

EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY AND CIVILISATION

**The Circulation of Children in
Eighteenth Century Southern Europe:
the Case of the Foundling Hospital of Porto**

ISABEL DOS GUIMARÃES SÁ

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the Degree of Doctor of the
European University Institute

Members of the jury:

Prof. STUART J. WOOLF
Prof. Doutor EUGÉNIO F. DOS SANTOS
Prof. Doutor ANTÓNIO DE OLIVEIRA
Prof. CARLO CORSINI
Prof. Dr VOLKER HUNECKE
Prof. ROBERT ROWLAND

Florence, 12 February 1992

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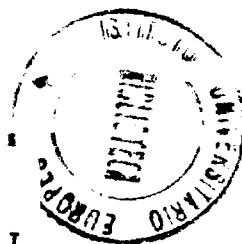
My mother and father who always helped me to solve research problems created by distance from the archives and supported my work all the way through;

The late Antonio Teixeira de Vasconcelos for the privilege of his company on various travels in the areas where wet-nurses used to live;

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Prologue

The number of persons in Portugal concerned even nowadays with child abandonment is surprising. In Lisbon, when the local Misericórdia organized an exhibition in 1987 of foundling's notes, clerks were frequently asked by the visitors if they could trace some relative in the archives. I myself was often told by friends or acquaintances that they had some ancestor - frequently a great-grand-father or great-grand-mother - who was a foundling.

This proves that a number of abandoned children not only survived until adult age but also reproduced themselves. It contrasts with a widespread vision according to which foundlings rarely reached adulthood, and if they did, were outcasts.



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Chapter 1 - Introduction: the history of childhood and child abandonment

The history of childhood and child abandonment

Much work on children has been done since the publication of "Centuries of childhood" in 1960¹. It is the merit of Philippe Ariès to have "invented" the history of childhood; all authors who have researched on this field have the book "Centuries of Childhood" as a compulsory reference point, although Ariès' findings have progressively been discussed in the light of new research. Nevertheless, we owe Ariès the merit of having raised the suspicion that feelings attached to the relationship between parents and children have not been the same across time; they can be thus the subject of a history. This view has been taken up by his followers and, most curiously, by his detractors: from Linda Pollock² to Viviana Zelizer³ the question has been the perception of differences in *feelings* towards children. Changes in emotive perception of childhood can influence the raising of children, their clothes, their education and, in turn, changing economic and social conditions can forge new attitudes towards childhood. Ariès, like other recent authors of major books on the history of children, nevertheless ignored a fundamental aspect of childhood in the past: child abandonment. Ariès almost never refers to it; Linda Pollock concentrates on children who have left literary evidence behind, the subject of diaries and other similar sources; Zelizer, in

¹ Ariès, Philippe, *L'enfant et la vie familiale sous l'Ancien Régime*, Paris, Plon, 1960.

² Pollock, Linda, *Forgotten children. Parent-child relationships from 1500 to 1900*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

³ Zelizer, Viviana, *Pricing the Priceless Child: the Changing Social Value of Children*, New York, Basic Books, 1985.

one of the most fascinating books on the history of childhood ever published, focused on American childhood in the last hundred years when child abandonment was no longer a widespread practice. Nevertheless, childhood in the past is to be associated with the fact that most populations in the West could abandon their children more or less legally. Whether the emergence of the "sentiment of childhood" was to be proved or denied, the hundreds of thousands of abandoned children were embarrassing evidence: they seemed to argue against any pretension of affection of parents towards their children; they threatened the dating that Ariès tried to prove, of changes in attitudes towards children in the last years of the seventeenth century and above all in the eighteenth century, precisely at the moment when child abandonment developed in the form of a highly organized institutional organization. Lebrun tried to justify it, on the basis that there was an investment in a lesser number of children, the ones who could be raised properly; the family would tend to abandon those members whom the family economy could not afford⁴. Flandrin suggested that abandonment replaced suffocation and infanticide, demonstrating an increase of the respect for the life of the child⁵.

The problem is still concerned with the place of emotion in human lives in the past: some claim emotions are strictly tied to economic and social conditions. Some arguments can be viewed as a sort of 'emotionometrics': how the individual can conciliate emotion with survival. A rationality is attributed to individuals in the past, restraining them from being emotionally involved with children. If there was high infant mortality, it was normal for an individual to refrain from investing deeply in such fragile creatures. Ariès used the argument, and was followed by Lawrence Stone⁶ and Edward Shorter⁷. Linda Pollock, instead,

⁴ Lebrun, François, 'Naissances illégitimes et abandons d'enfants en Anjou au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales E.S.C.*, a. 27, 1972, n. 4-5, pp. 1188-9.

⁵ Flandrin, Jean-Louis, *Le sexe et l'Occident. Évolution des attitudes et des comportements*, Paris, Seuil, 1981, pp. 203-4.

⁶ Stone, Lawrence, *The family, sex and marriage in England 1500-1800*, London, Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977, p. 105.

⁷ Shorter, Edward, *The making of the modern family*, New York, Basic Books, 1975, p. 252-3. Shorter supported a slightly different viewpoint,

tried hard to demonstrate that maternal and parental feelings are a-historical, as if part of a changeless human instinct/nature. Viviana Zelizer concentrated on the changing social and economic value of children, in an attempt to study the value of non-economic "goods". Zelizer suggests that such value is modelled by cultural values that turned the working and economically useful child into a non-working member of the family whose emotional price cannot be measured. What was not thoroughly answered, however, was the relationship between changing demographic and economic aspects and cultural values. Even if Zelizer focused structural changes in the labour market that progressively withdrew children from the factories, some questions were not answered. Is the changing social value of children tied up with the decline of fertility? Does it have to do with the welfare state? What is the effect of economic well-being on attitudes towards children? Thus, it seems that the discussion on such issues is bound to prolong itself indefinitely, since no answer seems to have been completely satisfactory. This book tries not to develop such questions, since in my opinion the problem of the value of children is inscribed in the larger question of the changing value of human life - both of children and adults - which has been ignored in all the works referred to. Since this is not the subject of this thesis, its scope limits itself to shedding light on an issue not sufficiently focused on until now: the high mobility of children during the eighteenth century, both within geographical areas and within different family networks.

making the high infant mortality dependent on the lack of parental affection towards children. Badinter expressed the same opinion (Badinter, Elizabeth, *L'amour en plus. Histoire de l'amour maternel, XVIIe-XXe siècles*, Paris, Flammarion, 1980, p. 110 (in the paperback edition).

Anthropology and the circulation of children

In fact, historians are now accustomed to the fact that, in pre-industrial societies many children were not breastfed by their mothers and were given to nurses⁸; that children were not raised by their own families but trusted to other households to receive education⁹; others were simply given away as apprentices or as servants at early ages¹⁰. All those transfers of responsibility towards children implied that parents spent little time with their own children and that children, besides moving from family to family, would move over large geographical areas. Viewed in this light, child abandonment becomes only one part of an integrated system, seemingly exaggerating its elements - geographic and family mobility. We shall borrow from relatively recent anthropological literature the concept of *circulation* of children in order to describe this high mobility of children in the past. In fact, anthropologists have long been studying the circulation of children in contemporary communities: Jack and Esther Goody drew attention to West African populations¹¹; Cláudia Fonseca to the poor children of Brazilian squatter cities; Ann Beth Waltner to Chinese areas, using a historical perspective¹²; others to

⁸ The bibliography on wet-nursing is too vast to be thoroughly referred to. It was started by French historians with the works of Paul Galliano for the region of Paris. Later George Sussman developed research on eighteenth and nineteenth France. Italian and Spanish studies followed in the eighties. In England, research was carried out by Dorothy MacLaren and Valerie Fildes and in Germany research on wet-nursing is linked to the names of Ulla-Britt Lithell, Hallie Kintner and Mary Lindemann (see complete references on general bibliography).

⁹ See McCracken, Grant, 'The exchange of children in Tudor England: an anthropological phenomenon in historical context', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 8, 1983, Winter, pp. 303-313.

¹⁰ See Smith, Richard, 'Families and their property in rural England 1250-1800', *Land, Kinship and Life-cycle*, Richard Smith (ed.), Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, pp. 71-72 and Mayhew, Graham, 'Life-cycle service and the family unit in Early Modern Rye', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 6, 1991, part. II - August, pp. 206-7.

¹¹ Goody, Esther, *Parenthood and Social Reproduction: Fostering and Occupational Roles in West Africa*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982; Goody, Esther, 'Kinship, Fostering in Gonja, deprivation or advantage?', in Meyer, Ph. (ed.), *Socialization: the Approach from Social Anthropology*, London, Tavistock, 1970, pp. 51-74.

communities in the Pacific. In all these anthropologists the term circulation of children serves to designate children temporarily or permanently entrusted to persons other than their biological parents. To Jack Goody we owe the best theoretical approach to the subject, in which a difference is made between fostering and adoption¹³.

All these authors have stressed the mobility of children in different kin groups. This circulation of children takes different forms and is perceived differently by the groups concerned. The most striking issue, however, is that, apart from strictly biological parent responsibility, there are alternatives of social responsibility that range from temporary care of children to a full transfer of legal rights. Parenthood appears to be more social than biological, children's attachment to adults being formed from the eighth month of life onwards.

The problem would be further enlarged if present day intercontinental circulation of children were to be considered. In recent years, a "silent" migration of children from underdeveloped countries to the West has occurred, these children being adopted by wealthier families. It is not my purpose to discuss it here; that the phenomenon exists merely underlines the fact that the social value of children is not the same in all societies and in all social groups. It supports Zelizer in her quest for the value of non-economic goods; it is further testimony to the changes that have occurred in the supply and demand of children. For this situation, whereby children are illegally exported to the richer countries that lack a stock of available children, would have been unthinkable in the child abandonment era, when the production of children was superior to demand.

¹² Waltner, Ann Beth, *The adoption of children in Ming and Early Ch'ing China*, Ph. D., University of California, Berkeley, 1981.

¹³ Goody, Jack, 'Adoption in cross-cultural perspective', *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, vol. 11, 1969, pp. 55-78.

Child abandonment: recent developments and the main comprehensive theories

The theme of child abandonment undoubtedly experienced a great expansion in the second half of the nineteenth century: there is a vast bibliography for each of the countries concerned. Doctors or students of medicine in their degree theses, individuals concerned with charitable institutions, politicians, statisticians and jurists dedicated a vast number of publications to issues concerned with child abandonment. On the other hand, few "professional" historians paid attention to child abandonment. Most of the nineteenth century authors were still involved in a phenomenon that was far from finished (the process of closing the foundling tours developed in the second half of the nineteenth century, particularly after 1860) and their works are often polemical pamphlets¹⁴.

In the twentieth century, however, there is a void of publications concerning foundlings until the seventies. This void is difficult to explain although some reasons can be provided. If we consider the Annales School as an essential historiographical step of the post war period, we must bear in mind that its first concerns were economic history and interdisciplinarity between the social sciences. The documental series of the foundling homes could not be studied without computer help; the only possible approach to child abandonment was institutional, as only non-serial documents could be studied. But the history of institutions was conceived as a branch of political history and political history was undervalued by the Annales school. The history of foundlings had to wait for the book of an "historien de dimanche" like Philippe Ariès in order to develop in the sequence of the "discovery of childhood" by historians. We have to wait until the

¹⁴ With few exceptions, no information on child abandonment provided in their work is used in this thesis. The explanation lies in the fact that this dissertation concerns mainly the period prior to the nineteenth century, for which little information is included in such works. They are so strongly biased by contemporary debates that deserve historians' attention in their own right.

seventies in order to find publications on child abandonment: in 1973 the French "Société de Démographie Historique" dedicated a book to Marcel Reinhard where several chapters focused on child abandonment¹⁵; an issue of the "Annales de Démographie Historique" dedicated to children was published in the same year¹⁶ and in that decade a wave of articles was printed in various publications. The recent wave of social history, particularly relating to historical demography, the history of the family and of poverty and welfare is linked with the diffusion of what has become an essential instrument for the historian: the personal computer. It has allowed the historian to undertake research on massive social data on his own, without depending on the collaboration of computer experts and on expensive institutional support.

In the eighties mention should be made to the volume on illegitimacy edited by Laslett, Oosterveen and Smith where several contributions referred to child abandonment¹⁷. In 1982 the "Società Italiana di Demografia Storica" published the proceedings of the colloquium "La demografia storica delle città italiane", where foundlings were reckoned as a fundamental element of urban demography¹⁸. In the following year, the "Annales de Démographie Historique" were dedicated to motherhood and breastfeeding¹⁹, at the same time when the "Quaderni Storici"²⁰ published several articles on foundlings. In 1987, a special issue of "Histoire, Économie, Sociétés", gathered articles of authors concerned with a current project of the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales under the direction of

¹⁵ *Sur la population française au XVIII et XIX siècles. Hommage à Marcel Reinhard*, Paris, Société de Démographie Historique, 1973. On single contributions see general bibliography.

¹⁶ *Enfance et société*, Paris, Mouton, 1973.

¹⁷ Laslett, Peter; Oosterveen, Carla and Smith, Richard (ed.), *Bastardy and its comparative History*, London, Edward Arnold, 1980.

¹⁸ *La demografia storica delle città italiane*, Bologna, CLUEB, 1982.

¹⁹ 'Mères et nourrissons', *Annales de Démographie Historique*, Paris, 1983.

²⁰ *Quaderni Storici*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1983, n. 53. Prior to this volume, a fundamental article by Carlo Corsini was published in 1976 in this revue ('Materiali per lo studio della famiglia in Toscana nei secoli XVII-XIX: gli esposti', *Quaderni Storici*, a. 11, 1976, pp. 998-1052).

Jean-Pierre Bardet²¹. The École Française de Rome also hosted a colloquium in January 1987 whose papers were published in 1991²². In the meantime fundamental articles have also appeared in the "Journal of Interdisciplinary History"²³, "Central European History"²⁴, and "Continuity and Change"²⁵, while historical conferences have included sessions on assistance to children in their programmes in the beginning of the nineties²⁶.

Also in the eighties, a section on child abandonment started to be a must in urban studies, following the earlier example of Maurice Garden who called attention to the importance of breastfeeding in urban demography²⁷. As examples can be quoted Perrot's study of Caen²⁸ and Bardet's for Rouen²⁹. In works focusing on urban welfare systems, care of foundlings was soon incorporated in the general framework of urban institutions of assistance. The early case of Bayeux by Olwen Hufton can be

21 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), *Histoire, Économie et Société*, vol. 6, 1987, n. 3. On the presentation of the project by Jean-Pierre Bardet, see: 'Présentation. L'enfant abandonné au coeur des interrogations sociales', pp. 291-299.

22 *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XVIe-XXe siècle*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991.

23 Fuchs, Rachel Ginnis, 'Legislation, Poverty and Child-Abandonment in Nineteenth-Century Paris', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. XVIII, 1987, n. 1, pp. 55-80.

24 Ulbricht, Otto, 'The debate about Foundling Hospitals in Enlightenment Germany. Infanticide, illegitimacy and infant mortality rates', *Central European History*, vol. XVIII, 1985, pp. 211-256.

25 Wilson, Adrian, 'Illegitimacy and its implications in mid eighteenth-century London: the evidence of the Foundling Hospital', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 4, 1989, n.1, pp. 103-164.

26 As examples, one can quote the *Tenth International Economic History Conference* (Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990), whose Session C40, 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', included a section on children and welfare; also in the *17^e Congreso Internacional de Ciencias Historicas*, (Madrid 26 Agosto-2 Septiembre 1990), there were some papers on child abandonment and infanticide.

27 Garden, Maurice, *Lyon et les Lyonnais au XVIIIe siècle*, Paris, Les Belles Lettres, 1970, pp. 116-140.

28 Perrot, J. C., *Genèse d'une ville moderne: Caen au XVIIIe siècle*, tome II, Paris, Mouton, 1975, pp. 841-853.

29 Bardet, Jean-Pierre, *Rouen au XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: les mutations d'un espace social*, vol I, Paris, CDU-Sedes, 1983, pp. 331-346.

quoted³⁰, like Linda Martz's study of Toledo³¹, followed by several Spanish works on urban welfare (see note 75 of chapter 3).

Some comprehensive works, testifying years of research by their authors, were also published during the eighties and the early nineties. James Boswell saved historians of Modern Europe a lot of work by publishing an excellent book on abandonment in Antiquity and the Middle Ages³². Due to some extensive monographs on foundling hospitals, child abandonment from the fifteenth to the eighteenth century is now better known for some European cities such as Madrid³³, Seville³⁴, St. Petersburg and Moscow³⁵, London³⁶, Milan³⁷, and Florence³⁸. Several Ph.D theses on the foundling problem in France during the nineteenth century also appeared from the late seventies onwards³⁹.

Historians dealing with foundlings have attempted to give meaning to child abandonment as a wide social practice. History of child abandonment has inevitably been linked with some other

³⁰ Hufton, Olwen, *Bayeux in the late Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1967, pp. 93-97.

³¹ Martz, Linda, *Poverty and Welfare in Habsburg Spain. The example of Toledo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983.

³² Boswell, John, *The Kindness of Strangers. The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, London, Allen Lane - the Penguin Press, 1988.

³³ Sherwood, Joan Mary, *Poverty in Eighteenth Century Spain. The women of the Inclusa*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988.

³⁴ Alvarez Santaló, Leon Carlos, *Marginación social y mentalidad en Andalucía occidental. Expositos en Sevilla (1613-1910)*, Sevilla, La Junta de Andalucía, 1980.

³⁵ Ransel, David L., *Mothers of Misery. Child Abandonment in Russia*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988.

³⁶ MacClure, Ruth K., *Coram's children. The London Foundling Hospital in the eighteenth century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1981.

³⁷ Hünecke, Volker, *I trovatelli di Milano. Bambini esposti e famiglie espositrici dal XVII al XIX secolo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1989.

³⁸ Gavitt, Philip, *Charity and Children in Renaissance Florence. The Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1410-1536*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1990.

³⁹ Potash, Janet Ruth, *The Foundling Problem in France 1800-1869: Child Abandonment in Lille and Lyon*, PhD Thesis, Yale University, 1979; Fuchs, Rachel Ginnis, *Abandoned Children in Nineteenth-Century France: institutional care and public attitudes*, PhD Thesis, Indiana University, 1980; Taeger, Angela, *Der Staat und die Findelkinder. Findelfürsorge und Familienpolitik im Frankreich des 19. Jahrhunderts*, Diss. phil., Technische Universität Berlin, 1986.

issues that seem to be inseparable from it: infanticide, poverty and welfare, wet-nursing and, although less explored in the general bibliography, adoption. Infanticide, because child abandonment has been held as a widely practiced alternative to deliberately killing newborns; poverty and welfare because abandonment is inevitably associated with hardship and family economic crisis; wet-nursing because children had to be raised with breast milk and thus assistance to foundlings relied on a wide network of breastfeeding women; adoption because the few children who survived were available as potential new members of families or of institutions in need of children. Infanticide, abandonment, wet-nursing, adoption and welfare have in common the fact that they derive from the needs of society to reproduce itself and to control reproduction.

Child abandonment divides historians over two main problems: the aims and effects of foundling homes (or the interpretation of their social impact for what relates to biological and social reproduction) and the origin of children (more precisely, their legitimate or illegitimate status).

I would group the various theories that have been formulated on the first issue in two main categories:

1 - child abandonment as an alternative to infanticide, the former progressively substituting the latter in the course of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. This theory can be said to be of French nationality because it is largely supported by the works of French historians of the family such as Badinter, Flandrin and Lebrun who have dealt with child abandonment, even if at a superficial level, in their works on family history. This group includes authors such as Da Molin for Italy, Valverde and Sherwood for Spain. Some of these authors go even further, suggesting that child abandonment was a deferred infanticide, that is, people indirectly suppressed their children by entrusting them to Foundling Homes where death attained more than 80% of the abandoned children. This hypothesis is supported by Sherwood who has worked on the eighteenth century *Inclusa* of Madrid. Bardet has thus called it "the contraception of the poor,

ignorant and clumsy" ("la contraception des pauvres, des ignorants et des maladroits")⁴⁰.

2 - A second group, led by the German scholar Volker Hünecke, has called attention to what might be called "false abandonment". By this is meant a popular misuse of foundling homes, which served as temporary boarding houses for the breastfeeding of children who were to be reintegrated in their families at a later stage. Abandonment thus had a simulated nature: people proposed to abandon their children at the foundling home and wait for a good opportunity to search for them. This thesis is also supported by the Spanish historians Elgarista Domeque and Fresneda Collado.

My criticism of the first theory is based on an awareness of our ignorance concerning infanticide in the past. In the first place, as happens with homicide, such a crime takes several forms and degrees. Infanticide can be committed by omission and by commission, that is, death can have an accidental face - leaving the child to die - or a deliberate character, consisting of deliberately and consciously killing the child. The court cases that have been studied concern mainly unwed women suspected of having suppressed their newborns, not all categories of reproductive women. Furthermore, such women are suspected of having killed their children by commission, because their intention was to conceal the fruit of pregnancy from public view. This leads to the hypothesis that married women had less socially evident forms of getting rid of their children, simply by letting them die. The suspicion is that infanticide was scarcely punished as such, if compared to the need to regulate reproduction. Evidence that infanticide was a widespread practice before the foundling homes is still rare⁴¹; only the repetition of the

⁴⁰ Bardet, Jean-Pierre, 'Présentation. L'enfant abandonné au coeur des interrogations sociales', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, p. 293. In his book, Angus MacLaren included child abandonment among the "family planning techniques", which sounds even more anachronistic (MacLaren, Angus, *A History of Contraception from Antiquity to the Present Day*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1990, p. 35).

⁴¹ Some Dutch and Belgian authors working on infanticide have demonstrated that it could have been a common offense though the number

testimonies by the texts which justify the establishment of foundling homes, according to which corpses of children were offered for public view, might suggest that in fact, before the seventeenth century, infanticide was common. Nevertheless, authors who have supported the infanticide theory have rarely mentioned this evidence, which can however be found in most of the normative texts that justify or precede the setting up of a foundling home.

As for the "contraception" theory, which I consider as being a sub-group of the former, it lacks awareness of one crucial fact: contraception is intentional and it is doubtful whether parents ever abandoned children deliberately in order to make them die. Individuals who use contraceptive methods know what they are doing and expect to achieve the end of avoiding the birth of children. It would be the same as affirming that late age at marriage and high rates of celibacy in European populations were used as a conscious contraceptive methods by contemporaries instead of saying that late age at marriage and high rates of celibacy functioned as preventive checks on the population, to use the Malthusian terminology. Certainly, child abandonment is typical of societies which do not use contraceptive methods to a significant extent. Nevertheless, child abandonment was not *deliberately* intended to eliminate surplus children, but on the contrary to save their lives, even if that aim was not attained. The high mortality of foundlings has been rightly stressed and cannot be denied; nevertheless, it is a fact that a proportion of children survived and was available to society to be distributed to people who requested children, either as workers or as family members, or even both, since both categories *are not* mutually exclusive.

of accusations is small. Faber worked on 126 instances of infanticide, tried in Amsterdam in the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Faber, Sjoerd, 'Infanticide and criminal justice in the Netherlands, especially in Amsterdam', *17^e Congreso Internacional de Ciências Historicas, Madrid 1990, 26 Agosto-2 Septiembre*, p. 498). Leboutte established a link between infanticide and unmarried mothers, as if married women were not tempted to commit crime against their newborns (Leboutte, René, 'L'infanticide du 16^e au 19^e siècle. Attitudes et mentalités à l'égard de la fille-mère', *17^e Congreso Internacional de Ciências Historicas, Madrid 1990, 26 Agosto-2 Septiembre*, pp. 503-507).

As for the second group of authors, their assumptions are more soundly based than the first. Hünecke's book on nineteenth century Milan's foundlings has demonstrated that families used the foundling hospital as a temporary shelter for their children. He used a source that can hardly be found for other case studies: the "anagrafe", where complete information on families can be found without undertaking family reconstitution using parish registers⁴². Other authors lack such evidence in order to support their assumptions mainly because, if this kind of popular usage existed in their case studies, it was an illegal feature and as such less evident in the sources. Not that frauds are not widely referred to; the problem consists in knowing the extent to which they were engaged in and how common they were. This thesis holds perfectly for nineteenth century Milan, where there was a labour market for women outside their households, but it has not been demonstrated for any other eighteenth century foundling hospital.

The second issue, concerning the initial status of foundling children (legitimate or illegitimate) is inevitably linked to the first problem. To simplify, authors who adopt the "infanticide" thesis tend to consider foundlings as mainly illegitimate; such is the case for Da Molin. Authors who adopt the "temporary" abandonment thesis have in turn insisted on the legitimacy of foundlings. Hünecke demonstrated that 50 to 70% of Milan's foundlings were legitimate⁴³. Nevertheless, legitimacy among foundlings has no meaning unless it is compared to the global rates of illegitimacy in the case studies considered.

The general difficulty with any of the theories consists in the fact that no general theory can be held for the whole of the Western world; the theories apply to case studies which concern regional areas to which correspond different family and

⁴² Hünecke, Volker, *I trovatelli di Milano* cit., p. 107-108.

⁴³ For the eighteenth century the percentage of legitimate children among foundlings was estimated at 50%. Hünecke, Volker, 'Intensità e fluttuazioni degli abbandoni dal XV al XIX secolo', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-eXXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, p. 58.

demographic patterns. Labour markets and family incomes could also have an influence on child abandonment if the women's involvement in work kept them out of their homes (e.g. Milan and women's work in industry) and prevented them from caring for their children at home.

Chapter 2 - Child abandonment in the Western World from the late Middle Ages to the end of the eighteenth century

Why did abandonment of children take on the proportions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries?

The Western world has been familiar with child abandonment since Antiquity; John Boswell's book proves that for the Romans abandonment and fostering were facts of life¹. Although statistical data are obviously missing, many testimonies demonstrate that foundlings were a component of the population. Laws, regulations and social habits were developed to cope with the availability of children without parents and the problems of their integration in foster families. Boswell suggests that abandonment derived from a system where redistribution of children born from families with a surplus of children to those who lacked them was still possible. That system ended with the foundation of Foundling Hospitals in late Medieval Europe. According to Boswell, abandonment without the support of institutions developed before the European foundations: people abandoned children who were to be picked up and reared by other families and later integrated in them.

Romans transferred parental responsibilities towards children without the mediation of public institutions. Instead, from the fourteenth century onwards, European foundlings were increasingly cared for by hospitals and confraternities and this 'direct' transfer was progressively substituted by indirect transfer. There was a new element in abandonment and that element was institutional care. An important problem should be

¹ Boswell, John, *The kindness of strangers. The abandonment of children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, London, Allen Lane, Penguin Press, 1988.

the answer to the question: why did the interpersonal system need to be substituted by a situation where abandonment was mediated by specific institutions? Of course, I am not the right person to answer such a question. It would involve a study of the transition era, when the first forms of institutional care had their beginning. Institutional care should not be confounded with the foundation of Foundling Hospitals. In many cases, as we shall see, the foundation of specific hospitals or hospital wards to assist foundlings was preceded by other forms of assistance. Apart from the Italian cases, where the foundation of Foundling Hospitals is better documented and studied, in other places ruling powers took interest in sheltering abandoned children long before Foundling Homes were started. In these, local institutions of assistance had multivariied purposes and included assistance to children in the range of services they provided. Institutional care, then, should not be related only to the foundation of Foundling Homes but to other forms of providing care for needy children.

The fact that abandonment never ceased between late Antiquity and the Middle Ages seems to be clear. The moment when we start finding evidence of the existence of foundlings and specific institutional measures to assist them is the fourteenth century. But why did abandoned children, absent in the sources until then, emerge from the shadow?

Possible answers could possibly be sought along the following lines:

1) The demographic system involved high rates of infant mortality that made the disposal of a child superfluous. No legitimate family would abandon any child as it was already difficult to preserve a sufficient number of children until adult age.

2) Infanticide was a common feature and it allowed families to regulate their size and select the sex of the children.

3) There was no circulation of children, in the sense that no family had the means or the interest to bring up alien children.

The value of children would be too high to allow any trespassing of parenthood.

If any of these perspectives of research is correct, abandonment in such hypotheses could be the problem of expanding societies who lacked the technical means to control natality. If well-being has a direct incidence upon fecundity and fertility, as some medical scientists affirm², and if mortality decreases when the level of subsistence rises, the number of children would automatically increase. Periods of relative prosperity could mean an enlargement of the size of families, with few individuals dying and more women giving birth. The surplus of children might have to be abandoned as soon as the family reached the maximum of children it could support or when material conditions worsened, due to famine, illness or war. Extra-marital relationships would also be translated into a higher number of births and thus in an increase in the number of illegitimate children. If we concentrate on the moments when abandonment reached its peaks they coincide with the fifteenth, sixteenth and eighteenth century, centuries of demographic expansion. Centuries of depression, such as the seventeenth century, knew in turn a stagnation of the number of abandonments³ and few foundling hospitals were founded anew

² Although her findings still require confirmation, R. Frish maintained that for the maintenance of regular menstrual function a minimum of 22 percent of body fat is required. She also claimed that undernourishment reduced the reproductive life span by contributing to late menarche and earlier menopause. See Marcy, Peter T., 'Factors affecting the fecundity and fertility of historical populations: a review', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 6, 1981, Fall, pp. 312-14.

³ Although there is no comprehensive work regarding other areas, there is evidence that in seventeenth century Italy there was a stagnation of the number of foundlings. See Da Molin, Giovanna, *L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia nell'Età Moderna. Aspetti demografici di un problema sociale*, Bari, 1981, pp. 13-57, where curves of the number of foundlings in many Italian cities are presented. The exception to the Italian case seems to be constituted by the Venetian cities, where the number of annual abandonments dropped during the eighteenth century until 1775 (Povolo, Claudio, 'L'infanzia abbandonata nel Veneto nei primi secoli dell'età moderna. Primi risultati e riflessioni intorno ad un tema di storia sociale', in *La Demografia Storica delle città italiane*, Bologna, Clueb, 1982, p. 651).

Concerning Spain, evidence for Murcia shows there was a stagnation during the seventeenth century and a rapid escalation in the eighteenth (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar: el abandono y la adopción de expositos en

(see Annex 1). This hypothesis, which would also involve paying careful attention also to the decline of infant mortality, is risky, but probably worth checking, especially if we consider that no scholar has yet explained why abandonment assumed such high proportions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and why it has almost vanished today. In fact, in the Western world, child abandonment, even if it has not totally vanished in the second half of the twentieth century, is aberrant and has no statistical importance. So far, historians and demographers have limited themselves to the discussion of the sterile questions whether foundlings resulted from impoverishment or illegitimacy or whether abandonment was a means of contraception or not. The infanticide problem is itself difficult to solve; on the other hand, infant mortality can be studied, at least from the nineteenth century onwards.

From direct to indirect circulation of children: the foundation of Foundling Hospitals in Europe and the New World

The foundation of Foundling Hospitals

Annex 1 gives a chronology of the implementation of institutional structures of assistance for foundlings in Europe and in the New World. As can be seen, by the early nineteenth century most cities had Foundling Homes. In the first place the vocation of Southern Europe to develop urban forms of assistance for

Murcia (1601-1721)', in Chacon, F. (ed.), *Familia y Sociedad en el Mediterraneo Occidental. Siglos XV-XIX*, Murcia, 1987, p. 95); in Madrid the stagnation concerned the period between 1650 and 1700 (Larquié, Claude, 'La mise en nourrice des enfants madrilènes au XVII siècle', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, Paris, t. 32, Janvier-Mars 1985, p. 129); in Valladolid there was also a stagnation in the annual number of foundlings during the seventeenth century, which was prolonged well into the eighteenth century, when numbers further decreased (Egido Lopez, Teófanés, 'La cofradía de San José y los niños expositos de Valladolid (1540-1757)', *Estudios Josefinos*, n. 53, 1973, p. 99).

Concerning France, this the case of Caen until 1690 (Langlois, François, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Caen, 1661-1820', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, pp. 309).

foundlings is confirmed. In Spain and Italy, the foundation of such hospitals started before the sixteenth century, but the boom of the creation of hospitals devoted to abandoned children took place in the second half of the eighteenth century. This period is the most interesting to us, because foundling hospitals spread in Northern and Central Europe. Nevertheless in Russia, Germany and England the foundation of such hospitals was restricted to the more important cities and some experiences lasted for a shorter period than Southern European ones. If a map were to be drawn from the data of the chronology, we would see that the emptier areas are those of non-Catholic countries. In Protestant countries foundling hospitals were founded later than in Southern Europe and the forms of assistance that developed are not coincident in many aspects with those developed in the South. In Germany, a strong public debate was engaged on prior to the foundation of such hospitals⁴. In England, London's Foundling Hospital was criticized by contemporaries⁵. Such controversies would be impossible to find in Southern Europe, where the foundling homes had already many years of existence, and where no serious public debate on abandonment took place before the nineteenth century.

In Russia, the foundling hospitals assumed the character of a megalomaniac utopia of empress Catherine II and her ministers⁶. In England, Christ's hospital, initially designed to include foundlings among its pensioners, was soon converted into a grammar school where foundlings were almost totally excluded⁷. London's foundling hospital, in turn, only admitted children unevenly during the General Reception (1756-1760), functioning

⁴ Ulbricht, Otto, 'The debate about Foundling Hospitals in Enlightenment Germany. Infanticide, illegitimacy and infant mortality rates', *Central European History*, vol. XVIII, 1985, pp. 211-256.

⁵ Taylor, James Stephen, 'Philanthropy and Empire: Jonas Hanway and the Infant Poor of London', *Eighteenth Century Studies*, Columbus, vol. 12, 1978-79, pp. 292-3.

⁶ Ransel, David L., *Mothers of Misery. Child Abandonment in Russia*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1988, pp. 31-38; on the ideology behind the foundation of the Russian hospitals see Berelowitch, Wladimir, 'Les hospices des enfants trouvés en Russie (1763-1914)', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-e-XXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, pp. 171-182.

⁷ Pearce, E. H., *Annals of Christ's Hospital*, London, Hugh Rees, 1908, p. 26 and 37.

in equal ways to its equivalents on the Continent during that period. Otherwise, selection of children was very restricted⁸.

There seems to be a progression in the implementation of hospital care for foundlings across Europe: first in Italy from the thirteenth century onwards, then in Spain in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, in the seventeenth in Portugal and France. Many of these structures of assistance were devoted to assist either sick adults or children. Such was the case of late medieval Italian cities⁹ and the Valencia one in the fourteenth century¹⁰. To my knowledge, the first hospital devoted exclusively to foundlings seems to have been the Ospedale di Santa Maria degli Innocenti in Florence. The great boom of new Foundling Hospitals in Southern Europe was nevertheless during the eighteenth century and they tended to be founded as institutions devoted specifically to the care of abandoned children¹¹.

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, most of the important cities of Southern Europe had foundling hospitals, of which some were even centuries old. The new foundations during

⁸ MacClure, Ruth K., *Coram's children. The London Foundling Hospital in the eighteenth century*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1981, pp. 61-154.

⁹ Verona (Viviani, G. V., *L'assistenza agli esposti nella provincia di Verona 1426-1969*, Verona, Amministrazione Provinciale (STEI), 1969, p. 13); Urbino (Ruggeri, Romano, *Economia rurale, povertà e assistenza a Urbino nell'età moderna*, Urbino, Argalia, 1978, p. 13); Imola (Galassi, Nazario, *Dieci secoli di storia ospitaliera a Imola*, vol. II, Imola, Galeati, 1970, p. 237); Camerino (Bussini, Odoardo, 'L'infanzia abbandonata a Camerino nei secoli XVIII e XIX: alcune osservazioni preliminari', *La Demografia Storica delle Città italiane*, Bologna, Clueb, 1982, p. 593); Brescia (Onger, Sergio, 'L'abbandono degli infanti: illegittimi e legittimi nel brefetrofio di Brescia (1800-1870)', *Storia in Lombardia*, a. 3, 1984, n. 2, p. 39); Novara (Martinengo, Anna, *La ruota di Novara*, Novara, Tip. S. Gaudenzio, 1978, p. 11); Milan (Hünecke, Volker, 'The abandonment of legitimate children in nineteenth century Milan', paper delivered to the Tenth International Economic History Conference, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', p. 5); Rome (Schiavoni, Claudio., 'Gli esposti (o proietti) alla ruota dell' Archiospedale di Santo Spirito in Saxia di Roma dal 1700 al 1824', in *La Demografia Storica delle città italiane*, Bologna, Clueb, 1982, pp. 663).

¹⁰ Rubio Vela, Agustín, 'La asistencia hospitalaria infantil en la Valencia del siglo XIV: pobres, huérfanos y expósitos', *Dynamis*, vol. 2, 1982, p. 162.

¹¹ Eighteenth century reforms separated foundlings from the sick. This was the case of Verona, where a reform in 1781 chased the sick out of the "Casa di Pietà" (Viviani, G. V., *L'assistenza agli esposti* cit., p. 24).

this century had the scope of rationalising the network of hospitals in each European state, creating a situation whereby each province or administrative area was to have an institution designed to assist foundlings¹². At the beginning of the nineteenth century the network was almost complete for Southern European states, except for some areas of Spain where single hospitals might still cover entire incorporated kingdoms of the crown of Spain, like Galicia or the Basque country¹³. It is notable that the areas of Spain with a weaker network of foundling hospitals were also the less integrated politically.

After the sixteenth century Europeans exported their welfare structures to the areas of expansion. In Latin America, Portuguese and Spaniards were responsible for the creation of foundling hospitals in the most important cities (See Annex I). These foundling hospitals served mainly the white populations although they could also be used by the black slave population and the Indians. In Anglo-Saxon North America, instead, foundling hospitals were never seriously implemented, probably because the English Poor Laws were in use¹⁴. In French Canada, the information available suggests the incorporation of care for foundlings in the services provided by General Hospitals¹⁵.

¹² See for instance the case of Rome, where mons. Caracciolo, following orders of the pope, founded between 1738 and 1739 new Foundling Hospitals in areas where abandoned children were traditionally sent to Rome (Cajani, Luigi, 'Decentramento e riforma dell' assistenza agli esposti in alcune province dello Stato ecclesiastico nel 700 (Patrimonio, Orvieto, Perugia, Umbria, Sabina Marittima e Campagna)', *Atti del decimo Convegno di studi umbri, Gubbio 23-26 Maggio 1976: Orientamenti di una regione attraverso i secoli*, Perugia, 1978, pp. 255-272).

¹³ During the eighteenth century only Pamplona and Zaragoza had structures of assistance for foundlings (Valverde, Lola, 'El abandono y la exposición de niños en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII y comienzos del XIX. Situación y reforma en la inclusa de Pamplona', *Actas del Congreso de Historia de Navarra de los siglos XVIII, XIX y XX*, Pamplona, 1986, p. 105).

¹⁴ The only article on child abandonment in North America, focusing on nineteenth century New York, mentions proposals for the foundation of Foundation Hospitals that were never executed (Gilje, Paul A., 'Infant abandonment in Early Nineteenth-Century New York City: three cases', *Signs*, vol. 8, 1983, p. 582).

¹⁵ De la Broquerie, Fortier, 'Les 'enfants trouvés' au Canada Français (1754-1950)', *L'Union Médicale du Canada*, t. 101, 1972, p. 716.

Little is known about assistance to abandoned children in Africa and Asia. In Goa, there is information that the main problem of the Portuguese was to restrict abandonment measures to the white population and prevent Indians from leaving their children at the general hospital¹⁶.

Foundling hospital buildings

Foundling Hospitals could function in three types of premises: in independent buildings built specifically to receive foundlings; as a section of general hospitals; finally they could be installed in normal urban houses.

Some Foundling Hospitals can be quoted for the artistic quality of their buildings like that of Florence, built according to Brunelleschi's plans during the first half of the fifteenth century and the Salamanca one, built by Benito de Churriguera¹⁷. Others were monumental city buildings like the Russian ones¹⁸ or the London and Dublin Foundling Hospitals¹⁹. Many of them display the investment of ruling authorities in buildings that could be symbols of the power of public institutions²⁰. The need for large buildings is linked to the aims of assistance for children, as well as

¹⁶ Assistance for foundlings in territories under Portuguese rule will be analyzed in Chapter 3.

¹⁷ Fernandez Ugarte, Maria, *Expósitos en Salamanca a comienzos del siglo XVIII*, Salamanca, Diputación Provincial, 1988, p. 46. This Foundling Hospital, a baroque building, was finished in 1720.

¹⁸ The buildings of the Russian Foundling Hospitals of Moscow and S. Petersburg still exist today. See their photographs in Ransel, David L., *Mothers of Misery* cit., p. 54.

¹⁹ On the London Foundling Hospital's construction, see MacClure, Ruth K., *Coram's children* cit., pp. 61-75. See also the reproduction of engravings representing the Hospital on pp. 64 and 73. The hospital had the capacity to house 400 children. The reproduction of the engraving depicting the Dublin Foundling Hospital can be seen in Robins, Joseph, *The Lost Children: a Study of Charity Children in Ireland 1700-1900*, Dublin, 1980, p. 23.

²⁰ In London, the Foundling Hospital became a meeting point for Sunday strolls (Wilson, Adrian, 'Illegitimacy and its implications in mid eighteenth-century London: the evidence of the Foundling Hospital', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 4, 1989, n.1, p. 112). In Florence, the foundling hospital testified to the power of the silk guild.

the forms of assistance given them: in cases where the hospital boarded children during lactation or after weaning there was a need for larger premises. Otherwise hospitals were mere passing points for children who were abandoned and were to be put to nurse as soon as possible.

Hospitals functioning as sections of general hospitals were particularly common in France, where no case of the construction of a building devoted exclusively to foundlings is known²¹. In Italy this system was also in use, as in Turin during the eighteenth century²². Rome assisted foundlings in the Santo Spirito di Saxia, a hospital that cured 2 to 3 thousand sick persons a year, boarded 400 to 500 unmarried foundling girls and a hundred male foundlings, and kept about a hundred persons on its staff²³. When coming back from nurse, children could be channeled to workhouses existing inside the general hospital.

Other cities simply rented or owned a normal house, most commonly attached to or in the vicinity of the general hospital, which was adapted to the needs of receiving children. In these,

²¹ See Grenoble (Norberg, Kathryn, *Rich and poor in Grenoble 1600-1814*, Berkeley, Los Angeles - London, University of California Press, 1985, p. 177-8); Clermont (Aleil, Pierre-François, *Enfants illégitimes et enfants abandonnés à Clermont dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle*, *Cahiers d'Histoire*, Lyon, t. 21, 1976, n. 3, pp. 322); Rouen (Bardet, Jean-Pierre, 'Enfants abandonnés et enfants assistés à Rouen dans la seconde moitié du XVIII^e siècle' in AA. VV., *Sur la population française du XVIII^e et XIX^e siècles. Hommage à Marcel Reinhard*, Paris, 1973, pp. 21); Amiens (Engrand, Charles, 'Les abandons d'enfants à Amiens vers la fin de l'Ancien Régime', *Revue du Nord*, t. 64, 1982, n. 252, pp. 77.); Dijon (Tainturier, Christine, 'L'Assistance aux enfants abandonnés à Dijon au XVIII^e siècle', *95^e Congrès National des Sociétés Savantes*, Reims, 1970. Section d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine, vol. 2, Paris, 1974, pp. 331) and Bayeux, where the local Hôtel-Dieu catered for foundlings and the impoverished sick (Hufton, Olwen, *Bayeux in the late Eighteenth Century*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1967, p. 93). In the cities of Provence, foundlings were also the responsibility of the local Hôpital Général or Hôtel-Dieu (Valran, G., *Misère et charité en Provence au XVIII^e siècle. Essai d'Histoire Sociale*, 2^e éd., Genève, 1979, p. 140-1); in Tarascon foundlings were cared for by the "Hôtel-Dieu" (Descomps, Gabriel, 'Les bâtards de la ville de Tarascon', *Bulletin de la Société Archéologique et Historique de Beaucaire*, year 12, 1972, n. 33, p. 7).

²² The French authorities only created a "Ospizio dei Trovatelli" in 1801 (Cavallo, Sandra, 'Strategie politiche e familiari intorno al Baliatico. Il monopolio dei bambini abbandonati nel canavese tra Sei e Settecento', *Quaderni Storici*, n. 53, 1983, p. 392).

²³ Schiavoni, Claudio., 'Gli esposti (o proietti) alla ruota', p. 664.

few foundlings boarded for long periods of time and those who came back to the hospital could be transferred to other institutions or be fostered by new families²⁴.

All these types of hospital had the same location in common: most of them were situated in the central urban parishes, generally near the cathedral.

The financing of foundling hospitals

In Europe foundlings were never the burden of a single authority; financing was mostly the responsibility of the lay authorities, less commonly of ecclesiastical institutions.

In France, the "seigneurs haut-justiciers" had the responsibility of paying for the care of foundlings, although in some cities the municipality supported them, although they were admitted to the General Hospital²⁵. In cities where the "seigneur haut-justicier" was the king himself, hospitals were mainly at royal expense²⁶. From France the practice of caring for foundlings using the Hôtel-Dieu or the Hôpital-Général premises was transferred to Canada, shortly before the integration of the territory into the English colonies in America²⁷.

In England and North America, the parish was responsible for the expenses of the abandoned children of its territory. Only in a big city like London was a foundling home founded. The reasons for the lack of foundling hospitals seem to lie in the fact that parishes managed to control the abandonment of children, doing searches in order to find the mothers of the children²⁸. Ultimately

²⁴ This is the case of the Portuguese "Casas da Roda" (in English "houses of the wheel"), generally administrated by the local council, where a resident wet-nurse gave assistance to the newly arrived foundlings.

²⁵ I.e. Dijon (Tainturier, Christine, 'L'Assistance aux enfants abandonnés à Dijon', p. 331).

²⁶ This was the case of Limoges, a city owned by the king (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges au XVIII^e siècle', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, Paris, t. 23, Juil.-Sept. 1976, p. 431).

²⁷ De la Broquerie, Fortier, 'Les 'enfants trouvés'', pp. 716.

²⁸ Mothers who abandoned could be punished when discovered, and the punishment ranged from time spent in the pillory to a term in the house of correction. The parishes where the foundlings were abandoned were

the contingent of illegitimate children who were abandoned was smaller than in most areas of the Continent. Social practices over punishment for bastardy were different from the Continent: parents could be publicly whipped and the fathers were obliged to finance the upbringing of their children. Behind the punishment lay economical considerations: the parish tried to discharge its responsibilities by finding the father of the child²⁹. The problem lies in knowing whether such punishment effectively discouraged illicit relationships and how rare bastardy was in order to cause such harsh penalties.

In Portugal, the "concelhos" (administrative circumscriptions formed by groups of parishes) were obliged to finance the care of abandoned children from the beginning of the sixteenth century. Nevertheless the main cities of the kingdom passed effective assistance for foundlings to the local Misericórdias although continuing to finance them. The system was exported to the colonies, as the models of the metropolis were used in Brazil and the pair Council-Misericórdia was reproduced in some cities.

In Spain, the picture is more complex, because it is the only country where we find ecclesiastical institutions with formal institutionalized responsibility for foundlings. Nevertheless, in many cities the town councils had financial obligations towards their maintenance. The most common situation was that the foundlings were supported by funds of various origin³⁰, the sources of income changing across time.

responsible for them, and would pay in order to trace the mother (Fildes, Valerie, 'Maternal feelings re-assessed: child abandonment and neglect in London and Westminster, 1550-1800', in Fildes, Valerie (ed.), *Women as mothers in pre-industrial England: essays in memory of Dorothy MacLaren*, London, Routledge, 1990, p. 156-7).

²⁹ King, Walter J., 'Punishment for bastardy in early seventeenth-century England', *Albion*, vol. 10, 1978, n. 2, pp. 130-151.

³⁰ One of the most interesting cases is that of **Valladolid**, where the confraternity which gave assistance to foundlings had the monopoly of the theatre plays represented in the city, whose profits reverted to foundlings. In the periods when censorship forbade plays, the confraternity relied on the alms of the citizens as well as on legacies accumulated during its existence, as well as on a percentage of tax money conceded by the kings of Spain (Egido Lopez, Teófanos, 'La cofradía de San José', pp. 88-93). In **Granada**, the Real Hospicio maintained itself through rents from its own properties and funds from the Royal treasury (Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social en la

In Madrid, where the foundling hospital was run by a confraternity, it was customary to leave alms for abandoned children, because this institution had lived exclusively on them in its beginning³¹. The "Real Hospital de Santiago", a hospital for pilgrims, sick persons and foundlings which had the same privileges as the Hospital of Santo Spirito di Saxia in Rome, was under royal patronage, benefitting from some royal and papal donations³².

In Italy the council authorities could support the upbringing of foundlings, even if other institutions coped with assistance for them³³. In cities like Verona, the assistance to foundlings was subtracted to the control of ecclesiastical authorities, or the guilds, or even the bishop. In Rome, the papal state financed the upbringing of foundlings³⁴.

Besides regular financing by a central authority, foundling hospitals could count on the accumulation of properties through donations and legacies, like other contemporary charitable institutions. Such was the case of Verona in the fifteenth century³⁵.

España del siglo XVIII: la asistencia al niño expósito en Granada (1753-1808)', *Dynamis*, vol. 2, 1982, p. 216).

31 At the moment of abandonment children brought a sum of money with them. Otherwise the hospital during the eighteenth century possessed five buildings and an annual rent given by the king. In years when the budget was not sufficient, the king would give extra donations to the foundling hospital (Soubeyroux, Jacques, *Paupérisme et rapports sociaux à Madrid au XVIIIe siècle*, Lille and Paris, t. II, 1978, p. 569-70).

32 This hospital totally escaped the jurisdiction of the local archbishop (Eiras Roel, Antonio, 'La casa de expósitos del real Hospital de Santiago en el siglo XVIII', *Buletin de la Universidad Compostelana*, n. 75-76, 1967-68, p. 299-306).

33 This is the case of the Ospedale di San Giovanni of Turin in the eighteenth century, whose first contracts with the municipality date back to the sixteenth century (Cavallo, Sandra, 'Strategie politiche e familiari', p. 392).

34 Schiavoni, Claudio, 'Gli esposti (o proietti) alla ruota', p. 664.

35 Viviani, G. V., *L'assistenza agli esposti* cit., pp. 11-13.

The administration of Foundling Hospitals

Foundling hospitals could be administrated by:

a) a confraternity (Spain, Portugal, Brazil)

In Spain, assistance to foundlings could be performed by local confraternities, as was the case of Valladolid until 1757³⁶, when confraternities were extinguished by the Enlightenment. This was also the case of Madrid, where the "Nuestra Señora de Soledad y de las Angustias" confraternity was substituted by a board of ladies from high society³⁷.

b) a board of ecclesiastical and civil authorities (Paris - Dames de Charité)

In practice, most confraternities divided the directive responsibilities between lay persons and ecclesiastics, as was the case in Madrid³⁸. The existence of boards of ecclesiastical and civil authorities can be observed for Granada³⁹.

c) the bishop and the cathedral's chapter. In some periods, the bishop's chapter could see to the care of foundlings, as was the case of Badajoz in the sixteenth century⁴⁰. The responsibility of such institution concerning foundlings seems to be more frequent in Spain than in the other Catholic countries.

d) a guild. It is the example of Florence, where the silk guild patronized the "Ospedale degli Innocenti". As founders, the silk

³⁶ The Cofradía de San José, founded in 1540, had the specific tasks of collecting, baptizing and caring for abandoned children (Egido, T., 'Aportación al estudio de la demografía española: los niños expósitos de Valladolid (siglos XVI-XVIII) in *Actas de las I Jornadas de metodología aplicada a las ciencias históricas, Santiago de Compostela, 1973*, Santiago de Compostela, 1975, vol. 3, p. 333-4).

³⁷ The "Junta de Socias de Honor y Mérito", who took over the administration of the Inclusa in 1797 (De Demerson, Paula, 'La Real Inclusa de Madrid a finales del siglo XVIII', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, vol. 8, 1972, p. 262)

³⁸ Soubeyroux, Jacques, *Paupérisme et rapports sociaux* cit., p. 571.

³⁹ Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', p. 221.

⁴⁰ Only between 1635-1694. See Cortés Cortés, Fernando, 'Mortalidad expósita en el Badajoz de Seiscientos', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-eXXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, p. 439.

guild members intended to prevent outside interference of any kind⁴¹. Nevertheless, the florentine hospital remains a unique case in Europe, as to what concerns its early foundation, and its importance in the public life of the city.

Foundling hospitals and other institutions of assistance

Foundling Hospitals never existed completely independently from other institutions of assistance. As we have seen, many medieval foundling homes were hospitals for the sick and invalid. In France many general hospitals and Hôtels-Dieu assisted foundlings among other needy⁴².

Even if there was a separate institution to care for abandoned children, cooperation between several urban institutions of assistance was often the rule:

1) In terms of medical assistance, foundlings rarely counted on medical staff exclusively dedicated to their care: they were cured for illness by the doctors and surgeons of general hospitals.

2) Children might be transferred from the general hospitals or other institutions where they had been delivered to the foundling homes⁴³.

3) When they reached the age when they should be dismissed from the responsibility of the foundling hospital they might be channeled to other institutions. This was the case of Florence and the Orbetello in the sixteenth century or Paris between the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. In French Southern cities, like Arles, Marseille or Aix-en-Provence, children passed from the Hôtel-Dieu to the Charité after their seventh

⁴¹ Gavitt, Philip, *Charity and Children in Renaissance Florence. The Ospedale degli Innocenti, 1410-1536*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 1990, p. 63.

⁴² See note 21 of this chapter.

⁴³ See section on "Modes of abandonment of children" in this chapter.

birthday⁴⁴. In the Norman city of Bayeux, children passed from the Hôtel-Dieu into the care and charge of the *hôpital général*, where children were supposed to work in order to contribute towards their upkeep⁴⁵.

Children on their way to the Foundling Hospital

Modes of abandonment of children

Child abandonment was by essence anonymous, in the sense that the individual who abandoned was looking in the first place for the termination of parental responsibilities. In Southern Europe abandonment tended to be anonymous, even if some exceptions can be found (the case of Rennes, for example)⁴⁶. Anonymous abandonment in institutions implied the existence of conventional sites to deposit children, places which were reckoned as adequate to abandon them, where children would be promptly conducted to the hospital premises. These places were widely used, unless there was a police force in charge of gathering abandoned children in a dispersed way and bringing them to the hospitals, as seems to have been the case of Paris before the nineteenth century⁴⁷. Otherwise, conventional places could be the baptismal fount in the Cathedral, as in the case of Toledo⁴⁸; a

⁴⁴ Valran, G., *Misère et charité en Provence* cit., p. 93; Fairchilds, Cissie, *Poverty and Charity in Aix-en-Provence, 1640-1789*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1976, p. 83.

⁴⁵ Hufton, Olwen, *Bayeux in the late* cit., p. 94.

⁴⁶ Fujita, Sonoko, 'L'abandon d'enfants illégitimes à Rennes à la fin de l'Ancien Régime', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, p. 330. In Siena, for instance, the foundling hospital selected the foundlings to be admitted, requiring them to be newborn, to be from the state of Siena and to have a birth certificate proving their illegitimacy (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata e mobilità territoriale degli esposti all'ospedali senese di S. Maria della Scala nel XVIII secolo', in *La Demografia Storica delle città italiane*, Bologna, 1982, p. 684).

⁴⁷ Robin, Isabelle, Walch, Agnès, 'Géographie des enfants trouvés de Paris aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, pp. 347.

⁴⁸ Martz, Linda, *Poverty and Welfare in Habsburg Spain. The example of Toledo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983, p. 255.

recipient outside the hospital as in Siena⁴⁹ or San Gimignano⁵⁰; the door of a person in charge of distributing abandoned children to wet-nurses, as in Porto's case before 1689⁵¹, the entrance of the hospital, as in Madrid⁵²; or a basket placed in the neighbourhood of the hospital and protected from view, as in Verona⁵³.

A special instrument could however add efficiency to the system, preserving anonymity and making possible an immediate reception of the child in the premises of the hospital: the wheel. The wheel consisted of a wooden box rotating round a central axis placed in a window opening instead of its shutters. This box would only have an opening and children could be safely deposited inside. The abandoner, who could not be seen by the attendants of the hospital, would advise them that a child was in the wheel⁵⁴, the box would be turned and the child would be taken out on the other side of the wall and promptly succoured.

It is not clear at what moment the wheel started to be used in foundling hospitals, although it seems certain that it was still not used in medieval times. Wheels were not a feature exclusive to foundling hospitals: some institutions that insist on the isolation of their boarders from the outside world still maintain them in use to the present day⁵⁵. It is likely, from what can be seen in such monasteries of reclusion, that wheels were common devices

49 Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 683.

50 Sandri, Lucia, *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano nel Quattrocento. Contributo alla Storia dell'infanzia abbandonata*, Firenze, 1982, pp. 103-7.

51 Dos Guimarães Sá, Isabel, *A assistência aos expostos no Porto. Aspectos institucionais (1519-1838)*, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1987, p. 68.

52 Sherwood, Joan Mary, *Poverty in Eighteenth Century Spain. The women and children of the Inclusa*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 106.

53 Viviani, G. V., *L'assistenza agli esposti* cit., p. 16.

54 The wheel allowed conversations between the exterior and the interior of the hospital. There could also be a bell which the abandoner rang at the moment of abandonment.

55 For instance in Rosano (Tuscany), there are still female monasteries that use them.

in these institutions, needed for purposes other than abandoning children, but for situations involving exchange of objects⁵⁶.

What was the geographical distribution of the wheel in Europe? No answer can be given with precision, but evidence seems to suggest that, before Napoleon, wheels were restricted to Italy, Spain, Portugal and the south of France. Inside these areas, the diffusion of wheels was not uniform: in Spain not all hospitals had them, and equal anonymity was guaranteed to abandoners by the use of conventional places of abandonment. In Portugal, there is no evidence of a foundling hospital which did not have one. In Italy, wheels were widely widespread by the sixteenth century. In France, wheels were in use especially in the South, before Napoleon institutionalized them for all his Empire in 1811⁵⁷.

However, we can say that wheels never existed in Germany or England where simple presentation of children occurred, with more or without enquiries by the personnel of the hospitals. In London, apart from the General Reception, children were admitted according to methods that were not entirely anonymous: children were admitted in takings-in previously announced; the affluence of too many children led to the choice of children by a balloting system. This system functioned from 1741 to 1756; from 1756 to 1760 the General Reception took place, children being admitted without restrictions other than an age limit. After the General Reception there was even a "face to face" abandonment, in the sense that the staff filled in a form that required questioning the person who brought the child⁵⁸.

These procedures strike us as being very different from those in use in Southern Europe, where the age limits were not as specific and compulsory and where the act of abandonment was an activity developed in secrecy. People deposited children on the

⁵⁶ In Portugal some convent buildings have wheels: in Porto, the Convento de S. Clara and the Recolhimento do Patrocínio da Mãe de Deus (the latter an institution for the preservation of female honour).

⁵⁷ A decree ordered the creation of wheels in all the cities of the Empire. See title II, art. 3 of its transcription in Dupoux, A., *Sur les pas de Monsieur Vincent. Trois cents ans de l'histoire parisienne de l'enfance abandonnée*, Paris, 1958, pp.183-6.

⁵⁸ Wilson, Adrian, 'Illegitimacy and its implications', pp. 105-9.

wheels or in conventional places without having to face one another. In addition, the balloting system, which meant an active contest between abandoners, is not known to have been used in Southern Europe.

Even if not all the hospitals in Europe possessed wheels, they tended to share common types of admission:

- 1) abandonment in the wheel;
- 2) abandonment in public places;
- 3) transfer from other institutions of assistance;
- 4) children admitted at the request of parents only during lactation.

The proportion of children in each of those four alternatives varied from institution to institution and sometimes within the same hospital.

Abandonment in public places, such as streets, churches, porches and similar, may have been common in periods when anonymous abandonment was restricted or subject to selection: the populations would have no alternative but to leave the children and escape if they knew they could not be admitted directly in the foundling home.

Transfer from other institutions of assistance, in turn, seems to be common to all the foundling homes, even those in Northern and Eastern Europe. Children born in prison and mostly in the general hospitals could be immediately admitted to the local foundling home. Many of such hospitals were even contiguous to maternity wards, from Russia to Spain⁵⁹. Giving birth in the hospital was unusual: mothers delivered at home, surrounded by the midwife and perhaps a group of women. Even the presence of

⁵⁹ Berelowitch, Wladimir, 'Les hospices des enfants trouvés en Russie', p. 183. See also for Turin, Cavallo, Sandra, 'Bambini abbandonati e bambini 'in deposito' a Torino nell Settecento', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-eXXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, p. 346. Both authors stress the role of such maternity wards in the formation of obstetricians and midwives.

a doctor was seen as an intrusion in a task that was supposed to belong exclusively to the world of women⁶⁰. Women who gave birth in hospitals were in a difficult economic or social situation. They were either poverty stricken or unmarried, or both. In the cities, it is likely that they belonged to the mass of recently arrived immigrants, lacking social ties in order to arrange delivery by a midwife. So the propensity to abandon children born in hospitals was high⁶¹, even before the creation of maternity hospitals in the nineteenth century⁶². For the eighteenth century, many hospitals give evidence of this transfer of children within two or more institutions⁶³. In cases like that of Granada, women delivered in buildings which were contiguous to the Foundling Hospital⁶⁴. The Inclusa of Madrid, besides accepting children deposited at the hospital's atrium, accumulated children from three other institutions: a confraternity devoted to the salvation of unmarried mothers from prostitution; secret child deliveries in an orphanage; and children whose mothers were sick at the general hospital⁶⁵.

⁶⁰ The presence of a male was exceptional, even in "maternity wards": in the case of Granada during the eighteenth century, midwives delivered children; only in complicated deliveries did they send for a doctor. On child delivery as an activity exclusive to women, see Wilson, Adrian, 'The ceremony of childbirth and its interpretation', in Fildes, Valerie (ed.), *Women as mothers* cit., pp. 68-107.

⁶¹ A hospital of Viterbo sent unmarried girls' children to Rome where they were abandoned (Cajani, Luigi, 'Decentramento e riforma dell'assistenza', p. 262).

In Paris, 84 % of the children born in the "Hôtel-Dieu" in 1751 were sent to the Foundling Hospital (Robin, Isabelle, Walch, Agnès, 'Géographie des enfants trouvés', pp. 348).

⁶² Fuchs, Rachel Ginnis, 'Legislation, Poverty and Child-Abandonment in Nineteenth-Century Paris', *Journal of Interdisciplinary History*, Vol. XVIII, 1987, n. 1, pp. 58.

⁶³ Cf. the cases of Pamplona (Valverde, Lola, 'El abandono y la exposición de niños', p. 99).

In Siena, the Ospedale di Monna Agnese was concerned with deliveries of children destined to be abandoned (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 682).

⁶⁴ Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', p. 215.

⁶⁵ Sherwood, Joan Mary, 'El niño exposito: cifras de mortalidad de una inclusa del siglo XVIII', *Anales del Instituto de Estudios Madrileños*, Madrid, vol. XVIII, 1981, p. 307.

Finally, not all parents were able to keep their children, even if they were willing to do so. Physical motives rendered breastfeeding impossible for many mothers, for instance through illness and subsequent lack of milk or the birth of twins, which demanded a higher quantity of breast milk. Lack of milk, together with a financial situation that did not allow for the payment of a private nurse, were two essential motives to apply for financial help to the foundling hospital, who could then support the care of children during a period restricted to lactation. Evidence suggests that in the Middle Ages this system was already in use⁶⁶. This service, although provided by foundling hospitals, did not make a foundling out of the child who received a breastfeeding allowance. In fact, such children had a different status and we might say that assistance for them was given through their parents⁶⁷. As this was a limited service, these children were subject to selective norms and thus almost all would be legitimate, although mothers of illegitimate children exceptionally obtained such lactations.

Consequences of anonymity

Anonymity implied onerous consequences for the Foundling Hospitals which did not select the children to be admitted. There was no way to limit the number of entrances and thus foundling hospitals had no means of controlling expenses. Foundling hospitals admitted a mixture of legitimate with illegitimate foundlings: there is no example of any hospital succeeding in limiting entrance to either exclusively legitimate or illegitimate children, even if attempts were very often made to limit the entrance to the latter. In Florence, for example, by the end of the

⁶⁶ This is documented for Valencia in the fourteenth century (Rubio Vela, Agustín, 'La asistencia hospitalaria infantil', p. 164-5).

⁶⁷ Several examples of eighteenth century institutions giving assistance to non foundlings can be given: Rouen (Bardet, Jean-Pierre, 'Enfants abandonnés et enfants assistés à Rouen', p. 22-25); Limoges (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 420).

In Spain: Pamplona (Valverde, Lola, 'El abandono y la exposición de niños', p. 99).

eighteenth century attempts were made to restrict assistance to illegitimate foundlings⁶⁸.

It has been suggested that economic crisis or wars increased the number of abandoned legitimate children; but it is also true, that the number of illegitimate grew as well⁶⁹.

The transport of foundlings

A common feature to the system of abandonment was the transport of foundlings from the rural areas to the cities where foundling hospitals functioned. Such movements are well documented and have been studied for 17th-18th Paris⁷⁰ and eighteenth century Rome⁷¹, but are common to many foundling hospitals across Europe⁷². Infants travelled long distances before

⁶⁸ Corsini, Carlo A., 'Materiali per lo studio della famiglia in Toscana nei secoli XVII-XIX: gli esposti', *Quaderni Storici*, a. 11, 1976, pp. 1004-5 and 1007-8.

⁶⁹ Sandri, Lucia, *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano nel Quattrocento* cit., p. 91.

⁷⁰ Paris received foundlings from a very wide area including Picardy (the city of Amiens systematically sent its foundlings to Paris before 1780 (Engrand, Charles, 'Les abandons d'enfants à Amiens', p. 73); Normandy (Bayeux: Hufton, O., *Bayeux in the late* cit., p. 95), Calvados (Dartiguenave, Paul, 'Les enfants trouvés une histoire immorale? L'exemple du Calvados', *Cahier des Annales de Normandie*, n. 13, 1981, p. 118); Burgundy, Artois, Cambrésis, Flanders, Hainault and Liège (Hufton, Olwen, *The Poor of Eighteenth Century France, 1750-1789*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1974, p. 345). See also Robin, Isabelle, Walch, Agnès, 'Géographie des enfants trouvés', pp. 352-4.

⁷¹ In eight years of the century for which information is available, foundlings from areas outside Rome were an average of about 25% of the total (Schiavoni, Claudio, 'Les enfants trouvés à Rome du XVIe au XIXe siècle', paper delivered to the Tenth International Economic History Conference, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', p. 9).

⁷² As for instance in the Auvergne area (Aeil, Pierre-François, 'Enfants illégitimes et enfants', p. 322).

In Italy, it is documented for Naples, Perugia, and Bologna (Da Molin, Giovanna, *L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia* cit., pp. 47-48, 69-83); Siena, where children in transit could be looked after by the farms belonging to the hospital (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 687-90).

In Spain, it was noted for the foundling hospital of Valladolid, where carriers even took illegal possession of the moneys destined for the confraternity which administered the hospital (Egido Lopez, Teófanés, 'Aportación al estudio de la demografía española: los niños expósitos de

arriving at the hospital: sometimes even more than 60 miles. When children were abandoned in rural areas, their transport to the urban centres was the rule: in Spain, priests were charged by law with sending the foundling to the nearest "Casa Cuna" at the expense of the parish⁷³. Nevertheless, transport of foundlings to the nearest city was not always legal. This was the case when transport of children implied that foundlings crossed the frontiers between different political units. Children travelled from Switzerland to Italy⁷⁴; from Portugal to Spain⁷⁵; from Belgium to France; from England to Ireland⁷⁶.

Long distance travel implied the existence of long distance caretakers of whom Sebastien Mercier has left a description well known to historians working on foundlings⁷⁷. The conditions in which children were transported - we must not forget the harshness of travelling conditions in the past - caused presumably high mortality before the children reached the foundling hospital. This mortality, for which no sources exist, cannot be estimated although some authors may have exaggerated it. It is not likely that transporters simply threw away dead children along the road. This might have happened, but was it the rule? Probably they left them to be buried in churches along the way or simply carried them dead to the hospital. Some foundling hospitals

Valladolid (s. XVI-XVIII)', *Actas de las I Jornadas de Metodología aplicada de las Ciencias Históricas*, vol. 3, Santiago de Compostela, 1975, p. 235 and 238); Granada (Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', pp. 218-9)

⁷³ Real Cédula of Carlos IV of 11 December 1796, 'Reglamento para el establecimiento de las casas de expósitos, crianza y educación de estos', *Novas Recopilaciones*, Libro VII, title 37, Law 5. Few studies focus on the abandonment of children in rural areas. See Garcia Jimenez, Bartolomé, *Demografía rural Andaluza: Rute en el Antiguo Regimen*, Córdoba, Diputación Provincial, 1987, pp. 211-212 and 245.

⁷⁴ Gilardonio, Virgilio, 'Materiali etnoantropologici della Lombardia prealpina. Creature, trovatelli, venturini in un mazzo di schede del Museo dell'Arte e delle tradizioni popolari', *Archivio Storico Ticinese*, Bellinzona, n. 80, 1979, p. 328.

⁷⁵ In the Galician city of Santiago, children arrived from Portugal (García Guerra, Delfín, *El Hospital Real de Santiago (1499-1804)*, Coruña, 1983, p. 321, 352 and 364).

⁷⁶ Connell, K. H., 'Illegitimacy before the Famine', in *Irish Peasant Society: Four Historical Essays*, Oxford, 1968, p. 67.

⁷⁷ Quoted by Claude Delasselle in 'Les enfants abandonnés à Paris au XVIII siècle', *Annales E.S.C.*, Paris, a. 30, 1975, pp. 193-194.

include children who arrived dead in their registers, others do not⁷⁸.

Abandonment and social mediation

Child abandonment was responsible for the implementation of an elaborate system of social mediation. A pregnant woman, whether isolated or supported by her family, would not be able to abandon children without the support of strangers. Child delivery was usually assisted by a midwife, who could be helped by other women; someone had to write a note that the child was to take with it in times when few people were literate; the services of a caretaker might be needed to transport the child to the nearest city.

Abandonment required information: when to abandon the child and how, what were the most suitable objects to leave with it, the best hours to abandon, the best way to make the child retrievable⁷⁹. A network of complicity was installed, and information concerning abandonment must have circulated among wide groups, probably formed mainly by women⁸⁰. If the rules of abandonment were not to be observed and institutions used in a fraudulent manner, the need to make information circulate among individuals involved even more complex networks, where the traffic of influences implied the formation of relationships of power. Secrecy is one of the requirements of power: by managing

⁷⁸ In Naples, for instance, children brought dead to the wheel represented 28,4% of the foundlings entered in 1642 (Da Molin, Giovanna, 'Modalità dell'abbandono e caratteristiche degli esposti a Napoli nel Seicento', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-eXXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, p. 491).

⁷⁹ As well as providing information and services concerning child abandonment, mediators could also have the function of softening the trauma of the separation between mother and child, as G. Cappelletto has suggested (Cappelletto, Giovanna, 'Infanzia abbandonata e ruoli di mediazione sociale nella Verona del Settecento', *Quaderni Storici*, Bologna, n. 53, 1983, p. 434).

⁸⁰ Social mediation concerning abandonment is documented for Siena (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 682).

secret information individuals gained influence over the abandoners. Services implying secret information, like informing parents where their children were or allowing the mother to be contracted as her child's wet-nurse were certainly well-paid and created networks of complicity. Midwives could have a determining influence on their clients. Midwives could exhort unmarried mothers to abandonment and act subsequently as recruiters of wet-nurses, channelling their women in labour to people they knew were in need of wet-nurses⁸¹.

In time, the users of foundling hospitals acquired a knowledge of the procedures of abandonment which led them to abandon children more easily and in growing numbers, a sort of social contagion, as Peyronnet called it⁸².

At least in Southern Europe, what we nowadays call corruption was not socially disapproved of in the sense that the use of public institutions as such was rare. In fact, if we think about it, foundling hospitals were one of the first public institutions to be widely used in Europe.

Most abandoned children could be identified by parents wishing to reclaim them: their names, the information on the circumstances of abandonment (day, hour, time), the details concerning the child (age, sex) and the description of the objects left with it provided keys which allowed their retrieval among the anonymous mass of foundlings. Children could be accompanied by a note where some of these issues were referred to, although notes primarily gave importance to baptism. Some parents even proved the children were theirs using material evidence: the other half of a broken object previously left with the child (a card, a ribbon, a coin or a medal) or a copy of its note.

⁸¹ I have found only one testimony to this type of recruitment of wet-nurses for nineteenth century Porto. The doctor in charge of the Foundling Hospital reported it as one of the frauds allowed by the foundling system (Vaz, Francisco de Assiz e Sousa, *Os Expostos. Hospício do Porto*, Porto, Typographia da Revista, 1848, pp. 30-31).

⁸² Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 423.

Retrievability of children does not imply that parents actually wanted their children back, but that they were notwithstanding willing to save the possibility of being able to trace them in the future if opportunity arose. Or simply that they were not willing to admit that separation from their children was definitive.

One cannot exclude that some of the child's tokens were part of a symbolic system. The use of certain objects might fit into the semantics known to the users of the institutions, varying from area to area. If we think of salt to mean the baptismal state of a child, of garlic against evil eye as well as "azeviche" (a dark stone believed to possess properties against the evil eye), there might be other meanings for objects that escape us today. A dialogue could have been established mainly between "experts" of abandonment, that is, the personnel of the institutions on the one hand and abandoners and midwives on the other.

Children on arrival at the Foundling Hospital

The first need: the baptism of children

Preoccupation with children's baptism was common both to abandoners and hospital administrators because both theology and common sense damned the child who died without receiving baptism. Since Saint Thomas Aquinas it was settled that it went to a place called limbo and popular beliefs held that the soul without the body would wander without peace⁸³.

Abandoners even developed a symbolic system to signify the acquisition of baptism by abandoned children: in fifteenth century Tuscany the presence of salt with the foundling at the

⁸³ Delumeau, Jean, *La peur en Occident*, Paris, Fayard, 1978, pp. 86-7; Ginzburg, Carlo, *I Benandanti. Stregoneria e culti agrari tra Cinquecento e Seicento*, Torino, Einaudi, 1966, p. 86.

moment of abandonment was an indicator of baptism⁸⁴. If this symbolic system did not exist, abandoners mentioned the sacrament of baptism in the notes left with children.

Once admitted, baptism was the rule⁸⁵; unless children arrived with an official certificate of baptism, foundling hospitals provided that children receive baptism. For many children the doubt prevailed whether they had already received baptism: in such cases, baptism was given "sub conditione", that is, conditionally. The formula was different for such a baptism, as baptism is a sacrament that cannot be repeated and the words saved the possibility that the child had already been baptized. If high mortality was not a concern for the administrators of foundling hospitals until the second half of the eighteenth century, concern for baptism was widespread. Some hospitals baptized all children regardless of their age⁸⁶. Through baptism, children acquired a soul and were purified of original sin. Baptism was also a guarantee to be buried in sacred ground⁸⁷.

Children were generally named following abandoners' suggestions, but some hospitals intentionally gave foundlings a different name: such was the case in Murcia⁸⁸.

⁸⁴ Trexler, Richard C., 'The foundlings of Florence 1395-1455', *History of Childhood Quarterly*, vol. 1, 1973, n. 2, p. 269. Salt, together with sand or earth, also served to render children immune to witches. According to popular traditions witches before harming the child would count all the grains, number them and then go round the victim as many times as the counted pieces, before being able to do any evil (Sandri, Lucia, *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano nel Quattrocento* cit. , p.122). In other areas salt had a reverse meaning: in medieval Chartres, salt meant that the child was baptized, although the custom had disappeared by the 15th century (Billot, Claudine, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Chartres à la fin du Moyen Age', *Annales de Démographie Historique*, a. 30, 1975, p. 172).

⁸⁵ The preoccupation with baptizing foundlings is common to all Catholic areas. For Calabria see De Rosa, Gabriele, 'L'emarginazione sociale in Calabria nel XVIII secolo: il problema degli esposti', *Ricerche di storia sociale e religiosa*, a. VII, 1978, n. 13, pp. 11-2.

