in Nineteenth-Century Iowa", *Geographical Review*, 64 (1974), pp. 339–361; Martin Dribe, "Migration of Rural

this third system, it does indicate its existence, and also its importance to the maintenance of the demographic balance of the capital parish of Vila do Conde's *concelho*. Its presentation will be an initial effort to characterize this system. The three systems coexisted over the century. In addition, migration within these systems was not exclusive and there was overlap between them. For instance, one person could have migrated internally for a season, going to Brazil afterwards. All three systems are presented in detail later in this article.

Following Borges' steps, this paper aims to identify migration systems in north-west Portugal through the analysis of migration patterns in Vila do Conde. The local analysis will allow for a deeper understanding of the roots of migration and its consequence for population dynamics. In this way, the study of Vila do Conde presented in this article aims to contribute to a better understanding of migration systems in Portugal and their role within global systems, through the identification of local responses to national and international economic, social, and political structures. In order to achieve this goal, passport and marriage registers are analysed, providing important evidence about the groups that moved, their characteristics, their motivations, and also the changes in migration patterns over the nineteenth century. It has been possible to observe how the population of Vila do Conde reacted to the macro-economic structures that have moulded migration at global and national levels. Next, the documents used in this research will be examined, followed by an explanation of each of the three migration systems identified for the case of Vila do Conde, and finally the migration patterns will be placed in their socio-economic and demographic contexts, so that the systems can be better understood.

DATA SOURCES: PASSPORT AND PARISH REGISTERS

The parish of Vila do Conde is the principal settlement of the *concelho* of Vila do Conde that is today an aggregation of a total of thirty parishes. An initial grouping of twenty-three parishes was aggregated in 1836, and another seven added by 1871.¹⁵ The *concelho* of Vila do Conde is one of the eighteen *concelhos* forming the Porto District (Figure 1, overleaf).¹⁶ In order to investigate migration in nineteenth-century Vila do Conde, two distinct groups of

Families in 19th century Southern Sweden: A Longitudinal Analysis of Local Migration Patterns", *The History of the Family*, 8 (2003), pp. 247–265.

15. The *concelho* of Vila do Conde is nowadays composed of thirty parishes: Arcos, Árvore, Avelada, Azurara, Bagunte, Canidelo, Fajozes, Ferreiró, Fornelo, Gão, Guilhabreu, Junqueira, Labruga, Macieira da Mata, Malta, Mindelo, Modivas, Mosteiró, Outeiro Maior, Parada, Retorta, Rio Mau, Tougues, Touguinha, Touguinhó, Vairão, Vila Chã, Vila do Conde, Vilar, Vilar de Pinheiro.

16. The district of Porto is composed of 18 *concelhos*: Amarante, Baião, Felgueiras, Gondomar, Lousada, Maia, Marco de Canaveses, Matosinhos, Paços de Ferreira, Paredes, Penafiel, Porto, Póvoa do Varzim, Santo Tirso, Trofa, Valongo, Vila do Conde, Vila Nova de Gaia.



Figure 1. Portuguese districts and the *concelho* of Vila do Conde.
Internal passport registers of Vila do Conde, Porto District, 1834–1863.

documents were used: passport and parish registers. The former were used to analyse internal and international emigration, their patterns, and changes over time in the *concelho* of Vila do Conde (including all parishes).

The parish registers were used to identify the characteristics of the migrants, and also to observe immigration into the parish of Vila do Conde, through the analysis of the origin of bridegrooms. Family reconstitution was also undertaken to provide information about parental influence on the decision to migrate.

Information presented in Portuguese parish registers can be, in general, very detailed, containing information about the person who is the subject of registration as well as supplementary information relating to other members of the family. The registers of Vila do Conde are no exception to this rule, and the first impression when reading the documents is the richness of the set. This is a real advantage in nominative linkage, since, as noted by Wrigley,¹⁷ “the larger the number of information fields common to a pair of records, the greater will be the certainty with which a decision can be made about whether or not they should be linked, *ceteris paribus*”. The parish register series of Vila do Conde is complete for the whole nineteenth century, with no gaps. However, records of marriages are incomplete from 1826–1830, largely because of their illegibility (the ink has faded away over time, almost disappearing completely from the paper). The impossibility of collecting marital information for 5 years is a shortcoming, but the completeness of the rest of the series make it worthy of study. A total of 3,132 marriages, 14,972 baptisms, and 8,383 burial registrations were analysed in this study.

Regarding passport registers, their establishment as mandatory documents for travelling around Portugal and overseas dates back to 6 September 1645, having its roots in the Filipino Codes.¹⁸ This was a royal enactment made in an attempt to maintain control of the population and population movement during the Restoration War.¹⁹ The act passed through several modifications after that, and only from 1835 could the creation and certification of passports be effectively applied. In a similar way, internal passports were first required in 1760, when Marquês de Pombal²⁰ instituted his despotic governance and created the *Intendência Geral da Polícia e da Corte*, a central government body dedicated to the maintenance of order in

17. E.A. Wrigley, “Introduction”, in *idem* (ed.), *Identifying People in the Past* (London, 1973), p. 5.

18. King Philip III of Spain concluded a legislative reform resulting in the constitution of the *Códigos Filipinos* (King Philip’s Ordinations). These codes were applied in 1603 in the whole Spanish Empire, when Portugal and its colonies were under Spanish rule.

19. This was the war in which Portugal gained independence from Spain. Philip II of Spain gained control of Portugal in 1580, and the Lusitanian people only retrieved their independence again in 1668.

20. Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, later the Marquês de Pombal, had governed Portugal for twenty-two years, aiming at the modernization of this kingdom that was backward in relation to other European states. This period is characterized by the restriction of church power, protective economic policies, incentives to the educational system, and despotic governance. The new order was protectionist, centralist, and controlling.

the kingdom. The new law was claimed to be necessary for the security of the kingdom, but in fact operated as a constraint upon the population.

Like external passports, internal passports began to be granted on a more regular and effective basis after the Act of 15 January 1835, with the establishment of the Liberal government and the creation of the *Secretaria Geral de Passaportes*, a subdivision of the *Intendência Geral da Polícia e da Corte* created in 1760, which had more autonomy to control migratory movements. From 1835 until 1863, when the internal passport was abolished, everyone who wanted to travel 5 leagues (about 25 km) away from his own residence would need a passport to do so.²¹

These two types of passport constitute very rich documentation regarding registered or approved migration in Portugal. It is important to note that unfortunately these documents do not represent all the migration taking place in nineteenth-century Portugal, since a body of migrants moved without obtaining passports. Hence the data analysed in this paper refers to the registered emigration only. Nonetheless, as a subject already discussed in the literature,²² the Portuguese data seems to be more complete than that of receiving countries, and so the passports can be used as a highly valuable source of information on migration, from which the general trends and characteristics of the people who moved inside and outside the country can be identified.

Concerning emigration to other countries, I built a dataset containing all information from the documents of those who were registered as leaving Vila do Conde between 1836 and 1875. It aggregates a total of 3,171 individuals, of which 3,105 were males and 66 were females. For internal passports, the series goes from 1835 to 1863, with information on the passport registration of those from the *concelho* of Vila do Conde who desired to leave for other parts of Portugal. The dataset contains a total of 1,262 people, of whom 1,238 were males and 24 females. Both datasets present information concerning date, name, place of birth, marital status, occupation, age, sex, and destination.

