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Pilgrimage of the Virgin of Nazaré (Portugal): religious and cultural itineraries

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In Portugal, the Estremadura *Círios* (*Candles* pilgrimages) constitute one of the strongest surviving traditions of popular religiosity that are still present in the traditional and religious calendar of some Portuguese regions. Deriving from the tradition of religious devotion to Mary during the Middle Ages, sites such as the Shrine of Our Lady of Cabo Espichel, and prior to that the Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré (Nazareth), generated a particular level of devotion by the 17th century, based on miracles which the Virgin of Nazaré granted to a local inhabitant. Since the 18th century, and the establishment of the *Brotherhood of the Virgin of Nazareth of Pederneira*, the *Great Silver Candle Pilgrimage* (Portuguese *Círio da Prata Grande* hereafter) has annually brought together 17 parishes of various municipalities to worship the Virgin of Nazaré under a form of pilgrimage, a *Círio*, which generally occurs in September of each year.

Itineraries based on religious heritage have not been the object of development within a tourism perspective in this region. This study aims at establishing itineraries, based on the rich history of the religious spaces, sites and manifestations in order to attract more domestic and inbound tourists to the region. The research methods include theoretical observations based on a literature review, document analysis and historiographical research, on the fields of history, heritage, culture, religion and itinerary design, and field studies undertaken over a number of years, including photographic surveying. We believe the itineraries present an opportunity for tourism development in this region, focusing on cultural and religious experiences.

Key Words: Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré, pilgrimage, *Círio da Prata Grande*, itineary

Introduction

According to Ambrósio (2006), the Portuguese pilgrimage and religious tourism sector is expanding much like the entire Catholic world. While this proves relatively easier for religious events interconnected with a major sanctuary, such as Fatima, which deploy strong marketing to position itself among domestic and inbound tourists, in some areas of Portugal we encounter major shortcomings in marketing and communication of religious sites, events and pilgrimages. This situation often has to do with the failure of local / regional authorities to comprehend the potential of such religious manifestations for tourism development, in the form of sharing cultural experiences with visitors.

This exploratory study correspondingly aims to produce a religious itinerary used for tourism purposes for parishes in the Municipalities of Mafra, Sintra, Torres Vedras and Nazaré, following in the steps of the

Círio da Prata Grande pilgrimage of Igreja Nova (Mafra), a religious event whose tradition stems from the 18th century, in order to attract more visitors. As this pilgrimage connects to the shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré, it would also be very practical and of shared benefit were the annual *Círio* pilgrimage to link with the Nazaré pilgrimage, which also takes place in September. This religious connection would seem obvious: the people of Igreja Nova parish (a very specifically defined geographical place) receive the pilgrim image of Our Lady and go every single year on pilgrimage to the shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré. Thus, we shall also detail this Shrine and its importance to the development of the *Círio*.

Furthermore, the Igreja Nova parish (Mafra) links to another *círio*: the *Círio* of Our Lady of the Cabo Espichel (Sesimbra). We therefore also reference this Shrine and its *Círio*, the oldest in existence in Portugal, within the scope of proposing the establishing of another cultural and religious itinerary interlinking

these two councils (Mafra and Sesimbra). Afterall, as we shall see, the religious tradition has been ongoing, down through the centuries, irrespective of the greater or lesser stability of the prevailing times.

Methodology

The methodology adopted is qualitative, based on route design and a review of the Religious History and Culture literature about *Candles* and the *Círio da Prata Grande* (*Great Silver Candle*). Despite the over 600 hundred years of the existence of this kind of pilgrimage in Portugal, there is still little information available. This is especially relevant when according to Varico Pereira (Diário de Notícias, 2009) the religious tourism sector in Portugal involves some 7 million people per year, thus 10% of the tourism flux, with annual profits of €700 million. Still, religious tourism, or tourism to religious destinations, integrates the designated ‘cultural tourism’ or ‘cultural touring’ products and not any specific product or status.

There is no official or regional data about visitation to places of devotion in Portugal, with the exception of Fatima, as travel to religious sites is considered part of the overall cultural tourism product. Literature also shows little research available, other than in the North of Portugal (see for example, Richards & Fernandes, 2007; and Fernandes, Coelho & Brázio, 2015) and some case studies on Fátima (see for example, Ambrosio, 2006; Santos, 2006). There is no statistical information available as regards participation in *Círios* religious events. Whereas in Nazaré there are some data on the participation of thousands of people who go to the ‘profane’ festival in September, mostly for entertainment purposes; there are no data for those going on the essentially secular pilgrimage, such as the *Círio da Prata Grande*.

The research for this study is based upon a literature review of theoretical observations, including cultural route or itinerary design and its importance for tourism; documentary analysis and historiographical research, in the fields of history, heritage, culture and religion and; field studies over a number of years, including photographic surveying. The resulting materials, derived from the documental research, were subject to analysis in order to cross-reference evidence from various different sources, including the stories and memories of those who shared their personal and familiar collections and testimonies (Castaño *et al.*, 2018), to enhance the evidence and the sources encountered, in accordance with Yin (2014) and Bryman (2004). The field studies were conducted in

different years and included photographic surveying, used for cataloguing and mapping of the cultural resources.

Literature Review

Throughout history, one community after another has left behind traces and evidence of their way of life [and their cultural heritage]. This evidence, known as cultural traces, is tangible evidence that helps us study and research past societies (Boado, 1996). Cultural heritage assets include both tangible assets, such as historic places, and intangible assets, such as cultural practices (McKercher & du Cros, 2002). Tourism is increasingly offering a range of cultural products, from visiting monuments and traditional arts and crafts centres [and religious sites] to participating in historical events and discovering unique lifestyles. Tourism creates an interest in these particular forms of culture [eg. religious heritage], often encouraging the preservation of cultural and historical traditions. Potentially the relationship between tourism and the cultural sector is highly complementary. The cultural sector creates attractions for the tourist while tourism supplies extra audiences for cultural events and activities (Tighe, 1991). For purposes of this study, the definition of cultural tourism is:

visits by persons from outside the host community motivated wholly or in part by interest in the historical, artistic, and scientific or lifestyle / heritage offerings of a community, region, group or institution (Silberberg, 1995:361).

Furthermore, one of the characteristics of postmodern society is that individuals are questing for personal and social development through the living of leisure experiences. Within this context, culture raises the most important raw material for the generation of those experiences (Richards, 2001), particularly, as cultural tourism brings together one or several cultural elements (i. e. heritage, artwork, traditions, etc.), making up the central component and complementing the experience of the trip (Morere & Perelló, 2013). Tourism at religious or sacred sites is a special type of cultural heritage tourism (Shackley, 2001), since heritage and cultural demonstrations are often related to the existing religion.

Religious tourism is a form of human movement characterised by the need to visit sacred places, its objective being to go through a spiritual experience (Liszewski, 2000). Nevertheless, different types of travel could be set within tourism associated with

religious spaces, even though not all of them have a religious sense (San Salvador del Valle, Izaguirre & Makua, 2008). Religious motivation, as it occurs with cultural tourism, combines with other kinds of motivations (Santos, 2006), since visits to religious spaces or pilgrimages could also be understood as quest for different non-sacred aspects of cultural, historical and architectural meaning. The trip keeps its religious meaning, but at the same time, other references connected with the secularised society are articulated, such as built heritage - churches, cathedrals, sanctuaries and so on - cultural manifestations such as religious festivals and traditions, nature and the body. Visitors are ready to pay more to cover these needs, day by day becoming more sophisticated, because they expect to enjoy quality experiences (ICORET, 2006). Thus, apart from expressing their religious needs in the destination they act as ordinary visitors in many other aspects (San Salvador del Valle, Izaguirre and Makua, 2008).

Tourists often view visits to historic religious sites as opportunities for cultural and educational experiences (Olsen, 2006). They seek authentic experiences tied to a specific historic place, rather than just leisure in a resort that could be anywhere (MacLeod, 2006). More specifically, religious tourists travel in a manner characterised by multifunctionality, interacting with other forms of tourism, although the religious element assumes prominence (Lozato-Giotart, 1993, in Santos, 2006).

Over the past decade, cultural routes [or itineraries] have been established as an attractive, flexible and extremely effective means of developing cultural tourism products (Berti *et al.*, 2015), including those associated with places of devotion / religious sites. Themed routes [or itineraries] as tourist attractions have gained prominence in recent years and have greater pulling power by connecting attractions that would independently not have the potential to entice tourists to visit an area, thus, spreading tourism's economic benefits to marginal areas (Meyer, 2004). Pilgrimage routes [or itineraries] are good examples of such situations, working as catalysts of tourism development (Richards & Fernandes, 2007), by focusing not only on the pilgrim's spiritual experience, but also cultural and social interactions along the route.

Routes or itineraries vary considerably in length and scale and attract different kinds and numbers of visitors (Meyer, 2004). According to Giordana (1996), a route is developed on a theme related to the discovery of cultural, historical, gastronomic, sporting or religious

heritage; the length of time may vary; organisation might be for individuals, for groups, self-organised, or pre-organised, or the criteria may overlap. Finally, the design of the route can be linear (without returning to the point of departure) or circular (where the end coincides with the starting point). There are no magical formulas for creating successful cultural routes or itineraries. They come from an in-depth analysis of the available resources and communities involved, with a focus on generating both significant and unique experiences (UNESCO, 2015).