For Spain, one can quote the case of Valladolid (Egido Lopez, Teófanés, 'La cofradía de San José', p. 100).

⁸⁶ Cf. the case of Siena (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 692).

⁸⁷ In Valladolid, the local confraternity charged with foundlings bought a chapel in a church especially designed to bury foundlings (Egido Lopez, Teófanés, 'La cofradía de San José', p. 90).

⁸⁸ Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 102.

Many authors have insisted on calculating baptisms of foundlings as a percentage of overall baptisms. The calculation is not without difficulties: in the first place, as we have seen, foundlings did not always come from the boundaries of the city or village where they were abandoned. Second, a proportion of them had already received baptism before being abandoned, being thus baptized *sub conditione*, that is, the baptism after abandonment was null if the child had received baptism beforehand. The calculation thus involves the risk of including a mass of foreign children and of counting twice children who were already registered in the parish books.

However, even considering such obvious limitations, the calculations can serve as indicators of the escalation of the number of foundlings in urban baptisms.

In a seventeenth century Perpignan parish, the number of foundlings baptized varied between 7 and 18% in a very irregular manner⁸⁹.

In Valladolid, between 1700 and 1769, the percentage of foundlings in overall baptisms varied between 25 and 9%⁹⁰.

Most of the hospitals had women who were ready to breastfeed foundlings on their arrival and during the period in which they were waiting for a country wet-nurse. Their number varied: Valladolid had six⁹¹, whilst Madrid had thirty, the number depending on the intake of children and the availability of country nurses.

In Pamplona, internal wet-nurses were ashamed of admitting publicly that they worked in the foundling hospital: on

⁸⁹ Gigot, Jean-Gabriel, 'Enfants abandonnés à Perpignan au XVIIe siècle (étude démographique sur les enfants nés de parents inconnus baptisés dans la paroisse S. Jean Baptiste entre 1634 e 1646)', *Centre d'études et de recherches catalanes des archives (C.E.R.C.A.)*, Perpignan, n. 17, 1962, p. 267.

⁹⁰ Egido Lopez, Teófanés, 'Aportación al estudio', p. 339.

⁹¹ Egido Lopez, Teófanés, 'Aportación al estudio', p. 238.

one occasion when they had orders to go out of the hospital with the children, they refused to obey, preferring to be dismissed⁹².

Internal wet-nurses were generally supervised by an older woman, in Spanish the "ama mayor", who was in charge of coordinating the care of children, particularly of gathering together the information belonging to each child and the service of the internal wet-nurses⁹³. The existence of this person proves that dealing with effective assistance for children (and not just registering them) was a task that could only be performed by women.

Legitimate children

Hospitals where anonymity existed never controlled the proportion of legitimate children that entered the hospital. The cases where that proportion is known, even if partially, are those where a check upon admissions existed⁹⁴. When the foundling was legitimate poverty was the logical motive for abandonment. Nevertheless contemporaries judged the abandoning of legitimate children harshly and blamed foundling hospitals for encouraging renunciation of parental responsibilities. If the children were not eliminated by death, they could be retrieved and reintegrated in family life, as Hünecke has shown for the case of nineteenth century Milan.

Anonymity permitted the abandonment of legitimate children, in institutions that were implicitly designed for illegitimate children, judging from the complaints that arose about the high number of legitimate children abandoned. In fact, foundling hospitals risked becoming institutions for the non-legal support of maternity. Anonymity opened up various possibilities

⁹² Valverde, Lola, 'El abandono y la exposición de niños', p. 107.

⁹³ Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', p. 223.

⁹⁴ The most striking case is that of Rennes at the end of the eighteenth century, where illegitimate children paid an admission fee, and, in practice, subsidised the care for legitimate children (see Fujita, Sonoko, 'L'abandon d'enfants illégitimes à Rennes', pp. 329-342).

of abusing the system of child abandonment. If the foundling hospitals enabled the parents to reclaim children without having to refund their expenses, it became possible for abandoners to keep children at public expense until the moment they judged best to reclaim them.

Also, if there was corruption inside the hospital, parents, having access to information that should have been kept secret, could follow their children to nurse. In practice, the hospital was paying for the nursing of their children: parents could then visit them at the wet-nurses's house and control their upbringing, probably giving them some extra pay besides the wages they received from the hospital.

Another form of abuse was when the child's own mother managed to be hired as its wet-nurse. The separation from the mother and child would only be restricted to abandonment and the period the child spent inside the foundling hospital. Thus, a certain number of children were not true foundlings, in the sense that they did not lose their identity and their families did not intend to part from them⁹⁵.

These frauds required the complicity of the personnel of the foundling hospital and the extent to which they were used will never be known, but we can suppose that the known frauds were only a small proportion of those which effectively occurred.

Marked foundlings

Foundlings could be marked for life in order to signal their status, but tattoos or burns are known only to Santiago de Compostela⁹⁶ and Rome⁹⁷. In other hospitals foundlings at most

⁹⁵ The occurrence of such cases, although fraudulent and as such rarely discovered, is documented for Spain, as for instance Murcia (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', pp. 106-7); Valladolid (Egido Lopez, Teofanes, 'Aportación al estudio', p. 343).

⁹⁶ García Guerra, Delfín, *El Hospital Real* cit., pp. 334-5.

⁹⁷ Grégoire, Réginald, "Servizio dell'anima quanto del corpo' nell'Ospedale romano di Santo Spirito (1623)", *Ricerche per la Storia Religiosa di Roma*, vol. 3, 1979, p. 250; Di Giorgio, Giorgio, 'Gli esposti dell'Ospedale del Santo Spirito nella seconda metà del Settecento', *Storia e Politica*, a. 3, n. 21, 1982,

wore a necklace printed with their identity and in many places not before the nineteenth century⁹⁸. More than the desire to discriminate foundlings from other children, there was a strong need to prevent the usual deceits of wet-nurses⁹⁹. In fact, the exchange of children was easy, in times when even the identification of adults was difficult, because of the absence of photography or anthropometrics¹⁰⁰. In order to avoid the retrieval of children through the names abandoners had suggested for them, some hospitals even gave them other names, keeping the "true" ones in secret books¹⁰¹.

Dead and handicapped children

In most foundling hospitals, especially those where entrances were anonymous, the administrators could not prevent the abandonment of dead children. Such children may have died during their transport from rural areas, but most of them were intentionally deposited dead. Not all of them were stillbirths; some children who died of illness were abandoned up to the age of eight years. The intention of the abandoners seems to have been to avoid the funeral expenses for the children¹⁰². The institutions sometimes had a structure which allowed the burial of a large number of children, consisting of burial grounds, priest and undertakers to dig the graves. Poor people, being unable to afford the cost of their children's burial, placed them in the hospital. Sometimes they were accompanied by notes where the abandoner

pp. 496. In Siena, only one case of a foundling was found during the eighteenth century, although a regulation of 1690 required that foundlings be marked for life (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 692).

⁹⁸ Dartiguenave, Paul, 'Les enfants trouvés', p. 136; Langlois, François, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Caen', p. 327, note 67.

⁹⁹ See regulations of the Hospital of Santo Spirito di Roma, published by Grégoire, Réginald, "'Servizio dell'anima', p. 250 where the exchange of children is mentioned. See also García Guerra, Delfín, *El Hospital Real* cit., p. 333.

¹⁰⁰ Corbin, Alain, 'Le secret de l'individu' in Ariès, Philippe, Duby, Georges (ed.), *Histoire de la vie privée*, Paris, Seuil, 1985-87, vol. 4, p. 429.

¹⁰¹ As was the case at Rome (Pagano, Sergio, 'Gli esposti dell'Ospedale di S. Spirito nel primo Ottocento', *Ricerche per la storia religiosa di Roma*, Roma, vol. 3, 1979, p. 378).

¹⁰² This was so for eighteenth century Calabria (De Rosa, Gabriele, 'L'emarginazione sociale', p. 17).

begged for the child to be buried, stating the family's poverty. Only in the nineteenth century was there a growth of sensibility, with mourning for dead children, the children of the elites being buried in individual graves with epitaphs. In times when children were buried in collective graves, it made little difference if they were buried anonymously in hospitals' graveyards.

Among foundlings there were physically or mentally handicapped children. Children with malformations at birth, blind, deaf or retarded were left by their parents¹⁰³, sometimes not immediately after birth. The reason for abandonment might not be linked solely to the hardship of bringing up children who were not self-sufficient, but also to the common attitude that handicapped children were a punishment for their parents' sins.

Time of abandonment

In foundling hospitals where anonymous abandonment was the rule, foundlings were left predominantly after sunset or as the sun rose. Dark was preferred to daylight¹⁰⁴. The first hours of the night were those when a higher number of abandonments occurred¹⁰⁵.

Sex ratio of foundlings

Sex ratio of foundlings seems to have been balanced between the sexes, except for the Middle Ages, when a higher number of girls were abandoned¹⁰⁶. Italy continued to register a higher number of female foundlings from the sixteenth to the

¹⁰³ Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 103.

¹⁰⁴ Sandri, Lucia, *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano nel Quattrocento* cit., p. 100.

¹⁰⁵ Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 100.

¹⁰⁶ San Gimignano (Sandri, Lucia, *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano nel Quattrocento* cit., p. 128); 15th century Chartres (Billot, Claudine, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Chartres', p. 176); Milan in 1470 (Albini, Giuliana, 'L'infanzia a Milano nel Quattrocento: note sulle registrazioni delle nascite e sugli esposti all'Ospedale Maggiore', *Nuova Rivista Storica*, Roma, vol. LXVII, 1983, p. 157).

eighteenth centuries¹⁰⁷. In Tula (Mexico) a slightly lower number of boys was abandoned¹⁰⁸. Except for these cases the sex ratio was similar to the normal sex ratio at birth, that is 105 boys for every hundred girls¹⁰⁹. In some areas, a slight preponderance of boys could occur, as for instance in London and Westminster¹¹⁰. In a Spanish rural area, from 1571 to 1812 the number of boys among baptized foundlings was slightly higher than in other baptisms¹¹¹.

Age of foundlings

Children were abandoned preferably within the first days of life. For most of them, the decision concerning abandonment had been taken long before birth. Children in the first month of life account for roughly 80% of the foundlings in most Southern European hospitals¹¹²; the rest would be children several months old, sometimes children already weaned¹¹³. In London, given the

¹⁰⁷ Da Molin presented sex ratios for several cities of Italy (Milan, Venice, Prato, Perugia, Siena, Pavia, Naples) which show a predominance of girls among abandoned children, although she recognised that the data might be deformed. A higher male mortality in the first days of life would also help to explain the higher number of girls (Da Molin, Giovanna, *L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia* cit., pp. 115-127). At the beginning of the nineteenth century values for the kingdom of Naples could nevertheless approach the normal sex ratio at birth: 107.6 in 1804-5 and 109.3 in 1804-5 (Da Molin, Giovanna, 'Natalità illegittima e esposizione nel Regno di Napoli in età moderna. Fonti ed valutazioni demografiche', *Università degli studi di Bari, Istituto de Scienze storico-politiche, Quaderni*, Bari, n.2, 1981-1982, p. 211). Schiavoni confirmed this preference for the abandonment of girls in Rome during the 76 years between 1660 and 1858, when the sex ratio corresponded to 97,4 (Schiavoni, Claudio, 'Les enfants trouvés à Rome', p. 14).

In Siena, during almost all the years examined, the number of girls was 2 to 3% higher than boys and this percentage increased in crisis years (Vigni, Laura, 'Aspetti del fenomeno dell'infanzia abbandonata', p. 693).

¹⁰⁸ Malvido, Elsa, 'El abandono de los hijos - una forma de control del tamaño de la familia y de l trabajo indígena. Tula (1683-1730)', *Historia Mexicana*, vol. XXIX, 1980, n. 4, p. 545.

¹⁰⁹ This is the case for Murcia (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 95).

¹¹⁰ Fildes, Valerie, 'Maternal feelings re-assessed', p. 150.

¹¹¹ The sex ratio was respectively 115.33 and 106.69 (Garcia Jimenez, Bartolomé, *Demografia rural Andaluza* cit., p. 229).

¹¹² In Rome, during the eighteenth century, 16% of foundlings were older than a month (Schiavoni, Claudio, 'Les enfants trouvés à Rome', p. 10).

¹¹³ The situation was different for English foundlings, especially during the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, when children were mostly between 6 months and 1 year old (Fildes, Valerie, 'Maternal feelings re-assessed', p. 148).

widespread adherence to the practice of lying-in, children aged anything up to 39 days were considered as having been abandoned immediately after birth: they comprised 70% of foundlings¹¹⁴.

Some authors have affirmed that most illegitimate foundlings were newborn whilst older foundlings would be legitimate children whom hardship had forced their parents to abandon¹¹⁵. Nevertheless, it would be risky to affirm that all newborns were illegitimate since it is far from impossible that married parents decided to abandon their children even during pregnancy. On the other hand, the same cannot be said about the elder illegitimate children whom mothers were not allowed to keep. The stigma relating to illegitimate motherhood would have to be checked in all the areas concerned. Unmarried mothers caring for their children might also have been compelled to abandon them later due to worsening material conditions. Social values, such as honour -and foundling hospitals also considered the need to save the reputation of women- were not universal, but varied from area to area and, what is more important, within social groups. The relationship between illegitimacy and age is not immediate, although it is more likely for older foundlings to have been legitimate. It depended on local attitudes towards unmarried motherhood: if a woman did not keep to her reputation, because she was too poor to have a chance to marry or if non formal marriages were frequent¹¹⁶, many illegitimate children would have remained with their families until the latter were forced by some circumstance to abandon them.

For instance, in some areas of Spain illegitimacy was accepted and there was a low level of child abandonment, at least until the end of the eighteenth century. The same is true for Northwest Portugal (although evidence exists only for the

¹¹⁴ Wilson, Adrian, 'Illegitimacy and its implications', p. 121.

¹¹⁵ Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 428-30.

¹¹⁶ Historians dealing with illegitimacy have often failed to distinguish between two types of illegitimacy: the children of single mothers and the children of parents who shared the same household without being married. Regional variations also need to be studied.

nineteenth and twentieth centuries), proving that bastards were not wholly discriminated against by the community¹¹⁷.

Seasonality of abandonment

Seasonality of abandonment seems to have been no different from the local variations of baptism records throughout the year.

A peak of abandonment seems to have occurred in most areas during the early summer, decreasing after August until late autumn and beginning of winter, when the number of abandonments began to progressively increase. There are some exceptions, such as the Spanish city of Murcia in the seventeenth century, where abandonments occurred mainly during winter and decreased during summer¹¹⁸. At Rome, the peak of abandonments took place in winter and autumn, which matches that of overall Roman baptisms throughout the year, at least for Roman-born foundlings¹¹⁹.

If we assume that all the foundlings were newborn (which is not true, the number of older children corresponding up to a maximum of 20%), the graph of conceptions reaches a peak during early spring and high summer¹²⁰.

In the Veneto the peak of conceptions of foundlings took place during the months of the harvests, from May to June¹²¹. Da Molin also found the peak of abandonments coinciding with that

¹¹⁷ The best analysis of North West Portugal's illegitimacy is by C. Brettell who does not affirm that total discrimination existed towards bastards, and distinguishes between several levels of acceptance of illegitimate children (Brettell, Caroline, *Men who migrate, women who wait*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986, Chapter V, pp. 210-262).

¹¹⁸ Data relate mainly to the seventeenth century, but there seems to be a change between 1690 and 1721, when the summer decrease is less evident (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', pp. 95, 98-99).

¹¹⁹ Schiavoni, Claudio, 'Les enfants trouvés à Rome', p. 11.

¹²⁰ Egidio Lopez, Teofanes, 'Aportación al estudio', p. 345: there was a peak of conceptions in January and from middle spring until middle summer.

¹²¹ Povolo, Claudio, 'L'infanzia abbandonata nel Veneto', p. 656.

of births and with the "soudure", that is, the period before harvest when the price of grain was at its highest during the year¹²².

Children as the responsibility of the hospital

Mortality of foundlings

Mortality of foundlings was high, and is assumed to be higher than for contemporary child and infant mortality (See Annex 2). The figures given for Europe's foundlings range from 60 to 95%¹²³. Foundlings were children at risk: besides the normal causes of child and infant mortality¹²⁴, they had to face a number of additional occasions that threatened their resistance. From the pregnancy of their mothers to weaning and later, they were subject to various moments of danger:

1) Pregnancy and child delivery: children often came from hidden pregnancies, with mothers who could have tried to abort without success; they might have compressed their stomach in tight clothes. Child delivery might also occur in bad conditions, without suitable assistance.

2) Transport in the material conditions of the time was far from comfortable; long distances had to be travelled without the company of a breastfeeding woman. In addition, for bureaucratic

122 Da Molin, Giovanna, *L'infanzia abbandonata in Italia* cit., pp. 95-98.

123 Mortality in Spain is estimated between 70 to 80% (Chacon Jimenez, F., Frasneda Collado, R., 'Aproximación a nuevas perspectivas y propuestas de investigación sobre el abandono en la Espana del antiguo regimen', *17º Congreso Internacional de Ciências Historicas*, Madrid 1990, p. 493).

124 Authors agree that mortality was directly proportional to the age of children: the most dangerous periods went from the first days of life to six months and later during weaning. Children were subject to seasonal mortality; in high summer mortality was particularly marked due to intestinal illnesses. Smallpox was one of the main causes of child mortality before the spread of vaccination.

reasons, the child might be passed on to various authorities before reaching the hospital.

3) Once accepted at the foundling hospitals, there were new risks of death, resulting from the austerity of the premises. The lack of minimum hygienic conditions and the high number of children endangered the lives of foundlings. The risk of contagious diseases increased, mostly syphilis. Breast feeding could be insufficient if the number of wet-nurses was not proportionate to the existing number of children. Some of the hospitals made attempts to implement artificial breastfeeding in order to solve this problem¹²⁵; others simply introduced solid food at an early age¹²⁶. In some cases, one can say that the survival of the child depended on the number of days it stayed inside the foundling hospital. Permanence in the hospital was dangerous even for older children, who had returned after being brought up by rural wet-nurses¹²⁷.

4) After being given to nurse, the dangers were not over: the child risked death by negligence and bad breastfeeding if the wet-nurse did not have a good supply of breast milk. In any case, its condition of health could be so bad by the time it reached the wet-nurse that it could not recover. Weaning was another difficult moment, especially if it was undertaken during the summer months, when gastric diseases were at their peak.

¹²⁵ Artificial feeding could mean the use of goat milk as was the case in **Santiago** (Eiras Roel, Antonio, 'La casa de expósitos', p. 316). In **Aix-en-Provence** the hospital of St. Jacques in 1779 took the decision to keep some goats in order to substitute solid foods (Valran, G., *Misère et charité en Provence* cit., p. 142).

¹²⁶ In **Madrid**, children were given "porridge" at four months (Soubeyroux, Jacques, *Paupérisme et rapports sociaux* cit., p. 591).

¹²⁷ Peyronnet estimated as 83% the percentage of children between 7 and 12 years old who died in the General Hospital of **Limoges** between 1764-1772 (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 433).

Dispersion of foundlings in the countryside

Most foundling hospitals worked as centres of distribution of children, in practice as mere "entrepôts": no foundling hospital ever brought up significant numbers of children entirely inside its premises¹²⁸. Foundling hospitals were the pivots of a system in which a massive circulation of children occurred. Foundlings coming from rural areas, as we have seen, first made a journey from their place of birth to the foundling hospital, whence they were to be sent again to a more or less distant place. In fact, except for Spain¹²⁹, children were given to nurse preferably in country areas, where they were supposed to stay until the end of their upbringing. The probable existence of a wide market for private wet-nurses, in times when even working families might pay for women to breastfeed their children, created a hierarchy of wet-nurses¹³⁰. The best paid and probably the best quality were those who boarded in the houses of the well-to-do and integrated their servanthood. The areas near the cities were also in demand on the part of private persons who put out their children to nurse. The foundling hospitals' wet-nurses were probably at the bottom of the scale, being the poorest, maybe the worst supplied with breast milk, and certainly those who lived at the furthest distances from the urban centres¹³¹. The phenomenon has been well studied in the cases of Lyons and Paris, which demonstrate that there was a geographical selection of wet-nurses¹³².

¹²⁸ In Rome, for example their number never exceeded a few dozen a year in the seventeenth century and ten or less per year during the eighteenth (Schiavoni, Claudio., 'Gli esposti (o proietti) alla ruota', p. 665).

¹²⁹ Soubeyroux has compared the case of Madrid with that of Lyons, remarking that, whilst the Lyons silk industry offered employment to women, in Madrid the lack of female occupations made women available to breastfeed foundlings (Soubeyroux, Jacques, *Paupérisme et rapports sociaux* cit., p. 573).

¹³⁰ According to Fiona Newall, nurses fostering parish children, often widowed mothers, came from a lower socio-economic group than wet-nurses caring for children from London or other local towns (Newall, Fiona, 'Wet nursing and child care in Aldenham, Hertfordshire, 1595-1726: some evidence on the circumstances and effects of seventeenth-century child rearing practices', in Fildes, Valerie (ed.), *Women as mothers* cit., pp. 132-3).

¹³¹ Data for Caen between 1661 and 1820 seem to confirm this. See Langlois, François, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Caen', p. 318.

¹³² This selection is also confirmed for Limoges (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 435).

When women came to the hospital to be hired, they would often bring a certificate of recommendation from their parish priest¹³³; they took the foundlings home and periodically returned to the city to be paid. To be hired as a wet-nurse was a voluntary act, except in Galicia where breastfeeding women were obliged by the foundling hospital and the local council authorities to take care of foundlings¹³⁴. In some cases, their husbands performed the function of go-betweens, receiving the wages for them when they came to the city on their own business. In most cases, however, the hospitals employed members of their staff responsible for establishing the link between the countryside and the city, sometimes with duties to check and control.

The common rule for many Foundling Hospitals was that the wages paid to the wet-nurses diminished once the child reached the age where he was supposed to be weaned. In Spain, for example, this was the case in Granada¹³⁵.

Like abandoners, wet-nurses could carry through a variety of deceits in raising foundlings:

1) Substitution of children, which consisted of exchanging a dead foundling with another child, including the wet-nurse's own one;

2) Postponement of the announcement of the foundling's death in order to continue to receive undue wages for some time;

3) Re-abandonment of the foundling she had taken from the hospital;

¹³³ Parish priests played a very important role in the choice and surveillance of wet-nurses (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 434).

¹³⁴ This practice was due to the low pay of foundling wet-nurses and to the risks of contagion from illnesses associated with them and it led to many abuses and cases of corruption, as families sought to avoid this compulsory duty (Eiras Roel, Antonio, 'La casa de expósitos', p. 324-5).

¹³⁵ Wet-nurses of children less than one year received higher wages than the others (Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', p. 231).

4) Hiding the absence of milk or even of pregnancy. If they were not physically able to breastfeed, wet-nurses could circulate foundlings among the women of their own household or among neighbours. Another alternative was to feed foundlings with solid foods before the weaning period, thus increasing mortality risks.

Such deceits have been referred to by almost all authors who have studied foundlings; they can be found everywhere in Europe¹³⁶.

Children reclaimed by their parents

The proportion of parents reclaiming their children is not really known for most institutions. In fact many parents must have searched for foundlings who had been dead by the time they came; the practice of most hospitals was to report searches only when parents succeeded. Only in such cases, where administrators had to decide if parents were to refund expenses or not and report its eventual departure, was a note made in the registers. If not, the use of registering searches was null, in times of few statistical preoccupations. The proportion of parents who effectively managed to recover their children ranges from 6-10 to 20-25%¹³⁷. The best study so far of foundling's families is of nineteenth century Milan, where the recovery of children was

¹³⁶ In France, all or some of these deceits were found in **Limoges** (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 436); **Caen** (Langlois, François, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Caen', p. 321); **Montpellier** (Jones, Colin, *Charity and Bienfaisance. The treatment of the poor in the Montpellier region 1740-1815*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982, p. 106).

In Spain, they are documented for **Madrid** in the seventeenth century (Larquié, Claude, 'La mise en nourrice des enfants madrilenés', p. 140); for **Santiago** (Eiras Roel, Antonio, 'La casa de expósitos', pp. 328-9); **Granada** (Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', p. 225).

¹³⁷ In some cities, the number of foundlings returned to their parents is strangely low: in **Rome**, of 2758 foundlings residing in the hospital, only 29 were given back (Di Giorgio, Giorgio, 'Gli esposti dell'Ospedale', p. 488). In **Murcia** between 1630 and 1721 it was 1.5% (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 105).

apparently the most common purpose of the system of abandonment, even if not officially recognized as such¹³⁸.

The ability of parents to use Foundling Hospitals according to their possibility or will to reintegrate them in the family is another proof that foundling hospitals were not "contraceptives" but a means of disposing of an available stock of children, for eventual use even in their own families. The whole society, from the state to employers and childless couples, could benefit from a number of children whose fostering was easy from the legal point of view and did not imply civil obligations such as exist for present day adoption.

The end of hospital responsibilities

The age at which children were dismissed from the care of wet-nurses varied across Europe: in some areas they were to stay with them only during lactation coming back to the hospital after weaning; in others they stayed with them until an age that varied between five and sixteen years¹³⁹. In many Foundling Hospitals, the foundling's seventh year was the moment when the return from the countryside took place¹⁴⁰.

Italy was an exception to this rule. Its Foundling Hospitals tended to keep their children in charge until adulthood, especially girls, whose marriage was guaranteed by the institution. Girls

¹³⁸ Hünecke, Volker, *I trovatelli di Milano. Bambini esposti e famiglie espositrici dal XVII al XIX secolo*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1989pp. 249-250.

¹³⁹ In Rome male foundlings would come back to the hospital between the ages of 12 and 16 years old, whilst girls went to the Conservatorio even before 11 (Schiavoni, Claudio., 'Gli esposti (o proietti) alla ruota', pp. 666-7).

In Paris, until 1696 children returned to the Foundling Hospital at three; after 1696 at five years of age. In 1751, the returned children were between five and seven years old and in 1761 the return to Paris was suppressed and children were given to persons willing to keep them until 25 (Robin, Isabelle, Walch, Agnès, 'Géographie des enfants trouvés', pp. 358-359). In Montpellier, children came back to the hospital on their fifth birthday (Jones, Colin, *Charity and Bienfaisance* cit., p. 106).

¹⁴⁰ In France such hospitals were: that of Limoges (Peyronnet, Jean-Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés et leurs nourrices à Limoges', p. 419); Bayeux (Hufton, Olwen, *Bayeux in the late* cit., p. 94); Tarascon (Descomps, Gabriel, 'Les bâtards', p. 8).

were supposed to live within the closed walls of the hospital or one of its sections while they were waiting for an husband. Both the Santo Spirito di Saxia of Rome and the Ospedale degli Innocenti of Florence¹⁴¹ gave dowries to girls, and in Rome a few of them took monastic vows¹⁴². Other minor hospitals, like that of Santa Maria della Stella in Orvieto also gave dowries to their "zitelle"¹⁴³. This feature was exported abroad, even to a religiously divided city: the Italian Hospital of Prague, obviously a Catholic foundation, also gave dowries to its girls¹⁴⁴.

Children after the Foundling Hospital

Redistribution of foundlings after upbringing by the hospital

After coming back to the hospital children could be redistributed in a variety of ways:

a) they could be given back to their wet-nurses, this time with the status of informally adopted children¹⁴⁵.

141 Richard Trexler studied the invasion of the Orbatello, initially an asylum for widows, by foundling women chased from the overcrowded and bankrupt Innocenti after 1580. Apparently, it was difficult to marry such girls, even if dowries were promised. See Trexler, Richard C., 'A widow's asylum of the Renaissance: the Orbatello of Florence', Stearns, P. N. (editor), *Old Age in Preindustrial Society*, New York and London, 1982, pp. 140-143.

142 Both boys and girls could take monastic vows, and the former would serve in the hospital itself. Girls to be married participated in three annual processions, and were chosen by their would-be husbands (see Grégoire, Réginald, "'Servizio dell'anima', p. 253).

143 Spinster in English. In Orvieto, girls could also be difficult to marry, even if given dowries (Cajani, Luigi, 'Decentramento e riforma dell'assistenza', pp. 265-6).

144 Svobodny, Petr, 'Les enfants abandonnés de l'hôpital italien de Prague', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-eXXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, pp. 1102.

145 The percentage of such children among the surviving could be high: 40% in Murcia. The authors of this study suggest that these adoptions could also serve as a means for the wet-nurses of recovering their own children without letting the hospital know (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 106, 110).

b) they could be given to other individuals who fostered them, either for purposes of labour¹⁴⁶ or even to integrate them in their families as more or less full members. For the male foundlings, fostering could assume the character of a formal apprenticeship contract¹⁴⁷.

c) Children could come back to the hospital and be put to work for the hospital's benefit. This was the case of the Roman Hospital of Santo Spirito di Saxia whose foundling girls worked inside its walls¹⁴⁸, and of Lyons, where groups of foundlings were given to factory owners with work contracts¹⁴⁹. In Spain, the Royal Hospital of Granada possessed a textile workshop which absorbed the work of children¹⁵⁰.

An insolved problem is whether foundlings were integrated as full members in their foster families. The fact that they were often put to work is not meaningful, as child labour was a widespread social practice among the labouring classes. What is meant here is the foster family's capacity to absorb a new member and this feature must be connected with the strength attributed to blood ties. In areas where a family was viewed essentially as a blood group, the resistance to full integration would be greater. On the other hand, if a family had no heirs, a foundling could be welcome. Foundlings could also integrate

146 In the nineteenth century, children could also be given to factories, at the request of the owners (Dartiguenave, Paul, 'Les enfants trouvés', pp. 129-133).

147 In eighteenth century Rome, these were called *concessione ad arte*. Girls could be given *a tempo nubile*, that is, given temporarily to families before getting married or becoming nuns. See Di Giorgio, Giorgio, 'Gli esposti dell'Ospedale', pp. 495 and 505.

148 Girls cared for the laundry, span, wove and embroidered: Di Giorgio, Giorgio, 'Gli esposti dell'Ospedale', pp. 496 and 498.

149 This practice however, was not numerically significant: less than 140 children were placed in this way during the century and only in periods of industrial crisis, when the administrators of the hospital did not manage to have them fostered individually by craftsmen. The local labour market also obliged the administrators to give them to factories outside the limits of the city, where the children of the "Charité" would not deprive the urban inhabitants of employment (Aguerre Hohl, J.-P., 'Les placements collectifs des enfants de la Charité au XVIIIe siècle', *Bulletin du Centre d'Histoire Économique et Sociale de la région Lyonnaise*, 1978, n. 3, pp. 17-47).

150 Vallecillo Capilla, Manuel; Olagüe de Ros, Guillermo, 'Política demográfica y realidad social', p. 235.

families through marriage strategies¹⁵¹. The question does not provoke a single answer; probably an extreme variety of situations occurred, from the making of a factory worker or a domestic servant out of a foundling to its full integration as an adopted son. Formal adoption probably did not exist in the eighteenth century; maybe families needed non-formal members who would enjoy part of the rights of the other children. The fact that there were various grades of integration in foster families is proved by the existence of several types of adoption, as was the case in Murcia¹⁵². It is likely that the integration of foundlings in foster families might have depended on the flexibility of the inheritance system: if the donor was free to leave a part of his belongings to non kin, formal adoption would be unnecessary. In Portugal, "unequal partibility" prevailed, the donor being free to dispose of the "terça" (equalling a third of his property) to persons of his own choice.

The percentage of children available for integration in foster families is low if compared to the number of foundlings who entered the institutions: 6 % in Murcia, between 1 and 3% in Seville¹⁵³.

The sexual division of labour imposed different destinies on foundling girls and boys: the latter were generally given as apprentices to local craftsmen, either formally (apprenticeship contracts being signed before the notary), or informally. The

¹⁵¹ Cavallo, Sandra, 'Strategie politiche e familiari', pp. 413-5.

¹⁵² Three types of adoption existed: in the first, foundlings could be helped to "tomar estado" without inheritance rights; in the second, they would eventually inherit if there were no heirs; only the third type was a full adoption (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', pp. 108-9). Alvarez Santaló suggested that there was not a full adoption, as this is understood nowadays, with the transmission of social status and family names, because of the fact that fostering parents often gave back "adopted" foundlings to the hospital (See Alvarez Santaló, Leon Carlos, *Marginación social y mentalidad en Andalucía occidental. Expositos en Sevilla (1613-1910)*, Sevilla, La Junta de Andalucía, 1980, p. 101).

¹⁵³ In this city, there were 6.03% of adopted children between 1630 and 1721 (Elgarrista Domeque, Rosa; Fresneda Collado, Rafael, 'Aproximación al estudio de la identidad familiar', p. 107. For Seville, the percentages relate to the eighteenth century (See Alvarez Santaló, Leon Carlos, *Marginación social* cit., p. 106).

practice of entrusting foundling boys to craftsmen is common to all Western Europe¹⁵⁴. Boys could also be channeled to the army or to the navy¹⁵⁵. Girls, in turn, could be given as domestic servants or remain in the protected environment of an institution¹⁵⁶. In the Charité of Aix-en-Provence children of both sexes worked in the textile industries, and only cooking and linen washing were reserved for girls. Boys did tailoring, shoemaking, cement-making, gardening and shepherding¹⁵⁷.

The projects for foundlings

Foundling hospitals could be permeated by the political beliefs of contemporary authorities: the most striking case is that of Irish hospitals, where the preoccupation of their Protestant rulers seems to have been to withdraw Catholic children from the influence of their parents¹⁵⁸. The city of Florence, for instance, ruled its charitable institutions, including the Foundling Hospital, as a benevolent father taking charge of its most fragile members¹⁵⁹. In the New World, in Mexico, according to Elsa Malvido, indigenous foundlings were used as a source of recruitment of the labour force by the colonial population¹⁶⁰.

¹⁵⁴ Valran documents it for the South of France, where boys also worked in the workshops of the hospitals (Valran, G., *Misère et charité en Provence* cit., p. 149). Children of the Charité of Aix-en-Provence were apprenticed to masters in the town at the age of sixteen (Fairchilds, Cissie, *Poverty and Charity* cit., p. 91).

¹⁵⁵ Children of Montpellier were sent to the naval school at Toulon to be trained as cabin boys (Jones, Colin, *Charity and Bienfaisance* cit., p. 223).

¹⁵⁶ Jones, Colin, *Charity and Bienfaisance* cit., p. 223; Fairchilds, Cissie, *Poverty and Charity* cit., p. 91. Venancio, commenting on the foundlings of Rio de Janeiro, remarked that, whilst foundling boys worked in the local naval industry ("Arsenal da Marinha") together with prisoners, girls were carefully withdrawn from the dangers of loose behaviour (Venancio, Renato Pinto, *Infância sem destino: o abandono de crianças no Rio de Janeiro no século XVIII*, S.Paulo, Master's thesis, FFLCH-University of São Paulo, 1988, p. 59).

¹⁵⁷ Fairchilds, Cissie, *Poverty and Charity* cit., p. 90.

¹⁵⁸ Robins, Joseph, *The Lost Children* cit., pp. 10-59.

¹⁵⁹ Trexler, Richard C., 'A widow's asylum', p. 142.

¹⁶⁰ About 17% of the children born to the indigenous population were abandoned (Malvido, Elsa, 'El abandono de los hijos', p. 538).

The realities of the lives of foundlings after the hospital seems to have been different from the projects conceived for them by contemporary politicians and theoreticians. The populationist ideas of Absolutism and the Enlightenment¹⁶¹ stressed the importance of the number of individuals for the well being of nations. Death of foundlings or illegitimate children was viewed as a political defeat for the state and as a waste of potential subjects for sovereigns. Some authors even considered that private vices led to public benefits in the case of illegitimate children¹⁶². Following the same line of thought, Mirabeau designated foundlings as the "pepinière de l'État"¹⁶³. A variety of authors drew up projects for the employment of foundlings in the army, the colonization of underpopulated areas or their emigration to the colonies. In Russia, foundlings were to form a new class of individuals trained to be the ideal citizens of a State of the Enlightenment era, fulfilling the gap created by the absence of a bourgeoisie. In Italy, they were to people the Maremma, a deserted and unhealthy area in Tuscany. In France, foundlings should were to be sent to Louisiana¹⁶⁴ or to Algiers¹⁶⁵, and

161 The diffusion of the ideas according to which kingdoms were underpopulated and could benefit from the upbringing of foundlings to solve the problem was common to all the states that organized assistance for foundlings during the eighteenth century. In Spain, we can find such ideas at the level of theoreticians like Bilbao (Riera, J., 'Antonio Bilbao y la Pediatría Española de la Ilustración', *Anales Españoles de Pediatría*, vol. 6, 1973, n. 1, pp. 127-130) and at the level of the administrators of Foundling Hospitals themselves, as for instance in Galicia (García Guerra, Delfín, *El Hospital Real* cit., p. 353-8).

162 Thus Jonas Hanway, who partially agreed with Mandeville (Taylor, James Stephen, 'Philanthropy and Empire: Jonas Hanway', p. 295).

163 Mirabeau, Victor Riqueti, *L'ami des hommes*, vol. II, Avignon, 1756, p. 173. Mirabeau also deplored the practice of making soldiers out of foundlings, asserting that the state should take care of their education and train them as farm labourers (vol. II, p. 175).

164 Aragon, Philippe, 'L'enfant délaissé au siècle des Lumières', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonnée' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, p. 390; Jeorger, Muriel, 'Enfant trouvé - enfant objet', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, p. 375. On the lack of white women in French colonies see Jeorger, Muriel, 'L'hymen sous la neige ou sous les tropiques', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, pp. 421-426.

165 See Mérien, Gilles, 'La colonisation de l'Algérie ou le pied noir sans foi', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, pp. 429-430.

Napoleon proposed to create a special military corps of foundlings, which was destined to failure¹⁶⁶.

These projects had something in common: they viewed foundlings as a stock of children whom society could dispose of. The state could redistribute the mass of familyless children according to its needs. Thus, the preoccupation with the future of foundlings was tied up with the need to render a previous investment profitable. In fact foundlings were basically a charge on public finances and there was a belief that the money spent on their upbringing entitled the state to the exercise of authority over them. In practice, most foundling hospitals developed an official *patria potestas* over foundlings: their origin was supposed to be the place where they were abandoned and their father was to be the foundling hospital; if the state paid for their upbringing, it would have paternal power over them.

Most of these projects took shape during the nineteenth century, although they were launched in the preceding century. In Mexico foundlings were used to people Upper California from 1797 to 1817¹⁶⁷. The intention of constituting a demographic stock out of foundlings had been present since the early eighteenth century but only after Napoleon and in the Russian case did it take shape. Nevertheless the small proportion of foundlings who survived until adolescence and adulthood was low and this sufficed by itself to defeat such projects.

¹⁶⁶ Colavolpe, Isabelle, 'L'enfant-trouvé sous la Toise', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, pp. 409-420. According to Muriel Jeorger the purpose of the Imperial Guard Regiment was to abolish the distinction between foundlings and non-foundlings and between French and non-French children, as foundlings would be enlisted from all the Empire ('*Enfant trouvé - enfant object*', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, 'L'enfant abandonné' (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, p. 380).

¹⁶⁷ Malvido, Elsa, 'El abandono de los hijos', p. 556.

Foundlings as adults

The fate of the few foundlings who reached adulthood is unknown¹⁶⁸. Foundling hospital records only state their immediate occupation after leaving the hospital and we know that the child's activities might often change during adolescence. Some ended up in factories, others in workshops as apprentices, whilst a large group remained in the rural areas, engaged in agriculture and rural crafts.

Probably these children's lives had changing natures, their circulation within family groups or occupations creating a variety of situations during the years of childhood and adolescence. The situation of Lazarillo de Tormes, shifting from master to master from the moment his mother entrusted him to a stranger, might have been a common reality for many foundlings¹⁶⁹.

¹⁶⁸ The only studies which might clear this issue are those based on family reconstitution where lineages including foundlings can be detected. For nineteenth century Campania see Berrino, Annunziata, 'Un fratello per marito. Gli esposti in una comunità ottocentesca', *Meridiana*, vol. 9, May 1990, pp. 103-126.

¹⁶⁹ The Lazarillo de Tormes, born in Salamanca, knew eight masters before settling down in Toledo (Hurtado de Mendoza, H. de Luna, Velez de Guevara, *El Lazarillo de Tormes - El diablo cojuero*, Paris, Louis Michaud, no date - 1st edition in the sixteenth century).

Annex 1

Chronology of the foundation of Foundling Hospitals

Twelfth to Fourteenth Centuries

- 1186 Siena, Italy (Sandri, L., *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano*, p. 37, note 1).
- 1192 Florence, Italy (Trexler, R., 'The foundlings of Florence', p. 261; Sandri, L., *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano*, p. 73, note 1).
- 1198 Rome, Italy (Schiavoni, C., 'Les enfants trouvés', 1990, p. 1; Sandri, L., *L'Ospedale di S. Maria della Scala di S. Gimignano*, p. 37, note 1)
- 1316 Florence, Italy (Trexler, R., 'The foundlings of Florence', p. 261).
- 1333 Urbino, Italy (Ruggeri, R., *Economia rurale*, 1978, p. 13).
- 1346-48 Venice, Italy (Pullan, B., *La politica sociale*, vol. II, p. 720).
- 1383 Venice, Italy (Pullan, B., *La politica sociale*, vol. II, p. 720).

Fifteenth Century

- 1419 Florence, Italy (Gavitt, P., 'Cultural Values', 1990, p.1, Trexler, R., 'The foundlings of Florence', p. 261).
- 1426 Verona, Italy (Viviani, G. F., *L'assistenza agli "esposti"*, p. 9).
- 1441 Leuven, Belgium (Bougard, J.-P., 'Des enfants trouvés', p. 259).
- 1456 Milan, Italy (Hünecke, V., 'The abandonment of legitimate', p.5)
- 1458c. Brescia, Italy (Onger, S., 'L'abbandono degli infanti', p. 39).
- 1474 Camerino, Italy (Bussini, O., 'L'infanzia abbandonata a Camerino', p. 593)
- 1477 Imola, Italy, (Galassi, N., *Dieci secoli*, vol. II, 1970, p. 238).

- 1480 Guadalupe, Spain (Dominguez Ortiz, A., 'Los expositos en la España Moderna', p. 351).
- 1482 Novara, Italy (Martinengo, A., *La ruota di Novara*, 1978, p.11).
- 1492 Santiago de Compostela, Spain (Eiras Roel, A., 'La Casa de Espósitos', 1967, p. 297; Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 5).
- 15th Burgos, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', 1990, p. 11).

Sixteenth Century

- 1532 Anvers, Belgium (Bougard, J.-P., 'Des enfants trouvés', p. 259).
- 1540 Valladolid, Spain (Egido, T. 'Aportación al estudio', p. 333; Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', 1990, p. 3).
- 1552 London, United Kingdom (Fildes, V., 'The English Wet-nurse', 1988, p. 153).
- 1572 Madrid, Spain (Carbajo Isla, M., *La poblacion de la villa de Madrid*, 1987, p. 17; Sherwood, J., 'El niño expósito', p. 300).
- 1584 Udine, Italy (Codarin Miami, L., 'Santa Maria della Misericórdia', p. 378)
- 1587 Salamanca, Spain (Fernandez Ugarte, Maria, *Expósitos en Salamanca*, pp. 42-55).
- 16th Palencia, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 4).

Seventeenth Century

- 1604 Puebla, Mexico (Gonzalbo Aizpuru, P., 'La Casa de Niños expósitos', 1982, p. 412, note 7).
- 1622 Andújar (Jaen), Spain (Gómez Martinez, E., 'Los marginados', p. 635).
- 1635 Badajoz, Spain (Cortés Cortés, F., 'Mortalidad expósita', p. 439).

- 1670 Paris, France (Delasselle, C., 'Les enfants abandonnés', p. 187).
- 1672 Marseille, France (Valran, G., *Misère et charité en Provence*, p. 64)
- 1682 Mons, Belgium (Bougard, J.-P., 'Des enfants trouvés', p. 259).
- 1685 Brussels, Belgium (Bougard, J.-P., 'Des enfants trouvés', p. 259).

Eighteenth Century

- 1704 Dublin, Ireland (Connell, K. H., *Illegitimacy before the Famine*, p. 66).
- 1706 Viana do Castelo, Portugal (Brettell, C. ; Feijó R., 'Foundlings in nineteenth century', p. 280).
- 1708 Baia, Brazil (Marcilio, M. L., 'Crianças abandonadas', p. 515; Russell-Wood, A.J.R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos*, p. 239).
- 1738 Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (Marcilio, M. L., 'Crianças abandonadas', 1990, p 515, Russel-Wood, A.J.R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos*, p. 235).
- 1738 Viterbo, Italy (Cajani, L., 'Decentramento e riforma dell' assistenza agli esposti', p. 264; Langellotti, A.; Travaglini, C. M., 'L'infanzia abbandonata', p. 741).
- 1739 London, United Kingdom (Wilson, A., 'Illegitimacy and its implications', p. 104).
- 1739 Narni, Italy (Cajani, L., 'Decentramento e riforma dell' assistenza agli esposti', p. 266-7).
- 1747 Cork, Ireland (Connell, K. H., *Illegitimacy before the famine*, p. 73).
- 1752 Oviedo, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 11).
- 1754 Montréal, Canada (De la Broquerie, F., 'Les enfants trouvés au Canada', p. 715).
- 1758 Santiago, Chile (Salinas Meza, R., 'Orphans and Family', p. 317).

- 1761 Cassel, Germany - Holy Empire (Ulbricht, O., 'The debate about Foundling', p.213).
- 1761 Orihuela, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 7).
- 1762 Prague, Germany - Holy Empire (Ulbricht, O., 'The debate about Foundling', p. 213).
- 1764 Moscow, Russia (Ransel, D., *Mothers of Misery*, p. 38).
- 1766 Mexico City, Mexico (Gonzalbo Aizpuru, P., 'La Casa de Niños expósitos', p. 414).
- 1769 Trieste, Austrian Empire (Trisciuzzi, L.; De Rosa, D., *I bambini di Sua Maestà*, p. 19.)
- 1771 St. Petersburg, Russia (Ransel, D., *Mothers of Misery*, p. 41).
- 1778 Santander, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 12; Dominguez Ortiz, A., 'Los expositos en la España Moderna ', p. 352).
- 1784 Vienna, Austrian Empire (Ulbricht, O., 'The debate about Foundling', p.213)
- 1788 Arequipa, Peru (Gallagher, M., 'Aristocratic opposition to the Establishment of a Foundling Home', p. 50).
- 1794 Zaragoza, Spain (Valverde, L., 'El abandono y la exposición de niños', p. 105).
- 1794-7 Calahorra, Spain (Valverde, L., 'El abandono y la expósición de niños', p. 105; 'Illegitimité et abandon', p. 1).
- 1795 Ouro Preto, Brazil (Marcilio, M. L., 'Crianças abandonadas', p. 516).
- 1797 Plasencia, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 11).
- 1797 Zamora, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 11).
- 1798 Caceres, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 11).

Nineteenth Century

- 1804 Guipuzcoa, Spain (Valverde Lamsfus, L., 'Illegitimité et abandon', p. 16).
- 1805 Pamplona, Spain (Marcos Martin, A., 'Infancy and the life-cycle', p. 5; Valverde, Lola, 'El abandono y la exposición', p. 94).
- 1806 Bilbao, Biscay, Spain (Valverde Lamsfus, L., 'Illegitimité et abandon', p. 16)
- 1824 S. Paulo, Brazil (Marcilio, M. L., 'Crianças abandonadas', 1990, p. 516).
- 1826 Porto Alegre, Brazil (Marcilio, M. L., 'Crianças abandonadas', p. 516).

Note: Bibliographic references have been shortened for reasons of space. The complete versions can be found in the final bibliography.

Annex 2
Mortality of foundlings

Italy

<u>City</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Source</u>
Camerino	1749-1908		86	Bussini, 1982, p. 605.
Florence	1700-02		77	Corsini, 1976, p. 1040.
Florence	1792-94		90	Corsini, 1976, p. 1040.
Todi	1703-1827		71	Bussini, 1991, p. 314.
Udine	1656-1755		76	Codarin Miani, 1991, p. 389.
Urbino	1586-1600	*	58	Ruggeri, 1978, p. 32-3.
	1601-51	*	66	Ruggeri, 1978, p. 33.
	1655-99	*	73	Ruggeri, 1978, p. 35.
	1700-25	*	24	Ruggeri, 1978, p. 39.
Viterbo	1738-42		70	Langellotti; Travaglini, 1991, p. 780.

Spain

<u>City</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Source</u>
Andújar	1677-1700		80	Gomez Martinez, 1991, p. 648.
Badajoz	1635-1687		74	Cortés Cortés, 1991, p. 454.
Madrid	1650-1700		70	Larquié, 1986, p. 375.
Madrid	1787-1802		83	Soubeyroux, 1978, p. 587.
Madrid	1700-99		67	Sherwood, 1988, p. 143.
Pamplona	1791-1804		53	Valverde, 1986, p. 103 (calculations for 11 years).

Salamanca	1700-1723		73	Fernandez Ugarte, 1991, p. 592.
Santiago (Galicia)	1747-54	<2	77	Eiras Roel, 1967-8, p. 375.
Santiago	1791-1806		70	Garcia Guerra, 1983, p. 375(n. of dead children entered during the year).
Seville	XVII		69	Alvarez Santaló, 1977, p. 518.
Valladolid	1747-57		87	Egido, 1975, p. 342.
"	1786-87		33	Egido, 1973, p. 240.

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France

City	Period	Age	Percentage	Source
Aix-en-Provence	1722-67	<1	46	Fairchilds, 1976, p. 84.
	1768-75	<1	71	Fairchilds, 1976, p. 84.
Amiens	1780-89	0-5	66	Engrand, p. 1982, p. 89.
Caen	1700-90	<1	59	Langlois, 1987, p. 323.
Caen	1700-90	>1 - 12	30	Langlois, 1987, p. 323.
Limoges	1745-48	>7	83	Peyronnet, 1976, p. 433.
Limoges	1764-72	7-12	61	Peyronnet, 1976, p. 433.
Lyons	1716-17	0-6.5	52	Garden, 1970, p. 127.
Nevers	1777-86		75	Florenty, 1991, p. 628.
Reims	1779-89	>1	46	Chamoux, 1973, p. 277.
Rennes	1770-89	< 2 months	80	Fujita, 1987, p. 336 (only illeg.).
Rouen	1782-89		86	Bardet, 1973, p. 27.

England

<u>City</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Source</u>
London	1741-60		61	McClure, 1981, p. 261.

Russia

<u>City</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Source</u>
Moscow	1764		81	Ransel, 1990, p. 45.
	1767		99	Ransel, 1990, p. 45.

Austrian Empire & Germany

<u>City</u>	<u>Period</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Source</u>
Vienna		< 1	61	Ulbricht, 1985, p. 237.
Cassel		< 8	55	Ulbricht, 1985, p. 237.

Unless otherwise stated, ages have been calculated for the whole period in which the children received institutional care. The * means that the period of calculation is not stated in the original source.

Note: Bibliographic references have been shortened for reasons of space. The complete versions can be found in the final bibliography.

Chapter 3 - Child abandonment in Portugal

Legislation on infanticide, abortion, child abandonment and adoption

Portuguese law concerning childhood, and most particularly abandoned children, does not differ significantly from laws of other European countries, especially in Southern Europe. Nevertheless, recent historiography has not dealt directly with the history of law. Historians have simply illustrated some legal issues in order to give a legislative context to their work. Research on the history of law tends to be avoided, partly because historians are conscious of their lack of a specific formation in the field; probably also because they expect some legal historians to undertake the research. Also, until recently, historians were suspicious of the effectiveness of legal pronouncements, arguing that laws did not have serious incidence on current practices. Such an argument, was linked to the emphasis on the serial history, which allowed a better knowledge of what happened in the reality of everyday life. It is not without foundation. Nevertheless, if we think of general laws as resulting from the will of an elite to influence social reality, their study becomes interesting, especially if research is directed towards three levels of analysis:

1- the study of general laws, proclaimed by the central power, throws light on the intentions of the ruling strata, which generally tend to adapt to a pre-existing reality that they try to reformulate or adapt for different purposes.

2 - the study of the local regulations of institutions, often written in minutes, records of meetings, etc. These must be subordinated to the general framework, although not necessarily coincidental with it, reflecting local needs and circumstances.

3 - finally, the whole of what Bourdieu calls the "habitus", that is, rules that are accepted by social use¹. They are not written in normative texts, but can be identified through the series of documents.

The legal framework of laws concerning abandoned childhood, and less specifically concerning the family, is not known for European states. There is no clear picture about the main differences in the laws concerning abandoned children: for instance, the fact that in Portugal town councils provided for foundlings, whereas in Spain the bishoprics were in charge of them remains unexplained².

This chapter does not have the ambition of comparing the different legal systems in Europe. My concern is to summarize - only for the Portuguese case - the laws relating to *offences to children's lives* (infanticide, abortion and "suppression of child delivery" (supressão de parto)³, *juridical status of children* of all categories (legitimate; illegitimate; orphans, adopted or made legitimate and foundlings), and *assistance to abandoned children*. I have deliberately simplified most issues: the legal historian knows that juridical reality is more complex than it appears in my text. Even so, what follows is more schematic than analytical: it derives from the need for an approximate picture of children's rights and duties according to the law⁴.

¹ Bourdieu, Pierre, 'De la règle aux stratégies', in *Choses dites*, Paris, Les Éditions de Minuit, 1987, pp. 75-93.

² See reference to the "Real Cédula" of the 11 December 1796 issued by Charles IV in Fernandez Ugarte, Maria, *Expósitos en Salamanca a comienzos del siglo XVIII*, Salamanca, Diputación Provincial, 1988, pp. 38-39.

³ I did not use the word "contraception" because these offences do not apply to any of the methods more usually associated with it: only to actions punishable by law in terms of child killing. Also, I took the modern concept of contraception as valid, considering as contraception only those methods that avoid pregnancy.

⁴ The present text is a reformulation of a chapter included in my previous Master's thesis. New material has been added, especially concerning jurisprudence and the status of the child, but the essential sources remain the same. On the other hand I have deliberately omitted laws issued during the nineteenth century, only keeping references to treatises that referred to situations that could have occurred during the eighteenth century. The fact that this chapter is included in this dissertation is that an understanding of the Portuguese system of abandonment would not be

I have deliberately restricted analysis to the eighteenth century, although I have dealt with nineteenth century laws in previous works⁵. Besides the fact that the nineteenth century is outside the scope of this work, two motives have contributed to my choice:

1- My intention was to illustrate how legal issues were still vague and imprecise during the eighteenth century⁶.

2 - The first half of the nineteenth century did not alter the paths that had been traced in the preceding century; legal materials only increased in number and their contents became clearer and richer.

The child's right to life: Infanticide, abortion and "suppression of child delivery" (supressão de parto)

Laws concerning offences against children's lives are important for the historian of childhood primarily for two reasons:

complete for foreign readers without a summary of its legal framework. Portuguese readers will excuse the repetition and can pass on to the following chapter.

⁵ See *A Assistência aos expostos no Porto. Aspectos institucionais (1519-1838)*, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1987, pp. 21-42; 'Abandono de crianças, infanticídio e aborto na sociedade portuguesa tradicional através das fontes jurídicas' (to be published in *Penélope*, Lisbon).

⁶ From the fifteenth to the eighteenth centuries three compilations of laws were in use: the *Ordenações Afonsinas*, from the second half of the fifteenth century to 1521, the *Ordenações Manuelinas* from 1521 to 1603, and from then onwards until the codes elaborated in the nineteenth century the *Ordenações Filipinas*. For the whole of the eighteenth century, the *Ordenações Filipinas* were in use, although supplemented by new laws, also available in compilations (See Serrão, Joel (ed.), *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, Porto, Livraria Figueirinhas, 1985 edition, article "Ordenações"). As many issues were not included in Portuguese laws, the *Ordenações Filipinas* also declared what were the sources of law to be retained valid and in what order: first, Roman and Canon Law, the former being preferred to the latter; second, the "glosas" from Acurcio and comments by Bártolo, unless they were contradicted by the common opinion of the jurists; finally the monarch could decide upon specific cases (See *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro III, tit. 64)

1) The fact that in contemporaries' minds the most important motive for the foundation of foundling homes was invariably the need to avoid infanticide. In many texts illustrations of newborn children being found dead was a common spectacle that started to provoke horror among contemporaries⁷.

2) The suspicion of many historians that infanticide was a common practice before the massive structures of assistance for foundlings were set up in the eighteenth century⁸. The value placed on children is regarded as having changed from pre-industrial societies to the present times, making infanticide sound a highly probable practice especially as it usually remained unpunished. Parents, it is argued, had little attachment to their children and the high birth rate turned them into easily replaced goods. Moreover, emphasis on female honour meant that infanticide could be seen as a social need.

⁷ In the Spanish, Italian and Portuguese cities the death of small children was invariably the motive that justified the foundation of foundling homes. For the Middle Ages one can quote the case of Rome (Boswell, John, *The kindness of strangers. The abandonment of children in Western Europe from Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*, London, Allen Lane - the Penguin Press, 1988, illustrations n. 15 to 17. The Pope founded the Hospitals of the Holy Spirit in France and in Rome was disturbed by the children fished out of the Tiber and brought to his presence by fishermen). In Germany a crucial issue in the debate concerning the foundation of foundling homes during the eighteenth century was also whether the number of infanticides decreased with abandonment. See Ulbricht, Otto, 'The debate about Foundling Hospitals in Enlightenment Germany: 'Infanticide, Illegitimacy and Infant Mortality Rates', *Central European History*, vol. XVIII, 1985, pp. 216-219. In Porto's case, a royal order authorizing the foundation of the foundling home mentioned the finding of many dead children in beaches and other "strange" places (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1º do Registo*, fl. 4). In Brazil, a bishop is said to have given orders to pick up children from dunghills (Mesgravis, Laima, 'A assistência à infância desamparada e a Santa Casa de S.Paulo: a Roda dos Expostos no século XIX', *Revista de História (Brasil)*, vol. 103, 1975, n. 2, p. 413). In New York, in the beginning of the nineteenth century there were proposals concerning the foundation of foundling hospitals, on the grounds they would be less expensive to the community and also that the number of the infanticides would decrease (Gilje, Paul A., 'Infant abandonment in Early Nineteenth-Century New York City: three cases', *Signs*, vol. 8, 1983, p. 582).

⁸ Flandrin, Jean-Louis, *Le sexe et l'Occident. Évolution des attitudes et des comportements*, Paris, Seuil, 1981, pp. 203-204; Valverde, Lola, 'El abandono y la exposición de niños en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII y comienzos del XIX. Situación y reforma', *Actas del I Congreso de Historia de Navarra de los siglos XVIII y XIX*, Pamplona, 1986, p. 97.

In such a context, knowing how the laws dealt with the life of children becomes crucial, because there is a contradiction between the respect for human life imposed by the Christian religion and the likelihood of infanticide. Nevertheless we need to note that, at least in Catholic countries, the child had to live long enough in order to be baptized and thus acquire a soul. So, the intentional killing of an infant became a particularly harsh offence if it had not received baptism.

Seventeenth century jurisprudence regarded abandonment as legal, provided that it did not cause the child's death and that the parents were poor or honour was endangered⁹. Otherwise, there were three ways of attempting on a child's life: infanticide, abortion and suppression of child delivery. While the definitions of the first two crimes have not changed since the eighteenth century¹⁰, the third one refers to an offence of subtle definition: it designated cases where pregnancies, secret or of public knowledge, reached their end without the community and the authorities knowing what happened to the child.

As some contemporaries noted, no Portuguese law mentioned infanticide¹¹. Infanticide cases were resolved by the application of Roman law, in which infanticide was equated with parricide and thus punished with death. Nevertheless, the *Ordenações Filipinas* refer to parricide only as the death of parents committed by the children and not in the reverse sense:

⁹ Mostazo, Francisco, *De Causis Piis in genere, et in specie...*, t. I, Lugduni, 1700, Liber IV, cap. XI, n. 77; Velasco, Gabriel Alvares, *De privilegiis pauperum et miserabilium personarum*, Madriti, Ildephonsi Martin, 1630, P. 2, q. 65, § 2, n. 180-182, 185 and 207-214; Frago, B., *Regiminis Republicae christianae*, Lugduni, 1641, part. III, Lib. I, § III, epit. 126.

¹⁰ The death of a child was considered as infanticide only in the very first weeks of its life; premeditated death of older children was considered homicide. This distinction was fully developed in the nineteenth century. Abortion could be defined as the voluntary killing of an as yet unborn child.

¹¹ Pinto, António Joaquim de Gouveia, *Exame crítico e histórico sobre os direitos estabelecidos pela legislação antiga e moderna, tanto pátria como subsidiária, e das nações mais vizinhas e cultas, relativamente aos expostos ou engeitados*, Lisboa, Tipografia da Academia Real das Ciências, 1828, p. 34; Freire, Pascoal José de Melo, *Institutiones Juris Civilis et Criminalis Lusitani...*, t. 5, Lisboa, Tipografia da Academia Real das Ciências, 1794, tit. 9, art. 14.

"And the son, or daughter, who wounds his father or mother with intent to kill him, although they may not die of such wounds, must be sentenced to death"¹².

The absence of a specific law to deal with infanticide leaves three hypotheses open:

- infanticide hardly ever happened in practice, so that there was not any pressure for the creation of specific laws. In the few cases where women were tried for infanticide, Roman law could be applied.

- infanticide was too common and ignored by the authorities, who did not feel the need to reinforce prohibition or simply were confronted with so wide spread a practice that they did not have the strength to prevent it.

- infanticide was the result of "omission" and not "commission", that is, it was the lack of care in looking after the child that caused death. In that case, death could be regarded as accidental in an era when accidents of this kind did not need justification¹³.

The answer to the question whether infanticide was common or not before the period of massive abandonment will not perhaps ever be answered, given the sources available. Trials for infanticide have always been exceptional and aberrational; the literature does not refer to the killing of newborn children and the iconography (except from the "Killing of the Innocents") does not normally represent them¹⁴.

¹² "E o filho, ou filha, que ferir seu pay ou may, com tenção de os matar, posto que não morrao de taes feridas, morra morte natural" (*Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro V, art. 1).

¹³ In present times, even carelessness can be prosecuted by law. To give an example, wet-nurses boarding in Porto's foundling home often killed foundlings while asleep, and their punishment was merely dismissal and even then this was not always the case (A.A.D.P., *Livro I das Entradas e Termos das Amas*, fl. 51-165).

¹⁴ It is unlikely that a practice that was not justified by any ethical rule should often be mentioned. Even if contemporaries left their children to die, silence had to be observed because it was against all the rules of the Church. Until the end of the seventeenth century, among the evil practices witches were supposed to perform, that of killing children was

As to abortion, a Roman law equated it to infanticide, being punished in the same way¹⁵. In Portuguese law only one reference to women suspected of making others abort has been found in the "Regimento de Quadrilheiros" of 1570¹⁶.

The "Regimento dos Quadrilheiros", published between the publication of the Ordenações Manuelinas and the Ordenações Filipinas, marked the passage to the latter without much change. Cases of suppression of child delivery were nevertheless included: that is, pregnant women whose newborn children were unknown to the community at the end of pregnancy¹⁷. When such cases happened, three hypotheses could be made about the child: it had been born dead; it had been abandoned or it had been killed. The only way to avoid this offence would have been to force pregnant women (only the unmarried ones, though) to report their pregnancy to the authorities. In France a law by Henri II made "déclarations de grossesse" compulsory in 1556, although this law

one of the most recurrent ones. See Leboutte, René, 'L'infanticide du 16e au 19e siècle. Attitudes et mentalités à l'égard de la fille-mère', *17^e Congresso Internacional de Ciências Historicas*, Madrid 1990, 26 Agosto-2 Septiembre, p. 503.

¹⁵ L. 4 ff. de Agnoscend Liber quoted by Pinto, António Joaquim de Gouveia, *Compilação das providências que a bem da criação e educação dos Expostos ou Engeitados se tem publicado e achão espalhadas em diferentes artigos da legislação pátria, a que acrescentam outras...*, Lisboa, Impressão Régia, 1820, p. 14. Nevertheless, it should be noted that a Roman law punishing infanticide did not appear before the fourth century a.c. (Flandrin, Jean-Louis, *Le sexe et l'Occident* cit., p. 210).

¹⁶ Women "... who are said to make others abort through beverages or any other method..." ("... que se tem infamadas de fazer mover outras com beberragens, ou por qualquer outra via..."). This "Regimento dos Quadrilheiros" established a police force in the towns and cities of the kingdom. Its members, the "quadrilheiros" were low rank judicial officers nominated by the councils for three years. In 1760 they were replaced by the Intendência Geral da Policia. Among a list of possible criminals - burglars; witches; prostitutes; alcoviteiras; gamblers - there were these "movedeiras", women accused of provoking miscarriages. See *Collecção cronológica de várias leis, provisões e regimentos de El-Rey D. Sebastião*, Coimbra, Real Imprensa da Universidade, 1819, p. 22.

¹⁷ Here there is a problem of semantics: "ou se andando alguma prenhe, se suspeite mal do parto, não dando dele conta": "não dar conta" can have two meanings: either participation to the authorities or not letting the community know what happened to the child. See *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, tit. 73, § 4.

tended to be ignored and needed to be confirmed twice¹⁸. Some French historians have studied illegitimacy and unmarried motherhood through sources that derive from this law, consisting mainly of accusations of paternity made by unmarried mothers¹⁹. In Portugal, such a law might have led to the same results, but no Portuguese historian has yet come across the same type of source for the seventeenth and the eighteenth century. Nevertheless, this law worked as a pretext for the creation of a law in 1806 which declared the obligation of unmarried mothers to declare pregnancy to the authorities²⁰.

¹⁸ This law was confirmed in 19 March 1698 and reinforced by Louis XIV in 25 February 1708. See Dupuis, André, 'Avant la pilule, deux édits royaux de 1556 et 1708 (sur les déclarations de grossesse)', *Vieux Papier*, Paris, t. 25, 1968, fasc. 228, pp. 241-245 where the texts of the 1556 and 1708 are transcribed.

¹⁹ See Depauw, Jacques, 'Amour illégitime et société à Nantes au XVIII^e siècle', *Annales E.S.C.*, Paris, a. 27, 1972, n. 4-5, pp. 1155-82; 'Les filles-mères se marient-elles? L'exemple de Nantes au XVIII^e siècle', *Aimer en France, 1760-1860, Colloque International, Clermont-Ferrand 1977*, Clermont-Ferrand, Faculté de Lettres et Sciences Humaines, t. 2, 1980, pp. 525-531; 'Immigration féminine, professions féminines et structures urbaines à Nantes au XVIII^e siècle', *Enquêtes et documents*, Centre de Recherches sur l'Histoire de la France Atlantique, Université de Nantes, Nantes, 1972, pp. 37-60; Laget, Mireille, 'Déclarations de grossesse et infanticide devant la châtellenie de Pézenas au XVIII^e siècle', *Pézenas, ville et campagne - actes du 48^eème Congrès de la Fédération Historique du Languedoc Méditerranéen et du Roussillon*, Montpellier, La Fédération, 1976, pp. 185-196; Logette, Aline, 'Naissances illégitimes en Lorraine dans la première moitié du XVIII^e siècle, d'après les déclarations de grossesse et la jurisprudence', *Annales de l'Est*, Nancy, 1983, ser. 5, a.35, n. 2, pp. 91-125; n. 3, pp. 221-245; Lottin, Alain, 'Naissances illégitimes et filles-mères à Lille au XVIII^e siècle', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, t. 17, 1970, p. 278-322; Phan, Marie-Claude, 'Les déclarations de grossesse en France (XVI^e-XIX^e siècles: essai institutionnel)', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, Paris, t. 22, 1975, pp. 61-88.

²⁰ The "alvará of the 18th October 1806, § VIII renewed explicitly the § 4 of title 73 of the Livro I: see Silva, António Delgado da, *Collecção da Legislação Portuguesa, desde a ultima compilação das Ordenações*, Lisbon, Tipografia Maygrense, 1826-30, vol. V, pp. 414-418.

The legal framework of childhood in Portugal: foundlings, orphans, legitimate and illegitimate children

Like other areas influenced by Roman law, childhood legislation in Portugal reflects the influence of the laws of the Roman Empire: children were not persons on the eyes of the law, and paternal power was extended over slaves, domestics, apprentices and children²¹. No wonder some laws of the Philippine code still keep together categories of persons that were most unlikely to be found associated²². *Patria potestas*, the power a *pater familias* had over the members of his household, remained in its essence intact in Portuguese law, although it was no longer unlimited as it had been during the Roman Empire. In the latter case, a father had the right of life and death over the members of his family (including his wife)²³. In Portuguese law, *patria potestas* remained basically the right to "constrain and punish", that is, the power to superimpose the father's will on his sons and daughters²⁴. Also, in Roman law "patria" potestas ended with the death of the *pater familias*; in Portugal it was restricted to the minority of the child²⁵. Adulthood was fixed in Portuguese law at 25 years, although the father was able to emancipate their children before that age; married minors were also freed from paternal power²⁶. Paternal power was of course a father's duty: if

²¹ See Boswell, John E., *The kindness of Strangers* cit., p. 27.

²² *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro V, tit. 41. This law ascribes the same penalty to the slaves that murder their master and to the sons and daughters who attempt against their father or mother. Another law allowed the father to imprison his slave as well as his son, although other forms of private imprisonment were forbidden (*Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro V, tit. 95, § 4).

²³ Although the paternal power in Rome seemed to be unlimited, some authors suggest that its incidence was weakened by the fact that generations did not overlap due to the low life expectation. See Richard Saller, 'Patria potestas and the stereotype of the Roman family', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 1, 1986, n. 1, pp. 7-22.

²⁴ The father could even keep them in "private" prison as punishment (*Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro V, tit. 95, § 4).

²⁵ I will not deal here with the different concepts of childhood according to age and to designations used by contemporaries: see the interesting points raised by Aries in *Centuries of Childhood*, and Boswell, *The kindness of strangers* cit., p. 34-35.

²⁶ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro 3, tit. 9, § 3 (concerning emancipation); Livro 1, tit. 88, § 6 and Livro 3, tit. 42, § 4 (concerning married minors).

he failed to exercise it, someone who might perform "patria" potestas had to be found. The juridical status of children varied precisely according to the presence or non-presence of a father. In the absence of a father, the legal problem of the attribution of the "patria potestas", applied to orphans, illegitimate children and foundlings.

So, according to the laws, we can define the different status of children as follows:

Legitimate

These were children born of legitimate marriage contracted between its parents or subsequently legitimated by any of the civil or ecclesiastical procedures available. A child born to a married woman was always legitimate, under the Roman principle that "pater es quam nuptias demonstrant"²⁷. In some cases where it was evident that the husband could not be the father, some legal devices were created in order to deny legitimacy to the child. These legal devices were based exclusively upon estimates of the duration of pregnancy, although the criteria varied across courts and even in the same court, as has been demonstrated by Allemand-Gay²⁸. There was an attempt to fix the minimum period in order to accord legitimacy at six months after marriage and a maximum of eleven months for the widowed woman²⁹. Other circumstances that raised the problem of legitimacy were those where the husband was absent for a long period of time in a place sufficiently distant to make fecundation improbable or even impossible. In Portuguese law, as the woman and her lover could

²⁷ No law in the "ordenações" deals with this issue. I presume that the Roman principle was in use (see note 5, concerning sources of law in the Ordenações Filipinas). For other European countries see Ourliac, Paul; Malafosse, J. de, *Histoire du Droit Privé*, tome III "Le droit familial" Paris, P.U.F., 1968, p. 51; Allemand-Gay, Marie-Thérèse, 'Le droit de la filiation illégitime à la fin de l'Ancien Régime', *XVIIIe siècle*, n. 12, 1980, pp. 251-269; Chinae, Gérard, 'La mère et l'enfant dans le Droit Dauphinois de la fin de l'Ancien Régime (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècle)', *Cahiers d'Histoire*, vol. 25, 1980, n. 3-4, p. 262.

²⁸ Only France is considered: see Allemand-Gay, M.-T., 'Le droit de la filiation illégitime', p. 269.

²⁹ Once again it was Roman law that inspired jurists. See Allemand-Gay, M.-T., *idem*, p. 253-254.

be killed by the husband for adultery without legal prosecution³⁰, mothers did not fear the law but the husbands themselves: in Porto, several cases can be found of children abandoned because the mothers feared punishment from their husbands³¹. Another woman who had a son by a black lover managed to get from the administrators of the foundling home a white child in exchange for the mulatto infant whose presence would have allowed her husband to kill her if he ever discovered³².

Illegitimate

The category of those born out of wedlock is the most complex one: the church and the state distinguished between a variable number of situations of illegitimacy that were nevertheless based upon the possibility of marriage of the presumptive parents. According to the logic of such distinctions among the illegitimate, there were children whose parents could contract marriage and those whose illegitimacy was aggravated by the fact that marriage of their parents was impossible. The former were the so-called "natural" children: their parents were able to contract marriage under the precepts of Canon law. The latter - the spurious issue of "damned intercourse"- resulted from sacrilegious, adulterous or incestuous relations.

The fundamental problem to be solved in case of illegitimacy was access to inheritance and Portuguese laws made a clear distinction between bastards of noble origin and others. An unprivileged man's bastard son could inherit in the same way as

³⁰ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro V, title 38, § 1, p. 1188. The law only punished with banishment the cases where a commoner killed a noble man for adultery with his wife. Between men of equal status the killing of both the adulterous wife and her lover went unpunished. The betrayed husband was entitled to his adulterous wife's dowry (*Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro 5, tit. 113, § 3).

³¹ Cases n. 100334, Maria, *Livro 1 das Entradas*, fl. 214 v., and n. 100397 Vitória, *Livro 1 das Entradas*, fl. 223 v. (both in 1701). In the latter, it is stated that the husband had just arrived in a ship and the wife abandoned the child in order to save her life.

³² A.A.D.P., *Livro 32 das Saídas*, fl. 408-9. In order to maintain secrecy, the pages of the book where the register is contained were stitched together.

his father's legitimate children: it sufficed that he was the natural son of unmarried parents or his father's *only* mistress³³. This law excluded from inheritance the "spurious" children and the commoner's illegitimate children born of public women, that is, prostitutes. Noblemen, on the other hand, could only leave the *terça*³⁴ to their bastards, and then only if they did not have any legitimate descendants³⁵. There was also the possibility for property owning families of disinheriting girls who had intercourse or married without their father's consent under the age of twenty five: even her brothers and sisters could claim she did not have any inheritance rights³⁶.

Natural children could inherit all kinds of property except crown property, unless it was otherwise stated in a formal title issued by the king³⁷. Those most deprived of inheritance rights were spurious children: they could only inherit from their brothers, and their parents could not inherit from them³⁸. They could not even inherit "foros" (contracts for rented property) unless they were legitimated by royal charter³⁹.

So far, the categories of children we have analyzed could not overlap: a child could not be legitimate and illegitimate at the same time. From now on the situation concerning orphans and foundlings becomes more complex: an orphan could be legitimate or illegitimate; a foundling could be legitimate or illegitimate and

³³ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro IV, tit. 92. This law could be interpreted as an authorization for a married man to have one concubine.

³⁴ The Portuguese inheritance system divided the estate in two parts: the *legítima*, formed of the property to be divided between the legal heirs, and the *terça*, which the testator was free to bequeath. The "terça" (the word meaning literally a third of the estate but the proportion could vary) could be used to benefit one of the legal inheritors, increasing his estate, or to benefit any other person or religious institution. On the implications of this system in household formation and family patterns see Osswald, Helena, 'Dowry, norms, and household formation: a case study from North Portugal', *Journal of Family History*, v. 15, 1990, n. 2, pp. 210-212.

³⁵ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro IV, tit. 92, § 1 and 3.

³⁶ Of course provided that her sisters did not incur in the same offence. *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro IV, tit. 88, § 1 and 2.

³⁷ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro 2, tit. 35, § 12. This was also valid for spurious children whose formal title authorized the inheritance of royal property.

³⁸ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro IV, tit. 93.

³⁹ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro IV, tit. 36, § 4.

also an orphan. Without considering such complex situations, let us include both foundlings and orphans in a broad category, that of children whose situation required some form of supervision or even assistance from the central authorities.