MIGRATION SYSTEMS IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY VILA DO CONDE

The analysis of the passport registers and parish registers of Vila do Conde reveals three main migration systems over the nineteenth century: the Atlantic, the Lisbon, and the local migration systems. Each one of them presents particularities of pattern, which will be presented in detail below.

21. Jose Fernando Martins Bonilha, *A contribuição minhota no contexto da emigração Portuguesa para o Brasil* (Braga, 1979), pp. 325–358.

22. Joaquim da Costa Leite, “Emigração portuguesa: a lei e os números (1855–1914)”, *Análise Social*, 23:97 (1987), pp. 463–480; Rodrigues, *Emigração e Alfabetização*.

Vila do Conde and the Atlantic migration system

Emigrants from Vila do Conde had been crossing the Atlantic Ocean since the sixteenth century.²³ Although constant, emigration rates were not particularly high until the second half of the nineteenth century. The relatively low population growth²⁴ observed in the *concelho* until the first half of the nineteenth century certainly contributed to moderate emigration. This changed from the middle of the nineteenth century, when both population and overseas emigration rates increased considerably. It was the time of European mass migration, when not only people from Vila do Conde, but from many other parts of the Old World started crossing the Atlantic in huge numbers.

In Vila do Conde, emigration to Brazil dominated overseas flow during the whole century (Table 1). These migratory movements emerged in a context of a long tradition of international Portuguese emigration towards overseas territories and ex-colonies. Since colonial times, Brazil was an important market for Portuguese goods and services. After independence it still attracted Lusitanians in search of work and better wages in a country of economic expansion. During the period analysed, Rio de Janeiro attracted the majority of migrants, although between 1836 and 1840 the province of Pernambuco was also attracting a huge number of people. It might be supposed that the place of destination would be related to labour market demand. Some provinces had economies based on agriculture, while in others (such as Rio de Janeiro) commerce dominated. It seems that the expansion of Brazilian agriculture was not attracting a majority of the migrants from Vila do Conde. They were moving to Brazil in an attempt to get a better life, working in jobs that would allow them a change of status and fortune. With that idea in mind, especially Rio de Janeiro, the capital city, seemed to be the place to look for better opportunities.

It could be argued that the destination stated in the passport might not be the final one, and even if the bulk of the emigrants were going to Rio it did not necessarily mean that they were going to settle in the city. However, as has been shown in the historiography, the majority of the Portuguese emigrants went to work in commerce, and the city of Rio de Janeiro was the trading centre at that time. According to Pescatello,²⁵

The historical inclination of Portuguese migrants to Brazil has been to settle in the cities; during the most intense period of migration nearly half settled in the

23. Polónia Amélia, "Vila do Conde: um porto nortenho na expansão ultramarina quinhentista" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Universidade do Porto, 1999).

24. The annual growth rate was of 0.1 persons per 1,000 people for the period between 1800 and 1849; and 8.1 persons per 1,000 people for the period between 1850 and 1900.

25. Ann Marie Pescatello, "Both Ends of the Journey: An Historical Study of Migration and Change in Brazil and Portugal, 1889–1914" (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, 1970), p. 144.

Table 1. *Total numbers of international passport concessions to individuals born in the concelho of Vila do Conde according to their destination, Porto, Portugal, 1836–1875.*

Destinations	Period								Total
	1836–1840	1841–1845	1846–1850	1851–1855	1856–1860	1861–1865	1866–1870	1870–1875	
No information	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Italy	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Germany	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
USA	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Austria	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Argentina	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	4
Africa	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	4
England	1	0	0	0	2	1	0	2	6
Uruguay	0	3	0	0	0	0	2	1	6
Europe	0	0	0	0	0	1	6	1	8
France	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	6	9
Spain	19	24	29	43	13	28	39	36	231
Brazil	166	168	220	498	294	401	574	594	2,915
Total	186	196	249	542	313	432	625	646	3,189
Brazil %	89.2	85.7	88.4	91.9	93.9	92.8	91.8	92.0	91.4

Table 1. (continued)

Brazilian provinces	Period								Total
	1836–1840	1841–1845	1846–1850	1851–1855	1856–1860	1861–1865	1866–1870	1870–1875	
Not specified	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	3
Paraíba	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Paraná	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Ceará	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2
Rio Grande do Norte	0	0	5	7	4	0	3	0	19
São Paulo	0	1	0	30	2	0	0	0	33
Pará	9	2	2	11	6	11	19	14	74
Bahia	10	11	15	9	10	20	21	18	114
Rio Grande do Sul	1	3	2	6	12	33	56	53	166
Pernambuco	70	43	51	121	89	136	172	186	868
Rio de Janeiro	76	108	144	314	171	197	303	321	1,634
Total	166	168	220	498	294	401	574	594	2,915
Rio de Janeiro %	45.8	64.3	65.5	63.1	58.2	49.1	52.8	54.0	56.1
Pernambuco %	42.2	25.6	23.2	24.3	30.3	33.9	30.0	31.3	29.8
Rio Grande do Sul %	0.6	1.8	0.9	1.2	4.1	8.2	9.8	8.9	5.7

Source: International passport registers, Districtal Archive of Porto, 1836–1875.

city of Rio de Janeiro and the smaller cities in the state of Rio de Janeiro. The next largest contingent, slightly more than one-third, settled in the city of São Paulo, and the rest in smaller cities of the state such as Santos, Campinas, Ribeirão Preto. The remaining numbers of Portuguese emigrants who entered Minas Gerais, Pará, and other states again continued the trend of settling in the cities.

Confirming this statement, the Brazilian census of 1872²⁶ shows that 78 per cent of the population resident in the city of Rio de Janeiro were not slaves (226,033 persons), and among them 30 per cent were declared as foreigners (84,279 persons). From the total of foreigners, 55,933 were Portuguese (66.4 per cent). Alencastro²⁷ even states that in 1872, in some areas of the city, there were more Portuguese men than Brazilians, a situation that became even more pronounced in 1890 (68.6 per cent of the foreigners living in the city of Rio de Janeiro were originally from Portugal). The author also states that the number of Portuguese individuals doubled from 1850 to 1872 in the city of Rio de Janeiro. They initially represented one-tenth of the population, and by 1872 they were already one-fifth.²⁸ The Portuguese concentration in the city of Rio de Janeiro was so intense that the Portuguese spoken there had a particular accent reminiscent of the Portuguese spoken in Portugal.²⁹

Even with the ending of slavery, Rio was still the place to which Portuguese immigrants preferred to go. By the end of the nineteenth century, the Brazilian government started a campaign to attract a labour force to work in agriculture, especially on coffee plantations, attracting emigrants from different countries. The Italians and Spanish went mostly to work as rural labourers, whilst the Germans, Poles, and Russians were colonists.³⁰ This was not the preference of the Portuguese immigrants, or at least not the majority of them, who preferred to move to cities and commercial centres. According to Matos,³¹ even the province of São Paulo, where a great quantity of migrants went to work on coffee plantations, had a large number of Portuguese in its capital city, despite the rural origin of the majority of the immigrants. In this context, emigrants from Vila do Conde seem to have followed this tendency of migrating to urban centres, especially to the capital city of Rio de Janeiro.

