

THE WATER PROBLEM

The water necessity since always drove the people to the proximity of the rivers. And since has thousand of years, the man searched to dominate the water and to defend himself against the lacks and the excesses (or either floodings) which so many problems caused. For example, to protect himself of floodings, the man raises levees; to carry the water, he constructs canals, aqueducts and behaviors; to bring the water of lower zones he invents mechanisms full of imagination. Wells, fountains, watering holes, reservoirs and aqueducts are also constructions of the man to supply the water to populations. Therefore, through these constructions we can know many of the History of the populations during the centuries and the way as they lived.



Although to be a city bathed for a river, and a river with a wide estuary, Lisboa nor always had water enough to supply its population. The problem is that the water of the estuary of the Tejo is salty. Lisboa nor always had water enough to supply its population. During many centuries, the problems to the return of the water had persisted, making it difficult the life of the inhabitants and being the cause of many conflicts and concerns. The water lack always marked the life of the city and was responsible for three surrenders of the History of Lisbon: During the Arabian occupation, when surrounded for D. Afonso Henriques (first Portuguese King) in 1147 and also during the surrounding of the Castilians, in 1373. Or either, the water lack also was a problem of military type, because to conquer Lisboa, was enough to surround it and the population finished for surrendering, not for the force or fear of the enemy's weapons, but because of the thirst and also of the illnesses (over all the plague). With the water lack, it had little hygiene and, therefore, it died much people of contagious diseases.

The water lack in Lisbon was aggravated in century XV and in 1478, King D. João II ordered to arrange the *Chafariz d'El Rey* and, in 1494, the *Chafariz dos Cavalos*, best known by *Chafariz de Dentro*. The water lack was so great that the people had to make great queues next to the few wells and fountains. To such point that they were frequent scenes of physical conflicts, to the extreme of some deaths, because of a water wire. The people used to said; *that he went himself for water and returned in blood!* In 1551, the Municipal Senate of Lisboa published laws that put discipline in the use of the pipes of the *Chafariz d'El Rey*.

Years later, Francisco de Holanda, in 1571, also advised King D. Sebastião to construct a new aqueduct, because as he said at the time that:

“And gain, Your Highness, this honour of giving this benefit to Lisbon (or have it be given) of restoring this fountain of Free Water, that is its name, to this city that is dying of thirst and no water is given to it.”

(in *Da Fábrica que Falece à Cidade de Lisboa*, dated 1571, first published 1879)

The King, who still was very young, although seemed enthusiastic with the idea but, as the History tells, finished by dying in *Alcácer Quibir* (Morocco), without giving to drink to the city and leaving the Kingdom of Portugal in the hands of the Filipes of Spain.

THE AQUEDUCT

Only much more late, in the reign of D. João V, a project came of new gaining force: Cláudio Gorgel do Amaral, solicitor of the city (a species of councilman of the City council) insisted next to the King so that a solution should be found: A new Aqueduct. The King ordered to study how much it'll cost and who would pay for the workmanship. After great quarrels, the people accepted that the King launched new taxes on the meat, the wine and the oil consumed in Lisboa. And was thus that, in 12 of May of 1731, the decree for the construction of an aqueduct, *Aqueduto das Águas Livres*, is signed.



The Romans had been the first ones to look to a solution for this situation, being the responsible ones for the construction of the first aqueduct that brought beautiful waters from Belas to the city, supplying health-resorts, public baths and sources. However, in the Average Age, it only remained some vestiges of this old aqueduct of a little or no use in those days.

Although all the polemic that had involved the workmanship, in 1748 the waters started to ran on the new aqueduct. However, only in 1799, sixty seven years after the beginning of the construction, the workmanship has considered as totally finished.

The main objective of the aqueduct was to supply the fountains that, however, had been constructed of by all the city. They were; *Chafariz das Amoreiras*, *Entrecampos*, *Janelas Verdes*, *Estrela*, *Rato*, *Carmo*, *Esperança*, *Cais do Tojo*, *Flores* and many others. Some of these fountains also had tanks for the laudering of clothes.

The aqueduct is one of the city's inspiring icons. It covers a distance of nearly 15 km to bring water from the outskirts to the city centre. One of the most majestic works of engineering of the XVII century, the aqueduct represents a long desired project.