Orphans

To be considered as an orphan under the law, it sufficed not having a father - thus illegitimate children were associated in some laws with orphans, because only the mother was known. A child without a live father but with a mother did not have the status of an orphan, although the law was also designed to protect maternal inheritance⁴⁰.

As for "patria" potestas, any man among the child's kin, preferably in his father's line, could perform it by being designated "tutor". Such a person had the obligation to take care of the orphan's property until adulthood, when he had to pass it over to him. Before 1521, the judges of the administrative circumscription were responsible for drawing up inventories of such property and seeing that the orphan was not defrauded of his inheritance. As some complaints emerged about the integrity of the inheritances received by the minors at twenty five years of age, a special judge to deal with orphans was created in the "Ordenações Manuelinas". The problem of orphans received special attention from the jurists: some treatises can be found for the eighteenth century⁴¹.

⁴⁰ Inventories of the property left by the mother to her children had also to be drawn up. See *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, tit. 88, § 7, 8 and 9.

⁴¹ Almeida, Jerónimo Fernandes Morgado Couceiro de, *Tratado orfanológico e prático, formado com as disposições das Leis Pátrias*, Lisboa, Tip. J. F. M. de Campos, 1820 (1st. edition in 1794); Guerreiro, Diogo Camacho de Aboym - *De munere judicis orphanorum opus*, Coimbra e Lisboa, 1699 a 1735; Pona, António de Paiva e - *Orphanologia prático em que se escreve tudo que respeita aos inventários, partilhas e mais dependências dos pupillos...*, Lisboa, Officina de José Lopes Ferreira, 1713; Campos, Manuel António de - *Tratado prático jurídico civil e criminal...*, Lisboa, 1765 e 1768.

Foundlings

The main difference between foundlings and orphans is that foundlings were individuals deprived of known parents, whereas orphans had at least one known parent and thus access to inheritance. Concern for orphans in Portuguese law was thus mainly directed to the preservation of the patrimony they would take possession of in adulthood as well as to their upbringing when they did not have anyone to care for them. Concern for foundlings, instead, was primarily directed to their rearing and to the institutions that were responsible for assisting them. They were under the authority of the institutions who cared for them until they were seven, when they passed to the authority of the Judges of the Orphans, until adulthood. Both the foundling home and the "Juiz dos Orfaos" were responsible for abandoned children; the father who abandoned them was presumed to have lost paternal power over them, although no obstacles were put in the way of taking back foundlings in Portugal, at least in Porto⁴². This fact is confirmed in cases where both mother and father reclaimed a child, if they were not married to each other and each one claimed the child for himself. The procedure of the institution was to prefer the father to the mother⁴³.

⁴² The administration did not always have clear procedures for such cases, sometimes hesitating in giving the child back, especially if it was not refunded for the expenses incurred. There are only two such cases reported. The first was that of a family not belonging to the "concelho" of Porto, who, not being able to pay, was not able to take back the child (A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, fls. 148-149, 6 June 1784). The second concerns a beggar who failed to recover his child on the grounds he could not support him and that it was not fair to the wet-nurse who had brought him up (A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, fl. 157).

⁴³ There was one particular case where it was stated that even if Roman law assumed the loss of paternal power, Portuguese law kept paternal power for the bastards of the commoners. The "provedor" quoted the *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro 4, tit. 92. The case history is reported in detail in Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, *A Assistência aos expostos no Porto* cit., p. 118.

Legitimated or adopted children

In Portugal, legislation for adoption does not exist for the eighteenth century⁴⁴. The only issue considered in the laws was the possibility of legitimation of a son, the only mechanism to formalize a desire to integrate a bastard into the family. Such a procedure was designed to legitimate bastards, who would have access to inheritance alongside legitimate heirs, although it seems no other procedure was available to individuals who wanted to adopt any other children. In civil law three procedures existed in order to legitimate a child:

1) Subsequent marriage of the parents: this was valid only for "natural" children;

2) "Carta de perfilhação": a public document registered by a notary, also valid for "natural children";

3) Spurious children who had to be legitimated by royal charter. Nevertheless such children could not inherit royal property, especially if the father had legitimate children⁴⁵.

It would be interesting to know whether the "perfilhações" filled the juridical void concerning adoption of children. Notarial acts include some "cartas de perfilhação" but it is not known if they were used in order to include relatives or strangers in the nuclear family. Probably, people preferred non-formal procedures of integrating children. Foundlings, as children deprived of families, could be used as a resource for the families needing a heir, an extra child or simply a free worker or servant.

The fact that some women or both members of the couple could try to have direct heirs in a fraudulent manner is attested by the law concerning "partos supostos" (false child deliveries). The offence was punished with banishment for life, the most

⁴⁴ The situation could be similar to the Spanish one, where there was a void in laws concerning adoption of children less than seven years old. See García Gonzalez, Juan, 'Expósitos, beneficencia y prohijamiento' in *Estudios Jurídicos en homenaje al professor José Santa Cruz Teijero*, Valencia, Universidad de Valencia, Facultad de Derecho, 1974, p. 322.

⁴⁵ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro II, tit. 35, § 12 and 13.

important penalty after death, and also loss of all property by the offender. The law also contemplated means of depriving the false son or daughter of its inheritance⁴⁶. It is not likely that there were a significant number of women with false children, probably being a rather rare offence. But the fact that the law existed reminds us of the fact that distribution of children among families is not equal: if some couples had too many children, others simply did not have them at all.

Assistance to foundlings: laws from the 15th to the 19th century

In Portugal the first time care of children is referred to is in the *Ordenações Afonsinas*, although they do not mention foundlings but illegitimate children. The father was obliged to pay for the upbringing of his illegitimate child, although the mother would take care of him until three years old. She could, nonetheless, ask the father to pay for any expenses she might have during that period. The same rule applied to legitimate children when their parents separated, but both were living⁴⁷.

The next law compilation to be published, the *Ordenações Manuelinas*, mentioned the word "enfeitado", the most common designation for foundling in the Portuguese language, for the first time in Portuguese law⁴⁸. Although keeping to the principle that fathers, married or single, were to pay for their children, it established a hierarchy of responsibility: if fathers could not pay, mothers should; in the event that both could not support the child, it was the kin's task to do so. In the event none of these three possibilities existed, the town would send them to the hospitals or "albergarias" generally responsible for such children, which were

⁴⁶ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro v, tit. 55.

⁴⁷ *Ordenações Afonsinas*, Livro IV, tit. 92, § 1 e 2.

⁴⁸ The popularity of the word "enfeitado" is in rivalry with the word "exposto", although the second seems to be more used during the nineteenth century. The etymology of the word "enfeitado" is curious because it comes from the verb "enfeitar" which means to reject.

to pay for their upbringing from their own funds. Finally, in the absence of such hospitals, children were to be cared for through town council funds; if these were not available, a special tax could be imposed on its inhabitants. This law passed almost unchanged over this point to the *Ordenações Filipinas*, although it does not seem that local hospitals were ever obliged to spend their funds on needy children. Since hospitals had their own property and could belong to private confraternities, is remarkable how they managed to pass responsibility for foundlings to the "concelhos"⁴⁹.

In substance, the *Ordenações Manuelinas* set up the central column of the system of assistance to foundlings in Portugal: the "concelhos" were to be in charge of children when they had no family. The situation was not to change until the nineteenth century, although some councils received specific funds from the king and/or made contracts with local *Misericórdias* that discharged them from assistance to foundlings, while continuing to pay for their upbringing.

The next compilation, the *Ordenações Filipinas*, did not alter what had been established in the *Ordenações Manuelinas*. It only added that the "concelhos" could decide to impose an extra tax on the inhabitants in order to assist foundlings without needing any permission from the above authorities. This exemption is curious because the law admitted it was the only exception to the principle that all extra taxation needed specific authorization⁵⁰. Without speculating about it, it might be suggested that the authorities recognized the need to get funds for foundlings and did not want to be bothered with too frequent requests for taxes in order to get money for foundlings. This law must have created abuses, as councils tended to collect funds under the pretext of foundlings and then apply the money to other expenses. Some Portuguese researchers of the history of administrative institutions even claim that fraud reached the point of registering

⁴⁹ The problems concerning institutions which cared for foundlings will be dealt with in the next part of this chapter.

⁵⁰ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, tit. 66, § 41.

"fictive" foundlings in council books⁵¹. It must be noted that the parish did not have any responsibility for the rearing of foundlings, as it did in England, although basically the principle was the same: the community was to pay for its own "rejected" children. The result was that the parish which was the administrative centre of the council was always overcharged with foundlings; the problem was further aggravated when the big cities erected structures for the maintenance of abandoned children.

Although councils were free to tax whenever they felt the need, Portuguese kings often channeled public funds to the upbringing of foundlings. Some royal decisions applied only to the Hospital de Todos os Santos de Lisboa⁵², whilst others applied to all the kingdom, as was the case in 1765⁵³.

The obligation of the councils to assist foundlings ceased when they reached seven years of age; from then on they would be under the responsibility of the Judges of Orphans⁵⁴. At this point the foundlings were associated with orphans: as foundlings did not have an inheritance to be protested, the responsibility of such judges was limited to their insertion in the labour market. They could find the foundling an employer or simply a family to

⁵¹ This information was transmitted by Prof. José Viriato Capela, who is the author of a doctorate thesis on local administration and finance presented to the University of Minho: *Entre Douro e Minho 1750-1830. Finanças. Administração e bloqueamentos estruturais no Portugal Moderno*, Braga, 1987.

⁵² Pinto, António Joaquim de Gouveia, *Exame crítico e histórico* cit., pp. 175-177.

⁵³ Silva, António Delgado da, *Collecção da Legislação Portuguesa* cit., tome respecting to the years between 1763-1774, p. 225. In this law, two thirds of the sum of the fines imposed on those who planted vines in forbidden territories (it was the time when wine producing areas were established) were to be given to the councils and used in expenses for foundlings.

⁵⁴ Alvará de 31 de Janeiro de 1775 in Silva, António Delgado da, *Collecção da Legislação* cit., tome including the years between 1775-1790, p. 4. This law responded to a request made by the administrators of the Hospital de Todos os Santos of Lisbon and only mentions the capital of the kingdom. Until then, the foundlings were cared for until the age of nine. As is explained in the text, this measure was designed to diminish expenses, as the hospital was overcharged with children. Also, the law explained that many foundlings after finishing their upbringing and being placed in families escaped and took shelter in the hospital until its administrators found them a new placement, thus aggravating the financial condition of the hospital.

stay with, and ensure they received the salaries they were entitled to. Responsibility ceased when foundlings reached the age of twenty⁵⁵ - foundlings' adulthood was reached five years before that of other children.

In 1783 the regulations relating to the non responsibility of the Hospital de Todos os Santos after the age of seven were clearly revoked: in the event of a deviation of the foundling girls (the only ones mentioned in the text) the Misericórdia could prosecute the defendant through its own judge, the "Juiz dos Feitos e Causas da Misericórdia"⁵⁶. The text was clearly an attempt to discourage those who encouraged abandoned girls to become prostitutes.

On the 10th May of the same year (1783), Pina Manique, head of the police headquarters ("Intendência da Polícia") promulgated what was to be the most important law concerning foundlings ever to be published in Portugal. The importance of the law was to last through the nineteenth century, when new laws coming out of the liberal reforms did not alter its basic principles. Not only was it directed to all the kingdom (including the colonies), but also it provides evidence that the Portuguese rulers shared the populationist ideas of the Enlightenment, which were common, as we have seen, to Catherine of Russia as to Carlos III of Spain⁵⁷. Basically, the law ordered the foundation of establishments to assist foundlings in all the cities and towns which were administrative centres. The most interesting issue about the law is its rhetoric which affirmed that the number of subjects was one of the major sources of wealth to the kingdom, which was underpopulated. Nevertheless, infanticide and the death of abandoned children were frequent, and the state was deprived of useful citizens. The establishment of "rodas"⁵⁸ would avoid such losses, and abandonment could take place anonymously. For the rest, the law did not change what had been

⁵⁵ Alvará de 31 de Janeiro de 1775 in Silva, § 8 in António Delgado da, *Collecção da Legislação* cit., tome including the years between 1775-1790.

⁵⁶ Alvará de 12 de Fevereiro de 1783 in Silva, António Delgado da, *Collecção da Legislação* cit., vol. including the years 1775-1790, pp. 331-332.

⁵⁷ See chapter 2, section "The projects for foundlings".

⁵⁸ The law referred to foundling hospitals by the name of the instrument that served for the physical deposition of foundlings: the wheel.

decided earlier for the case of Lisbon: councils were to support foundlings until seven and then Judges of Orphans were to take them in charge. The only novelty was that the Police was to supervise assistance to foundlings: the "Intendência" was to receive an annual listing of the foundlings from each "comarca"⁵⁹. The pretext for the intervention of the police force was thus the need to avoid the death of children, which assumed the character of infanticide.

The foundation of new "rodas" following the prescriptions of the 1783 law did not take place in the way the Intendência expected: in 1800, a confidential document refers to the lack of them in some areas of the kingdom. The document is very interesting because it refers to the sale of children to Spain and to the participation of the "rodas" in the business, suggesting the commerce of foundlings. It also signalled to the need to prevent people from spying at the wheels in order to see who abandoned children there⁶⁰.

Advantages conceded to wet-nurses

Legislation on orphans included rewards to those who brought up children on a free basis: they could keep them as workers without paying for them after the age of seven, for as many years as those for which they had not been paid for their care⁶¹. The tradition of protecting families who brought up needy children was nevertheless reinforced for foundlings, and since the beginning of the sixteenth century specific laws were passed to reward wet-nurses and their families. The first charter of privileges dates back to 1502, during Manuel I's reign, conceding important privileges that were to last during the first three years

⁵⁹ A "comarca" was an administrative and jurisdictional circumscription formed by a group of "concelhos".

⁶⁰ Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, *Livro nº 6 da Intendência Geral da Polícia*, fls. 70-72 v.. See also Peres, Damião, 'Expostos' in *História de Portugal*, vol. 6, Barcelos, Portucalense Editora, 1934, pp. 635. Nevertheless, in nineteenth century Algarve foundlings were still "exported" to Spain (Cortes, Nuno Osório, *O abandono de crianças no Algarve. O caso dos expostos de Loulé (1820-1884)*, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1991, p. 66, note 1).

⁶¹ *Ordenações Filipinas*, Livro I, tit. 88, § 12.

of care for the foundling. The advantages consisted of a long list of exemptions from obligations that could be imposed by the council. Among them, the payment of some of the taxes the "concelho" could impose on its inhabitants, and the obligation to give shelter to other individuals or cede farm goods and horses⁶². On 29 January 1532 another charter prolonged the validity of such privileges until the sixth year of the foundling's upbringing⁶³. Nevertheless, in 1576 some limitations to these privileges were made, such as financial contribution to public buildings (bridges, fountains, pavements, walls), the obligation to fulfill various tasks in the council and give up animals kept for commercial purposes⁶⁴.

If sixteenth century laws favouring wet-nurses placed particular stress on council obligations, in the seventeenth century charters of privilege insisted on military exemptions. On 29 August 1654 a law exempted the wet-nurses' husbands from the war⁶⁵ and some years later the sons of wet-nurses were also

62 The chart was destined to the Hospital de Todos os Santos de Lisboa: "... que não pague em nenhuma peitas, fintas, talhas, pedidos, serviços, empréstimos, que pelo concelho onde for morador sejam lançados, por qualquer guisa e maneira que seja, nem vá com prezos, nem com dinheiros, nem seja tutor, nem curador de nenhuma pessoas que sejam, salvo se as tutorias sejam lédimas, nem sirva em nenhuns outros cargos, nem servidoens do dito concelho, nem seja official delle contra sua vontade, nem pouzem com elle em suas cazas de morada, adega, nem cavalherices, nem lhe tomem seu pão, vinho, roupa, palha, cevada, lenha, galinhas, nem besta de cella, nem d'albarda, nem outra alguma couza contra sua vontade". Quoted by Pinto, António Joaquim de Gouveia, *Exame crítico e histórico* cit., pp. 187-188.

63 *Idem*, pp. 188-189.

64 In Portuguese, "... pagar em bolsa e em fazimento e refazimento de muros, pontes, fontes, calçadas ... [podendo ainda ser] Juízes, Vereadores, Almotacés e Procuradores do Concelho, e lhe poderão ser tomadas as bestas, carros, carretas que trouxerem ao ganho, por seu dinheiro e estado da terra" in Pinto, António Joaquim de Gouveia, *Exame crítico e histórico* cit., p. 189; Tomás, Manuel Fernandes, *Repertório ou Índice Alfabético das Leis Extravagantes*, vol. I, Coimbra, Real Imprensa da Universidade, 1815, p. 49.

65 The law answered to a demand made by the "provedor" and other members of the "Misericórdia" of Lisbon "... para efeito de serem escuzos os maridos das amas que criarem as crianças que se engeitão no Hospital Real de Todos os Santos desta cidade de servir nas companhias de Ordenança e hir aos alardes e exercícius que se costumão fazer, enquanto os criarem; para que com isto não faltem as amas que as criem, nem a estas crianças os meyo para poderem viver, e não virem a morrer ao desamparo, como pode suceder por esta cauza. Hey por bem que os maridos das amas dos engeitados enquanto as criarem sejam isentos dos encargos da guerra, sem que tenham

freed from recruitment⁶⁶. On 31 March 1787 military privileges given to both husbands and sons were confirmed⁶⁷. Although the 1654, 1695 and 1787 charters applied to Lisbon case, the chances are that in other cities of the kingdom they were also valid⁶⁸.

The existence of those privileges suggests that there was the need to stimulate the supply of wet-nurses, who would have supplementary motives to care for foundlings, besides their fees. On the other hand, as not only the wet-nurses but also the members of their families could benefit from the privileges, the upbringing of foundlings could be the occasion for the development of family strategies.

The status of foundlings in law and in jurisprudence

During the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries, the jurisprudence on the juridical status of foundlings is fragmentary. As foundlings were integrated in a wider group - the poor - they could benefit from the privileges of the latter. These were: the possibility of choosing the royal court instead of other courts; the power of protesting court decisions without time limit and of suspending debts while they were considered as belonging to the category of the poor. In turn, they could not testify in court, because they were judged not morally capable⁶⁹.

One problem that had to be solved was the determination of the legitimacy or illegitimacy of foundlings. Should a foundling be

outra obrigação que de terem armas e acudirém aos alardes gerais que se fazem duas vezes cada anno em cada huma comarca deste reino" (*Ordenações Filipinas*, 5ª edição, Lisboa, Mosteiro de S. Vicente de Fora, 1747, pp. 395-396).

⁶⁶ 22 December 1695, "Alvará em que se concedeu o mesmo privilégio aos filhos das amas dos engeitados", *Ordenações Filipinas*, 5ª edição, Lisboa, Mosteiro de S. Vicente de Fora, 1747, pp.396.

⁶⁷ 'Alvará de 31 de Março de 1787' in Silva, António Delgado da, *Collecção da Legislação Portuguesa* cit., vol. III, pp. 430-1.

⁶⁸ At least in Porto, the register books mention privileges accorded to wet-nurses from the first half of the eighteenth century. In the nineteenth century, these charters were confirmed by law and privileges progressively enlarged.

⁶⁹ Hespanha, António Manuel, *História das Instituições. Épocas medieval e moderna*, Coimbra, Livraria Almedina, 1982, p. 228, note 426.

considered illegitimate or illegitimate? The problem was crucial, since no searches of paternity were made and the social integration of the foundling might depend on this issue. Although some jurists tended to believe that foundlings should be devoted to the learning of crafts or to the army⁷⁰, their inclusion in many occupations, such as those provided by the Church or public institutions, depended on legitimacy. On the other hand, it was fundamental to determine whether or not foundlings could inherit. The problem was difficult to solve and not all jurists agreed. The jurisprudence arrived at a compromise between two alternatives. According to the juridical principle that in cases of doubt the more favourable hypothesis was to be retained valid, jurists admitted the presumptive legitimacy of foundlings⁷¹. Nevertheless, there were restrictions that required proof of legitimate birth or papal dispensation. Such restrictions related to foundlings who wanted to inherit alongside legitimate children; to receive sacred orders and to be admitted to the Inquisition⁷².

The question of deciding about fathers who abandoned their *patria potestas* was easier to solve. Authors agreed unanimously that the moment the father had abandoned his child, he lost his rights over him. The decision was also valid for abandoned slave children, who gained freedom through abandonment⁷³.

Although the lines of the legal status of foundlings were traced during the eighteenth century, the rights of foundlings were fully defined at the beginning of the nineteenth century. A Portuguese jurist, Gouveia Pinto, author of two compilations of laws concerning foundlings, published in one of them a list of such rights. They are quoted here because they summarize what has

⁷⁰ Mostazo, F., *De causis piis* cit., t. I, Liber IV, cap. XI, n. 59.

⁷¹ Mostazo, F., *De causis piis* cit., t. I, Liber IV, cap. XI, n. 73-76; Fragoso, *Regiminis Republicae* cit., t. III, part. III, Liber I, § III, n. 133-134; Pegas, Manuel Alvares, *Tractatus de exclusione, inclusione, successione et executione majoratus*, Lisboa, 1686, Pars Quinta, cap. LXIII, n. 1, 2, 3, and 7.

⁷² Mostazo, F., *De causis piis* cit., t. I, Liber IV, cap. XI, n. 75-76; see also Freire, Pascoal de Melo, *Institutiones Iuris* cit., t. II, tit. VI, § VIII.

⁷³ Velasco, Gabriel Alvarez, *De privilegiis pauperum* cit., pars 2, q. 65, § 2, n.s 192-194; Fragoso, *Regiminis Republicae* cit., t. III, part. III, Lib. I, § III, n. 132; Mostazo, F., *De causis piis* cit., t. I, Lib. IV, cap. XI, n. 78; Pegas, Manuel Alvares, *Tractatus de exclusione* cit., Pars Quinta, cap. LXIII, n. 6.

been said about the legal rights of foundlings and they do not contradict any of the issues regarded as valid for the eighteenth century. One remark must be made: Gouveia Pinto was translating a French author, who wrote a treatise on illegitimate children and foundlings⁷⁴.

1- The condition of being a foundling was transitory; it corresponded only to the first years of life. During those years he was supported by society through its public institutions;

2 - From the age of seven onwards, foundlings had the same status as orphans, with the sole difference that the former were emancipated five years before the latter, at the age of twenty;

3 - The foundling was at the first stage of his own genealogy: his parents being unknown, he was presumed to be legitimate and have equal rights to legitimate children in the eyes of the law.

4 - The origin of the foundling was the place where he was abandoned. Abandonment in an institution had the character of a second birth, through which the child acquired a "patria" and putative parents, that is to say, the institution that assisted him, or, in a broader sense, the state that was his new father.

5 - The foundling could inherit any kind of property, being subject to the laws in current usage for all individuals. He could receive legacies from any person juridically capable of leaving a will.

Charitable institutions concerned with foundlings

Unlike other European countries, very little has been written recently on Portugal's charitable institutions during the pre-industrial period. Although the wave of monographs on urban

⁷⁴ Loiseau, M. *Traité des enfants naturels, adulterins, incestueux et abandonnés...*, Paris, J. Antoine, 1811, pp. 768-804.



networks of institutions has already reached Spain⁷⁵, so far it has not had any impact on Portuguese historiography.

Due to the lack of recent studies, this chapter will rely on general assumptions suggested by the material available, often out of date and irrelevant. In addition, knowledge of the sources of charitable institutions belonging to two Northwest Portuguese cities - Porto and Braga - will serve as empirical material.

It is assumed in this section that assistance to foundlings cannot be separated from the global network of charitable institutions in a given area. Generally, as we have seen in chapter 2, care for foundlings was confused with help for other categories of needy children, as well for sick adults and sometimes the handicapped. Not only were children to be cared for by institutions which also helped adults, but often interaction between different institutions was the rule. An overview of the general principles according to which charity was organized in the Southern European states is thus judged as useful.

The point of departure will be an overview of the recent bibliography on welfare existing for Modern Europe. The situation will be then compared with the Portuguese case.

Most recent works have pointed to the following common features of Ancien Regime charity:

1 - The development of complex structures of assistance, formed through the incorporation of small scale institutions dating from the Middle Ages. This reorganization of charity took place during the fifteenth century and continued in the following

⁷⁵ Carasa Soto, Pedro, *Pauperismo y Revolucion burguesa (Burgos, 1750-1900)*, Valladolid, Universidad de Valladolid, 1987; Garcia Guerra, Delfín, *El Hospital Real de Santiago (1499-1804)*, Coruña, Fund. P. Barrie Maza, 1983; Marcos Martin, Alberto, *Economía, sociedad, pobreza en Castilla: Palencia, 1500-1814*, 2 vols. Palencia, Diputación Provincial, 1985; Martz, Linda, *Poverty and Welfare in Habsburg Spain. The example of Toledo*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1983; Maza Zorilla, Elena, *Valladolid: sus pobres y la respuesta institucional (1750-1900)*, Valladolid, Universidad de Valladolid - Junta de Castilla y León, 1985; Rodriguez de Gracia, Hilario, *Asistencia social en Toledo, siglos XVI-XVIII*, Ocaña-Toledo, Caja Ahorros Provincial de Toledo, 1980.

century⁷⁶. Such institutional evolution paralleled urban growth and the development of the state, normally absolute in its basic principles.

2 - The interactive functioning of institutions existing in the same city, through the specialization of services within each one⁷⁷.

3 - The co-existence of private and public charity, of old and new forms of assistance from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, with both medieval-type direct face to face assistance (individual giving of alms and the collective alms giving of some institutions) and mediatized charity, where the beggar was replaced by the professional alms collector. Funds were then channelled to the benefit of some institutions, as access to charity was bureaucratized⁷⁸.

4 - The charity funds could be gathered in two ways: by obligation, through taxation, and voluntarily, through services, alms collecting and legacies. Southern Europe tended to prefer the second solution and its institutions were funded by the private and voluntary donations of the rich (king, nobility and clergy). The development since the Middle Ages of confraternities of crafts or laymen⁷⁹, where assistance was administered on an associative basis gave charity the character of a private enterprise coordinated by the central authorities. The services related to assistance were performed by members of the confraternities. Charity assumed then a lay face, especially when these brotherhoods were independent of the ecclesiastical authorities.

⁷⁶ Pullan, Brian, 'The old Catholicism, the new Catholicism, and the Poor', in Politi, Giorgio, Rosa, Mario, Della Peruta, Franco (a cura di), *Timore e Carità. I Poveri nell'Italia Moderna*, Cremona, Biblioteca Statale e Libreria Civica di Cremona, 1982, p. 23-24; Pullan, Brian, 'Support and redeem: charity and poor relief in Italian cities from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 3, 1988, n. 2, pp. 190-3).

⁷⁷ It would be excessive to quote cases of interactive urban networks of charity, as it is a feature that can be observed in many case studies.

⁷⁸ Gutton, Jean-Pierre, *La Société et les pauvres en Europe (XVI-XVIII siècles)*, Paris, P.U.F., 1974, pp. 97-115 (on the prohibition of begging); Pullan, Brian, 'The old Catholicism', p. 21.

⁷⁹ Pullan, Brian, 'Support and redeem', pp. 183-87. The foundation of confraternities started around the thirteenth century and continued until the sixteenth century and beyond.

5 - Medical care was clearly secondary compared to the importance of the religious services performed in the institutions⁸⁰. General hospitals for the sick confessed the patients, administered extreme unction and gave proper burials to the poor whilst the first service provided for abandoned children was baptism. The architecture of infirmaries followed the structure of churches and priests performed mass services there.

6 - Selective criteria existed for access to institutions: the law of supply and demand can be applied to access to charity⁸¹. Selective criteria varied according to the functions of each institution, and could consist of residence, legitimacy, age, sex or good morals and behaviour.

7 - The need was felt to distinguish the true from the false poor, the divide being marked by physical capacity to work⁸².

8 - Poverty could last a lifetime and reproduce itself in the following generations (structural poverty) but could also be the result of family, economic or political crisis (conjunctural poverty)⁸³.

9 - Poverty and access to charity are linked to the life-cycle: the age of an individual can make him automatically the object of assistance. Peter Laslett has suggested that the ways in which this dependency is dealt with might depend on family forms: the nuclear family could enhance the dependence on charitable institutions, whilst complex families might give support to its needy members⁸⁴. Viazzo has nevertheless suggested that, if the Laslett hypothesis holds for the old and aged, it needs further evidence before it can be applied to childhood⁸⁵.

⁸⁰ Marcos Martin, Alberto, *Economia, sociedad* cit., p. 595.

⁸¹ Woolf, Stuart J., *The poor in Western Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries*, London and New York, Methuen, 1986, p. 198.

⁸² Woolf, Stuart J., *idem*, p. 9 and 18.

⁸³ Gutton, Jean-Pierre, *La Société et les pauvres* cit., pp. 72-3.

⁸⁴ Laslett, Peter 'Family, kinship and collectivity as systems of support in pre-industrial Europe: a consideration of the 'nuclear hardship hypothesis', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 3, 1988, n. 2, pp. 153-175.

⁸⁵ Viazzo, Pier Paolo, 'Family structure and the early phase in the individual life-cycle: a Southern European perspective', paper delivered to

10 - Access to charity reflects the structure of social networks: in a society based on status and hierarchy it was important to have a recommendation⁸⁶.

11 - The Counter-Reformation added to charity a concern with the repression of deviant morals, adding to poor relief the concern with the salvation of the souls of the recipients⁸⁷.

In Portugal, the significant issue that, to my knowledge, cannot be observed in any other Southern European country, is the incorporation of a significant number of institutions of assistance under the administration and authority of the Misericórdias. The Misericórdias were lay confraternities, under the direct protection of the king, that were founded from 1498 onwards in the majority of the cities of the kingdom and its colonies⁸⁸. The expansion of the Misericórdias speaks for itself: before 1750, besides the countless confraternities established in continental Portugal, not only in cities but also in small towns and even villages⁸⁹, there were 11 in the Atlantic archipels of Madeira and Azores, 16 in Brazil, 3 in Angola and about 29 in Asia, included those of India, Japan and Indonesia⁹⁰. The foundation of Misericórdias even surpassed the boundaries of what were the Portuguese colonies of the time: for instance, the Misericórdia of

the *Tenth International Economic History Conference*, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', p. 4.

⁸⁶ Woolf, Stuart J.. *The poor in Western Europe* cit., p. 208. Cavallo, Sandra, 'Patterns of poor relief and patterns of poverty in eighteenth-century Italy: the evidence for the Turin Ospedale di Carità', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 5, 1990, n. 1, pp. 72-73.

⁸⁷ Pullan, Brian, 'The old Catholicism', p. 25.

⁸⁸ On the dates of foundation of Misericórdias in Portugal and its colonies see Correia, Fernando da Silva, 'A Misericórdia de Lisboa', *Medicina Contemporânea*, year LX, 1942, n. 19, 20, 21 (special issue).

⁸⁹ In the single province of Algarve, 22 Misericórdias belonging to cities, towns (vilas) and villages have been studied, although in the perspective of the history of art (Pinto, Maria Helena Mendes; Pinto, Victor Roberto Mendes, *As Misericórdias do Algarve*, Lisboa, Ministério da Saúde e Assistência, 1968, p. 9).

⁹⁰ See map on pp. 24-25 of Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos. A Santa Casa da Misericórdia da Bahia, 1550-1755*, Brasília, Editora Universidade de Brasília, 1968.

Buenos Aires seems to have been founded by the Portuguese and that of Manila in the Philippines⁹¹.

The functioning of such institutions was autonomous: each confraternity could have its own statutes which were subject to royal approval. But, even if they adopted the "Compromisso" of Lisbon, as was often the case of new Misericórdias, they were independent local bodies. Although the Misericórdias might have different regulations, the basic principles of their activity were the same for all of them. These principles were the fourteen works of mercy, which gave unity to the multiple confraternities existing in the Portuguese territories. According to such principles, each confraternity organized a wide range of activities: burials (for members, non-members, the poor and those sentenced to death), assistance to prisoners, care of the sick poor, domestic relief for the shame-faced poor and dowries for poor orphaned girls. These activities were to be performed through the volunteer work of its members, organised in different institutions which the Misericórdias could administer. From reclusion institutions for women to colleges designed for orphans and from general hospitals to leper houses, the confraternities often took charge of the most important local institutions of charity. Misericórdias also accumulated important patrimonies, as the ceremonies they performed for burials guaranteed the accumulation of pious legacies and inheritances. Furthermore, the Misericórdias were also authorised by the king to collect alms: its "mamposteiros" (licensed alm collectors) could cover the entire kingdom in search of donations⁹².

Caring for others was not the only concern of the Misericórdias. They also provided prestigious funerals for members and their families, had important roles in the local processions and could assist their own members in need. The orphans of members could receive dowries and impoverished members' families could receive secret domestic relief. Other

⁹¹ The Misericórdia of Manila, although founded by Spaniards, had close relationships with the Portuguese ones (Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., p. 27).

⁹² Ribeiro, Victor, *História da beneficência pública em Portugal*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 1907, pp. 59-65 and 70.

advantages for members were the privileges institutionalized by the king in 1502, which exempted them from the performance of tasks imposed by the councils⁹³. In any case, the importance charity assumed in this baroque Catholic society sufficed to make membership of the local Misericórdia a symbol of status. The local spheres of power had a strong pillar in the Misericórdia, which seems to have competed on equal terms with two other local authorities: the town council and the bishop's chapter. Although the confraternity was not subject to ecclesiastical jurisdiction or administration, the local clergy often occupied high posts in the ruling bodies of the confraternity; so did the local nobility, as members of the best families tended to share such positions with clergymen. Misericórdias became important elements of the local political arena.

The members of the confraternity could not be manual workers. Besides the negative value of manual work in Ancien Régime societies, members had to be free from work duties in order to be available to help in the confraternity's tasks. Membership was stratified within the confraternity itself: there was a divide between noble and non-noble members, with the ruling posts reserved for noblemen. Non noble members tended to be either merchants or master craftsmen who owned their workshops, and possessed enough spare time to perform the duties imposed by the confraternity. This discrimination was even included in the *Compromissos*, which defined precisely the "rights and duties" of each class of member. The qualifications for membership of the Misericórdias created a divide between those who were to give and those who were to receive relief: members on the one side and prisoners, those under death sentence and the sick poor on the other. In the worst hypothesis, members were to be helped secretly as shame-faced poor, or their orphaned girls could be given dowries.

The most important feature of Portugal's Misericórdias is that they created a quite homogeneous welfare system, as flexible as each local regulation permitted, without being subjected to the

⁹³ Ribeiro, Victor, *idem*, p. 63 and p. 76.

bureaucracy of a central authority. The fact is that the incorporation of the medieval charitable institutions into larger ones that took place throughout Southern Europe, occurred within the framework of the Misericórdias in the Portuguese case. Or, more exactly, the regrouping of municipal institutions started even before the foundation of the first Misericórdia in Lisbon during the reign of João II, but was absorbed by the Misericórdias in the sixteenth century⁹⁴. Most municipal medieval hospitals of the main cities of the kingdom passed under the administration of the local Misericórdias: such was the case of Lisbon in 1564, Évora shortly after 1551, Porto in 1521, which were absorbed into large hospitals⁹⁵. In other cities, large hospitals were refounded and also administered by the Misericórdia, as for instance in Braga⁹⁶.

I would suggest that, in a context of progressive reinforcement of the royal powers, the Misericórdia was a subtle strategy to subtract assistance from the control of the ecclesiastical authorities. If charity is seen as a means of social pacification, in the sense that inequality is justified by the fact that the rich are supposed to share their property with the poor on a voluntary, generous basis, its control becomes crucial. In a context where charity was highly valued, kings could obtain moral profit out of the protection of the institutions of assistance. Not that ecclesiastical dignitaries were excluded from the Misericórdias; the truth is that they could be members and often performed ruling duties. Simply, they were to fulfill them in the context of an institution that was under the king's patronage and did not - at least officially - submit to any cathedral's chapter or any monastery. The Misericórdias thus performed a double role: on the one hand they helped to soften social conflict, and on the other they increased the prestige of the king. At the local level they pacified society since the rich and the powerful gave of their time and often their property to assist the poor, thus compensating for social and economic inequality; on the other

⁹⁴ Ribeiro, Victor, *idem*, pp. 84-85.

⁹⁵ Ribeiro, Vitor, *idem*, pp. 93 and 84.

⁹⁶ Ribeiro, Victor, *idem*, p. 84.

hand, they drew the king's benevolence closer to the common people.

The extent of the Misericórdias' monopoly of the administration of charitable institutions is not known. There were some exceptions to the incorporations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and new institutions independent of the Misericórdias were founded between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. But we do not know the importance of such non-Misericórdia institutions in the political life of the cities nor the number of recipients of assistance. The information available suggests that the local Misericórdias tended to administer the main general hospitals in the important cities of the kingdom and a number of smaller institutions whose capacity and character varied⁹⁷.

If by law foundlings were to be supported financially by the local councils, the Misericórdias often had the obligation of providing effective assistance for them. This was a local arrangement, formalized by a contract between the Misericórdia and the council. In the kingdom of Portugal we know of such contracts for Lisbon (1635)⁹⁸, Porto (1685)⁹⁹, Coimbra (1708)¹⁰⁰ and Évora (1767-68)¹⁰¹ (cities where the Misericórdias also administered general hospitals), although it is possible that other smaller towns also transferred responsibilities for care to the Misericórdias. In Brazil, Africa and Asia similar arrangements were made in some cities, such as Baía de San Salvador, Luanda and Goa¹⁰². In places where such contracts did not exist, assistance for foundlings was entirely the responsibility of the

⁹⁷ Ribeiro, Vitor, *idem*, pp. 84-85. See also local monographs on the Misericórdias which generally include a survey of the institutions of assistance they administered.

⁹⁸ Ribeiro, Vitor, 'A Santa Casa da Misericórdia de Lisboa', *Memórias da Academia Real das Ciências*, Nova Série, 2^a classe, Ciências Morais e Políticas e Belas-Letras, tomo IX, Parte II, Lisboa, Tipografia da Academia, 1902, p. 396.

⁹⁹ A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, fls. 15-31 v..

¹⁰⁰ Anjo, A. César, 'Assistência a crianças expostas em Portugal', *Amatus Lusitanus. Revista de Medicina e Cirurgia*, Lisboa, vol. VII. 1950, p. 427.

¹⁰¹ Pereira, Gabriel, *Documentos históricos da cidade de Évora*, p. 255, quoted by Ribeiro, Vitor, *História da beneficência pública* cit., p. 102.

¹⁰² Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., p. 234.

municipality. Assistance for foundlings in some of these towns has already been the subject of study: Braga¹⁰³ and Guimarães¹⁰⁴ and Esposende¹⁰⁵ in the Northern province of Minho, Figueira da Foz¹⁰⁶ and Meda¹⁰⁷ in central Portugal.

Evidence suggests that the Misericórdias tended to keep their patrimonies quite separate from expenses for foundlings. Although their statutes included a clause on deprived children, they always made clear that foundlings were the council's financial charge. In exchange, care for foundlings was carried out without any remuneration from the council authorities. It was a fair deal, since the councils were officially charged with foundlings, but most councils lacked the experience and means that the local Misericórdias had acquired in charitable matters.

Unlike other Southern European states, foundlings were invariably cared for by only two alternative institutions: the council or the Misericórdia. In no case was the cathedral's chapter charged with them or a confraternity other than the Misericórdia. Compared with the rest of Southern Europe, Portugal is striking for its homogeneity. This can also be observed in the fact that the wheel was the national instrument of abandonment, used widely in Portugal as well in Brazil even before its legalization in 1783. The "Ordem circular de Pina Manique" of 1783 referred to the institutions responsible for foundlings as "Rodas", even before the law mentioned explicitly that wheels were to be adopted in every

103 Dos Guimarães Sá, Isabel, 'Foundlings and orphans in North-West Portugal: the case of pre-industrial Braga', paper delivered to the *Tenth International Economic History Conference*, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', p. 7.

104 Cunha, Manuela, *L'abandon d'enfants au Portugal: un vision diachronique de l'évolution des institutions et de la législation suivie d'un étude de cas de le ville de Guimarães*, Paris, Université de Paris IV, 1986 ('mémoire de D.E.A.', unpublished), p. 35.

105 Matos, Sebastião, 'Os expostos da Roda em Esposende', *Boletim Cultural de Esposende, Esposende*, Dezembro de 1983, pp. 39-90.

106 Cascão, Rui, 'Demografia e Sociedade. A Figueira da Foz na primeira metade do século XIX', *Revista de História Económica e Social*, Lisboa, 1985, Janeiro-Junho, p. 105.

107 Lopes, Maria Antónia, 'Os expostos no concelho de Meda em meados do século XIX (1838-1869)', *Revista Portuguesa de História*, Coimbra, tomo XXI, 1984, pp. 119-176.

such institution¹⁰⁸. The foundling homes were widely known as "rodas", a sign that the institutions were assimilated to the instruments of abandonment. Unlike Spain or Italy, where not all the cities possessed wheels, in Portugal most main towns possessed one by the end of the eighteenth century and the foundling hospitals of Lisbon and Porto had installed them at least since the seventeenth century. The use of the wheel meant that there was an indiscriminate acceptance of children, since abandonment was anonymous. Since there was no control of admissions, large numbers of children were abandoned. The figures known for the Portuguese foundling hospitals are striking for their high numbers relative to the urban populations.

Even if there were wheels in every head of "concelho", transport to the main hospitals of the large cities was the rule. Local authorities were always eager to save expenses with children and it is possible that abandoners also found suitable to send children to far away distances. This transport could be either clandestine or semi-official, as was the case in Amarante. Each hospital existing in a larger city had an area of influence¹⁰⁹. The conditions of transport were inhuman and do not seem to differ from the description of Louis-Sébastien Mercier: children being carried by groups of two or more in baskets and dying on their way to the foundling home. A text from the Intendência Geral da Polícia even acknowledged the fear that those children could die as "pagans"¹¹⁰. In the larger cities, as we have seen, the Foundling

108 'Ordem circular de 24 de Maio de 1783' in A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 150-2.

109 Several documents contained in the archives of the Intendência Geral da Polícia report on the bad conditions of the transport of foundlings to Lisbon from areas as distant as Almada, Setúbal, Torres Vedras and Abrantes (Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, *Livro nº 2 da Intendência Geral da Polícia*, pp. 30-31v).

110 Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, *Livro nº 2 da Intendência Geral da Polícia*, pp. 37v.-39: '... pois que daquelas vilas [Setúbal e Almada] mandando os miseráveis innocentes aos seis e oito juntos em canastras para a Roda de Lisboa, como até agora praticavão todas as villas do Ribatejo até Abrantes, chegando muita parte delles mortos, e talvez perecendo pagoens, e onerando-se desta forma a Roda de Lisboa com os que chegam ainda vivos, que não pode suprir as despezas das creações...'. See also the quotations of Louis-Sébastien Mercier on the transport of foundlings to Paris included in Delasselle, Claude, 'Les enfants abandonnés à Paris au XVIIIe siècle', *Annales E.S.C.*, a. 30, 1975, p. 193; on the transport of Spanish foundlings see

Homes were administered by the local Misericórdias. It is possible that the Misericórdias, since they were financed by the council, never had a real need to control expenses, and so made few attempts to discover where foundlings came from and which areas sent them. The fact is that it is easier to study transport of foundlings from the areas of departure than from the point of arrival, as, at least in Porto's case, the origin of foundlings is never stated. In the nineteenth century, one of the first concerns of the legislation on foundlings was to make each "concelho" contribute financially to the expenses with foundlings of each district.

When the council was responsible for the foundlings, the local structure included a woman to receive foundlings at the wheel, the "rodeira", who was later to recruit wet-nurses for the children. Also, a "vereador", an officer of the local council, was to keep registers of children and to supervise expenses. Generally the council rented or owned a house where the "rodeira" lodged and where children boarded until they were given to wet-nurses. When the Misericórdia was in charge of foundlings, the functions of the council were restricted to regular financing of expenses, while all other tasks were performed by members of the Misericórdia, who also recruited the personnel to care for the foundlings: wet-nurses to attend them on reception and to breastfeed them. Generally the Misericórdias employed their own medical staff to care for the children, treating them when they were ill.

Cooperation existed between the civil structures that assisted foundlings and the church, as foundlings were generally baptized in the parish where the wheel was located. Also, the recruitment of wet-nurses relied on the certificates issued by their parish priests, that certified the availability of breast milk, the condition of the woman's own child and other issues such as good mores or good blood. Once admitted as nurses, payments were often made against a certificate of life of the foundling issued by the parish priest. Strict cooperation was thus needed and parish priests were exhorted not to ask for money for writing such documents.

Once the foundlings reached the age of seven, they passed over to the responsibility of the judge of orphans, who was in charge of integrating the foundling in society, through adoption by a family or insertion in the labor market. Legally, foundlings over seven were assimilated to orphans.

Foundlings managed to involve a significant corpus of Portugal's institutions in their upbringing: the councils, sometimes the Misericórdias, the judges of orphans and the parish priests. If we add to such institutions the multitude of women who breastfed them, the individuals who abandoned them and if we bear in mind the high numbers of foundlings in Portugal, a high proportion of the population can be stated to have been involved in some form with child abandonment.

In the colonies, the miscegenation of races posed different problems for the local foundling hospitals. Evidence suggests that they were primarily founded to assist the white population.

The chronology of the foundation of Foundling Hospitals in Brazil follows the evolution of its colonization and is adapted to the importance assumed by each city at a given moment. Thus in Brazil, the first foundling hospitals to be established were in Salvador (1726)¹¹¹, the colonial capital and the main export city for sugar, and in Rio de Janeiro in 1738¹¹². The area of Minas Gerais followed in 1795 with the establishment of the wheel in Ouro Preto¹¹³. In cities whose development took place in the nineteenth century, foundling hospitals were founded later: S. Paulo in 1824-5¹¹⁴ and Porto Alegre in Rio Grande do Sul (South

¹¹¹ Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., pp. 239 and 235.

¹¹² Venancio, Renato Pinto, *Infância sem destino: o abandono de crianças no Rio de Janeiro no século XVIII*, S. Paulo, Master's thesis, FFLCH-University of São Paulo, 1988, p. 40.

¹¹³ Marcílio, Maria Luisa, Venancio, Renato P., 'Crianças abandonadas e primitivas formas de sua proteção. Séculos XVIII e XIX, Brasil', *17º Congresso Internacional de Ciências Históricas*, Madrid 1990, 26 Agosto-2 Septiembre, p. 516.

¹¹⁴ Marcílio and Mesgravis put forward the year 1824 for the foundation of the wheel, whilst Nizza da Silva advances 1825 (Marcílio, M. L., Venancio, R. P., 'Crianças abandonadas', p. 516; Mesgravis, Laima, 'A assistência à infância', p. 406; Silva, Maria Beatriz Nizza da, 'O problema dos expostos na

Brazil) in 1826¹¹⁵. The tendency was also that in some Brazilian cities the local Misericórdias got involved in the upbringing of foundlings: such was the case of Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and S. Paulo¹¹⁶.

Several issues suggest that care for foundlings was designed to concern the white population: Russel-Wood remarks that illegitimate children did not dishonour the black or mulatto mother stressing also the easy absorption of non-kin children by the black population to present times¹¹⁷. Nizza da Silva observed that black or mulatto foundlings could not have the status of slaves under Portuguese law; hence, masters of slaves constrained their slaves from abandoning their children in order not to lose their property¹¹⁸. Marcílio notes an increase of the use of the Bahia wheel by the coloured population during the nineteenth century; nevertheless, in the eighteenth century white children were preponderant¹¹⁹.

In India, the only information available concerns Goa, whose Misericórdia cared for foundlings with funds supplied by the council¹²⁰. Assistance to them was provided in the Hospital dos Pobres, a large hospital concerned with the sick poor. Later, in 1755, the indigenous population was prohibited from abandoning children in the local Misericórdia, help being restricted to white children¹²¹.

capitania de S. Paulo', *Revista de História Económica e Social*, nº 5, Janeiro-Junho 1980, p. 98).

115 Marcílio, M. L., Venancio, R. P., 'Crianças abandonadas', p. 516.

116 For Bahia and Rio de Janeiro see Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., pp. 233-251; for S. Paulo see Mesgravis, Laima, 'A assistência à infância', p. 415.

117 Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., p. 247.

118 Silva, Maria Beatriz Nizza da, 'O problema dos expostos', p. 96.

119 Marcílio, M. L., Venancio, R. P., 'Crianças abandonadas', p. 513.

120 In a Compromisso valid between 1595 and 1633 can be read: "Vindo alguns engeitados a esta Casa de Misericórdia se darão a criar como até gora se fez com o dinheiro que para isso dá a cidade" (Martins, José Frederico Ferreira, *História da Misericórdia de Goa*, vol. I, Nova Goa, Imprensa Nacional, 1910-14, p. 249 (excerpt from chapter 34).

121 The decision of the Mesa (Misericórdia's body of decision) concerning the Hospital dos Pobres states: "Não aceitará mais engeitados senão os que forem brancos por não haver rendimentos, nem legados para eles e a Casa não estar já de os sustentar" (Martins, José Frederico Ferreira, *História da Misericórdia* cit., p. 355).

In Macau, in the Far East, the Compromisso of the local Misericórdia included the obligation to assist foundlings, although the administrators made several attempts to obtain financing from the central authorities¹²².

In the Portuguese African colonies, information on foundling care is rare, although there is a mention that the Misericórdia of Luanda took them in charge¹²³.

122 Soares, José Caetano, *Macau e a Assistência (Programa médico-social)*, Lisboa, 1950, pp. 282-4, p. 336 quoted by Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., p. 235.

123 Russell-Wood, A. J. R., *Fidalgos e Filantropos* cit., p. 234.

Chapter 4 - A century in the life of the Casa da Roda

Urban context

Porto in the eighteenth century

The social history of the city of Porto during the eighteenth century is yet to be written. Whilst its economic life tends to be better known, historical demography and social history suffer from the lack of a general survey. A history of the foundling home would benefit substantially from such demographic studies as the evolution of illegitimacy rates, the average age at first marriage and percentage of celibates, not to mention child and infant mortality¹. Marriage patterns and household composition are unfortunately unknown for the period I am concerned with, although excellent research has been done for the seventeenth century². On the other hand a survey of the charitable institutions of the city is lacking; urban innovations in what concerns public buildings have been studied for the second half of the eighteenth century³.

Most recent work has been dedicated to the nineteenth century, namely to the new urban parishes that absorbed emigration from the countryside⁴. If we are to assume that the situation evolved after a beginning in the eighteenth century it is

¹ As eighteenth century parish registers in Northern Portugal do not mention the death of children before confirmation, this last issue remains impossible to measure.

² Osswald, Helena, 'Dowry, norms and household formation: a case study from North Portugal', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 15, 1990, n. 2, pp. 201-224.

³ Ferrão, Bernardo José, *Projecto e transformação urbana do Porto na época dos Almadas, 1758-1813. Uma contribuição para o estudo da cidade pombalina*, 2nd edition, Porto, Faculdade de Arquitectura da Universidade do Porto, 1989.

⁴ Pereira, Gaspar Martins, *Estruturas familiares na cidade do Porto em meados do século XIX - a freguesia de Cedofeita*, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1986.

legitimate to refer, with care, to some features of the nineteenth century.

The general picture this chapter tries to draw will be simplistic and contextual: its purpose is to insert the Foundling Home in the broader scene.

The characteristics of Porto's climate are clearly Atlantic, and the city is located on the steep bank to the right of the river Douro. An English traveller commented in 1779: "To walk much about this city, is, I assure you, rather a violent exercise; not one city in it being upon a level, excepting that where the most part of the English inhabit; all the others consist of ascents and descents, some of them so steep as to make it very difficult for any sort of wheel carriage to get on; for which reason, litters carried between a couple of stout mules are more in use here, and a much safer conveyance"⁵.

In the eighteenth century Porto was a flourishing town; the wine trade developed by English businessmen in the last decades of the preceding century had given new life to the city's economy. Its seaport was busy, concerned mainly with trade with Brazil, which was at the time Portugal's main colony, first for its gold and later in the century for its tobacco and sugar.

The city's population increased through the century: in 1732 it is reported to have 20000, at the end of the century its population had more than doubled, totalling 43000 persons⁶. The

⁵ Costigan, Arthur William, *Sketches of society and manners in Portugal*, vol. I, London, T. Vernor, 1787?, p. 396.

⁶ The bibliography consulted does not show agreement between the estimates made and the sources used; data given here is nevertheless based on these authors. See Godinho, Vitorino, *Estrutura da Antiga Sociedade Portuguesa*, 3.a edição, Lisboa, Arcádia, 1977, p. 42; Schneider, Susan, *O Marquês de Pombal e o vinho do Porto. Dependência e subdesenvolvimento de Portugal no século XVIII*, Lisboa, A Regra do Jogo, 1980; Santos, Cândido dos, 'A população do Porto de 1700 a 1820', *Revista de Historia*, vol. I, I.N.I.C., Centro de História da Universidade do Porto, Porto, 1978, pp. 287-289; Serrão, Joaquim Veríssimo, *A população de Portugal em 1798. O censo de Pina Manique*, XXXIX. See also Bairoch, Paul; Batou, Jean; Chèvre, Pierre, *La population des villes européennes. Banque de données et analyse sommaire des résultats, 800-1850*, Genève, 1988, p. 57 where a different progression of the number of inhabitants is given: 25000 in 1700, 30000 in 1750 and 43000 in 1800.

city itself expanded its area, growing out beyond its walls to create new urban parishes.

Porto might be considered, together with Viana, in the northern area of Minho, one of the main centres for intending emigrants, most of whom were destined for Brazil.

Despite such expansion, there was little industrial development. Like Lisbon, Porto continued to be a town devoted to sea trade rather than industry. Even commerce was deficitary, due to the overwhelming English domination. The river Douro and its seaport formed the economic core of the city: the portwine travelled from the vineyards of the interior to the cellars on the south bank of the river.

If foreign merchants helped to develop commerce, the city continued to lack industrial development. This was reflected in the town's landscape: except for the old urban parishes, the immediate surrounding areas still had a markedly rural character, where the wealthier tradesmen owned country estates with huge farmhouses.

Like other towns all over Europe, the city attracted from the surrounding areas peasants in search of work or ships on which to emigrate. Whilst the city's population continued to expand, there were many who considered it more a temporary port of passage rather than a place to settle in.

The countryside around Porto, apart from the portwine production areas, was mainly characterised by smallholding properties in the hills, and an extreme fragmentation took place: the same owner might have his lands dispersed over a relatively wide area. The peasant, either cultivating his own land or renting it from a nobleman or religious order, was generally called a "lavrador", while rural day workers were called "jornaleiros". The latter mainly crowded around the vineyards of Douro, which belonged to Porto's wealthier families.

The presence of the English transformed most of the town's customs, as would "Brasileiros" ("nouveaux riche" emigrants

returned from Brazil) in the following century. In the middle of the nineteenth century, Porto was seen by contemporaries as divided in three areas: the old, inside the walls city, devoted to business and crafts, where most of the public buildings were located; the oriental quarter, mostly a "brasileiros" residential area, and finally the eastern zone, where Englishmen had built their homes⁷. But, already before the arrival of return emigrants from Brazil, the English and other foreign minorities connected to the export trade had changed the life of the city. They were responsible for some buildings in neo-classical style that threatened the city's baroque image, they created an elite of local "notables" to assist them in business, and finally they changed the system of values by imposing new forms of social life.

Above all, Englishmen produced a series of travel accounts reporting on the Portuguese and on the city of Porto itself. Their insights, although contaminated by prejudice and feelings of superiority towards 'natives', are nevertheless a very important source for our knowledge of the social life of the town. One such traveller, William Costigan documented the importance of the "empenhos", an "empenho" being in the words of the English consul of Porto in 1779, "... the act, whereby a person in habits of friendship or intimate acquaintance with another, invested with power or authority, interposes earnestly with him in favour of a third person, most commonly a worthless, undeserving subject, in order to procure for him, against Charity, Reason and Justice, some special favour he does not deserve; or to avert the imposition of those pains and penalties, whatever they be, he in the course of justice has incurred, and is become liable to the law"⁸.

Demographical work done for the area suggests high levels of illegitimacy, at least for the new urban parishes in the nineteenth century. In the parish of Cedofeita, the percentage of baptisms of illegitimate infants was 8.2% from 1820 to 1839,

⁷ Júlio Diniz, *Uma família inglesa*, 1868, cap. IV, quoted by Godinho, V., *Estrutura da Antiga* cit., 1977, pp. 294-296.

⁸ Costigan, Arthur William, *Sketches of society* cit., p. 400.

between 1853 and 1862 15.4%⁹ Further North, in Alto Minho, anthropologists and historians have found a high level of social acceptance of bastards¹⁰. Canon law protected unmarried parents from dishonour arising from public knowledge of their sins. In fact, synodal constitutions gave priests authority not to declare the names of fathers in baptism registers of illegitimate children or even of the mothers when their condition was not publicly known¹¹.

The institutions of charity: an overview

There were about 20 institutions of charity in eighteenth century Porto (see appendix 1). These institutions of Porto were the result of a double inheritance: the medieval one and the post Counter Reformation foundations. The former consisted of three kinds of establishments: shelters for pilgrims; deposits for lepers and hospitals owned by confraternities. As examples can be quoted the Hospício do Senhor do Além founded in 1140 as a shelter for pilgrims; the hospitals of S. Crispim and of the "Senhora da Silva" owned by the guilds of shoemakers and metal workers; finally the two hospitals for lepers existing outside the old walls of the city. The post Counter Reformation institutions, influenced by the new Catholic attitudes towards charity, were founded in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. They conform to the standards of Counter reformation institutions: the safeguard of female honour, conserved in the "Recolhimentos" and the education of male orphans, devoted especially to an ecclesiastical career in the colonies. Most of those institutions selected the

⁹ Pereira, Gaspar Martins, 'A população de Cedofeita em meados do século XIX', *Revista da Faculdade de Letras*, II série, vol. V, 1988, p. 285. These percentages might be distorted by the presence of the illegitimate born in the city's main hospital, the "Hospital de Santo António".

¹⁰ Brettell, Caroline, *Men who migrate, women who wait*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1986, pp. 210-262.

¹¹ *Constituições synodales do bispado do Porto novamente feitas e ordenadas pelo ... Dom João de Sousa*, Coimbra, Real Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1735, p. 37: "E quando o baptizado não for havido de legitimo matrimonio, também se declarará no mesmo assento do livro o nome de seus pays, se for couza notoria, e sabida, e não houver escandalo, porém havendo-o em se declara o nome do pay, só se declarará o nome da may, podendo-se declarar sem escandalo, e perigo".

individuals to be admitted according to various selective criteria, adapted to the specificity of their functions.

One institution overshadowed the other charitable institutions of assistance by its complex organisation, the number of hospitals it owned and the wide ranges of charitable services it provided: the "Santa Casa da Misericórdia do Porto".

Created in 1499, shortly after the Lisbon Misericórdia, the confraternity assembled the old hospitals belonging to the town council in 1521; in the following two hundred years several new establishments were added to it: the Casa da Roda for the care of foundlings and the Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora da Esperança for orphaned girls. Altogether the Misericórdia ran eight institutions, designed for a wide range of needy persons, from children to adult women, from the sick to the old and invalid (See appendix 1).

The role played by the Misericórdia in the city's life and in assistance to the poor required the development of a complex organisation, as the regulations of the confraternity - the "Compromisso" - suggest. Porto's Misericórdia received its first statutes during the seventeenth century, at times when its forms of assistance had become different from those of the Lisbon Misericórdia¹².

The "Compromisso" is essential for the understanding of the confraternity's organisation as it gives information on the structure of the confraternity relating to membership and ruling bodies, sources of income, organisation of finances, religious obligations, medical assistance and services provided (see appendix 2). The Misericórdia, in order to perform its charitable obligations and run its institutions developed not only a structure of voluntary work of its members, but also financial, juridical and medical structures. Nevertheless, the analysis of the

¹² When it was created the Misericórdia do Porto, although totally independent from Lisbon, followed the same rules and adopted its "Compromisso"; the first regulations of Porto's own Misericórdia were approved by the king in 1646. I shall refer to the 1717 edition in the following paragraphs: *Compromisso da Misericórdia do Porto*, Coimbra, no Real Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, anno de 1717.

"Compromisso" needs caution, because many of its regulations were altered or added during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The "Compromisso" itself foresaw the alteration of the rules it contained, except for some dispositions which were judged to be non changeable¹³. I shall refer to such alterations whenever they are judged as being significant to the analysis.

The fulfilment of the fourteen works of mercy implied a wide range of services, from treating the ill to peacemaking between enemies¹⁴. Some of those works of mercy were fulfilled within the framework of specific institutions administered by the Misericórdia itself (see appendix 1). Others were performed independently like the obligation to provide for burial ceremonies for its members, accompanying the condemned to their hanging place and later collecting their bones, or relieving shame-faced poor in their private houses. In theory, the Misericórdia, being obliged to fulfill the fourteen works of mercy, should have given indiscriminate assistance to the poor, but evidence suggests that some of the institutions administered by the Misericórdia and most of the services provided involved a careful choice of the recipients. Certainly, it still remained the one institution of the city that provided assistance on a large scale to the most deprived members of the population. Nevertheless, the individuals who were helped were subjected to a previous selection, the level of assistance depending upon the service required and the resources available.

The confraternity gathered 250 male members, presumably from the upper and medium strata of the urban population, whose life and mores were carefully investigated by a committee of old members before admittance¹⁵. The Misericórdia placed several requirements on its would-be members: purity of blood and

¹³ On those exceptions, see *Compromisso* cit., p. 35.

¹⁴ The works of mercy were divided in two categories: spiritual and physical. Spiritual works included: teach the ignorant; give good advice to those who ask for it; punish those who make mistakes; comfort the sad; forgive offences; suffer patiently ills done by others; pray for the live and sick. Physical works consisted of: treat the ill; clothe the naked; feed the hungry; give water to the thirsty; shelter pilgrims; assist prisoners; give burial to the dead.

¹⁵ On the requirements for admission, see *Compromisso* cit. p. 4-8.

knowledge of their ancestors up to the third generation, good behaviour, married status or age over twenty five for bachelors, residence in the city's area and availability of time for their service duties. Members of the popular classes would be excluded from membership by the fact that they worked with their own hands: craftsmen, for example, should be masters or of an equal category, {in order to be able to dispose of their time}. Literacy was also required. Members of the Misericórdia were called "irmãos" (brothers). There was a discrimination even within the confraternity's members: first class members - "irmãos nobres" - were noblemen and had access to the top ruling posts, whilst second class members - "oficiais" - only received physical services and lower rank ruling posts inside the confraternity¹⁶.

Members were all obliged to carry out the fourteen works of mercy and obey the Misericórdia's ruling bodies, having to accept the offices and duties assigned to them¹⁷. The bells of the church could call all the members on any occasion; for private calls the confraternity must have had its own go-betweens, as distances within the city could be easily run¹⁸. The absences from the city of the "irmãos" posed a problem for the confraternity which tried to settle the minimum obligations of each member. So, the statutes defined 7 occasions during the year when attendance of all the members was required, without exceptions¹⁹. Two of these days were dedicated to renewal of the confraternity's ruling bodies: the 2nd and the 25th July²⁰. Five days corresponded to religious feasts, and members prepared or attended the respective processions: these were crucial moments in urban life during the

16 On 18 March 1767, the Misericórdia allowed the members of the commercial bourgeoisie to accede to the Mesa as noble councillors. See A.M.P., *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, fl. 263. In the case of Braga, noble members were designated as "de primeira condição" and non-noble as "de segunda condição" (see Arquivo Distrital de Braga, *Livro 1 do Fundo da Misericórdia*, 'Compromisso da Misericórdia de Braga de 1618', fl. 3).

17 On the obligations of the members, see *Compromisso* cit., pp. 8-9.

18 *Idem*, p. 8.

19 *Idem*, p. 9: " ... sem poder usar de dispensação alguma ...".

20 Respectively Visitation's day (the Virgin paid a visit to Saint Isabel) and Saint James day.

baroque period²¹. Besides these occasions, members had to attend funerals of other members or of member's wives and children. Besides these obligations, members could be called on to perform any of the tasks required by the exercise of the fourteen works of mercy within the framework of the services and institutions the Misericórdia possessed. Brothers could be dismissed for inadequate behaviour either towards the institution and the obligations that derived from membership, or in their private lives. The impression is that the Misericórdia considered that the social image of its members influenced its prestige as a public institution²².

The government of the Misericórdia consisted of two top posts, the "provedor" and the "escrivão" (scribe) and eleven counsellors. These thirteen men formed the "Mesa", a decision-making assembly that gathered twice a week on Wednesdays and Sundays²³. Of these, seven were noblemen, including the provedor and the scribe and five of the counsellors; the rest were "oficiais". They were elected indirectly on 2 July: all the members voted for ten electors -five noblemen and five "oficiais"- who would then choose the thirteen men in groups of two. Each noblemen would vote with an "oficial" writing down two lists, one with the name of the provedor and the other with the name of the rest of the members of the Mesa. The new Mesa would meet right away, electing three treasurers. Decisions were taken after elections and the members of the Mesa, besides having to attend religious ceremonies and participate in the confraternity's annual events, had to elect all the brothers who would perform duties²⁴. Obligations also included a monthly visit to all the

²¹ The first procession was in the afternoon of the All-Saints day; the second in St. Martin's and the other ones during the Holy Week (thursday of Ramos to prepare the procession of the Endoenças which they would attend the following day; the last on the very morning of Holy Friday (Idem, p. 9).

²² Idem, pp. 10-13.

²³ Idem, p. 20. The word "Mesa" means table, meaning those who could attend the meetings of the confraternity where ruling matters were discussed.

²⁴ Idem, pp. 19-21. Such brothers - the "mordomos" and "oficiais" - would have to perform their duties for an entire month, after which they were replaced.

premises of the house, including its various hospitals, visit to the prisoners assisted and to the recipients of poor relief. This was an inspection duty, to control that the new nominated mordomos and officials would find the premises in order.

The provedor, a noble brother over forty years old, chose the mordomos and officials inside the "Mesa": 4 for the domestic visits to the shame-faced poor; two for the prisoners. They carried out their duties in groups of two, one nobleman and one "oficial". The provedor also ensured that the house obtained information on all the matters concerning it; he could not spend money without the consent of the Mesa. He alone could order a vote in its meetings, or the preparation of a register, or impose an order of silence on the members²⁵. The "escrivão" also had to be a nobleman aged at least forty, and replaced the provedor in his absence. All the registers had to be written in his own hand; certificates as well contained only his signature²⁶.

The Mesa, when concerned with matters that required the consent of the whole brotherhood, was assisted by the "Definitório", a consultative body of a minimum of ten members, equally distributed between noble and non noble brothers. The "definidores" were persons with long experience of membership, having participated in previous Mesas. They were elected on St. James day, and their election followed the same indirect procedure as that for the Mesa on 2 July. The Mesa and the Definitório could hold joint meetings that had the power to change the rules of the institution²⁷. Such additions or alterations should be registered in the "Livros de Lembranças".

The official sources of income of the Misericórdia were the collection of alms, donations included in wills and rents. Non official profits were those deriving from lending money with interest, although this activity is not so much documented as suggested in several documents.

²⁵ Idem, pp. 21-24.

²⁶ This regulation was revoked in 1710: the "cartorário", seemingly a help to the "escrivão" could write in all the books except those of the expenses (A.M.P., *Livro 6 das Lembranças*, fl. 209 and following).

²⁷ *Compromisso* cit., p. 34-35.

Alms were collected on special days of the week in all the churches of the city and in all the parishes of the territory of the city, called "termo". There were "irmãos" specially charged with collecting such money, with due authorisation²⁸.

Legacies must have provided the bulk of the Misericórdia's revenues. When a will to the benefit of the Misericórdia became public, the Mesa took charge to ensure it was worthwhile accepting it. If the inheritance was overwhelmed by debts or religious obligations, such as an excessive number of masses, the Misericórdia might refuse it, on the grounds that it was not profitable to the house. According to the regulations, the property inherited was to be auctioned as soon as all the charges listed in the inheritance were satisfied.

The Misericórdia must have kept some of the donated properties, as we can find a section devoted to the exaction of rents²⁹.

The Misericórdia was also not free to spend the money it inherited as it wished, because wills often specified the destination of the donated funds.

The Santa Caza relied on the help of several treasurers in order to manage its funds: the "tesoureiro da casa" and the "tesoureiro do depósito" both concerned with the donations to the Misericórdia. The "tesoureiro do depósito", once again a noble member, received the actual donations and alms, whilst the "tesoureiro do depósito" dealt with the real profits of the money received. This post was extinguished after 1707, and the money was incorporated to the orphans' budget³⁰.

The confraternity entrusted to several mordomos the role of distributing the money inside the Misericórdia. The "mordomo da bolça" was to give money to all the mordomos whose duties

²⁸ In an economy characterised by non-free initiative, receiving alms was subject to authorisation of the authorities.

²⁹ Today the Misericórdia is still the owner of houses in the city, receiving its rents.

³⁰ A.M.P., *Livro 6 das Lembranças*, p. 277: this post was extinguished.

required spending money, as for example the visitors to the prisoners or the shame-faced poor³¹.

The "mordomo do celeiro" was responsible for collecting all the rents owed to the Misericórdia, either in money or in kind. The latter were received at harvest time, around S. Michael's day, on the 28 September³². They also received the alms collected on Sundays by the Misericórdia's "irmãos".

The legal structure of the Misericórdia included members responsible for dealing with wills, and others in charge of creating an archive which could serve to issue legal documents.

The "mordomos dos testamentos" were specifically in charge of dealing with wills, and channeling them to the lawyers who served the confraternity, who would solve any legal difficulties that might occur³³.

The "mordomo do cartório" was to keep the archive of the institution in order. The post was to be filled for an unlimited number of years, as the quantity of documents required an expertise that only experience could give³⁴.

The Misericórdia owed its patrimony mainly to the religious services it provided, relating to funerals and masses established in wills. In order to fulfil its responsibilities, the confraternity developed a religious structure with a church of its own and numerous persons attached to it. A member of the confraternity, the "mordomo da igreja", was chosen to coordinate the religious services. He supervised the recitation of the masses assigned to each priest and ensured that all the poor boarding in the

³¹ *Compromisso* cit., p. 38.

³² *Idem*, pp. 45-46. The Misericórdia drawn up a list of prices in order to calculate the value in money of some of the goods to be collected. This list was published by Magalhães Godinho covering the years between 1740 and 1854 and is the one I have consulted in this work (Godinho, Vitorino Magalhães, *Prix et monnaies au Portugal*, Paris, A. Colin, 1955, pp. 81-85).

³³ *Compromisso* cit., p. 37. In 1771, the lawyers who served the house were forbidden from getting involved in legal matters against the Misericórdia (A.H.M.P., *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, fl. 330 v.)

³⁴ *Compromisso* cit., p. 47. See also *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, 'Regimento do cartorário e seus ajudantes', fl. 261v. (22 February 1767).

institutions of the Misericórdia attended a mass on Sundays. The "mordomo da igreja" also gave orders for the poor to be buried at the Misericórdia's expenses, and was in charge of the preparation of processions and other religious ceremonies³⁵.

The "capelão da casa" was the official priest of the religious ceremonies of the Misericórdia: he carried out funerals, recited masses for the dead poor and was recognised as the leading priest. He was also responsible for the religious objects³⁶. Nevertheless, the masses the Misericórdia was obliged to celebrate for the souls of its benefactors required numerous priests. These "capelães" were also able to hear confessions and were obliged to be present at all the public ceremonies attended in the open air by the Misericórdia: funerals, processions and executions of death penalties³⁷.

One of the works of mercy was assistance to prisoners: two brothers, a nobleman and an "official", cared for poor prisoners. Prisoners had to be selected before being granted charity: those in prison for debts, "fianças" (unpaid cautions) or "degredos não cumpridos" (unfulfilled banishments) were excluded and the others were admitted only after evidence was provided³⁸. Once admitted, the Misericórdia took full charge of them: the solicitors of the house would look after court matters related to their trial and sentence, and the two "mordomos dos presos" would ensure twice a week (on Wednesdays and Sundays) that they would be given bread and a portion of meat; if ill, it was the task of the mordomos to see that their bodies and soul were cared for: they would make them confess and take communion and see that doctors and surgeons paid them visits³⁹.

³⁵ *Compromisso* cit., pp. 39-40.

³⁶ *Idem*, pp. 41-2.

³⁷ *Idem*, pp. 40-41. In 1772 the confraternity started to have two choir boys, who got paid on an annual basis (A.M.P., *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, 'Assento de 28 de Junho de 1772', fl. 334 v.).

³⁸ *Compromisso* cit., p. 29: "E porém não poderão ser admitidos os que estiverem presos por dividas, fianças & degredos não cumpridos, & para que se possa saber a cauza, & razão de suas prizões, & alcançar perfeita informação da pobreza, não poderão outrosi ser admitidos, senão depois de folha corrida".

³⁹ *Idem*, pp. 29-30.

The Misericórdia also helped the poor to pay ransoms for war prisoners. Priority was given to those born in the city over those of the hinterland; women and children had preference over men⁴⁰.

One of the first tasks of the Misericórdia was to ensure proper funerals for its members as well as for their wives. In the case of members' children, a selection was made: the Misericórdia was supposed to provide funerals only for those aged over eighteen and under 25⁴¹. This distinction suggests that children under 18 were not considered worth burying with solemnity, while at 25 they were old enough to be members of the Misericórdia in their own right. Nevertheless, in 1648, the Mesa made clear that only the members' legitimate children would be buried by the Misericórdia⁴². Funerals of members had to be accompanied by all the members of the community and followed a fixed ritual⁴³.

The Misericórdia's duties concerning death were not restricted to its own members: those sentenced to death were also the confraternity's responsibility. Some "irmãos" had the task of following the condemned from the prison to the place of

⁴⁰ Idem, pp. 52-53 (capítulo XXVIII). The ransoms were paid to war prisoners, especially those captured in North Africa. It is not clear how women and children got arrested: maybe they formed the families of the men who lived in the Portuguese African garnisons. The wars in North Africa reached their peak in the 16th century; I do not know if there were still prisoners from North Africa in the eighteenth century, but there is no bibliography on the subject.

⁴¹ Idem, p. 57: "A obrigação, que a irmandade tem de enterrar a qualquer irmão, se estende também a sua molher, ainda que faleca depois d'elle, salvo se se casar segunda vez, com homem, que não seja irmão, & a seus filhos, & filhas, em quanto estiverem debaixo de seu poder, & governo, ainda depois d'elle morto, não sendo menores de dezoito annos nem mais de vinte, & cinco, ou tiverem tomado estado bastante, para sahirem do poder de seu pay, se elle fora vivo, a qual idade constará por certidão do livro do baptismo, jurada, & reconhecida".

⁴² A.H.M.P., *Livro 5 das Lembranças*, fl. 127: "... e porque havia dúvida se se estendia aos filhos naturais ou outros quaisquer que não fossem de legítimo matrimónio e se assentou considerando a forma do Compromisso e modo com que falava depois de lido na dita Junta pelos mais dos votos que não porcedia o compromisso se não nos filhos legítimos nascidos de legítimo matrimónio e que assim se devia praticar ..." (31 August 1648).

⁴³ *Compromisso* cit., p. 55-57 (Capítulo XXX).

execution⁴⁴. Later, on All Saints day, their bones were removed by the Misericórdia and buried⁴⁵.

The shamed-faced poor also received domestic help from the Misericórdia, who, to save their reputation, preferred to send its oldest members to visit such poor in their homes⁴⁶. Four brothers (two pairs each consisting of a noble and an official) divided the houses to visit according to a topographical criterion: one visited the zone above the "mosteiro de S. Domingos" and the other the area below. Once again, selective criteria were used in order to choose the recipients of charity: they had to be poor and not own any property which might enable them substantially to survive, they were not to be publicly recognised as poor, so they could not beg in the street or at the doors of houses. Persons of "quality" whose status did not allow them to do service for others were also admitted amongst the shame-faced poor⁴⁷. Their lives were to be carefully enquired into by the confraternity before admittance, but in secret.

In the eighteenth century the Misericórdia seemed to look forward to the reduction, even the disappearance of this form of assistance: it was stated that no food and money should be given to the shame-faced poor because there were no legacies destined for them; the decision also forbade the admittance of new persons to the number of those assisted⁴⁸. In short, when those who were being assisted died, they would not be replaced and the service would gradually disappear.