26. *Recenseamento Geral do Império do Brasil de 1872*, CEBRAP: CD, novas consultas, Table 13.

27. Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, "Vida Privada e ordem privada no Império", in F.A. Novais (ed.), *História da Vida Privada no Brasil*, II (São Paulo, 1997), pp. 12–93, 35.

28. *Ibid.*, pp. 12–93.

29. Even now the Portuguese spoken in the city of Rio de Janeiro resembles that spoken in Portugal.

30. Pescatello, "Both Ends of the Journey", p. 144.

31. Maria Izilda Santos de Matos, "A imigração portuguesa para São Paulo: trajetória e perspectivas", in *Portugueses no Brasil: migrantes em dois atos* (Niterói, 2006), pp. 129–135, 131.

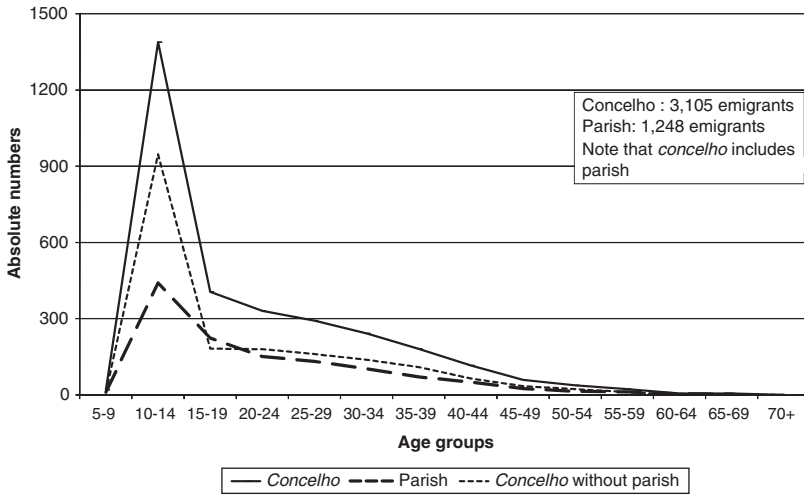


Figure 2. Total numbers of male emigrants born in the *concelho* and the parish of Vila do Conde, by age.

International passport registers, Porto District, 1836–1875.

An analysis of the characteristics of the emigrants can be used as support for the statement that people from Vila do Conde were mainly migrating to urban centres. A major part of the young emigrants were being prepared by their families to migrate and get jobs in trading, while young adults were migrating in order to exercise their professions and receive better remuneration. Figure 2 shows the concentration of young boys, between ten and fourteen years of age, leaving for Brazil over the period. It would be very hard for such young males to migrate without their families' support. In fact, as already revealed in the literature,³² they were being prepared to migrate, receiving formal education and financial support.

Henrique Rodrigues, studying literacy and emigration to Brazil in the district of Viana do Castelo, concludes that the great majority of the young boys emigrating were literate. This author analyses the access to school and the age group of emigrants and sees that a high proportion of young emigrants came from parishes in which schools were established. In places where access to school was difficult the proportion of boys emigrating was lower. This author also shows that most of these literate children were coming from urban centres, while the illiterate came from rural areas.³³ Rodrigues also points to an increase in the number of private schools. The demand for learning reading, writing, and numeracy skills

32. Rodrigues, *Emigração e Alfabetização*.

33. *Idem, Emigração de Grupos Familiares*.

Table 2. *Number of schools per square kilometre and number of students per 100 children between 6 and 15 years of age, Portuguese districts, 1864*

Districts	Number of schools per km ²	Students per 100 children between the ages of 6 and 15		
		Males	Females	Total
Bragança	17	19.1	2.3	11
Vila Real	30	19.9	2.7	11.5
Viana do Castelo	34	18.3	1.2	9.7
Braga	43	18	1.3	9.7
Porto	116	18.5	5.8	12.2
Guarda	28	25.1	4.2	14.8
Viseu	42	20.2	2.3	11.4
Aveiro	38	21.4	2.1	11.9
Castelo Branco	15	16.6	4.5	10.6
Coimbra	34	16.3	1.1	8.8
Leiria	23	13.9	2.2	8.2
Santarém	27	12	6.3	9.3
Lisboa	64	21.6	2	20.8
Portalegre	10	15.5	4.2	10.1
Évora	9	15.8	11.2	13.6
Beja	7	13.6	2.3	8.2
Faro	16	9.8	3.5	6.8
Portugal	27	17.7	5.4	11.7

Source: Portuguese Census of 1864.

had resulted in the opening of more schools. The census of 1864 shows that the northern part of the country had the highest proportion of young boys between six and fifteen years of age (Table 2). The northern region also had the highest numbers of elementary schools by square kilometre. The districts of Bragança, Guarda, and Castelo Branco did not have a high school density, which was a result of their larger area and smaller population in relation to districts in the coastal area. It is interesting to note that although the northern districts showed a higher proportion of young male students in school, they did not show a high proportion of girls. The emphasis on boys' schools only serves to reinforce the hypothesis that literacy was an essential tool for young male emigration to succeed.

International emigrants seem to have come from the most "educated" areas of Portugal, which were the same areas from which most of the emigrants were departing. This association is supportive of the hypothesis that a high proportion of the emigrants were boys educated to become emigrants, in search of wealth for themselves and their families in distant Brazil. In such cases, a young boy would need support from his family in order to be able to invest time in studying. Moreover, the young male

would need financial support to be able to travel and survive until he was fully established in a job in the New World.

The documents used in this research do not allow us to determine the literacy of the emigrants from Vila do Conde, but the reconstitution of 252 families of young migrants, originally from the urban parish of Vila do Conde, shows that 38 per cent of the youngsters with defined occupations were going to work in commerce, independently of their fathers' professions.³⁴ This shows that commerce was a career choice followed by many. They were being trained to exercise their reading, writing, and numeracy knowledge as clerks in one of the many shops in Rio de Janeiro or other big cities in Brazil. They were not following their fathers' occupations. It seems that schools were contributing to the production of high-quality emigrants to go to Brazil.

But commerce was not the only career aimed at by the youngsters. The second biggest group of young emigrants was composed of sailors (37 per cent). The economic importance of the sea to Vila do Conde (a seaside *concelho*), as a food resource, a place to work and a context for commercial activities is reflected in the proportion of individuals working in maritime occupations. Such occupations were common in Vila do Conde, which in the sixteenth century was one of the biggest shipbuilding centres of northern Portugal, resulting in a large concentration of mariners in the area. It seems that there were two main groups of young migrants leaving Vila do Conde for Brazil. One was made up of young emigrants "produced" by their families and supported by their fathers to be sent abroad. They went mainly to Rio de Janeiro to work in the commercial sector irrespective of their family's main occupation. The other group was composed by men of the sea, who would, of course, have worked mainly in the transportation and commercial sectors.

The economic importance of fathers is also highlighted in the family reconstitution analysis. For those whose paternal status can be identified ($n = 81$), the majority had their fathers alive at the time of the emigration to Brazil (68 per cent), and just 32 per cent did not. A high proportion of fathers' dates of death (68 per cent) could not be identified; most of them (75 per cent) had their children born in the second half of the century, of whom 23 per cent were born from 1870 onwards. If we assume that the presence of a father is an important determinant of a youngster's emigration, it is plausible to suppose that most of these unidentified fathers were still alive at the time of the emigration, explaining why they could not be found in the burial database and had probably died after 1900. A father's presence seemed to be crucial for the migration of young people.