Also a part of this monumental set are the multiple subsidiary aqueducts, galleries, fountains as well as the emblematic *Mãe d'Água das Amoreiras* in a total of 58 km of constructions. The construction began in 1752, from a design

by Carlos Mardel. It represented the place of water arrival. Its name, *Mãe d'Água*, actually stands for, Mother of Water. Its structure is integrated in the tradition of the portuguese "plane architecture", a style that refers to a defiance of horizontal lines, proportion, symmetry and sobriety in the volumes and front walls.

The overall conception and planning of this work was given to Manuel Da Maia, working with Custódio Vieira. But the new "winds" from Central Europe would be brought by Carlos Mardel (Martell Károly), a Hungarian architect. The most beautiful constructions whole complex, fountains and terminus of *Amoreiras*, were conceived by him. Carlos Mardel, arrives in Portugal shortly after the beginning of the construction work. Soon, the overall responsibility of the building work becomes his.

The construction of the aqueduct was considered made by the population of Lisboa as a glorious one of the people, because he was the proper people who paid the workmanship, although King D. João V to be very rich. Jose Hermano Professor of History (in his "Concise History of Portugal") referred that in the Arch of the *Rua das Amoreiras*, concluded in 1748, a registration in which was placed a statement, in Latin: "In the year of 1748, reigning the merciful, happy and magnanimous King João V, the Senate and people of Lisboa, to the cost of the same people and with great satisfaction of them, introduced in the city Free Waters desired by space of two centuries, and this by means of hard work of twenty years in the extension of nine thousand steps."

This registration, currently already does not exist because, as the Professor explains, years later, *Marquês de Pombal* house ordered to erase it and to substitute it for another one where he did not say that it had been the people to pay the workmanship. New and the liar registration says that "Regulation by D. João V, the best King, public wellness of Portugal, had been introduced in the city, aqueducts that will last of perpetual, and that they form a turn of nine thousand steps, waters becoming from this workmanship with tolerable public charges and sincere applause of all."

Although in the two following centuries it has been constructed more canals to bring other waters to Lisboa the truth is that the Aqueduct of Free Waters functioned up to 1968! Its last mission had been some supplying of a small scale in the region of Sintra. Currently already it does not function as aqueduct, but it is opened to groups of people who want to visit it and to also know its history and the proper History of the City of Lisboa.

It remains to say that other histories are told many on the aqueduct, as that one that says of the terrible assassin and thief Diogo Alves, who used to advantage the hiding places in the aqueduct to commit all the species of crimes.

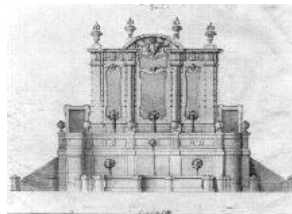


"AGUADEIROS"

It was at this time that, along with other typical professions of the city, as the clean-chimneys, the milkmaids, the "saloiás" saleswomen (a known woman of the broad bean-rich), the laundry-women of Caneças, had appeared the "aguadeiros" (water carrier) celebrities. They supplied in the some fountains of Lisboa, waiting his turn in the long queues, and later covered the streets of the city with his proclamations: "Water! water! ... fresh water!..."

In century XXVIII, the water carrier profession could not be exerted in any way. They had to inscribe and to get first the authorization in the City Hall and also they had to use in the chest an emblem of the city. Moreover, they were obliged to give aid to the population in case of fire. At this time still it did not have organized firemen as currently and, therefore, each water carrier had to always return the house with a well full barrel, in case of flames of a fire appeared during the night.

THE PUBLIC FOUNTAINS



The public fountains in the city of Lisboa are not merely running water. They are, above all, places to pause and ponder. Close by one can see both old people warming themselves in the sun and children in the colourful spectacle of their play. In the water that flows from each public fountain the history of a street, a quarter, a whole city is told.

The **Chafariz d'El Rei** (Fountain of the King) is one of the better known. Its origin dates back to the reign of King Afonso II, in 12th century, and it was then known as Saint John's Fountain. According to the ancient chronicles, it was probably the first public fountain in Lisboa to be built by royal decree for the use of the inhabitants of the city.