44 Idem, pp. 58-59 (Capítulo XXXI). The accompanying of the prisoners assumed the form of a religious service, performed in order to provide a Christian death to the condemned.

45 Idem, p. 59-60 (Capítulo XXXII). For those who had been burnt alive, the bones which had not burnt would be picked up in the afternoon of the day of the execution (Idem, cap. XXX, p. 57).

46 Idem, p. 31: "... como requiere hua occupação, em que tanto importa conservar-se o credito, & boa reputação com que a Irmandade procede nella"; p. 33: "... hirão a pé, e ambos juntos infallivelmente...".

47 Idem, p. 31: "... não possam, nem devam servir a outrem, nem ter modo de vida em que se possam sustentar ..."

48 A.M.P., 'Exposição do estado presente desta Real Caza e suas administrasões', *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, fl. 266 (3 June 1767). This decision suggests that the shamefaced poor, in case of illness, were to be channeled to the main hospital.

Many wills donated money to render possible the marriage of poor orphan girls. The giving of dowries assumed the character of a public contest, although not all orphans were allowed to participate in it. Here again a choice was made between the recipients of charity. The girls had to be legitimate, over 15 but under 30 and possess a good reputation. If their petition was selected they were supposed to place it inside a box which was located outside the church of the Misericórdia from Easter to the Holy Ghost day. When the box was taken out, a small child took the papers from it randomly. The procedure was unfair, as a girl who was not successful in the draw had to try again in the balloting the following year with new competitors⁴⁹. It might well happen that she was never lucky enough to have her petition picked up.

The *Compromisso* also referred to the need to making peace with enemies, but its authors were obviously respecting the fourteen works of mercy, because not much attention is paid to this obligation. It was even laid down that not all conflicts should be solved privately, in order not to create obstacles for justice⁵⁰.

So far, these activities of the members of the Misericórdia did not involve the administration of specific institutions. Nevertheless, the work of mercy which prescribed the treating of the ill made the Misericórdia the most suitable institution to run the hospital for the sick poor, which must have been the largest in town, curing over two thousand patients a year in the second half of the eighteenth century.

The Hospital de D.Lopo, the main institution owned by the Misericórdia, had the role of distributing patients to the other hospitals owned by the institution, as well as that of providing medical assistance to all the other institutions owned or run by the Misericórdia. With a chemist shop of its own and a medical

⁴⁹ *Compromisso* cit., pp. 48-52.

⁵⁰ *Idem*, p. 60: "E tratando-se de perdão de algum crime, ou injuria, se tera sempre respeito a sua qualidade, porque tal pode ser, & tão prejudicial ao bem comum, que seja maior serviço de Deos deixar ir as cousas pelos termos ordinarios, que atalhar o rigor da justiça, sem a qual a Republica, & sua quietação se não podem sustentar".

school, its doctors, surgeons and blood leechers had the task of treating all the sick of the other institutions. It admitted individuals with fevers and syphilis, and kept infirmaries for convalescents. The hospital also had its own cemetery, where all the poor who died in the Misericórdia's institutions were to be buried, from foundlings to the sick adults who had died in hospital. Probably, of all the institutions of the Misericórdia, it was the least discriminatory, with a clear vocation to assist the poor.

Although two institutions devoted to the safeguard of female honour already existed, neither of them was concerned with orphaned girls. The Misericórdia founded in 1722 the "Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora da Esperança" which was to receive orphaned girls aged from 7 to 25: it is significant that until that date there was no interest in providing them with an institution. This suggests that the need to create a school for male boys developed earlier, because they had more rewarding careers. Selection of girls was demanding, as can be seen from appendix 1. There is no information that foundling girls were ever admitted to it.

As for the Foundling Hospital, opened in 1689, it was not owned by the Misericórdia but by the town council, which also paid for the upbringing of foundlings. Nevertheless, the hospital's history is tied to the Misericórdia, which administered it from 1689 until 1838. Only in the years preceding the contract made between the Misericórdia and the council⁵¹ and between 1838 and 1864 were the foundlings under the effective supervision of the city's authorities. During the eighteenth century, the period of concern of this work, the Foundling Hospital was entirely the responsibility of the Misericórdia and was influenced by the overall structure of this confraternity.

⁵¹ For the years before 1689, see Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, *A assistência aos expostos no Porto. Aspectos institucionais (1519-1838)*, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1987, pp.56-72.

Functioning

Location

The foundling home consisted of an ordinary house attached to the main hospital; it was neither a specific and monumental building like the London or the Russian examples or even some Spanish Foundling Hospitals nor a mere section of the general hospital as in many French cities. According to a late seventeenth century description the building had a decorated facade, its main frontispiece bearing the royal arms and the arms of the city⁵². On the same facade there was a wheel, which was placed there at the very beginning of the hospital's existence. The fact that the foundling home was a point of passage for the children must be stressed: it acted as a deposit for children in transit, waiting for a foster family. It never acted as a working house and it was not used as a permanent residence for the foundlings, whatever their sex. Hence the modest size of the building and the lack of investment in the premises by the Misericórdia or the council. It is not clear why neither of these authorities ever invested in the architecture of the Casa da Roda, as happened with the Misericórdia's church⁵³: probably the political profits to be gained from a magnificent or at least a prestigious building did not justify the investment.

⁵² Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial' in AA. VV., *Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto, Collecção de manuscritos inéditos agora dados à estampa*, IV, *Anacrisis Historial*, vol. II, Porto, Biblioteca Municipal, 1913, p. 169: "... una singular obra de magestuosa fabrica de canteria, escodada y muy perfecta, con un frontispicio y fachada de modelo, de mucha y aseada perfeccion, cuyo remate se perficiona con una cruz y quatro piramides de pedra de grano, de mucha hermosura, en lo alto de la cupula de dicho frontispicio y fachada, donde en escudos de muchos follajes y festones, con tarjetas, se ven y se pusieron las armas reales y las de la ciudad con muy buena orden y disposicion, y en admirable puesto, pues queda al lado del Hospital y arriba de la portaria antigua, en frente del Padron de Santo Eloy y de su plaça."

⁵³ The Misericórdia is attached to the construction of some of the most important architectural buildings of the city: the Misericórdia's church by Niccolò Nasoni, and the "Hospital de Santo António" by John Carr.

There was no change of premises during the eighteenth century: from the opening of the wheel in 1689⁵⁴ the site had been the same, remaining so until the nineteenth century, when multiple changes occurred⁵⁵. This stability is parallel to an astonishing stability of the procedures of the administration: from its very beginning the structure of the registers and even the forms of assistance remained the same, although subject to improvement throughout the century.

Neither the main hospital nor the foundling's house remain today. Only the street where it was located gives an idea of the site. A crowded narrow street in one of the older parishes of the city, that of the cathedral, on the way between the medieval heart of the city and its new urban parishes, Cedofeita and Santo Ildefonso, about 3/4 of a mile higher than the river Douro.

Description of the premises

In 1783 we have a description of the premises of the house⁵⁶. It consisted of two stories, each with one large room:

⁵⁴ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 4: a royal order of the 14 March 1686 authorized the foundation of the foundling home, attached to the Hospital of D. Lopo and communicating with it from its interior. The owners of the houses and gardens (quintais) contiguous to the chosen place were obliged to sell them. The fact that an interior communication between the main hospital's yard and the foundling home existed meant that newborn children could be directly abandoned from the "maternity wards". According to a document in which the location of the future house of the foundling home was referred to, it was situated in front of the Padrão de Santo Eloy. To the North the house was contiguous to other houses, to the west to the yard of the main hospital, to the south to one street which had been recently built and one of the infirmaries, to the east to the public street (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 7, 'Venda da pensão que faz Alvaro Vaz Mogeimas ao Doutor Cristóvão Alvares Coelho por ordem de Sua Magestade que Deus guarde'). This document, which formalized the selling of the house, is dated 5 March 1688.

⁵⁵ On the changes of premises in the early part of the nineteenth century, see Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, *A assistência aos expostos no Porto* cit., p. 147-149.

⁵⁶ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Relação da Real Casa da Roda da cidade do Porto, que igualmente compreende o Método com que sempre se costumou

downstairs slept the wet-nurses; upstairs there were cradles for the children. The main tasks of everyday life probably took place downstairs where there was also a kitchen, a storeroom to keep the firewood and also the toilets. In the kitchen there was always a fire, with hot water to wash foundlings. Nurses also gathered near the fireplace to cook and eat. There was a roofed balcony where linen was dried. Water came from a fountain in the yard. There are no indications about the size of the rooms, although they must have been small ones, with little furniture. An altar dedicated to the Innocent Saints is supposed to have existed, in an atrium contiguous to the nurses' room, destined to receive the dead bodies of foundlings to be buried. There was a picture hanging behind it, representing the Innocent Saints. Its symbolic value is evident: on the one hand it mirrored the popular attitude towards children, considered not guilty of sins, being sanctified by death without sin. On the other hand, it must have reminded wet-nurses that children were not guilty of their parents' sins. The wet-nurses' beds numbered six, whilst there were eight cradles. These cradles were placed in such a way that it sufficed to rock one to propagate the movement to the rest of them. For the overcrowded nights some little baskets filled with straw were kept for extra foundlings. Each wet-nurse, on appointment received a box with a key with clothes and linen for the newly

tratar as crianças expostas na dita administração pedida pelos Provedores das Comarcas circunvizinhas para por ela se poderem dar melhor cumprimento a uma nova ordem da Rainha Nossa Senhora em que lhe mandou estabelecer Casas da Roda em todas as Vilas e Cabeças de Concelho, cujo extracto foi dado em 30 de Maio de 1783'. This document is of crucial importance because it followed immediately to the law of Pina Manique of 1783, which established the setting up of foundling homes in all the cities and heads of "concelho" of the kingdom. Besides proving the great impact the law had when it was passed, it gave place to this document, which will be the main source for this chapter. The fact is it gave instructions about the running of future foundling homes, based on the detailed description of the premises and the functioning of the already existing "Casa da Roda" of Porto. Based on Porto's experience, it is above all a detailed radiography of the institution's functioning and it is still the only source of the type found in Portugal's archives. It is also a confirmation that Porto's establishment was judged as an institution that had acquired maturity and experience, being thus adopted as a model for the future institutions. The document was published in Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, 'A Casa da Roda do Porto e o seu funcionamento (1710-1780)', *Revista da Faculdade de Letras - História*, Porto, II Série, vol. II, 1985, pp. 192-199.

arrived. She was supposed to give back all these objects when she was dismissed.

Reception of children

1) The children entered mainly during the night and early hours of the morning. The wheel was closed during daytime and only children admitted directly from the main hospital or with breast-feeding allowances were allowed to enter during the day. As the cathedral bells that marked the end of the day - "o sino do correr" were rung, the wheel opened to the public, to be closed only the following morning. Anonymity was always strongly stressed by the administration: besides the fact that there was a wheel from its very beginning, in 1767 the Criminal Judge ordered that police officers could not be placed in the area of the foundling hospital nor in such places where they could inhibit abandoners⁵⁷.

2) There was a bell which announced the arrival of children and wet-nurses replaced one another in the task of turning the wheel and collecting the child deposited inside. There were night shifts and at least one nurse had to be awake in order to receive foundlings. If not, the bell would promptly advertise the arrival of a new child. The child was carefully undressed and all the objects pertaining to it were kept together. The child was assigned a number which corresponded to the order of its entry which was pinned on its cradle. All its belongings were also given its number. Then it was given a bath, breastfed and put to sleep. The following morning it was baptized at the cathedral and only then brought to

⁵⁷ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 77, 'Registo duma ordem do Dr. Juiz do Crime desta cidade que determina ao Juiz da Quadriha do Bairro pertencente ao sítio onde está a Roda dos Expostos não aboite as Guardas chamadas da Polícia junto a ela nem ainda se ponham em lugar que a possam avistar para que não impidam, nem atemorizem as pessoas que nela vão a expor os Meninos'. The criminal judge had been informed that the policemen made the deposition of the children in the wheel difficult by the fact that they stood their guard in places where they could see the abandoners.

the presence of the provedor who filled in its full details in the "Livro de Entradas".

3) Its identity being settled through baptism and registration, the child had to wait until a wet-nurse came to take it to her house, which could be either in the city, in its outskirts or in the countryside. Until then, the wet-nurses continued to feed it, together with the newly arrived.

4) The house could also receive children in transit, that is, children that came to the city either because they had finished their upbringing and were to be fostered or because they were forced to change nurse. Foundlings dead at nurse were also delivered at the house. Only wet-nurses living near the hospital could do this, thus while saving the money needed to bury the child. For the nurses who lived thirty or more kilometers away from the city the cost of the journey did not allow them to bring the dead children back to the hospital and children were buried locally.

Typology of wet-nurses

No child up to the age of seven was breastfed by a single wet-nurse. At least two women nourished it, and the number of wet-nurses could reach more than five. The policy of the administrators was to avoid placing children with urban wet-nurses, unless they had no choice. This aim was referred to at several moments⁵⁸ and it gave origin to a clear differentiation

⁵⁸ In 1749 the "Mesa" of the Misericórdia recommended that only on there were no women available from the countryside children could be given to urban wet-nurses. The motive for this decision was the suspicion that the "humours" of the city were pernicious to the children's health: "... e por se evitarem também alguns outros prejuízos que emanam da multiplicidade de crianças que se criam por ordem da sua mesma administração por pessoas desta cidade e seus subúrbios, onde talvez que os humores sejam mais nocivos às crianças, do que os que se alentam com ares naturais: lhe encomendamos muito que no extremo de não haverem mulheres aldeanas com as circunstâncias precisas se dêem as crianças nesta cidade, o que tudo confiamos faça observar e executar com o seu bem conhecido zêlo" (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 76 v.).

among the wet-nurses. I have drawn a typology of the wet-nurses, according to four criteria:

- 1- the moment in the child's life when they took care of it;
- 2- the period of time they were supposed to keep the child;
- 3- residence;
- 4- salary.

First, the "amas de dentro" (internal wet-nurses) of the house, who breastfed the child at the moment of abandonment and while waiting for a definitive wet-nurse. They were supposed to keep the child for a short period and they lived inside the foundling home. Of all the types of wet-nurses, they were the women who had to feed the largest number of foundlings. Because they did not keep the foundlings for a long time, they were constantly changing from child to child. The large quantity of foundlings also increased the risks of contracting a contagious disease: the history of the hospital records several women supposed to have acquired syphilis while at work⁵⁹. No wonder these wet-nurses were the best paid among nurses: their salary could even compete with that of a male day labourer. They received two sorts of payment: a daily wage of 120 reis⁶⁰ and an annual stipend of 4000 reis⁶¹. The latter, known as "soldada", was common to all the domestic servants and confirms the ancillary character of the occupation of internal wet-nurse.

⁵⁹ In 1749 three wet-nurses were dismissed from the service, two for having acquired syphilis without informing the administrators of it and a third one for not having denounced the others (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 das Entradas e Termos das Amas 1710-1780*, fls. 44 v to 45 v.)

⁶⁰ This wage corresponded to the sum of 80 reis until 1710; in 1711 it was raised to 120 reis. There is no notice of any further rise, so I have assumed it kept stable until the end of the century (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 das Entradas e Termos das Amas*, counter-cover).

⁶¹ In case the wet-nurse might not finish a complete year of service inside the house, careful calculations were made in order to give her an amount in proportion to the time she was in the house. A table with such calculations is to be found on the counter cover of the *Livro 1 das Entradas e Termos das Amas* in A.A.D.P.. This annual stipend corresponded to a daily amount of 11 reis.

If the foundling's stay in the hospital was prolonged for a long time, the administration had to call for extra women capable of breastfeeding⁶². The policy of the house was to create a provisional staff whose function was to nourish children until they could go to the countryside. These wet-nurses were supposed to care for the children on a provisional basis and lived in the city, in places where foundlings could be easily retrieved and given to country wet-nurses. These "amas de empréstimo" (in English "borrowing wet-nurses") were the result of an evolution: in the first half of the century the administrators appointed women to come to the house when it was especially crowded and feed foundlings there. By the second half of the eighteenth century they took the child home and were paid on a daily basis. Their salary was lower than that of the "internal" wet-nurses but its total could be raised by taking several children at the same time. Of all the nurses, we know least about this category: as they were probably old acquaintances of the administrators, lived within reach and were transitory, no systematic records were kept of their identities and payments. In the 1770's they received 40 reis a day, and later their salary increased to 60 reis a day⁶³.

Finally, the child was given a definitive wet-nurse, a "ama-de-fora" (outside nurse) or "ama de assento" (long term wet-nurse), who was to keep the child until the age of seven. This woman was to travel to the hospital every three months with a printed piece of paper on which her payments were registered. Sometimes someone else -very often her husband- might receive the wages for her. Such wet-nurses lived in the countryside, sometimes more than 60 kilometers away; no wonder some nurses came only once a year and accumulated payments. Few of them brought the foundling with them, unless they had orders to the contrary issued by the administration, which wished to certify

⁶² Unlike other European hospitals, artificial breastfeeding was not the rule during the eighteenth century with the exception of syphilitic children. For instance, in July 1749 the sum of 280 reis was paid for the rental of a goat that was kept in the house to breastfeed such foundlings for six days (A.A.D.P., *Livro 2 da Despesa Miúda*, fls. 71-71 v.).

⁶³ A.A.D.P., *Livro 28 das Entradas*. Their payments were registered in the margins of the main entry records of the foundlings.

the child's good health. Instead of the child, they brought a certificate issued by their parish priest, declaring the child was alive and properly cared for. Even definitive wet-nurses often gave up foundlings: the motives for this could be illness, lack of interest in the foundling or simply lack of milk. Many of them gave up foundlings because they were expecting another child of their own, but they did not always report this to the administration. Evidence suggests that once children were in their possession, all tricks were possible: they could try to wean the child precociously, or simply make an arrangement with another woman to breastfeed it. In fact, children seem to have circulated in neighbourhood groups. The salary of this type of wet-nurses consisted initially of 4000 reis per year; in 1698 it was raised to 5000 reis. The wet-nurses had complained that due to the high price of bread, many foundlings died of hunger and others were not properly nourished⁶⁴. In 1713 their salary would reach 7000 reis a year and this was the last rise during the eighteenth century. It was stressed in the minute that payments should never be made in advance⁶⁵. The period during which a wet-nurse might keep a foundling on a paid basis ceased on its seventh birthday: in 1720 the "Mesa" of the Misericórdia had decided that in no case should the women be paid afterwards⁶⁶. The fact is, as is referred to in the minute, that foster families frequently asked for payment to continue, on the grounds that the child was handicapped. The Misericórdia decided not to give in to such pressure, stating that only the king had powers to postpone the age limit when foundlings were dismissed from the hospital's responsibility⁶⁷. Nevertheless, the payment records show that this rule was not observed: in fact, admitting that sick foundlings cost more when living inside the house, they often gave one or two extra years of wages.

⁶⁴ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl 48: "... pela grande carestia de pão, e dos mais mantimentos, de que nascia morrerem muitos engeitados de fome, e outros serem muito mal creados, e alimentados ...".

⁶⁵ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Cópia do assento por que se acrescentou maior salário às amas que levam para sua caza as creanças da Roda', fl 49.

⁶⁶ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 23 January 1729, 'Cópia do assento por que se determinou que em nenhum caso se assista pela Administração da Roda aos Engeitados nela expostos, depois de findarem os 7 anos', fl. 69.

⁶⁷ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 75 v.

Table 4.1. summarizes the wages of the various types of wet-nurses compared to the daily wages of an agricultural male labourer. The average price of the "alqueire" (corresponding to 17,795 litres) between 1740 and 1799 was 320.7 reis⁶⁸.

Table 4.1.
Evolution of salaries of wet-nurses (per day)

<u>date</u>	<u>internal</u>	<u>borrowing</u>	<u>definitive</u>	<u>men's wages</u>
1697			10.9	
1698			13.7	
1710	80			
1711	120			
1713			19.1	
1768				80
1781				100
1783				120
1785				140
1788				160
			40 (date of rise not known)	
			60 (date of rise not known)	

Life inside the Foundling Home

Eating must have been in the kitchen, and wet-nurses seem to have enjoyed little privacy. They were closed inside the house during the night and were not expected to go out during the day, except if they had orders to do so. Apparently, the model to be reproduced inside the house was the life of reclusion in convents, as seems to have been the rule in other charitable institutions.

⁶⁸ Calculations drawn from lists of prices of the Misericórdia published by Godinho, Vitorino Magalhães, *Prix et monnaies* cit., pp. 80-83.

Life started early in the morning, at five during summer and an hour later during winter. All the activities relating to daily life were took place primarily inside the house: reception of the children, washing and dressing, suckling, eating and sleeping. Only baptism in the cathedral required a daily escape from the house: the cathedral was a five minutes walk from the house and the wet-nurse alone was to transport the newly arrived foundlings there. We do not know exactly where the wheel was located: if it opened directly to the nurses' sleeping room or to an entrance yard.

Religious life in this community included masses on Sundays and participation in religious festivities. Two days seem to have had a special meaning: the eighth September and the 28th December. On the eighth September, Nativity day, the foundling home's inhabitants showed themselves in public. The house was painted (caiada), the pavements were waxed and silk cloths were rented⁶⁹. All the external wet-nurses were supposed to come to the city with their foundlings; if they did so, they would be given a small extra sum by the administration. This seems to have been a particularly cherished day because it enabled the abandoners to try to trace their own children. In some notes abandoners even recommended that the wet-nurses come to the city on that occasion. The 28th December, the day of the Innocent Saints, seems to have received little attention at the beginning of the century. By the end of the century, however, its importance equalled that of the 8th September and a mass was celebrated in the Misericórdia's church⁷⁰.

Gender conflict

The male administrators were supposed to enter the house only during the day; it is likely that the "provedor" did not usually go there, but only received the daily visits of the chief nurse,

⁶⁹ The cloths were to hang in the open windows.

⁷⁰ A.A.D.P., *Livros 1 a 5 da Despesa Miúda*.

reporting the movement of the entrances during the previous day. We know that the register work was done mainly in the provedor's house, thus no registers were kept in the Roda itself. There was a clear divide between the male administrators world and the female and children's lives: the house was devoted to the most immediate help for the children while registering, sponsoring and supervising were done from the outside. The person who maintained the link between these two sectors was the "ama-sêca", an old woman, able to read and write, with direct authority over the wet-nurses. The motives reported for the sacking of internal wet-nurses give a picture of disorder inside the house that shows that the interaction between the two spheres must have been anything but perfect. If a women's culture existed, based on the development of a counter power versus men's authority, as Adrian Wilson has suggested⁷¹, such must have been the case of the foundling home. It was apparently a house where women, although controlled by men, were left with a great autonomy to manage the problems of the everyday life of the institution. Men only visited the house, and the most important task, that is, the assigning of foundling identities was done during the night hours, when the doors of the house were safely locked. A gap in the information needs to be noted: I have not been able to find out how external wet-nurses picked up the children from the house. One thing is certain: the order in which children left the house to the countryside was not their order of arrival. Some children registered earlier waited longer to be given away. This suggests that external wet-nurses probably could choose freely among the children the foundling they would take home; nor can one exclude that some forms of favoritism existed, with the result that some children went before others. If the internal wet-nurses had any autonomy relating to the distribution of foundlings to the countryside, this would be the confirmation that they had in fact large powers. Every kind of fraud would have been possible: the wet-nurses might know the abandoners of

71 Wilson, Adrian, 'The ceremony of childbirth and its interpretation', in Fildes, Valerie (ed.), *Women as mothers in pre-industrial England: essays in memory of Dorothy MacLaren*, London, Routledge, 1990, pp. 68-107. The quoted passages are from pp. 96-97. See also N. Zemon Davis, 'Women on top' in *Society and Culture in Early Modern France*, London, 1975, pp. 124-151.

a child and give it to some chosen wet-nurse or to the mother itself, appointed fraudulently as its wet-nurse. On the other hand, wet-nurses themselves might in turn have defrauded the expectations of parents: it was not difficult to exchange one newborn child for another. In cases where a specific child whom parents wanted to follow in the countryside was dead, nothing was easier than to exchange it for another in order to receive a reward. In itself, the care taken in assigning the children with their own identity tokens varied according in direct relationship to the attention of the internal staff. That task lay entirely with the wet-nurses: the only task of the male administrators was to write down the situation as it was described to them by the chief wet-nurse. The registers show that conflicts rose easily between the male sector and the women. On the basis of such conflicts, two elements must be considered:

1) The fact that male administrators came from an elite. They knew how to read and write, and probably incorporated the beliefs of ruling classes about foundlings: that their lives should be saved and an anonymous system of caring for the children should be safeguarded.

2) Nurses, in turn, belonged to the huge mass of the illiterate, and shared popular attitudes towards foundlings, tending to see them as common children and possibly getting involved with their parents. Their economic needs made them more vulnerable to private deals with abandoners. Mortality inside the house did not frighten them: they seem to have paid little attention to foundlings killed through their carelessness. Administrators, on the contrary, reported children being suffocated by sleeping women or eaten by rats⁷².

In such a context, the two groups became almost enemies. The book where the appointment of new internal wet-nurses was registered witnessed a fight between female subordinates and male chiefs. The tone of the accusations is very much the same of the popular pamphlets which satirized female servants. Criticism

⁷² References to these events are numerous: see A.A.D.P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*.

in pamphlets was double: first, servants were criticized because they were women, second because they were servants. They reproduced the common image of women and on the other hand they criticized their behaviour as servants⁷³. The negative qualities of the nurses as women could be expressed in terms such as idle/ liar/ false/ treacherous/ disobedient. They were also depicted as possessing a weakness to gossip - "má lingua" - and to quarrel frequently amongst themselves. Criticism of their professional performance included cheating with the identifying tokens, causing the death of children by careless behaviour, not having enough milk or its defective quality. Their sexuality is often referred to in a context where the absence of sexual intercourse was seen by the employers of wet-nurses as having an influence on the quality of their milk. Their reclusive life inside the house was also supposed to prevent them from physical contact with their husbands. Administrators give an image of sexually licentious women which could almost support Shorter's view on the loose sexual mores of the poor⁷⁴, if it were not for the fact once again they came from an elite judging their social "inferiors" through their own prejudices.

The next section will try to analyze in detail who were the people in charge of the running of the institution, what were their obligations and how they performed them. Internal wet-nurses will receive attention first, as the immediate help to foundlings was given by them. Secondly, male administrators will be considered. The analysis will be developed according to the dichotomy male/female, elite/popular and literate/illiterate suggested above.

⁷³ See Moutinho, Maria José, *O folheto de cordel: mulher, família e sociedade no Portugal do século XVIII*, Master's thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1987.

⁷⁴ Shorter, Edward, *The making of the Modern Family*, New York, Basic Books, 1975.

The adults

The women

The internal wet-nurses

The contracts of internal wet-nurses evolved during the century: from 1739 to 1743, a wet-nurse could be sacked whenever she did not carry out her duties, although these were not specified⁷⁵.

In September 1743 the obligation to care for children carefully, with charity and love was added⁷⁶. In the following year the contract included the commitment of the wet-nurse neither to introduce her husband into the house nor to talk to him during the night. She would also be also expelled if her behaviour was notorious⁷⁷. In the following year obedience to the administrators was also required in a contract. The prohibition concerning the entry of the husband into the house was maintained, but it was enlarged to any member of the opposite sex⁷⁸. The contracts became more and more detailed and in the same year the obligation to conceal the secrets of the house was added⁷⁹. Another contract placed emphasis on the respect due to other internal wet-nurses⁸⁰.

⁷⁵ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 36 v and 38v.

⁷⁶ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 39 (two wet-nurses admitted on 4 July 1743).

⁷⁷ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 40: "... com a cláusula de que não admitiria seu marido na Roda, nem lhe falaria nella de noite, e que contando em contrair este termo, e não cumpria o que era obrigada tratando com zello e amor as crianças e era de notório procedimento seria expulsa, afim de se evitarem assim desordens..." (25 October 1744)

⁷⁸ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 40 v. "... e prometeu cumprir com a sua obrigação, e de não admitir na Roda homem algum de noite, nem de dia, e de tratar com amor e zello as crianças, e de ser obediente a quem correr com esta administraçam; e não o fazendo assim seria logo expulsa ..." (9 February 1745). Note that this time the prohibition concerned any man and not only the husband.

⁷⁹ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 41. This wet-nurse also showed a certificate proving that her own child was being nursed privately (21 February 1745).

⁸⁰ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 41 v.: "... a qual prometeu cumprir com a sua obrigação, e entrou com a condição de que o

On 1749 a more or less stable formula of contract was fixed: "... because her capacity, her purity of blood and good mores are well known, she promised to acknowledge her obligations as I told her, that of being obedient to whom ever is in charge of the administration of the Roda, of keeping its secrets, of not admitting into it any man, either during the night or during the day, not even her own, and treating the children with care, love and propriety and, in the event of not doing so she would be immediately expelled from the service of the house"⁸¹. This contract would be often be quoted as a model from 1749 until 1755, although some extra obligations were added in some of them. In 1750 a nurse was required to treat children with love and affection as if they were her own⁸². During the next year a reference is made to extra money received by the internal wet-nurse, proving that such occurrences had happened before⁸³. A reference is also made to the examination of the breastmilk by the medical staff of the hospital of the Santa Casa (I presume they referred to the main one)⁸⁴. Certificates of the parish priests confirming the age of the woman's own children and their death or to prove wet-nurses' purity of blood and good behaviour also began to be presented by 1756⁸⁵.

A new model of contract was drawn up in 1755: it copied the preceding one of 1749, adding the recommendation on the care to be taken in preserving the identifying tokens of the

dito seu Marido não subiria à Caza da Roda, nem passaria do portal para sima, e de noute lhe não falaria depois da Roda aberta, e de tratar com amor e zello as crianças e com respeito as mais Amas; e não o fazendo assim seria logo expulsa..." (30 November 1745).

⁸¹ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 46v: "... por constar de sua capacidade e limpeza de sangue e bons costumes, a qual prometeo cumprir com a sua obrigação que por mim lhe foi declarada, de ser muito obediente a quem administrar a Roda, de goardar segredo, de não admittir na Roda homem algum, de noute nem de dia, nem ainda o seu próprio, e de tractar as crianças com zello, amor e limpeza e que não o cumprindo assim seria desde logo expulsa do serviço da mesma Roda ..." (18 September 1749).

⁸² A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 48 (5 November 1750)

⁸³ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 50: "... cobrando alguma cousa por onde mereça ser expulsa, o que será logo in continenti, e para em nenhum tempo se chamar a ignorância fis este termo depois de lho ler, e muito bem o entendeo..." (2 September 1751).

⁸⁴ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 57.

⁸⁵ A.A.D..P., *Livro I das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 60 (29 January 1756).

foundlings⁸⁶. Only in 1768 was an official contract formula fixed which summarized all the sparse regulations included in the previous contracts. Its official character is certified by the fact that it was written in the "Livro 1 do Registo" which contained the most important documents and regulations of the institution⁸⁷. From 1768 onwards the contracts do not seem to have been altered. Even the way in which nurses were committed to respect the rules changed: they swore on the Bible and signed their contract (although only sixteen were able to sign until 1780)⁸⁸.

The evolution of the contracts corresponds to the definition of the most important problems that afflicted the administrators: carelessness on the care of children; exchanges of the identities of foundlings; sexual relationships of the wet-nurses; indiscreet behaviour concerning the "secrets" of the house. When they made wet-nurses swear not to fall into such behaviour, administrators were implicitly confessing the fragile nature of the management of the house as well as the secrecy that should have involved life in its interior.

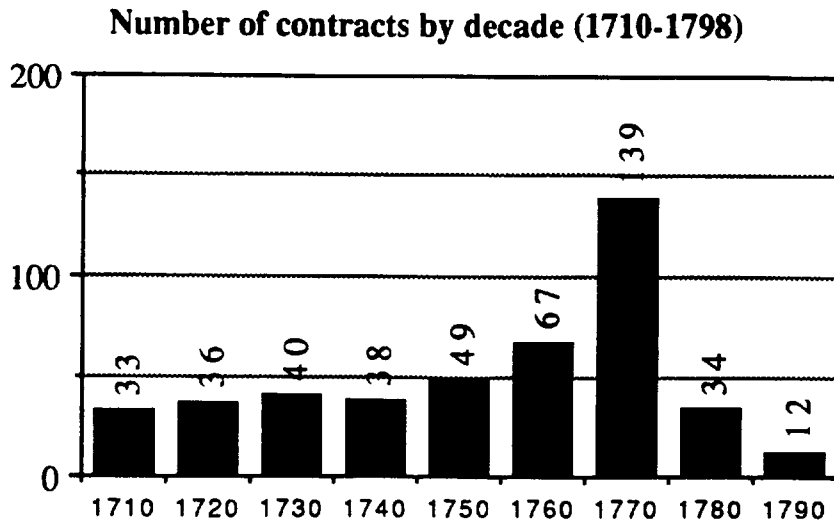
The profession of wet-nurse is precarious by nature: the availability of breast milk, besides being temporary, is subject to many capricious circumstances. An illness or a new pregnancy could easily finish the milk supply all of a sudden, endangering the material survival of the nurse and the physical survival of the child. No wonder so many women developed strategies to hide defective milk or its total absence. What is striking among the internal wet-nurses of the house is that, in spite of this precarious character, few wet-nurses abandoned the house because of lack of capability to breastfeed.

⁸⁶ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 59 v.: "... fazendo-lhe outrossi especial recomendação da fedilidade com que se devia portar na entrega de todos os sinaes que troucessem os meninos expostos, pelo irreparável prejuízo que aos mesmos e à Administração do contrário se seguia." (13 November 1755).

⁸⁷ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 86 v (13 July 1768). Copied in the *Livro 1 do Registo*, ('Registo de huma resolução que tomou o M. Reverendo Sr. Doutor Provedor actual sobre o que hão-de observar as amas no tempo do seu governo, fl. 82v.).

⁸⁸ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 das entradas e termos das amas*, fl. 68.

Graph 4.1.



Graph 4.1. depicts the evolution in the number of contracts by decade during the century. It remains stable, with a tendency to increase in the 1750's and 1760's. In the 1770's a boom in the number of contracts took place, this decade totalling about 30% of the internal wet-nurses ever admitted. There is an abrupt fall in the 1780's that is however due to under-registration. In fact, in the two last decades (1780-89 and 1790-99) data concerning internal wet-nurses is contained in a new book, which was poorly kept (the date of leave is almost never registered), and scarcely used: only the first pages contain registers that concern internal wet-nurses⁸⁹. There is no apparent motive for this lack of accuracy and quantity of information, except that the occupation of wet-nurse might have got even more precarious, and the keeping of registers possibly became too major a task for scarce returns. In order to control payments, clerks would keep temporary registers that would be cancelled and destroyed each time a nurse was sacked. Another possibility is that proper registers were kept in a book that has disappeared.

Table 4.2. represents the variation of the period for which each single contract was valid. Internal wet-nurses tended to stay

⁸⁹ A.A.D.P., *Livro 2º das Entradas e Termos das Amas.*

on average less than half a year: the first three cohorts amount to about 56% of the total. In the 1770's this instability reached its peak: 73.5 % of the wet-nurses staying less than a month were hired in this period. Obviously, the Casa da Roda experienced a period of crisis over the stability of its feminine personnel, which might have continued for the next twenty years, if only accurate data were available.

The contracts can include the same individuals more than once: there was a tendency to take back into service women who had previously served as internal wet-nurses. The 448 contracts correspond to only 349 wet-nurses and several of them were admitted more than once to serve the Casa da Roda⁹⁰.

The marital status of these women by decade is depicted in table 4.3.: the tendency was to choose married women, although unmarried wet-nurses were always taken into service in all decades except in the 1760's. Preferred for moral reasons as well as practical ones (their breastmilk was thought to be better), married wet-nurses account for 60% of the total. The percentage of unmarried women is significant: 27% of the wet-nurses were single, a proportion that is not surprising with the high levels of illegitimacy that are suspected for this area in this period.

As we shall see in chapter 5, the definitive wet-nurses were recruited preferably in the rural areas. Internal wet-nurses, instead, reflect an urban environment; 93% gave an address in the

⁹⁰ The methodology used in eliminating the repeated wet-nurses consisted of examining a sequence of elements where information might coincide: name, marital status, name of husbands (name of parents for unmarried wet-nurses). Doubtful cases, even with good possibilities of corresponding to repeated wet-nurses, were eliminated. The results were then checked with a contemporary index of internal wet-nurses contained in the *Livro 1 das Entradas e Termos das Amas*. No inconsistencies were found, although the information in the index is not complete for many cases, as the clerks forgot to update it by noting the folio where a new mention of the same wet-nurse was to be found. Unless stated otherwise, further references until the end of this section are drawn from the contracts of wet-nurses contained in the *Livro 1 das Entradas e Termos das Amas* from the Arquivo da Assembleia Distrital do Porto (A.A.D.P.).

Table 4.2.
Duration of contracts of wet-nurses by decade

Count Row % Column %	1710	1720	1730	1740	1750	1760	1770	1780	1790	Totals
1-30	1 1.47	4 5.88	1 1.47	1 1.47	2 2.94	7 10.29	50 73.53	2 2.94	-	68 100
31-90	3 3.03	3 11.11	5 2.50	2 2.63	11 4.08	22 10.44	41 35.97	7 5.88	2 15.18	96 100
91-180	10 9.09	8 8.33	8 12.50	2 5.26	13 22.45	14 32.83	29 29.50	3 16.67	1 21.43	88 100
181-365	7 11.36	9 9.09	9 9.09	2 2.27	15 14.77	15 15.91	13 32.95	7 3.41	-	93 100
366-730	9 7.52	9 9.68	9 9.68	2 25.81	9 9.68	15 16.13	13 13.98	7 7.52	-	93 100
731-1460	9 21.21	12 25.00	12 22.50	4 63.16	6 18.37	6 22.39	1 9.35	7 20.59	-	53 100
no inf.	1 16.98	5 11.32	5 22.64	1 15.09	10 7.55	3 11.32	3 1.89	6 13.21	9 20.59	43 100
Total	33 7.37	36 8.03	40 8.03	38 8.93	49 8.48	67 10.94	139 14.96	34 31.02	12 7.59	448 100
Row	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Column	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Table 4.3.
Marital status of internal wet-nurses by decade

Count Row % Column %	1710	1720	1730	1740	1750	1760	1770	1780	1790	Totals
unmarried	5	14	5	2	2	-	54	10	1	93
	5.38	15.05	5.38	2.15	2.15	-	58.06	10.75	1.08	100
	16.13	43.75	16.66	7.69	5.41	-	49.54	40.00	9.09	26.65
widowed	2	1	2	-	-	-	4	3	3	15
	13.33	6.67	13.33	-	-	-	26.67	20.00	20.00	100
	6.45	3.12	6.67	-	-	-	3.67	12.00	27.27	4.30
married	6	11	23	22	34	48	50	11	5	210
	2.86	5.24	10.95	10.48	16.19	22.86	23.81	5.23	2.38	100
	19.35	34.38	76.67	84.62	91.89	100.00	45.87	44.00	45.45	60.17
unknown	18	6	-	2	1	-	1	1	2	31
	58.06	19.35	-	6.45	3.23	-	3.23	3.23	6.45	100
	58.06	18.75	-	7.69	2.70	-	0.92	4.00	18.18	8.88
Total	31	32	30	26	37	48	109	25	11	349
Row	8.88	9.17	8.60	7.45	10.60	13.75	31.23	7.16	3.15	100
Column	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

city (see table 4.4.). The vast majority of the internal wet-nurses lived in town; 8 lived in the immediate vicinity of the city (the "concelho", a group of parishes under the same administrative authority); only 10 lived in the rural areas. The quantity of nurses living in S. Ildefonso, a "new" parish, is striking in the sense that it was located outside the city's walls, and had almost as many resident nurses as the sum of the three in-wall parishes (Sé, S. Nicolau e Vitória). In spite of their urban residence, 29.8% of the nurses declared rural origins.

Table 4.4.
Address of internal wet-nurses (1710-1799)

	N.	Freq.	Adj. Freq.
Sé	72	20.63	28.34
Vitória	32	9.17	12.60
S.Nicolau	5	1.43	1.97
S.Ildefonso	104	29.80	40.94
Cedofeita	8	2.29	3.15
Miragaia	7	2.01	2.76
Massarelos	-	-	-
Non identified urban parishes	8	2.29	3.15
"concelho"	8	2.29	3.15
rural areas	10	2.87	3.94
<u>unknown</u>	<u>95</u>	<u>27.22</u>	<u>-</u>
	349	100	100

Total Adj. Freq. = 254

The occupation of internal wet-nurses' husbands reflects the same urban pattern⁹¹ (see Table 4.5.). Their husbands were

⁹¹ In chapter 5 we shall see that the occupation of country wet-nurses' husbands, although not always tied to agriculture, reflects a rural environment in the sense that farm labourers were frequent.

typical urban lower and middle class persons: artisans were the majority, followed by people providing services (barbers, chemists, cooks, nurses, factotums and domestic servants). We also register the presence of sailors and soldiers; whilst shopkeepers and farm workers were clearly a minority.

Table 4.5.
Occupation of husbands

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>N.</u>	<u>%</u>
Artisans	124	72.94
Services	23	13.53
Soldiers	9	5.29
Sailors	8	4.71
Labourers	4	2.35
<u>Shopkeepers</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1.18</u>
	170	100

The motives which led to the sacking of internal wet-nurses were varied and could be multiple for the same act; it is difficult to distinguish between the main motive for sacking and the secondary one. The most interesting feature about the alleged motives is the way in which the clerks expressed themselves about the women and their behaviour. Contracts include side remarks in which the scribe took note of the reasons why the wet-nurse was unsuitable for service, including very often moral judgements on their character and behaviour. In English, unless skilfully translated, the original side notes lose most of their flavour. Although already utilized in a previous article in Portuguese⁹², the material has now been reworked and quantified in order to analyze what were the most frequent criticisms made about the behaviour of these women. The side remarks have been grouped in several clusters (see table 4.6.) and their frequency counted.

⁹² Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, 'A Casa da Roda', pp. 161-199.

No individual nurse was considered, but the event in itself - the fact that a contract was ended and the wet-nurse dismissed from service. The total number of contracts was 448, concerning 349 different women. Of these 448 contracts, 146 do not state any motive for the end of service: the analysis thus concerns 302 events. Given the co-existence of several motives for each event, the frequency relates to the set of motives I have established. Most of the nurses abandoned their service as a result of being sacked by the administration: only 23 are said to have abandoned the house of their own free will. In table 4.6. the remarks made by the clerks concerning the reasons for the termination of service have been grouped in two main areas. The first groups the motives that rendered women physically unfit for the job. Among these, the most frequent was absence of milk, which was frequently accompanied by sickness. Illnesses are never specified⁹³ and they are often reported because they are said to cause disappearance of breastmilk. Syphilis, in turn, as a disease that could be easily distinguished from the others (although its confusion with other venereal diseases could occur) was reported because of the threat it represented to the inhabitants of the foundling hospital. The figure for this disease applies not necessarily to the person of the wet-nurse herself but also to the contagion of members of her close family group, either her husband or her children. Pregnancy, either concealed or declared by the wet-nurse, is referred to 8 times, but the nurse often continued to perform her duties during the first months of pregnancy. Her child delivery was often reported later, as proof that she did not observe continence, as was expected of wet-nurses. These so called physical motives amount to 181 references, whilst the ones that have to do with behaviour and character of wet-nurses add up to 247.

⁹³ We should remember that until the nineteenth century the specification of illnesses in hospital records is either vague or non-existent.

Table 4.6.
Reasons for termination of service of wet-nurses

Physical

Absence of milk	98
Illness (not specified)	62
Syphilis	13
Pregnancy	<u>8</u>
	181

Behaviour

bad character	58
nurse said to be diligent	29
lack of efficiency	27
sexual intercourse	24
"bad behaviour"	22
infanticide	21
frauds	16
husband threatened peace of hospital	11
quarreled with other wet-nurses	11
theft	9
alcoholism	7
lack of charity towards children	5
other situations	<u>7</u>
	247

The content of the remarks on the behaviour of wet-nurses is interesting for the variety of situations it depicted. 56 women are said to possess a bad character and the defects mentioned were: tendency to gossip; disobedience; propensity to lie; idleness; filthiness or other (the whole range of feminine defects generally available in men's speeches about women). 29 nurses are said to be diligent: we can note that such references represent only 6.5 % of the total number of contracts. There are 22 mentions of

unsuitable behaviour: cases when the wet-nurses did not keep to the rules of the house. They are reported to have shown little respect towards male administrators, to have gone out without permission and to have misbehaved in public. Through their frequency, quarrels are counted separately: in 11 cases wet-nurses are said to have provoked quarrels with other nurses (one reaching the point of threatening the others with a knife)⁹⁴. Nevertheless, disorder could be also caused by individuals outside the house: the nurses' husbands, often unhappy about the presence of their wives in the Foundling Hospital (and even disagreeing openly with it in one case) came to its neighbourhood and disturbed the quiet. Their action could assume some degree of violence, one having threatened his wife with a whip, another showing a knife and two others even insulting the administrators, accusing them of licentious behaviour towards wet-nurses⁹⁵. From the mention of undue sexual intercourse by wet-nurses, we can conclude that the desired isolation of wet-nurses from the external world did not take place. Women actually met their men, be it their husbands or their lovers⁹⁶. A dismissal concerning

⁹⁴ Fl. 108 (wet-nurse Ana Luisa, started service in 1771).

⁹⁵ The husband of Rosa Maria Soares (contract of 1770) threatened her with a whip (fl. 105 v.). The husband of Ana Rosa de S.José, who began working in 1770, in a state of drunkenness insulted his wife and the other wet-nurses, having threatened the clerk with a knife (fl. 104). The husband of Ana Maurícia was similarly arrested for the same reasons (fl. 435 v.; contract began in 1774). The husband of Joaquina Teresa (1768) threatened to beat the 'mordomo' (fl. 89 v.). The husband of Ana Maria threw stones at the Foundling Hospital and insulted the 'mordomo' (fl. 75, contract of 1765). Angelica Maria's husband even insulted the secretary of the Casa da Roda (fl 111, contract of 1771).

⁹⁶ The following married nurses were accused of having improper contact with their husbands: Ana Joaquina (1773, fl 124 v.); Ana Perpétua (1770, fl 97 v.); Ana Rosa S.José (1770, fl 104); Andreza Maria (1750, fl 48, her husband was let inside the Foundling Hospital); Benta Maria (1768, gave birth six months after having abandoned service, fl. 89); Eusébia Maria Cruz (1777, said to neglect children in order to meet her husband, fl 156); Luisa Maria Rosa (1774, fl 129 v.); Maria Jesus (1775, said to be obsessively jealous of her husband, fl 137 v.); Maria Joana (1771, said to go out without permission in order to meet her husband, with whom she had frequent quarrels, fl 108 v.); Rosa Angelica (1770, left children in the cathedral - presumably those to be baptized - in order to meet her husband when he came to town, fl. 98 v.); and Rosa Jesus (1770, fl 99).

Among the single wet-nurses said to have had sexual intercourse with men are Angelica Rita (1778, who was often accompanied by a married man who was her lover, fl 162 v.); Angelica Silva, Antonia Joaquina Silva, Joaquina Rosa, Maria Josefa Maria Silva, Maria Teresa Jesus and Mariana

three wet-nurses contemporaneously took place in 1770, when the wet-nurses were authorized to attend a religious procession, but forbidden to be accompanied by their men. Not only did they not obey the order, but were also accused of public scandalous behaviour although we do not know exactly of what it consisted⁹⁷.

There are 16 mentions of wet-nurses having broken the rules of the house: 4 concern respect for the identity tokens of children⁹⁸; in 4 of them it is stated that the secrets of the house were not concealed, and in 8 full mention of private deals with the parents of the foundlings is made⁹⁹.

Theft (either within or outside the premises of the house) and alcoholism also deserve mention: whilst some women are said to have robbed their fellow nurses, others are accused of entering taverns and drinking in excess. But the most interesting mention concerns the fact that, by present day standards, 21 of those women might have been accused of committing or having contributed to infanticide, at least in its non-intentional sense (see infanticide by omission in chapter 3). The death of those children is attributed to the carelessness of wet-nurses, which could give place to several kinds of accidents:

1- children were suffocated in bed by sleeping wet-nurses¹⁰⁰;

Angélica were said to be in contact with previous lovers (1774, fl 130 v.; 1775, fl. 138; 1776, fl 152; 1775, fl 142; 1772, fl 118 v.; 1774, fl 132 v.; 1775, fl 137); Antónia Maria managed to escape the house during the night passing her small body through the foundlings' wheel (1767, fl 82); Maria Joaquina and Rosa Maria met men when out of the house (1773, fl. 125 v.; 1773, fl. 124); Maria Ribeiro communicated with valets when she met them and entered taverns (1774, fl 136 v.).

⁹⁷ Ana Perpétua ('.. porque dando-lhe a faculdade de ir ver com as mais amas a função das cruces, mas sem a escusada e pernicioso companhia de seus maridos à ocupação de criar, em desprezo da dita recomendação o mandou chamar e o levou consigo ..'; '.. constou mais que também se comunicara com seu marido pública e escandalosamente.', fl 97 v.); Joana Xavier Silveira (fl. 100) and Rosa Jesus (fl. 97 v.), were fired under the same circumstances'.

⁹⁸ This remark is generally applied to "amas-sêcas", the women in charge of preserving the identity tokens of children.

⁹⁹ One nurse is reported to have abusively taken a child outside the hospital and shown it to a man who had asked to see it (Ana Vitória, 1766, fl 78 v.).

¹⁰⁰ Ana Antónia (1752, fl 51 v.); Ana Felizarda (1772, fl 113 v.); Ana Joaquina (1770, fl 100 v.); Ana Maria (1773, fl 128 v.); Joana Xavier Silveira

2- children were dropped on the floor¹⁰¹;

3- children were beaten¹⁰².

The fact that the death of those infants did not have other consequences than contributing to the sacking of the wet-nurses should not astonish us; death of children inside the Foundling Home assumed little importance in a context where the house was crowded with children that would die sooner or later. Besides, as foundlings had been cut off from their families, no kin could complain of the treatment given to them, even if they were informed about it. Nevertheless the fact that the wet-nurses were not legally punished for careless behaviour leading to the death of infants, is another hint that legal prosecution of infanticide was restricted to specific situations that placed more emphasis on the mother of the child (preferably unmarried) than on the value of the life of the child itself. After going through all such cases of misbehaviour we wonder what the expression "lack of charity concerning children" (appearing 5 times) effectively meant.

The compilation of information on parents of foundlings (see chapter 5) has revealed five cases of internal wet-nurses having abandoned their children and taken possession of them again on the day they left. It is strange that such occurrences were not reported in the "Livro das Entradas e Termos das Amas": probably the administration suspected but tacitly consented that the wet-nurses had somehow to get rid of their children in order to be engaged in the Foundling Hospital. At the moment of their

(1770, fl 100), broke the arm of a foundling while asleep and it consequently died); Maria Luísa (1779, fl. 165); Maria Rosa (1775, fl 141); Maria Teresa (1777, fl 142 v.); Maria Teresa Jesus (1774, fl. 132 v.); Maria Vale (1772, fl 121 v.); Mariana Margarida (1768, fl 83, suffocated a child while being a provisional wet-nurse); Quitéria Maria (1752, fl 52 v.); Rosa Maria (1777, fl 153 v.).

¹⁰¹ Ana Maria left children on the floor without taking them into her bed; thus one child was bitten by rats (1769, fl 96); Joana Maria was said to be so careless as to let children fall off her bed (1769, fl 96 v.).

¹⁰² Three wet-nurses were accused of beating foundlings. Of these, two women were said to have beaten them to death (Mariana Margarida, 1768, fl. 83; Josefa Maria, 1767, fl 81; Josefa Rosa, 1767, fl 81 v.).

departure, though, they would be forced to take their children with them¹⁰³.

The "ama-sêca"

In order to coordinate the action of the internal wet-nurses, the post of "directora" or "ama-sêca" was created (1768), a word meaning literally "dry nurse". This woman did not have any functions concerning the feeding of foundlings: her tasks were to ensure that the identity tokens of foundlings were not dispersed as well as controlling the internal wet-nurses, certifying that they treated the children with care. Children were said to be the victims "of the lack of milk, food and propriety, the absence of love of the wet-nurses reaching the extreme of having beaten to death some nurslings"¹⁰⁴.

In practice this "directora" established the link between the male administrators, absent from the foundling hospital in the crucial moments when the children arrived (during night time), and the life inside the house. She had to fulfill requirements that were not demanded of other nurses: she was preferably a widow, with few or no family at all, an old Christian, of good morals with fear of God, over forty years old, and able to read and write¹⁰⁵.

103 Mariana Angélica (fl. 137) was the mother of foundling number 104297 (António Almeida, *Livro 27 das Entradas*, fl. 436; *Livro 66 das Saídas*, fl. 190 v.); Antónia Joaquina Silva (fl. 138) abandoned foundling n. 106039 (Estêvão Caetano, *Livro 28 das Entradas*, fl. 19 v.; *Livro 70 Saídas*, fl. 175); Maria Teresa Teixeira (fl. 139v) was the mother of foundling n. 106223 (João Maria Porto, *Livro 28 das Entradas*, fl. 109; *Livro 70 das Saídas*, fl. 401); Maria Rosa (fl. 141) abandoned foundling n. 104128 (Filipe Casais, *Livro 27 das Entradas*, fl. 359; *Livro 69 das Saídas*, fl. 474), and Maria Josefa (fl. 142) was the mother of foundling n. 106323 (José João, *Livro 28 das Entradas*, fl. 159 v.; *Livro 67 das Saídas*, fl. 342). All these five wet-nurses entered service in the Foundling Hospital in 1775.

104 A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Registo de huma resolução...', fl. 81. v.: "...[faltando] com o leite, comestível e limpeza necessária, chegando a tal extremo o desamor das ditas amas, que mataram algumas inda de leite às pancadas...".

105 A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Registo de huma resolução...', fl. 82: "...convém muito que seja viúva, com nenhuma ou pouca família, cristã-velha, bem procedida e temente a Deus, de quarenta anos para cima, de muita capacidade, propósito e respeito, que saiba ler e escrever

Every aspect of life inside the foundling hospital was thus dependent on this woman, from the reading of the notes to the surveillance of the good behaviour of the wet-nurses, ensuring that they kept to the contract that had been read to them when they had been admitted as internal wet-nurses. She was also in charge of emergency baptisms for foundlings whose condition was too serious to wait until the next morning's ceremony in the cathedral. As far as I know, they were paid on the same terms as the other breastfeeding internal wet-nurses.

The "amas-sêcas" were accused of the same faults as the other internal wet-nurses. They could be suspected of hiding dead children in order to hide the high frequency of death inside the hospital¹⁰⁶. On two occasions the 'ama-sêca' was fired together with other internal wet-nurses. We presume that such collective sacking had its origin in incidents that were judged to be especially notorious, or at least in situations where the administrators wanted to destroy complicity between wet-nurses. One case, also related to infanticide, was when a healthy 15 month old child was mysteriously found dead by the wheel and it was presumed that a nurse had placed it there, because the child was not able to walk¹⁰⁷. As none of the wet-nurses who were present at the time the child was put there accused herself of its death, they were all dismissed, including the "ama-sêca". The second occasion was when the "ama-sêca" refused to give urgent baptism to a child. The nurse who presented the child to her to be baptized was also fired, on the grounds that she did not baptize the child herself after the refusal of the "ama-sêca"¹⁰⁸.

desembaraçadamente, e ultimamente de quem se espere o cumprimento do regimento...".

¹⁰⁶ Ana Antónia Pereira, a widow hired in 1777 is said to have concealed dead children from the administrators (fl. 155v).

¹⁰⁷ Ana Maria ('.. por omissão ou comissão de aparecer ao pé da roda hum menino de 15 meses morto desgracadamente não tendo ate aí moléstia alguma, não sendo possível que fosse pelo seu pé porque ainda não andava; com ela foram expulsas as mais amas e moças que se achavam nas casa da dita roda por se ficharem todas e não se poder achar a delinquente', fl. 149); Bernarda Maria (fl 154 v.); Rosa Cândida (dry wet-nurse, fl. 153). This event took place in 1777.

¹⁰⁸ In 1768 Ana Jacinta refused to baptize a dying child who passed away without baptism (fl. 86 v.); Maria Josefa, an internal wet-nurse did not also baptize it, although knowing it was dying, as is proven by the fact that she

The men

The medical staff

Initially the medical staff cared for foundlings together with the sick looked after in the main hospital, without getting paid for the extra service. Their work in the Foundling Hospital consisted of tending sick foundlings or ill wet-nurses. Another task consisted of examining the quality and quantity of the breast milk of the newly appointed wet-nurses. In 1730, doctors as well as surgeons obtained from the king an annual salary of 20000 reis¹⁰⁹. In the petition addressed to the king, the doctor complained of the enormous amount of extra work caused by sick foundlings and by the examination of the wet-nurses' milk, the number of them being of over 600 a year¹¹⁰.

The administrative staff

The administrative staff of the Casa da Roda was initially formed by four posts: the provedor, the main authority within the institution, the scribe, the treasurer and the 'mordomo'. These men were elected at the beginning of each economic year, that is to say, on the 2 July. It was the Mesa's responsibility to elect them. They were supposed to keep the post for a year, until the next election. The result of the election could be reported in the book of entries of foundlings ("Livro de Entrada") in the middle of

asked the former to do it ('..por não exemplar hua criança q lhe coube na sua roda sabendo muito bem que estava moribunda pois pediu à ama-sêca q o fizesse..', fl. 87).

¹⁰⁹ A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, 'Registo do treslado duma provisão que alcançou o Doutor Manuel Monteiro de Fonseca, médico do partido do hospital, per que Sua Magestade lhe consigna 20 mil reis de partido no dinheiro do cofre da cidade, pelo trabalho de curar as amas e os engeitados da roda', fl. 70; 'Cópia do treslado de outra provisão que alcançou Pedro da Fonseca Ferreira, cirurgião do hospital de d. Lopo per que Sua Magestade lhe consigna 20 mil reis de partido no dinheiro do cofre da cidade pelo trabalho de curar as amas da Roda e engeitados dela', fl. 72.

¹¹⁰ A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, 'Registo do treslado duma provisão que alcançou o Doutor Manuel Monteiro de Fonseca...', fl. 70 v.: '... que em cada ano excediam o número de 600...'. Besides not getting paid for his services to the Foundling Hospital, the doctor could not treat his own patients privately, thus losing a significant income.

the records of abandoned children. Such notices of elections were used in this chapter to identify the house's directive body: there are 56 of them, one for each year. I tried to complete information consulting the registers themselves unsuccessfully: the difficulty lied in understanding who were the persons nominally in charge, as these men tended to be replaced by fellow brothers very often.

These four persons, who constituted the main body of the administration, performed their duties on an unpaid basis. Nevertheless, with time, the administration's tasks grew more complex, and above all, the increasing number of foundlings required paid employees. In 1742, confirming that foundlings were the main source of work for the Misericórdia, the post of secretary was created . This man was charged with assisting the 'provedor', with authorization to write up all the books except the entrance ones; he received 4000 'reis' a year. His main function, though, was to control wet-nurses and prevent them from defrauding the administration¹¹¹. Other paid posts were created during the century: that of 'servente' in 1770, a man charged with various tasks, such as opening and closing the doors of the Casa da Roda or do some shopping. He was obliged to wear a uniform. This 'servente' replaced the 'mordomo' because of an incident that happened during that year: the 'mordomo' escaped with money held for the daily expenses and was known to defraud wet-nurses, keeping their money¹¹² on various occasions.

In 1783 the house's staff acquired some new posts: a help to the secretary¹¹³ and two 'cursôres' or 'caminheiros', men in charge of travelling to the countryside to contact wet-nurses¹¹⁴. At the end of the century, in 1796, the number of persons working for the administration was the same, except for the 'cursôres' who were numbered three¹¹⁵.

111 A.M.P., *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, fls. 44 v-45.

112 A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo* , fls. 86-88 v.

113 "ajudante de secretário".

114 By this time the secretary and his help received 48 000 'reis' a year, whilst 'cursôres' or 'caminheiros' got 200 'reis' for each service. A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, fls. 139.

115 A.A.D.P., *Livro dos Assentos das Amas e das Lactações* , fls. 80.

From a service performed on a free basis by the members of a confraternity, the administration evolved into a mixture of professional work and voluntary service: "provedores", scribes, and treasurers continued to be at the head of the institution but, instead of relying on the help of the 'mordomos', they were surrounded by professional helpers. It was no wonder that the number of administration members increased from 4 to 9 men, if we think about the augmentation of work caused by the increase in the number of foundlings, especially in the last quarter of the century.

If there was a hierarchy among those posts, after the 'provedor', its absolute governor as it is expressed in a crucial document¹¹⁶, followed the scribe, the man in charge of writing up the registers, some of them being signed by the provedor. This service was mainly confined to the most important registers, that is, those which included the possibility of tracing the identities of the foundlings: the ones contained in the Entry Books. All of them were signed by the provedor. The "Livros de Saída", being mainly concerned with the care of foundlings by the wet-nurses, were more the treasurer's reign. Only for the initial appointment with a wet-nurse, when her identity was stated, did the scribe take part. The treasurer carried out the task of registering the payments made to the wet-nurses. The provedor's signature is limited to the moment when the child died or when its family came to reclaim it and took possession of the foundling. The treasurer was the accountant of the institution: every three months he presented the final balance sheet of expenditure. This could be divided in two categories: the expenses within the Casa da Roda's building, that is payment to the internal wet-nurses, payments for food, heating, foundlings' initial clothing, medicines, etc... The major expense, concerned with payments to the hundreds of external wet-nurses, in turn, was called external expense and kept in separate registers. These accounts were then presented to the council, in order to justify the money granted by both the council and the king. The mordomo, in turn, had no clear functions: he was

¹¹⁶ 'Relação da Real Caza da Roda da Cidade do Porto...', A. A. D. P., *Livro 1º do Registo*, pp. 139-145. On this document, see note 56 of this chapter.

responsible for internal expenses until one man ran away with the confraternity's money¹¹⁷. It was probable that he performed minor tasks such as executing orders from the provedor: buying goods, contacting wet-nurses, etc... These directive functions were not remunerated with salaries: the reward for performing them must have been other than money.

The 1760's seem to be a turning point in the history of the administration of this institution: in fact, in 1767, the internal elections ceased and the choice of the administrators was made by royal decision. It is not clear why this change took place: it is possible that it marks the moment when the central power took assistance to foundlings more seriously. In fact, some aspects of the house's administration come closer to a definition. Some crucial documents which laid down the house's functioning were issued, while the external authority of the king became visible within the institution's life. Once the king appointed the provedor, the tendency to keep this post for several years on end became more visible: Manuel de Moura e Castro, for example, performed this charge for at least 11 years, from 1766 to 1776¹¹⁸.

The research, for obvious motives, could not be extended to the family context of these individuals nor to their power in other spheres outside the 'Casa da Roda'. I know that these individuals formed part of a larger context than the Casa da Roda: first of all they were influential members of the confraternity and most probably powerful members of the city's elite. Since the Misericórdia performed various charitable services and administered eight institutions, the 'Casa da Roda' was only one of the many possibilities the confraternity made available to its members to obtain directive functions and access to power. It will be the task of other researchers to uncover the path followed by these men and the steps in their careers. What has been done here is to study personnel of posts inside the foundling home: who

¹¹⁷ A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, fls. 86-88 v: this happened in 1770, when the 'mordomo' ran away with one hundred thousand reis belonging to the house's daily expenses, also having checked wet-nurses out of their payments, taking possession of money belonging to them. This incident was followed by the creation of the post of "servente".

¹¹⁸ The series is not complete.

was elected or chosen to fulfill certain tasks, when and for how many years. Was there a career within the posts available in the 'Casa da Roda'?

The sources provide some information about the social level of the administrators, as titles and occupations are referred to, but such evidence is most discontinuous, especially for the treasurers and 'mordomos', for whom it is virtually non-existent.

The corpus of the administrators makes clear the overwhelming presence of the clergy within the institution¹¹⁹ and the particular permeability of the bishop's chapter to functions inside the Roda: 5 'cónegos', 1 'arcipreste', 1 'mestre-escola' and 1 treasurer of the cathedral were elected '*provedores*'. There were 4 'cavaleiros professos da ordem de Cristo' a title reserved to non-ecclesiastical individuals that conceded a sort of noble status to its possessor¹²⁰. On the other hand, many of the administrators were men of higher education, especially the scribes, often titled 'doctors'¹²¹. Their family names suggest that all administrators, except for the mordomos, probably brothers of second order, belonged to the city's most influential families. Any study of the ruling elites of the city would gain from an analysis of the identities of these men, but, as was stated earlier, that task is outside my scope.

Of the 38 '*provedores*' identified, 12 were provedores two or more years, whilst 26 performed this charge only once. Records show that 8 of these 'repeating' provedores remained linked to the institution over a period from 5 to 19 years, thus giving continuity to the Casa da Roda¹²². All the other 4 repeating provedores performed this function in two successive years.

¹¹⁹ Of the 38 "*provedores*", 10 were members of the clergy, including one prior of the Colegiada de Cedofeita, one of the main religious institutions of the city: Manuel Guedes dos Santos Oliveira e Silva, provedor in 1788.

¹²⁰ José Freitas Rocha, José Rosa Vilela Monteiro, Bento Gomes Delgado and Geraldo Blenz.

¹²¹ Among the "*provedores*", 3 of them are referred to as '*doutores*': José Luis Fonseca Sousa, Francisco Xavier Araújo (also a priest) and Geraldo Blenz (also a '*cavaleiro de cristo*').

¹²² 5 years: Bento Gomes Delgado, 1788, 1792.

9 years: José Freitas Rocha in 1756, 1763 and 1764.

Some provedores also held titles and posts in the life of the city during the years when they were in charge of the Misericórdia, which may indicate of a progression in their careers¹²³.

Over the 56 years, we know the identities of 20 *scribes*. Once again the presence of the clergy is important: 9 were priests, two of those being also called 'doutores'. Priests took charge of the archive for 18 years whilst non-ecclesiastical 'doutores' exercised functions over 15 years. But in this administrative post no members of the bishop's chapter or 'cavaleiros da ordem de Cristo' are to be found. Only two individuals are referred to as captains¹²⁴.

The length of time during which these men were involved in the administration is shorter than for "provedores": from 2 to 11 years. Only 4 of these men performed their duties over a period of more than 6 years¹²⁵.

Nothing is known about the condition or the occupation of the 20 treasurers whose identity is known, except for one member of the army¹²⁶. Once again there is a tendency to fill the same post over several years, either consecutively or at intervals. But this repeating holding of the same office is less than in the posts of 'provedor' and scribe: it never exceeds 7 years. This post

11 years: Sebastião Prada Lobo, 1712 and 1722; Martinho Lopes Morais Alão, 1742, 1744, 1750 and 1752; Manuel Moura Castro, all the years between 1766 and 1776.

16 years: Tomás Vicente Huet Sotomayor, 1765, 1780

18 years: Tomás Correia Maciel, 1732, 1748 and 1749.

19 years: Jose Rosa Vilela Monteiro in 1727, 1729, 1732 and 1745.

¹²³ José Rosa Vilela Monteiro was a counsellor of the 'Mesa' in 1729; by 1745 he was a 'cavaleiro de cristo'. Tomás Correia Maciel was a treasurer in the cathedral of Lamego, a town in the Douro region by 1732; in 1748-49 he was a conego and treasurer to the chapter of Oporto's bishopry. Bento Gomes Delgado appears in 1788 without reference to other functions; in 1792 he was a 'cavaleiro de cristo', 'guarda-mor da alfandega', counsellor of the 'mesa' and 'procurador da cidade'.

¹²⁴ António Caldeira Almeida (1727-1729) and Luís Pereira Almeida (1761).

¹²⁵ 6 years: Manuel Nascimento Santos, 1757, 1758 and 1762.

8 years: Manuel Ramos Silva, 1712, 1713, 1717, 1718 and 1719.

9 years: João Diogo Ribeiro, from 1768 to 1776.

11 years: Crispim da Rocha, 1742, 1744, 1750, 1760, 1762.

¹²⁶ Manuel Carlos Silva Pereira, 1734 and 1735, appearing as 'alferes'.

is not always referred to in the reports of the elections. The same happens with the 'mordomos', who disappeared after 1769.

The names of 28 '*mordomos*' are known, for the same years as scribes and treasurers: this should mean that there was less of a tendency for such a post to be held for several years on end by the same individual. In fact, only 10 were re-elected. All of them kept the post for 2 to 5 years consecutively, except for two individuals who stayed linked to them for 16 and 18 years¹²⁷. The social backgrounds and occupations of '*mordomos*' are unknown, except for the case of a button maker¹²⁸.

For the first time in all the posts concerned, two of these '*mordomos*' became treasurers after several years¹²⁹. These are the only cases where the same person performed two different functions in the administration.

Analyzing administrative staff, one is struck by the lack of communication between different posts: not only were '*provedores*' a separate category of high social position in the city, but the less important functions also had no communication between them. No scribe could be elected '*provedor*' in the following election; no treasurers became scribes; only two '*mordomos*' became treasurers. Instead, all these officials could occupy the same post for more than one year either consecutively or at intervals.

¹²⁷ Manuel Dias Rabaço, '*mordomo*' from 1718, 1719 and 1724 and treasurer from 1730 until 1733; João Correia, who was a '*mordomo*' in 1732, 1733 and 1749.

¹²⁸ Manuel Silva, '*mordomo*' in 1734.

¹²⁹ Manuel Carlos Silva, a '*mordomo*' in 1725 and a treasurer in 1734 and 1735. Manuel Dias Rabaço also appears as '*mordomo*' in 1718, 1719 and 1724 and as a treasurer in 1730, 1731, 1732 and 1733.

The children

For many historians and demographers the analysis of entrance curves has served the purpose of relating child abandonment with economic crisis as well as political events. The entrance curves were used, specially among those who tried to relate fluctuations in entries with prices, to demonstrate that the children were often legitimate: parents were constrained to abandon them because of hunger. Such an assumption ignored the incidence of economic crisis in phenomena such as pre-marital pregnancies or illegitimacy; furthermore, it gave no account of the age of the children, as it would have been logical that such foundlings were not all newborn but children some months old. What has not been stressed, therefore, is the structural character of abandonment: the fact that it was a well established system in Southern Europe, available to all who wished to abandon their infants.

This section aims to analyse child abandonment in Porto from 1690 to 1799, a period of over a hundred years in the life of the institution. The purpose is to draw a line of evolution relating to the number of children assisted during this period.

Data compiling obeys to the needs and specificity of aggregative analysis. The high numbers of children assisted and the nature of the questions put forward in this section ruled out the possibility of a detailed analysis, impracticable in any serious manner for 63415 individuals, which is the total number of children that entered the Casa da Roda. A simple count was effected throughout the 51 books of entry (Livros de Entrada). Distinctions between categories, such as foundlings versus breastfed children on allowance, were not possible; the same applies for the classification of children according to age at the moment of their entry in the hospital. In later chapters, the nominative analysis of the chosen samples will cover such issues in detail.

The main questions that this phase of the work tried to answer were as follows:

- How did the entry curve vary during the period? Can it be linked with price movements and popular riots?
- What was the sex ratio of the children and how did it vary during the century?
- What was the seasonality of the entrances? Did it differ from the seasonality of the overall births registered in the parishes of this area?
- How many children were abandoned already dead?
- What was the incidence of indoor mortality?
- What is the weight of foundlings in the number of annual baptisms in the city?
- Considering the total number of children assisted per year, and not just those entered annually, how high were the figures the hospital dealt with?

The answer to these questions is not an aim in itself but provides the basis for the conclusions that can be drawn from them. For instance, the *entry curve* will allow further comparisons with other hospitals across Europe and will place of the Casa da Roda at its appropriate point on a scale, drawn up according to the number of children that entered such hospitals.

On the other hand, *sex ratio* will answer the question whether child abandonment was sex differentiated. Were girls seen as undesirable children rather than boys?

The analysis of the *seasonality* is more difficult when it comes to comparisons with the general seasonality of births. Here, the difficulty lies in the fact that the latter has not been studied either for urban or for rural births in Porto region. A comparison will be made with the nearest case studies for which information on this point is available. The pertinence of the question lies in the

fact that, if seasonality was equal for both births of foundlings and births of "all" children, one might think that abandonment was not the result of changing economic conditions but rather affected a given proportion of all births.

The answer to these two last sets of questions - sex ratio and seasonality - might demonstrate that children were not abandoned because of their sex or because of bad years but only because a certain proportion of them could not be kept by their families, for economic or social reasons that were of a structural and not a conjunctural nature.

The next two questions, although not coherently tied up with the previous ones, will help to clarify the problem of life conditions in the hospital itself. The question can be formulated whether mortality in the hospital increased in the years in which entrances were higher. If this is the case, the situation would be a normative one: the extra number of children would be compensated by a higher mortality, which was inevitable since the same number of wet-nurses had to breastfeed more children and accommodation became overcrowded. Less nutrition and a higher contact between children would have increased the risks of mortality.

The second question is related to the previous one. In most of the constitutive documents of Foundling Hospitals, the motive regularly alleged by their founders is the need to avoid seeing dead children everywhere in the streets and dunghills; some suggest that such children were the victims of infanticide. Recent authors have even suggested that infanticide was current before the Reformation, alongside indifference to stillbirths and dead children: respect for children's lives, as is asserted, was only born in the era of Foundling Hospitals. Death without baptism was no longer acceptable. In order to check this hypothesis, I have checked if the number of dead children entering the hospital increased between 1700 to 1799. If the "indifference" or the "infanticide" (see chapter 1) thesis were true, it would be logical that people would increasingly wish to leave their newborn dead at the hospital, especially if they were not baptized. It might also

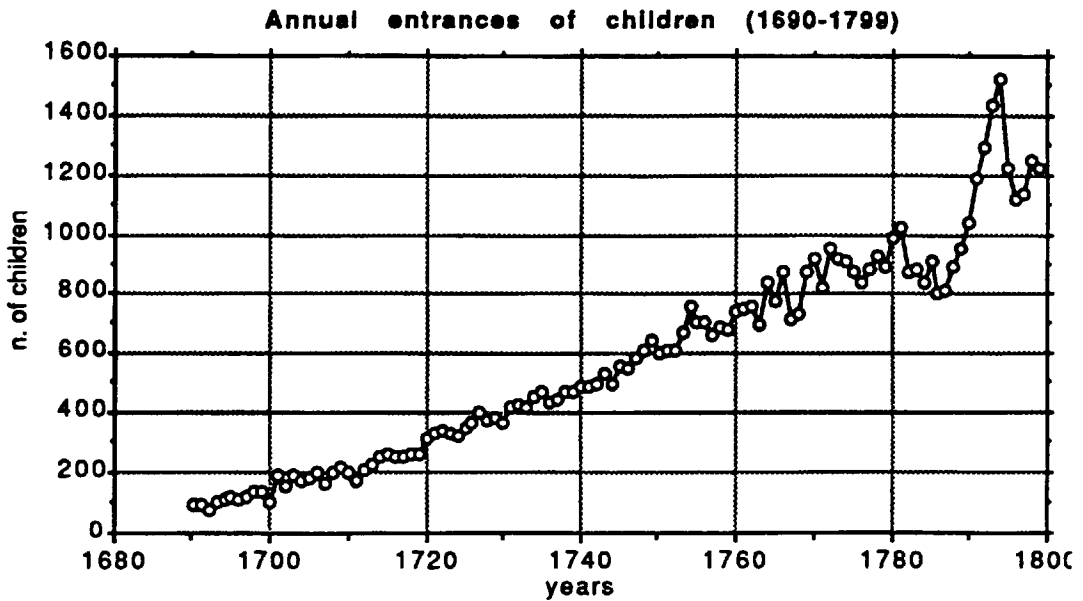
be the case that they were left all the same but that the administrators simply did not register them. But such a fact is unlikely, as we know that concern for dead children increased among the administrators during the century (see section on internal wet-nurses).

In terms of the proportion of foundlings among urban baptisms and the total number of children assisted¹³⁰, the calculations allow us to show the overall dimensions of children assisted, the impact of annual entries as a proportion of the overall baptisms of the city, the impact of annual mortality, the numbers of children restored to their parents and of children who finished their up-bringing through the Hospital.