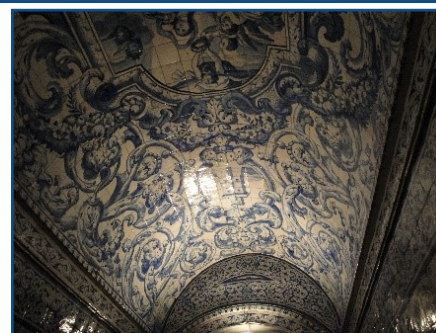
Historical background of the case study

Marian devotion, the Shrine of the Our Lady of Nazaré, in Portugal (1179-2018), and the devotion of the Virgin of Nazaré in the ex-Portuguese Colonial Empire (1415 - 1975)

In Portugal, worship of the Virgin Mary predates the foundation of the nation. At the end of the 10th century, the regions between the rivers Douro and Vouga became known as *The Lands of Saint Mary*. Following the Portuguese Christian Re-conquest (1128 -1249), Marian worship was developed by the Cluny and Cistercian Orders and later, through the influence of the Mendicant Orders of Saint Francis and Saint Dominic. In the period of the Portuguese Expansion and Discoveries (15th and 16th centuries), these Monastic Orders and the Jesuits took Marian devotion to Africa, to the Atlantic Islands, to the Asian colonies and to Brazil.

Nazaré in the Centre Region of Portugal, is composed of three places: the Praia (the beach); the Sítio (the Place, and old town, on top of a cliff) and; Pederneira (an old town, on a hilltop) (Figures 1 & 2).

The Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré is located at the Sítio and has been one of the most important sites of Portuguese Marian pilgrimage from the Middle Ages onwards, for the Portuguese monarchy (1128-1910), who undertook monumental works and made donations: Fernando I (1367-1383) ordered the building of the Sanctuary; João I (1385-1433); João II (1481-1495); Manuel I (1495-1521); the third wife of King João III, Queen Leonor of Austria (sister of the Emperor Charles V, 1st of Spain); Filipe II (1598-1621); João V (1706-1750) and others. It was also as a place of popular worship throughout this time also. The site has survived despite the Napoleonic Invasions (19th century) - when French troops looted the Shrine and the town, set fire to some of the Sítio's houses as well as killing some rebels in this place – and the early

Fig. 1: Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré and Chapel of Memory, Sítio, Nazaré

Photos by Authors

decades of the 20th century with religious restrictions enforced during the 1st Republic (1910-1926). Figure 3 shows a tour guide interpreting the cultural heritage of the Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré which is situated in Sítio.

The Virgin of Nazaré always travelled in their vessels. Navigators like Vasco da Gama, before and after his first journey to India (1498), Pedro Álvares Cabral, who discovered Brazil (1500), or Jesuits like Saint Francisco Xavier, the Apostle of the East Indies (Goa, Cochín, Cape Camorim, Malacca, Japan, China) before embarking to Goa (1541), prayed at the Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré.

As Pereira (2006a:59-62, our translation) states, quoting Matos Sequeira:

... this temple of great devotion is filled with memories [about the miracles of the Holy Lady of Nazaré and] about the royal visits to Her shrine, since our first kings. According to tradition, Vasco da Gama gave up his gold chain in exchange for the necklace of the Virgin. As a relic, this necklace was employed by the great navigator to tame the seas when rounding the Cape of Storms.

Alão (2001:161-162; 165-166) in a translation from a 17th century parish publication identified the different kinds of people connected with seafaring, who would go to the Shrine:

On How Commonly Came to the House of Our Lady of Nazaré, Pilots, Masters and Sailors on the Vessels that Arrive from India (Chapter 45, our translation) [or people connected with Religious Orders] *Of the many who visit the House of Our Lady of Nazaré are Priests and Religious Figures from All the Orders* (Chapter 45, our translation).

In the case of Brazil (the largest ex-Portuguese colony), one of the Portuguese vessels that fought against the French invader in Maranhão and against Dutch forces in Pará in the 17th century, was named the ‘Virgin of Nazaré’. The Fortress of Belém (today converted into Fortress of the Crib Museum), built in the 16th century, is the heart of Belém of Pará (in Brazil), as well as being enormously important for the people of this city who emigrate to other places and take this devotion with them. The old fortress may have been baptised with the name ‘Holy Lady of Belém’, but it remained under the protection of the

Fig. 2: Praia, Sítio and Pederneira in Nazaré

Photos by Authors

Fig. 3: A tour guide interpreting the cultural heritage of the Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré and Sítio

Photos by Authors

Virgin of Nazaré. Surrounding the Fortress, the first houses were constructed and later the town emerged with regions called Presépio, Nazaré and Belém.

Frey Caetano Brandão, bishop of Belém of Pará, in the second half of the 18th century, always mentioned the City of Our Lady of Nazaré of Pará. Later on, after the expulsion of the Jesuit Order, the city was simply called Belém. The devotion to this Madonna, brought by the navigators of the Portuguese caravels and by Portuguese emigration lasted for almost 300 years, although the first procession of the *Círio / Candle of Nazareth* officially dates to the 8th of September 1793 when Portugal authorised the first procession (Serra, 2017). This *Círio*, which took place throughout the 19th century on the second Sunday of October, is one of the most important in the country. Even in Marian Shrines worldwide, this *Círio* has been continuously celebrated, even after the independence of Brazil, in 1822, as a symbol of identity, religiousness and devotion, and in 2013 was classified as an element of World Cultural Heritage by UNESCO.

Worship of the Virgin of Nazaré (afterwards also known as the Queen of Amazonia) is said to have begun in the town of Vigia around the time the little image of the Virgin was discovered by Plácido José de Sousa, a Portuguese descendent, in 1700, on the borders of the 'igarapé' Murutucú, in Belém of Pará. According to legend, the image that he took home with him, always returned by miracle to the site where it was found. Plácido ordered the building of a small chapel, where nowadays Her Shrine stands. The current Shrine, with its architecture inspired by St. Paul's in Rome, was commissioned in the 20th century by the Barnabitas, the Italian Order of the Regular

Clergymen of Saint Paul, who arrived in Brazil in 1903 in two groups, with one settling in Belém.

The Bishop of Pará, João Evangelista, returned the Brazilian image of the Virgin to Lisbon in 1774 and placed the city under the protection of the Virgin of Nazaré in 1773. The image of this Virgin, who is standing, is in answer to one of the main Portuguese *Círios*, the *Círio da Prata Grande* (Igreja Nova). Neither of these two are equal to the Virgin of Nazaré (Portugal), who is black (these others are white), and sits, breastfeeding Jesus.

The Círios (Candle pilgrimages) and the Círio da Prata Grande (Igreja Nova, Mafra)

Classical civilisations, as well as the Hebrew religion, had the habit of lighting candles in churches and sanctuaries, at funereal ceremonies, in a practice that was pre-Christian but that came to be adopted by Christianity whether in the crypts or alongside images of saints. This custom would give rise to Festivals of Candelária (*candela* - candle in Latin) or the purification of the Virgin, a liturgical act ordered by Pope Sergio I in the 7th century. The *círios*, with their pagan reminiscences, are characterised by their devotees carrying their wax (*cera*, Portuguese for wax; *círio*, in Latin *cereus*) torches on pilgrimage to the altar of the divinity as a form of homage, were to perpetuate their presence in the brotherhoods of Catholic pilgrimage, as is the case for example with the *círios* of Estremadura. The group of pilgrims came to be known as the *Círio* and the pilgrimages on which they would take their wax offerings to the sanctuaries, are called *círios* (candles out of metonymy).

The Estremadura *Círios* (Candle light pilgrimages), which come from the traditions of Middle Age worship of Mary were consolidated during the 17th and the 18th centuries, are one of the strongest traditions concerning popular religiosity. They still remain nowadays and are very much present in the traditional and religious calendar of events such as: Senhora da Nazaré (Nazaré); Senhora da Atalaia (Montijo); Senhora da Arrábida (Sesimbra), Senhora dos Remédios (Peniche); Senhora da Praia (Praia das Maçãs, Sintra); Senhora da Penha de França (Lisbon) or Senhora do Cabo Espichel (Sesimbra), among others. As Pato (2008: 110, our translation) refers:

Throughout the region of Estremadura [popular pilgrimages to a sacred place] preferably take the name of círios / candles, though this form of organization has parallels in other areas . . . A círio is therefore the movement of devotees to a private sanctuary in fulfilment of a promise in a collective pilgrimage or cyclical tour of long-distance and can take two forms: either the individual parishes worship the entity, or collectively organise an annual journey alternating, in time and in successive years, paying their devotion. During that year, the cult of the Virgin or of the Holy Spirit is the responsibility of the parish which is assigned to organise the celebrations ... passing on after one year to another parish, until the moment that the giro (movement in 'circle') ends and the festivity returns to the original parish. In any case, it is a symbolic delimitation of an itinerary and the possession of sacred places, in function of a belief held by all the community ... villages and towns take turns in organising religious festivals, not only in the case of the Virgin of the Cape [Cabo] but also in many others; this is remarkable in the case of Our Lady of Nazaré: the so-called Círio da Prata Grande pilgrimage continues to gather 17 parishes that take turns in organising this annual religious celebration ...'.