During the 16th century, at the peak of the Portuguese sea voyages, it was from the King's Fountain that came the water, which supplied the ships that then crossed the world. In mid-century, given the conflicts caused by the use of the water that flowed from its six sprouts, it was decreed that each one of them should serve exclusively one social group. Thus, there was a sprout for slaves

and another one for free men. There was also a sprout for free women and another for slave women. The others were meant for use of the ships. In the 18th century, the front wall of the fountain was modified, and three more sprouts were added. In 1864 it suffered yet another change, which gave it the aspect, it still bears today. The "Ferdinandian" wall, which supported it, has disappeared more recently.

Chafariz do Carmo, another remarkable fountain in the city can be found in *Largo do Carmo*. Right next to the ruins of the convent of the same name, which was destroyed in the 1755 earthquake, it lies in the centre of a square which dates back to the time of the *Marquês de Pombal*, minister of King José I. The fountain was built as one of the places through which the Free Waters flowed, carried by the Aqueduct.

About this fountain, one of the most picturesque histories can be shared:

Concerning the scarcity of water, E. Noronha supports that "To the measure that the Company of Waters of Lisboa fought for its interests, supplying the minimum possible liquid to the consumer, the water carriers did not leave to pull ashes to their sardine. At June, 17 of 1873, the fire inspector, followed by the foreman and two policies, gave ownership of one more pipe to the water carriers of the *Chafariz do Carmo*. It was to grant to these an iniquitous privilege, in detriment of the particular ones and to protect brazenly the exploration by the gallegos. The people did not want and it was not. The inspector, the foreman and the policies, despite the proximity of the headquarter of the Municipal Guard, if do not run away, were subjected to the physical punishment that the people was prepared to give them. It rescued an infantry force, but it was for giving reason who had it. It continued the two pipes in the ownership of the consumers".

This fountain is located in an area one simply must visit. If the ruins of the *Carmo* convent were not sufficient reason for that, or the Santa Justa lift, a magnificent iron structure concluded in 1901, the proximity to *Chiado* would justify it. From *Chiado*, if they so wish, visitors can proceed to the *Alto de Santa Catarina*, from where they will be able to enjoy one of the best views of the river Tagus and the bustle of the Lisboa harbour. And since this is so close to the *Rua do Século*, here is an excellent pretext to visit another fountain.

Chafariz do Século (In the small square which evolves the *Rua do Século*, one can see quite clearly how important water once was in the town. Indeed, it was not enough to have a fountain built. It was also necessary to consider its location and, in the case of the *Rua do Século*, to have a square built to serve the fountain. Dating back to the 18th century, this fountain is constituted by a frontispiece fitted into a stonewall. From its three bronze sprouts water flows into a shell.

Chafariz da Esperança Also built in the 18th century, the fountain in the *Rua da Esperança* provides the visitor with an opportunity to look in on *Madragoa*. In this typical popular quarter, which has maintained the picturesque nature of its buildings, this fountain brings a religious dimension to water, where the first life forms were formed. The architecture of the fountain has the shape of a church altar.

Chafariz da Junqueira Also setting itself apart by its architecture, the bears a manelino style in its rabbit in the shape of a crescent covered in *azulejos* (tiles).

There's a story about this fountain and Amália;

During an assay in the Santo Amaro Academy she knows the one that would become her first husband, Francisco Da Cruz, mechanical and amateur guitarist, with whom marriages, in 1940. Before, already it deceives her with another woman. Amália tries to commit suicide with kill-rats poison, in the *Chafariz da Junqueira*, in front of the door of the beloved one. Failed attempt: She drops in the water the major part of the poison. Reconciliation and marriage, in the same year where she sings in a house of fados, *Retiro da Severa*.

Chafariz das Janelas Verdes. Another fountain, also built in the 17th century, the fountain of the *Janelas Verdes*, representing Venus and Cupid, is one example more of the water distribution network associated to the *Aqueduto das Águas Livres*.

In the case of Lisbon's fountains, it can be said that beauty is refreshing.

Credits:

This text was made up by consulting the following webpages:

http://www.atl-turismolisboa.pt/publications/stepbystep/spring99/index_uk.htm

http://atelier.hannover2000.mct.pt/~pr464/ingl_files/inicio.htm

<http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Atrium/2046/aqueduto05.html>

<http://www.instituto-camoes.pt/bases/amalia/foideus.htm>

and the book about Lisbon's fountains, which I bought to create this cache: "*Chafarizes de Lisboa*" by Alexandre M. Flores & Carlos Canhão – Edições Inapa – ISBN 972-8387-57-1.