The evolution of the entries can be seen in graph 4.2.:

¹³⁰ Results have been elaborated with data compiled by other individuals: the proportion of foundlings in overall baptisms (Graph 4.13.) has been based on data published by Cândido dos Santos, 'A população do Porto de 1700 a 1820', *Revista de História*, Porto, vol. I, 1978, pp. 281-349. Data for graphs 4.14. to 4.22. was compiled by the administrators of the Misericórdia themselves. Nevertheless I am responsible for the graphs that have been elaborated. It should be stressed that such data is presented here because of the broad picture that can be drawn from them; it would be very time consuming to check their precise accuracy.

Graph 4.2.



The analysis suggests that four major periods could be distinguished:

1 - The increase in the children admitted to the Hospital was continuous and steady until c. 1754; starting with about 100 children a year in 1690, the number reached 600 by 1748.

2 - From 1755, although the tendency to increase continued, some ups and downs can be noticed until 1781.

3 - The eighties brought a short-term decrease in the number of children until 1787, with the same instability as in the immediately preceding phase.

4 - After 1787 there was a steep rise, with its peak in 1794, then decreasing until 1796 and recovering afterwards until the last year of the century.

If graphs are easy to describe, the same does not apply for their explanation. The chronology of events such as epidemics, political troubles and famine does not yet exist for this period:

hence my results will always suffer from the lack of previous broad analysis of the history of the city. In the 18th century, Porto is known to have had only one serious popular riot, against Pombal's newly created taxes on the sale of wine and reduction in the number of the city's taverns¹³¹. It occurred in 1757 and its participants were brutally repressed, the children of the executed being sent to the Misericórdia.

Prices, on the other hand, are well known for the period. They were published by Vitorino Magalhães Godinho according to a source, which was, very curiously, elaborated by the Misericórdia itself¹³². Graph 4.3. compares the fluctuations in prices and the number of foundlings since 1740, the year in which the series of prices starts. In order to make the two curves comparable, each category of numbers was divided by its standard deviation.

131 Oliveira, António de, "Soulèvements populaires au Portugal à l'Époque Moderne - revue bibliographique (1974-1987)" in *La recherche en Histoire du Portugal*, Paris, Centre d'Études Portugaises, E.H.E.S.C., Paris, 1989, pp. 41-48; Silva, Francisco Ribeiro da, "Os motins do Porto de 1757 (Novas perspectivas), in *Pombal Revisitado, Proceedings of the International Colloque on the 2nd Anniversary of his Death, 1982*, Lisbon, Estampa, 1984.

132 Godinho, Vitorino Magalhães, *Prix et Monnaies* cit., pp. 81-85. The prices were registered because the payments of rents in kind (cereal, chicken), were to be transformed in cash. There was a need to know the normal current price for the goods, in order to convert them into money.

Graph 4.4.

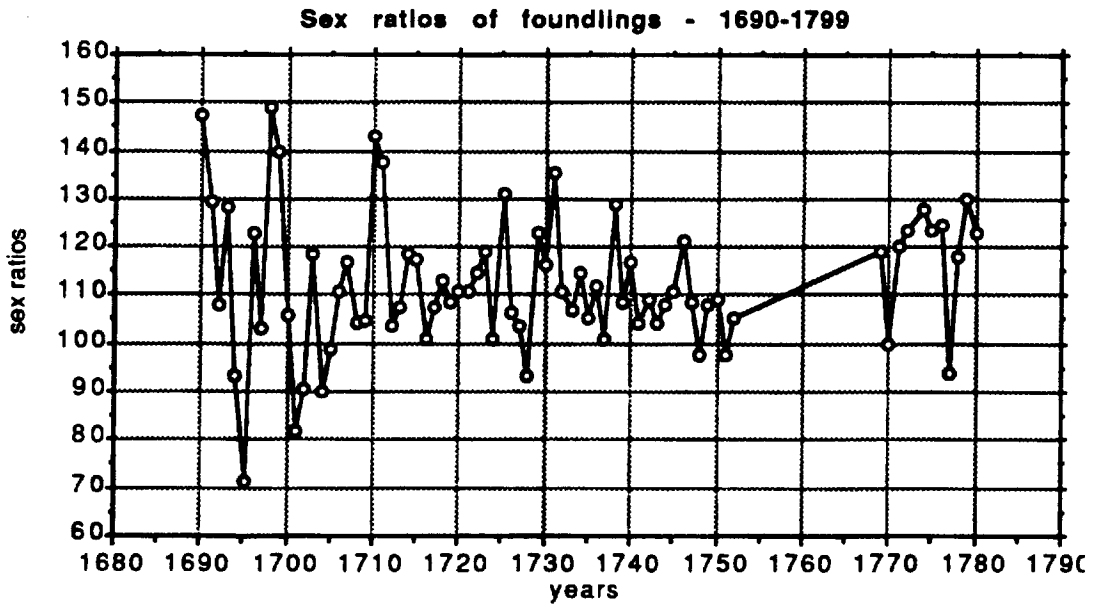


Table 4.7. Frequency distribution of sex ratios by years

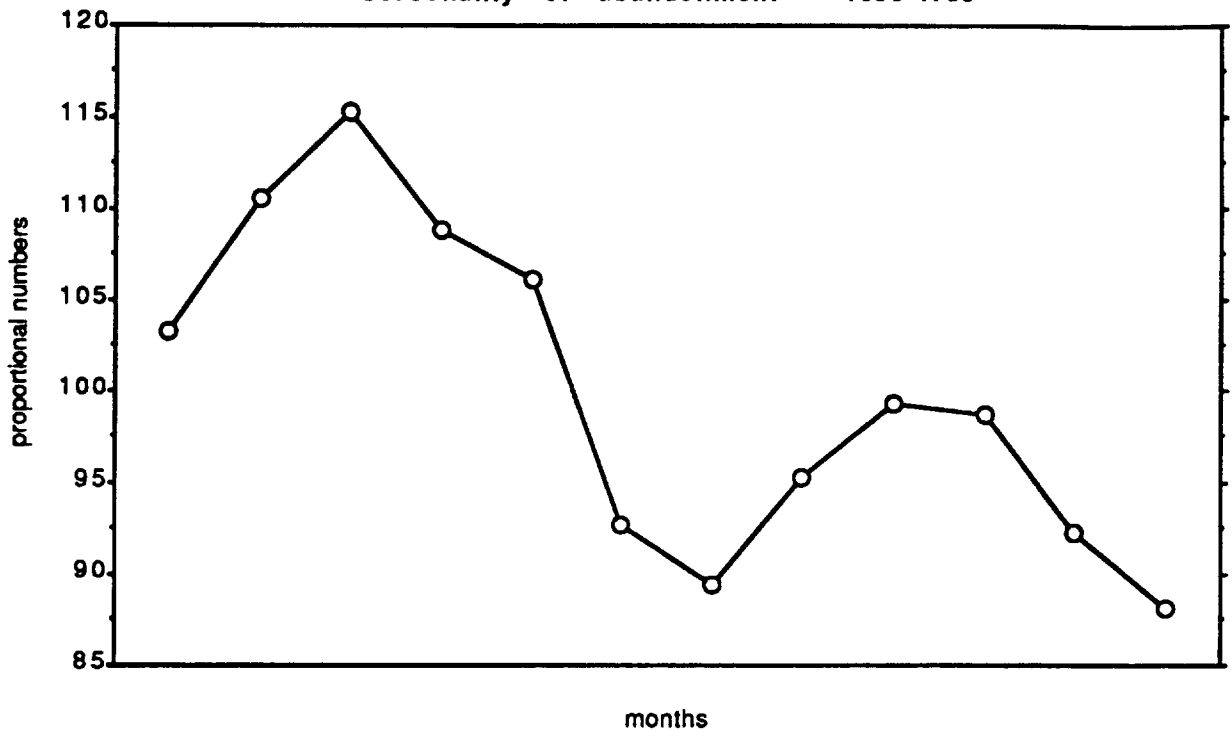
X₁: sex ratio

Bar:	From: (≥)	To: (<)	Count:	Percent:
1	70	80	1	1.351
2	80	90	1	1.351
3	90	100	8	10.811
4	100	110	26	35.135
5	110	120	18	24.324
6	120	130	12	16.216
7	130	140	5	6.757
8	140	150	3	4.054

-Mode

Graph 4.5.

Seasonality of abandonment - 1690-1799

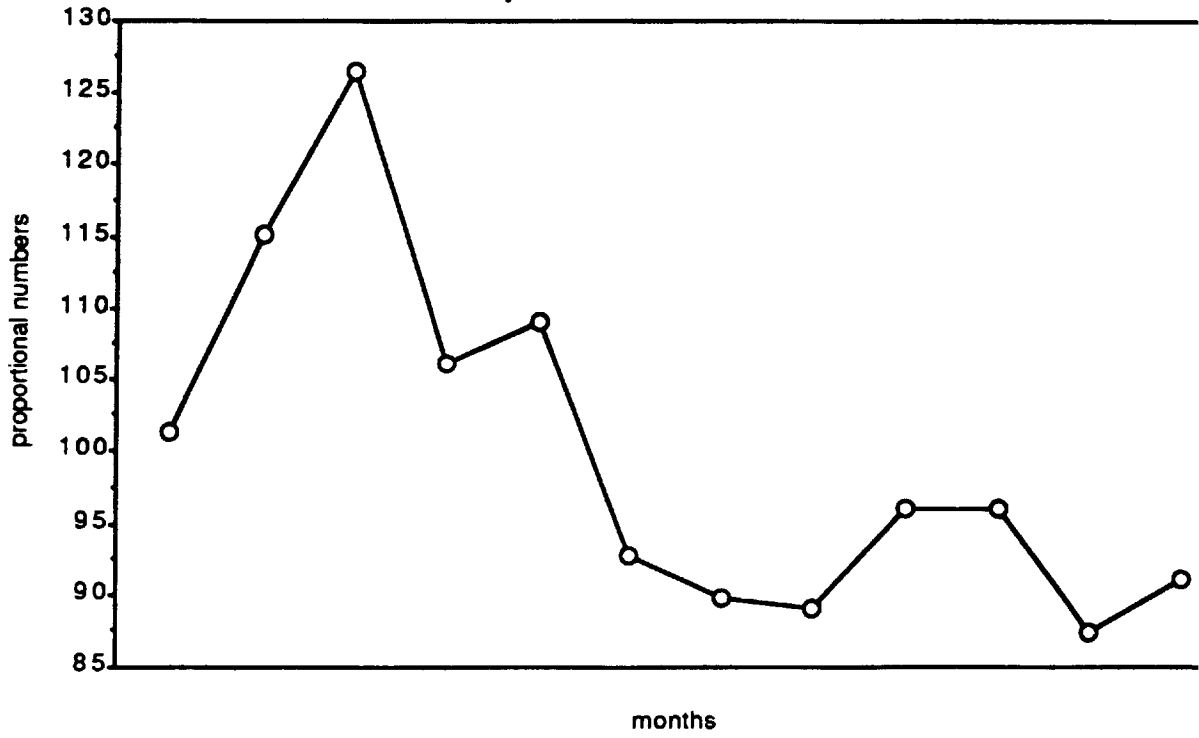


Graphs 4.5. to 4.9. illustrate the seasonality of abandonment during the whole period under analysis. As can be seen, foundlings were abandoned in higher numbers during the winter (January, February and March), decreasing through the Spring until July. There was a rise during the last two months of the Summer, decreasing during Autumn until December. The most significant rise took place from December to January. If one relates this curve to the months of conception - although bearing in mind that circa 10 to 20 % of these foundlings were not newborn - conceptions took place mostly from April to August, with its peak in June.

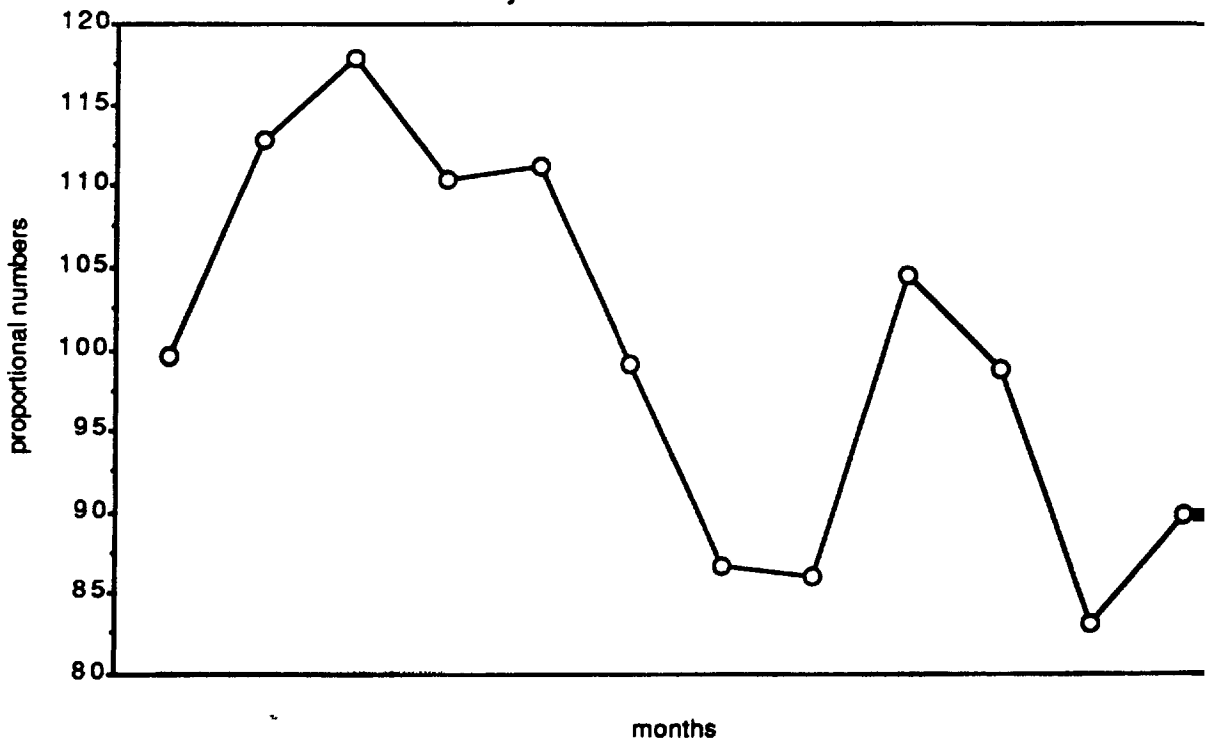
The general picture matches not only data existing for North Portugal but also other results obtained for some areas of Spain.

Graphs 4.6. and 4.7.

seasonality of abandonment - 1690-1719

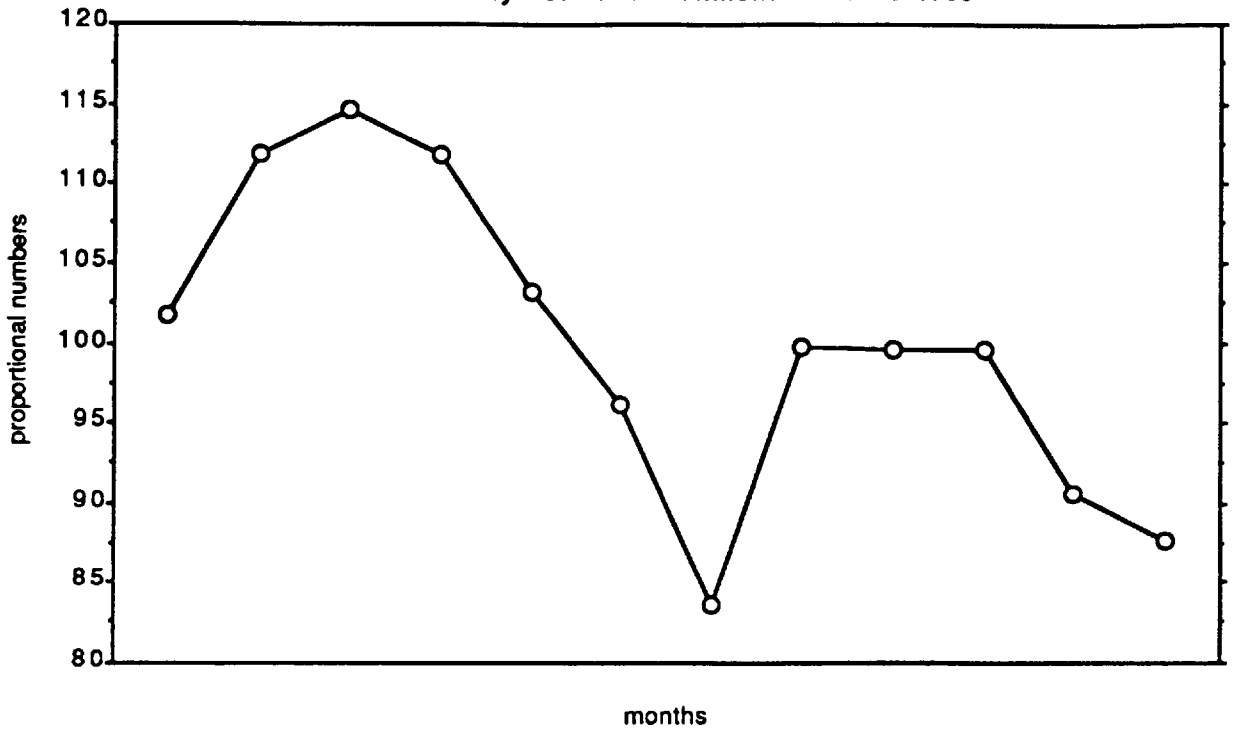


Seasonality of abandonment - 1720-1739

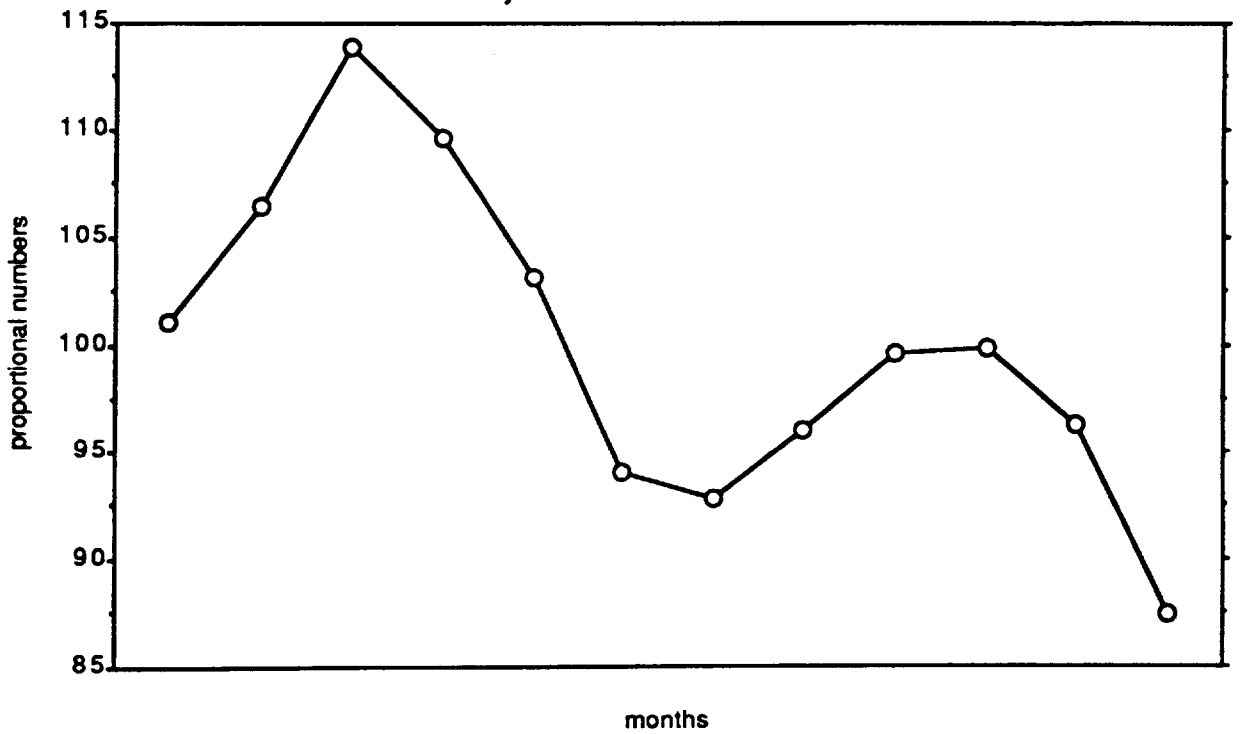


Graphs 4.8. and 4.9.

Seasonality of abandonment - 1740-1759

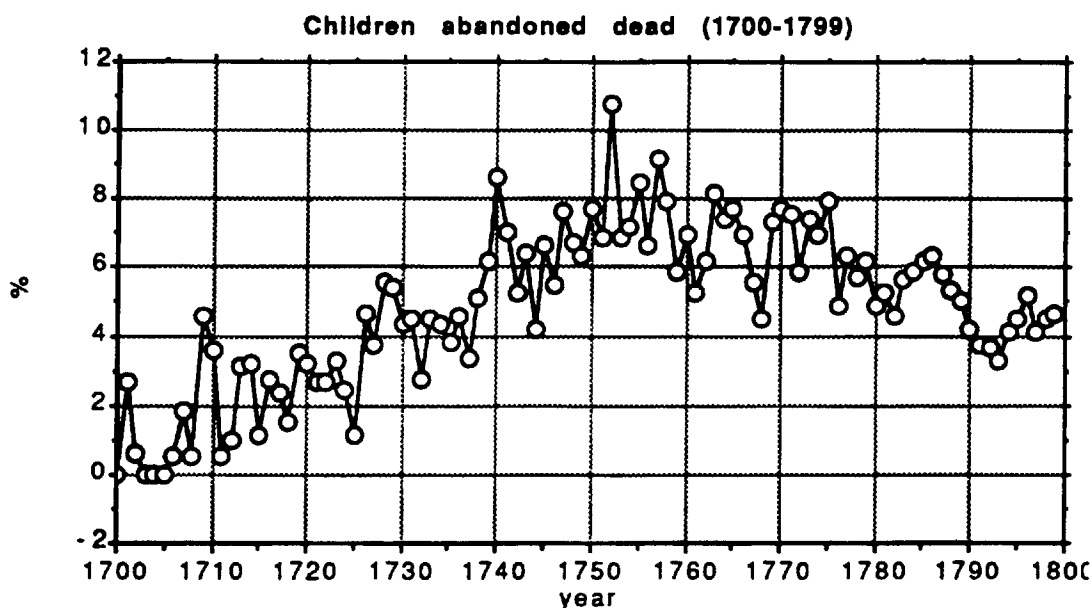


Seasonality of abandonment - 1760-1779



Graph 4.10. shows the percentage of children who were abandoned dead.

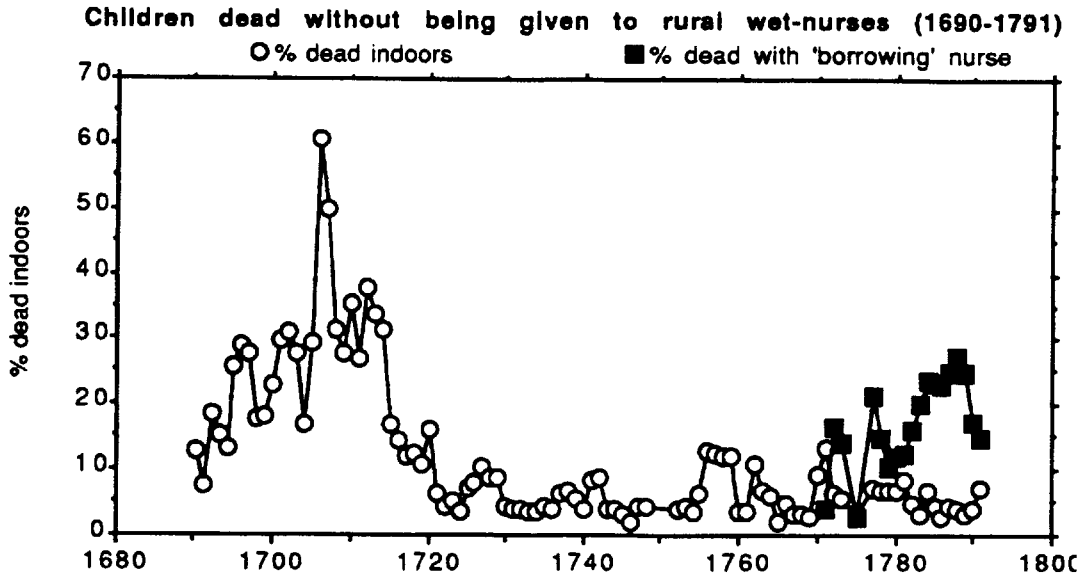
Graph 4.10.



There is effectively an increase in the preoccupation of abandoners to guarantee a free burial to children: the percentage of dead foundlings at the moment of the entry in the hospital rose constantly from 0% in the early years of the century to 13% in the early fifties. Nevertheless, this percentage decreased after 1752, keeping below 6% in the last decade of the century.

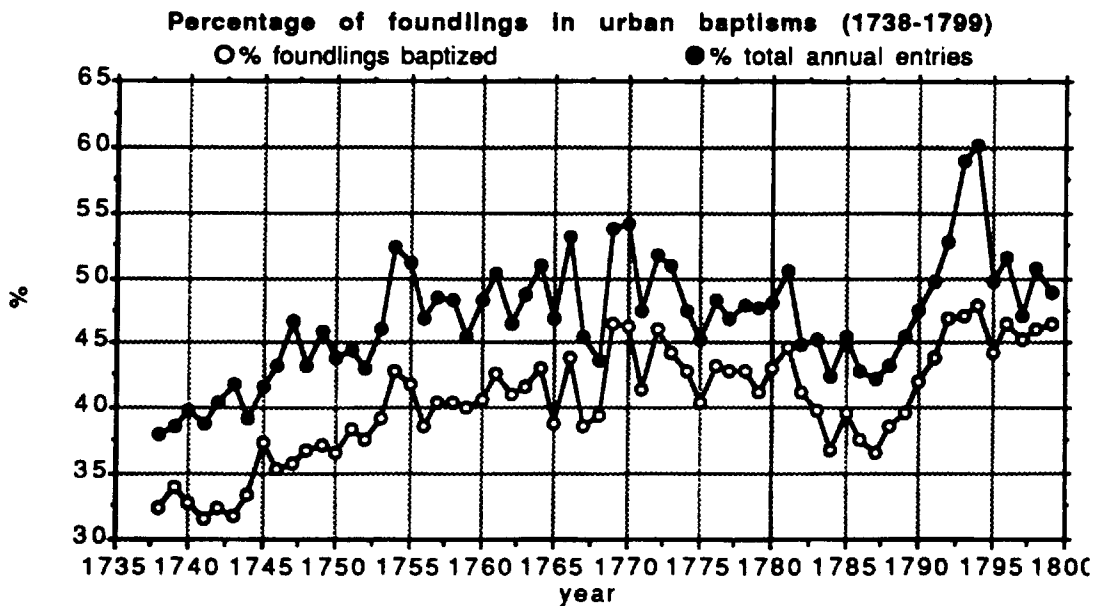
Mortality inside the "Casa da Roda" (Graph 4.11.) shows an interesting evolution: it rose in an irregular manner until 1712, with a peak in 1706 when 60 % of the total number of foundlings entered died in the house; after 1713 it decreased; after 1720 values kept below 15%. Nevertheless, after 1766 the use of giving children to borrowing wet-nurses inside the city must be considered, because in practice such foundlings were also waiting for a "definitive" wet-nurse, although they cannot be included in indoor mortality (see graph 4.11.).

Graph 4.11.



In some case studies, the percentage of foundlings in overall baptisms of the city where the children were assisted has been studied. Such a calculation does not give the proportion of children born inside the walls that were abandoned: the networks of transport of children from the rural areas are recognized as being responsible for a large proportion of children abandoned in the cities. Also, the children baptized in one of the parishes might receive a second baptism if they were abandoned. Nevertheless, in order to give a broad idea of the weight foundlings represented in the births of the whole city, their numbers were calculated as a percentage of the sum of the baptisms of the seven parishes of the city during the century. Two percentages have been calculated, the first considering only the foundlings that were baptized and the second including all foundlings, whether baptized or not. The two curves, as can be seen in graph 4.12. are parallel.

Graph 4.12.



The difference between the proportion of children left at the wheel and that of baptized foundlings gives the number of the non-baptized children. Such foundlings who were not taken to the cathedral to be baptized could be in one of the following situations:

1 - they were already dead when they were abandoned at the wheel;

2 - they died in the interval of a maximum 24 hours after abandonment, as baptism of foundlings took place daily, every morning, and all the children arriving on the eve were baptized;

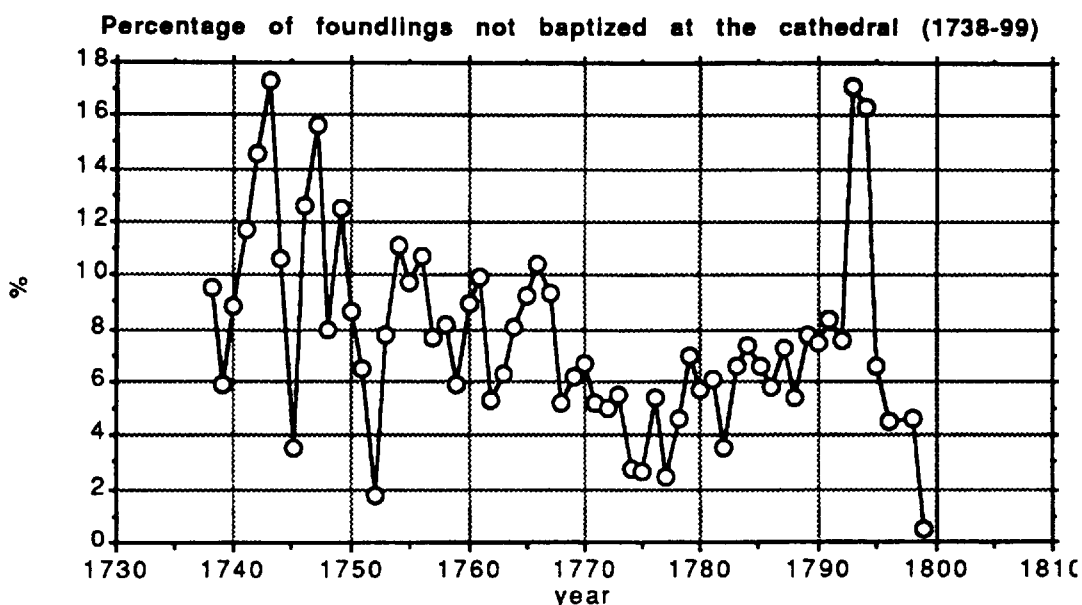
3 - they were children on lactation, with known parents and already baptized;

4 - in very rare circumstances, the child brought a birth certificate issued by its parish priest which was recognized as valid, generally when the priest's handwriting was familiar to the administrators.

Graph 4.13 depicts the approximate percentage of the foundlings who were considered already baptized and thus

needed no baptism "sub conditione". In the calculations I have subtracted the children who were abandoned dead; nevertheless, the graph does not take into account the children on lactation (generally already baptized) nor the children who did not survive inside the hospital until baptism.

Graph 4.13.



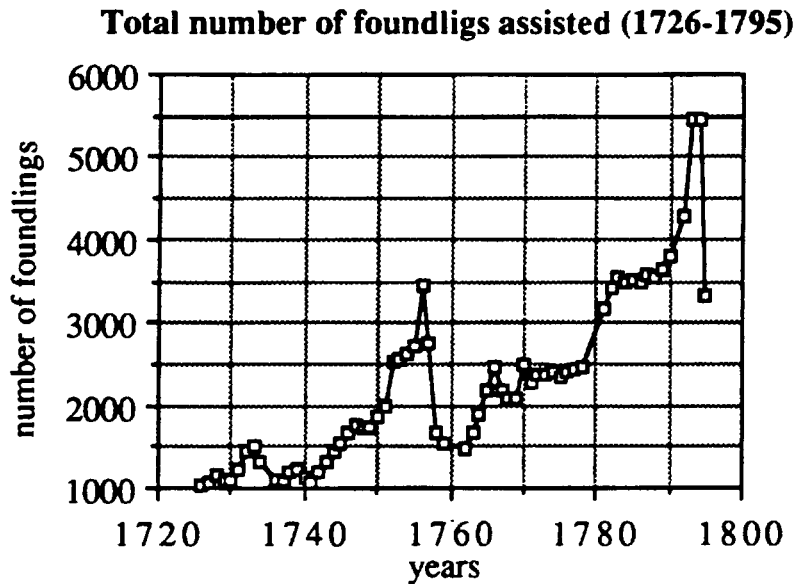
Graph 4.13. shows that normally only one child in ten was not baptized: only in three years did this percentage rise significantly, probably when an exceptional number of breastfeeding allowances were granted.

These results have been elaborated with data which has been extracted from the records by research today. However, there are also some calculations which can be made with figures given by the Misericórdia itself. On the 2 July, when the Misericórdia was supposed to elect its new ruling members, who would take charge of the different posts existing for each of the institutions the Misericórdia administered. Administrators on leave would make a final account of the main movements registered during the preceding year, registering the results in the "Livros de Entradas". Although not completely reliable and not

complete for the whole period (figures for some years are missing), some graphs have been elaborated.

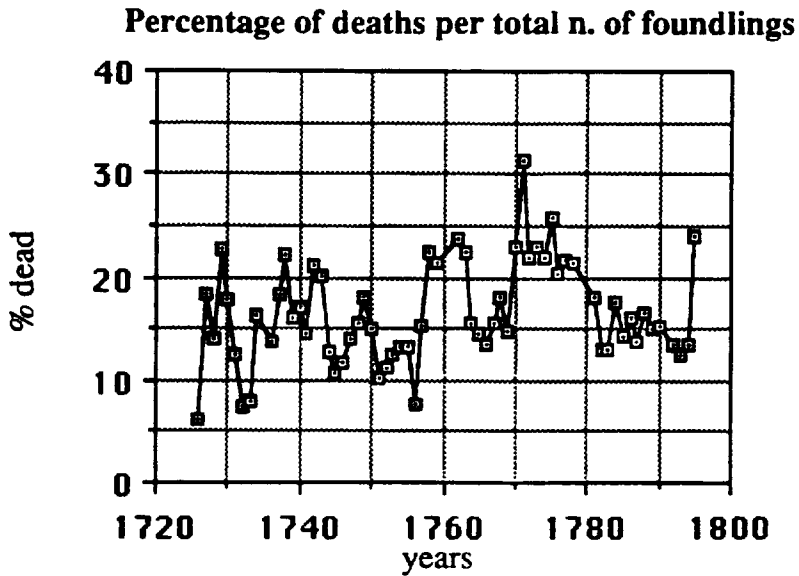
Graph 4.14. is the most valuable, because it accounts for the total number of foundlings being assisted each year, that is, the foundlings of the year plus the remaining children from the previous years. It gives a broad idea of the huge mass of children assisted: from 1000 up to 5500.

Graph 4.14.



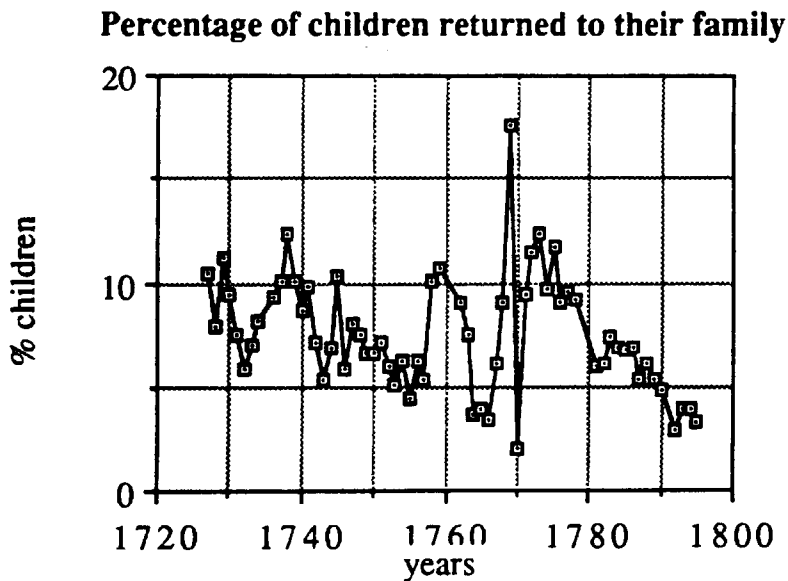
Graph 4.15. represents the total annual number of deaths (not by year cohort), and its percentage in the total number of foundlings existing in the previous year.

Graph 4.15.



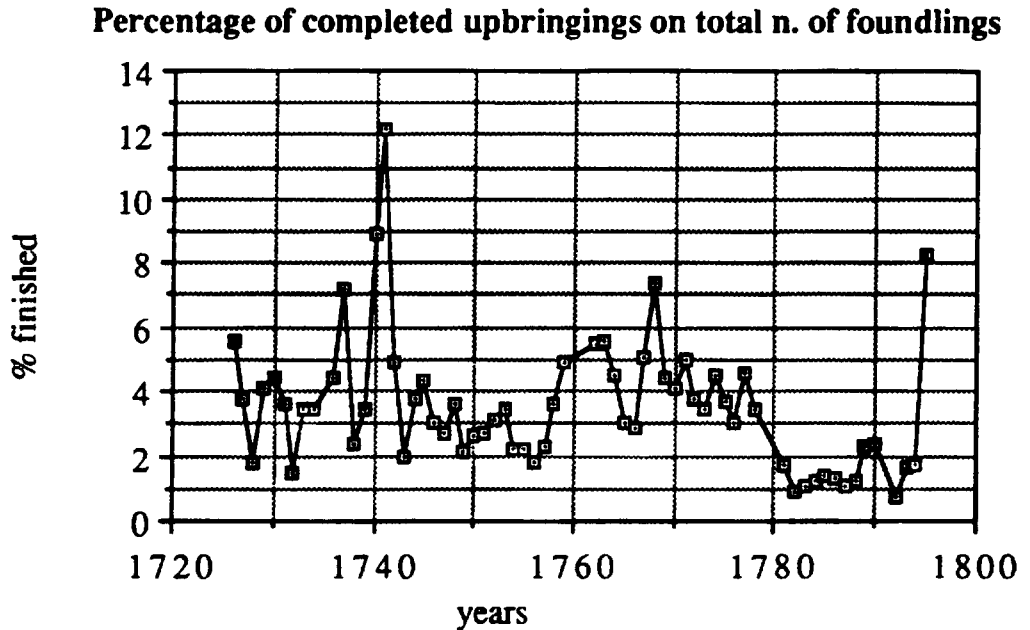
Graph 4.16. gives the number of children who were claimed by their families and returned to them:

Graph 4.16.



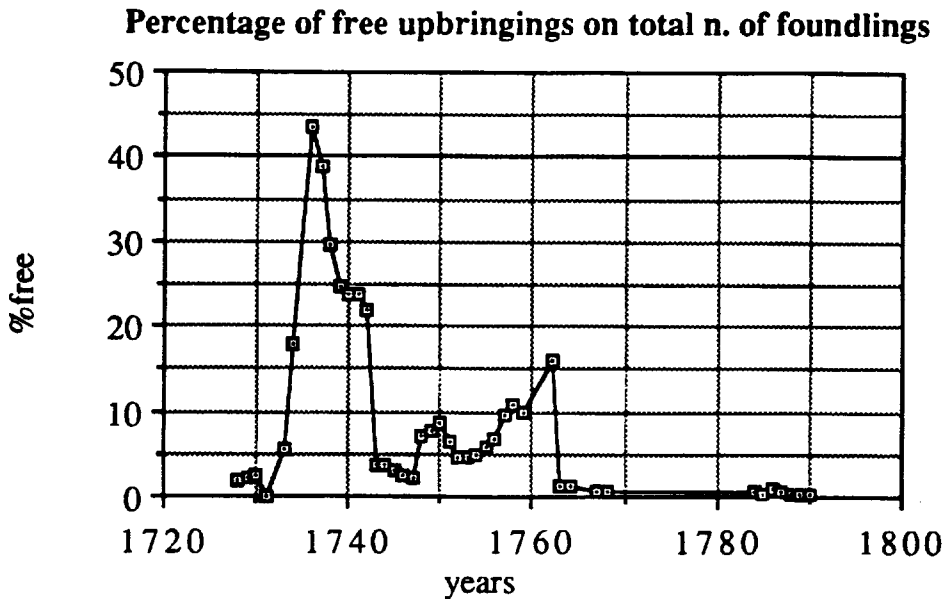
Graph 4.17 represents the number of children who completed their institutional upbringing, that is, reached seven years and were available for fostering.

Graph 4.17.



Graph 4.18. relates to children who were fostered before their seventh year, the so called "criações sem soldo" (no wage upbringings). That is, they were given to a family or to an individual who, although entitled to them, did not receive any wages. It is not known why their number is so variable: as such fostering took place because of special privileges relating to the husbands and sons of wet-nurses, it might be that an episode of war encouraged the fostering of foundlings in such periods. This was certainly the case for the Seven Years War (1756-63). On the other hand, it could be related to a moment of high general child mortality, people seeking to replace their own dead children. It could also be related to differences in the administration of the House, which would encourage the "criações sem soldo" in some periods and not in others. As the data is somewhat erratic, it will need to be verified.

Graph 4.18.



If one reconsiders the questions posed at the beginning of this chapter, the following results are suggested:

1. Prices seem to have a certain impact on the variation of entries, specially after 1760. Nevertheless they should not be considered as a sufficient motive for abandonment. Prices worked as surface indicators of a system where abandonment was structural and not conjunctural.

2. The sex ratio presents values that could roughly match the normal sex ratio ratio at birth; if a difference exists, it regards an extra number of boys rather than girls. It is not likely that parents chose to abandon their children according to their sex.

3. Seasonality of abandonment matches seasonality of births and conceptions in the general population, although the calculations do no take account of non-newborn children being abandoned.

4. A proportion of children were abandoned dead: their percentage increased until 1750 and decreased slowly in the following decades; by the end of the century the practice of

abandoning corpses was slightly higher than in the beginning of the century. If one assumes that the percentage should have been equal during the century (because infant mortality did not appear to have experienced significant changes), this could be a sign of a changing attitude towards children: instead of the initial indifference towards the corpses, the families began to deposit bodies on the wheel so that the Misericórdia would cover the costs of their funeral. What is not explained, however, is why the growth is not constant during the century.

5. The indoor mortality shows surprising variations, very difficult to explain without a detailed knowledge of year by year occurrences inside the "Casa da Roda": number of internal wet-nurses, epidemics, overcrowding, etc. Still, it is a good indicator of the number of children who were deprived of the opportunity of being given to an external wet-nurse.

6. Finally, the annual proportion of foundlings in the total sum of baptisms in the seven parishes of Porto gives an idea of the weight of the foundlings in the births of the city: never below 30%, the foundlings accounted in many years for 60% of the new-borns in town. One might say that, during the eighteenth century, of every 10 new-born children living in the city 3 to 6 were foundlings.

Sponsoring and evolution of expenses

Foundlings in Porto were always supported by the local council, from the 16th to the 19th century. Nevertheless, as is documented in the Portuguese law, foundlings were to be assisted by the local hospitals, if they possessed property assigned to them. Only in the absence of such hospitals were foundlings to be brought up at the expense of the council¹³³.

¹³³ *Ordenações Manuelinas*, liv. 1, tit. 67, § 10; *Ordenações Filipinas*, tit. 88, § 11 '... os mandarão [aos engeitados] criar à custa dos Hospitales, ou Albergarias, que houver na cidade, villa ou lugar, se tiver bens ordenados para criação dos engeitados: de modo que as crianças não morram por falta

Given that foundlings were at the expense of local hospitals, it may seem surprising that the Misericórdia, administering eight hospitals, never had any financial responsibility for the city's foundlings. The fact is that, when the Misericórdia took over the responsibility of administering the foundling home in 1689, the problem had been resolved in the 16th century. In fact, before the foundation of the Misericórdia of Porto in 1499, the council administered the funds of its own hospitals, presumably spending a part of them on foundlings. In 1521 those hospitals were incorporated in the Misericórdia¹³⁴, which was meant to continue the tradition. In 1528 the king, responding to the appeal of council officials, ordered the Misericórdia to use for the foundlings the remaining funds of the expenses for its own hospitals. In so doing, the king was revoking a previous law which exempted the Misericórdia from such an obligation¹³⁵. Despite this, the Misericórdia managed to reduce the sum it was obliged to pay and later to cancel it¹³⁶. No further documents referred to the problem and when the contract between the Misericórdia and the council was signed, it was settled that the former would administer without financial obligation, with the foundlings to be supported entirely by the funds of the city council¹³⁷. If there were disputes concerning money, they concerned the amount and never the institution which was to pay. In the seventeenth century there was no question that the Misericórdia should contribute financially to the upbringing of foundlings.

de criação. E não havendo hi taes Hospitaes ou Albergarias, se criarão à custa dos bens do Concelho....."

¹³⁴ Alvará de 15 de Maio de 1521 (A.H.M.P., *Livro 3 das Cartas, Provisões e Alvarás*, fl. 1)

¹³⁵ A.H.M.P., *Livro 3 das Cartas, Provisões e Alvarás*, fl. 1: "Porquanto vos mando que do sobejo dos ditos hospitaes depois de compridos todos os encarregos que os defuntos em suas instituições deixarão que por suas almas se fizessem, guasteis os ditos dez mil reis em cada hum anno nos ditos engeitados, assi e da maneira que he declarado na dita provisão e fizestes até à feitura do dito alvará que assi passei para os não dardes, porquanto avendo respeito a todo o sobredito hey assi por bem".

¹³⁶ A.H.M.P., *Livro 3 das Cartas, Provisões e Alvarás*, fl. 5.

¹³⁷ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Registo, cópia e treslado do Termo que se fez com a Câmara e Mesa sobre a Roda dos Engeitados em como a Administração deles corre por conta da Santa Caza', fl. 2 (1 October 1685).

Today it may surprise us that the Misericórdia did not exact any payment for its services concerning the Roda given that its members themselves admitted that the foundlings were a major source of work for the institution in terms of their registration¹³⁸. If we consider that the Misericórdia ran eight institutions, including the main hospital, the Roda no doubt represented a burden to the institution. It is a fact that the registers of persons admitted to the hospital were more laconic than registers of foundlings. Moreover, no poor adult had an accountancy register for seven years, as did foundlings, whose existence required payments to the wet-nurses every three months. The Misericórdia did not require payment for its services to foundlings probably for two reasons:

1) Assistance to foundlings was a charitable activity and thus its rewards could not be material but only spiritual;

2) As noted earlier, the law placed responsibility for foundlings on the local hospitals. The Misericórdias, as independent bodies with a discrete accumulation of their own revenues, were not municipal institutions in the strict sense of the expression. On the other hand, their importance in the local ruling elites made participation in assistance to foundlings inevitable. Maybe there was a tacit understanding between the urban authorities and the local hospitals that underlay the contracts drawn up by the Misericórdias in some cities of the kingdom.

Although the terms of the contract between the Misericórdia remained unchanged between 1688 and 1838, the sums paid were subject to various changes through the century.

In 1687, when the contract was signed, the annual sum paid by the council corresponded to 2,000,000 "reis"¹³⁹. In 1726 the

¹³⁸ A.M.P., *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, fl. 44 v.

¹³⁹ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Cópia do contrato entre o Senado da Câmara desta cidade e a Santa Caza da Misericórdia da mesma', fls. 97 v. to 103 v.

sum was increased to 5.6 "contos" a year¹⁴⁰. Twelve years later, in 1738, the sum rose to 8 "contos"¹⁴¹. Again in 1752, there was a rise to 12 "contos"¹⁴². Finally, in 1781 the last rise during the eighteenth century took place, this time up to 20 "contos"¹⁴³.

Although the Town Council never interfered in any of the procedures of the Misericórdia in matters of administration and assistance, the increases of money were a constant source of conflict. They led to an acid correspondence between the two institutions and obliged the Misericórdia to constant "tours de force". The 1638 contract was very clear about the responsibilities of the Misericórdia for the administration of the Foundling Hospital: if the "Câmara" failed to refund the total expenses for foundlings the Misericórdia could cease to be responsible¹⁴⁴. This point is crucial for an understanding of the negotiations between the two parties: it enabled the Misericórdia to have the last word in all the disputes. In 1726, the provedor threatened to give back the whole archive pertaining to foundlings, as a symbolic and effective gesture of renouncing responsibility towards the foundlings¹⁴⁵.

Underlying the financial problem between the council and the Misericórdia was the determination of the latter never to

140 The "conto" corresponds to a million "reis". A.H.M.P., *Livro do Registo e Despesas do Cofre*, 'Provisão confirmando a escritura de Contrato entre a Câmara e Misericórdia para a criação dos engeitados', fl. 175 v.

141 A.H.M.P., *Livro do Registo e Despesas do Cofre de 1738*, fl. 2. This time the document signed between the two parties included the commitment by the council to pay each trimester in advance.

142 A.H.M.P., *Livro do Registo e Despesas do Cofre de 1738*, fl. 80 v.-84. The obligation to pay each three months in advance was stressed again in the document.

143 A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, 'Cópia da provisão por que se mandam dar mais dois contos de reis adiantados em cada trimestre sendo provedor o Sr. Dom Prior da Insigne e Real Colegiada de Cedofeita', fls. 105 v. to 107.

144 The "alvará régio" that confirmed the contract affirmed that, in case the stipulated sum being insufficient, the council was obliged to fund the additional expenses. If this did not happen, the Misericórdia ceased to be responsible ("... de sorte que nunca a dita Caza da Misericórdia ficaria obrigada a continuar com a dita administração e a poderia largar ... " A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 5.)

145 A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 57v. and 58. The council had turned down a request to raise the annual subsidy, claiming that only the king had the power to do so. The king's authorization was finally granted by a "provisão régio" on 8 November 1726 (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 67).

involve its patrimonial funds in expenses for foundlings¹⁴⁶. The explanation of this concern seems to lie in the fact that there was a profitable market for money in the city. As the Misericórdia's provedor confessed in 1781¹⁴⁷, money had to be borrowed and interest to be paid; I suspect that the Misericórdia itself had profits to make in the money business¹⁴⁸ and thus did not want to lose them by spending its own funds on foundlings. Such a suspicion has to be confirmed; nevertheless, one of the most important activities of confraternities was lending money at interest. Suspicion derives from the fact that the most important problem raised by the Misericórdia concerning money was not actual financial loss but the period of time the institution had to wait before being reimbursed the extra money.

146 A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 50 and 50 v.: "Que considerando-se pela Mesa do anno passado os prejuizos que esta casa tem com a administração da Roda dos Engeitados, pois aceitando-se na escriptura que se fes com o Senado da Câmara, confirmada por sua Magestade [...] para esta caza correr com a dita administração por seus irmaos sem despesas próprias, nem prejuízo seu, e para este se evitar se determinou a consignaço de quinhentos mil reis que se fes para a dita despsa se pagaria os querteis adiantados para que delle se fosse fazendo a tal despeza que antam pareceu era a suficiente, e o mais que fosse necessario se pagaria pelo cofre da cidade por certidam desta Caza, ficando esta livre de todo o prejuízo: se tinha este experimentado em grave deterimento da mesma caza [...] entanto que não bastando os ditos quarteis adiantados, e nam pagando o Senado o dito acréscimo senam no fim de cada seis meses, dispendia a caza adiantado seu proprio de seis para sete mil cruzados, suspendendo o rendimento deles para a dita assistência, sem dever de ser obrigada a isso em damno das Administrações a que pertencia o dito dinheiro". Another letter of the 21 July 1726 affirmed the need not to divert the Misericórdia's legacies from the purposes intended by the benefactors themselves (A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 55). [Emphasis added]

147 A.H.M.P., *Livro 5 das Despesas dos Engeitados*, fl. 193-193v.: "... por causa do grande número de crianças expostas, o que se provava dos documentos que oferecia e bem se manifestava da população prodigiosa da dita cidade pello que se viam sempre obrigados os provedores da dita administração a pedir pedir dinheiro a juros à custa della, para satisfazerem o que he preciso e inevitável gasto, ou a mandar suster por algum tempo os devidos pagamentos no que padecia este ramo da porpagação tão interessante ao Estado, e porque sendo as suas competentes amas de ordinário pobricissimas, faltando-lhe os seus prontos salários sentião o maior prejuizo as mesmas crianças que alimentavão". [Emphasis added]

148 Two documents demonstrate this involvement with the money market: in 1728 the Mesa decided that no member of the Mesa could be the "fiador" of money the Misericórdia lent on interest ("Os irmãos da Meza no anno em que o forem não podem ficar por fiadores de dinheiro que se dê a juros da Caza"). The king confirmed this decision by a "provisão" of 1732, adding that no brother who owed money to the house could be elected member of the Mesa (see A.M.P., *Livro 6 das Lembranças*, 'Assento de 3 de Outubro de 1728, fl. 508 and 'Provisão de 26 de Junho de 1732', fl. 561).

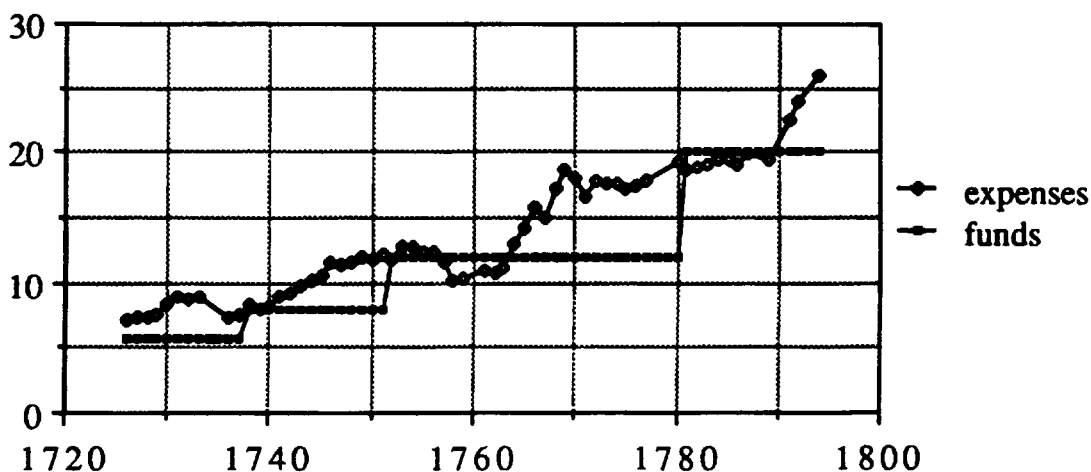
The council seems to have been the only financial support for foundlings: we do not know if there were alms boxes specifically to help abandoned children. On the other hand, few donators left legacies for foundlings, judging from the Misericórdia's sources. Only one case of a donation is known, because it aroused a legal problem: as the donation was given through the Misericórdia, the "Mesa" hesitated as whether or not to give it to the council. Five theologians were consulted and their opinions were not unanimous. Nevertheless, the provedor in charge convinced the consultants to agree that the Misericórdia administer the money. The sum, 120,000 reis, would be placed on the money market and its profits would be devoted to the assistance of handicapped foundlings. Such a solution is interesting for two reasons: first, it confirms the Misericórdia's familiarity with the money market; second, it helped to solve the problem of handicapped foundlings. In fact, the council's financial responsibility ended when children were seven years old. If some foundlings could not be fostered or placed on the labor market after that age, their support had to be provided by the Misericórdia, an obligation laid down by statute¹⁴⁹.

Graph 4.19. compares the evolution of the total expenses of the Roda with the sums paid by the council. The product of the money exacted from parents who recovered their children has been subtracted from the general expenses. I shall deal with those sums later in the chapter.

¹⁴⁹ *Compromisso* cit., cap. XXVI, p. 47. The text does not mention cases of infirm foundling children, but its contents make probable their inclusion in the broad category of children without support ("meninos desamparados"). In fact, the Misericórdia often transferred such foundlings to its two institutions devoted to invalids.

Graph 4.19.

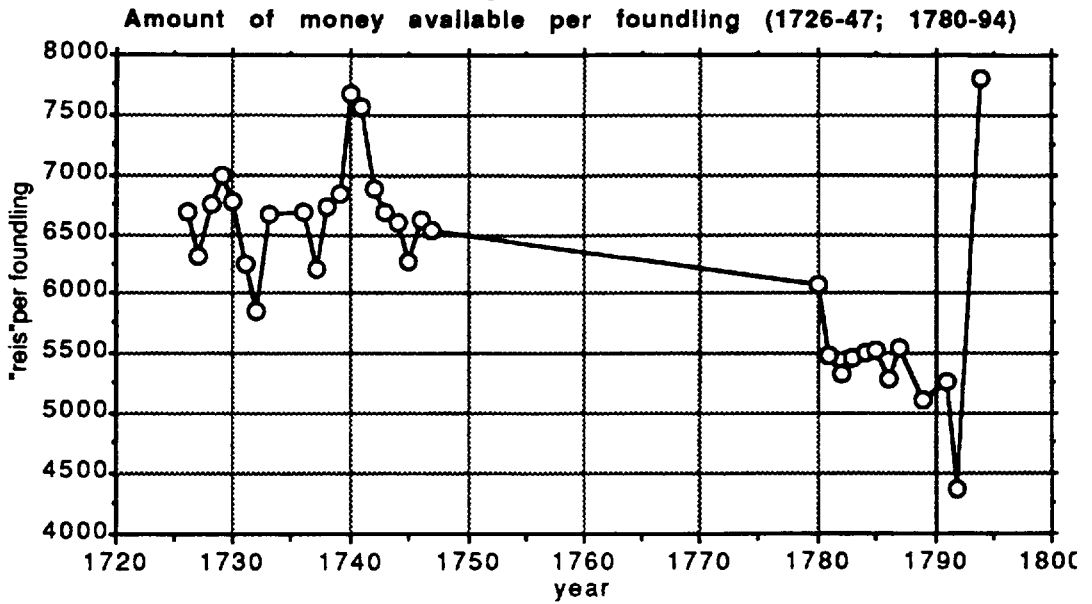
Evolution of expenses (1726-1794)



As can be seen, the rises proved insufficient a few years after they had occurred. Both the inflation and the increase in the number of foundlings contributed to cancel the financial increases. As foundlings cost from 7000 reis a year during the whole period for which data is available¹⁵⁰, I have tried to calculate the annual amount of money available for each live foundling. Graph 4.20. shows the evolution of this coefficient for the years when such a calculation was possible.

¹⁵⁰ See section on the typology of wet-nurses in this chapter. This total applies only to expenses for external nurses. The costs of the children's maintenance in hospital varied from child to child and would increase this sum. I do not consider them here.

Graph 4.20.

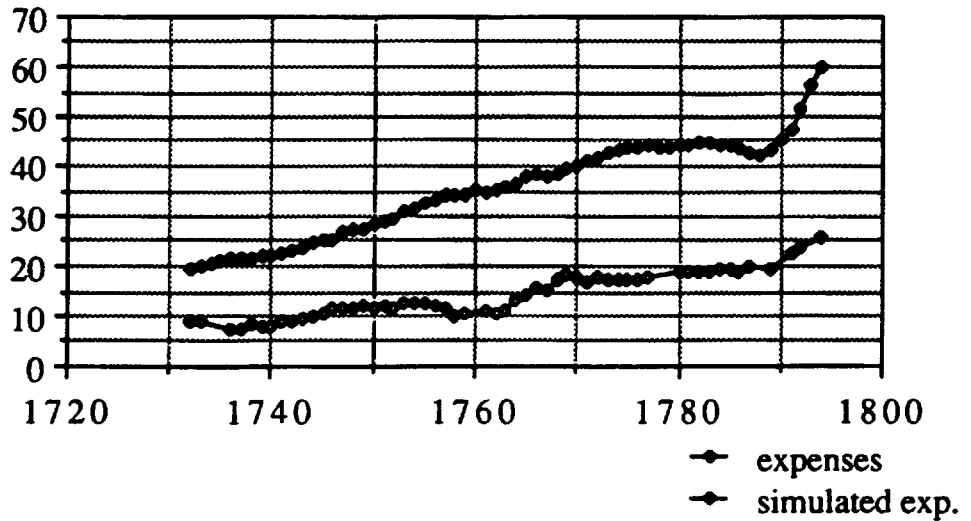


The amount of money available per foundling, except for three years, was always less than 7000 reals. In the years between 1726-47 it remained above 6000 reals (except for one year), but between 1780-1794 the situation worsened, the sum staying below 5500, except for 1794, when the number of total foundlings in the charge of the institution descended abruptly. The only escape from a chronically deficitary situation was the fact that mortality of foundlings decreased the number of those receiving assistance.

Graph 4.21. is based on a purely fictional situation: I have assumed that each child deposited at the wheel a nurse was to be paid for seven years. The purpose was to calculate which would have been the House's expenses if there had been no infant mortality. I proceeded by summing up sequential cohorts of seven years of entrances of children, adding the foundlings arriving that year and subtracting the foundlings seven years earlier.

Graph 4.21.

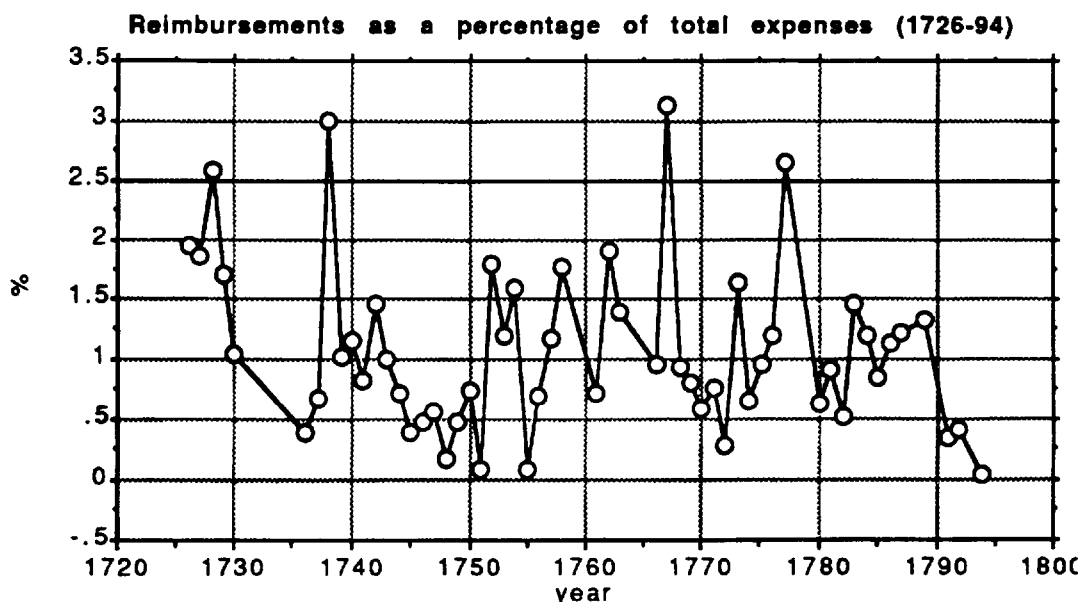
Expenses if all foundlings had lived up to 7 years old



This data seem to suggest that mortality can be considered as an imperative for the system of abandonment: if foundlings had all survived expenses would have increased by 200% to 370%.

Finally, Graph 4.22. demonstrates that foundlings were a public expense. The weight of the reimbursements made by parents in order to recover their children was minimal for the expenses of the house. The private contribution to assistance for foundlings was irrelevant, especially if we also recall that no significant donations were made during the century.

Graph 4.22.



The percentage of the reimbursed sums in the general expenses is very low, only passing 2% in four years. In the majority of the 69 years covered by the graph its impact on general expenses did not even reach 1%.

We have seen the amount of money spent on foundlings by the council. The most interesting calculation to be made remains, however, impossible to estimate: the weight of the foundling home in the council's budget. The council's funds, derived mainly from local taxes, were destined for specific scopes and not subject to a general account. It would need a specific, time consuming and sophisticated study of the tax policies of the council¹⁵¹.

¹⁵¹ I took advice from the director of the A.H.M.P. (Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto), who discouraged such research on the grounds of the disorganisation of the council's finances during the eighteenth century.

Chapter 5 - Abandonment and Child Rearing by Cohorts

The production of sources and choice of samples

The sources

Production of written texts leads inevitably to the analysis of power relationships within a group. Historical sources, as Jacques le Goff has pointed out, are sources of power. Whoever writes down a fact, ascribes a certain weighting of rights and duties among the persons recorded. All sources are the product of a complex process of production that transforms every information into an indirect one, that is, a representation of the initial fact.

Any document establishes a link in time between the members of the group: its purpose is to serve as a reference in the future, its capacities of regulation being more or less fixed at the time of its production. So, the primary function of the document is to draw a link between acts that took place at different moments in time. Several examples can illustrate this point. Thus, parish registers in Portugal could:

- prove degrees of consanguinity that might allow or forbid marriage between individuals;
- give access to public posts by proving absence of Jewish ancestors;
- prove a legitimate birth, essential to access to certain public posts or to inheritance, at least in the aristocratic classes.

Again, status animarum controlled religious observance among parishioners.

So what were the uses of registers related to foundlings? These were formed mainly by two types of registers: the "Livros

de Entrada", registers of children, and the "Livros de Saída", concerned with the rearing of children by nurses.

Let us begin with the "Livros de Entrada":

- these could be used as baptism registers and thus as proof of filiation; they could serve as identifiers for an eventual claim by their original families.

As to the "Livros de Saídas", they identified wet-nurses, registered their payments and controlled their behaviour in relation to the hospital and the children they had in charge.

If sources intend to establish communication between persons at different moments in time, they should answer traditional questions like: *who tells what to whom, when, how and why*. Let us apply these questions to our two major types of sources.

a - "Livros de Entrada"

Who: one wet-nurse came to the "Provedor"’s house to report on the children abandoned in the last 24 hours. She was responsible for most of the information gathered, including the placing in sequence of foundlings by order of arrival. The clerk wrote down all entries in the registers, one for each child according to time of abandonment, and finally the Provedor signed every register.

What:

circumstances of abandonment:	day, month and year
	time
	place
personal data:	sex
	age
	colour of skin
	state of health

	handicaps
identifying tokens:	transcription of notes left with the infant
	clothing
	abandoner's speech at the moment of abandonment
baptism data:	date
	place
	name, address, occupation and marital status of godparents
	name of priest responsible for baptism
references:	number and page of the Livro de Saídas where the upbringing of each child can be followed
additional information:	death in the Hospital
	search by parents
	other

The last two items (references and additional information) always appear as side remarks and they are always written after the initial registration.

Until 1796 these Entry Registers include children in a different situation from the foundlings, that is, children whose parents are given a free lactation paid at the administration's expenses: we shall call them breastfeeding allowances. In registers of such kind, parents are identified through name, address,

marital status and occupation, the child (name, age, sex), and the motives for lactation are referred to.

To whom: it is important to state to whom the information was addressed and who had access to it. In fact, direct and free consulting of sources was exclusive to administrators, especially those in the upper rank offices. Secrecy was needed even because some information was confidential, such as data on parents, for example. Users of the institution, such as children's families, wet-nurses or 'adopters' could only have access to the information through the mediation of the institution's officers. As we shall see, registers were also produced to match administrators' needs and have an administrative function.

When: registers were, or should have been (if the administration was careless about this point) drawn up every day, generally in the morning after the baptism of children in the cathedral had taken place.

Where: all the books were initially kept in the Provedor's house, thus being liable to be transferred frequently from house to house, as the post was for one year. Later in the century the archive was to be moved to the hospital's headquarters¹.

How: as children could be brought to the room where the register was being compiled², some information derived from the officers' direct observation. Data such as sex, handicaps or colour could be confirmed by administrators and they could estimate the child's age. It is important to stress that, except when date of birth is referred to in the abandonment notes, the information on age is always the product of the personnel's estimates, the male administrators relying often on the wet-nurses' judgements in this matter. Nevertheless, most of the information included in the registers is the result of mediation by agents such as wet-nurses or doctors. It was the wet-nurse's responsibility to keep the identifying objects of the child from his moment of arrival, without attributing them to another child, as well as stating the

¹ The date of this transfer is not known.

² It is still unclear whether their presence before the Provedor was compulsory or not.

time of arrival. She could also reproduce any conversation held with the abandoner at the moment of deposition at the wheel³. She could also add some extra information such as that deriving from gossip; such sentences always began with the expression "it is said that" ("constou"). The medical staff from the main hospital (Hospital de D.Lopo) might also be requested to examine some children in order to report on infectious diseases such as syphilis.

Why:

- to eliminate possible misidentifying between foundlings;
- to allow foundlings and their descendants the possibility of obtaining certificates of filiation needed to marry or inherit;
- to justify the financial resources obtained from the municipality;
- to permit the linking between abandonment or the child's identity and his upbringing, by including a reference to the "Livros de Saída".

After this analysis the researcher should be able to detect distortions in the content of the sources and assert the validity of the information. Only deep contact with the sources, together with the study of the institution that is produced them can allow a knowledge of their weaknesses and variations in content.

Contact with these registers leads to awareness of situations, such as:

1. Some children were abandoned more than once. This is very rare, nevertheless it prevents the historian from identifying the number of foundlings with the number of children. Repeated abandonment of the same child might occur in two circumstances:

a) the foundling was given to his mother, either because she had claimed him or because the administration had compelled her

³ It was relatively common to say some words when the child was without a note, consisting mostly of name that the abandoner wished to give to the child or reference to a previous baptism, followed by the respective Christian name.

to take him back (generally having discovered that she was his mother by gossip or enquiry). She then placed him on the wheel again. Some of these cases were detected by the wet-nurse who recognized children and reported the occurrence to the administrators. Such cases could occur once or twice a year on average.

b) second abandonment was made by the child's wet-nurse who, not being willing to renounce the child's upbringing officially deposited him at the wheel. The reasons for this are not very clear, as the wet-nurse lost money (she could receive a salary corresponding to the period of time she had kept the child). Such cases are even more rare, occurring generally when the nurse was about to leave the city in a hurry.

2) Two different categories of children are mixed in the registers, such as "expostos" e "lactados". The general graphs (see chapter 4) do not take account of this confusion, but "lactados" can not have exceeded 5% of the total number of children. They cost the same amount of money as did foundlings, but only for a period of 15 to 24 months whilst abandoned children were a charge on the institution until the age of 7 years.

3) All the information given by the wet-nurses might be distorted by their own lapses of memory, carelessness, exchange of identities, subtraction of objects (specially silver or gold pieces of jewelry) and false declarations.

b - "Livros de Saída"

After being registered in the Entry Books, children stayed in the "Casa da Roda" waiting to be given to a country wet-nurse. These nurses were known as "definitive" because, unless the child died or they gave up his upbringing, they were supposed to take care of the foundling until he was no longer under the institution's supervision, on his seventh birthday. These women were registered, together with the foundlings they took, in the "Livros de Saídas"⁴.

⁴ "Saída" means departure from the hospital and it is the antonym of "entrada" (entry).

Who: registers were elaborated by the clerk (or secretary) and the treasurer. It is important to stress that the main officer, the "provedor" did not always participate on the registration or he did so only at its end (i.e. at the death of the child or end of his care). It was clearly a routine that inferior officers could perform, leaving for the Provedor the crucial moments in the passage of children through the hospital, such as entry and release.

What: a) summary identification of the child, referring to the register of the "Livro de Entrada" and repeating data that allowed linking between the two sources (name, date of entry, colour, age);

b) identification of the wet-nurse, including direct information such as name and civil status, name and occupation of the husband and address; and indirect information given by her parish priest (age of last born child, which was essential to determine the age of breastmilk, cleanness of blood, and good behaviour⁵) or a doctor (on arrival, her milk and state of health might be examined, at the request of the administrators);

Identifying items for unmarried wet-nurses differed from those of married or widowed ones, because, since there was no data on the husbands, they declared the names of their parents and sometimes stated an occupation (such as dressmaker or weaver).

c) registers of payments: these were made with irregular periodicity. As a rule, the women should be paid every three months, but as the journey to Porto was most often inconvenient on account of the distance, they might come after 6, 9, 12, 15 months or even more. If there were extra days, these were added to the final sum. The tendency was to make payments in round numbers corresponding to whole months: only when the upbringing was interrupted was the sum of the extra number of days added.

⁵ It is likely that these parish certificates also confirmed personal data previously mentioned, as there was often the danger of getting false identity statements from the wet-nurses.

d) side notes on an extreme variety of occurrences:

- death of the wet-nurse or husband;
- marriage or remarriage of the wet-nurse;
- comments on the child's health, clothing, religious education (i.e. ability to pray); observations on physical particularities;
- chemist's expenses with reference to some medicines used and the ailments they cured (syphilis, smallpox, skin diseases, etc...);
- diets;
- fraudulent behaviour⁶;
- motives for interruption of upbringing.

e) Final observations

One could list the motives for ending the register in the "Livro de Saída" as the following:

a) death of the child generally referring to the death certificate issued by the parish priest of the wet-nurse's parish. This also includes information on the place of burial. The originals of these certificates are no longer in the archive, but their content has been transcribed in the register.

b) "criação sem soldo" or "para privilégio"⁷: If a wet-nurse offered her services without payment or a family fostered a child after weaning, Portuguese law envisaged compensatory privileges, such as for example exemption of her husband or children from military service. Sometimes this happened while the child was still on lactation: the fostering family took the responsibility of breastfeeding the child, mostly by paying a wet-nurse at their

⁶ On account of the importance attributed to them, they will be analysed in detail.

⁷ These two expressions mean respectively: "up-bringing without fees" and "for privilege".

own expense. The choice of the woman was their initiative, but they had to report her identity to the administration (together with additional information attached to it, such as marital status, name and occupation of husband, address).

This form of upbringing was very close to adoption, as the family who fostered the child was not supposed to give the child back to the administration after his seventh birthday⁸.

c) "complete" upbringing: normally, the Misericórdia's responsibility ended on the child's seventh birthday. Only when the child was ill or had any mental or physical handicap could the upbringing be prolonged by one or two years (generally one) on the administrators' decision.

In theory, and according to Portuguese law, the placement of foundlings after seven⁹ was the attribute of the Judges of Orphans. Porto clearly and consciously disregarded this rule, probably because the Misericórdia was an institution with equal (perhaps more) credibility. Nevertheless, it is sometimes stated that the persons who kept the child should report him at the age of twelve to the Judge of the Orphans who exercised the office in their circumscription.

As the Misericórdia took this responsibility of placing children after seven, there is a reference to the persons who kept the child after this age. Many of such children were kept by their wet-nurse; others were given to families or to craftsmen workshops. In either case, a more or less formal commitment took place, its formality increasing throughout the century¹⁰. The parties in this contract were the Misericórdia and the fosterers, who signed at the bottom (the head of the foster parents and the

⁸ See discussion on fostering and adoption further in this chapter.

⁹ Seven years old is a key age in the attitudes towards childhood in the Ancien Regime. It was the time when children could confess (and thus begin to be referred to in status animarum) or give consent to arrogation in roman law (this law, although jurisprudence still mentioned it in Spain, did not seem to be practised). See García González, Juan, 'Expositos, beneficencia y prohijamento', *Estudios jurídicos en homenaje al Professor Santa Cruz Teijero*, Valencia, Universidad de Valencia, 1974, p. 317.

¹⁰ Contents of this contract will be analysed further .

Provedor). In general, this was the last information given on the child's life course - unless he was brought back to the Misericórdia on account of a failed fostering or his parents' claim, trace of the foundling is lost in the "Casa da Roda"'s documentary sources. It is a crucial moment because it ascribes civil responsibility to a foster family and allows us to study what became of foundlings at the age of seven.

d) claim by parents: parents with the necessary proof could reclaim their children whenever they pleased. There are cases of foundlings who were transferred from their foster families to their mothers long after the age of seven. Unlike foster parents, they did not have to take any commitment regarding the child's well being. They are identified (unless they asked for secrecy, a facility allowed by the Misericórdia¹¹) and information is given on restitution of expenses. As most parents could not afford to pay the debt to the Misericórdia, they had to bring poverty certificates¹². These statements of poverty offer a good picture of the parents' economic conditions, even if they are not wholly reliable, given that the parish priest was normally trying to help his parishioners.