In the case of the Estremaduran *círios*, these

occasionally take on the form of giros [Giro Saloio, Círio da Prata Grande] organised and stopping over in various parishes, on a rotational itinerary ... rigorously obeying a pre-established order (Pato, 2008:119-120).

Círio is therefore the cyclical movement of devote Catholics to a sanctuary in order to make a vow or to comply with a collective promise to a particular Saint or the Virgin, involving a long-distance pilgrimage. The originality of the círio thus results from how these pilgrimages represent the expression of a collective vow. The inhabitants of these rural settlements called

for (and call for...) protection against infestations of pests, hunger, the natural catastrophes that would attack their agricultural output (present ever since the Middle Ages...), make their collective vows and collectively go to pay their duties through worship and the vows made and the offerings left in the Sanctuaries. The initiative of these celebrations initially stemmed from a collective of farmers and/or fishermen organised into brotherhoods normally on the 'fringes' of the Catholic Church, with the latter's hierarchy associated with only the pilgrimage and the celebrations, as identified by Pereira (2006).

Despite the religious facet, the *Círios* incorporate a pre-Christian symbolic weighting as they are celebrated in rural regions at the end of harvesting between August and September. As Pereira (2006:108) notes 'there is no definite date to the event and each *Candle* can choose the day of celebration it wants'.

In times past, celebrations took place on the first Sunday after Ascension Thursday. The pilgrimages continue today to reflect a seasonal and cyclical activity. Hence, the *Círios (Candles)* have their special days and they occur generally between August and September. August is the month of the Virgin and is interrelated with the harvests. In September the *Círio da Prata Grande* is celebrated, which gathers 17 parishes of the Municipalities of Mafra, Sintra, Torres Vedras and Nazaré. It generally coincides with Nazaré hosting pilgrimages, celebrations with fireworks and much entertainment in honour of the Virgin, and extends from the 8th of September, the day of Our Lady, until the 14th of September, the day of D. Fuas Roupinho's miracle. The *Great Silver Candle* so called because of its wealth in silver and because of the amount of their offerings, began in the parish of Igreja Nova (Mafra).

The Círio da Prata Grande / Great Silver Candle (Igreja Nova, Mafra) and the connection to the Giro Saloio / Rural Candle pilgrimage of the Shrine of Our Lady of Cape Espichel / Our Lady of the Stone of Mua / She-Mule.

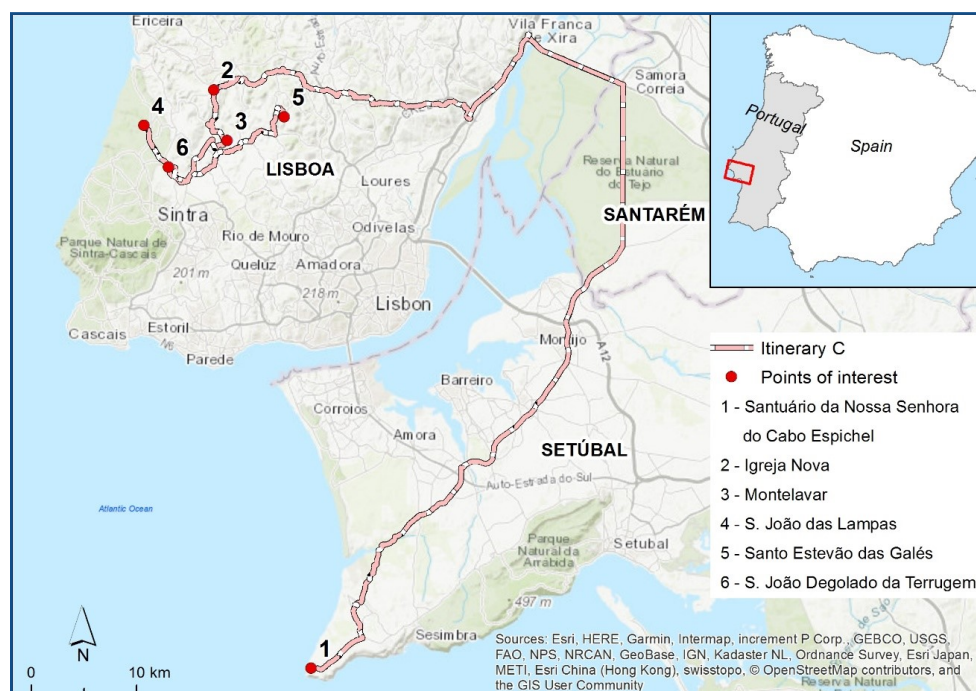
The oldest and most important *giros* in the Estremadura region, interconnected with their respective Sanctuaries (Fig. 4), were those of Our Lady of Cabo Espichel (to the south of the river Tagus) and Our Lady of Nazaré (to the north of the river Tagus). The legends of both shrines emerge in medieval times. Both shrines are located on promontories, sacred and religious spaces ever since the beginning of human history.

Fig. 4: Shrine of Our Lady of Cape Espichel and the Chapel of Memory

Photos by Authors

Integrated into Marian worship, the legend of Our Lady of Cabo Espichel perhaps reaches back to the 13th century, while such devotion first gets explicitly mentioned in a royal charter (1366) issued by Pedro I (1357-1367). The date of the appearance of the image remains uncertain although it was preceded by apparitions of Our Lady in Cape Espichel. The Giro Saloio (Fig. 5), the pilgrimage that interlinks the two banks of the Tagus and runs through rural communities, in its original form, traces its origins back to the reign of João I (1385-1433) (Pato, 2008).

According to the legend, Our Lady would appear on the Beach of Lagosteiros, which is above the little Chapel of the Shrine, riding a small she-mule. When she went up, the she-mule would leave her marks in the stone (really these marks are the footsteps of dinosaurs). The discovery of the image has two versions: one says that it was some men from the village of Caparica who found it; the second states it was two old men, one from the town of Alcabideche (north of the river Tagus) and the other from the town of Caparica (south of the same river). The latter version explains how the two sides come together in this act of devotion.

Fig. 5: The parishes of Círio da Prata Grande and the 'link'/itinerary to the Shrine to Our Lady of Cape

The *Círio Saloio* - rural candle / *Círio do Bodo* - the candle of largeness freely bestowed money or gifts (15th century) or Real Candles (18th century), is composed of 26 parishes from the councils of Cascais, Sintra, Loures, Oeiras, Lisbon, Odivelas and Mafra was at 'the origin of an organisation similar to that of Senhora da Nazaré' (*Círio da Prata Grande*) (Pato, 2008:16), with its first Brotherhood founded in 1432 by the Archbishop of Lisbon, Pedro de Noronha.

According to Pato (2008:16, our translation), the:

popular religious worship, which rapidly took root on the two banks of the Tagus ... from the reign of João I onwards, has come to establish an indelible feature of rural culture. These pilgrimages, commonly known as círios, were organised on the north bank from 1430 onwards in the form of a tour / giro, with participant locations paying homage to the Virgin annually and in turn on a rotational basis

The *círios saloios* have already celebrated their 575th anniversary (1430-2005) (Pato, 2008). In Belas, the *Círio* turned 570 years of age in 2015 and in Loures the 580-year landmark was reached in 2016.

In the Municipality of Mafra, the only parishes to host both the *Círio Saloio* of Our Lady of Cabo, every 25 years, and the *Círio da Prata Grande*, every 17 years, in the *Giro Saloio* order, are Montelavar, Santo Estevão das Galês and Igreja Nova, itself the driver behind the *Círio da Prata Grande* ever since the 18th century. In the Municipality of Sintra, the only parishes to host both the *Círios* are S. João das Lampas and S. João Degolado da Terrugem. During the period that the Pilgrim figure of the Virgin of Cabo is in Igreja Nova, this parish always organises a pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Cabo Espichel (along with the parish that is to subsequently receive the figure), so that their inhabitants can keep their collective vows as we may read in the *Loas* dedicated in 2008:

We are all going to walk / All the way to Cabo Espichel / And there we are going to meditate / on the miracle of the skiff / ... Mary the Virgin Saint / Sweet flavour of honey / the pilgrims on this day / Shall take you to Cabo Espichel / On this divine day / All the believers are going / With the Queen of Portugal / Farewell Lady of Conception / Save Archangel Michael, / We are going in prayer / To the Sanctuary of Espichel ... It's time to get walking / Heading along our path, / To come back here later / With the Immaculate Virgin / Your grace we shall request / From our dear Mother / Give

us the courage to go / And a good return as well. / ... Igreja Nova on this day / In a simple gesture of love / Here, they come for Mary / And her son the Saviour / ... We come from Igreja Nova / We are devotees of Mary / We provide all our forces, / As the Brotherhood does order ... / On this site before / Appeared the Virgin Mary / Since that blessed time / began the pilgrimage ... / We are devout pilgrims / On this sacred site / We sing psalms and hymns / To the Immaculate Virgin / ... On the moment of departure / hear this final prayer / Bless, Mother dearest / The Celestial Brotherhood. '

Pilgrimage to the Sanctuary of Cabo Espichel, Loas to Our Lady of Cabo Espichel, Parish of Nossa Senhora da Conceição de Igreja Nova, Mafra (Simões & Pereira, 2008: 21-23, own translation).