34. The fathers of these boys emigrating to work in commerce had eighteen different occupations, such as sailor, carpenter, day labourer, and artist.

Regarding the group of international migrants composed of young skilled adults, the first observation that can be made is that they were mostly single (83 per cent of those between 20 and 24 years of age), and despite their origin (rural or urban parishes) they worked in commerce and carpentry (more than 50 per cent of those with information about occupation). Among migrants from the parish of Vila do Conde, carpenters predominated, while in the rest of the *concelho* traders were most prominent. It is also interesting to see that in the rural areas 14 per cent of those with an identified occupation were described as labourers,³⁵ whilst in the urban centres labourers made up less than 4 per cent. In addition, the urban centres appear to have exported 10 per cent more skilled emigrants than the rural ones.

Although the difference between the two groups was not particularly great, it seems that the urban centres were sending more specialized labour abroad, which is perfectly understandable since such labour was more heavily focused there. While the occurrence of occupations varied from year to year, in general occupations in commerce, carpentry, building, agriculture, and those carrying the general title of labourer, remained the most common.

In addition to the group of young boys and skilled adults, the analysis of patterns over the period shows a variation in the characteristics of transatlantic flows within the system. It is possible to say that two main migration patterns predominated in the Atlantic migration system. One was mainly composed of youngsters emigrating to Brazilian urban centres to work in commerce with skilled male adults emigrating to exercise their professions, and who aimed to save money to return to Portugal one day (described above). Another pattern was composed of unskilled married male and female migrants travelling with their families to work on farms or as domestic servants under labour contracts,³⁶ intending to settle permanently in a new home country. The first pattern was predominant over most of the period, losing ground to the second in the last decades of the nineteenth century, when the mass migration of unskilled workers began reaching higher levels.

This change in the first pattern's predominance, with a decrease in the proportion of young boys crossing the Atlantic, can be indirectly observed in the mean age of male emigrants, which increases by six years, from around seventeen years old to twenty-three over the period analysed (Figure 3). At the same time, a decrease is observed in the proportion of single males, with an increase of married migrants, which indicates a growth of family migration during the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in contrast to the predominance of the traditional migration

35. Labourers were manual workers without any defined skill.

36. Costa Leite, "Portugal and Migration, 1855-1914", p. 99.

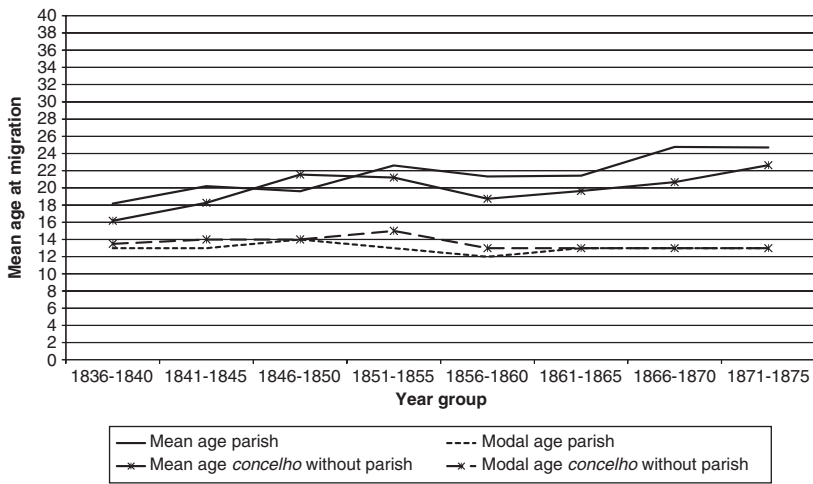


Figure 3. Mean and modal ages of male emigrants born in Vila do Conde, by sex, and five-year period.

International passport registers, Porto District, 1836–1875.

pattern of bachelors during the preceding period. It is worth noting that a few women migrating overseas were registered in the passport lists (there are a total of 3,171 international passports, of which 3,105 are for male individuals and 66 are for women.). They were not as young as the male migrants, being mostly around twenty-five to thirty-four years of age.

The increase in the mean age at emigration coincides with the growth in the proportion of migrants without a declared occupation, which could indicate an increase of unskilled family migration by the end of the century. Unfortunately, passport registers from this specific group do not show detailed information about the migrants and their companions, nor the names of their parents, restricting the opportunities to undertake family reconstitution.

To summarize, two distinct patterns of emigration from the *concelho* of Vila do Conde to Brazil developed over the nineteenth century in the Atlantic migration system. One of them was composed mainly of single young males with some education, and young skilled adults (mostly carpenters and traders). These migrants would exemplify the chain and/or the circular patterns of migration, going to Brazil to work as skilled workers, following their families and friends, with some of them returning to Portugal with substantial funds. The second pattern of migration is observed in the last quarter of the century, with a proportional increase in family migration, and a rise in the numbers of unskilled males and females moving overseas. These migrants were involved in chain migration through their social network contacts or agencies which would facilitate their establishment in the New World, with no plans to

return to their homeland. The Atlantic migration system observed in Vila do Conde is part of the general Atlantic system already observed in other parts of Portugal, such as the Algarve. Nonetheless, the case of Vila do Conde contributes to a deeper understanding of the changes in its patterns over the century.

Vila do Conde and the Lisbon migration system

Overseas emigration was not the only route taken by *Vila Condenses* over the nineteenth century; internal migration also had an important place in the dynamics of this population. The parish of Vila do Conde had been an important urban centre since the fifteenth century, contributing to the expansion of the Portuguese Empire through the construction of vessels and the specialized work of naval carpenters and sail-makers. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the village achieved prominence as one of the country's principal shipbuilders, when simultaneously the king established customs administration in the port and the village acquired its administrative autonomy.³⁷ In consequence of the ship "industry", the parish and the rest of the *concelho* of Vila do Conde developed high quality shipbuilders, carpenters, and sail-makers, who would exercise their abilities there or in other markets around the country. In addition, sailors and maritime merchants also circulated around the country for work. The link between the population of the parish and the sea was always very significant in the history of Vila do Conde. This close relationship certainly facilitated the intense emigration observed from the parish to other places inland and overseas.

In the nineteenth century, the *concelho* of Vila do Conde retained its importance in shipbuilding, exporting its workforce mainly to the urban centre of Lisbon. Although the documentation analysed does not allow us to determine the starting point of this movement, it is possible to conclude that over the period in focus, internal migration seems to have been constant, without any abrupt peaks. At the beginning of the period Setúbal was attracting more emigrants than Lisbon; this was because a labour force was being attracted by its industrial development. It is important to highlight that the city of Porto, the biggest urban centre of northern Portugal, was also attracting emigrants from Vila do Conde, although not at the same level as Lisbon. This difference seems to be related to the great expansion of Lisbon in contrast to the relative low expansion of Porto.

The explanation for the emigration concentration towards urban centres, especially Lisbon, rests again on the fact that the migrants were skilled labourers. Over the period studied, the migrants from both rural

37. Amélia, "Vila do Conde"; and A. do Carmo Reis, *Nova História de Vila do Conde. Vila do Conde* (Câmara Municipal de Vila do Conde—História Local 6, 2000), p. 93.