To whom: registers were meant to serve the administrators in order to check payments and the financial budget, and thus were permanent consulting material for officials, who had free access to them. The books could also be used to locate children, in case they were sought after by their parents. Wet-nurses could also be traced, and the registers established contracts between them and the administration. Access to parents or wet-nurses was of course mediated by the administrators.

When: the register was elaborated at the moment when the child was given to a definitive wet-nurse and information on the child and wet-nurse continued until the upbringing was over or the child was withdrawn from the Misericórdia responsibility. At intervals of multiples of three (6, 9, 12, 15 or more months) a new

¹¹ Some priests worked as parents' solicitors under secret of confession.

¹² Issued by parish priests, they are referred to in the books, but the originals are no longer in the archive.

payment was registered. The wet-nurse (sometimes her husband) presented the child or brought a certificate issued by her parish priest stating that the foundling was alive and in good health¹³.

How: the initial contract was drawn by the "Provedor" or the scribe. Payments were added by the treasurer and the final notes were done by the "Provedor" who, due to his high position, was responsible for all the registers.

Why: • financial control;

- supervision of wet-nurses' behaviour;

- checking on children's wellbeing

- to allow the calculation of the total sums spent, as well as the verification of dates of payments in order to make readjustments;

- registers could also be used to eliminate wet-nurses judged to be damaging to the hospital on account of dishonest behaviour, although, due to the difficulty of finding such women, administrators could seldom afford such a luxury.

- to locate the child in the countryside, to check if he was still alive, who took care of him, etc..

All these purposes required a direct cooperation between the administration and the parish priests: the latter worked as essential "linchpins" between the hospital and the breastfeeding areas. If there was complicity between them and the wet-nurses, the interest of the administrators could be damaged¹⁴. If (deliberately or not) they allowed the wet-nurse to replace her dead foundling by her child or vice-versa, she could go on receiving unwarranted payments. The same happened if he did not declare the foundling's death.

¹³ The originals are no longer in the archive.

¹⁴ See Cavallo, Sandra, 'Strategie politiche e familiari intorno al baliatico. Il monopolio dei bambini abbandonati nel Canavese tra Sei e Settecento', *Quaderni Storici*, n. 53, 1983, p. 393.

Problems of data compiling and linking

In some cases, more frequent in the beginning of the 18th century, the link between the "Livro de Entrada" and the "Livro de Saída" is missing, which makes it impossible to follow the child's upbringing.

Other problems are strictly related to what Bourdieu¹⁵ characterized as "habitus", that is to say, non formal behaviours homologated by group consensus. We can include here, false statements by wet-nurses which are impossible to check, as well as exchange of children. This consisted either of replacing the foundling by another child, coming to receive payments with the "wrong" child, or passing the child to another woman who breastfed him on the basis of a private agreement. Such procedures come to light in the sources only rarely, but it is probable that they were common practice. On the other hand, it is impossible to check priests' declarations, for they are the only source of the information given. Again, official transfers of wet-nurses create problems within the structure of files, as each child could have a variable number of wet-nurses, ranging from one to five or more.

Problems of "identifying people in the past"¹⁶: the same wet-nurse can appear in the sources during several years (up to twenty). Although some repeated information allows linking, that is not always the case. In the course of several years, there can be variation in name of the wet-nurse or her parents (for single nurses), but also some features can change across time, such as marital status, occupation of husband or address. If this information is carefully compiled, problems of homonymy can be compensated by such additional information. But in general, such problems are common to all historical sources with nominal data, and shall not be discussed here.

¹⁵ See note 1 of chapter 3.

¹⁶ Wrigley, E. A. (editor), *Identifying People in the Past*, London, Edward Arnold, 1973.

Some features of the process of the recruitment of the children and wet-nurses are not clear. It is certain that the order of arrival was not respected when it was time for putting out the children: some children got a wet-nurse the day after abandonment, others who entered earlier waited for weeks or even months. Who chose the child to be given to the wet-nurse? The "Provedor"? The internal wet-nurses? Or the definitive one? The child's health could play a role at the moment of leaving the hospital, because sick children would not leave until they got better. But it would be interesting to discover whether networks of complicity played a part in the fact that some children waited longer than others.

Another dubious point is the role played by the wet-nurses' husbands. Did their presence with a parish certificate avoid their wives' trip? This is likely, because some of them were in the trading business (boatmen, peddlars).

Absence of regularity in payments was tolerated, not least because the administration could be interested in delaying payments for financial reasons. Only when the administrators felt the need to see the child might they request the wet-nurse to bring the child to their presence on the next visit.

Another point which is still not clear is the character of the visits made by administrators' emissaries, the "caminheiros", men who traveled in the countryside establishing the contacts between the wet-nurses and the hospital. It is still not clear whether they made any regular visits with the purpose of superintending the wet-nurses or if they only acted in specific situations at the request of the administrators. It is likely that their functions were merely "postal" and that control was a secondary task, only performed in cases of suspicion.

Choice of samples

After the aggregative analysis undertaken in Chapter 4 (section on children), there was a need to utilise the sources for a detailed analysis in foundlings and wet-nurses throughout the century. For such purposes, four samples of three years were taken every 25 years: 1699-1701, 1724-1726, 1749-1751 and 1774-1776. The sample totals 5920 foundlings, together with all the users of the institution who were connected to them in the sources: parents, wet-nurses and their husbands and 'adopters'. The aim was to study the Hospital as an institution which was used by a whole range of persons who performed different roles. An attempt was made to insert the different categories of roles in the contexts to which they belong.

In terms of the representativity of the whole sample, the calculations are shown in the Table 5.1. for each cohort of 25 years:

Table 5.1.
Sample of children analysed

<u>Years</u>	<u>N. of years</u>	<u>Children</u>	<u>%</u>
1699-1701	3	433	7.75
1699-1723	25	5589	
1724-1726	3	1046	9.17
1724-1748	25	11407	
1749-1751	3	1818	9.72
1749-1773	25	18708	
1774-1776	3	2623	9.81
1774-1799	26	26730	
Total of cohorts	12	5920	9.48
1699-1799	101	62434	

The contents of the data are relatively homogeneous for all the whole samples, although the information gets more dense and complete approaching the end of the century. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the registers reveal coherence since the beginning of the hospital: the basic procedures of registering remained almost unchanged for a century in the life of the institution.

The individuals inside the hospital

Foundlings

We have seen that two different categories of children were assisted, although they shared the same record books: foundlings - abandoned children whose upbringing was to extend until they were seven years old- and children on allowance, that is, the offspring of families in crisis whose mothers could not breastfeed them. In this category children were not abandoned but

temporarily cared for by the administration, and were supposed to be dismissed when weaned. The presence of these two types of assisted children has an inflationary effect on the curves of abandonment. Because these two categories belong to different juridical and social realities they have been separated in order to restore the real size of the population which was in fact abandoned. Children on breastfeeding allowances will be dealt with in the next section.

This chapter is on foundlings as individuals as seen through the statistics: thus it is descriptive, as it tries not to explain reality but to understand who these foundlings were to the extent that this is allowed by the sources. With some recent exceptions, few studies have done serious calculations of this population: most of them rely on 19th century statistics or on simple rapid counting adequate for aggregative analysis. Statistics have the disadvantage of transforming an individual into a number: this chapter is no exception. But it will certainly help to settle some features about these nearly 6000 children and how institutional abandonment evolved during the century.

The issues concerning foundlings that shall be dealt with are:

- sex (table 5.2.):
- age at the moment of abandonment (table 5.3.) ;
- colour (table 5.4.);
- distribution of entrances according to period and time of the day (table 5.5.);
- health conditions (table 5.6.);
- baptism (table 5.7.);
- possibility of retrieving foundlings in case of search by their families (table 5.8.);
- differential mortality by age (tables 5.9. and 5.10) and by situation (table 5.11.);

- number of foundlings who had "borrowing wet-nurses" (table 5.12.)

- time spent by foundlings with "borrowing wet-nurses" between 1774-76 (table 5.13.);

- situation when the child left the house (table 5.14).

Sex ratios confirm the tendency explored in Chapter 4 namely that a balanced proportion of both sexes were abandoned: if there is inbalance, it tends to favour boys. Table 5.2. shows that only in 1701 did the number of girls exceed significantly the number of boys; in turn, 1699 showed a sex ratio of 136.8. All the other years indicate values that can be considered normal - only in the last cohort (1774-76) was there a homogeneous tendency to abandon more males than females, with a sex ratio keeping steadily above 120.

Table 5.2.
Sex ratio of foundlings

	Males	Females	Und. sex	Total	Sex ratio
1699	78	57	-	135	136.84
1700	53	48	-	101	110.42
1701	84	103	-	187	81.55
total	215	208	-	423	103.37
1724	164	159	-	323	103.14
1725	198	152	-	350	103.26
1726	184	176	-	360	104.55
total	546	487	-	1033	112.11
1749	293	265	-	558	110.57
1750	305	274	1	580	111.31
1751	293	294	1	588	99.66
total	891	833	2	1726	106.96
1774	502	392	-	894	128.06
1775	454	363	-	817	125.07
1776	471	378	-	849	124.60
total	1427	1133	-	2560	125.95
totals	3079	2661	2	5742	115.71

Ages stated were seldom the result of abandoners' declarations: they were produced by the male administrators' estimates, often helped by the wet-nurses. A significant attraction to the following ages can be noticed: 3 days, 8 days, 15 days, 1 month, 1 year and 2 years. The attributed age was important to determine the end of the upbringing as it was supposed to end on the child's seven birthday and not on the fulfilment of seven years of assistance by the institution.

Report of ages of children was not compulsory for the administrators during the century: looking at table 5.3., we realize that during the first two cohorts they relied on the clerks to decide when to register ages. It is also likely that they did so when foundlings did not match the normal age at abandonment: i.e. new born to first week of life. If a considerable proportion of them are reported to be newborn, this is because the text of the record gave me the information that the child was in the first days of life. The fact that this negligence in recording ages exists is in itself interesting, as it accounts for an unawareness of the child's individuality, or for the assumption that almost all children were expected to be newborns.

In the two last cohorts (see table 5.3.) about 85% of the foundlings were less than one month old, and the majority of these were abandoned a few days after birth. This means that the decision about abandonment had been taken before child delivery: it is hard to conceive that a mother (or someone else for her) should decide to abandon the child only a few hours after the birth. In all the years under study the number of children aged more than six months did not exceed 6% of the total: only in those cases could one apply the hypothesis of a worsening of economic hardship.

Table 5.3.
Age of foundlings at the moment of abandonment (number of days)
(Cohorts 1699-1701 and 1724-1726)

	>0	0-4	4-30	30-180	180-365	365-730	730+	total	missing values
1699	-	11	6	9	-	3	1	30	105
%	-	36.67	20.0	30.0	-	10.0	3.33	100	
1700	-	5	1	7	-	-	-	13	88
%	-	38.46	7.69	53.85	-	-	-	100	
1701	-	18	5	9	4	4	4	44	143
%	-	40.91	11.36	20.45	9.09	9.09	9.09	99.9	
total	-	34	12	25	4	7	5	87	336
%	-	39.08	13.79	28.74	4.6	8.05	5.75	100.01	
1724	-	3	1	3	-	2	2	11	312
%	-	27.27	9.09	27.27	-	18.18	18.18	99.99	
1725	-	15	3	7	2	-	2	29	321
%	-	51.72	10.34	24.14	6.9	-	6.9	100	
1726	-	42	15	23	9	-	5	94	266
%	-	44.68	15.96	24.47	9.57	-	5.32	100	
total	-	60	19	33	11	2	9	134	899
%	-	44.78	14.18	24.63	8.21	1.49	6.72	100.01	

Table 5.3. (continued)
 Age of foundlings at the moment of abandonment (number of days)
 (Cohorts 1749-1751 and 1774-1776)

	>0	0-4	4-30	30-180	180-365	365-730	730+	total	missing values
1749	7	335	134	59	7	6	2	550	8
%	1.27	60.91	24.36	10.73	1.27	1.09	0.36	100	
1750	10	352	121	55	11	12	12	573	7
%	1.75	61.43	21.12	9.6	1.92	2.09	2.09	100	
1751	17	363	110	63	18	11	6	588	-
%	2.89	61.73	18.71	10.71	3.06	1.87	1.02	100	
total	34	1050	365	177	36	29	20	1711	15
%	1.99	61.37	21.33	10.34	2.1	1.69	1.17	99.9	
1774	21	521	242	71	15	9	13	892	2
%	2.35	58.41	27.13	7.96	1.68	1.01	1.46	100	
1775	24	483	186	88	13	14	9	817	-
%	2.94	59.12	22.77	10.77	1.59	1.71	1.1	100	
1776	19	508	207	83	10	10	10	847	2
%	2.24	59.98	24.44	9.8	1.18	1.18	1.18	100	
total	64	1512	635	242	38	33	32	2556	4
%	2.5	59.15	24.84	9.47	1.49	1.29	1.25	99.9	

The number of coloured foundlings, either black or mulatto was low when compared to general numbers, although it increases during the century (see Table 5.4.). Mulatto children were more frequent than black ones (100 and 42 respectively). Nevertheless, coloured foundlings were irrelevant as a sub-group: they only represent 2.5% of the total number of children analyzed.

Table 5.4.
Colour of foundlings

	Black	Mulatto	Both	% (in total n. of foundlings)
1699	-	1	1	0.74
1700	-	-	-	-
1701	-	2	2	1.07
Total	-	3	2	0.71
1724	-	3	3	0.93
1725	1	2	3	0.86
1726	-	5	5	1.39
Total	1	10	11	1.06
1749	3	9	12	2.15
1750	2	11	13	2.24
1751	3	10	13	2.38
Total	8	30	38	2.20
1774	14	25	39	4.36
1775	14	16	30	3.67
1776	5	16	21	2.47
Total	33	57	90	3.52
Total	42	100	142	2.47

Abandoning was an after dark activity (table 5.5.): secrecy was the essence of the business and, except among the last cohort (1774-1776) very few children were deposited at the wheel in the afternoon, probably because it was common practice to close it during the day. The evening hours in which the children were abandoned changed during the year according to annual variations in the time of sunset. Even children abandoned in the morning tended to precede the sunrise.

Table 5.5.
Period of the day when foundlings were deposited at the wheel

	Early morning	%	Morning	%	Afternoon	%	Night	%	total	missing values
1699	9	9.47	27	28.42	1	1.05	58	61.05	95	40
1700	10	13.16	15	19.74	-	-	51	67.11	76	25
1701	36	27.48	16	12.21	-	-	79	60.31	131	56
total	55	18.21	58	19.21	1	0.33	188	62.25	302	121
1724	21	6.75	19	6.11	-	-	271	87.14	311	12
1725	31	9.01	31	9.01	4	1.16	278	80.81	344	6
1726	40	11.87	22	6.53	2	0.59	273	81.00	337	23
total	92	9.27	72	7.26	6	0.6	822	82.86	992	41
1749	2	0.38	80	15.07	-	-	449	84.56	531	27
1750	34	6.01	75	13.25	2	0.35	455	80.39	566	14
1751	42	7.30	60	10.44	-	-	473	82.26	575	13
total	78	4.67	215	12.86	2	0.12	1377	82.36	1672	54
1774	72	8.06	77	8.62	64	7.17	680	76.15	893	1
1775	60	7.34	87	10.65	56	6.85	614	75.15	817	-
1776	60	7.08	103	12.15	70	8.25	615	72.52	848	1
total	192	7.51	267	10.44	190	7.43	1909	74.63	2558	2
totals	417	7.55	612	11.08	199	3.6	4296	77.77	5524	218

The practice of abandoning dead children (see Table 5.6.) seems to increase between the first and the second half of the century, from 1-3% to 7%. It is possible that some of these children died during transport to the city but some notes leave no doubt that abandoners knew that the only assistance they would get would be a free funeral (see section on notes). If abandonment of dead children accounts for an increasing respect for the child¹⁷, this hypothesis could be confirmed by this evidence. As for children who entered suffering from desperate health conditions, they did not reach 1% of the total number of foundlings, except in the last cohort (1774-76), where they account for 2.5 % of the total.

Table 5.6.
Dead and dying foundlings on the moment of abandonment

	"Sane"	%	Dead	%	Dying	%	Total
1699	133	98.52	-	-	2	1.48	135
1700	100	99.01	-	-	1	0.99	101
1701	181	96.79	5	2.67	1	0.54	187
total	414	97.87	5	1.18	4	0.95	423
1724	315	97.52	8	2.48	-	-	323
1725	345	98.57	4	1.14	1	0.29	350
1726	337	93.61	17	4.72	6	1.67	360
total	997	96.52	29	2.81	7	0.68	1033
1749	513	91.94	38	6.81	7	1.25	558
1750	530	91.38	47	8.10	3	0.52	580
1751	542	92.18	42	7.14	4	0.68	588
total	1585	91.83	127	7.36	14	0.81	1726
1774	810	90.60	63	7.05	21	2.35	894
1775	735	89.96	67	8.20	15	1.84	817
1776	779	91.76	43	5.06	27	3.18	849
total	2324	90.78	173	6.76	63	2.46	2560
total	5320	92.65	334	5.82	88	1.53	5742

¹⁷ See chapter 1, p.2 and chapter 4, pp. 163-4.

Table 5.7. confirms the fact that welfare in pre-industrial times was strongly shaped by religion: the main concern of the services provided for foundlings was awarding them a Christian existence and hence baptizing them, even if they had probably already been baptized before abandonment. Only 1.4% of the foundlings were not baptized, most of them because they had a baptism certificate that was judged as authentic by the administrators. Such recognition was based on a handwriting familiar to the staff. From 97 to 99% of the foundlings were baptized at the cathedral and a few received an emergency baptism due to bad health conditions carried out by the wet-nurse inside the house (0.3 to 0.6%). It is possible that wet-nurses performed such baptisms for a higher number of foundlings, but the only cases reported were those of children who died before they could be taken to the cathedral in order to confirm the sacrament by a solemn baptism.

Table 5.7.
Baptism of foundlings

	No	%	Yes	%	nurse	%	Total	Missing
1699	-		134		-		134	1
1700	2		98		-		100	1
1701	2		180		-		182	-
total	4	0.96	412	99.04	-		416	2
1724	6		309		-		315	-
1725	2		341		-		343	3
1726	2		336		3		341	2
total	10	1.0	986	98.70	3	0.30	999	5
1749	19		498		3		520	-
1750	10		520		3		533	-
1751	6		537		3		546	-
total	35	2.19	1555	97.25	9	0.56	1599	-
1774	7		821		3		831	-
1775	6		743		1		750	-
1776	12		786		5		803	3
total	25	1.05	2350	98.57	9	0.38	2384	3
totals	74	1.37	5303	98.24	21	0.39	5398	10

Children tended to be abandoned with signs that would make possible a retrieval by their families. Besides garments, beads, medals and a wide range of other "personal" objects, abandoners and recipients of children often also exchanged verbal communication (see Table 5.8.). This communication could be either oral - conversations held at the moment of abandonment, while the two parties could not see each other - or written: notes that were left wrapped with the child's clothes. While notes were material proof and tended to be transcribed in the Entry Registers throughout the century - even if they might be ultimately lost or exchanged - conversations could be easily forgotten or misreported by nurses: the percentages show a variability, especially between 1724-26 that suggests that not all the administrators took care in transcribing them.

It is striking that only about 40% of foundlings (see Table 5.8.) were deprived of any report of verbal communication at the moment of abandonment: the analysis of the description of their "personal" objects, which could also function as identification items, would show that very few children would be lost without trace in the "crowds" of foundlings the institution took care of.

Much has been written about mortality of foundlings: voices outraged with sorrow for the overwhelming majority of deaths, reaching 80 and even 90% of the foundlings. The truth is that most calculations were done simply by subtracting the number of dead children during the year for the number of children entered in the same period. The calculations risked distortion as the dead children were cumulative, that is, they had been abandoned over a longer period of time, that could go up to seven years or more, the years in which they were under the institutions' supervision. On the other side, few studies of infant mortality comparing foundlings and non-foundlings have been done up to now.

Table 5.8.
Verbal communication at the moment of abandonment

	no note	%	with note	%	conversation	%	dubious	%	TOTAL
1699	68		65		2		-		135
1700	47		49		5		-		101
1701	75		106		6		-		187
total	190	44.91	220	52.01	13	3.07	-	-	423
1724	81		152		89		1		323
1725	183		160		3		4		350
1726	125		188		47		-		360
total	389	37.66	500	48.40	139	13.46	5	0.48	1033
1749	137		307		114		-		558
1750	140		337		101		2		580
1751	140		313		133		2		588
total	417	24.16	957	55.45	348	20.16	4	0.23	1726
1774	385		468		41		-		894
1775	306		473		38		-		817
1776	334		468		46		1	0.12	849
total	1025	40.03	1409	55.04	125	4.88	1	0.04	2560
total	2021	35.20	3086	53.74	625	10.88	10	0.17	5742

Table 5.9.
Mortality by age of foundlings (in intervals of one year)

	<1	<2	<3	<4	<5	<6	<7	7+	Total
1699	57	2	1	2	3	2	1	-	68
1700	56	7	3	1	-	-	-	-	67
1701	109	6	3	2	3	-	-	-	123
total	222	15	7	5	6	2	1	-	258
%	86.05	5.81	2.71	1.94	2.33	0.77	0.39	-	100
1724	87	34	22	4	7	2	-	-	156
1725	118	33	15	8	3	4	1	2	184
1726	108	24	26	3	4	5	1	4	175
total	313	91	63	15	14	11	2	6	515
%	60.78	17.67	12.23	2.91	2.72	2.14	0.39	1.16	100
1749	192	47	24	11	7	6	7	2	296
1750	175	47	26	18	15	4	5	2	292
1751	212	45	21	20	8	7	2	2	317
total	579	139	71	49	30	17	14	6	905
%	63.98	15.36	7.85	5.41	3.31	1.88	1.55	0.66	100
1774	354	74	28	8	8	8	9	8	497
1775	230	52	39	17	22	11	9	5	385
1776	314	64	32	22	8	14	4	14	472
total	898	190	99	47	38	33	22	27	1354
%	66.32	14.03	7.31	3.47	2.81	2.44	1.62	1.99	100
Totals	2012	435	240	116	88	63	39	39	3032
%	66.36	14.35	7.92	3.83	2.90	2.08	1.28	1.28	100

Tables 5.9 and 5.10. have a close look at the age at death of foundlings. They confirm what has been affirmed for other foundling hospitals: in Porto mortality was higher during the first year of life (66%), still meaningful in the second (14%) but it dropped constantly in the next five years (see table 5.9.). In the first year of life (see table 5.10), mortality within the first six months corresponded to 85% of the total. The first month of life was undoubtedly the most dangerous: 41% of deaths during the first year of life occurred in it. One of the striking issues is that mortality varied little from cohort to cohort, except for 1699-1701, when mortality during the first year was at its peak (see table 5.9.)

Table 5.10.
Foundlings less than a year old - mortality in months

	< 1	1-3	4-6	7-9	10-12	Total
1699	23	9	14	7	4	57
1700	31	12	7	2	4	56
1701	46	38	16	7	2	109
total	100	59	37	16	10	222
%	45.04	26.58	16.67	7.21	4.50	100
1724	36	19	18	6	8	87
1725	51	22	15	11	19	118
1726	38	21	28	13	8	108
total	125	62	61	30	35	313
%	39.94	19.81	19.49	9.58	11.18	100
1749	72	41	57	17	5	192
1750	88	34	35	11	7	175
1751	99	42	28	21	22	212
total	259	117	120	49	34	579
%	44.73	20.21	20.73	8.46	5.87	100
1774	131	87	72	33	31	354
1775	75	55	63	19	18	230
1776	133	95	49	19	18	314
total	339	237	184	71	67	898
%	37.75	26.39	20.49	7.91	7.46	100
totals	823	475	402	166	146	2012
%	40.90	23.61	19.98	8.25	7.26	100

Table 5.11.
Mortality of foundlings by situation

	0	1	2	3	4	total	total n.	% of total				
1699	-	24	-	37	9	70	135					
1700	-	24	-	31	11	66	101					
1701	5	56	-	51	16	128	187					
total	5	104	-	119	36	264	423	62.41				
1724	8	13	-	127	17	165	323					
1725	4	26	-	140	14	184	350					
1726	17	27	-	134	9	187	360					
total	29	66	-	401	40	536	1033	51.89				
1749	38	49	-	209	36	332	558					
1750	47	54	-	216	16	333	580					
1751	42	39	-	260	13	354	588					
total	127	142	-	685	65	1019	1726	59.04				
1774	63	47	137	282	24	553	894					
1775	67	29	21	318	11	446	817					
1776	43	68	131	239	23	504	849					
total	173	144	289	839	58	1503	2560	58.71				
totals	334	582	456	289	5.03	2044	35.60	199	3.47	3322	5742	57.85

0 = foundlings entered dead
 1 = dead inside the hospital
 2 = dead with borrowing wet-nurse
 3 = dead with definitive wet-nurse
 4 = wet-nurse brought them back to the hospital dead

In Porto's case, results have proved to be surprising. In all the cohorts observed mortality up to 7 years old did not exceed 63% (see Table 5.11.). It is certainly a high rate, but less dramatic than what could be expected. What this study does not provide, though, is an answer to the question of knowing how different was foundling mortality from infant mortality in the area. Did more foundlings die than children kept by their families?

What we do know is that a significant proportion of children did not cost much to the administration: they either entered dead (from 2 to 7% in all the years considered) or died during their stay inside the house (see Table 5.11., situations 0 and 1). If we add together dead children in these two categories, a significant percentage of children was eliminated from long time financing at the outset: 26% between 1699-1701, 9% between 1724-26 and 15.5% between 1749-51. During the last cohort (1774-76) that proportion decreased to 12% but 11% children were still dying in the city, in the care of provisional wet-nurses.

As explained in chapter 3 , these women were the result of the lack of country wet-nurses to care for the children, as is repeated countless times in side remarks in the registers. In order to shorten the foundlings' stay in the house, they were given to breastfeeders in the city until a definitive wet-nurse was available. So the situation was no different from being in the hospital: administrators simply placed children outside the house and picked them up whenever possible. This practice started during the last quarter of the century and must have created a labour market that would function on its own, as the number of children who were given to them could represent 67.6% of the total number of foundlings abandoned in 1774! But the percentage dropped to 17% during 1775 and in the next year it rose to 50% (see table 5.12.). The time spent in this stage of upbringing was not negligible: it could last up to four months, but 30 % of children stayed less than a month (see table 5.13.). In 1775, 72% of the foundlings left during this period, probably because the availability of definitive wet-nurses shortened the

child's stay. In 1774 and 1776, the expenses of foundlings with borrowing wet-nurses were high, as about 70 % of the foundlings spent from 30 up to 120 days or more with those women.

Table 5.12.
Number of foundlings who had borrowing wet-nurses

year	borrowing wet-nurse	total	%
1774	604	894	67.56
1775	141	817	17.26
1776	425	849	50.06
total	1170	2560	45.70

Table 5.13.
Time spent by foundlings with borrowing wet-nurses

N. of days		1774		1775		1776		Total
>	<		%		%		%	
0-30		185	30.63	102	72.34	137	32.24	424
30-60		196	32.45	19	13.48	125	29.41	340
60-90		173	28.64	19	13.48	125	29.41	317
90-120		44	7.29	1	0.71	35	8.24	80
120 +		6	0.99	-	-	3	0.71	9
total		604	100	141	100.01	425	100.01	1170

We come now to the issue of the situations in which foundlings ceased to depend on the hospital for care (see Table 5.14.). Such dismissal could take place in various forms:

1 - a member of the child's family (or someone else duly entitled to retrieve it) came to the hospital, and after a convincing proof that he was taking the same child that had been previously abandoned, left with it. To identify the child it could be enough to tell the day and hour it had been abandoned, the name it had been given, describe the objects brought with it at the moment of abandonment. Sometimes identification could be more sophisticated and searchers brought pieces of objects that had been torn apart when the child had been abandoned (pieces of paper, ribbons, cards, medals, etc).

Table 5.14.
Not dead foundlings - situation when dismissed from hospital's care

	1	2	3	4	5	tot.	total n.	%
	%	%	%	%	%			
1699	23	22	15	-	5	65	135	
1700	20	10	4	-	1	35	101	
1701	25	13	21	-	-	59	187	
total	68	45	40	9.46	6	159	423	37.59
1724	94	39	20	3	2	158	323	
1725	93	32	31	10	-	166	350	
1726	112	8	51	2	-	173	360	
total	299	79	102	9.87	15	497	1033	48.11
1749	149	2	44	24	7	226	558	
1750	154	3	44	45	1	247	580	
1751	157	3	40	32	2	234	588	
total	460	8	128	7.42	101	707	1726	40.96
1774	248	4	75	5	9	341	894	
1775	266	-	87	9	9	371	817	
1776	253	4	73	11	4	345	849	
total	767	8	235	9.18	25	1057	2560	41.29
TOTALS	1594	140	505	8.79	141	2420	5742	42.15

1 = "adopted" after seventh birthday 2 = incomplete register
 3 = returned to parents 4 = "adopted" before 7th birthday
 5 = missing link between sources

Although we can assume that the majority of foundlings were made "retrievable" by both the abandoners and the administrators, the figures show that only a small number of them were searched for by their parents. It is possible that this percentage would increase if searchers for dead children had been reported or if we knew more about informal and "illegal" contacts between the persons working for the Casa da Roda and the families of foundlings. Actually only 8.8 % of all children were recovered alive by their families: the percentage kept steady between 1699-01, 1724-26 and 1774-76 (9%), dropping to 7.5% only in the 1749-51 cohort.

2 - Once the child completed seven years of age, he was placed with a family. This could be with the wet-nurse or an entirely new family. These children - who can be considered fully as the survivors from the institution and from infant mortality - represented only a small proportion in 1699-1701 - 14.9%- but increased to a steady level of between 25 to 30 % in all the other three cohorts.

3 - Foundlings could be cared for by families without payment, but in exchange for exemption from recruitment of the husband and male children of the family. The number of such foundlings was variable in all the cohorts - non existent between 1699-701, irrelevant between 1724-26 (0.19%), the percentage was significant between 1749-51 (5.9%) and dropped again between 1774-76 (1%). Such a variation must have followed military conjunctures and probably suffered from difficulties in respect of the existing laws - known as "privileges" - that excluded family members from war service.

4 - A significant number of children had incomplete registers: the administrations lost trace of them, and their death, or survival was simply not reported. The proportion of such cases was higher in the first cohort, dropped in the second and was virtually non existant in the last two cohorts. In other cases there is a missing link between the sources: the reference that allowed retrieval of the child in the "Livro das Saídas" is wrong and the

child is lost. The percentage of these cases is again higher in the first two cohorts (around 2%) and less than 1% if we consider the last two cohorts together. The sum of the cases where we actually do not know how children were withdrawn from the institution's responsibility totals 3.4% of the whole sample of twelve years.

Non foundlings - children with sponsored lactations and others

Not all the children who were registered in the Livros de Entradas were truly abandoned: some of them were simply transferred from the main hospital to the wheel by order of the administration or were allocated a lactation at the house's expense.

The regulations of the Misericórdia included help to needy children, as it is confirmed in the "Compromissos"¹⁸. The Misericórdia distinguished between such children and foundlings because the former were admitted by request subject to acceptance by the "Mesa", the Misericórdia's main decision-making body. Only the "Mesa" and the "mordomos"¹⁹ of the main hospital had the power to admit these children to be breast-fed on a free basis.

Most of the children assisted provide evidence of the inner cooperation between two institutions with different purposes: the "Hospital de D. Lopo" and the "Casa da Roda", all administered by the members of the Misericórdia, but financed by different organs. The "Hospital de D. Lopo" counted on the confraternity's patrimony to survive whilst the "Casa da Roda" relied on regular payments by the council. Although this was never stated in any document, it is clear that these lactations were included in the

¹⁸ *Compromisso da Misericórdia do Porto*, Coimbra, Real Colégio das Artes da Companhia de Jesus, 1717, chapter XXVI, p. 47.

¹⁹ The "mordomo" was a member of the confraternity temporarily charged with giving service in a Misericórdia's institution, in this case the "Hospital de D.Lopo".

"Casa da Roda"'s budget, as their inclusion in the "Entry Books" suggests together with a minute issued by the Mesa as far back as 1698²⁰. The Mesa justified this decision on the grounds that the council used to assist these children before the foundation of the "Casa da Roda", which was in fact true²¹. There is then a contradiction with the confraternity's regulations which prescribed assistance to non-foundling children to the Misericórdia. An argument that might have been put forward by the administrators is that, since the council had assumed the obligation to support foundlings, as the law enforced, it was also natural to pay for other children in need of lactations. Moreover, the Misericórdia administered the "Casa da Roda" on a free basis; it would have seemed natural to its members to feel entitled to include the young "desamparados"²² among the foundlings, even if it was not strictly legal. In fact, although different in status, both categories of children were in need of public assistance.

The main difference between such children and foundlings is above all that the House's assistance to them was temporary. They were not supposed to be cared for up to seven years of age like foundlings, but only until weaning, so help was restricted to lactation. Another difference is that anonymity was no longer observed: the names of parents were declared in the registers. Notwithstanding such differences their status is often ambiguous, especially in the two first cohorts (1609-1701 and 1724-26) where the family's possibility or intention of reclaiming the child after weaning was not clear. Such an ambiguity is caused by the fact that, as we shall see, most of these children were transferred from the hospital where their mother was desperately ill or died. However, in the other cohorts (1749-51 and 1774-76), the status of children with a sponsored lactation becomes formal: in such cases families applied to the Misericórdia's Mesa and their child was breast-fed by a wet-nurse at the House's expense, and referred to in the sources as "lactado".

²⁰ A.A.D.P., *Livro I do Registo*, fls 47-48.

²¹ See Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, *A assistência aos expostos no Porto. Aspectos institucionais (1519-1838)*, master thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters, University of Porto, 1987, page 71, table 2.

²² The translation of the word is "children without support".

More ambiguous than these cases are those children whose status shifted from that of foundlings to the one of 'lactado' or vice-versa. The fact is that some children who received a breast-feeding allowance were not returned to be given to their families at the end of the lactation; whereas parents who had first abandoned their children, reclaimed them afterwards and applied for a lactation that was granted them. Such cases have been analysed in both foundling and non-foundlings files²³, although there are only five children with double status.

The numbers of non-foundlings are somewhat hidden within the total of children assisted by the House: of the total number of children of the sample, only 3% were non-foundlings and only between 1749-1751 did the percentage reach 5% (see table 5.15.). The low numbers suggest that the offer of charity to needy children other than foundlings was very limited.

²³ This double counting, of course, has to be taken into account in the analysis. See table 5.15.

Table 5.15.
Foundlings and non-foundlings

	Foundlings	%	Both*	%	Non-foun.	%	Total
1699	135		-		4		139
1700	101		-		4		105
1701	187		-		2		189
total	423	97.69	-	-	10	2.31	433
1724	322		1		5		328
1725	350		-		1		351
1726	360		-		7		367
total	1032	98.66	1	0.10	13	1.24	1046
1749	558		-		39		597
1750	578		2		29		609
1751	587		1		24		612
total	1723	94.77	3	0.165	92	5.06	1818
1774	894		-		16		910
1775	816		1		23		840
1776	849		-		24		873
total	2559	97.56	1	0.04	63	2.40	2623
totals	5737	96.91	5	0.25	178	3.01	5920

* This category includes overlapping children whose status shifted from foundling to non-foundling or vice-versa, and were analyzed in both files.

That impression is confirmed by the fact that most of these children were legitimate: the proportion of illegitimate, although not negligible, is less than 10% for the whole sample (see table 5.16.). Even if the marital status of the parents is not clear in the sources, the father's name is declared for 87% of the children (see table 5.17). If to be successful in getting a child to be breast-fed meant being married, or at least able to give the name of the father of the child, then unmarried mothers seem to have had no choice but to abandon their children whenever they were not able to breast-feed.

Table 5.16.
Legitimate and illegitimate non foundlings

	Legitimate	%	Illeg.	%	Unknown	%	Total
1699	1		-		3		4
1700	1		-		3		4
1701	2		-		-		2
total	4	40	-		6	60	10
1724	4		-		2		6
1725	1		-		-		1
1726	3		1		3		7
total	8	57.14	1	7.14	5	35.71	14
1749	35		2		2		39
1750	29		2		-		31
1751	21		3		1		25
total	85	89.47	7	7.37	3	3.16	95
1774	12		4		-		16
1775	21		3		-		24
1776	21		3		-		24
total	54	84.38	10	15.62	-		64
totals	151	82.51	18	9.84	14	7.65	183

Table 5.17.
Parenthood of non foundlings

cohort	known father	%	father not stated	%	total
1699-701	4	40.0	6	60.0	10
1724-726	13	92.86	1	7.14	14
1749-751	87	91.58	8	8.42	95
1774-776	55	85.94	9	14.06	64
total	159	87.43	24	12.57	183

As to sex ratios, as can be seen in Table 5.18., there was a tendency in the last two cohorts for girls to be given a higher number of lactations, especially between 1749-51, when the sex ratio reaches 67. Nevertheless, data is not sufficient to be able to

affirm that parents preferred to give away girls rather than boys in order to receive free lactations.

Table 5.18.
Sex ratios - foundlings compared to non-foundlings

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>Foundlings</u>	<u>Non-foundlings</u>
1699-1701	103.37	100
1724-1726	112.11	100
1749-1751	106.96	66.67
<u>1774-1776</u>	<u>125.95</u>	<u>93.94</u>
total (average)	112.10	90.15

Two remarks can be made about age (see table 5.19.) and duration of allowance: first, such children were generally older than foundlings themselves: their mean age is 103 days (if cohort 1699-1701 is excluded), whilst foundlings' mean age is 33.64²⁴. Between 1699-1701, the mean age is 577.3 which means that these children were already weaned. In fact only 3 of them had less than 90 days: the rest were clearly children without family to look after them. Second, it is stated that they should be breast-fed until 18 months old²⁵, which confirms that the standard age for a child to be weaned was a year and a half.

Table 5.19.
Mean age at beginning of lactation (average n. of days)

<u>Cohort</u>	<u>Foundlings</u>	<u>Non-foundlings</u>
1699-1701	-	577.3
1724-1726	-	97.1
1749-1751	35.42	119.5
<u>1774-1776</u>	<u>31.85</u>	<u>93.6</u>
total (average)	33.64	221.88

²⁴ The first cohort is absent from the calculations because information is missing for almost all the foundlings. For the period 1724-26, the number of cases for which information on age totals 134, and thus covers only 12.8 % of this cohort's total number of cases. As children's age tended to be noted when they were older than the other children, the mean age is particularly high: 108.18 days. As results could be distorted by this value, rising to a total mean of 58.48, it was omitted from the table.

²⁵ This reference to the period of lactation can often be found in the two last cohorts.

Often aged more than a week, baptism was not a service fulfilled by the "Casa da Roda", as these children were, with few exceptions, already baptized.

Unlike parents of foundlings, the identities of the parents of these children were fully enquired into and stated in the registers: names, marital status, addresses and occupations were noted, as well as the motives that led the parents to apply for a lactation.

As table 5.20. shows, parents of "lactados" came from within the city's boundaries. Children from parishes in the city's perimeter were also included, although fewer in number (11% of the total sample), whilst children from parishes beyond of a distance of 15 km from the city's boundaries were very few (5%)

Table 5.20.
Non foundlings: residence of parents

cohort	city	outskirts	country	no inf.	total
1699-701	1	2	2	5	10
Freq. (%)	10	20	20	50	100
Adj. frq. (%)	20	40	40	-	100
1724-726	8	3	-	3	14
Freq. (%)	57.14	21.43	-	21.43	100
Adj. frq. (%)	72.73	27.27	-	-	100
1749-751	78	7	6	4	95
Freq. (%)	82.11	7.37	6.32	4.21	100
Adj. frq. (%)	85.71	7.69	6.59	-	100
1774-776	56	6	1	1	64
Freq. (%)	87.5	9.38	1.56	1.56	100
Adj. frq. (%)	88.88	9.52	1.59	-	100
total	143	18	9	13	183
Freq. (%)	78.14	9.84	4.92	7.10	100
Adj. frq. (%)	84.12	10.59	5.29	-	100

The occupations (see table 5.21.) of the parents of these children reflect the urban character of this group: the majority (52%) were craftsmen, 13% were in transport and commerce, 16% were soldiers. Among the craftsmen, except for one master of arts, they were in the journeymen's grade of the artisans' career, which means that they did not have workshops of their own. Servants and clerks represent 15% of the total number of fathers whose occupation is declared. Under the label "clerks" were included all those who had occupations that required a good level of literacy such as solicitors and scribes. The number of agricultural laborers or indigent (beggars) is irrelevant (4%).

Table 5.21.
Non foundlings - occupation of parents

cohort	agric.	crafts	commerce	servants	clerks	soldiers	beggars	not stated	total
1699-701	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	3	4
<i>freq. (%)</i>		33.3						66.70	100
<i>adj. freq. (%)</i>		100						-	100
1724-726	-	3	-	-	-	-	1	9	13
<i>freq. (%)</i>		23.08					7.69	69.23	100
<i>adj. freq. (%)</i>		75					25	-	100
1749-751	1	31	8	2	5	16	-	24	87
<i>freq. (%)</i>	1.15	35.63	9.19	2.30	5.75	18.39		27.59	100
<i>adj. freq. (%)</i>	1.59	49.21	12.70	3.17	7.93	25.40		-	100
1774-776	3	27	8	8	3	3	-	3	55
<i>freq. (%)</i>	5.45	49.09	14.55	14.55	5.45	5.45		5.45	100
<i>adj. freq. (%)</i>	5.77	51.92	15.38	15.38	5.77	5.77		-	100
total	4	62	16	10	8	19	1	39	159
<i>freq. (%)</i>	2.52	38.99	10.06	6.29	5.03	11.95	0.63	24.53	100
<i>adj. freq. (%)</i>	3.33	51.67	13.33	8.33	6.67	15.83	0.83	-	100



The history of children whose lactation was paid by the Misericórdia²⁶ is above all the history of poor families in crisis. An evolution in the type of situations that could give place to a free lactation can be demonstrated by the analysis of the different cohorts. The service was an developing one and got more structured as the century went on. Such differences applied to number of children (see table 5.15.) as well as to the modes of assistance.

From 1699 to 1701, institutional transfer was the only means of being assisted: all children were transferred from the hospital where their mothers had died (8 cases) or were ill (2 cases). Of the latter only in one case is it stated that he is supposed to be given back to his family. The status of children in this cohort is doubtful: it could be that those children were simply assimilated to foundlings and that their families, if existing, never attempted to have them back. The age of such children (see table 5.19.) suggests that they were children deprived of kin who could help them, thus were no longer in need of breast milk but of adult care. One might say that at the beginning of the century lactation did not exist as a formal service, but only the obligation to assist needy children, as the council had done even before the existence of the Misericórdia and the foundlings' wheel²⁷.

An extreme case of a child without anyone to take care of her was Berta, a girl whose "stepfather" (companion to the mother) who looked after her died at the hospital²⁸; the mother had probably already died.

In the second cohort (1724-26) the service came closer to a definition: in eight of the fourteen cases observed it was declared that such children would be taken care of only during the illness of their mothers. Death in the hospital is no longer the main

²⁶ It is not clear if the money came from the Misericórdia's funds, but its inclusion in the "Livros de Entrada" and the fact that separate payment is never referred to, leads to think that expenses with them were paid though the foundlings' budget paid by the council.

²⁷ Sá, Isabel dos Guimarães, *A assistência aos expostos no Porto. Aspectos institucionais (1519-1838)*, master thesis presented to the Faculty of Letters of the University of Porto, 1987, pp. 68 e 71.

²⁸ Berta, case number 100206, *Livro 1º de Entradas*, fl. 189 v.

motive for being assisted, but illness of mothers: 10 ill and 1 dead. The absence of a father also influenced admission as 3 children are stated to have absent fathers. The main way to be assisted was to rely on a decision of the Mesa: 13 of the children entered due to its formal authorization. Although poverty and absence of mother's milk must have been behind the attribution of lactations, this fact was not usually stated explicitly: only for 6 children during the second cohort.

In one case, a shift of status is noted: parents failed to take their daughter back, and thus she became a foundling²⁹. This case confirms that parents were expected to search for their children: their status, although still ambiguous, is clearly that of temporarily assisted children.

The years between 1749 and 1751 brought full maturity to the system, by then it seemed to be at its peak. Not only is this the cohort where a higher percentage of lactations can be found (see table 5.15), but it is also when this service reached its maximum level of bureaucratic rigour. In the next cohort the definition of "lactado" and the requirements to belong to this category became more ambiguous as we shall see. In fact, between 1749-51 children to be breast-fed generally had a certificate of poverty of parents issued by the parish priest, as well as a document from a doctor or a surgeon, certifying the incapacity of the mother to breast-feed for health reasons. Now poverty emerged as the main motive to obtain a lactation and would continue to do so until the end of the century. Illness or death of the mother continued to be important motives, but were clearly in second place. Birth of twins (and inability to breast-feed both newborns) and a new pregnancy of the mother were also good reasons to have a lactation (9 children were assisted because their mothers could not breast-feed both twins, two of such children being brothers³⁰). On the other hand, 9 had pregnant mothers at the time lactation was conceded. The roles of medical

²⁹ Antónia Maria, case number 100508, *Livro 3 das Entradas*, fl. 314.

³⁰ Cases n. 103110 and 103111, two daughters of an unmarried mother: although they were both in the house, only one got the lactation; the other was sent back to the mother.

practicers were appreciated, as 6 mothers presented a pregnancy certificate issued by a doctor or a surgeon.

Another determinant motive to be awarded a lactation was the large number of children for a given couple: 4 are stated to have between 4 to 6 children, with short money to provide for all of them³¹.

One cannot exclude that recommendation or the protection of a powerful person could interfere in the choice of the families to be awarded a lactation³². The fact is that some servants of the individuals occupying high posts in public institutions were included among the few who had access to free lactations. Also, the attribution of allowances could derive from a sense of loyalty towards those who were once included in the "Casa da Roda"'s staff: a wet-nurse who acquired syphilis³³ or a factotum who had formerly worked for the Misericórdia and got a lactation for his son³⁴. Another woman, an ex-foundling, was in the hospital while her son was transferred to the Casa da Roda in order to be given a free nurse³⁵.

quarta
*
Autonomous requests for lactations seem to gain relevance in the third cohort, rather than institutional transfer or recommendation. Only 44 children relied on direct transfer from hospital or depended upon a decision of the "Provedor". We can note a change in the way this transfer took place: instead of referring to the "Mesa"'s orders or decisions the register mentions a request ("súplica") to the Foundling Home by one of the members of the confraternity who was in charge of the general

³¹ Cases number 102203 (*Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 171 vs), 102391 (*Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 231), 102688 (*Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 327), 103160 (*Livro 14 das Entradas*, fl. 6).

³² The sources do not confirm this suspicion. Only in case n. 102050 (*Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 104) are the godparents of the child are seemingly influential persons, one being a nephew of a court magistrate and the other a friar.

³³ Case n. 101877, *Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 71: 'the mother was a nurse, and she is leaving contaminated of 'gálico' [syphilis] because of the children of the wheel and because of this and her poverty' her child is ordered to finish lactation at the institution's expense.

³⁴ António, case n. 101804, *Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 48 v. (year 1749).

³⁵ Joaquim, case n. 101758, *Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 35 v. (year 1749).

hospital ("mordomo"). The attribution of a lactation directly by a member of the Misericórdia (i.e. "Provedor" or the "Mordomo" of the general hospital) had the advantage of not requiring any certificates, either medical or issued by the parish priests, as the judgement of the official required no confirmation.

Admission of children to sponsored lactation seems to have followed selective norms, as the data compiled demonstrates, such as legitimacy, residence and recognized poverty, which was declared by the parish priest. The extremely poor, such as beggars and disabled, are absent, as can be seen in table 5.21. The impression is that the structural poor were mostly absent from this service, which was almost exclusively limited to situations of need created by events in the life-cycle, such as illness, death and excess of children.

In conclusion, one seems to be in presence of a highly restrictive service, almost impossible to obtain for the majority of couples. The fact that married parents were preferred to unwed mothers leads one to think that illegitimate children were bound to be abandoned; the same could be said about married mothers who could not prove lack of milk. The fact that breast-feeding allowances were so few in number and so restricted in character might explain why anonymous abandonment could be the only solution to get rid of an extra child or to ease the economic pressure caused by an extra mouth. Still, an important element is missing: nothing is known about the requests for lactation that were refused, or even if there was a limit to the number of allowances to be allocated each year. Nevertheless, the issues referred to previously lead to the conviction that, like most charitable services of the eighteenth century, access to lactations was subject to selective criteria. Also, the mediation of social actors such as powerful individuals (the Misericórdia's staff, doctors, surgeons and parish priests), seems to have been an important element in order to be awarded a "lactation".

The individuals outside the hospital

Godparents

I demonstrated that 98% of the foundlings who entered the house alive were baptized at the cathedral (see table 5.7.) This section intends to look more closely at the actors of baptism, that is, the priests and the godparents. The reason for the inclusion of priests is that they could also be the children's godparents and they certainly had their say when it was necessary to ask someone to be a godfather or godmother.

Foundlings were baptized in the city's most important church, the cathedral, which unquestionably had a large group of priests in charge of religious services³⁶. It could be asked why the Misericórdia, possessing its own church, never baptized foundlings on its premises: it would have saved the children a 15 minutes return trip to the cathedral. The answer is not known, but my guess is that, baptism having a fee, the Misericórdia was not willing to add it to its expenses with foundlings. In fact, the cathedral priest in charge of baptizing foundlings obtained from the king an annual stipend of 20000 "reis" in 1781³⁷, which amounted to almost three times the annual salary of a definitive wet-nurse. Also, baptizing the children in the cathedral could also have had a symbolic meaning: abandoned children should be the concern of the whole city and not only the Misericórdia.

Table 5.22. lists the names of the priests that baptized children in all the cohorts considered.

³⁶ See chapter 4, where the complexity of the division of tasks between the priests officiating in the church of the Misericórdia itself can be seen.

³⁷ A.A.D.P., *Livro 1º do Registo*, fls. 108-111.

Table 5.22.
Priests who baptized children

1699-1701

Francisco Soares ("coadjutor")
Luis Nogueira ("coadjutor")
Manuel Teixeira ("abade" de S.Paio de Seide)
José Lopes ("coadjutor")

1724-1726

Luis Pereira Carvalho ("coadjutor")
Manuel Soares Rosário

1749-1751

Luis Pereira Carvalho
Manuel Carvalho Meireles
João Pereira ("cónego")

1774-1776

António José Ferreira Barbosa (parish priest)
Manuel Ramos Vieira ("abade")
Apolinário José Ferreira de Sousa
Crispim da Rocha ("reverendo beneficiado")

The striking feature about this list is that the task of baptizing foundlings was accomplished by more than one person in each period. Besides probably being judged too overwhelming for a single man to perform, baptizing foundlings lacked the symbolical value that would make it important for it to be executed by a single priest. Some priests also seem to be occasional like Manuel Teixeira, who did not even belong to the cathedral's group of priests: he was the abbot of the parish of S.Paio de Seide, in the "concelho" de

Famalicão³⁸. Moreover, the Church was always fighting a phenomenon that was too frequent before the council of Trent: the absence of priests from their parishes. Most changes of baptizing priests were probably due to the fact that they had to replace one another due to of absence. Priests do not overlap from cohort to cohort, except for Luis Pereira Carvalho, who seems to be present at the baptismal basin both between 1724-26 and between 1749-51.

Tables 5.23. to 5.26. give the number of children baptized by each of the priests included in table 5.22. As expected, an equal division of baptisms among priests did not occur. The period 1699-1701 registered the highest level of equal distribution of children among priests, if the totals are analyzed. It can also be observed that in each year of the cohort there were two priests who ensured baptism from the higher number of foundlings. Priest 1 (Francisco Soares, "coadjutor") disappeared from the baptismal font in 1699, being replaced in 1701 by a new priest, José Lopes.

Table 5.23.
Priests who gave baptism to foundlings (1699-1701)

	1	2	3	4	Missing	Total
1699	39	83	6	-	6	134
1700	-	17	81	-	-	98
1701	-	5	37	128	10	180
Total	39	105	124	128	16	412
%	9.47	25.48	30.10	31.07	3.88	100

- 1 = Francisco Soares
- 2 = Luis Nogueira
- 3 = Manuel Teixeira
- 4 = José Lopes

In the 1724-1726 period, two priests baptized the foundlings, but priest 5 (Luis Pereira de Carvalho) baptized nearly three quarters of the children.

³⁸ I am not sure if the parish referred to is "Seide" or "Selhe", as the records are quite difficult to read.

Table 5.24.
Priests who gave baptism to foundlings (1724-1726)

	5	6	Missing	Total
1724	192	117	-	309
1725	267	73	1	341
1726	264	72	-	336
Total	723	262	1	986
%	73.33	26.57	0.10	100

5 = Luis Pereira de Carvalho

6 = Manuel Soares Rosário

Between 1749-1751, this man continued to be the priest in charge of baptizing foundlings (I have assumed it is the same person), being occasionally replaced by Manuel Carvalho de Meireles and "cónego" João Pereira, the former in 1749 and 1751 and in 1750 by the latter.

Table 5.25.
Priests who gave baptism to foundlings (1749-1751)

	5	7	8	Missing	Total
1749	381	110	1	6	498
1750	416	-	101	3	520
1751	425	108	-	4	537
Total	1222	218	102	13	1555
	78.58	14.02	6.56	0.84	100

5 = Luis Pereira Carvalho

7 = Manuel Carvalho Meireles

8 = João Pereira

In 1774-1776 the task seems to have been attributed to António José Ferreira Barbosa, designated as the parish priest (he baptized 87% of the foundlings). His substitute was Apolinário José Ferreira de Sousa. The contribution to baptism of foundlings by the other two priests (Manuel Ramos Vieira and Crispim da Rocha) was insignificant.

Table 5.26.
Priests who gave baptism to foundlings (1774-1776)

	9	10	11	12	Missing	Total
1774	726	2	76	4	13	821
1775	640	1	96	3	3	743
1776	675	-	107	4	-	786
Total	2041	3	279	11	16	2350
%	86.85	0.13	11.87	0.47	0.68	100

- 9 = António José Ferreira Barbosa ("pároco")
 10 = Manuel Ramos Vieira ("abade")
 11 = Apolinário José Ferreira de Sousa
 12 = Crispim da Rocha ("reverendo beneficiado")

In short, the tables, except for the one corresponding to 1699-1701, show a tendency to assign responsibility for baptism of foundlings to only one priest, who when necessary could be replaced.

Unlike the other sections of this chapter, godparents and godmothers will not be the subject of a detailed statistical analysis. The reason is that the results of such an analysis would simply prove what is already evident without statistics: baptism of foundlings was a mere religious formality, and the individuals who served as godmothers or godfathers just lent their names to the register and offered their presence in the ceremony. Most of them lived in the immediate neighbourhood of the cathedral, its parish of "Sé" being the most quoted in the registers. The overwhelming majority of godparents were urban residents, and only exceptionally was an outsider to the city recorded as godparent.

My only scope was to prove how meaningless was baptism of foundlings in social terms, especially if compared to what we know about the choice of godparents for non-foundlings. In the latter, godparents gave expression to a social alliance, in the former they tended to be repetitive and merely accidental. Not that anyone could be a foundling's godparent: respectability of godparents was ensured, but no specific person was assigned to a given foundling. Most frequently the foundling hospital's employees performed

these roles. In 1699-1701, the "mordomos da roda" seemed to perform the role of godfathers as one of the tasks imposed by their post³⁹. As for godmothers, most of them were the very internal wet-nurses who had been charged with carrying the children from the Casa da Roda to the cathedral baptismal font (see table 5.27. at the end of the section). In addition, persons whom we suspect led their daily lives in the cathedral were particularly requested to become godparents. First of all, the members of the bishop's chapter: the "cónegos" (very rarely because of their high ecclesiastical ranking), the "mestre-escola" (schoolmaster) or the "chantre" or "sub-chantre" (masters of the choir). Among others we can quote the man who rang the cathedral bells⁴⁰, the choir boys⁴¹ or even the famous baroque architect of Porto Nicolau Nasoni⁴². In 1774-1776, the same priests who officiated baptisms were godfathers of children: this is the case for 83% of the baptisms of foundlings (see table 5.28. at the end of the section).

The result was that the same person could have dozens or even hundreds of "afilhados"⁴³, like the priest in 1774-1776 who was godparent to 1737 foundlings (see table 5.28.). This proves that baptism of foundlings had a merely religious purpose and lacked any social function.

39 Of 451 children baptized, 148 (32.82%) had the "mordomo da roda" as godfather.

40 The "campainha" (bell man) was godfather 322 times between 1724-1726, which corresponds to 32.59% of the baptisms of this cohort.

41 Most of these were also mentioned as "students", because they were obviously being trained for future priesthood: 96 children had one of them as godfather in 1724-1726 and only 13 between 1749-1751.

42 Of Tuscan origin, Nasoni was the architect responsible for several of the most remarkable baroque buildings of the city (see chapter 4). He was godfather of foundlings apparently while he was doing some work inside the cathedral and sources refer to him as a "painter". This designation is somewhat surprising, as some of his most important projects had already been elaborated or executed in 1751, like the church and the tower of the "Clérigos", the "Paço Episcopal" (palace of the bishop) and the facade of the church of the Misericórdia (see Ferrão, Bernardo José, *Projecto e transformação urbana do Porto na época dos Almadás 1758/1813. Uma contribuição para o estudo da cidade pombalina*, 2nd. edition, Porto, Faculdade de Arquitectura, 1989, p. 159. The foundlings to whom he served as godfather are registered in *Livro 13 das Entradas*, fls. 239, 406 and 424 v.

43 "Afilhado" and "padrinho" ou "madrinha" are the Portuguese words for the relationship established by baptism between children and godparents. "Afilhado" is the person who receives baptism, and the other two words relate to godparents.

Generally, the same persons served as godparents for the total number of children baptized on that particular morning. The practice was to baptize together all the children who had arrived at the hospital since the last time the baptism of foundlings had taken place. From 1724-26 baptism of foundlings started to be a daily routine at the cathedral, as rare was the day that no child was abandoned at the wheel. From 1738 onwards, baptism registers of foundlings were written in separate books⁴⁴. This separation obviously originated because of their high numbers; it must also have created a clear division between foundlings and other children baptized at the cathedral. It is also possible that there was a separate ceremony for foundlings, other children being baptized on another occasion during the day. With daily baptism, the children baptized were those who arrived between the late morning of the previous day until the early hours of the morning, before the wet-nurse took the children to the cathedral. Some of the godparents could almost be considered as a semi-official team constituted of persons who were liable to be godparents and who appeared several days per month as godparents. Such is the case of some individuals who can be found as godparents in 1749-51 and can be identified 25 years later with the same function, like for example a certain Brás Abreu Guimarães. Crispim da Rocha, who appeared in 1774-1776 as one of the priests who baptized foundlings, can be traced 50 years before: in 1724-1726 he was a godparent, referred to as a clergyman "in minoribus"; in the next cohort, 1749-1751, he was already quoted as what he would be 25 years later: "reverendo beneficiado". This is the case of a man who witnessed the baptism of foundlings for half a century, if we assume, as is possible, that his presence at the cathedral was continuous during all these years.

On rare occurrences, the sources suggest that baptism was a crucial moment for those who abandoned. Sometimes mothers tried to assist at the ceremony; others suggested verbally in the foundlings' notes who the godparents were to be (the procedure ignored their wish). In other cases, baptism was itself the purpose

⁴⁴ Santos, Cândido, 'A população do Porto de 1700 a 1820. Contribuição para o estudo da demografia urbana', *Revista de História*, vol. I, 1978, p. 301, note 22 and pp. 316-318.

of abandonment: some couples, retrieving their child the day after it was abandoned, confessed having abandoned it because they could not afford the baptism.

Table 5.27.
Children who had wet-nurses as godmothers

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	78	334	412
%	18.93	81.07	100
1724-1726	324	664	988
%	32.79	67.21	100
1749-1751	503	1052	1555
%	32.35	67.65	100
1774-1776	1549	801	2350
%	65.91	34.09	100
Total	2454	2851	5305
%	46.26	53.74	100

Table 5.28.
Foundlings' godparents (1774-1776)

Godparents	N. of foundlings	%
Antônio J. Ferreira Barbosa	1737	73.91
Manuel Ramos Vieira	1	0.04
Apolinário J. Ferreira de Sousa	209	8.89
Crispim da Rocha	6	0.26
Others*	391	16.64
Missing	6	0.26
Total	2350	100.00

* This category also includes priests who did not baptize foundlings.

Abandoners

Those who abandon: a study of notes left with foundlings

Notes: their importance as a source and method of analysis

In *Émile*, Rousseau described the home where children were put to nurse in these terms: "... il n'y a plus de résidence des familles, l'habitude ne renforce plus les liens du sang; il n'y a ni pères ni mères, ni enfants, ni frères ni soeurs; tous se connaissent à peine, comment s'aimeraient-ils?"⁴⁵. Rousseau's point, although in another form, has been taken up by Antoinette Chamoux, who sustained that growth of love is dependant on the long term presence of the individuals involved⁴⁶.

This chapter concentrates on the study of notes left with the foundlings. In different ways, such notes have always been judged by those who studied them as the only source that could depict parental feelings towards abandoned children. I will argue that most abandoned children were too small and had not spent enough time with their families in order to be loved. I do not entirely⁴⁷ agree with any of the theses that argue that maternal love is a feature of so-called modernity and assume that in past societies there was indifference towards children⁴⁸. None of these theses reflected on the fact that feelings towards children's lives are dependent on the value ascribed to human life as a whole. The changing social value of children reflects changes in the value of

⁴⁵ Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, *Émile*, Livre I, in *Oeuvres Complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1969, p. 258.

⁴⁶ Chamoux, Antoinette, 'La femme devant l'allaitement', 'Mères et Nourrissons', *Annales de Démographie Historique*, Paris, 1983, pp. 7-22.

⁴⁷ This point is developed in the introduction.

⁴⁸ Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family*, New York, Basic Books, 1975; John R. Gillis, 'The cultural construction of motherhood in 19th and 20th century Britain and its effects on fertility', paper delivered to the 17^e Congreso Nacional de Ciências Históricas, Madrid, 26 August-2 September 1990, pp. 447-457.

human life. Human behaviour, as Norbert Elias demonstrated, is moulded by social constraints⁴⁹. Maternal love is not a modern feeling; in the past it was mediated by different attitudes towards children and by different institutions which modelled human behavior according to different rules.

The notes that children brought attached to them have not so far been thoroughly studied, probably because they require a long work of transcription and their content may become repetitive and monotonous. Alvarez Santaló was aware of their interest, though he did not analyze a great number systematically in his study of the *Inclusa* of Seville⁵⁰. Because of his particular concern with Catholic hypocrisy as one of the causes of the system of abandonment, he drew attention to the contents of notes, in order to conclude that they expressed the attitude of people who were more worried in seeming than in being, that is, in hiding sins from public view, thus devoiding them of any social significance or effect. It would be interesting to concentrate on the concept of Catholic morals, precisely because morals are risky to define. The only help here is the comparison with Protestant morals. They are often characterized as being individualist, guilt-led, with expiation of sins as conducted by the individual's own dialogue with God. Society only intercedes (~~intervenes~~) to mediate God's punishment. Catholic morals, in turn, viewed sin and its redemption as a necessary path towards salvation. Repentance was a need, although it could be more abstract rather than based on public knowledge. The concept of sin itself was dependant on the fact that it was public: sins that were unknown from the community did not exist. Although confession was non public, lay practice seems to have equated sin with public knowledge. Santaló's analysis of Catholic morals is open to discussion, what is certain is that foundling notes are undoubtedly the only source that throws direct evidence on the mentality of the users of the system of abandonment. Direct evidence but not, as Bardet affirmed

⁴⁹ Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing process*, vol. 2, *Power and Civility*, New York, Pantheon Books, pp. 229-333 (1st edition 1939) and *Involvement and Detachment*, Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1987.

⁵⁰ Leon-Carlos Alvarez Santaló, *Marginación social y mentalidad en Andalucía Occidental. Expósitos en Sevilla (1613-1910)*, Sevilla, La Junta de Andalucía, 1980, pp. 201-231.

"abandonment in direct speech"⁵¹ (or abandonment in the first person) as Franca Doriguzzi recognized in the most systematic article on such notes published so far⁵².

The importance of these notes as evidence of situations leading to abandonment or of parents' motives in their letting their children go has been either overvalued or underestimated. Overvalued because evidence concerning parents can be distorted and stereotyped: if abandonment was the right of poor people, they were bound to be illiterate and rely on the professional scribe or on the help of some other person who would transform the content of their message into a formalized text, filled with rhetoric and subservience. The writing of notes was thus the result of social mediation, between illiterate people and the administrators of the institutions⁵³. Another point, is that notes were primarily letters addressed to the administrators of the institutions; because they were destined for a person, they required a certain manner of writing and content. Furthermore, people thought that a note recommending their children to administrators might improve the benevolence towards them. In societies where subservience towards the powerful was not only the rule but also a need, help depended establishing on a good relationship with patrons. As Sandra Cavallo has put it, charity was viewed as the result of their good will and not the effect of a right⁵⁴. Thus, the content of the notes was inevitably filled with

⁵¹ Jean-Pierre Bardet, *Colloque Enfance abandonné et société* (to be published). Bardet, Jean-Pierre, Jeorger, Muriel, 'La société face au problème de l'abandon', *Histoire, Économie et Société*, "L'enfant abandonné" (special issue), vol. 6, 1987, n. 3, pp. 304.

⁵² See Franca Doriguzzi, 'I messaggi dell'abbandono: bambini esposti a Torino nel '700', *Quaderni Storici*, vol. 53, 1983, a. XVIII, n. 2, pp. 445-468. Though it is not based on quantitative analysis, the description of notes from Torino foundlings points to a great similarity with Oporto notes, with only small differences.

⁵³ On the roles of social mediators in child abandonment see Giovanna Cappelletto, 'Infanzia abbandonata e ruoli di mediazione sociale nella Verona del Settecento', *Quaderni Storici*, vol. 53, 1983, a. XVIII, n. 2, pp. 420-441 and Volker Hünecke, 'Les enfants trouvés: contexte européen et cas milanais (XVIIIe-XIXe siècles)', *Revue d'Histoire Moderne et Contemporaine*, vol XXXII, January-March 1985, pp. 25-26.

⁵⁴ Sandra Cavallo, 'Patterns of poor relief and patterns of poverty in Eighteenth Century Italy: the evidence of the Turin Ospedale di Carità', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 5, 1990, n. 1, pp. 72.

formalities in the form of requests of favours and praise of the recipients of the letter. In spite of these two limitations of notes (social mediation and subservience), the repetitive information contained in them can be an indicator of some of the obsessions of people who had recourse to abandonment.

An aspect that is often underestimated is the function of the notes: they were not meant to give information about the child's family or the circumstances that led to abandonment. In other words, they did not tell any stories. Such stories could and *should* be left secret, as abandonment was legal and anonymous. The purpose of the notes, was primarily to state whether or not the child's soul had been acquired through baptism, secondarily to give information that might help to identify the child in the future, and finally to try to improve the services to the child by direct request to the hospital's staff. Thus notes possess a descriptive character: with very few exceptions, they are non-narrative documents.

#?
5.000
The analysis concerns all the notes that were left with the roughly thousand children that form the whole sample. Whenever a register included a note, it was transcribed onto the computer. These notes concern only foundlings, as children on breast-feeding allowances did not bring them, since their identification was fully registered. As half the children brought a note with them, my sample deals with 3086 texts of various forms and lengths. Notes were not transcribed from the original pieces of paper where they were first written, but from the 'Livros de Entrada'. My transcription is then the result of a double decoding: the first of the administrator who read and wrote it in the book and then my own reading of his text. Administrators might have difficulty in reading weird handwritings; semantics of notes might be confusing and impossible to understand. That, together with my own difficulties in reading the administrator's handwriting, and understanding the meaning of many words no longer in current use in the Portuguese language, made their transcription and interpretation an uneasy task.

Notes were predominantly written in prose, although some were rhymes, most of these of mediocre poetic talent. They are mostly but not all written in Portuguese. Some examples of notes in Latin can be found, several in Spanish and one seemingly in French.

The number of words included in a note could vary from one (those mentioning only a Christian name) up to five hundred⁵⁵.

The content of the notes was of course variable; nevertheless, the items can be summarized as follows, by order of importance:

1) baptism and name of the child. Either one or the other is always mentioned in the notes, being the most crucial information to be given by the abandoners. All other elements are secondary with respect to baptism and name;

2) recommendation about the care to be given to the child and reference to the intention of coming to the administration to reclaim it form the second most important items that were included in notes.

3) All other elements are fortuitous compared to the above: there could be mention of objects and clothing that were supposed to act as identifying items; information relating to time (date of birth and age of child; date of abandonment and time of abandonment); reference to parents, to child delivery and intention to refund the administration for the expenses of the child.

All information gathered from the transcription of the notes has been grouped according to the three main actors that the notes refer to: the recipients of charity (both children and abandoners) and the donors of charity (administration staff and wet-nurses).

The analysis of those notes has not been based on automatic content analysis. My procedure was to compile a grill that focused

⁵⁵ Note from foundling 100231 (Feliciano, *Livro 1 das Saídas*, fl. 195), for example, has 437 words and is written in verse.

on all the items most likely to be present in a note (baptism, naming, circumstances of abandonment, mention of clothing, date, time of abandonment, age or date of birth of child, intention to reclaim it, recommendation on the care to be provided by wet-nurse, etc). The choice not to use a content analysis package, besides the fact that it needed a formation that would have been very time consuming for me, was also based on the conviction that common sense is a capacity so far unknown to computers. In fact, a computer programme is not capable of interpreting situations according to human logic and tends to resolve problems in a repetitive way, whilst the human mind applies a different decision to each case, according to clusters of elements that require different solutions. Still, the stacking of notes in the computer memory allows its possible re-working on the light of other methodologies or other perspectives.

Although no specific content analysis package was used, the occurrence of some fundamental words was quantified, such as:

- the vocabulary relating to the the various designations of child and foundling;
- mention of poverty of parents;
- mention of civil status of parents;
- words expressing human virtues or qualities such as "honour", "charity", "piety", "expurity of blood"⁵⁶;
- words signifying specific social situations, such as "secret", "shame", "sin" or "danger";
- words of appeal to the recipients of the notes;
- clothing;
- objects brought by children.

Word counting was done semi-automatically, using a common word-processor, through the use of word change functions. Every time a word or group of words were integrated in counting, this implied a transformation that made it impossible for them to be counted more than once. As words can be polysemantic, in many cases counting was done word by word, in order to eliminate the words with meanings that were irrelevant to my analysis. For example: the word *love* could appear with

⁵⁶ In Portuguese "limpeza de sangue".

several meanings - "amor de deus" (God's sake), "amor da ama" (wet-nurse should take care of the foundling with love), "amor perfeito" (flower), "amor divino" (representation of God's love of humanity in religious medals). The only ones that interested me were the first two: "amor de deus" meant that they were asking a for service that only God could reward (thus implying the lack of resources of the person who was asking for the favour); "amor" also interested me because it was the only word that I could find clearly expressing affection towards children. I was also concerned me to compare the frequency between the two meanings of the word: as we shall see, the number of references to "amor de deus" is superior to the mention of human love.

A final remark is required about word counting: as the method used is rather elementary in its rules, and aims only to obtain broad figures, it was assumed for convenience that every word appears only once in each note, which is not necessarily true in all cases. Some texts could be rather repetitive, in order to stress certain points. All words have been counted according to their possible variations: feminine/masculine; singular/plural; diminutive and orthographic. Percentages have been calculated dividing the number of occurrences by the total number of notes in each cohort.

The recipients of charity: children and parents

a) Children as depicted in notes

A) Vocabulary relating to the designations of child and foundling

The words people used to mean child (see Table 5.29.) were not significantly different from the words used nowadays: "criança" (child) and above all "menino/a" (boy; girl). Words one would expect to occur frequently, such as "creatura" (creature) or "inocente" (innocent), which have fallen in disuse, are in practice very rare. Such latter designations have a rhetoric content, since they express ideas about a child: the first, "creature", implies an incomplete living being, probably due to the initial stage of development of newborns; the second, "innocent" testifies to the idea of innocence often linked to a child, who knows no guilt from

the parents' sins and will go to Heaven if it dies. To signify abandoned children, people used two words: "engeitado/a" meaning literally "rejected children", and "exposto" (exposed child, meaning abandoned). The latter is totally absent from the two first cohorts; between 1749-51 it appears only 9 times and in the last cohort (1774-1776), the word appears 38 times, either as verb or noun. Both designations for foundlings (either "engeitado" or "exposto") can also appear as verbal forms: "he exposto" ou "he engeitado" mean "is being abandoned". The adjective "abandonado" (abandoned) does not appear to qualify these children.

Table 5.29.
Vocabulary relating to the the designations of child and foundling

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
criança	63	86	173	186	508
(child)	28.6	17.2	18.1	13.2	16.5
menino	171	384	817	1078	2450
(boy; girl)	77.7	76.8	85.4	76.5	79.4
inocente	4	1	2	6	13
(innocent)	1.8	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4
criatura	4	-	3	4	11
(creature)	1.8	-	0.3	0.3	0.4
engeitado	6	14	29	42	91
(foundling)	2.7	2.8	3.0	3.0	2.9
exposto	-	-	9	38	47
(foundling)	-	-	0.9	2.7	1.5
Total	248	485	1033	1354	3120
	112.7	97.0	107.9	96.1	101.1
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

B) Baptism and name giving

The situations relating to *baptism* depicted in notes ranged among the following:

1. the child was already baptized, thus it had a Christian soul and was out of danger of not going to Heaven if it died. Baptism had not only the function of making the child a member of the Catholic community: it was also a formal ceremony of name giving. Thus these two acts - baptism and name giving - are inseparable and will be treated as such.

2. the child received a non-solemn baptism, without the sacred oils and all the rites of the Catholic church, that needed confirmation by a full baptism in the church by a priest. This was an emergency baptism, that could be done by a woman (the "parteira"), or any person that was able to pronounce the right

sequence of words. Although it needed the confirmation of a proper ceremony in the church, it fulfilled the basic function of giving a soul to the child⁵⁷. If the child died, it could be buried in sacred ground, just as if it had received baptism in church.

3. The child had not received baptism. If it was alive, the suggestion of the name to be given with baptism was inevitably made. The very few exceptions seem to derive from forgetfulness or from the fact that there was no point in giving the child a name since it was born dead or died before baptism. If the child was dead, it would be buried in the ground floor of the house⁵⁸, in the area used to store firewood.

4. There is no specific mention of baptism, although other elements in the text can give information about it. This category created certain problems in the analysis, as we shall see.

⁵⁷ See voice 'baptême' in Naz, *Dictionnaire de Droit Canonique*, t. II, Paris, Librairie Letouzey et Ané, 1937, pp. 110-174.

⁵⁸ The building was a "casa de sobrado", a typical house of North West Portugal, where the ground floor was not paved and generally used to store wine and wood or to keep animals during nighttime. The fact that the floor could be dug made children's burials possible. The upper floors, supported by wooden beams, were inhabited by the internal wet-nurses and the children.

Table 5.30.
Content of notes - statement regarding baptism

	with bap.	provisional	no bap.	no mention	total
1699-1701	82	33	81	24	220
%	37.27	15.0	36.82	10.91	
1724-1726	183	50	143	124	500
%	36.6	10.0	28.6	24.8	
1749-1751	333	103	188	333	957
%	34.8	10.76	19.64	34.8	
1774-1776	528	71	279	531	1409
%	37.47	5.04	19.8	37.69	
Total	1126	257	691	1012	3086
%	36.49	8.33	22.39	32.79	

If we look at table 5.30, the percentage of children with baptism is always superior to unbaptized children. Curiously, the percentage of children declared to be baptized does not register a significant variation between the cohorts (from 34 to 37%). In comparison, unbaptized children range from 37 to 20%. Children with provisional baptism are significant between 1699-1701 (15%), drop to 10% in the following two cohorts and reach their minimum between 1774-1776, when the percentage is only 5. The sum of the overall percentage of the two categories is 44.8, which means that nearly half the children are said to have received some form of baptism. It is interesting to note that failure to mention baptism increases through the century: 11%, 25%, 35% and 38%. This could be the indicator of a less baptism minded population, as well the reflection of semantic evolution: sentences like 'ha-de-se chamar" (should be named) would imply no baptism whilst "chama-se" (is called) could refer to baptism, although it was not specifically referred to in the text. This point shall be dealt with next, when references to the name of the child are analyzed. Also, as Santaló pointed out, the absence of a

mention of baptism does not mean that children were not baptized: it only means that baptism was not referred to in the notes⁵⁹.