These rotating pilgrimages received royal support and intervention from monarchs including Pedro II (1668-1706); João V (170-1750); José I (1750-1777, who visited the Sanctuary in 1777 accompanied by the royal family and leading nobility to attend the celebrations); and Maria I (1777-1816, who went on pilgrimage to the Sanctuary in 1784). The Napoleonic Invasions (1807-1810) resulted in the looting of the treasures from many of these sites. But, with the return of the royal family from Brazil, the *círios saloios* again gained the devotion of senior nobility and the royal household, for example Miguel (1826-1834), Maria II (1834-1853), Pedro V (1853-1861), Maria Pia (wife of Luís I, 1861-1889) and Carlos I (1889-1908).

Both *Círios*, on either side of the Tagus river, have left significant built legacies following interventions such as the construction, inside the baroque Church of the Shrine (ordered by Pedro II), of ten altars, richly finished in polychrome carving, the Guest Houses/ Casas dos Círios for the pilgrims and an Opera House (currently undergoing restoration).

Under José I but also under Maria I, the royal family and the clergy would mix with the masses in the old Portuguese way, whether at religious ceremonies or at celebrations, including fireworks and bullfighting (as currently still happens at the Shrine of Nazaré and sometimes in Igreja Nova). We would highlight that from the 17th century onwards there were participants of African origin in the processions and *círios* across all of the Lisbon region, who would on occasion perform combat moves and dances, such as the *lundum*, a dance pruriently documented since the 16th century (Pato, 2008).

Following the reform carried out to the Brotherhood of Our Lady of Cabo Espichel in the 17th century, the late 19th century would see its importance first dwindle and then die out. The *círio* habit of visiting the Shrine also entered a certain decline, with visits only made between parishes according to a pre-established order. However, this ritual, broken off during the period of the first Republic (1910-1926) subsequently resumed in certain cases.

To continue revitalising this tradition, in celebration of the 600th anniversary of the Sanctuary, the Municipality of Sesimbra, the current Brotherhood and the State committed themselves to the restoration and improved attractiveness of the area. However, this support proved insufficient and the Sanctuary is now under the auspices of a Revive program, a scheme run by the State to assist private investment in restoring otherwise dilapidated heritage. In this case, such an initiative should prosper given the fine geographic setting of the location ensuring the combined development of the religious and tourism facets. This program extends to the restoration of the *Houses of Círios*, for lodging pilgrims.

The legend of Our Lady of Nazaré, in Nazaré (Leiria Municipal Council), and in Arrifana, parish of Igreja Nova (Mafra Municipal Council)

According to legend, the image of Our Lady of Nazaré was venerated in the early days of Christianity in Nazareth (Galilee, Israel). It was saved in the 5th century by the Greek monk Ciriaco, who brought it to the Monastery of Cauliana, near Merida (Spain). When the Moors invaded the Iberian Peninsula and King Roderic was defeated by Tarik in the Battle of Gaudalete (711AD, southern Spain), according to the legend, this last Visigoth king did not die in battle, but he and brother Romano, a monk in the Monastery where he had been hidden, brought the image to the Atlantic coast, where they arrived in 713. Later, they separated, and Romano took the image with him, and went to live in a grotto, in the same Sítio (place) where nowadays stands the Chapel of Memory. By chance, four centuries later, according to the legend, some shepherds found the image in 1179, and people went to see the grotto and to venerate Our Lady.

This peculiar year, 1179, is when Pope Alexander III, with the *bula Manifestis Probatum* recognised Afonso as the 1st king of Portugal, and this country as an independent kingdom, even though the Spanish (Castile) had already recognized it in 1143.

In 1182, Dom Fuas Roupinho, governor at the time of the castle of Porto de Mós was in danger in the Sítio, and asked for the protection of Our Lady. When he was saved, he subsequently built a chapel in Her honour, the Chapel of Memory. The image was taken by Roupinho himself from the original grotto to the little Chapel.

The writer Ramalho Ortigão (1943:219-227, our translation) may be the best source to ‘make a bridge’ between this miracle and the transformation of the town of Nazaré into a resort since the 19th century. He gives us not only the idea, in 1876, about how many shrines and places depend on fashions, such as this one, but also we can contrast what we would call the ‘real’ devotion of rural areas, who fight against city fashions and their policies due to the strong belief that they have built up over the centuries, a little ‘outside the normal world’:

... Nazaré is mainly occupied by bathers of Caldas [da Rainha] and people from the surrounding Estremadura ... the place of baths, lies between the ancient town of Pederneira, located in a high place, and the Sítio of Nazaré, which rises in another ... The famous festival of Nazaré will be held in September and lasts three days; it includes a dancing party, bullfighting, representation in the town playhouse, etc. ... The image of Our Lady of Nazaré, whose church was built in 1370 by King Fernando, has been considered for a long time as one of the most miraculous of Christianity. It is painted wood ... and people say that it was brought from Nazareth to Merida, where it spent some time, and from Merida to the place where it is now found. The first chapel was built by D. Fuas Roupinho of Porto de Mós, in Afonso Henriques' time. The image in that time placed between two rocks on the site called the Memory ... You certainly know the story of the miracle that led to the gratitude of D. Fuas ... He had been hunting on September 14, 1182. The morning was misty The dogs spotted a stag ... and pursued closely by D. Fuas. Suddenly, the ground disappears under the hooves of the horse. D. Fuas, who had reached the edge of the large rock, hovering high above the sea. D. Fuas cried out for the image of the Virgin he had seen in his Memory. The horse rears up and stops, and in doing so the animal marked the rock with traces of horseshoes. D. Fuas dismounts and goes to give thanks to the Virgin, for having saved him from crashing into the abyss. The deer disappeared, which leads to think that it was nothing less than the living devil disguised as deer ... Since the chapel was erected by D.

Fuas, miracles have become consecutive and extraordinary. Patients without speech, without sight, paralysed legs and arms, having consulted doctors and taken baths in the nearby Caldas-da-Rainha, arrived in pious pilgrimages and recovered their health at the altar of Our Lady. Every miracle was recorded in a book ... where the narrative was authenticated by the testimony and the signing of many witnesses ... In these simple stories [of the 17th century] accompanied by details are revealed the most characteristic expression of truth ... On the miracle of D. Isabel de Moura, four hundred sick were part of the pilgrimage that begged the therapeutic intervention of the Virgin. Nowadays except for the early morning hours of conventual Mass, the temple is deserted. ... New images, modern, foreign, came to take the virtues of the old Portuguese images At the time of writing, it is the Holy Lady of Lourdes that is doing miracles, especially among polite society ... '.

In the case of the legend of the *Círio da Prata Grande/ Great Silver Candle*, a miracle took place in the village of Penedo da Arrifana, parish of Igreja Nova, in 17th century, on a route, dating back to the Moors, which reached Lisbon from the direction of Torres Vedras (near Livramento), crossing the Municipality of Mafra (specifically villages in the parish town of Igreja Nova). This miracle was the result of a personal vow made by João Manuel, an old man, who lived there. It is said that one day, while he rested under a tree, he saw a group of pilgrims, coming from the Sítio of Nazaré, who told him about the sheer number of miracles by Our Lady, including that of Fuas Roupinho. His old wife had been ill for a long time. Then, as he did not know the way to Nazaré, he asked the pilgrims if he might go with them to the Shrine the following year. As they had become acquainted, the following year he went with them and asked Our Lady to heal his wife. In return, he promised Our Lady that he would come back to pay his vow. As the Lady listened, he returned to the Shrine, with his wife (and his donkey), on four occasions. During that time, João Manuel had been talking with his parish priest to give him the credentials to enter the Shrine and take advantage of all the benefits, including the possibility of buying a flag with the sphinx of Our Lady. He bought the flag, with other pilgrims of Arrifana and Igreja Nova. This flag, displayed in the Shrine, at the head of the pilgrimage, returned to the Church of Igreja Nova, where it stayed until the following year. The pilgrim statue replaced the flag, representing Our Lady, in the 18th century.

The Brotherhood of Our Lady of Nazaré (Nazaré), the Brotherhood of Our Lady of Nazaré of Pederneira (Igreja Nova, Mafra), their treasures and facilities for receiving pilgrims at the Shrine

The Brotherhood of Our Lady of Nazaré, which substituted the oldest Royal House of Our Lady of Nazaré (controlled by the Portuguese crown, which had substituted the previous order, created in the 17th century by the leading men of Pederneira), was set up in 1926 and their statutes were approved in 1933. This happened following the implementation of the 1st Republic (1910). The Brotherhood undertakes religious, cultural and social work.

The diffusion of the miracle of Fuas Roupinho, above all by Brito Alão in the beginning of 17th century, contributed not only to creating one of the most important pilgrimage centres of the Modern Epoch in Portugal, but also to enriching the heritage and the treasures of the Virgin of Nazaré by the 19th century. The Brotherhood of Our Lady of Nazaré has a book, dated 1642, containing a description of all the donations in gold and plate as well as other treasures, which belonged to the Virgin in 1608. This heritage grew still further before being looted by Napoleonic forces in the early 19th century.

In Igreja Nova, the vow of João quickly became a community vow, and year after year the number of pilgrims grew, not only those who belonged to the parish of Igreja Nova, but also others who came from the surrounding neighbourhoods and councils. In 1722, there were ten parishes. The total number of 17 parishes was probably reached in 1730.