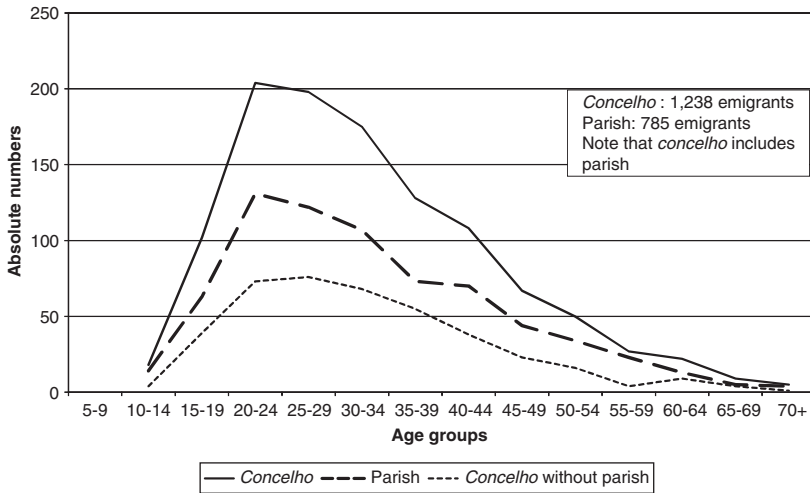


Figure 4. Total numbers of male emigrants born in the *concelho* and in the parish of Vila do Conde.

Internal passport registers of Vila do Conde, Porto District, 1835–1863.

and urban parishes were made up of rising numbers of carpenters, especially after 1850. This trend was probably linked to the development of Lisbon and the growth of the construction industry. According to Veiga,³⁸ the age structure of the Portuguese capital city changed greatly from 1801 to 1864. Earlier in the nineteenth century Lisbon had a high proportion of young persons, and in that respect was similar to other cities such as Porto. By 1864 the population pyramid had changed its shape with a reduction of those younger than fourteen years. The author attributes this change to the increasing influx of immigrants to the city which inflated the adult share of the population.

The growth of large urban centres increased the demand for skilled workers in such places, which was reflected in the numbers of specialized male workers who left the *concelho* of Vila do Conde and migrated to other parts of Portugal. The share of migrants going to Lisbon increased considerably between 1835 and 1863, reaching 67 per cent of all emigrants by the end of the period. It is possible to infer that internal migrants were increasingly specialists, providing skills necessary to the development of the capital city.

This labour force migrating mainly to Lisbon was mostly composed by adults between twenty and thirty-nine years of age (Figure 4). Both groups of internal migrants (those from the parish and those from the rest of the *concelho*) showed very similar age structures, with around 50 per cent of

38. Veiga, *A população portuguesa*, p. 66.

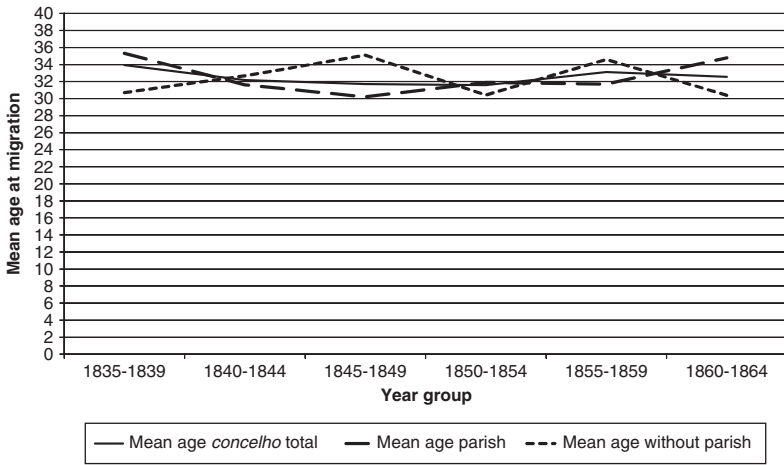


Figure 5. Mean age of male emigrants born in the parish of Vila do Conde, by sex, and five-year period.

Internal passport registers, Vila do Conde, Porto District, 1835-1863.

individuals between twenty and thirty-four years of age leaving their homes to go to other parts of Portugal, with only around 2 per cent of migrants younger than fifteen years of age. Internal migrants were predominantly males of economically active age. Unfortunately, the small number of women moving internally does not allow for trend comparisons over the period.

Over the observed period of thirty-five years there was a slight tendency for an ageing of those men migrating internally, with more people between forty and forty-four years old leaving the *concelho* as a whole by the end of the period. Part of this change could be a life-cycle effect, since as 20 per cent of the internal migrants travelled more than once, some would age over the time. Nonetheless, the great increase in older migrants observed between 1855 and 1859 is probably related to the agricultural crisis of the 1850s, which would contribute to an increase in seasonal migration. Another interesting point is the fact that the mean age at migration tended to be between thirty and thirty-five years old, with some peak periods but no apparent trend of increase or decrease (Figure 5). This pattern probably indicates that internal emigration was a more stable and long-standing feature of Vila do Conde society. Possibly seasonal labour migration was an important component in the local economy.

Occupational information on internal migrants is more fully reported than in international passport registers (over 80 per cent of the internal migrants from both rural and urban areas indicated their occupation). This difference is closely related to the distinct age structures that characterized both groups. A high proportion of young migrants without defined occupation was particularly noteworthy among international migrants, while a greater proportion of those migrating internally were adults with defined occupations.

Internal migrants displayed a greater variety of occupations than international ones. The dominant occupation appears to change according to demand, but in general sailing, fishing, carpentry, commerce, and shipbuilding were the most frequently enumerated (75 per cent of all declared occupations). It is interesting to see that in the coastal urban parish of Vila do Conde 42 per cent of those documents with information about occupation were from the sailors and fishermen group, while in the rural areas this group represented only 14.5 per cent. This preponderance in the capital parish is explained by its coastal geographic position, and the high concentration of this specific occupational group in the town. Fishing and maritime trading played an important economic role in the parish of Vila do Conde, along with long-distance commerce and shipbuilding. It seems that the parish was specialized in some occupational areas and persons with these specific skills were migrating to other Portuguese regions and centres.

Summing up, it is possible to say that the Lisbon migration system was characterized by the circular movement of skilled labourers, who would migrate from Vila do Conde to an urban centre, mainly Lisbon and Setúbal, returning home after some time. Differing from the Atlantic migration system, the Lisbon system did not change its pattern over the period analysed. The characteristics of the migrants and their destinations kept relatively constant over time. It is interesting to note, though, that both the Lisbon and the Atlantic migration systems presented the same characteristics of sending skilled labour to urban centres, at least in the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century. However, they diverged concerning life-cycles, with married migrants moving internally so they could return home more easily. Conversely, the Atlantic group had left no wives back in Portugal, and so could change from temporary into permanent migrants, forming families on the other side of the ocean.

An interesting aspect to highlight is that the source of migrants, in this case the *concelho* of Vila do Conde, was “producing” and “exporting” skilled workers who would migrate at different periods of their life cycles. It could therefore be inferred that age would be a very important determinant of the destination and the system to be followed by male migrants travelling alone. The situation would change if the whole family decided to migrate together. In such a case, skills and age were not determinants, and the goal would be to improve life quality by settling in a place where work could be found to maintain the family.