Table 5.31.
Content of notes - mention of child's name

	with name	name suggested	no mention	total
1699-1701	111	94	15	220
%	50.45	42.73	6.82	
1724-1726	229	252	19	500
%	45.8	50.4	3.8	
1749-1751	442	482	33	957
%	46.19	50.36	3.45	
1774-1776	709	653	44	1406*
%	50.43	46.44	3.13	
Total	1491	1481	111	3083
%	48.36	48.04	3.6	

* The three foundlings missing are stated to have been born dead, and thus could not have been given any name.

The social and cultural importance of name giving has already been stressed by various scholars⁶⁰. The abandoners rarely gave up their right to name the child: only in 3.6% of the notes is no name referred to (see Table 5.31.), 48% already had a name, whilst for another 48% the name to be given was suggested. It was fundamental for abandoners to keep control of the child's

⁵⁹ Leon-Carlos Alvarez Santaló, *Marginación social y mentalidad en Andalucía Occidental. Expósitos en Sevilla (1613-1910)*, Sevilla, La Junta de Andalucía, 1980, p. 210.

⁶⁰ See Carlo A. Corsini, 'Prénom et classe sociale. Les enfants trouvés à Sienne, 1766-68' in Jacques Dupâquier, Alain Bideau et Marie-Elizabeth Ducreux, *Le prénom, mode et histoire. Entretiens de Mahler 1980*, Paris, Éditions de E.H.E.S.S., 1980, pp.177-187.

name because it was an identifying item (and, as we shall see parents often had the ambition to trace their children out at nurse). Table 5.32. shows that, where there is ambiguity about the child having been baptized or not (category "no reference"), names are nevertheless referred to. It is possible that, in cases where the child had a name (23%), it had already received some kind of baptism; when names were suggested, it could mean no baptism had been ministered. Still, no definitive statement can be made; what can be said is that only in exceptional cases (mostly when the child was dead) was no name referred to.

Table 5.32.
"No reference" to baptism by name

	with name	name suggested	no mention	total
1699-1701	9	13	2	24
%	37.5	54.17	8.33	
1724-1726	21	101	2	124
%	16.94	81.45	1.61	
1749-1751	62	264	7	333
%	18.62	79.28	2.10	
1774-1776	143	369	19	531
%	26.93	69.49	3.58	
Total	235	747	30	1012
%	23.22	73.81	2.96	

Most important of all, names are an indicator that parents were not willing to give up completely the social fatherhood of children, an impression that other elements in the notes also confirm. If parents were not interested at all in the children they abandoned, why should they bother to name them? Only because the name was a compulsory feature of baptism? Or is it because they still regarded them as their children and thus should be named by them?

Baptism and name were undoubtedly the main concern of the authors of the notes. They were mentioned for almost every

child with a note, even for those who were deposited dead at the wheel. Among the latter, the most common worry was to give instructions about the burial, depending on whether the child had received some kind of baptism or not. Table 5.33. depicts the information given on baptism for those children whose abandoners were aware that they were deposited dead⁶¹.

Table 5.33.
Children deposited dead by baptism situation

	named	without name	total
with baptism	13	21	34*
no baptism	-	11	11
provisional bap.	1	13	14
no reference	-	3	3
	14	48	62

* one child was dying when it entered the wheel, and the note did not mention any name, which suggests the abandoners were aware it was dying.

Baptism was still a main concern, as 48 children (77.42%) are said to have been baptized. One of them, although born dead, was baptized while still alive in its mother's womb⁶². It is clear that the parents did not bother to state in the notes the names their children had been given, probably because they were dead shortly after birth. Since there was no interest in preserving any name as a further sign of identity, names were not given to the children. In 33 notes (53.2%), mention of a burial "in holy ground" (the Portuguese expression: "enterro em sagrado") is made. Of these, only in three cases is it stated that the child should not be buried in holy ground: in one, it is even suggested that the child should go to the firewood storeroom, which denotes that the

⁶¹ In a very few cases, one can find a child that, although entering dead, had a note ignoring its death. They should be cases of children who died during the journey to the hospital. Among the notes, only foundling n. 100665 (1724), is said to have died on its way to the house.

⁶² Foundling n. 103395, (1751).

person who wrote it was well aware of the details of the house's functioning⁶³.

These dead children's notes clear up one very important aspect: why people abandoned their dead children, instead of burying them in private. Poverty is assumed to be the reason for abandoning a dead child in 12 notes. The Misericórdia, besides ensuring a proper religious ceremony, would not be able to charge the parents for the funeral.

C) Material artifacts mentioned in the notes

In a society where material artifacts were scarce and thus highly valued, description of objects takes on particular significance, especially in a context where children were intended to be identified by them.

Table 5.34.
Reference to signs of recognition

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	75	140	215
%	34.88	65.12	
1724-1726	211	275	486
%	43.42	56.58	
1749-1751	635	296	931
%	68.21	31.79	
1774-1776	1109	283	1392
%	79.67	20.33	
Total	2030	994	3024
%	67.13	32.87	

The mention of the signs of recognition (Table 5.34.) in the text of the notes demonstrates that the accuracy of the notes developed during the century: between 1699-1701 they were 35% and in the last cohort 80%. This was a way to avoid mistakes

⁶³ Foundling n. 104787, (1776).

in a further identification: although the child often brought some objects that were peculiar to him and might by themselves be used to identify him, these objects were nevertheless described in the notes, so as to check their presence with the child at the moment of abandonment⁶⁴. In a hospital more and more crowded with children, it was fundamental to certify the precise elements of information which were meant to trace the child. Also, experience accumulated over the years brought a *know how* that was still incipient at the beginning of the century, together with a probable professionalization of the mediators of abandonment (midwives, for example). For our analysis, these objects have been divided in two main groups: clothes and other objects.

Many notes describe the clothes foundlings were dressed in. They did not always describe all the clothes brought by the children, but only those that, for any reason, were judged as significant. Clothing which was not mentioned in the notes was always described in the Entry Register, separate from any transcription. Table 5.35. only contains clothing mention in the notes. Most parents referred to clothes as signs of recognition. It is an important feature, because people who wrote the notes were probably hoping that children would take their clothes with them when they went to nurse. The increase in the percentage of notes mentioning clothes is striking: 7% between 1699-1701; 9% between 1724-1726; 29% between 1749-1751 and 42% between 1774-1776.

⁶⁴ In certain cases, therefore, the objects were not with the child when he arrived at the house: they might have disappeared during the journey or have been stolen. Generally objects in silver or gold never arrived at their destination.

Table 5.35.
Mention of clothes

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	15	200	215
%	6.98	93.02	
1724-1726	43	443	486
%	8.85	91.15	
1749-1751	265	666	931
%	28.46	71.54	
1774-1776	587	805	1392
%	42.17	57.83	
Total	910	2114	3024
%	30.09	69.91	

The listing of children's clothes, sometimes described in great detail, can be a good source for the study of clothing, and could possibly add something to Ariès's impressionistic comments about children clothing⁶⁵. Unfortunately no clothes are to be seen and we cannot know what they looked like. Nevertheless the sources describe the cloths they were made of and their colors.

The clothing of children (Table 5.36.) consisted mainly of shirts, strips of cloth (we can infer that swatching was still the rule) and napkins. There is an hierarchy of importance among such objects: napkins (sometimes consisting of any piece of cloth or even rugs), strips and shirts. Little hats and "manguitos" were rarer and appear fundamentally in the two last cohorts.

⁶⁵ In *L'Enfant et la vie familiale*, Paris, Plon, 1960 (1st edition) Philippe Ariès dedicated a chapter to children's clothing although never mentioning newborn's clothing, concentrating on the changes in dressing that took place in the different stages of the child's life.

Table 5.36.
Objects of clothing

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
gibão	-	-	7	5	12
(<i>jerkin</i>)	-	-	0.7	0.4	0.4
manto	1	-	13	9	23
(<i>cloak</i>)	0.5	-	1.4	0.6	0.7
coifa	-	1	40	141	182
(<i>hair-<u>nap</u></i>)	-	0.2	4.2	10.0	5.9
manguito	-	3	71	179	253
(<i>false sleeve</i>)	-	0.6	7.4	12.7	8.2
camisa	15	22	181	398	616
(<i>shirt</i>)	6.8	4.4	18.9	28.2	20
coeiro	8	21	184	490	703
(<i>napkin</i>)	3.6	4.2	19.2	34.8	22.8
faixa	9	45	246	493	793
(<i>stripe</i>)	4.1	9.0	25.7	35	25.7
total	33	92	742	1715	2582
	15.01	18.4	77.5	121.7	83.7
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

Children's clothes seem to have been kept together with ribbons. Ribbons were objects difficult to classify in my analysis, because they could be a part of the children's dress, having the function of tying shirts or strips, or be isolated objects, attached to one arm or leg, when they were used as signs of recognition. As they could have both functions and were not pieces of clothing in their own right, they have been included in the next table (see Table 5.37.), that deals with the objects most frequently referred to as signs of recognition.

Table 5.37.
Objects brought by children

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
anel	-	4	11	12	27
(ring)	-	0.8	1.1	0.9	0.9
medida	3	23	71	65	162
(medal)	1.4	4.6	7.4	4.6	5.2
veronica	3	18	76	106	203
(medal)	1.4	3.6	7.9	7.5	6.6
figa	2	20	84	121	227
(amulet)	0.9	4.0	8.8	8.6	7.4
reliquia	2	12	101	125	240
(relics)	0.9	2.4	10.6	8.9	7.8
rosário	-	-	88	189	277
(rosary)	-	-	9.2	13.4	9.0
bolsa	4	26	165	105	300
(purse)	1.8	5.2	17.2	7.5	9.7
contas	1	12	91	225	329
(beads)	0.5	2.4	9.5	16.0	10.7
fita	24	98	362	748	1232
(ribbon)	10.9	19.6	37.8	53.1	40.0
total	39	213	1049	1696	2997
%	17.7	42.6	109.6	120.4	97.1
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

The objects children brought had the function of ascribing a personal property to the children, giving them a personality among the mass of children and were used as identity marks. Many of them were protective tokens, either religious or profane. Among the religious objects, rosaries ("rosários"), medals ("veronicas" or "medidas"). The word "reliquias" meant a group of objects, usually kept in a purse ("purse"), that were to be cherished regardless of their nature: they could be religious or not. Profane objects were supposed to chase away the evil (such as "figas", objects in the form of closed hands with the thumb between its two neighbouring fingers, or cloves of garlic). The variety and imagination these objects depict is endless: children could be abandoned with any object, from containers of jam

("marmelada") to fresh flowers and herbs⁶⁶. Most of these objects depict the extreme poverty of the parents who could not afford to give the child any object which would cost money.

It is possible that many of the objects had symbolical meanings whose sense escapes to us now: as a clandestine activity, abandonment must have surely developed its own codes and secrets. There could thus be an "underground" tacit communication between some abandoners and the hospital, channeled through mention of objects and particular issues. But, above all, both clothes and objects leave one with the suspicion that parents were willing to identify their children if they were wearing them when at nurse. As the tendency of the administrators was to keep objects in the archive (even clothing, although there was a greater chance that these would be worn by children), parents must have been often disappointed in their hopes.

D) Other information on foundlings

Tables 5.38., 5.39., 5.40. and 5.41. deal with items relating to the measure of time by abandoners: date of birth and age of the child; date and time of abandonment. Each one of these had the function of situating the child in a time context and could be useful in the future if recognition was attempted.

The specification of the date of birth (Table 5.38.) of the child was also important, not only as an item of identity, but also as a useful element to draw up certificates. We must not forget that for the foundlings the Entry Books were meant to be the equivalent of parish registers for other people: any birth certificate would have to be prepared by the hospital's staff. The presence of information on birth shows the same increase in accuracy (although circumscribed to the second half of the century) already noted for the description of signs of recognition,

⁶⁶ Among fresh herbs, bundles of rosemary, coriander and sage; among flowers, roses, dried flowers, pansies, sunflowers and carnations; one child brought an onion tied to his right leg (coxa) and another a group of green grapes. Another one even brought a rosary made of pinefruits with a paternoster made of raisins whilst another had a "ponta de cabra loura" (seemingly a white goat's horn).

although the percentage of notes with date of birth was always lower, never passing 30%.

Table 5.38.
Mention of date of birth

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	44	171	215
%	20.47	79.53	
1724-1726	92	394	486
%	18.93	81.07	
1749-1751	225	706	931
%	24.17	75.83	
1774-1776	416	976	1392
%	29.89	70.11	
Total	777	2247	3024
%	25.69	74.31	

Age (Table 5.39.), instead, was a feature that was present almost only for foundlings that were abandoned after some weeks or months. The percentage of notes referring to age is relatively uniform for all cohorts, ranging from 4 to 5%. Mention of date of birth, then, was more frequent than a simple statement of the age of the child at the moment of abandonment.

Table 5.39.
Mention of age

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	12	203	215
%	5.58	94.42	
1724-1726	21	465	486
%	4.32	95.68	
1749-1751	41	890	931
%	4.40	95.60	
1774-1776	69	1323	1392
%	4.96	95.04	
Total	143	2881	3024
%	4.73	95.27	

Date of abandonment (Table 5.40.) was important information for two motives: first, it was a necessary item in a letter, and notes were basically letters in their own right; second, it also offered information that might contribute to locate the child more rapidly. The growing intensity with which it is referred to in the notes (from 20% at the beginning of the century to 54% between 1774-76) shows the same increase in accuracy that was previously observed for signs of recognition and date of birth.

Table 5.40.
Mention of date of abandonment

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	42	173	215
%	19.53	80.47	
1724-1726	173	313	486
%	35.60	64.40	
1749-1751	377	554	931
%	40.49	59.51	
1774-1776	758	634	1392
%	54.45	45.55	
Total	1350	1674	3024
%	44.64	55.36	

The same can be said about the mention of **time of abandonment** (Table 5.41.). This is a curious feature, since its reference in the text implied an exact check of the moment of abandonment by the person who wrote it. This fact suggests that there was someone who wrote notes just before abandonment, who could be the "parteira" just after child delivery or a scribe who rented his services to the abandoners, working near the wheel. This fact points to the existence of mediators specialized in abandonment, since I have already assumed that few abandoners could write notes themselves.

Table 5.41.
Mention of time of abandonment

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	4	211	215
%	1.86	98.14	
1724-1726	18	468	486
%	3.70	96.30	
1749-1751	106	825	931
%	11.39	88.61	
1774-1776	208	1184	1392
%	14.94	85.06	
Total	336	2688	3024
%	11.11	88.89	

b) Parents

Direct mention of parents, as can be seen in table 5.42., is not very common in notes and decreases throughout the century, except for a small rise from the third to the fourth cohort.

Table 5.42.
Reference to parents

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
mãe (mother)	29	17	37	75	158
	<i>13.2</i>	<i>3.4</i>	<i>3.9</i>	<i>5.3</i>	<i>5.1</i>
pai (father)	32	25	22	31	110
	<i>14.5</i>	<i>5.0</i>	<i>2.3</i>	<i>2.2</i>	<i>3.6</i>
pais (parents)	12	28	16	51	107
	<i>5.5</i>	<i>5.6</i>	<i>1.7</i>	<i>3.6</i>	<i>3.5</i>
"he de"	19	16	18	12	65
<i>(belongs to)</i>	<i>8.6</i>	<i>3.2</i>	<i>1.9</i>	<i>0.9</i>	<i>2.1</i>
total	92	86	93	169	440
	<i>41.8</i>	<i>17.2</i>	<i>9.7</i>	<i>12.0</i>	<i>14.3</i>
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

Except in the first cohort (42%) parents tended to be absent from the notes, which definitely are not a source that can be used to answer the legitimate/illegitimate controversy that has always

accompanied research on abandoned children. The notes mention poverty, married parents and unmarried mothers, it is true, but always in a minute proportion of the cases.

Table 5.43.
Mention of poverty of parents

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
pobre/pobreza	11	6	21	43	81
(<i>poor/poverty</i>)	5	1.2	2.2	3.1	2.6
necessidade	2	2	7	4	15
(<i>need</i>)	0.9	0.4	0.7	0.3	0.5
total	13	8	28	47	96
	5.9	1.6	2.9	3.3	3.1
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

The mention of poverty (Table 5.43.) of parents is rare: only in 1699-1701 did the percentage reach 6%, dropping to 1.6% in the second cohort and rising to circa 3% in the last two.

Table 5.44.
Mention of civil status of parents

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
solteiro	3	1	5	7	16
(<i>unmarried</i>)	1.4	0.2	0.5	0.5	0.5
cazado	4	2	8	13	27
(<i>married</i>)	1.8	0.4	0.8	0.9	0.9
viúva/o	-	1	-	-	1
(<i>widow</i>)	-	0.2	-	-	0.03
pai ausente	7	4	5	1	17
(<i>father absent</i>)	3.2	0.8	0.5	0.1	0.6
total	14	8	18	21	61
	6.4	1.6	1.9	1.5	2.0
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

Mention of civil status of parents (Table 4.44.), could be serve as a good indicator of the legitimacy of children. But discretion is the rule, except in the first cohort (6.4%): mention of civil status never rises above 2% in all the other cohorts.

Any mention of specific situations leading to a declining social status, endangered by any deviation from the norms (testified by the words "danger", "credit", "secret", "sin" or "shame") occurs only in 1% of the total number of notes (see Table 5.45.). One cannot deduce from the lack of mention that morals were loose or social risk absent. Discretion seems to have been the rule and people were very reluctant to confide their particular situations in the notes. Nevertheless, a lack of sense of guilt is suggested: if we recall that most parents faced abandonment as provisional, we could almost think that these people did not see abandonment as a definite choice for their children's lives. Here again we can notice that the first cohort is the sole exception of spontaneity among the cohorts: in this instance people were more eager to tell their lives, possibly because they did not yet have very formalized rules of dealing with the institution.

Table 5.45.
Words denoting specific social situations

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
segredo	2	2	-	2	6
(<i>secret</i>)	0.9	0.4	-	0.1	0.2
crédito	1	-	4	1	6
(<i>credit</i>)	0.5	-	0.4	0.07	0.2
perigo	9	5	-	3	17
(<i>danger</i>)	4.1	1.0	-	0.2	0.6
pecado	-	3	1	1	5
(<i>sin</i>)	-	0.6	0.1	0.07	0.2
vergonha	-	1	2	1	4
(<i>shame</i>)	-	0.2	0.2	0.07	0.1
total	12	11	7	8	38
	5.5	2.2	0.7	0.6	1.2
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

Nevertheless, notes can, although very rarely, contain information on the situations that led to abandonment. These references to parenthood and situations occurred more spontaneously at the beginning of the century, when parents even, albeit unwillingly, gave information that enabled administrators to trace them and constrain them to take back their children. As the century went on, such occurrences were made impossible: reference to parents became even more rare, and very cautious. Along with an older habit of using the institution as a deposit for children came indifference and formalism in the notes. This is ever more evident, as we shall see.

In the first cohort (1669-1701), one is struck above all by the incidence of emigration in abandonment: absence of the father is reported in 10 cases, whilst one woman admits having conceived a child while her husband was away at the sea. Of the 42 children whose parents give information about themselves, 22 were illegitimate although not all from the law's perspective⁶⁷: two were the offspring of adultery, the mothers having to abandon them lest their husband find out. Secrecy, one of the pillars of Catholic morals, was invoked in some cases, that proclaim the convenience in hiding the child of public view.

If there is any mention of situations leading to abandonment, they can be summarized as follows:

- poverty;
- lack of milk of the mother;
- absence of one of the parents: death of the mother; emigration of the father or imprisonment;
- sex outside marriage, either adultery, pre-nuptial or other.

Apart from the last issue, and if we bear in mind the motives alleged for receiving a free lactation for non-foundlings,

⁶⁷ Under the law, the son of a married woman was legitimate, unless he was born less than seven months after the mothers' wedding or 6 months after the father's death. Emigration, with long absences of husbands, endangered these principles, and as the husband was entitled legally to punish the wife for adultery, adulterous mothers were constrained to abandon proof of their infidelity.

situations leading to abandonment and to sponsored lactations were basically the same⁶⁸.

Concern for children is expressed by the recommendation that good care ~~to~~ given the child: most parents wished for a good wet-nurse for their children, preferably not too far from the city, and possessing 'good and clean' blood. Blood was the essence of the requirements for a wet-nurse: good because of lack of new-Christian (Jewish) ancestors and clean because of absence of contagious diseases such as syphilis which could contaminate the child⁶⁹. Other notes, more rarely, asked for a woman that would be "capable" (capaz), whilst some even wished for a wet-nurse who would care for their children with love (see Table 5.46.).

Table 5.46.
Recommendations concerning the wet-nurse

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	74	141	215
%	34.42	65.58	
1724-1726	187	299	486
%	38.48	61.52	
1749-1751	255	676	931
%	27.39	72.61	
1774-1776	155	1237	1392
%	11.14	88.86	
Total	671	2353	3024
%	22.19	77.81	

Table 5.46. shows that the percentage of notes with recommendations decreases during the second half of the century, this decrease being more evident in the last cohort (1774-1776), with only 11% of the notes. This change may be due to a greater familiarity with the hospital's existence, that made pointless

⁶⁸ See chapter on non-foundlings.

⁶⁹ The medical science of the time considered breast milk as a transformation of the woman's blood into milk.

asking for any improvement of the treatment granted to the children. It would be risky to conclude that it denoted a lesser concern for the children's wellbeing, as, we shall see, notes tend to evolve during the century.

In fact, in the two first cohorts, the recommendation consisted of an exhortation to give the child to a wet-nurse not far from the city or in a favorite area specified in the note. This point is one of the most interesting that the notes depict: it provides a clear demonstration that parents wanted to know where their children were, probably wishing to contact their wet-nurses and visit them. Such a hope, which depicts a certain naïveté, tended to disappear through the century. In one of the notes it is even claimed that both the administration and the parents would benefit from knowledge of the wet-nurse's and child's address⁷⁰.

Other notes, very rare but very illustrative, show that some users of the institution did not have a high opinion of the wet-nurses. In one note written in verse, we can find: "but let her (the wet-nurse) not be like others nowadays, who want foundlings just to earn money⁷¹."

Many notes leave us with the impression that there was no awareness that abandonment was not a way to give children a free lactation. Diverse references to the non-foundling market of wet-nurses also appear, but are rarer. There is even one parent who refers to the bad treatment that a given private nurse had given his son, leaving him no choice but to abandon it. Evidently, this was a society where breast-feeding was linked to wet-nursing: a feature that Pullan has related to the presence of the foundling system⁷².

⁷⁰ Note n. 100116, from cohort 1.

⁷¹ "... mas (?) que não seja ela como outras deste tempo, que querem os engeitados só por levar emolumentos.." (Tomás, n. 100505, abandoned in 1724).

⁷² Brian Pullan, *Orphans and Foundlings in Early Modern Europe*, The Stenton Lecture 1988, University of Reading, 1989, p. 10.

Table 5.47.
Mention of love

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
amor	3	5	5	15	28
(love)	1.4	1.0	0.5	1.1	0.9
amor de deus	14	24	51	28	117
(love of god)	6.4	4.8	5.3	2.0	3.8
total	17	29	56	43	145
	7.7	5.8	5.9	3.1	4.7
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

Expression of feelings and emotions associated with the act of abandoning are obviously very rare (Table 5.47.). Only one note in verse speaks about a mother in tears parting from her son and another eloquently says "adeus amorzinho da minha alma, que tanto te quero" (goodbye little love of my soul, I love you so much)⁷³. If the word "love" appears, it is often accompanied by

⁷³ António, foundling n. 102007, *Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 126 v. aos 10 de novembro de 1749 annos.

as 6 horas para as 7
mais alegre que contrito
metido em hum fulipo
de minha mai eu sahi
e venho parar aqui
pois a fortuna o permite
pedindo a mai putativa
me seja caritativa
e goarde esta conchinha
que venha apenca por linha
quando a mostra vier
para minha mai siquer [sic]
por ella me conhecer
e tambem agradecer
o modo com que me tratao
pois lagrimas lhe nao faltao
neste meu apartamento
mas com o contentamento
que me ha-de resgatar
se eu da morte escapar
pede muito de favor
me criem com amor
que ella assim o fizera
e o nome me puzera
conforme sua vontade
antonio que hei-de ser frade

the words "de Deus" and thus is an expression belonging to the vocabulary of the religious cult (meaning "for God's sake"). When applied to children, it consists often of a recommendation to the wet-nurse, who is asked to care for the child "with love". The rarity of the expression (1% of all the notes) does not erase its curious meaning: abandoners dared to expect that their children be loved by their nurses, as they would have been if they were in their parents's company.

c) The donors of charity: administrative staff and wet-nurses

Notes were adressed to the institution itself and to people who worked in it. They reflect as such the relationship between its users and its staff. Table 5.48. depicts the designations the institution had throughout the century.

**Table 5.48.
Designations of the institution**

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
santa caza	25	60	75	61	221
(Holy House)	11.4	12.	7.8	4.3	7.2
roda	18	57	195	295	565
(wheel)	8.2	11.4	20.4	20.9	18.3
total	43	117	270	356	786
	19.5	23.4	28.2	25.3	25.5
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

The designations of the institution register an evolution: in the first cohorts, the Misericórdia (referred to as the "Santa Caza") was clearly assimilated to the Casa da Roda whilst in the two last cohorts it was surpassed by the word "roda" (wheel). The revolving tour that was the instrument of abandonment in

da religiam da serra.

Maria Thereza, n. 102462, abandoned in 1750: "naceu a 26 de Julho do anno de 1750 annos, por-lhe-am o nome Maria Thereza, o amorzinho da minha alma que tanto te quero'.

Portugal and its symbol became the designation of the institution that was to give assistance to foundlings.

Table 5.49.
Words invoking the recipients of the notes

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
"senhoras amas" -		4	7	2	13
(wet-nurses)	-	0.8	0.7	0.1	0.4
"provedor"	3	52	156	229	440
	1.4	10.4	16.3	16.3	14.3
"irmãos"	11	7	5	1	24
	5.0	1.4	0.5	0.07	0.8
"mordomo"	12	14	2	-	28
	5.5	2.8	0.2	-	0.9
total	26	77	170	232	505
	11.8	15.4	17.8	16.5	16.4
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

The fact that notes become formal as the century proceeds can be seen particularly when analyzing the recipients of the notes. We have seen that notes were letters to the administration; they had to be addressed to some authority within it. In the first half of the century the brothers of the confraternity and the mordomo were still mentioned, but the "provedor" emerged as the most central and powerful figure, whom the letters had to invoke. All other persons were secondary figures who were rarely referred to.

Table 5.50.
Intention of reclaiming the child

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	129	86	215
%	60	40	
1724-1726	335	151	486
%	68.93	31.07	
1749-1751	541	390	931
%	58.17	41.83	
1774-1776	620	772	1392
%	44.54	55.46	
Total	1625	1399	3024
%	53.74	46.26	

Table 5.51.
Intention of refunding expenses

	Yes	No	Total
1699-1701	32	183	215
%	14.82	85.12	
1724-1726	78	408	486
%	16.05	83.95	
1749-1751	145	786	931
%	15.58	84.42	
1774-1776	58	1334	1392
%	4.17	95.83	
Total	313	2711	3024
%	10.35	89.65	

The intention of coming to the administration to reclaim the child (see Table 5.50.) and refund the money the administration had spent on it (Table 5.51.) was probably the most rhetorical item included in the notes. Of all those who declared such a purpose, few accomplished it and even fewer paid the

administration. As this mention can be inevitably found at the bottom of notes, maybe it was a stereotyped way of ending them. But payment was not only possible in monetary form: some notes affirm that the child or the abandoners would pray for the hospital's staff and contain their best wishes of luck and progress for the administrators. This happened when abandoners were conscious that they would never be able to refund the expenses of their children; they said that every help to be given was for "the love of god": the spiritual benefit from charity should thus be its best reward.

Table 5.52.
Words expressing virtues or qualities

	1699-01	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
honra/do	4	1	2	2	9
(<i>honor</i>)	1.8	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.3
limpo/limpeza	18	27	13	42	100
(<i>ref. to blood</i>)	8.2	5.4	1.4	3.0	3.2
caridade	-	12	28	49	89
(<i>charity</i>)	-	2.4	2.9	3.5	2.9
piedade	2	5	12	6	25
(<i>piety</i>)	0.9	1.0	1.3	0.4	0.8
capaz/capacidade-		6	53	24	83
(<i>ability</i>)	-	1.2	5.5	1.7	2.7
boa ama	11	52	49	30	142
(<i>"good" nurse</i>)	5.0	10.4	5.1	2.1	4.6
total	35	103	157	153	448
	15.9	20.6	16.4	10.9	14.5
n. of notes	220	500	957	1409	3086

Table 5.52. gives the frequency of some attributes qualifying either the parents (honour), or the wet-nurses (with charity, clean, with piety, capable or good) or even the administrative staff (charity, piety). Here the frequency is higher, depicting the need that the users of the institution felt of recommending or simply praising the persons who would attend

to their children. Particularly interesting is the mention of "limpeza" (propriety) and limpo/a (clean) that could have two meanings, both attached to blood: either the absence of contagious diseases such as syphilis or the absence of miscegenation with Jewish blood. Such references reach 3.2% of the whole sample, only surpassed by the recommendation to give the child to a good wet-nurse (boa ama), particularly frequent in the second cohort, when it reached 10%.

The image that abandoners leave through the notes is one of people using an institution without much sense of guilt and looking at it as a sort of customary right, as Hünecke calls it⁷⁴. The word sin, related to the need to expiate faults, appears very rarely. In some notes, abandoners do not even seem to be aware that they were not supposed to keep contact with their children when they were at nurse. They proclaim their intention to go and visit the wet-nurse and give her a reward if the child is well cared for. The absence of a sense of guilt (even when the child is obviously illegitimate and the result of sin) is a direct consequence of this attitude towards children, whose separation from parents was judged as provisional. This does not mean that parents did not express their sorrow at having parted from the child, although this happened rarely.

The impression created by the notes is that abandoners preferred to think that abandonment was a way of obtaining a free lactation for their children. Children, they said, would be searched for in a near future, and were not being wasted. Love for them is a sentiment that is hardly present: the children were too young and had not spent enough time with their parents to grow any affection. As one note expresses it graphically, a child "was made laughing, delivered in pain, and brought up by poor

⁷⁴ Hünecke, Volker, 'The abandonment of legitimate children in nineteenth century Milan', paper delivered to the Tenth International Economic History Conference, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, p.14.

farmers"⁷⁵. But even if abandonment was not seen as a dramatic or shameful event, abandoners did not like to think that their children were being delivered to a probable death or that the circumstances of life would never enable them to get them back.

Those who reclaimed children

This section is concerned with parents who came to search for their children, because only for such cases is there concise information on them. Nevertheless, there are cases where the identity of parents is known although they never attempted to search for their children; they are rare but have been included in the analysis⁷⁶. There is only one case of a child who reported on its own abandonment. José Teotónio, a five year and half ~~year~~ old boy, remains the only child in the whole sample who was able to shed light on his identity and the circumstances of his abandonment. It is the only oral testimony of a subject of abandonment, although his speech is transcribed indirectly. He was never officially retrieved by his family⁷⁷.

The act of the search was an event often described in two or three lines in the register of foundlings. Only between 1774-1776

⁷⁵ "Ei-lo ahi vai, feito a rir, parido com muntas dores, criai-o agora pobres lavradores", note from foundling n. 106681, Leonel Joaquim, abandoned in 1775; another note from 1751 seems to say exactly the same though the last words could not be read: "... ele foi feito com grande gosto, parido com grandes dores..." (António José, abandoned in 1751, Livro 29 das Entradas, fl. 72).

⁷⁶ A first approach to this material was undertaken in my paper "The "Casa da Roda do Porto": reception and restitution of foundlings in the eighteenth century", *Enfance abandonnée et Société en Europe XIVE-XXe siècle, Actes du colloque international*, Rome, 30 et 31 Janvier 1987, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, pp. 539-572. It has been reworked in the light of new information and with the help of the computer. This accounts for possible discrepancies between the data presented in the paper and in this chapter.

⁷⁷ Foundling n. 103375, Livro 14 das Entradas, fl. 84: "diz o mesmo rapaz se chama José Teotónio, e que he filho de João Moreira e de Quitéria Maria, do lugar de Casal Garcia, mas não sabe dizer a freguesia e que hontem jantara em Valongo, e que o trouxera à roda um homem chamado Mathias, e enquanto não se averigua a verdade se suspende o baptizar-se, mayormente porque o mesmo rapaz diz que seu padrinho he hum doutor que lhe dera o chambre, que traz vestido, e que sua madrinha he Dona Micaela de Amarante".

were parents obliged to sign their names (or get someone else to sign for them). It sufficed to demonstrate unequivocally that they were retrieving the right child by displaying information that could establish a link to the entry record. People would state the names they had given them, the day of abandonment, describe objects that accompanied them or present a copy of the note. As administrators reported such claims in the "Livros de Entrada" as well as in the "Livros de Saída", research involved record linkage between the two sources. The results of the following analysis are severely weakened by the fact that the administrators did not always report on searches made for dead children, especially in the two first cohorts (1699-1701 and 1724-1726). As is shown in the table, dead children searched for by their parents corresponded only in the 1774-1776 cohort to about 21%, which is a more plausible percentage than that for the other cohorts (see Table 5.53.)

Table 5.53.
Live children at the moment of the search

	Live	%	Dead	%	Total
1699-1701	41	97.62	1	2.38	42
1724-1726	113(1)	96.58	4	3.42	117
1749-1751	162(7)	94.19	10	5.81	172
1774-1776	242	79.08	64	20.92	306
Total	558	87.60	79	12.40	637

N.B. Figures in parenthesis correspond to children that died after having been searched for by their parents.

Not all the parents who came for their children did so willingly. In many cases, the administration had access to information that allowed to retrieve the abandoners. However, the reasons when the administrators decided to force parents to take their children back remain unclear. They sometimes refer to the "notorious behaviour" of the unmarried mother. We suspect that the urge to preserve honour was designed for the women who had fallen into sin only once and needed a second chance. In cases of public misbehaviour, forcing them to take the child back must have been a punishment. In other cases, when parents were

married, they simply made an effort to restrict abandonment to the breastfeeding period and made sure parents took them after weaning. But we suspect that administrators knew more about the abandoners' lives than what is stated in the sources. And when they did not, the reason might be that they were simply not willing to be informed. In fact, information might be provided by a variety of informers: wet-nurses, midwives, neighbours and people charged with the transport of the infants⁷⁸. Like other societies in the eighteenth century, social control through interpersonal relationships (gossip) must have played an important role, even in an urban environment. The fact is that the words "constou" (it has been heard) or "averiguação" (enquiry) are too present in the sources to be ignored (see table 5.54.).

Table 5.54.
Information on parents

	A	B	C	D	Total
1699-1701	1	2	3	36	42
%	2.38	4.76	7.14	85.71	100
1724-1726	6	15	-	96	117
%	5.13	12.82	-	82.05	100
1749-1751	9	9	8	146	172
%	5.23	5.23	4.65	84.88	100
1774-1776	5	5	-	296	306
%	1.63	1.63	-	96.73	100
Total	21	31	11	574	637
%	3.30	4.87	1.73	90.11	100

A = "constou" (it was heard)

B = "averiguação" (enquiry)

C = No search (information available on parents without any initiative of search or restitution to them)

D = No information - presumably parents came of their own will

⁷⁸ Midwives could report on recent deliveries; neighbours could give information on women suspected of having given birth recently; obviously some abandoners coming from the countryside had to use boats or other means of transport.

Even if administrators could easily trace parents and force them to take the children they had abandoned, such mandatory acts had obvious limitations. Abandonment being anonymous, it was possible for the parent to re-abandon with almost total impunity. Such double abandonments were discovered by the administration in fifteen cases (see table 5.55.).

Table 5.55.
Reintegration of children in their families

	A	B	C	D	Total
1699-1701	41	-	-	1	42
%	97.62	-	-	2.38	100
1724-1726	102	4	6	5	117
%	87.18	3.42	5.13	4.27	100
1749-1751	136	22	4	10	172
%	79.07	12.79	2.33	5.81	100
1774-1776	233	4	5	64	306
%	76.14	1.31	1.63	20.92	100
Total	512	30	15	80	637
%	80.38	4.71	2.35	12.56	100

A = Reintegrated
 B = Not reintegrated
 C = Re-abandoned
 D = Dead child

If the two tables (5.54. and 5.55) are compared, it can be seen that the cohorts where administrators made efforts to find the parents of foundlings were also the periods when the reintegration of foundlings in their families failed to a higher degree. Between 1724-1726 18% (A+B) of the restitutions were undertaken by the administrators' initiative; the percentage of re-abandoned children was the highest of all cohorts (5.13%). Between 1749-1751, the identities of the parents of 10.5% children were discovered by the administration's initiative; 12.8% of all children whose parents were known were never reintegrated in their families.

Table 5.56.
Parents who refunded expenses to the Foundling Hospital

	Yes	%	No	%	Total
1699-1701	5	11.90	37	88.10	42
1724-1726	44	37.61	73	62.39	117
1749-1751	38	22.09	134	77.91	172
1774-1776	54	17.65	252	82.35	306
	141	22.14	496	77.86	637

Table 5.56. depicts the refunding of expenses to the Foundling Hospital by parents. Parents were in theory obliged to pay the total sum of money the administration had spent on the child from the moment of abandonment until the day they were withdrawn, unless they could prove they were too poor. In the first two cohorts the exemption from payment depended mostly on the administrator's judgement, based on his personal knowledge of the parent and also on the information brought informally by others. In the second half of the century, the issue was formalized, and parents started to present written documents, consisting of poverty certificates issued by parish priests. Even so, the impression is that the administrators were dealing almost invariably with poor people and that they were well aware of the fact. Once, an administrator even recognized he had been too harsh with a mother who had sold everything she had to repay the Foundling Hospital⁷⁹. Only between 1724-1726 and 1749-1751, when the administrators' approach to parents seems to have been more rigid, was the percentage of those who refunded expenses above 20%. For the whole of the sample it can be said that roughly 8 out of 10 parents never refunded administrators for the expenses of their children.

The suggestion that coming to search for a previously abandoned child was a shameful act is prompted by the fact that

⁷⁹ *Livro 14 das Salidas*, fl. 42 v.: "Quis cobrar o resto que deve Brfzida dos Santos conteuda no assento retro e fiz toda a diligência e achei ser uma pobre miserável que para haver de pagar os 12600 reis vendera tudo quanto tinha, nem de seu marido tinha noticia alguma desde que se ausentou para o Brasil pelo que me pareceu não era justo vexá-la. Os senhores provedores que me sucederem obrarão o que melhor lhes parecer. Porto, 20 de Julho de 1730".

parents often sent for their children through a mediator, be it a priest or a non-ecclesiastic. Such persons were supposed to keep the parents' identity secret. Priests referred to the secrecy of confession ("segredo de confissão") and non-priests to natural secrecy ("segredo natural") (see table 5.57.). Even if they disclosed some information that can be found in the registers, it should not be forgotten that access to the register books was reserved to the administrators⁸⁰. Such mediators refunded the Misericórdia more often than identified parents, suggesting that secrecy could have been a luxury that only the better off could afford. If there were exceptions to the rule that the users of the Casa da Roda were the poor, they were probably included in the group of these "secret" parents. We suspect that the rich often hid behind priests or non-ecclesiastical persons in order to negotiate with the foundling home. Nevertheless, priests also started to bring poverty certificates to exempt "secret" parents from refunding expenses, especially between 1774-1776. This fact limits even further the possibility that the Foundling Hospital was used by the higher strata of the population. At most, if rich and noble people also abandoned their children, they rarely cared to take them back.

Table 5.57.
Searches involving secrecy concerning the identity of parents

	Yes	No	Not confirmed	Total
1699-1701	-	3	39	42
%	-	7.14	92.86	100
1724-1726	11(1)	95	11	117
%	9.40	81.20	9.40	100
1749-1751	31(10)	132	9	172
%	18.02	76.74	5.23	100
1774-1776	26	279	1	306
%	8.50	91.18	0.33	100
Total	68	509	60	637
%	10.68	79.91	9.42	100

* Numbers in brackets cases apply for children who were dead by the time they were searched for.

⁸⁰ In some cases, this third person was not even charged with taking the child out of the hospital. His only intention was to pay the expenses of the child.

Table 5.58. summarizes the cases where incomplete information on the identity of parents can be found. Not all of them involve secrecy: in the 1699-1701 cohort the lack of information is due to the structure of the records, which are less detailed than in the other three cohorts. The difference between these data and those of the former table is explained by the fact that table 5.57. only reports the cases when secrecy was formally declared, although many parents were not thoroughly identified even when secrecy was not specifically invoked. Also, in many cases when children were dead by the time of the search, the scribes did not note the identities of parents.

Table 5.58.
Identification of parents

	Yes	%	No	%	Total
1699-1701	3	7.14	39	92.86	42
1724-1726	92	78.63	25	21.37	117
1749-1751	131	76.16	41	23.84	172
1774-1776	280	91.50	26	8.50	306
Total	506	79.43	131	20.57	637

In 43 cases (see Table 5.59.) the administrators reported on the fraudulent behaviour of parents towards the Foundling Hospital. Parents were supposed to lose all links with their children after they abandoned them; they were not supposed to know where they were put to nurse. Instead, in these 43 cases proof is given that parents managed not only to retrieve children from the wet-nurses and visit them but also had some forms of control over the choice of wet-nurse, preferably a woman not living too far from the family. The major fraud consisted of the mother being engaged as wet-nurse to her own child, or getting a relative or a neighbour to pick the child at the Foundling Hospital. We can note that "hunting" for frauds took place mainly in the second cohort (1724-1726: 21.4% of the total number of frauds), precisely one of the periods when administrators were more severe towards parents.

Table 5.59.
Frauds detected in parents' behaviour

	Yes	%	No	%	Total
1699-1701	-	-	-	-	-
1724-1726	25	21.37	92	78.63	117
1749-1751	7	4.07	165	95.93	172
1774-1776	11	3.59	295	96.41	306
Total	43	7.23	552	92.77	595

From all the material concerning foundlings, information on parents has proved to be the only data available that sheds some light on the problem of illegitimacy in quantitative terms. I must stress that administrators did not, in the overwhelming majority of cases, classify children in categories of "legitimate" or "illegitimate". The fact that they did not make such distinctions is in itself revealing: the habit of dealing with high levels of illegitimacy must have prevented them from operating a sharp discrimination between the legitimate and the illegitimate children.

Given the lack of specific information, the historian is left with the task of operating distinctions. The issue is not without difficulties: in many cases, the marital status of the parent/s who searched for children is not stated; there is also the problem of widows. To establish if a widow's child was technically legitimate one needs to know how long before her husband had died. In the cases of married women whose husbands are stated to be absent, in an area of high emigration, the problem is similar: how long had they been separated physically from their wives?

In order to solve such difficulties, I observed a sequence of fixed rules:

1) In cases where there is a single woman without indication of marital status the child is presumed illegitimate, but only when there is subsidiary information that is never available for married and widowed women. Such information consists of place of origin (initial address before emigration to the city) and name of the woman's parents (sometimes the occupation of the father is also declared).

2) Unless otherwise stated, the son of married parents is legitimate. I applied the rule referred to in chapter 3: *pater es quam nuptias demonstrant*.. When the husband is said to be absent, the child is held to be legitimate unless the source states it was the result of adultery, as was the case in several entries.

3) Children of widows are held to have an indeterminate status: they have not been classified, unless mother states that her dead husband was the father (only one case).

4) The status of the child relates to the moment of birth. In a few cases the mother gave birth to the child while single, subsequently marrying the father's child or to another man. The child is thus classified as illegitimate.

5) Cases when the identity of parents is not revealed. In some of them, "secrecy", wether "natural" (interpersonal) or "confessional" (heard in confession by the priest), is invoked. Such cases could probably be presumed illegitimate, but we do not know to what extent recognition of having abandoned a child, even a legitimate one, was a social devaluation for certain strata of the population. For such a reason, no evaluation was made concerning their status.

These criteria lead to the definition of the following categories (see table 5.60.):

- legitimate (L)
- presumed legitimate (PL)
- illegitimate (I)
- presumed illegitimate (PI)
- not determined (X)

Table 5.60.
Status of foundlings searched for by parents

	L	PL	I	PI	X	TOTAL
1699-1701	1	-	5	-	36	42
Freq. (%)	2.38	-	11.90	-	85.71	100
Adj. freq. (%)	16.67	-	83.33	-	-	100
1724-1726	16	1	51	16	33	117
Freq. (%)	13.68	.85	43.59	13.68	28.21	100
Adj. freq. (%)	19.05	1.19	60.71	19.05	-	100
1749-1751	30	3	75	20	44	172
Freq. (%)	17.44	1.74	43.60	11.63	25.58	100
Adj. freq. (%)	23.44	2.34	58.59	15.63	-	100
1774-1776	89	5	153	12	47	306
Freq. (%)	29.09	1.63	50.0	3.92	15.36	100
Adj. freq. (%)	34.36	1.93	59.07	4.63	-	100
Total	136	9	284	48	160	637
Freq. (%)	21.35	1.41	44.58	7.54	25.12	100
Adj. freq. (%)	28.51	1.89	59.54	10.06	-	100

The percentage of legitimate children (L) increased constantly between each cohort: the steepest rise took place between the last two, reaching the peak of 34% between 1774-1776. Children presumed legitimate (PL), in turn, represent only 1.41% of the total. Nevertheless, the majority of foundlings were illegitimate. If we abstract from figures shown for 1699-1701 which are too small to be taken into consideration, the percentage of illegitimate children (I) kept constantly around 60%. If presumed illegitimate children (PI) were added, the percentage of illegitimate children would rise to around 70%, not to mention the undetermined cases (X) that would undoubtedly fall into this category.

The most common profile of the individual who came to search for a foundling was undoubtedly the unmarried mother (see Table 5.61.), but there is a gradual increase in the proportion of married couples, that reached its peak between 1774-1776. The couple, searching for either a live or dead child, began to be more present in the fourth cohort (1774-1776) (Table 5.63.).

Table 5.61.
Marital status of mothers

	Unmarried	Married	Widow	No inf	Total
1699-1701	5	1	-	13	19
Freq. (%)	26.32	5.26	-	68.42	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	83.33	16.67	-	-	100
1724-1726	49	16	7	25	97
Freq. (%)	50.52	16.49	7.22	25.77	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	68.06	22.22	9.72	-	100
1749-1751	67	33	6	30	136
Freq. (%)	49.26	24.26	4.41	22.06	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	63.21	31.13	5.66	-	100
1774-1776	141	105	14	21	281
Freq. (%)	50.18	37.37	4.98	7.47	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	54.23	40.38	5.38	-	100
Total	262	155	27	89	533
Freq. (%)	49.15	29.08	5.07	16.70	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	59.01	34.91	6.08	-	100

N.B. This table relates to the number of cases where information on mothers is provided (533:637).

These married parents often managed to transform the status of their children with the administration from that of foundling to that of child on allowance. Although officially it was not admitted as such, the administration allowed them to keep them on wet-nurse until weaned.

Table 5.62. represents the occupation of the presumptive fathers of such children. Husbands of married and widowed women were artisans for the most part (47.63%); followed by agricultural workers (10.69%) and domestic servants (9.92%). Sailors and soldiers represent around 13% of the total, whilst transport and commerce sum up 7%.

Table 5.62.
Occupation of husbands

	N.	Freq. (%)	Adj. freq. (%)
Artisans	62	34.07	47.33
Services	8	4.40	6.11
Servants	13	7.14	9.92
Soldiers	7	3.85	5.34
Sailors	10	5.49	7.63
Transport	5	2.75	3.82
Agric. workers	14	7.69	10.69
Commerce	4	2.20	3.05
Other	8	4.40	6.11
Unknown	51	28.02	-
Total	182	100	100

Unmarried mothers often came on their own, for relatives are absent from the sources and everything suggests that no social support was provided for them (see Table 5.63.). The unmarried mother was often living in the city although her parents had lived in the countryside. She was rarely recognized as being able to refund the money spent on her child. We feel that she was often pitied for her poverty by the administrators: "pobríssima" (extremely poor) and "pobre miserável" (poor miserable) were labels often added to the side remarks that record the act of search.

Table 5.63.
Persons who searched for children

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	TOTAL
1600-1701	31	3	1	1	-	6	-	42
%	73.81	7.14	2.38	2.38	-	14.29	-	100
1724-1726	64	7	7	5	15	15	4	117
%	54.70	5.98	5.98	4.27	12.82	12.82	3.42	100
1749-1751	77	10	22	4	32	20	7	172
%	44.77	5.81	12.79	2.33	18.60	11.63	4.07	100
1774-1776	168	13	69	4	38	10	4	306
%	54.90	4.25	22.55	1.31	12.41	3.27	1.31	100
Total	340	33	99	14	85	51	15	637
	53.38	5.18	15.54	2.20	13.34	8.01	2.35	100

A = Mother

B = Father

C = Both parents

D = Other kin

E = Person in charge of searching the child for its family ("procurador")

F = Nobody (parents forced to take back children or when no search was ever made)

G = No information

Table 5.64. depicts the address of mothers, which I considered the most reliable element for analysis, as the identification of the father is often absent. As can be seen, the practice of abandoning extended to parishes outside the boundaries of the city, a fact that confirms the transport of foundlings from distant areas to the Foundling Hospital. Nevertheless, urban mothers were more frequent in all cohorts, even if rural addresses sum 40% of the total.

Table 5.64.
Address of mothers

	A	B	C	D	E	F	Total
1699-1701	4	4	2	1	3	5	19
1724-1726	18	15	4	9	34	17	97
1749-1751	38	25	3	7	49	14	136
1774-1776	71	77	5	17	96	15	281
Total	131	121	14	34	182	51	533

Table 5.64.
Address of mothers (continued)

	A+B+C	D+E	F	Total
1699-1701	10	4	5	19
%	52.63	21.05	26.32	100
1724-1726	37	43	17	97
%	38.14	44.33	17.53	100
1749-1751	66	56	14	136
%	48.53	41.18	10.29	100
1774-1776	153	113	15	281
%	54.45	40.21	5.34	100
Total	266	216	51	533
%	49.91	40.52	9.57	100

A = Urban in-walls parishes (Sé, Vitória and S. Nicolau)
 B = Urban parishes outside the walls (Massarelos, Miragaia, Cedofeita and S. Ildefonso)
 C = Non specified urban parishes
 D = "Termo": parishes belonging to the hinterland of the city
 E = Rural parishes outside Porto's hinterland
 F = No information

Table 5.65. represents the unmarried mothers who gave the name and address of their own parents. From 25 to 32% of them gave proof of a rural origin, even if not all of them had necessarily emigrated to the city: many remained in their native parishes, travelling to the city in order to give birth, to abandon their children or simply to recover them from the Foundling Hospital.

Table 5.65.
Urban unmarried mothers with a rural origin

	Yes	No inf.	Total
1699-1701	-	5	5
%	-	100	100
1724-1726	16	33	49
%	32.65	67.35	100
1749-1751	17	50	67
%	25.37	74.63	100
1774-1776	35	106	141
%	24.82	75.18	100
Total	68	194	262
%	25.95	74.05	100

Quantification has the defect of concealing the extreme variety of situations that are depicted in the registers of search. Besides the stereotype of the unmarried mother searching for her child, a myriad of cases, almost similar to present day "fait divers" chronicles, can be found. No mention has been made of the woman who came to search for her half sister in the foundling home, because her mother with her second husband (and father of the foundling) had been deported to Angola⁸¹. They both died there, but the daughter managed to come back to Porto and take her sister away. Neither has reference been made to the case of an unmarried woman who sent for her daughter from her death bed, overcome with remorse; the "procurador" was asked to keep the child without wages once she died⁸². Another woman, the maid of a vicar, probably waited for the death of her former master to look for the child and declared it was her master's⁸³. Even more surprising are the few cases where people waited more than seven years to search for their children. Ana Luísa Joaquina was over seventeen when she met her mother. She was too small for her age, had distorted feet and bad eyesight⁸⁴. Another girl, Rita, was 18 at the moment of the search, but her family refused to take her because they were disgusted she was a mulatto girl⁸⁵. Such cases are not representative in quantitative terms, but they possess the merit of reminding the researcher that he/she is observing the lives of other human beings, and not simple abstractions.

⁸¹ Child n. 104122, Flora Angélica, *Livro 27 das Entradas*, fl. 356 v., abandoned in 1774; *Livro 69 das Saldas*, fl. 442.

⁸² Child n. 102524, Domingas, *Livro 13 das Entradas*, fl. 273 v., abandoned in 1750; *Livro 37 das Saldas*, fl. 300.

⁸³ Child n. 100891, Bibiana, *Livro 3 das Entradas*, fl. 420 v., abandoned in 1725. The child was taken because it was her "own blood". Curiously, the priest's father also claimed the child (*Livro 14 das Saldas*, fl. 299).

⁸⁴ Child n. 105107, *Livro 29 das Entradas*, fl. 383 v., abandoned in 1776; *Livro 73 das Saldas*, fl. 102.

⁸⁵ Child n. 106126, *Livro 28 das Entradas*, fl. 61 v., abandoned in 1775; *Livro 70 das Saldas*, fl. 281

Nurses and their families

This section attempts to draw a profile of the women who cared for the hospital's children as "definitive" wet-nurses. These women cared for the foundlings considered in this chapter, in the four cohorts selected (1699-1701; 1724-26; 1749-51 and 1774-76), who were abandoned alive and survived to their stay in the hospital: they amount to 4843 children (See table 5.14).

The main information that is available for such women consists of marital status, parish of residence and occupation of husbands. As each breastfeeding wet-nurse had first to be a mother, the incidence of unmarried mothers among wet-nurses can throw light on the incidence of illegitimacy in this area of Portugal. On the other hand, the areas where wet-nurses lived are powerful indicators of the relationship between an urban institution - the "Casa da Roda" and the rural areas surrounding the city. To know the extent of the presence of urban wet-nurses compared to rural women seems crucial in order to define the modes of recruitment of the women who were to care for foundlings. Occupation of husbands is the only clue to the social backgrounds of the fostering families. Were the wet-nurses predominantly wives of peasants? What was the incidence of craftsmanship in the rural areas?

The most interesting items of information on wet-nurses for demographic purposes are missing: mean age at marriage, average number of children per family and insertion of the foundlings between births. Such data would be available only through family reconstitution: the main reason it was not undertaken is that, besides the time it would take, the data gathered for this study was already difficult to exploit thoroughly. There are further reasons:

1. The absence of records of child mortality in Portuguese parish registers makes it impossible to know how many children were present in a household at a given moment.

2. Status animarum were lacking in a range of parishes where they were searched for (areas of Amarante and the rivers Douro and Tâmega). Status animarum would allow a faster identification of families as well as a check upon the results of family reconstitution.

3. In each cohort studied (1699-1701; 1724-26; 1749-51 and 1774-76), the number of parishes where women were engaged as wet-nurses ranged from about a 100 to over 300, and very few parishes had more than 25 nurses in each cohort. To study a parish would imply a retrieval in the hospital records of all the wet-nurses belonging to that parish who worked for the hospital during the whole century and linking them to reconstituted families. The task was judged overwhelming for results that were likely to be too partial. Not only was it difficult to select a parish in terms of the available sources but its representativity among the other parishes where there were wet-nurses would be open to discussion. It would be risky to assert that the chosen parish represented the demographic profile of the nursing parishes.

Despite such doubts, a demographic study of wet-nurses is strongly recommended in the future, taking this dissertation as a point of departure. In order to overcome the difficulties referred to in 3., it would be possible to benefit from "ready made" family reconstitutions in a given area⁸⁶. Locating wet-nurses in a group of parishes would be a solution to the problem of selecting a unique parish and would allow the comparison between "breastfeeding" and "non-breastfeeding" parishes.

The main difficulty in working on the series concerning wet-nurses consisted of detecting repeated wet-nurses in each cohort. In order to be able to study wet-nurses and their families, one major step had to be fulfilled: the elimination of wet-nurses who appeared more than once in the registers. To have two nurslings at the same time was forbidden by the rules of the hospital and,

⁸⁶ Professor Norberta Amorim (Universidade do Minho) and her students have done massive family reconstitution work in over 20 parishes in the area of Minho - the triangle between Famalicão, Braga and Guimarães.

despite what happened to many regulations that were not respected, administrators kept to this principle. Nevertheless, there was no prohibition concerning caring for more than one foundling, provided that only one of them was being breastfed. When the foundling died at nurse, if the woman was still capable of breastfeeding, she might take another one on charge a few days later. In a context of high mortality, it is no wonder that many wet-nurses cared for more than one foundling in each cohort considered. Also, if the foundling was weaned and she could keep on breastfeeding, she might take another younger child from the foundling hospital.

If the wet-nurse cared for more than one *live* foundling at a given moment, the administrator might take note of the occurrence by annotating the book and the folio where the same woman was registered as nursing another child. But if the wet-nurse cared for several foundlings in non-coincident periods of time, the linkage has had to be established artificially.

The problems found at this stage can be listed as follows:

1. nominal variation: names, either for women or men, can change from record to record;
2. change of marital status of wet-nurse;
3. changes in the parish of residence.

These difficulties turned the task of eliminating repeated wet-nurses into a very hazardous one. Not only could mistakes not be avoided, but the repetition of women who appeared more than once in the registers risked not being detected.

Hence, in order to eliminate repeated wet-nurses, I proceeded as follows:

1. The elimination was done after the information on all the wet-nurses was available; no elimination took place while compiling data, except when the registers themselves established cross references between their "contracts".

2. The computer listed a first index of wet-nurses by their first names⁸⁷.

3. A second index, listing wet-nurses' husbands also by their first names, checked and completed the first one. The intention of making both listings was to minimize the damage to elimination caused by variation of names.

4. Each time the names of the members of the couple were totally coincident or fairly similar, further elements of information available in the source were checked:

- 1 - occupation of husband;
- 2 - village of residence within parish;
- 3 - parish.

Couples who do not inhabit the same parish on both occurrences were immediately discarded unless a change of residence was previously noted. Small variations in the designation of the occupation (i.e. from "lavrador" to "jornaleiro" or "trabalhador") were accepted, as well as variations concerning the villages of residence, considering that they were not noted with accuracy, as the main administrative unit for retrieval was the parish.

The basic criterion was to reject the elimination of a wet-nurse whenever a doubt concerning non-coincident information could not be cleared. Doubts were especially frequent when unmarried women were considered, as the information on men was not available. This explains why the number of unmarried women might be inflated, especially between 1724-26, when these difficulties prevented me from eliminating a substantial number of women on the basis of non-coincident information (see Table 5.66.).

⁸⁷ Portuguese surnames are less useful for identification of people because many individuals, especially women, did not possess them and they show more variation from register to register than Christian names.

The difficulties experienced in the identification of persons, on which this whole section relies, make all the results to be presented the product of a construction based on probability. Nevertheless, I proceeded by defect and not by excess: I preferred not to eliminate a wet-nurse if I did not have enough coincident information. The fact that I found homonymous couples living in different parishes, with husbands with different occupations, proved how risky was the operation of eliminating wet-nurses.

Eliminated wet-nurses totalled 172, remaining a total of 4730 women. Although the children included in the sample sum 5920⁸⁸, only 4843 were given to definite wet-nurses, if those who entered dead or those who died in the Foundling Hospital are eliminated (see table 5.14.).

In terms of marital status and not considering variations from cohort to cohort, 80% of the wet-nurses were married, 4% widows and a significant 16% unmarried (see table 5.66.). The high percentage of unmarried women among nurses, offers indirect evidence of the incidence of illegitimacy in Porto and its surrounding areas but is not sufficient to demonstrate it. At least, it suggests an undeniable tendency of the Foundling Hospital to attract unmarried women as nurses. It should be noted, though, that some of these women were engaged as dry wet-nurses, who were not necessarily unmarried mothers. Nevertheless, the percentage of such "dry" wet-nurses among unmarried women is low: 7.56 between 1749-51 and 6.25 between 1774-76. The presence of widows, who, unless widowed less than nine months before their last child delivery, were not supposed to dispose of breastmilk, could also confirm the tendency of such women to engage in sexual intercourse outside marriage. Again, the same remark could be made that not all of them were breastfeeding: the percentage of "dry" wet-nurses among widows is 29.49% between 1774-76 (23 in a total of 78). Comparing the cohorts, the distinction among categories is striking in its homogeneity, except for unmarried women, whose percentage, always above 13%, rises

⁸⁸ All children were included, as the wet-nurses of the non-foundling group were the same as the ones of foundlings.

to 19.8% between 1724-26, probably due to the problems in eliminating repeated wet-nurses referred to previously. Widows also represented 11% of the wet-nurses between 1699-1701, but dropped to a consistent percentage of between 3 to 4.6%. Married wet-nurses do not display much variability, although their percentage increased constantly from cohort to cohort, reaching the maximum of 83% between 1774-76.

Table 5.66.
Marital status of wet-nurses

	Unmarried	Married	Widow	Unknown	Total
1699-1701	38(1)	191	29	2	260
%	14.62	73.46	11.15	0.77	100
1724-1726	191(4)	741(3)	29	9	970
%	19.69	76.39	2.99	0.93	100
1749-1751	230(1)	1174	68(2)	9	1481
%	15.53	79.27	4.59	0.61	100
1774-1776	275(13)	1666(21)	78(3)	-	2019
%	13.62	82.52	3.86	-	100
Total	734(19)	3772(24)	204(5)	20	4730
%	15.52	79.75	4.31	0.42	100

Note: Numbers between brackets represent wet-nurses who are known to have changed marital status. In further analysis wet-nurses with unknown marital status (total of 20) have been grouped in the married category whenever their registers include the name of a man; otherwise, they are inserted in the unmarried women's group.

Although information on husbands' occupation may be missing, the tendency was to note it both for married women or widows. Table 5.67. depicts the type of activity of such men.

Table 5.67.
Occupation of wet-nurses's husbands

<u>Type of activity</u>	<u>1699-01</u>	<u>1724-26</u>	<u>1749-51</u>	<u>1774-7</u>	<u>Total</u>
Agriculture	1	329	465	610	1405
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	0.45	42.67	37.41	34.98	35.32
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	2.63	48.31	41.85	35.84	39.78
Daily wage					
(not specified)	1	14	43	261	319
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	0.45	1.82	3.46	14.97	8.02
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	2.63	2.06	3.87	15.33	9.03
Artisans	24	259	433	564	1280
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	10.90	33.59	34.84	32.34	32.18
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	63.16	38.03	38.97	33.14	36.24
Shopkeepers	2	20	5	35	62
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	0.90	2.59	0.40	2.01	1.56
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	5.26	2.94	0.45	2.06	1.76
Services	2	5	58	65	130
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	0.90	0.65	4.67	3.73	3.27
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	5.26	0.73	5.22	3.82	3.68
Soldiers	2	19	25	22	68
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	0.90	2.46	2.01	1.26	1.71
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	5.26	2.79	2.25	1.29	1.93
Transport	4	27	75	114	220
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	1.82	3.50	6.03	6.54	5.53
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	10.53	3.96	6.75	6.70	6.23
Other	2	8	7	31	48
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	0.90	1.04	0.56	1.78	1.21
<i>Adj. Freq. (%)</i>	5.26	1.17	0.63	1.82	1.36
No inf.	182	90	132	42	446
<i>Rel. Freq. (%)</i>	82.73	11.67	10.62	2.41	11.21
Total	220	771	1243	1744	3978

Two features are striking:

1 - Since the majority of women came from rural areas (as we shall see later in this section), one would have expected to find an overwhelming majority of rural workers. Instead, their percentage is little superior to that of artisans: 39.8% for the former and 36% for the latter.

2 - Petty trading is of minor importance in the whole range of classified occupations. This small impact can be explained if we bear in mind that artisans tended to sell their goods directly in their workshops; so that shopkeepers would thus be included in the artisan category. On the other hand, the occupations related to

transport include a good number of peddlars, who were responsible for the distribution of city goods in the countryside.

Looking closer at some activities, a finer drawn image of occupations can be obtained. In agriculture, the terms "lavrador", "jornaleiro" or "seareiro" and "caseiro"/"rendeiro" designated different forms of relationship with the land: the "lavrador" cultivated his own land, wether his property or rented, while the "jornaleiro" or "seareiro" (the latter word is used only between 1774-76) was an agricultural day labourer, paid by wages. Table 5.68. represents the frequency of such designations in the cohorts. The category "others" stands for a small number of farm servants and individuals who declared mixed activities in agriculture and craftsmanship. The interpretation of these results is dependent on the accuracy of the distinction contemporaries established between such categories.

Table 5.68.
Husbands' occupations in agriculture

	"Lavradores"	"Jornaleiros" & "seareiros"	Others	Total
1699-1701	1	-	-	1
1724-1726	232(3)	93(1)	4	329
%	70.51	28.27	1.22	100
1749-1751	315(1)	138(1)	12	465
%	67.74	29.68	2.58	100
1774-1776	271(1)	313	26	610
%	44.43	51.31	4.26	100
Total	819	544	42	1405
%	58.29	38.72	2.99	100

Note: numbers in brackets apply for individuals who were designated both as daily wage workers and farmers in different moments or simultaneously.

There is a great variability of crafts among artisans; however, table 5.69. shows that the most common trades were tailors, shoemakers, carpenters and stonemasons. All the other occupations were less frequent, although metalworkers, weavers, basketmakers, clog-makers, umbrella-makers ("sombreireiros")

and makers of wine barrels ("tanoeiros") stand out among the large range of crafts depicted in the registers.

Table 5.69.
Husbands' occupations: crafts

	1699-701	1724-26	1749-51	1774-76	Total
taylors	2	77	125	146	350
shoemakers	8	41	71	104	224
carpenters	1	38	81	98	218
stonemasons	6	40	55	51	152
metalworkers	2	17	28	16	63
textile workers	1	3	14	28	46
basketmakers	1	8	13	23	45
clog-makers	-	6	5	33	44
"sombreireiros"	-	3	6	31	40
"tanoeiros"	-	7	8	4	19
Others*	3	19	27	30	79
Total	24	259	433	564	1280

* This category accounts for all the occupations which could not be grouped into the others and whose frequency did not exceed 3.

Most of those artisans had necessarily to be resident in the rural areas: table 5.70. shows the geographical distribution of wet-nurses: parishes have been grouped in 5 categories. The first three apply to urban parishes: within the city walls (A), including Sé, S. Nicolau and Vitória; outside the city walls (B), including Cedofeita, S. Ildefonso, Massarelos and Miragaia ,and unspecified urban parishes (C). Category "D" applies to the parishes which fall within the boundaries of the present day "concelho" of Porto and were rural parishes in the eighteenth century (see maps 1, 2, 3 and 4). Category "E" includes all the rural parishes outside the "concelho". Maps 5, 6, 7 and 8 depict the distribution of wet-nurses in the countryside surrounding Porto.

Table 5.70.
Geographical distribution of wet-nurses

	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL
1699-1701	29	38	2	3	183	5	260
1724-1726	44	84	8	26	807	2	971
1749-1751	76	96	1	16	1259	1	1449
1774-1776	28	79	-	12	1872	-	1991
Total	177	297	11	57	4121	8	4671

Table 5.70.
Geographical distribution of wet-nurses (continued)

	A+B+C	D+E	F	TOTAL
1699-1701	69	186	5	260
%	26.54	71.54	1.92	100
1724-1726	136	833	2	971
%	14.01	85.79	0.20	100
1749-1751	173	1275	1	1449
%	11.94	87.99	0.07	100
1774-1776	107	1884	-	1991
%	5.37	94.63	-	100
Total	485	4178	8	4671
%	10.38	89.45	0.17	100

A = Parishes inside the city walls
 B = Parishes outside the city walls
 C = Not specified urban parishes
 D = "Concelho"
 E = Rural parishes outside the "concelho"
 F = No information

The table shows a very clear tendency towards the increasing recruitment of wet-nurses in the rural areas: urban wet-nurses represented 26.5% of the total between 1699-1701; 14% between 1724-26; 12% between 1749-51 and only 5.4% in 1774-76, with rural wet-nurses increasing in inverse proportion. Most of these rural wet-nurses came from parishes that were located far from the city and in areas which were distant from the sea: the percentage of wet-nurses from the parishes of the "concelho" (Category D) is only 1.22 over the whole century.

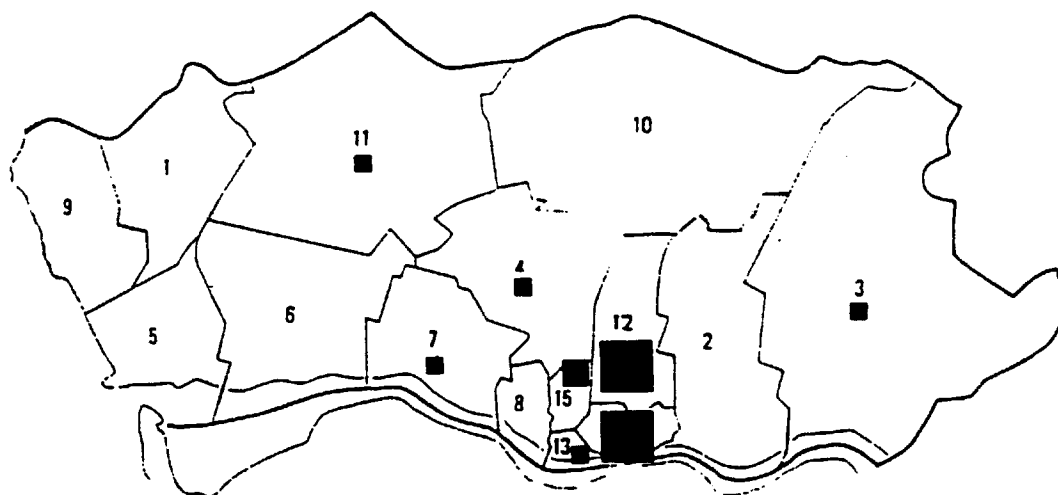
Maps 1 to 4 depict the distribution of wet-nurses within the limits of the "concelho". Parishes 4, 7, 8, 12, 13, 14 and 15 are

urban whilst the other eight can be considered rural⁸⁹. The maps show a consistent void of wet-nurses in the rural parishes of the "concelho": nurses were concentrated within the walls (n. 13, 14 and 15) and the immediately contiguous parishes (4, 7 and 8). In 1699-1701, the nurses concentrated mainly in the old urban parishes, although S. Ildefonso, an urban parish outside the city walls registered the highest number of wet-nurses. S. Ildefonso would keep the highest proportion of nurses for the whole century, even between 1724-26 and 1749-51, when the out-walls parishes registered a higher number of wet-nurses. The enlargement of the urban "nursing area" is the only significant change that occurred during the first half of the century (see maps 2 and 3). Map 4, which represents the wet-nurses who breastfed foundlings between 1774-1776, shows the decrease in the number of urban wet-nurses detected in table 5.70. as well as a change in their topographical distribution: fewer nurses in the old urban parishes and a stagnation in the nurses of the new urban parishes, except for the parish of Cedofeita (n. 4). It is clear that the hospital tended to recruit wet-nurses outside the urban spaces, while it made little use of the neighbouring parishes. This could be explained in several ways: the first hypothesis is that there were no wet-nurses in the rural areas of the "concelho"; the second is that wages paid by the hospital were not rewarding enough for the women wishing to breastfeed; the third, which derives from the second, is that there was a competitive market for private wet-nurses that obliged the hospital to recruit its wet-nurses in more distant areas.

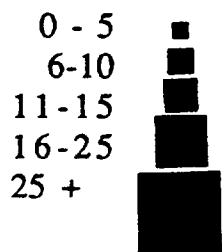
⁸⁹ Streets have been grouped into the parishes according to the "Memórias paroquiais" of 1758 (see Santos, Cândido dos, 'A população do Porto de 1700 a 1820. Contribuição para o estudo da demografia urbana', *Revista de História* (Porto) vol. I, 1978, pp. 283-287). These maps are approximate graphic representations of the distribution of wet-nurses, as the boundaries of parishes in 1758 are not the same as those represented in the map, which depicts present day limits. New parishes were also created in the nineteenth century: for these no values have been attributed.

Geographical distribution of wet-nurses in the "concelho" of Porto

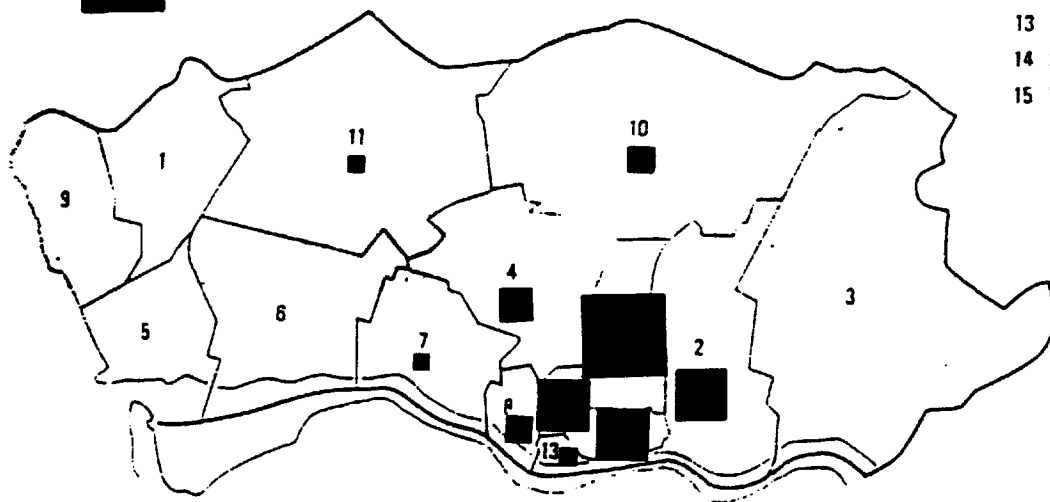
Map 1 (1699-1701)



- 1 Aldoar
- 2 Bonfim
- 3 Campanhã
- 4 Cedofeita
- 5 Foz do Douro
- 6 Lordelo do Ouro
- 7 Massarelos
- 8 Miragaia
- 9 Nevogilde
- 10 Paranhos
- 11 Ramalde
- 12 St. Ildelonso
- 13 S. Nicolau
- 14 Sé
- 15 Vitória

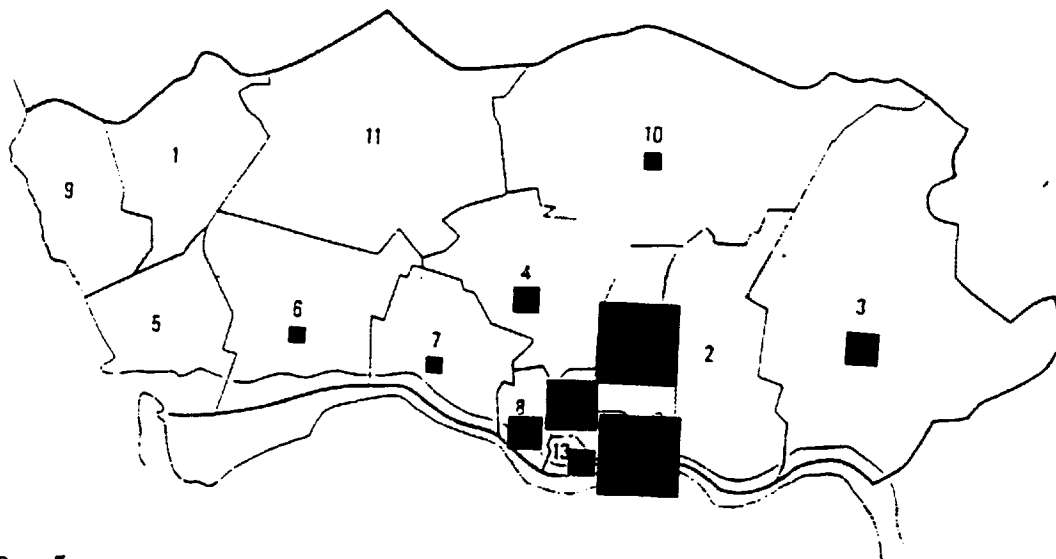


Map 2 (1724-26)

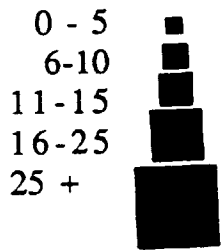


Geographical distribution of wet-nurses in the "concelho" of Porto (continued)

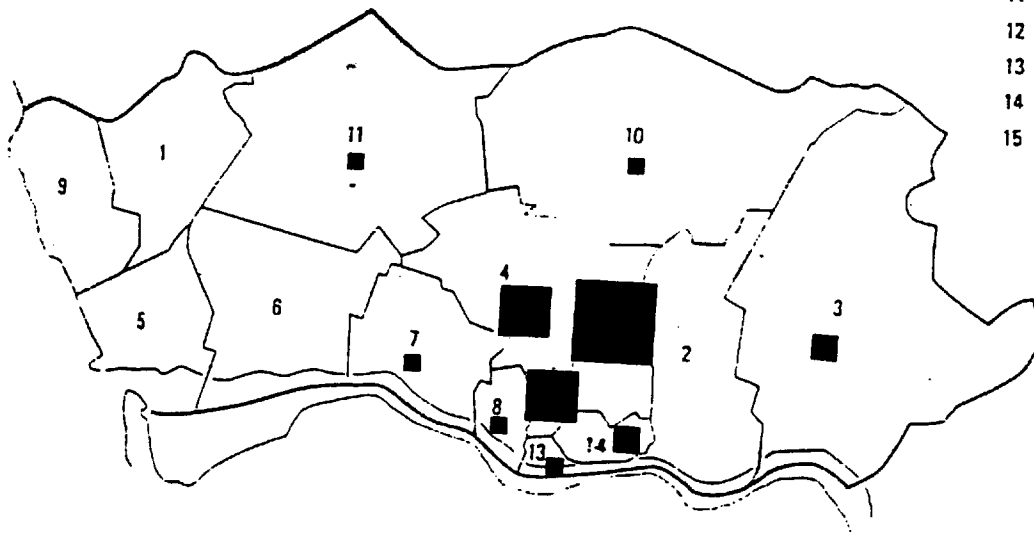
Map 3 (1749-51)



- 1 Aldoar
- 2 Bonfim
- 3 Campanhã
- 4 Cedafeita
- 5 Foz do Ouro
- 6 Lordeo do Ouro
- 7 Massarelos
- 8 Miragaia
- 9 Nevogilde
- 10 Paranhos
- 11 Ramalde
- 12 St.º Ildefonso
- 13 S. Nicolau
- 14 Sé
- 15 Vitória



Map 4 (1774-76)



Maps 5, 6, 7 and 8 depict the areas where rural wet-nurses came from. Map 5 (1699-1701) shows a situation that would change radically in the other three cohorts: nurses came in their overwhelming majority from the south of the river Douro; their area of distribution extends to a maximum of 40 kilometers north-south, from the most northerly parish (Aguas Santas) to the extreme south one of Válega. Such parishes are not distant from the main road that then ran to Coimbra and Lisbon, as described by Camponanes in his *Noticia geographica del reyno y caminos de Portugal* ⁹⁰. To the east, the most distant parish is Penafiel, some 25-30 km from the city.