In 1722 the pilgrim figure of Our Lady was acquired. It is the same figure that is currently used every year, during the annual celebrations, to each of the seventeen parishes that constitute the *giro*, and also which goes to Nazaré every year, *to visit her Mother* (as the faithful usually say), taken by the parish which is in charge of the organisation of the pilgrimage and the feast. Thus, while the pilgrim figure of Our Lady of Nazaré dates to the 18th century, the pilgrim figure of Our Lady of Cabo Espichel is of an uncertain date, according to Pato (2008).

The *Brotherhood of Our Lady of Nazareth of Pederneira – Great Silver Candle / Círio da Prata Grande* had their statutes - *Commitments of the Brotherhoods of Our Lady of Nazaré, located in Igreja Nova* - signed in 1732. However, the general agreements ('acórdãos geraes') were approved in 1741,

by the Cardinal of Lisbon, Thomas de Almeida (the first Patriarch of Lisbon, named by Pope Clement XI, in 1716), on 17th March 1741, during the reign of João V (1706 - 1750) (Simões, 2010).

The municipalities, parishes, protector saints and churches that receive the *Círio da Prata Grande* pilgrims number thirteen in the Municipality of Mafra:

- Igreja Nova (Our Lady of Conceição);
- Mafra (1st Saint André, afterwards Virgin Mary, Basilica of Mafra);
- Santo Isidoro (Saint Isidoro);
- Cheleiros (Our Lady of Assumption of the Reclamador);
- Encarnação (Saint Domingos of Fanga da Fé);
- Carvoeira (Our Lady of O);
- Ericeira (Saint Peter Apostle);
- Alcainça (Saint Michael);
- Sobral da Abelheira (Our Lady of Olive);
- Santo Estevão da Galé (Saint Stephen);
- Gradil (Saint Silvester);
- Azueira (Saint Peter of the Chains);
- Enxara do Bispo (Our Lady of the Assumption),

three in the Municipality of Sintra:

- Montelavar (Our Lady of Purification);
- Terrugem (Saint John the Beheaded);
- S. João das Lampas (Saint John)

and one in the Municipality of Torres Vedras:

- S. Pedro da Cadeira (Saint Peter of Antioquia).

As there were many uncertainties over which parish should be the first to celebrate, King João V ordered that the oldest must be the first (in this case, Igreja Nova), followed by the others, according to the dates of joining the Brotherhood. Nowadays, the treasures (gifts of gold and plate) of Our Lady of Nazaré are kept in banks, by members of the Brotherhood; Our Lady of Nazaré, the pilgrim figure of the *Círio da Prata Grande* has many fine and rich mantles, and many other kinds of gifts (such as that from the Candle of Nazareth in Brazil or from Our Lady of the Cape Espichel).

Some of the shrines were built with hospitals and guest houses to shelter pilgrims, such as the Shrine of Our Lady of Virtues of Aveiras de Baixo (Azambuja), as

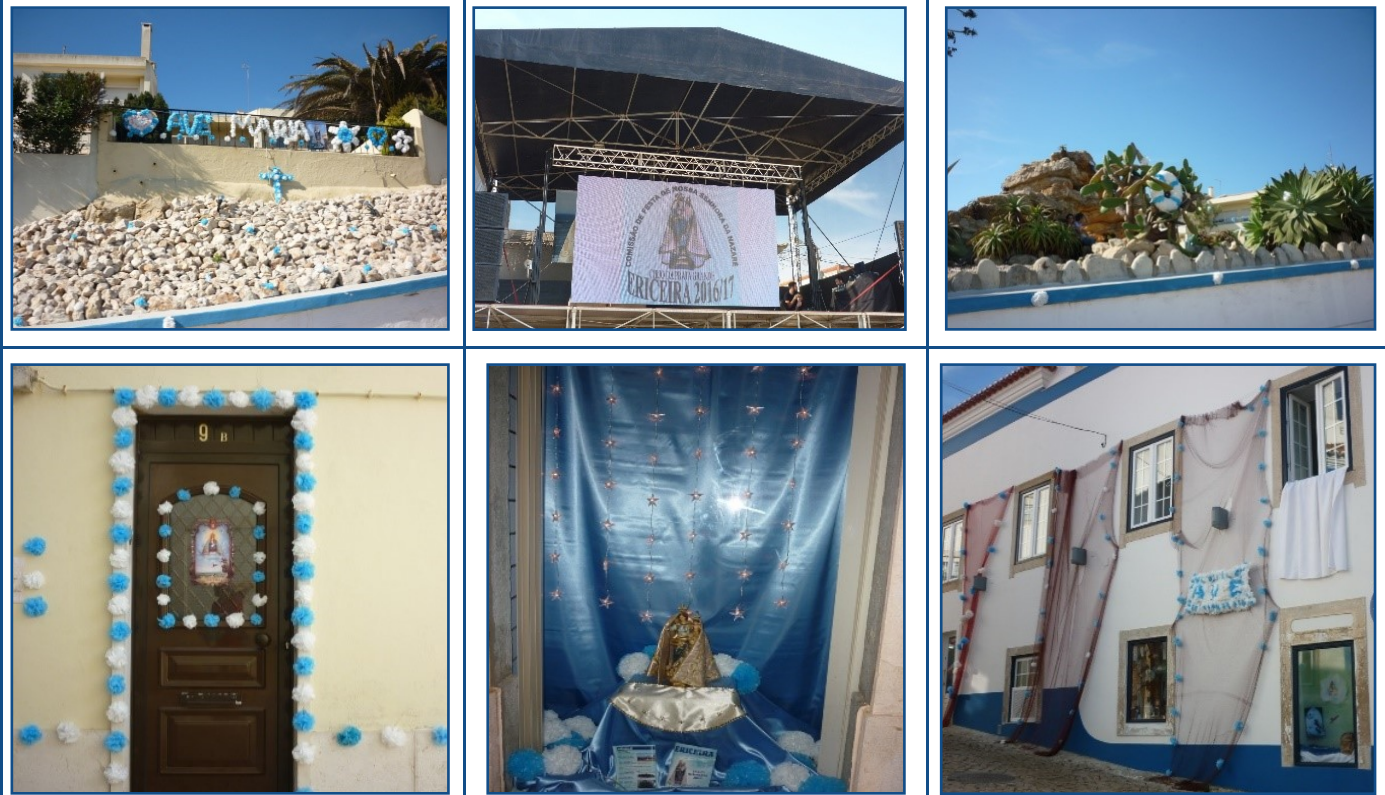
ordered by King Duarte, in recognition to the Virgin after the Portuguese conquest of Ceuta (Marroco, 1415). The shrine was to receive pilgrims, arriving from all over continental Portugal, while including some arrivals from North Africa; or the Shrine of Our Lady of Cape, which also has an abundance of infrastructure, including accommodation for pilgrims, ordered built by the *Círio* of Lisboa in the 18th century.

In the *Sítio* of Nazaré, the impressive Shrine, was surrounded by walls, in the 17th century, according to Alão (2001: 110-111) the houses of the pilgrims were 'more than 30' for normal people, and 'paços' (palaces) for the nobles. Other houses were only for clergymen. There was also an enormous bread oven. The *Candles* were always 'lit' and maintained by the 'ermitão' (hermit), who was obliged to provide 'clay dishes and provisions to sell to the pilgrims, even when pilgrims were not in attendance.

Brito Alão, in the 17th century, made an almost 'avant-la-lettre' tourism study about the growth, development and planning of this Shrine. Chapter 23 is dedicated to the subject of: 'The amount of growth in the number of residents in the settlement of the *Sítio* of Our Lady of Nazaré' (2001:107-109), where he refers to the development of *Sítio*. Today, the Brotherhood maintains the Palace, the Theatre, the Bullring (for the festival after the religious celebration), the 'Coreto' (where musicians perform), and the Hospital. The area is surrounded by the houses of the *Sítio*'s inhabitants and others built by the *Círios*, such as the house of the *Círio da Prata Grande* (which has a street with its name).

The *Brotherhood of Our Lady of Nazareth of Pederneira* of Igreja Nova acquired a house in the *Sítio*, with two floors, to house pilgrims from the 17 participant parishes who wish to stay there. Throughout the centuries, many of these pilgrims arrived by foot, by donkey, by horse or by carriage, whenever they have money. Nowadays, people usually arrive by car. The income from rents is distributed among all the parishes. This also serves for repairs and maintenance of the properties owned by the Brotherhood and provides additional income for the organisation of the religious festival. The *Berlinda* that carries the Virgin was acquired and is maintained by the Brotherhood.

Fig. 6: Streets, Houses, Shops of Ericeira, prepared to receive the Virgin of Nazaré, adorned with the colours of Our



Photos by Authors

Organisation, Symbols and Rituals of the Círio da Prata Grande

Nowadays, the *Círio da Prata Grande* pilgrimage is symbolised neither by the richness of the silver nor the lavishness of the donations as in times past, but rather by some religious objects in silver, connected to the ritual of the pilgrimage itself and to the Pilgrim statue of Our Lady (the current one was bought by the Brotherhood in the 18th century). The *Círios* are promoted generally by the Brotherhoods, such as the *Brotherhood of Círio da Prata Grande*, in Igreja Nova, with the organising commission generally comprising the priest of the parish, judges, treasurers, registrars and festival organisers. Generally, these people are the ‘important’ people in the community. People without money or special social ranking also help in the organisation of the event. The former ‘wealthy’ people generally take part in the procession on horseback or in carriages, dressed in 18th century costumes (Fig. 7).