Vila do Conde and the local migration system: some initial evidence

Local migration into Vila do Conde is the third system identified in this research. The identification of this type of migration is restricted by two reasons: first, the absence of sources directly related to short-distance migration, such as passport registers, and second, the impossibility of analysing

Table 3. Total numbers and percentage of bridegrooms according to place of birth, parish of Vila do Conde, Porto District, 1800–1900.

Place of birth	All bridegrooms		Bridegrooms younger than brides only	
	n°	%	n°	%
No information	185	8.2	23	4.4
Parish of Vila do Conde	1,322	58.3	293	56.1
Other parishes of <i>concelho</i> of Vila do Conde	92	4.1	23	4.4
Other <i>concelhos</i> from Porto District	349	15.4	106	20.3
Neighbouring districts*	218	9.6	59	11.3
Other districts	67	3.0	10	1.9
Other countries	33	1.5	8	1.5
Total	2,266	100	522	100

*Neighbouring districts are composed of Viano do Castelo, Braga, Vila Real, Viseu, and Aveivo.

Source: Marriage registers, Districtal Archive of Porto, 1800–1900.

passport registers from all parishes of Portugal, in order to verify who was immigrating to the *concelho* of Vila do Conde. Hence, in order to analyse immigration into Vila do Conde it was necessary to look from a different perspective, investigating different sources, in this case marriage registers. Although this type of document does not allow for a deep understanding of short-distance migration, and the characteristics of this system, it gives some indication of the immigration pattern and its influence on the marriage market and demographic balance. An analysis of marital patterns reveals that male immigration into the parish of Vila do Conde was essential for the maintenance of marital and legitimate fertility levels. It is important to note that in the case of the local system, only the parish of Vila do Conde was analysed and not the whole *concelho*, as in the case of the Atlantic and the Lisbon systems. This is an initial attempt to delineate patterns of immigration into Vila do Conde.

In order to understand the relationship between the marital dynamics of the parish of Vila do Conde and its local migration system it is important first to consider the impact of international migration on its population. As explained above, the majority of emigrants going abroad were young single males. The absence of young men from their original marriage market resulted in a very unbalanced gender situation, restricting marriage and consequently increasing female celibacy. According to Veiga,³⁹ the Portuguese sex ratio between 1864 and 1900 was between 92 and 94 males per 100 females; while in the Porto region the sex ratio varied between 82 and 87

39. *Ibid.*, p.76.

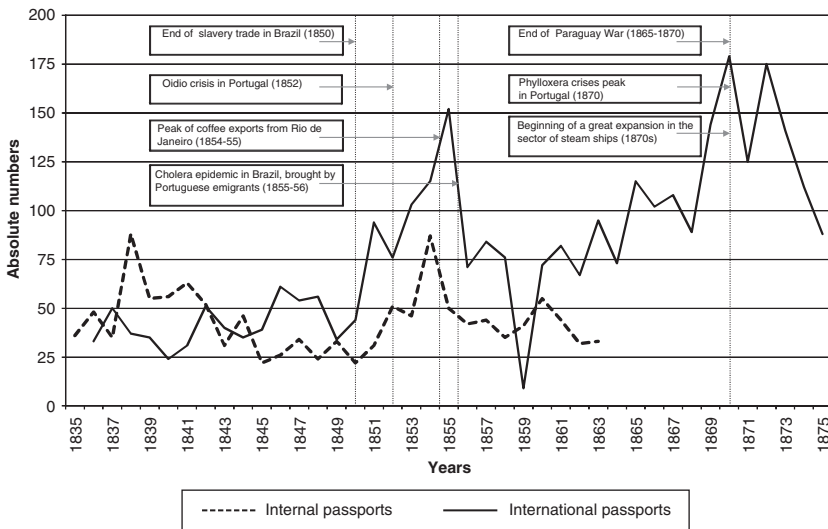


Figure 6. Annual totals of internal and international passport registers born in the *concelho* of Vila do Conde, Porto District, 1835–1875.

Source: *Internal and international passport registers, Districtal Archive of Porto and Municipal Archive of Vila do Conde.*

males per 100 females. In the case of Vila do Conde, the shortage of males was even worse, with sex ratios between 67 and 73 males to every 100 females. In theory, the lack of males would constrain legitimate reproduction, which would lead ultimately to population decrease. The parish of Vila do Conde did not fall into this demographic trap, maintaining its growth by two alternative methods: illegitimate pregnancy, and “imported males”.

The distribution of single bridegrooms by place of birth shows clearly that the parish of Vila do Conde received a considerable number of males (29.4 per cent) from other parishes and also from other districts during the second half of the nineteenth century (Table 3). Most of the “foreigners” came from other *concelhos* of Porto district,⁴⁰ and also from neighbouring districts. The parish of Vila do Conde was attracting males from other places, and most of the parishes that were “sending” bridegrooms were located in the interior of the districts (not in the coastal area). These immigrants were probably coming from rural regions in search of employment in the urban centre of Vila do Conde.

It is interesting to highlight that the proportion of bridegrooms born outside the *concelho* of Vila do Conde was particularly high between 1855 and 1884, with a peak of 38.1 per cent in the period 1870–1874 (Figure 6).

40. In fact they came mostly from Póvoa do Varzim, a parish localized in the northern border of Vila do Conde.

This is the same period when the age at first marriage of women peaks. When couples with wives older than their husbands are analysed separately, an increase in the proportion of bridegrooms born outside the *concelho* of Vila do Conde is observable (Table 3).

It is important to make clear that the isolated fact of a high proportion of bridegrooms originally from other parishes is not by itself an indicator that there was an inflow of potential husbands to Vila do Conde. There is also a possibility that they were only getting married in the natal town of their spouses, but not establishing residence there. However, when marital fertility is assessed, it is possible to observe that the average number of children of brides married between thirty and thirty-four years of age increased during the same period. This fact leads us to suppose that the hypothesis of an inflow of males compensating for part of the imbalance in the marital market constitutes a suitable explanation.

Looking into the economic sector of the foreign bridegrooms, it is possible to see that they were mostly employed in the secondary sector. Those individuals were employed as carpenters (30 per cent), masons (24 per cent), painters (12.8 per cent), shoemakers (11 per cent), blacksmiths (3 per cent) and locksmiths (3 per cent).

It seems to be again the case of urban attraction. However, immigration into Vila do Conde assumed the character of a local system, in which migrants would not change their lives completely by moving to another country, or engaging in temporary work. They would migrate to a centre not too far away to work in the secondary sector, settling there and getting married. Much still needs to be investigated in order to define the local migration system in the *concelho* of Vila do Conde, and this article may lay claim to be the starting point for this investigation.

DETERMINANTS OF MIGRATION

Several factors lead to the establishment of migration. In order to understand the dynamics of the migration systems in Vila do Conde, it is important to understand the national and global contexts in which its population was placed. As mentioned before, the system's analysis considers not only the local context, but rather associates it to a broader perspective of the world. Following this idea, it is important to contextualize the migration systems identified in Vila do Conde in the Portuguese and the European historical contexts.

Portugal was immersed in the main streams of demographic, economic, and social changes that characterized nineteenth-century Europe. The Lusitanian nation experienced some important changes over the period, such as a considerable increase in the size of its population. This demographic enlargement provoked a need for adjustments in food supply, as well as the availability of livelihoods (jobs and land). Even if the Portuguese

population did not grow at an extremely high rate, such as the population of England for instance, its increase brought about the need for adjustments. This same situation was being experienced by several other European countries over the nineteenth century, and they all followed different routes to escape this demographic trap.

One way to adjust to this new demographic reality was by developing the economic sector accordingly, by expanding the industrial sector, for example. This was the case in some industrializing countries, which used the part of the population “in excess” to supply the new demand for industrial labourers, as in Germany. In this country it is possible to observe a fall in emigration rates concomitant with its industrial development. In England the expansion of the industrial sector was not sufficient to absorb its huge population growth, which was reflected in the maintenance of high emigration rates in the three decades prior to World War I.⁴¹

In the case of Portugal, industrial development was continuous but slow. Portuguese industrialization in the nineteenth century was not oriented to export, but tended to keep pace with the increase in the country’s own consumption⁴² in a scenario of high protective tariffs.⁴³ In this fashion, Portugal ended up mainly developing food and textile production, the former by the expansion of cultivated areas, and the latter by the development of textile industries, with limited mechanization. It should be noted that a very important factor that contributed to the industrial development of England, France, Germany, and Belgium (the most important industrialized European countries in the nineteenth century) was the availability of good quality coal at competitive prices. This was the primary mineral fuel used in the mechanized industries, essential to the spread of the English model of industrialization.⁴⁴ In Portugal coal was not as abundant as in the Ruhr Valley area of Germany, for instance, a factor which certainly influenced the slow development of heavy industries in the country. The less coal-consuming textile manufacture would, therefore, constitute a more suitable industry to be first expanded in Portugal.

Although slow, Portuguese industrial growth absorbed part of the population increase in its labour market, as did the expansion of agriculture. However, this modest economic expansion was insufficient to

41. T.J. Hatton, and J.G. Williamson, *Global Migration and the World Economy: Two Centuries of Policies and Performance* (Cambridge, MA, 2005), pp. 53–60.

42. Pedro Lains, “A indústria”, in Pedro Lains and Álvaro Ferreira da Silva (orgs.), *História Económica de Portugal, 1700–2000: o século XIX*. Lisboa (Lisbon, 2005), pp. 259–281, 279.

43. According to Kevin H. O’Rourke, and Jeffrey G. Williamson, *Globalization and History: The Evolution of a Nineteenth-Century Atlantic Economy* (Cambridge, MA, 1999), pp. 95–105, “Portugal and Spain can be considered countries of severe protection trading policies”.

44. Rondo Cameron, “A New View of European Industrialization”, *The Economic History Review*, new series, 38 (1985), pp. 1–23.

keep pace with demographic increase. One way found to avoid overcrowding, starvation, and death, “prophesised” by Malthus,⁴⁵ was by preserving, and even intensifying, the emigration movement that had been taking place from Lusitanian lands since the heyday of their most famous maritime exploits. It could be said that emigration to Brazil,⁴⁶ in the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, was mostly seen as a way to obtain a career in commerce, or to receive higher remuneration than in Portugal. The great difference in real wages, in favour of Brazil,⁴⁷ and its increase over the century was a major incentive towards emigration.

The already settled Portuguese community in Brazil contributed to the establishment of social networks, which facilitated the assimilation of new arrivals into the Brazilian social and economic community.⁴⁸ In addition, the remittances sent by the emigrants to their families back in Portugal helped to finance new emigrants, as well as to keep the Portuguese economy in balance.⁴⁹ Technological advances in transportation (trains and steamships) had key roles in the intensification of emigration flows. The transatlantic journey that once was full of uncertainties became more secure, schedulable, shorter, and cheaper. Therefore, emigration to the New World became less risky and more affordable over the nineteenth century, potentially increasing the number of emigrants. But was it enough to justify the massive increase in emigration rates in the last decades of the nineteenth century?

The moderate and continuous movement towards the American continent, observed since colonial times, changed its shape to become a massive outflow with a diversification of destinations as well as of types of emigrants. Portuguese participation in the so-called nineteenth-century European mass migration only took place in the last decades of the century, although a traditional movement had been taking place for some centuries already. This change in the characteristics of emigration can be easily seen through a socio-economic analysis of the emigrant. If in the first half of the century the majority of emigrants could be described as either unskilled young single males under fourteen years or skilled young single adult males, by the last decades of the period there was another group of migrants that was gaining space in the emigration typology, the unskilled married adults (males and females, often family groups).

45. Thomas R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (Cambridge, 1992).

46. It is noteworthy that Portuguese emigration over the nineteenth century was not restricted to movement to Brazil and the United States. However, since these were the two main destinations they will get more emphasis in this section.

47. O'Rourke and Williamson, *Globalization and History*, pp. 17–19.

48. Jorge Fernandes Alves, “Lógicas migratórias no Porto oitocentista”, in Miriam Halpern Pereira (ed.), *Emigração/imigração em Portugal* (Lisbon, 1993), pp. 78–97.

49. *Idem*, *Os Brasileiros*, p. 275.

The rise of this third type of migrant coincided with the economic boom of coffee exports in Brazil, industrial expansion in the United States, and the periods of economic crisis observed in Portugal over the second half of the nineteenth century. It is important to make clear, though, that family emigration to Brazil did not necessarily mean migration to work in the fields, although that did happen to some degree. The greater part of families engaged in family migration to work in Brazilian farms emigrated in the first half of the century, coming from the Portuguese islands. As Leite points out,⁵⁰ there was an increase of engaged migration of families from the islands after the ratification of the Portuguese–British treaty for slave abolition in 1842, with ex-slave ships used for their transportation. However, this type of migration did not last long, and by the last quarter of the century family migration from the islands was redirected to the United States to work in the growing industrial sector.⁵¹

It is worth noting that by the end of the nineteenth century it is possible to observe a proportional increase of family emigration also among those originally from the mainland. According to Rowland,⁵² the “traditional” migration, which had been taking place since earlier centuries and was characterized by the flow of young single males, was a strategy to maintain families’ economies in shape. The young boy who was prepared to move to the New World was, in fact, expelled from that social organization in order to preserve the family as an economic unit, avoiding the need for land division. In this way property would be preserved, and once the young male had accumulated enough in the new land he would be able to return and buy his own land in Portugal. The “new” type of migration, however, had another motivation, which was that the family economic unit was no longer sufficient to provide for the whole family; therefore there was a need to find a new way to maintain family finances in balance. In this case, the whole family would migrate to settle in a new place where they would find enough work, without the intention of returning to Portugal.

So far, it could be concluded that population growth, associated with slow economic development, and improvements in transportation, contributed to the increase of migration rates and also to the diversification of migration, reaching the point of mass migration at the end of the century. Hence, emigration was working as the main escape valve from potential problems that population increase could have caused in the absence of substantial economic growth. This statement is particularly true during the periods of economic downturn. After the three main crises of the

50. Costa Leite, “Portugal and Migration, 1855–1914”, p. 104.

51. Baganha, “Portuguese Transatlantic Migration”, p. 61.

52. Robert Rowland, “Velhos e Novos Brasis”, in Francisco Bethencourt and Kirti Chaudhuri (eds), *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, IV (Lisbon, 1997), pp. 304–374, 334.

second half of the nineteenth century in Portugal (1852, 1870, and 1890), it is possible to observe large increases in the volume of emigration from the *concelho* of Vila do Conde. Agricultural and financial crises were working as push factors, contributing to the increase of emigration. The possibility of seeking a new life on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean or even in another part of Portugal was seen by many as a way out of difficult times in the homeland.