However, more recently, ad-hoc organisations of people manage the religious event and organise the popular festival. Sometimes, parishes only organize the religious celebration and correspondingly do not organise activities other than the arrival or departure of

Our Lady from the parish. Igreja Nova, like other *Círio da Prata Grande* parishes, as well as in the city of Nazaré, always organises the religious procession and the ‘profane’ festival, which takes the form of the entire community sharing the joys of receiving Her or, when leaving the parish, the sadness of the moment, with family and friends. Some older people fear that, 17 years later, they will not be around to receive and greet Her again in their own parish.

When Our Lady leaves the parish, following the farewell mass in the church where She has been on display, people sing the goodbye *Loas* as they render Her to the congregation of the next parish. The flag of the parish organising the religious event is present, as well as a ‘flag’ which represents Our Lady of Nazaré and Fuas Roupinho’s miracle, that is always in the beginning of the pilgrimage. The *Círio da Prata Grande* pilgrimage, is always very honourable and splendid, and to render Our Lady to another parish, the honour is bestowed on the Republican National Guard (GNR), on horseback; wealthy farmers on horses; wealthy farmers in horse-drawn carriages and in 18th century attire; the Angels, in carriages, who sing the *loas*. Afterwards comes the *Berlinda*, a little

Fig. 7: Círio da Nazaré. Igreja Nova, 2009, and Saint Peter's Church, Ericeira, 2016



Photos by Authors

carriage pulled by horses, made from glass and wood. The wood is decorated with the Portuguese Coat of Arms and D. Fuas Roupinho's miracle. Inside, in the Virgin's Seat, is the Pilgrim statue of Our Lady. Outside of the Berlinda, at the back, are two of the Our Lady's churchwardens, dressed in 18th century costume, and trailed by the pilgrims by foot (Fig. 10).

To receive Our Lady people come, not only from the parish accepting Her, but also people from other parishes in the same *Círio* as well as others from different regions, who come to see the arrival. Everybody gathers either in the Church receiving Our Lady, or outside, because there is generally not the space within for the numbers in attendance (like in 2009, in Igreja Nova, or in 2016, in Ericeira). There is a celebration when Our Lady arrives and not only the Angels but also everybody there can sing the *Loas*. After this ceremony, devotees approach the statue of Our Lady and touch Her, generally donating money as well as some strands of gold or silver to pay for their vows.

The Angels take responsibility for the singing of the *Loas*, the religious songs dedicated to Our Lady, throughout the pilgrimage and whenever the procession stops in certain places (towns or villages) on the already agreed itinerary. These are all young males and must be aged under 12. They represent the voice of popular purity, the people who wish to be in touch with Our Lady (or Jesus or the Saint of devotion in other cases).

The founder of the religious Order of Cistercians, Saint Bernard of Clairveaux (1090-1153), cousin of our first king, Afonso Henriques, was one of the most important proponents of Marian worship in 12th century Portugal. St. Bernard's tomb lies in the Monastery of Alcobaça (Portugal), a world heritage site, founded on the wishes of Afonso Henriques, which is nowadays the best-preserved Cistercian monastery in Europe. Saint Bernard composed the famous *De laudibus Virginis Matris* (poems to the Virgin Breastfeeding Jesus). Later, the King of Castile, Alphonse X, compiled (1270-90) the *Songs / Loas to Saint Mary*, also in honour of the Virgin. We can today find the

remains of these medieval *loas*. The *loas*, in the oral tradition, are religious songs with music and poems dedicated to the Virgin, handed down from generation to generation throughout centuries.

The current model of *loas* dates to the 19th and 20th centuries. In the case of the *Círio da Prata Grande*, in the 21st century, they inform us, for example, of the visit by pilgrims from Igreja Nova to Enxara do Bispo to fetch the Virgin that is to stay in their parish for the next year (Alves, 2009: 22-33, own translation).

Finally comes the time / so long expected / To bring to Igreja Nova / The Immaculate Virgin ... / We left full of faith / For Enxara do Bispo / To honour the Virgin of Nazaré / And her son Jesus Christ. (Start of the pilgrimage from Igreja Nova to Enxara do Bispo)

... Among you is passing / Mary with her coat of arms / To always want to stay / Next to your hearts ... / Having you here alongside / Mary of Nazareth / To whom our grandparents / attributed such great faith (In the places of passage)

... Brothers we arrived / To Enxara do Bispo / With our steps guided / By the Divine Mother of Christ ... Seventeen years passed / With a longing in our hearts / Here we are together / To welcome Mary ... United in the same faith / sharing the same love / For the Virgin of Nazaré / Our Mother and the Lord (Arrival at Enxara do Bispo)

... In the procession / The people walk with faith / Following the Queen of Portugal / Lady of Nazaré ... / It's the Star that guides us / shining Sun that never sets, / Light that always shines / Lighthouse in shallow sea. / ... When we suffer in life / grief and sorrow / To the Virgin we resort / Looking for Her tenderness (Sunday 13, after the procession in Enxara do Bispo).

The Image and the Legend of Our Lady of Nazaré, in Religion, in the Arts, in Literature

This Nazaré statue is one example of the black virgins found across the Europe of the middle ages, but, according to legend, this is the first and only image of Our Lady made by Saint Joseph himself and in the presence of the Virgin Mary (Pato, 2008). Arising out of the 13th century tradition that attributes a lot of importance to the oriental colour of the Virgin, perceived as more genuine for normal people, another interpretation stems from Saint Luke himself who

made some images of the Virgin and painted them during Her life. In this way, the artistic objective of the artisan workshop that produced the Virgin was to associate it with eastern origins and a certain degree of historicity (Justino, 2004, Pereira, 2006, V.8). For some researchers, the supposed antiquity of these figures of the virgin was a strategy to confer prestige on the shrines, sometimes without any chronological basis (Pato, 2008). The Nazaré figure, is probably a replacement of an earlier figure, dated between the 14th and 15th centuries. According to Pato (2008), while the pilgrim figure of Our Lady of Cabo appears to be of an uncertain date, that of Our Lady of Nazaré dates to the 18th century, the moment when the devotion to Our Lady of Nazaré began to resurge in Igreja Nova and other places.

Until the 17th century, the iconography of the Virgin, represented as a Breastfeeding Virgin, sat and with black hands and face - was more connected with sea life, especially connected to fishermen (Justino, 2004: 59) and maritime explorers, than the miracle of Fuas Roupinho. However, as Brito Alão depicts in his book (1628), an anonymous engraving already existed which represented the miracle of Fuas Roupinho. Thus, from the 17th century to the 21st century, iconography about the legend of D. Fuas once again re-emerges. Furthermore, artists then began representing it in their works such as the 17th century painting by Luís de Almeida in the sacristy, or the stained glassed window of Quinta da Regaleira (Sintra, 19th century) or 'D. Fuas Roupinho' (1945), the fresco in Gare Marítima de Alcântara, made by José de Almada Negreiros (1873 - 1970).

The fascist policy during the dictatorship period (1933-1974) sought to transform the image of human hardship, such as the lives of fishermen and rural workers, into an image of 'Joy in Work'. Furthermore, it sought to displace devotion from this ancient shrine to the newly founded Shrine of Fatima (with the first apparition of the Virgin there in 1917), with a message against the Soviet Revolution (1917) and communism. This policy contributed to transforming the religious image of one of the most important shrines in central Portugal into a simple one of a picturesque coastal town with fishermen and their wives dressed with their seven colourful skirts and a resort for tourists. However, despite all the efforts to mould the reality, not only painters but also Portuguese photographers, film directors and writers continued to 'talk', directly or indirectly, about this miracle, this place and the hard lives of fishermen and their wives (Leitão, 2012) and the religious festival dedicated to the Virgin of Nazaré.