The same factors that were leading to the migration of people overseas seem also to have been contributing to their movement within Portugal itself. A comparison between the total numbers of internal and international passport registers shows that they assume very similar patterns, although until 1849 when the number of internal passports goes up, the number of international goes down, and vice versa. This difference seems to be associated with the end of the civil war (between 1828 and 1834) which brought epidemics and destruction, debilitating the population, especially in the north-west. From 1850 until the end of the period with information on internal migration (1863), both sets of documents present very similar trends, with an intense increase in the number of passports, followed by a fall in 1855, resuming the increase in 1860.

The agricultural crises of the 1850s clearly affected migration. This was a period of “strong agriculture depression in the northern area”,⁵³ which certainly acted as a push factor on both international and internal migration. The increasing emigration to Brazil was brought to a halt in 1855, with a cholera outbreak in that country, slowing down the pace of outflow in the following years. It also coincides with the peak in Brazilian coffee exports, which start to decline after this date. It is interesting to note that the Paraguay War does not seem to have negatively affected external migration, which shows an increase trend in the 1860s. After the end of the Paraguay War there was a fall in the number of international emigrants going to Brazil, with an increase in the next year, falling again in 1874 and 1875.

But not only push factors were contributing to emigration growth. Pull factors were also attracting people towards the adventurous journey to the Americas. In Brazil the development of the recently independent monarchy,⁵⁴ and the enlargement of its urban centres increased the demand for skilled labourers. Urban growth generated a rise in demand for skilled workers, especially in the building sector, while economic growth generated by the growth of exports (coffee, rubber, tobacco, and cocoa) increased the role of the main urban centres as active commercial

53. Helder Adegar Fonseca, “A ocupação da terra”, in Lains and Ferreira Silva, *História Económica de Portugal, 1700–2000: o século XIX*, pp. 83–118, 86.

54. The independence of Brazil was obtained in 1822, when Prince Pedro declared its independence from Portugal that was then ruled by his father, the king Dom João VI.

settlements.⁵⁵ As a consequence, from 1872 to 1890 the city of Rio de Janeiro almost doubled its population, while São Paulo grew at a rate of 5 per cent a year between 1872 and 1886, increasing to 8 per cent between 1886 and 1890.⁵⁶ In addition to urban development, prosperity in the coffee market and the end of slavery resulted in the need for wage labourers to work in the plantations.

It is interesting to note that Brazil was not the only country growing at a fast pace. Other nations were also experiencing expansion in agriculture, and in some cases showing evidence of the growing strength of industry. The case of the United States is emblematic. Its infrastructure was being improved, including the expansion of railways all over the country. An economy expanding at such a rapid rate required large amounts of labour. The United States was in need of both specialized workers and day labourers. The shortage of labour made wages higher there than in Europe. In fact, wages in the United States were significantly higher than other regions of recent settlement, such as Argentina, Canada, and Brazil. Assuming that the principal motive for emigration was the search for the highest wage possible, it might have been expected that everyone would have gone to the United States. But emigration patterns show that the highest wages by themselves were not sufficient to attract emigrants. Cultural affinities, language, and a less competitive job market would also be attractive. In the case of Portugal, these factors seem to have been extremely relevant among skilled workers and also for those seeking a career in the trading sector. Brazil had Portuguese as its official language, and many Portuguese cultural practices were also present there. It seems that for a skilled worker, the advantage of moving to a place built as an extension of Portugal itself, along with the benefit of higher wages, would have been much more appealing than moving to a completely foreign setting, even if the wages there were higher still.

In addition to overseas centres, some growing urban centres at home were also attracting migrants. This was the case of Lisbon, the capital city, which was experiencing an expansion of its size and economy. In a sense, Lisbon was attracting people in the same way as other international cities, such as Rio de Janeiro, were doing. It needed skilled workers to undertake its development and so attracted specialized labour through offering higher wages. Lisbon's large-scale immigration can be easily observed in its population growth. Livi-Bacci, comparing demographic growth between different districts, says that between 1864 and 1960 the populations of the Viana do Castelo, Guarda, and Viseu districts increased by

55. Emília Viotti da Costa, "1870–1889", in Leslie Bethell (ed.), *Brazil Empire and Republic, 1822–1930* (Cambridge, 1989), pp 161–213, 165.

56. *Ibid.*

only 33 per cent, while in Lisbon and Setúbal (the country's capital city and most industrialized region) the population quadrupled. The author attributes this behaviour to a "permanent migratory deficit that has been compensated only partially by high birth rate".⁵⁷ The great variation in the proportion of population increase among the districts suggests that internal migration was intense in continental Portugal. Some districts acted as suppliers and others as receivers of population. In the case of the *concelho* of Vila do Conde, it seems that its capital parish was attracting migrants to work in its urban centre, contributing to balancing its very low sex ratio, while at the same time it was also pushing people away, given its economic limitations.

It could be concluded from what has been stated up to this point that, given the sharp demographic increase in Portugal over the nineteenth century, emigration was an important preventive check used to smooth out rates of population increase, which in a scenario of low economic and industrial growth was certainly important. And following the national trend, the population of the *concelho* of Vila do Conde also experienced both emigration and immigration in a way that balanced its demographic and economic situation.

CONCLUSION

Over the nineteenth century people from the *concelho* of Vila do Conde developed strategies of migration to avoid the demographic trap of high population increase that was taking place all around Portugal. Three recurrent circuits of migration were identified, characterizing three distinct migration systems.

The Atlantic migration system mainly connected Vila do Conde to Brazilian urban centres. Its pattern changed over the century, with a proportional decrease of young single adult males, and an increase in the proportion of married males and families. Economic, demographic, and technological changes contributed to the change from a very positive selection of the middle class, merchants, affluent farmers, and skilled artisans, to a positive selection towards labourers.

The Lisbon migration system followed the logic of urban centres attracting skilled labour, but in this case the majority of the migrants were married skilled adult males. They went to the capital of the country in search of better wages. This was circular migration, in which the migrants would return to their family homes, even if they would later emigrate again for work. The enlargement of Lisbon contributed to the concentration of emigrants there, but other urban centres also attracted the flows.

57. Massimo Livi-Bacci, *A Century of Portuguese Fertility* (Princeton, NJ, 1971), p. 32.

Evidence of the local migration system also shows the urban attraction logic, but in this case migration would not mean a change of life, but only settlement in a neighbouring area. Males from parishes in the interior of the country were moving to the urban centre of Vila do Conde, where they could exercise their occupations (mainly in the secondary economic sector) and also contribute to the marital market, which was suffering from a high male deficit due to Atlantic migration.

All three systems were placed in the socio-economic and demographic contexts of the time. They coexisted and balanced each other according to the peculiarities and needs of the time. This research is an initial attempt to understand migration patterns better and their place in the broader contexts of systems in northern Portugal. More research is needed in order to identify the several migration systems operating in Portugal over the nineteenth century, and this present work aims to be a contribution to the solution of the puzzle that is the history of Portuguese migration.