Fig. 8: Proposed itinerary A

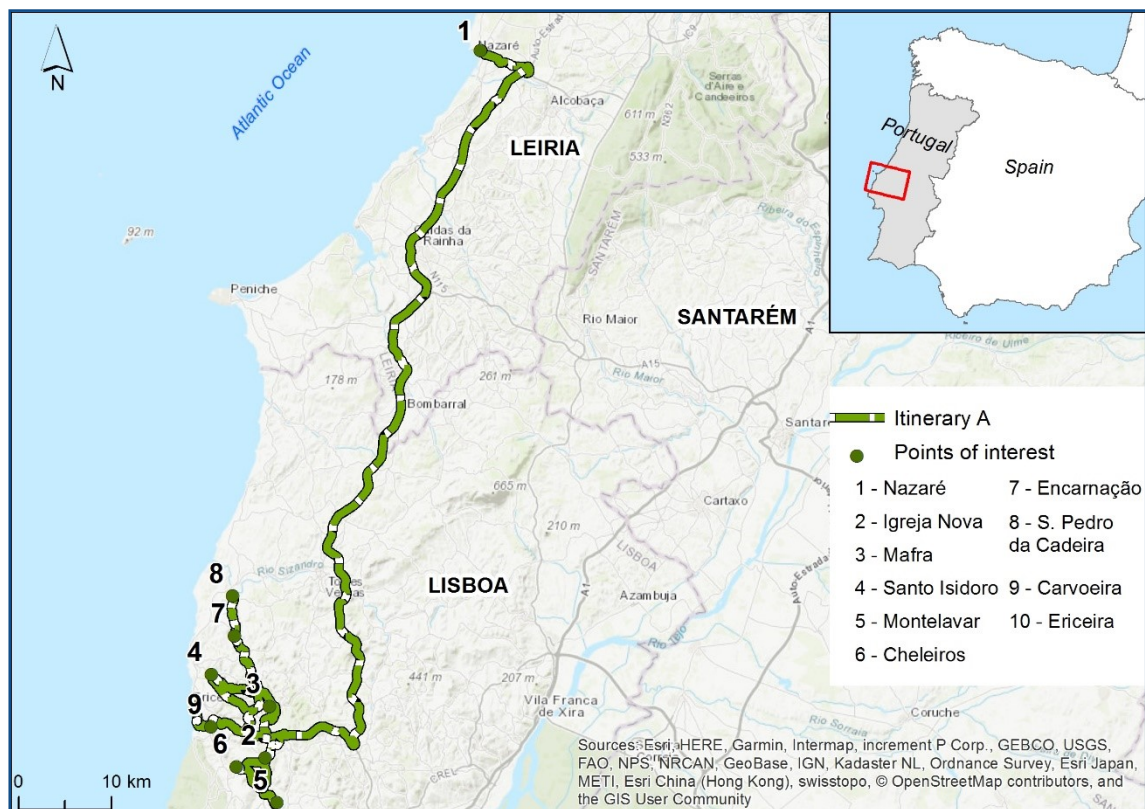


Fig. 9: Proposed itinerary B

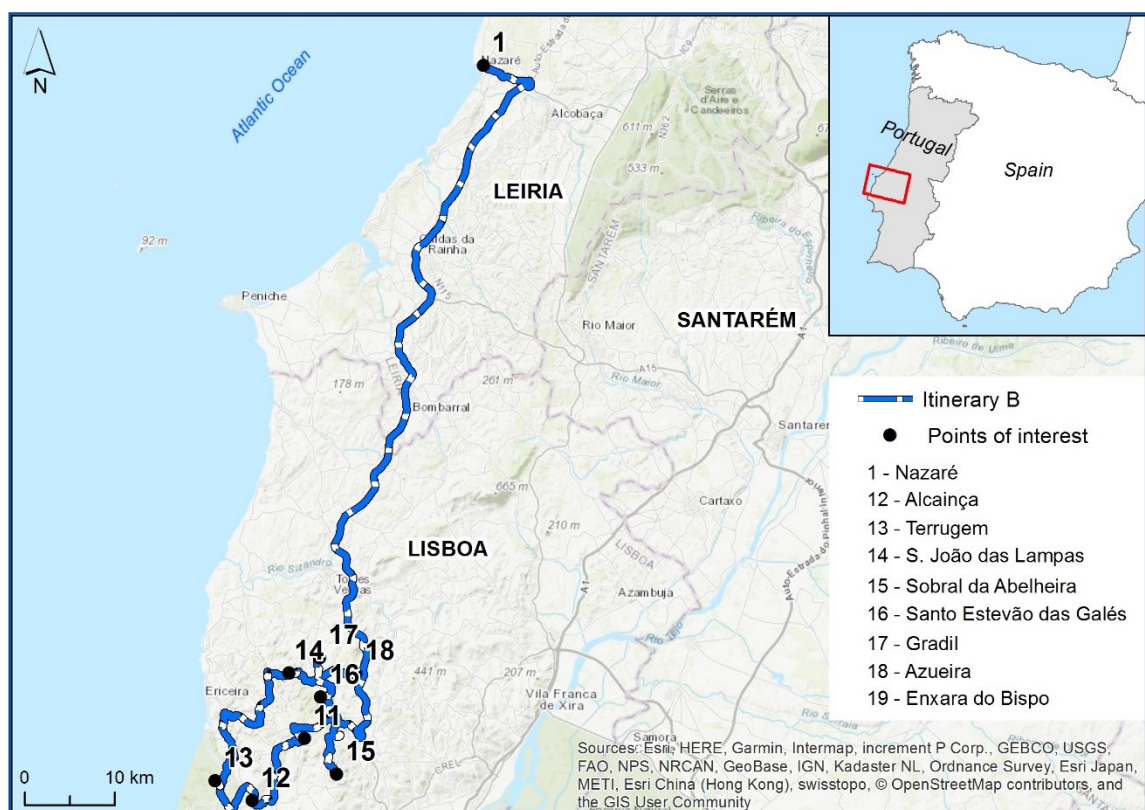


Fig. 10: Church of Our Lady of Conceição of Igreja Nova, House of Agreement of the Brotherhood, Museum of Our Lady of Nazaré, with the Berlinda and ex-votos



Photos by Authors

Proposed Itinerary

The proposed itinerary of the *Círio da Prata Grande* involves four Municipalities (Mafra, Sintra, Torres Vedras and Nazaré), hosting the parishes and the protector saints and churches that receive the pilgrim image of the Virgin of Nazaré (Fig. 8 and 9).

The parishes and churches are outlined in the following sections:

Igreja Nova

Church of Our Lady of Conceição (Fig. 10) Commissioned by Manuel I at the beginning of the 16th century, in the time of the Discoveries. The church was partially destroyed by the 1755 earthquake, and rebuilt in 1874. In 1984, destroyed by fire, but again rebuilt. Surviving from the original construction, there is a Manueline entranceway. There are, among other points of interest, a portico of the bell tower and the baptismal font. There is, outside, a building, the House of the Agreement (dated of 1904), maybe in reference to the founding of the Brotherhood, which also functions to host Brotherhood reunions. Also, outside there is a

Museum, which functions to host the Brotherhood belongings. Among other objects, the Museum displays the ex-votos, offered to Our Lady, the Berlinda, the throne of Our Lady, used during the processions on foot, old *Loas*, etc. This parish is also a member of the *Giro Saloio* of Our Lady of the Cape.

Mafra I

Church of Saint André – Located in the ‘Old Town’ of Mafra, commissioned during the reign of Denis I, with the first document dated from 1297, Gothic ‘parish’ style, with preservation works completed in the 16th and 20th centuries. The Basilica of Mafra replaced the church.

Mafra II

Basilica of the Royal Palace and Convent of Mafra. Currently, this site spans about four hectares (37,790m²). Commissioned by King João V, who vowed to build a monastery for the Order of S. Francis, were God to give him a successor. God gave him his heir, the future king José I. The first stone, laid on the 17th of November of 1717, was dedicated to Our Lady

and to Saint Anthony. This complex has a Library, considered one of the most beautiful in the world, with 40,000 volumes, a Ward, a Pharmacy, etc. The interior and exterior are in the Basil marbles of Portugal and Carrara. The two Basilica carillons, with 49 bells apiece, are one of the largest historic sets in the world, as well as the six simultaneously designed and built organs, which were originally conceived to be played as a set, constitute a unique collection worldwide. This is the largest baroque monument in Portugal and one of the largest in Europe.

Santo Isidoro

Church of Saint Isidoro – built in the 16th century during the reign of Manuel I, with subsequent work in the 17th (with polychrome tile panels, gilded woodcarving) and 18th centuries.

Montelavar

Church Our Lady of Purification – Initially dedicated to St. Mary, before 1348, the first decades of the 16th century saw construction of the actual Church, with its Manueline style influences and, following the establishing of the parish, the church name changed to Our Lady of Purification. There are polychrome, 17th century tiles and an 18th century altarpiece. There have been restoration works this century. This parish is also a member of the *Giro Saloio* of Our Lady of the Cape.

Cheleiros

Our Lady of Redemption, Igreja Matriz de Nossa Senhora de Rocamador / do Reclamador – Referred to already in Medieval times (King Afonso II), the Gothic style testifies to its construction at the end of the 13th and the beginning of the 14th centuries during the reign of King Denis. In the 16th century, under Manuel I, the church underwent transformation and since then has kept its Manueline symbols, such as the armillary sphere and the baptismal font. There are also polychrome, 17th century tile panels, as well as a tower bell in the King John V style and a baroque organ. The church underwent restoration between the 1940s and 1950s.

Encarnação

Church of Saint Domingos of Fanga da Fé, Church of Encarnação – The Chapel of Saint Domingos of Fanga da Fé, was the parish church, but, was destroyed by the earthquake of 1755. Although restored and functioning until the 19th century, it was replaced by the Church of Our Lady of Encarnação, which became the parish church. The latter was built at the beginning of the 17th century, in the Mannerist style, with the interior in

Baroque, with blue and yellow 17th century tiles, and blue and white 18th century tiles, as well as marble and gilded woodcarvings from the same century. There are many different representations of the Virgin including six canvases by André Gonçalves (1685-1754), the same painter who was working in the Palace of Mafra, in the early years of the 1730s.

S. Pedro da Cadeira

Church of S. Pedro da Cadeira – This was built in the second quarter of the 16th century, and rebuilt in the 17th century, by King João IV and subsequently again in the 18th century. There are 17th century tiles and gilded 18th century wood carvings. The Church, badly damaged by the 1755 earthquake, underwent substantial rebuilding to receive Our Lady of Nazaré, the Great Silver Candle in 1761 (the last was in 2015). There are some canvas paintings, possibly by Bento Coelho da Silveira (1620-1706).

Carvoeira

The Church of Our Lady of O – This has only an uncertain date of building, as it was abandoned. Some of the 18th century finishings and contents disappeared (such as the valuable mass books), with the exception of a sun clock. The church was rebuilt in 1983 and in 1988 it was robbed and lost almost all its images, including that of Our Lady of O.

Ericeira

Church of Saint Peter the Apostle – This was first a small Chapel outside the village, built in 1446. The chapel became the main place of worship in 1530, as demonstrated by the Renaissance image of St. Peter on the lateral south door. Of Manueline style, there is a baptismal chapel, adjacent to the church. The transformation of the chapel into a church began in the middle of the 17th century and finished in 1745, in the reign of João V. Inside, we encounter the Rococo style and images, which feature the miraculous fishing of St. Peter, as well as, among others, a depiction of St. Anthony of Lisbon / Padua.

São Miguel de Alcainça

Church of Saint Michael – This church is one of the oldest in the Municipality of Mafra and dates from the early 14th century (as do the Churches of S. André and Cheleiros). The structure has correspondingly undergone many transformations over its history, especially in the 16th century. It contains important 17th and 18th century tiles across much of its wall surface.

Terrugem

Church of Saint John the Beheaded – dates to the 15th century, with transformations undertaken during the reign of Manuel I in the 16th century, which modernised both urban and rural churches. Following the 18th century interventions (bell tower and porch entrance), the temple displays the same architecture as others which characterise the rural regions. Inside, there are important 17th century tiles finishing the walls. The main Chapel is in Manueline style, with vegetal motifs. This parish is also a member of the *Giro Saloio* of Our Lady of Cape.

S. João Baptista das Lampas

Church of Saint John – The first documented reference to this parish dates from 1421 as does the parish church. With this Late Gothic origin, this church, as others, underwent transformation during the reign of Manuel I, with visible traces on the interior and exterior of the monument. In the 17th century, the church was embellished with gilded carvings and different kinds of tiles (*cuerda-seca*, *aresta*, *Mudejar*), covering the walls. Outside, 18th century developments included a sun clock, bell tower and porch. This parish is also a member of the *Giro Saloio* of Our Lady of Cape.

Sobral da Abelheira

Church of Our Lady of the Olive – The founding date of this church remains uncertain. It is a temple of rural architectural design with a Manueline entranceway. From the 17th century, the main Chapel contains gilded woodcarvings and tiles covering the walls, especially in the main-altar, where they represent the miracle of Our Lady of the Olive. During the 20th century, the church experienced some transformations and restoration work.

Santo Estevão das Galés

Church of Saint Stephen – The rural architecture of this temple contrasts with the Moorish 18th century tiles lining the interior of the Church, as well as with the ceiling and choir stall decorated in polychrome paintings also dating to the 18th century. Outside, there is a bell tower from the same period. This parish is also a member the *Giro Saloio* of Our Lady of Cape.

Gradil

Church of Saint Silvester – King Denis donated this village to Pero Salgado, court treasurer, in 1302. After he died, it returned to the crown. King Afonso IV bestowed a charter on the village (1327) and, later, Manuel I renewed this charter (1519). The temple

displays a rural architecture style with a single nave. This must have served as a church previously, in the 16th century, because inside the church there remain some decorative features from this period, such as baptismal font. The current church dates to the end of the 17th century. Tiles, from the 18th century, line the interior walls of the Church, with a wooden ceiling. The organ is an 18th century instrument. The main Chapel displays gilded woodcarvings with a Baroque style façade.

Azueira

Church of Saint Peter of the Chains – The date of foundation of this church is still uncertain even though there are documents dated 1566 that refer to it. The 1755 earthquake, destroyed the original temple. It was rebuilt at the end of the 18th century, with the bell tower added in the same century. The interior has only a single nave even though the church contains five altars. As the church was robbed and looted on several occasions, mass has been celebrated in Livramento Church.

Enxara do Bispo

Church of Our Lady of Assumption – References to the cult of Our Lady of Assumption of the Mountain date from the 13th century. The Church was built in the 16th century during the reign of Manuel I and consecrated in 1534. There is a baptismal room with Manueline decoration. With a single nave, 17th century tiles line the interior walls of the Church, as well as painted panels and altarpieces. The main chapel is in gilded woodcarvings. The façade displays a Baroque style.

Final Reflections

... the church of Our Lady of Nazaré, where in mid-September is held the most renowned pilgrimage of all Estremadura, ... that brings into the town about 25,000 people. ... Then the village comes to life: there are bullfights, fairs, fireworks, processions, praises sung by the angels ... followed by the cars of the pilgrims, accompanied by harmonicas and bongos. (Raúl Proença, 1991:643, our translation)

The period when the *Cirios* pilgrimages takes place, the festive gathering of people and pilgrims corresponds harmoniously to the end of the harvesting cycle (August/September), and has no predetermined date, a fact that reinforces its character of cyclical fertility, of regeneration and transformation, of deep and pagan roots, which underpin devotion to the Virgin of Nazaré.

From the 17th century to the early 20th century, people from different places and social classes went on pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Nazaré. Collective pilgrimages departed from Pederneira, Penela, Santarém, Coimbra, Sintra, Ericeira, Colares, Mafra, S. Pedro de Dois Portos, Almargem do Bispo, Óbidos, Porto de Mós, Alcobaça, Alhandra, and Lisboa, belonging to different *Círios*, maybe 25 in total. Almost all of them have set dates for celebrations but otherx (9) organise their pilgrimage for the day before or the same day as the entrance of the *Great Silver Candle*: the Saturday after the Thursday following 8th September (the Feast Day of Our Lady). In the 1920s, thousands of people flocked to this Shrine, as they continue to.

Nowadays, the number of *Círios* staging the annual religious celebrations has fallen. Among the most important, regarding Our Lady of Nazaré, we have the *Great Silver Candle*, and those of Óbidos or Penela. The latter locations and Brotherhoods were also listed by Alão (2001:127-128, Chapter 31):

On the Brotherhoods of Penela, Santarém and Coimbra who come to this Holy House with their festivals, that are held on the Second Day / Eve and on the Day of the Assumption of Our Lady, the 15th of August.

All the Brotherhoods acted (and act...) in mutual competition regarding donations and offerings made, whether in terms of quantity of silver required for the making of the candle that represented them and was there in the Sanctuary (thus, the *Great Silver Candle* reference), as well as over the arrival of the pilgrims / *Círio* to the Sanctuary. This was normally designed to impress through the numbers of people, offerings, carts, horses and riders, who would then stage a series of parallel events (games, fireworks, moralising comedy performances) independent of the great devotion that accompanied the religious dimension. This was such a large event that around the site, the pilgrims, with all their tents 'seemed like an army of many thousand souls' (Alão, 2001:129). This was indeed one of the most important shrines in Portugal, before the appearance (1917) and consolidation of the Shrine of Fatima.

Nowadays, in some parishes, where the *Círios* (and other kinds of religious processions) have not been celebrated for a long time or have not visited the Shrine within the scope of their devotions, the tradition is returning. We think this will also be the case for some parishes connected with Our Lady of Cabo Espichel. Already visited by some of the *giro saloio* *círios*, this

Shrine may one day flourish more strongly than it currently does. The restoration works, while advancing only slowly, are taking place and shall certainly contribute to the re-emergence of this site from a religious and cultural point of view.

We consider it very important, for the development of tourism, for economic development, to foster the visibility and profile of these places. In this sense, creating religious and cultural itineraries, linking brotherhoods, councils, parishes and their tangible and intangible heritage, would seem one of the best ways to achieve this goal. It is important not only that councils, dioceses, brotherhoods, the tourist sector and the community that receives these events, provide the best quality of service possible at these religious sites but also that they act to ensure points of information, inside and outside the sites, and accurately register the number of visitors.

In addition to establishing an itinerary, which may be visited outside of the period when the parishes celebrate the *Círios*, all the communities and councils involved in the *Great Silver Candle* must learn how to better value this heritage to attract people outside of the pilgrimage period. Preferably, the churches connected with the *Círios* would be open all day to enable visits as well as providing information about other nearby places of interest. They might have published copies of the *Loas*, outside of the religious period, and sell souvenirs from a small bookshop or even a small supermarket or souvenir shop opened for this purpose. For instance, when we visit the Basilica of Mafra, one of the most important monuments in Portugal, we do not find any information, in the Convent bookshop, about the *Círio da Prata Grande*.

We believe that one of the greatest advantages Municipalities might gain from dynamically running a *Great Silver Candle* itinerary is that the rivalry and envy among parishes, still evident today, could end. Alão (2001:127) talked about it 400 years ago as regards the Brotherhoods:

so fervently dedicated to the service of Our lady, that everything among them is subject to saintly envy over who is celebrating the best.

For instance, some people claim that the fire, which destroyed a lot of the heritage and walls of the Igreja Nova church, was criminal arson by a rival from another parish. Sometimes we encountered this rivalry in the way people referenced the other parishes. The region would gain from eliminating such rivalry, and bringing these parishes together to ensure collective engagement with this project.

On the other hand, for certain people, particularly those who opt for introspection and silence, the crowds and *touristified* space associated with some religious shrines or sanctuaries, might not constitute the best means of expressing their religious (and even cultural) feelings. In this sense, should people wish to share the particular ambience of the Portuguese *Círios*, without encountering large crowds, on the date accorded by the community to the pilgrimage they can do so. Should they prefer to embark on the a quiet personal solo pilgrimage, they can do that also.

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