Twenty five years later (see map 6), between 1724-26 the areas breastfeeding children from the foundling Hospital that would remain until 1774-76 were already formed. The former area to the south of the city remained unchanged, although with a smaller number of wet-nurses. Three areas south of Porto were added to it (the *concelhos* of Oliveira de Azeméis, Vale de Cambra and Arouca), although with a low number of wet-nurses. A new area appeared to the north of the city, in the direction of Barcelos and Viana. The most spectacular change took place in the areas east and north east of the city: the wet-nurses were spread over a region that formed an arch going from Famalicão to Cinfães including the contemporary "concelhos" of Santo Tirso, Guimarães, Paços de Ferreira, Lousada, Paredes, Penafiel and Marco de Canavezes. This area is striking in terms of its distance from the Foundling Hospital (most parishes were more than 35 km from the city) and for the fact that there is a relative absence of wet-nurses in the area between it and the city (from the "concelho" of Valongo to that of Castelo de Paiva).

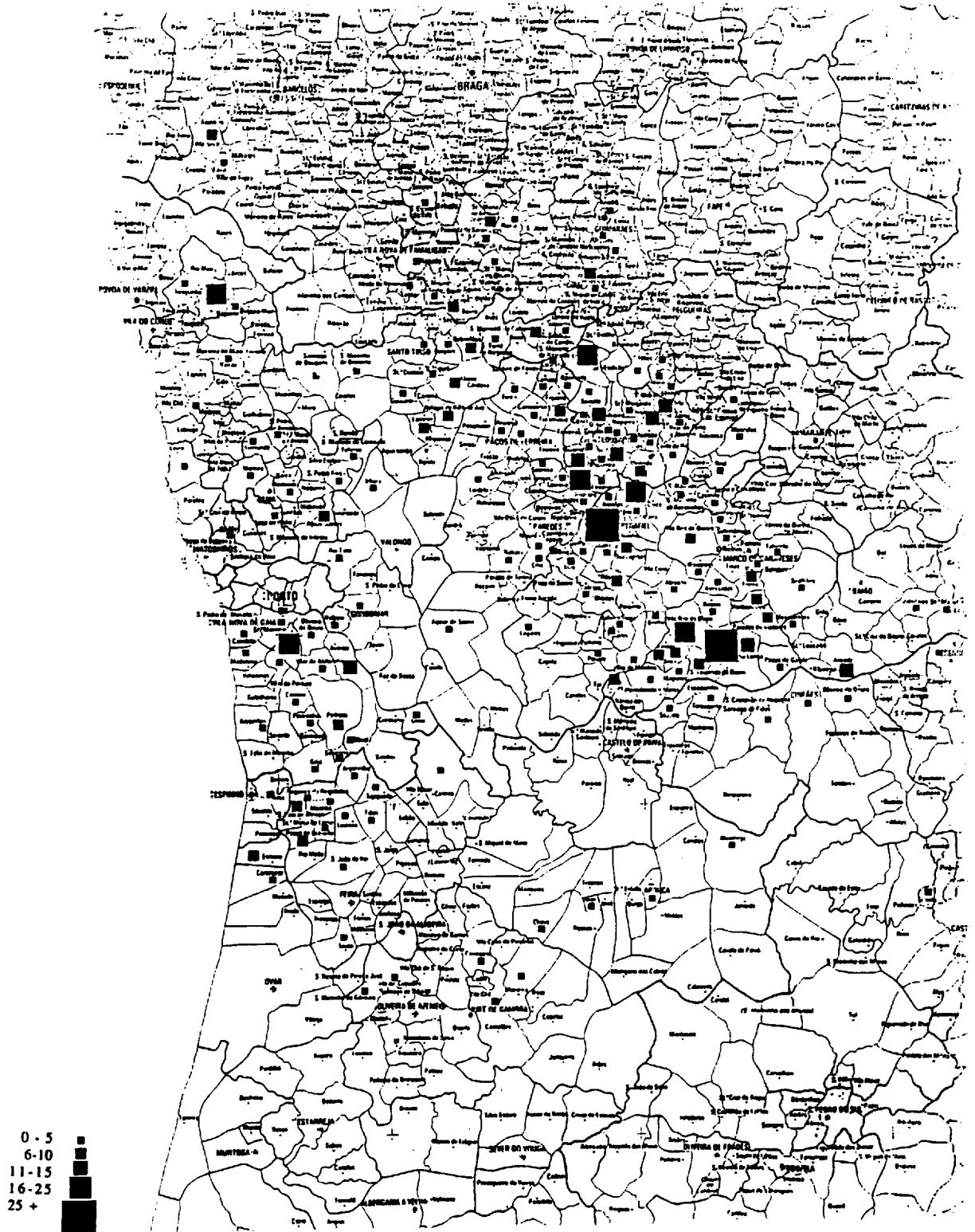
The only minor changes that can be observed in map 7 (corresponding to 1749-51) are the increasing density of the parishes of the area east and north east of the city that took part in breastfeeding: the number of parishes with wet-nurses increased and a few parishes affirmed their vocation to breastfeed

⁹⁰ Campomanes, D. Pedro, *Noticia geographica del reyno y caminos de Portugal*, Madrid, Of. de Joaquim Ibarra, 1752, p. 10.

foundlings, such as (among others) Penafiel, Vila Boa do Bispo and Soalhães. The area also expanded eastwards, with the inclusion of the "concelho" of Baião, which is very near to the areas where port wine was cultivated. The river Douro, and the road that ran alongside it affirmed itself as the main means of communication with the city for all the parishes of the concelhos of Castelo de Paiva, Cinfães, Marco de Canavezes e Baião.

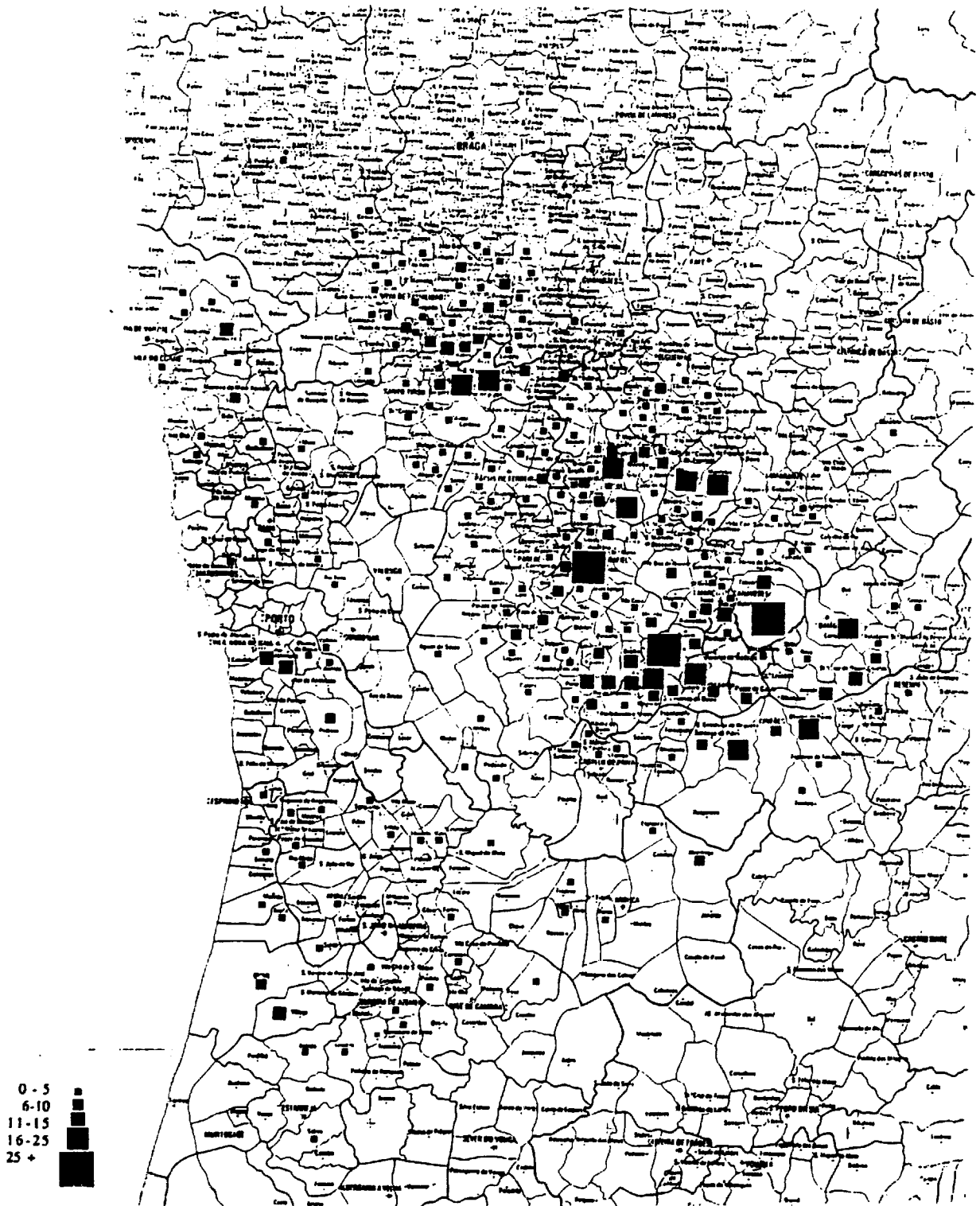
Geographical distribution of wet-nurses outside the "concelho" of Porto

Map 6 (1724-26)



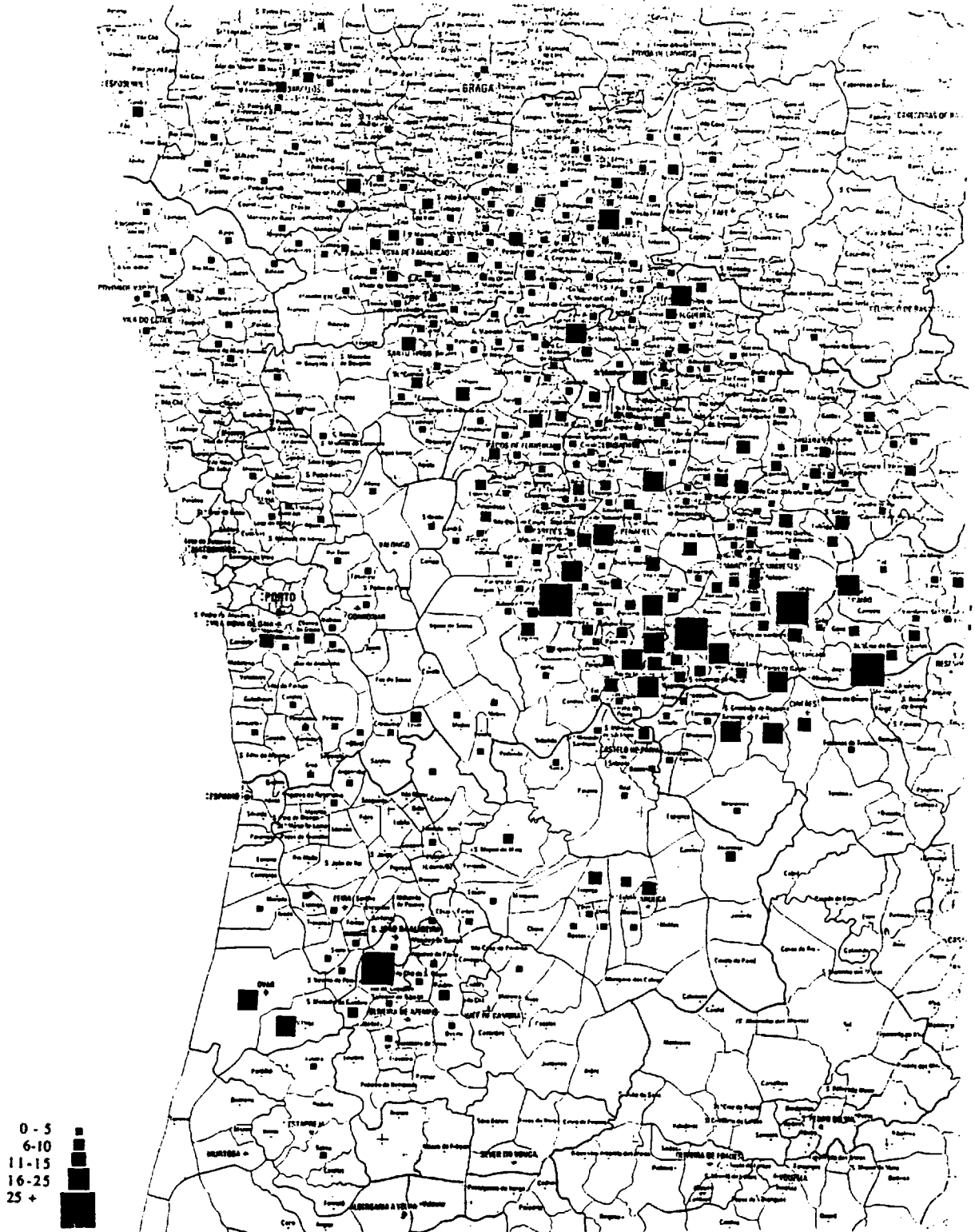
Geographical distribution of wet-nurses outside the "concelho" of Porto

Map 7 (1749-51)



Geographical distribution of wet-nurses outside the "concelho" of Porto

Map 8 (1774-76)



In 1774-76 (see map 8) the number of parishes involved in breastfeeding in the "arch area" continued to increase, expanding further north east to the concelhos of Guimarães, Felgueiras and Amarante. By then, the parishes from the north bank of the Douro had confirmed their privileged relationship with the hospital: this area shows the highest concentration of parishes with more than 25 nurses. Another surprise is the renewed intensity of breastfeeding in the areas south of the city (a preferential region in 1699-1701 - see map 5), especially in the concelhos of Ovar and S.João da Madeira.

The evolution depicted in the maps demonstrates the increasing involvement of rural areas in the breastfeeding of foundlings, who must have played a very important role in the relationship between the city and the countryside. Most of the parishes were a day's walking distance from the city or several hours by carriage or boat. If we bear in mind that wet-nurses were supposed to come to the city to collect their payments every three months, either accompanied by the foundling in their care or with a certificate issued by their parish priest that it was alive, the Foundling Hospital must have made a large contribution towards breaking down the isolation of these rural areas and intensifying the contacts between the town and the countryside. The "vacuum" of parishes nursing foundlings that lay between these areas and Porto remains to be explained: if we discard as implausible the hypothesis of the absence of wet-nurses in these areas, the existence of a parallel market for private wet-nurses must be considered. Foundlings' wet-nurses would then be the worst paid women, living in poor and distant areas.

Detailed parish studies with reconstitution are needed to push these hypothesis further. Nevertheless, even on the basis of the nursing registers they seem to indicate certain "specialisations" both in terms of space (parishes with a "vocation") and in terms of professions, artisans as much as peasants. The high presence of rural artisans is the most striking issue about this professional specialisation, as it can be expected

that they constituted a small percentage of the rural population. Nevertheless, it is highly probable that these artisans' families did not loose contact with farming, therefore existing a tendency to perform various occupations, diversifying the sources of income of the family.

The practice of nursing

Having constructed a social identity for the nurses, we shall now proceed in order to study the practice of nursing using the "Livros de Saída" of the hospital records as the sources.

In order to see how these women behaved as wet-nurses, I have compared the second cohort (1724-1726) with the fourth one (1774-1776). In terms of supply of wet-nurses, it should be noted that although the number increased significantly between these two periods it failed to keep up with that of the infants: if we divide the total number of nurses (see table 5.66.) of each cohort by the total number of children the ratios obtained are: 92.91 for 1724-1726 and 76.96 in 1774-1776. The difference in the ratio shows a decrease of 17.2% in the proportion of wet-nurses, who, as we have seen, tended to come from an increased number of rural parishes spread over a vaster area. The decrease in the supply is obviously tied to a higher demand for women to care for a booming phenomenon of child abandonment. Let us see if this decrease in the proportion of wet-nurses had any influence in the practice of nursing. The information available for analysis consisted of:

- 1) Type of wet-nurse - divided in "dry" nurses for weaned children, and breastfeeding ones for all the others;

- 2) Number of wet-nurses by child;

- 3) Number of foundlings cared by one wet-nurse during each cohort (period of three years);

4) Information on wet-nurses' own children, in cases when clerks took notice of dead nurses' children;

5) Age of wet-nurse's milk.

Before moving on, it must be noted that information pertaining to 5) is still rare between 1724-1726, as the clerks did not observe the practice of noting such information early in the century. Otherwise, the available information is comparable in equal terms, except that all ambiguity seems to disappear in the sources during the last cohort. For example, if the fact that the wet-nurse was going to care for the child but not going to breastfeed it was understated between 1724-26 (the "unknown" cases accounting for nurses who took foundlings over one year old in charge), by 1774-1776 it became quite clearly defined. In table 5.71. such data are analyzed, and the two cohorts would show very similar percentages, if only the sources in the first cohort had been more clear: in fact, if the dry nurses are added to the nurses about whom we do not know if they had any milk, the percentages would be respectively 6.9% and 9.6%

Table 5.71.
Type of wet-nurse

	"Dry"	Breastfeeding	Unknown	Total
1724-1726	44	903	23	970
%	4.54	93.09	2.37	100
1774-1776	194	1824	-	2018
%	9.61	90.39	-	100
Total	238	2727	23	2988
%	7.97	91.27	0.77	100

The important issue, however, is the fact that there were only 8% of "dry" wet-nurses, while 92% of those women had experienced a birth in recent years before being engaged as wet-nurses. This also confirms that, as the hospital did not lower wages after weaning - and on this issue Porto's foundling hospital differs from the majority of its European counterparts -, there was

no significant transfer of responsibility for children after weaning. The tendency was clearly to keep the child as long as possible until he was dismissed from the hospital's care at the age of seven.

It is well known that children could be passed on from nurse to nurse during the seven years they were kept at the hospital's expense. The change could be at the wet-nurse's initiative, as she was expected to give the child back if her breastmilk supply ran out, if the child was in ill health or simply if she did not want to care for him any longer. Nevertheless, the administrators often took the decision themselves if the wet-nurse brought a sick or undernourished child at the moment of payment or if a complaint was made that she had treated the child badly.

Contemporary historiography has given a distorted image of the behaviour of wet-nurses towards children: they are thought of as being careless and remissive in their attention to hospital children. The "killer" wet-nurse became almost a "cliché" of the literature on foundlings. The problem is that historians pay too much attention to cases that are striking precisely because they are aberrant. Table 5.72. shows that only 20% of the foundlings had more than one nurse while they were alive. It could be argued though, that few children survived long enough to change wet-nurses. The counter argument would be that there was a clear strategy on the part of wet-nurses to take several foundlings until one of them survived long enough to be adopted. Besides, among married "dry" wet-nurses of the last cohort, it was particularly frequent for them to state that they had no children, which suggests that they were in search of one when they took a foundling from the hospital. Between 1774-1776, 45 of the 177 (25.4%) married dry wet-nurses declared at the moment they took the child that they did not have children of their own. Among the unmarried dry wet-nurses of the same period, 8 out of 17 (47.6%) inherited the foundling from a dead mother who had been the child's previous nurse or were in a similar situation (were acquainted with or belonged to the previous nurse's kin).

Table 5.72.
Number of wet-nurses per child

	1724-6	%	Cum.%	1774-6	%	Cum.%
1	753	81.23	81.23	1316	78.29	78.29
2	147	15.86	97.09	299	17.79	96.08
3	23	2.48	99.57	55	3.27	99.35
4	3	0.32	99.89	10	0.59	99.94
5	1	0.11	100	1	0.06	100
Total	927	100		1681	100	

Note: All children who were given to wet-nurse are considered here. The table thus includes wet-nurses of children on a breastfeeding allowance, as such women were considered among the hospital's staff, since it was the institution which was paying for them. Besides, the compilation of data does not suggest that these women behaved differently from foundling wet-nurses.

If there is a slight tendency for having more than one wet-nurse in the last cohort (21.7% against 18.8% between 1724-26 which accounts for 3% of the children), cumulative percentages are striking in their equality between the two cohorts. Altogether it could be affirmed that no significant variation in the number of wet-nurses per child occurred in the two cohorts. This issue seems to me of particular interest because, as the hospital got more widely used by the population (see section on foundlings' notes), one could have expected foundlings to be transferred more often from nurse to nurse, thus deteriorating the relationship of wet-nurse to foundling.

The number of children cared for by the wet-nurses in each cohort is also an indicator of the evolution of the practice of nursing. Table 5.73. reports on the children of the hospital who were cared for by the wet-nurses considered in the previous section.⁹¹

⁹¹ This table may suffer from mistakes deriving from the difficulties in defining wet-nurses' identities that were referred to in that section.

Table 5.73.
Number of children per wet-nurse

	1724-6	%	Cum.%	1774-6	%	Cum.%
1	826	85.15	85.15	1623	80.43	80.43
2	129	13.30	98.45	340	16.84	97.27
3	10	1.03	99.48	47	2.33	99.60
4 or +	5	0.52	100	8	0.40	100
Total	970	100		2018	100	

There is a difference between the number of children per wet-nurse between the two cohorts: 14.9% of the wet-nurses had more than one foundling between 1724-1726 and 19.6% in 1774-1776. There is an increase of 4.7% in the number of wet-nurses who took more than one foundling between the two cohorts. It should be stressed, however, that these children represent only our samples and not the whole career of each woman as wet-nurse. Examination of the sources has shown that women could be appointed by the hospital as wet-nurses for periods as long as fifteen years or more, benefiting from breastmilk derived from several births. What the table depicts is then their capacity to take children over a period of three years, a capacity that seems to have increased. It should be noted that mortality of foundlings is different between the two cohorts: 42.9 in 1724-1726 and 46.2 in 1774-1776⁹². In three years, it happened very rarely that any of the wet-nurses of the samples observed took foundlings as a result of two pregnancies.

Breastfeeding nurses were expected to have weaned their own last child before being engaged. This rule informs us of a social habit: women were not supposed to breastfeed more than one nursling at a time. Even if administrators could have little control over this principle, parish priests and the women themselves often informed the administrators that the women's own children had died; in this way, they could explain why the

⁹² See table 5.2.8: here only mortality of foundlings with wet-nurses was considered, and mortality within hospital after abandonment was excluded (except for the foundlings brought back dead to the hospital by the nurses).

wet-nurse had such "young" milk. Otherwise, wet-nurses were expected to dispose of breastmilk for a period of more than a year, thirteen months being the modal "younger" age of milk for those whose children were still alive. This rule was valid for the first child of the hospital taken in each birth, as wet-nurses, as we have seen, could take a sequence of hospital's children with breastmilk from a single birth. Table 5.74. represents the number of nurses' dead children in each cohort. The "live" category accounts for nurses' children who were presumed to be alive, although one cannot exclude that their mothers had taken the hospital's children before the children of our sample and their own children were declared as dead in another register or were dead by the time another foundling was taken in charge.

Table 5.74.
Nurses' dead children at the moment they took a child from the hospital

	Live	Dead	Probably dead	Unknown	Total
1724-1726	151	37	1	714	903
%	16.72	4.10	0.11	79.07	100
Adj. freq. (%)	79.89	19.58	0.53	-	100
1774-1776	1386	333	18	87	1824
%	75.99	18.25	0.99	4.77	100
Adj. freq.	79.79	19.17	1.04	-	100
Total	1537	370	19	801	2727
%	56.36	13.57	0.70	29.37	100
Adj. freq. (%)	79.80	19.21	0.99	-	100

If adjusted frequencies are considered, the variation between the two cohorts is non-existent: around 19% of the wet-nurses of each cohort declared that the last child they had given birth to was dead. The information is precious: it proves that about one in five wet-nurses was trying to compensate for the loss of her child, either with a strictly biological scope (continuing to "push" her breastmilk in order to postpone ovulation⁹³) while

⁹³ Among the authors who treat this issue in detail see Corsini, Carlo A., 'La fecondité naturelle de la femme mariée. Le cas des nourrices', *Genus*, vol. XXX, 1974, n.1-4, pp. 1-12; Lithell, Ulla-Britt, 'Breast-feeding habits and their relations to infant mortality and marital fertility', *Journal of Family History*, Cambridge, vol. 6, 1981, pp. 182-194; MacLaren, Dorothy, 'Nature's contraceptive: wet-nursing and prolonged lactation, the case of Chesham, Buckinghamshire, 1578-1601', *Medical History*, t. 23, n. 4, 1979, pp. 426-441;

making a financial profit out of it, or for the wider purpose of effectively getting a replacement for a lost child. I calculated whether nurses with dead children showed a higher propensity to adopt. Among such married women 33.3% "adopted" a foundling, whilst the percentage for women who declared their children were alive is 23.5.

The age of wet-nurses' breastmilk cannot be compared between the two cohorts. Table 5.75. collects the few data existing for the 1724-26 cohort.

Table 5.75.
Age of breastmilk (1724-1726)

<u>Age (in months)</u>	<u>Rel. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Adj. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Cum. Adj. freq.</u>
1-6	1 0.11	4.0	4.0
7-12	1 0.11	4.0	8.0
13-18	18 1.99	72.0	80.0
19-24	4 0.44	16.0	96.0
25-30	1 0.11	4.0	100
<u>Unknown</u>	<u>878 97.23</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>100</u>
	903 99.99	100	100

The majority of wet-nurses had given birth between 13 months and 18 months earlier, followed by nurses whose milk was aged between 19 months and two years. In spite of the insufficient data, this pattern can be observed between 1774-1776, where breastmilk was normally aged between one year and less than two. Table 5.76. depicts, this time with full information, the data existing for 1774-1776.

Marcy, Peter T., 'Factors affecting the fecundity and fertility of historical populations: a review', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 6, 1981, Fall, pp. 309-326.

Table 5.76.
Age of breastmilk (1774-1776)

<u>Age (in months)</u>	<u>Rel. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Adj. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Cum. Adj. freq.</u>
1-6	182	9.98	10.47
7-12	100	5.48	16.23
13-18	1022	56.03	75.03
19-24	298	16.34	92.17
25-30	72	3.95	96.32
31-36	39	2.14	98.56
37-42	11	0.60	99.19
43-48	7	0.38	99.60
49 or +	7	0.38	100
<u>Unknown</u>	<u>86</u>	<u>4.71</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	1824	99.99	99.98

The percentage of wet-nurses with milk aged less than a year corresponds roughly to that of nurses who declared that their own youngest child was dead (15 and 19 % respectively). The 3% difference accounts for the women whose children died after their first birthday or who had died long before the date of the contract. 84% of the wet-nurses had milk aged less than a year; 6.1% had milk aged between two and three years; whilst older breastmilk tended to be exceptional - wet-nurses with milk aged more than three years tended to have a previous career in nursing that falls outside the duration of the sample. It would be unlikely that a woman who presented herself as a wet-nurse for the first time with such an breastmilk would be accepted by the hospital.

In conclusion, the striking feature about this section on wet-nurses' behaviour is that its main characteristics (small percentage of dry-nurses, low rate of change of wet-nurses by foundling, about 19% of nurses with their own dead children, age of breastmilk) did not show significant variation over fifty years. With the increase of abandonment that took place between the two cohorts, together with the enlargement of the breastfeeding rural areas, I was expecting that some changes over these issues would have occurred. Instead, the behaviour of these women as wet-nurses seems to be strikingly steady.

Did unmarried nurses behave differently?

The 1774-1776 cohort offers good conditions for the comparison of the information on the practice of nursing by two groups: married or widowed wet-nurses on one hand and unmarried ones on the other. The purpose is to see if these two groups behaved differently as wet-nurses. Table 5.77. depicts the type of children cared for by wet-nurses, in order to see if unmarried women took more children on breastfeeding allowance than the others.

Table 5.77.
Type of children

	Foundlings	Breastfeeding all.	Both	Total
Married	1 689	49	6	1 744
%	96.85	2.81	0.34	100
Unmarried	260	11	3	274
%	94.89	4.01	1.09	100
Total	1949	60	9	2 018
%	96.58	2.97	0.45	100

In both groups there was a small group of wet-nurses who specialized in the care of non-foundling children, although there were also women who cared for both foundlings and children on allowance. In the unmarried group, nurses of children on allowance seem to be more frequent (4% against 2.8%).

In relation to the type of wet-nurse (see table 5.78.), the tendency to find unmarried dry wet-nurses is lower (6.2% against 10.2%).

Table 5.78.
Type of wet-nurse

	Dry	Breastfeeding	Total
Married	177	1567	1744
%	10.15	89.85	100
Unmarried	17	257	274
%	6.20	93.80	100
Total	194	1824	2018
%	9.61	90.39	100

Table 5.79.
Number of children cared for by wet-nurse

Number	Married		Unmarried		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
1	1411	80.91	212	77.37	1623	80.43
2	285	16.34	55	20.07	340	16.84
3	42	2.41	5	1.83	47	2.33
4 or +	6	0.34	2	0.73	8	0.40
Total	1744	100	274	100	2018	100

The tendency to take more than one foundling in the period of three years is slightly higher among unmarried wet-nurses, although the information in the table is not striking in terms of its variability.

Table 5.80.

	Wet-nurses' own children				Total
	Live	Dead	Probably dead	Unknown	
Married	1194	285	17	71	1567
%	76.20	18.19	1.08	4.53	100
Unmarried	192	48	1	16	257
%	74.71	18.68	0.39	6.22	100
Total	1386	333	18	87	1824
%	75.99	18.25	0.99	4.77	100

Nurses who declared dead children account for the same percentage in the two groups. In terms of age of breastmilk, percentages could also be expected to be parallel.

Table 5.81.
Age of milk - married wet-nurses

<u>Age (in months)</u>	<u>Rel. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Adj. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Cum. Adj. freq.</u>
0-6	161	10.27	10.76
17-12	82	5.23	5.48
13-18	882	56.29	58.96
19-24	255	16.27	17.04
25-30	64	4.08	4.28
31-36	32	2.04	2.14
37-42	10	0.64	0.67
43-48	7	0.45	0.47
49 or +	3	0.19	0.20
Unknown	71	4.53	-
Total	1567	99.99	100

Table 5.82.
Age of milk - unmarried wet-nurses

<u>Age (in months)</u>	<u>Rel. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Adj. freq. (%)</u>	<u>Cum. Adj. freq.</u>
1-6	21	8.17	8.68
7-12	18	7.0	7.44
13-18	140	54.47	57.85
19-24	43	16.73	17.77
25-30	8	3.11	3.31
31-36	7	2.72	2.89
37-42	1	0.39	0.41
43-48	-	-	-
49 or +	4	1.56	1.65
Unknown	15	5.84	-
Total	257	99.99	100

The comparison between the two tables is striking again for the absence of significant differences between married and unmarried wet-nurses. They tended to take foundlings in the same moments: variations are too small and relate to contingent details: on the whole, it can be said that more than a half of them breastfed foundlings between a year and a year and a half after their last birth, and around 17% in the next six months.

In conclusion, the practice of wet-nursing, besides being the same in the two cohorts considered, did not vary from the unmarried wet-nurses to the married ones. A behaviour that is striking for its uniformity, where variations might be easily

explained by an increasing supply of children or by changes in fertility and in duration of breastfeeding; although, confirmation of the latter can only come from a major demographic study.

Finally, mention should be made of several issues that are illustrated by the registers very irregularly: the so-called "aberrant" cases referred to earlier. All of them have been extracted from the "Livros de Saída" concerning the 1724-26 cohort when the administrators seem to have exercised a higher degree of surveillance over the practice of nursing. Most of them concern the fraudulent behaviour of wet-nurses (but not only this) although many of them concern wet-nurses who were suspect of cheating, without further confirmation. In 1774-1776 such references become rare, probably because the shortage of wet-nurses did not allow the administrators to be too critical of their behaviour. Even so, less than 100 mentions can be found in a total of over 1100 acts-of-nursing for 1724-1726, which does not represent a high proportion. In brief, the issues, of a highly varied nature, can be listed as follows in order of importance:

- Ill treatment of child by wet- nurse (24 mentions can be found, although many only testify to a suspicion that was denied by a parish priest's certificate).

- False certificates of payment or false information on wet-nurses' identities which allowed the women to receive undue payments or be registered with mistaken names and residences (16 cases).

- Betraying the anonymity of the child, by having undue contacts with its parents or by the woman rearing her own child or of kin (16 mentions).

- Undue and informal circulation of children among wet-nurses: some women, who were not breastfeeding the child, passed it on to some other woman, generally a neighbour or a relative (11 cases). One such wet-nurse was discovered not to

have had breastmilk for over eight years⁹⁴. Another child was informally passed on sequentially by four women⁹⁵.

- Change of children: another child replaced the hospital's child when the wet-nurse had to present the latter to the administrators (7 mentions).

- Nurses received payments in advance privately, pawning the receipts the hospital issued which allowed them to collect the next payment within three months (6 mentions).

- Only one wet-nurse was defined as a "killer of foundlings" ("matadouro de expostos") and accused of coming to the hospital to pick up children she would sell to others ("passadeira por dinheiro")⁹⁶.

Although more discreet in the sources, other occasional references give us subsidiary information on the practice of nursing:

- the value attached to the restitution of the child's clothes supplied by the hospital. In case of death, the wet-nurse who, not having brought them to the hospital, did not show a parish priest's certificate that confirmed that the child had been buried dressed in them, could have to recompense their value by payment (5 mentions).

⁹⁴ The information was given by her parish priest (*Livro 13 das Saldas*, fl. 35 and following).

⁹⁵ "Esta ama Domingas Mendes largou esta menina a Francisca solteira e esta a largou a Catarina Lopes e esta por criar outro engeitado a largou a Luisa Pereira..." (*Livro 15 das Saldas*, fl. 55)

⁹⁶ This is a very curious case because the woman was accused by a "provedor" but his successor in the post made no accusations of that sort against her (*Livro 14 das Saldas*, fl. 279 v. and following: "Esta Maria solteira é a mais fina trapaceira que tem Beire e pelo que tem feito à Roda se lhe não deve pagar e enganou [os provedores] com nome suposto, tem vendido e trespassado vários engeitados e mandou buscar ete pela sobredita Josefa de Nevogilde, que o tomou com trapaça, como me constou por carta do abade de Nevogilde. Por não obedecer mandei caminheiro em Abril a chamá-la e outras duas e não veio [...]. Não se lhe deve pagar pelo sobredito e por ter culpas nesta administração, e ser matadouro de engeitados e passadeira por dinheiro. Veja-se o L. 14 fl. 530 e fl. 58 e L. 10 fl. 424 e muitos mais a topei, e todos confirmam ter estas habilidades e por crédito e reputação desta administração se lhe deve tirar e castigar; o senhor Provedor que me suceder fará o que for justo. Porto, 1 de Março de 1727").

- Some nurses are noted as having three foundlings in their care (4 mentions). Generally the administration felt entitled to have at least one of them back.

- the hospital's competition with the private market for wet-nurses (3 mentions). In one such case, the wet-nurse had to commit herself to the administration to quit breastfeeding her other nursling⁹⁷.

- After their wives' deaths, husbands showed interest in keeping children who were already weaned (3 cases).

- Administrators commented on the extreme poverty of some nurses (2 mentions). Nevertheless, one of them was allowed to keep the child in spite of being a beggar, because the administrators discovered it was mentally retarded⁹⁸.

- Finally, and most curiously, witches are held as being the cause of children's deaths (2 cases): the expressions "sucked" and "bitten" by witches are used ("chupada"⁹⁹ e "mordida pelas bruxas"¹⁰⁰). The striking feature about these occurrences is not so much the fact that they were both reported by the children's wet-nurses, but that the administrator registered the issue as a matter worth of consideration, although no comments were made.

- Husbands are registered as coming to the administration in order to collect their wives' payments (1 case).

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⁹⁷ *Livro 14 das Saldas*, fl. 500 and following.

⁹⁸ *Livro 14 das Saldas*, fl. 359 and following.

⁹⁹ "Faleceu Maria am casa da ama, que disse fora chupada das bruxas porque vinha pisada em partes e a trouxe à roda morta ... " (*Livro 13 das Saldas*, fl. 41).

¹⁰⁰ "Faleceu no mesmo dia e diz a ama que mordida das bruxas." (*Livro 13 das Saldas*, fl. 301).

Foundlings aged more than seven: fosterage or adoption?

After their seventh birthday foundlings were supposed, according to Portuguese law, to be given to the Judges of Orphans who would place them in other families or in the labour market. The significant point is that the Misericórdia does not seem to have proceeded in this way, as one of its "provedores" confessed, admitting that the practice of the Foundling Hospital contradicted the existing law¹⁰¹. The procedures of the institution were as follows: after the seventh birthday, calculated according to an estimate of the child's age at the moment of arrival¹⁰², the wet-nurse, accompanied by her husband, came to the administration and the scribe noted the end of the upbringing. The nurse seems to have been given the choice of keeping the child. If she did not want it, the foundling would return to the Casa da Roda and wait for someone to take him out. In both cases, the act of assuming responsibility for keeping a foundling over seven years of age was officially registered in the "Livros de Saída", after the registers of payments to its former wet-nurse/s. The main characters recorded in the register would preferably be men: either the wet-nurse's husband, even her father (if she was unmarried) or a male newcomer to the administration. This does not mean that women were excluded from the official act: in cases where they did not have a husband they would take responsibility for the foundling on their own. Neither did they disappear automatically from the register when they were accompanied by a man: simply, taking a foundling out was a family business and required the presence of the couple. They did not sign, but they were nevertheless referred to in the register.

101 A.A.D.P, *Livro 1 do Registo*, fl. 125: " ... que da administração da roda desta cidade nunca se mandaram ao juízo dos órfãos dela os seus respectivos expostos, antes assim que estes acabam as creações o seu provedor os põe a officios e lhes busca os meios que julga mais próprios para a sua futura subsistência: porém ainda que este costume seja atendível para o nosso caso, poderá na censura de direito ser inválido, como oposto à ley, pelo que me não entrego da sua defeza".

102 See section 5.1.: estimates were based mostly on the wet-nurses' and administrators' judgements, and showed a predilection for certain numbers (i.e. 1, 2, 6, 8, 15).

All persons wishing to have "grown" foundlings in their homes needed to present a "fiador": a person who by general consent had adequate resources to assume responsibility for the child in the event of the former fostering couple proving unable to do so. All the male who were involved were supposed to sign the register, together with the "provedor". Women might also sign, but not necessarily.

The act of taking a foundling in such conditions cannot be held as full adoption. As was noted in chapter 3, adoption was nonexistent in Portuguese law during the eighteenth century¹⁰³. The "perfilhação" was used to legitimize illegitimate children; it is assumed that it could be used to replace a non-existing legal device for adoption¹⁰⁴. My suggestion is that, if full adoption did not apparently exist, that was because no social need was felt for it. Other devices, such as taking children out of the foundling Hospital, replaced legal adoption with the advantage of exempting "adoptants" from the duties involved in present day adoption.

In the case of foundlings fostered after the age of seven, the registers declare they should be treated as sons, but nothing is said about becoming full members of the family. The foundling does not seem to have had any inheritance rights on equal terms with the children of the fostering individual/s; only in a few cases was the donation of property or the promise of a future inheritance mentioned in the registers. The registers often mentioned the commitment of adoptants to provide the child with means of subsistence, either by teaching him or her a trade or by paying wages after the age of 12 to 14¹⁰⁵. The status of the foundling must have been halfway between that of the servant or

¹⁰³ This void also existed in other European legal systems, as in the Spanish case (see García González, Juan, 'Expositos, beneficencia y prohijamento', pp. 319-320).

¹⁰⁴ This is a hypothesis that would be worth checking further in notarial records. I did a survey which demonstrated the rarity of cases of "perfilhação" in notarial registers, as well as an practical difficulty in establishing if the subject of "perfilhação" was the former illegitimate child of the contracting person.

¹⁰⁵ The age at which labour was paid varied according to sex: it was 12 for boys and 14 for girls.

apprentice and a member of the family. If we remember that legally the rights of the father (*patria potestas*) were very similar to those of the master over his servants, this ambiguity concerning the status of children is not surprising.

In a context of high circulation of children, the legal aspects were not the basic issues that mattered to those accepting children from other families. The fact that a family could increase its number of children by incorporating a foundling and thus influence in a non-biological manner its own family size needed a flexible system. Without formally integrating the foundling in a family, arrangements could be made according to changing conditions, without increasing the complex problems involved in property transmission.

Although I am well aware that foundlings were not "adopted" in the present day sense of the word, the terms "adoption", "adoptant", "adoptees", "adopted" will be used in this section, together with those of "fosterage" or "fostering parents", because I am unable to find single words that expressed such concepts in a more concise manner.

The nonexistence of a rigid formulary of registers of "adoption" accounts for the extreme flexibility of the procedure. Administrators seem to have adapted each register to the person who was taking responsibility for the child. Registers vary from the extremely short notices declaring whom the child was with (generally such children were left with their former wet-nurses) to contracts occupying one whole page of the register book. In some cases we lose trace of children after the age of seven: the scribe took note of the end of the upbringing but did not care to comment on what happened to them.

Table 5.83.
Foundlings and adoptants

	N. of foundlings	N. of adoptants
1699	24	24
1700	22	23
1701	26	26
Total cohort	72	73
1724	97	103
1725	103	107
1726	114	120
Total cohort	314	330
1749	173	178
1750	200	205
1751	190	201
Total cohort	563	584
1774	253	287
1775	275	306
1776	265	306
Total cohort	793	899
Total	1742	1886

Table 5.83. shows the number of children available in each cohort for "adoption" and the registers of adoption that relate to them. As can be seen, the "adoptants" could give up children, as many foundlings after the age of seven stayed with more than one family. Fostering families could reject children and bring them back to the Foundling Hospital; children could also escape from them and then the administrators placed them in other families. On other occasions, the administrators decided that the fostering family was not suitable for the child because it was not well cared after, and replaced it with another. The peak of the replacements took place in the 1774-1776 cohort, where 106 "adoptants" took children that had already been given in "adoption" to others.

A device existed for those who did not want to wait until the child's seventh birthday in order to take it home: upbringing without wages. By rearing a foundling without receiving money, the family acquired the right to keep it (unless its own family

claimed it) and, according to Portuguese law, exemption from army duties, first relating to the wet-nurse's husband and later extended to their children¹⁰⁶. Table 5.84. examines the frequency with which such "premature" adoptions took place.

Table 5.84.
Type of fostering

	Complete upbringing	Before age 7	Total
1699-1701	71	2	73
%	97.26	2.74	100
1724-1726	311	19	330
%	94.24	5.76	100
1749-1751	477	107	584
%	81.68	18.32	100
1774-1776	870	29	899
%	96.77	3.23	100
Total	1729	157	1886
%	91.68	8.32	100

In all cohorts the percentage of such children was below 6%, except for 1749-1751, when it reaches 18%. It is possible that a situation of war encouraged families to take a child from the Foundling Hospital; no other explanation for this peak is plausible. The percentage of upbringings without wages was highest in 1750, when they reached 23.9% of the total number of "adoptions" during that year.

¹⁰⁶ See chapter 3.

Table 5.85.
Type of "adoptant"

	1	2	3	4	5	Total
1699-1701	61	5	1	1	5	73
Freq. (%)	83.56	6.85	1.37	1.37	6.85	100
Adj. Freq (%)	89.71	7.35	1.47	1.47	-	100
1724-1726	176	75	19	7	53	330
Freq. (%)	53.33	22.73	5.76	2.12	16.06	100
Adj. freq. (%)	63.54	27.08	6.86	2.52	-	100
1749-1751	300	250	23	6	5	584
Freq. (%)	51.37	42.81	3.94	1.02	0.86	100
Adj. freq. (%)	51.81	43.18	3.97	1.04	-	100
1774-1776	507	330	27	25	10	899
Freq. (%)	56.40	36.71	3.0	2.78	1.11	100
Adj. freq. (%)	57.03	37.12	3.04	2.81	-	100
Total	1044	660	70	39	73	1886
Freq. (%)	55.36	34.99	3.71	2.07	3.87	100
Adj. freq. (%)	57.58	36.40	3.86	2.15	-	100

1 = Wet-nurse's family

2 = Newcomers

3 = Newcomers acquainted with wet-nurse or with administrators

4 = Other

5 = Unknown

Table 5.85. analyses the type of fostering families according to their former relationship with the child. The majority of foundlings was fostered by the wet-nurse's family (1): around 90% between 1699-1701, 63.5% between 1724-1726, 51.8% in 1749-1751 and 57% between 1774-1776. It is obvious that wet-nurses felt an interest in keeping foundlings, often confessing their emotional attachment to the child: the expression "pelo muito amor que lhe tinham"¹⁰⁷ is frequent. Nevertheless, foster parents were supposed to give a salary to the child after it was 12 to 14 years old. If we consider that most foster families cared for more than one foundling over the years, and often kept one of them after the age of seven, it is evident that taking foundlings from the Foundling Hospital did not have the unique scope of providing money, but was inscribed in a long term process, where at least one of the foundlings was assimilated to the family. Once in a while the child was refused to the wet-nurse's family at the

¹⁰⁷ In English: on behalf of the love they felt.

age of seven on the grounds that the household had already incorporated one or more grown up foundling.

Some of the foundlings were available to newcomers who wanted to foster children. In Table 5.85., variables 2 and 3 account for them. Variable 2 relates to persons who apparently had not had any previous contact with the child. Variable 3 corresponds to those in which a former acquaintance with the wet-nurse of the child is evident or in which a recommendation might have played its role in the attribution of the child. In such cases, the "adoptant" came from the same parish as the wet-nurse, sometimes had the same address, or was a member, of the Misericórdia. I detected around 3.9% of newcomers with such links to the child or to the institution, a percentage that might increase if the sources were scanned to account for such connections. Nevertheless, the sources report them occasionally, and the link was established by myself. The sum of variables 2 and 3 accounts for the total of newcomers. Lower between 1724-1726 (26%), it maintained itself around 40% in the second half of the century: 46% between 1749-51 and 41% in 1774-1776.

Disabled children who went to the hospitals of the Invalids owned by the Misericórdia; children who returned to the Foundling Hospital and died before being attributed to new families and children whose upbringing was prolonged for a year on account of their physical unfitness, are included in variable 4. They relate to 2% of the whole sample.

Between 1774-1776 children that were reckoned as needing a further year of paid wet-nursing started to be systematically accorded to the wife of a secretary who reared them in Porto's neighbouring parish of S. Verissimo de Paranhos. Such prolongations were designed to save expenses, as it was reckoned that the administration would spend more had they stayed in the Foundling Hospital. In any case, they confirm the vocation of the Foundling Hospital to serve as a passing point for the children and to refuse permanent boarders on its premises.

Let us now look more closely at the children who were given to newcomers. Some of those took more than one child in the

cohorts they are related to, a fact interesting in itself, for it accounts for the function of the Foundling Hospital as a deposit for available children. Unlike in previous sections (of chapter 4 on internal wet-nurses and chapter 5 on definitive wet-nurses) repeated newcomers have not been eliminated, as this section is primarily concerned with what happened to the children who survived the foundling system. Their occupations and residence have been analyzed as probable indicators of the environments where children would live and the activities they might develop inside these families.

Table 5.86. represents the occupations of such newcomers. They have been classified in such detail in order to demonstrate that such "adoptants" came from highly positioned social strata, if compared to those of godparents, abandoners and wet-nurses.

Parish priests and church dignitaries were good customers of the Foundling Hospital's available children, especially between 1724-1726, when they fostered 22.5% of the total. Lay men in public posts and people in the so-called "liberal" professions¹⁰⁸ (lawyers, medical professionals and "doutores" - individuals with non-specified university degrees) account for 7.7% of the adoptants. Modest shopkeepers (barbers, booksellers, grocers) have been separated from "homens de negócios", a category that refers to people in business and commerce, who were normally better off than the former. Persons from the army, often bearing the titles of sergeant, lieutenant, or captain account for around 5% of the total.

Farmers (and estate owners¹⁰⁹) represent a variable percentage of newcomers: 10% between 1724-1726, they rose to 35.5% during 1749-1751, no doubt due to the increase of fosterings without wages that were designed mainly for them in Portuguese law. Between 1774-1776 the percentage was around 18%.

¹⁰⁸ Although aware of the anachronism of this designation, I have used it in order to group such occupations.

¹⁰⁹ Individuals who declared themselves to be the owners of farms.

Table 5.86.
Occupation of wet-nurses's husbands

Type of activity	1699-1701	1724-1726	1749-1751	1774-1776	Total
Agriculture	1	329	465	610	1405
Rel. Freq. (%)	0.45	42.67	37.41	34.98	35.32
Adj. Freq. (%)	2.63	48.31	41.85	35.84	39.78
Daily wage workers					
(activity not specified)	1	14	43	261	319
Rel. Freq. (%)	0.45	1.82	3.46	14.97	8.02
Adj. Freq. (%)	2.63	2.06	3.87	15.33	9.03
Artisans	24	259	433	564	1280
Rel. Freq. (%)	10.90	33.59	34.84	32.34	32.18
Adj. Freq. (%)	63.16	38.03	38.97	33.14	36.24
Shopkeepers	2	20	5	35	62
Rel. Freq. (%)	0.90	2.59	0.40	2.01	1.56
Adj. Freq. (%)	5.26	2.94	0.45	2.06	1.76
Services	2	5	58	65	130
Rel. Freq. (%)	0.90	0.65	4.67	3.73	3.27
Adj. Freq. (%)	5.26	0.73	5.22	3.82	3.68
Soldiers	2	19	25	22	68
Rel. Freq. (%)	0.90	2.46	2.01	1.26	1.71
Adj. Freq. (%)	5.26	2.79	2.25	1.29	1.93
Transport	4	27	75	114	220
Rel. Freq. (%)	1.82	3.50	6.03	6.54	5.53
Adj. Freq. (%)	10.53	3.96	6.75	6.70	6.23
Other	2	8	7	31	48
Rel. Freq. (%)	0.90	1.04	0.56	1.78	1.21
Adj. Freq. (%)	5.26	1.17	0.63	1.82	1.36
No information	182	90	132	42	446
Rel. Freq. (%)	82.73	11.67	10.62	2.41	11.21
Total	220	771	1243	1744	3978

In turn, the number of foundlings given to artisans increased from cohort to cohort: 4% in 1699-1701; 24% in 1724-1726, 32% in 1749-1751 and 40% in 1774-1776. Table 5.87. depicts the position of such artisans in the hierarchy of crafts. Most of them do not give any information on the subject; nevertheless, 20% of them in all cohorts (except 1699-1701) declared themselves to be master craftsmen, the percentage reaching its peak between 1774-1776 (63%).

Table 5.87.
Artisans - grade in career

	Masters	Journeymen	Total
1699-1701	-	-	2
%	-	-	-
1724-1726	4	3	17
%	23.53	17.65	-
1749-1751	23	-	-
%	63.03	-	-
1774-1776	75	-	119
%	63.03	-	-
Total	102	3	208
%	49.04	1.44	-

Several issues can be inferred from the analysis of the occupations of newcomers:

1. Artisans were more frequent than farmers, in spite of the contemporary theoretical works that prescribed that foundlings should preferably be given to farm labourers. Among artisans, attention should be paid to rope-makers, who were the majority of craftsmen¹¹⁰. Formal contracts of apprenticeship are very rare in the sources: only four cases were found¹¹¹. Probably, picking up

¹¹⁰ Rope-makers account for 42.86% of all artisans between 1749-51 and 47.06% between 1774-76. Between 1724-26, they represent only 5.88% of the total number of craftsmen.

¹¹¹ One case in 1726 and three in 1776. In 1726 the child (n. 101399, Francisco José, *Livro 15 das Saldas*, fl. 205) was given to a tailor by his foster father, who confessed that the child himself had chosen that trade. He

foundling children as future members of a workshop had the advantage of constituting an alternative to legal obligations implied in notarial apprenticeship contracts. By taking a foundling, the artisan could invoke charity and pity for a child without family, while he guaranteed extra help in the workshop at a low price and without strict obligations. In 1774-1776 some "factory administrators" started to be mentioned in the sources, indicating that more complex industrial structures than the artisan's workshop were being settled by the end of the eighteenth century.

2. Individuals from the higher social strata came to the Foundling Hospital in order to pick up children who would probably function as servants, as it would be naïve to believe that such children became full members of their families. Nevertheless, it was the only moment in the children's lives when the higher strata took an interest in foundlings. The study of wet-nurses, godparents and abandoners has shown that the foundling Hospital was concerned mainly with the poor, who constituted its staff and its customers.

New foster parents lived preferably in the city (See Table 5.88., variable "A+B+C"), constituting 51.3% of all "adoptants", in a percentage that varied little from cohort to cohort. Fostering couples from the countryside show more variation, ranging from 40 to 47% in the first two cohorts to 60% between 1749-1751 and

began apprenticeship on 30 March 38, aged 12, with Manuel António, resident in the parish of "Sé": "e dando-lhe a escolher vários [ofícios] escolhera somente o de alfaiate com inclinação, apontando-se-lhe outros, pelo que estava ajustado com o alfaiate [...] para o que tinha feito escritura de obrigação disso na forma do uso do dito ofício, para lho aprovar como provedor da roda o qual lhe aprovo quanto posso por me parecer a favor do dito engeitado de que fiz este assento".

Contracts of foundlings entered in 1776 were signed when the boys were between 15 and 16 years old (cases n. 104331, José Fernandes, *Livro 71 das Salidas*, fl. 410; n. 105039, Manuel Sousa Lima, *Livro 73 das Salidas*, fl. 32 and n. 105210, Luciano, *Livro 73 das Salidas*, fl. 158). Note the difference between the duration of contracts: José Fernandes was given as apprentice to a stoneworker for a year and a half; Manuel Sousa Lima, was given to a metalworker (ferreiro) for 4 years and, in fact, in 1795 his former foster father came to the administration and declared the foundling was ready to earn a living in his trade; Luciano, given to a tailor, was to learn this trade for 7 years, the master having to dress and nourish him for that entire period of time.

going down to around 40% between 1774-1776. The rise of rural families during 1749-1751 must be linked to the rise in the percentage of farmers in the same cohort.

Table 5.88.
Residence of new foster parents

	A	B	C	D	E	F	TOTAL
1699-1701	1	2	-	-	2	1	6
1724-1726	29	12	4	5	39	5	94
1749-1751	50	55	3	43	114	8	273
1774-1776	73	129	5	24	117	9	357
TOTAL	153	198	12	72	272	23	730

Table 5.88.
Residence of new foster parents (continued)

	A+B+C	D+E	F	TOTAL
1699-1701	3	2	1	6
%	50.	40.	10.	100
Adj. Freq (%)	60.	40.	-	100
1724-1726	45	44	5	94
%	47.87	46.81	5.32	100
Adj. Freq (%)	50.56	49.44	-	100
1749-1751	108	157	8	273
%	39.56	57.51	2.93	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	40.75	59.25	-	100
1774-1776	207	141	9	357
%	57.98	39.50	2.52	100
Adj. freq. (%)	59.48	40.52	-	100
TOTAL	363	344	23	730
%	49.73	47.12	3.15	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	51.34	48.66	-	100

A = Parishes inside the city walls
 B = Parishes outside the city walls
 C = Not specified urban parishes
 D = "Termo"
 E = Rural parishes outside the "termo"
 F = No information

Also worth mentioning is the increasing importance of the new urban parishes outside the city walls, which surpassed that of the in-wall parishes in the second half of the century. The former, especially Santo Ildefonso and Cedofeita, became the most prosperous parishes in town, where businessmen and artisans settled their homes and trades.

The marital status (See Table 5.89.) of new foster parents confirms that fostering a foundling was designed for families which already existed as such. Unmarried persons were less frequent than married couples and widows. Although information is far from being exhaustive, children were preferably given to couples, the name of the wife or the husband being often declared in the sources. Widowed individuals were mostly women who came to the administration and took a child¹¹². Widowers were less frequent, probably because the administrators thought that the child should be given to a family where there were women. Bachelors might mention their sisters when they took a seven year old child and widowers declared that their daughters welcomed a girl to keep them company.

Table 5.89.
Marital status of new foster parents

	Single	Married	Widow(ed)	No inf.	Total
1699-1701	-	-	-	6	-
1724-1726	12	20	7	55	94
%	12.77	21.28	7.44	58.51	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	30.77	51.28	17.95	-	100
1749-1751	8	167	36	62	273
%	2.93	61.17	13.19	22.71	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	3.79	79.15	17.06	-	100
1774-1776	8	87	15	247	357
%	2.24	24.37	4.20	69.19	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	7.27	79.09	13.64	-	100
Total	28	274	58	370	730
%	3.84	37.53	7.95	50.68	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	7.78	76.11	16.11	-	100

¹¹² The occupation of their former husbands is often referred to in the sources. They are included in table 5.3.5.5. as it was drawn up on the principle that it was the whole family and not the single individual that assimilated the foundling.

Although signatures are not held to be totally reliable indicators of literacy¹¹³, tables 5.90. and 5.91. intend to allow the comparison between the ability to sign contracts of newcomers and that of wet-nurses' husbands. Table 5.90. confirms that newcomers were educated people, especially if compared to wet-nurses' husbands. There is almost an inverse relationship: in the former 63% sign their names and 37% do not; in the latter only 28% sign and the rest drew a cross or asked someone else to sign for them (in Portuguese "assinatura a rogo" - signature on demand). This relationship is more or less homogeneous in all cohorts, except in 1749-1751 of table 5.90., where the number of farmers rose (see Table 5.67.). Even at the risk of being simplistic, there seems to be a connection between urban background, high social rank and literacy. Wet-nurses' families, living mostly in the countryside, although not necessarily tied exclusively to agriculture, show a higher tendency towards illiteracy, whatever the limitations of the analysis of signatures.

Table 5.90.
Signatures in contracts - new foster parents

	Yes	No	No inf.	Total
1699-1701	1	1	4	6
%	16.67	16.67	66.67	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	50.0	50.0	-	100
1724-1726	37	11	46	94
%	39.36	11.70	48.94	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	77.08	22.92	-	100
1749-1751	115	98	60	273
%	42.12	35.90	21.98	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	53.99	46.01	-	100
1774-1776	101	41	215	357
%	28.29	11.48	60.22	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	71.13	28.87	-	100
Total	254	151	325	730
%	34.79	20.68	44.52	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	62.72	37.28	-	100

¹¹³ See Chartier, Roger, 'Les pratiques de l'écrit' in Ariès, Philippe, Duby, Georges (editors), *Histoire de la vie privée*, vol. 3, Paris, Seuil, 1986, p. 114.

Table 5.91.
Signatures in contracts - wet-nurses' husbands

	Yes	No	No inf.	Total
1699-1701	-	-	61	61
%	-	-	100	100
1724-1726	9	40	127	176
%	5.11	22.73	72.16	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	18.37	81.63	-	100
1749-1751	53	107	140	300
%	17.67	35.67	46.67	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	33.12	66.88	-	100
1774-1776	75	202	230	507
%	14.79	39.84	45.36	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	27.08	72.92	-	100
Total	137	349	558	1044
%	13.12	33.43	53.45	100
Adj. Freq. (%)	28.19	71.81	-	100

Although secondary figures in the process of fosterage, "fiadores" can be considered as characters depicting the probable social networks involved in the relationships of the "adoptants" with the institution. Except in the final cohort, "fiadores" were generally persons acquainted with the foster parents and sometimes also with the administrators. In 1774-1776, the secretaries and clerks of the Foundling Hospital played an increasing role as "fiadores", suggesting that this role was deprived of its former purpose, which was to present a trustworthy individual who could respond for "adoptants" should some problem occur. However, in any case, a "fiador" was held to replace the obligations towards the child of the person he represented by taking the foundling at charge. His role was uniquely designed to give some respectability to the person who fostered, by linking him or her to a social group. This "fiador" was always a man, and his signature was a must in every register in which he took part. Initially the tendency was to present a different person as "fiador" in each case of "adoption". When "fiadores" became more and more a formality, they started to repeat themselves in the registers. Initially, in cohorts 1724-26 and 1749-51, the "fiador" could be someone whom the foster parents knew in town or someone they brought with them from their parish of residence; members of the foster families could be

also "fiadores". By 1774-1776, the secretaries of the administration started to be appointed as "fiadores" in the majority of the registers; the "fiador" had been emptied of his initial function.

Chapter 6 - Porto's Casa da Roda in the European context

Volker Hünecke proposed three major stages in the course of the five hundred years of institutionalized child abandonment:

1 - from the end of Middle Ages until the beginning of the seventeenth century. During this stage new foundling homes were established and foundling care was improved;

2 - from the Counter Reformation to the beginnings of the Enlightenment, Catholic Southern European countries almost alone persisted in establishing Foundling Homes and attempts were made to avoid the abandonment of legitimate children, leading to a decrease in the number of foundlings;

3 - in the eighteenth century some countries introduced institutional foundling care where it did not exist previously and the State tended to replace the church, local authorities and communities, brotherhoods and guilds in the care of foundlings.

Institutionalized abandonment came to an end during the nineteenth century where there was a public discussion of the foundling problem. Attempts were made to stem the flow of abandonment, in two ways: repressive (closure of the tour or a close watch on admissions) and reformatory (the search for alternative forms of assistance, as for instance in welfare for needy mothers)¹.

The stages proposed, albeit unwillingly, stress the primacy of Southern Europe in creating institutions of assistance for foundlings (see annex 1 of chapter 2). The area which we call Southern Europe coincides broadly with Catholic political units such as Spain, Portugal and the Italian states. Southern France is also included in this area, its patterns of abandonment being

¹ Hünecke, Volker, 'The abandonment of legitimate children in nineteenth century Milan', paper delivered to the *Tenth International Economic History Conference*, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', pp. 3-5.

different from those of Northern France: it must not be forgotten that wheels existed in Southern France before the Napoleonic decree of 1811. Thus the eighteenth century saw the extension of the abandonment system to countries where it did not exist previously, and in particular to England and Russia. As for the end of institutionalized abandonment, it needs to be circumscribed to the second half of the nineteenth century, as foundling hospitals were still being founded in the first decade. In Portugal, for instance, from 1820 onwards there were attempts to change the administrative organization of foundling hospitals.

Nevertheless, what I have called Southern Europe for reasons of convenience is far from being a homogeneous area. Studies in marriage patterns and household composition have demonstrated the extreme variability of such issues in the "Mediterranean" area². The latter is also a concept subject to discussion: one might ask what are the Mediterranean characteristics of regions such as Northern Portugal or Northern Spain. My major difficulty during the development of this thesis was to relate child abandonment with household groups. This difficulty arose for two sets of reasons:

1 - the extreme variability of marriage patterns and household composition already referred to, creates the need for local studies of these issues at a micro level. Since such research has not been undertaken for the area of the Douro Litoral, which concerns the Casa da Roda, I have had to make conjectures, extending to it research that has been done for adjacent areas, such as Alto and Baixo Minho, with high levels of illegitimacy and celibacy and a high proportion of stem families³. Besides, the difference between urban areas and rural areas has to be taken

² See Rowland, Robert, 'Sistemas matrimoniales en la Peninsula Ibérica (siglos XVI-XX): una perspectiva regional', Perez Moreda, Vicente, Reher, David S. (editors), *Demografía Histórica de España*, Madrid, El Arquero, 1987; Benigno, Francesco, 'Famiglia mediterranea e modelli anglosassoni', *Meridiana*, n. 6, 1989, pp. 29-61; Nunes, João Arriscado, 'Nupcialidade e família em Portugal. Balanço crítico e perspectivas', paper delivered to the 1^o Congrès Hispano-Luso-Italià de demografia històrica, Barcelona, 22-25 April 1987, p. 484.

³ See the references under the subtitle "Portugal" in the general bibliography.

into consideration, as Benigno has suggested⁴. What were the similarities between Porto and the adjacent rural areas in terms of co-resident groups and levels of illegitimacy?

2 - Even if I had been able to obtain an accurate picture of family and co-resident groups in this area, it would have been an impossible to extrapolate conclusions. To give an example: in Biscay, high levels of illegitimacy and the stem family are accompanied by low rates of abandonment until the end of the eighteenth century⁵, which is definitely not the case of Porto, where there may have been high illegitimacy and a strong presence of complex families⁶. This difficulty remains even if the 'nuclear hardship' hypothesis suggested by Laslett in 1988⁷ is considered: stem families, as various scholars such as Gavitt⁸ and

⁴ Benigno, Francesco, 'Famiglia mediterranea', p. 44.

⁵ Foundlings cannot be found in birth registers and the nearest foundling homes were 100 to 300 km away, while until the nineteenth century no institutions for abandonment existed. In the Basque Provinces until the end of the eighteenth century there was a social acceptance of bastardy that refrained from abandonment: canon marriage had difficulty in replacing informal relationships after the Council of Trent; a large proportion of non-nuclear families favoured the care of illegitimate children. This proportion of complex families was due to a one-heir system of inheritance, with small property. When the proportion of rentiers became higher than that of the landowners, it is likely that the number of complex families diminished and mothers were forced to abandonment. The law gave the child to the father, who financed breastfeeding until the age of three, either by the mother or by a wet-nurse, and generally, parents kept to the law. The application of this law vanishes during the eighteenth century and mothers were discouraged from suing fathers. (Valverde Lamsfus, Lola, 'Illégitimité et abandon d'enfants au Pays Basque à l'Époque Moderne', Tenth Economic History Conference, Louvain, 1990, Session C40: Charity, the poor and the life-cycle).

⁶ Osswald, Helena, 'Dowry, norms, and household formation: a case study from North Portugal', *Journal of Family History*, vol. 15, 1990, n. 2, pp. 201-224. Her research, however, applies to seventeenth century Porto. A tendency to nuclearity was detected, although the family tended to be complex in the initial phase of the life-cycle.

⁷ Laslett, Peter, 'Family, kinship and collectivity as systems of support in pre-industrial Europe: a consideration of the 'nuclear hardship hypothesis'', *Continuity and Change*, vol. 3, 1988, n. 2, pp. 153-175. However, in a seminar at the European University Institute (30th January 1992), Laslett affirmed that the family is always dependent on the support of the collectivity, regardless of its structure.

⁸ Networks of extended families did not always prevent abandonment, as is the case of Renaissance Florence in which there was absence of support from any kind of extended family structure. See Gavitt, Philip, 'Child values and family resources: The case of the Ospedale degli Innocenti in Renaissance Florence', paper delivered to the *Tenth International*

Viazzo⁹ have pointed out, do not imply a weakening of the role of the collectivity, at least during the initial phase of the life-cycle.

Forced to wait for satisfactory answers to such problems, I have limited myself to develop the issues that I find most significant in relation to child abandonment in Porto: the flexibility of the system and the easiness with which the population dealt with illegitimacy.

Leaving aside the theories according to which foundling hospitals were equivalent to houses of disguised infanticide, if the high levels of child and infant mortality are accepted as normal for a foundling hospital, the Casa da Roda do Porto appears as an institution which fulfilled the scopes for which it was designated by its contemporaries. More than that, it does not seem to have been a source of conflict in the city's life. Conflicts would appear later, after the 1820's, whenever the administrators were unable to pay wet-nurses. The success of the foundling home as a public institution, in a context where public institutions were not perceived as such, their private use being the rule, is due to a high degree of flexibility, leaving the population free to use it for a multitude of purposes. To give some examples:

a) Children were accepted without discrimination, regardless of geographical origin or status;

b) parents could reclaim their children from the hospital, without being necessarily obliged to refund expenses and without age limit;

c) the informal giving of children to people who requested them, be it their previous wet-nurses or alien families. This "adoption" could take place at any age, even before reaching seven years.

Economic History Conference, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', p. 7.

⁹ Viazzo, Pier Paolo, 'Family structures and the early phase in the individual life-cycle: a Southern European perspective', paper delivered to the *Tenth International Economic History Conference*, Leuven, 20th-24th August 1990, Session C40: 'Charity, the poor and the life-cycle', pp. 7 and 14.

Certainly, not all the children were likely to survive until completion of their upbringing, and mortality of foundlings was obviously higher than that of children brought up by their own families. Nevertheless, rare were the cases when a child older than seven had to stay in the hospital because no one wanted to take him home. The institution responded to a social need - that of disposing of surplus children - and this was accomplished without conflict. No wonder the foundling home became crowded with children, given that there were no selective devices to limit their number; and we must remember how restrictive was the access to other charitable services.

As for illegitimacy, it is improbable that it would have caused scandal in a society where it was so common:

a) unmarried women came to search for their previously abandoned children: around 60% of the claimed foundlings were illegitimate at the time of their birth¹⁰;

b) the administrators were accustomed to contract unmarried wet-nurses. There is a percentage of 26.7 unmarried women among internal nurses¹¹ and around 16% among "rural" ones¹². Unless being a wet-nurse was an occupation particular to unmarried women, the high levels of celibacy of the area become evident¹³.

c) On some occasions, the administrators even showed tolerance over illicit sexual intercourse, as when they saved an adulterous woman who had a mulatto child by her lover from being punished by her husband¹⁴. This is certainly an extreme case; however, the attitude of accepting illegitimacy as a fact of

¹⁰ A few cases of legitimation subsequent to marriage were detected. See chapter 5, section "Those who reclaimed children": the percentage would increase to 70% if the "presumed illegitimate" children were considered.

¹¹ See chapter 4, table 4.3., p. 144.

¹² See chapter 5, table 5.66.

¹³ They have been studied for the Alto and Baixo Minho but are less clear for the Douro Litoral.

¹⁴ See chapter 3, p. 80.

life can be found throughout the history of the house during the eighteenth century.

d) The foundling girls of Porto did not receive any dowry from the Casa da Roda when they married, and several records register unmarried wet-nurses who had been foundlings themselves. This issue confirms a sharp contrast between Porto on one hand and the Italian foundling institutions on the other. If we conceive dowries for foundlings as a characteristic of honour minded societies, the fact that in Porto they were not given is meaningful. In countries where the pursuit of honour was stressed, institutions tended to be responsible for girls until they married and even ensured the payment of a dowry: such is the example of Florence, where even parents wishing to reclaim their female children underwent scrutiny by hospital officials of their life and morals¹⁵. Nevertheless, the preoccupation with guaranteeing a married future for the girls of the foundling homes is present throughout Italy and not only in the case of Florence. In Brazil foundling girls could receive a dowry which was given to the groom, previously approved by the institution, at the moment the marriage registration took place. Even so, the percentage of girls to get such dowries was limited: only 3% of the girls between 1802 and 1811 in Rio de Janeiro¹⁶. Once again honour was not the reason for such dowries, but the shortage of white brides.

The Casa da Roda appears as an important support system in a context where surplus children were the rule. It operated as a leveller between the number of children the family was able to rear at a given moment and the number of children available. There was a permanent stock of available children that could be either claimed by the family or acquired by alien couples. The foundling hospital helped legitimate families in distress by giving free lactations to their children; it also removed, either temporarily or not, the burden of rearing children to parents in hardship. In a context where high infant mortality might have

¹⁵ Gavitt, Philip, 'Cultural values', p. 11, 12 and 15.

¹⁶ Marcílio, M. L., Venancio, R. P., 'Crianças abandonadas e primitivas formas de sua proteção. Séculos XVIII e XIX, Brasil', *17^o Congresso Internacional de Ciências Históricas, Madrid 1990, 26 Agosto-2 Setembro*, p. 519.

reduced the possibilities of successful reproduction of a certain part of the population, foundlings may have worked as replacements for dead children¹⁷.

There are also issues that remain to be explained such as the capacity of a society for dealing with disregard of its own rules. Northern Portugal is held to be an area where the Catholic religion was a strong presence and the structures of the Church were well implemented. According to Catholic rules, procreation outside marriage was forbidden, and that leads to the consideration of 'sin' as an important variable in behaviour. It is a characteristic of Catholic religion that sin was always capable of redemption by repentance and forgiveness. Redemption was spiritual in the confessional; but it was also material when it came to preventing sins from being known in public. That is to say, the concept of sin regarded the public sphere and not the private one: as an Italian popular saying stated, *peccato celato è mezzo perdonato*. In this sense, even the definition of sin seems to have adapted to reality: the church emphasized the need not to leave the children die without baptism, but seems to have been impotent to refrain people from conceiving illegitimate children and abandoning them. Even so, the power of establishing what was sinful behaviour was complemented by the power to forgive. It could have worked as a cause and effect relationship: if the rules were not flouted, punishment or forgiveness could not take place and religion would have lost its ascendance over the population.

Another question that awaits a concise answer concerns the motives for abandonment. Like other case studies, abandonment could be explained by a variety of reasons. Nevertheless, it is not likely that all motives for abandonment had the same weight in each case. Gavitt has pointed to several motives for the abandonment of children at the Innocenti, which do not

17 The "redistribution of children" hypothesis has already been put forward concerning Northwestern Portugal (Viana do Castelo) by Brettell and Feijó who related it to high celibacy, late marriage and childless couples. See Brettell, Caroline, Feijó, Rui, 'Foundlings in nineteenth century northwestern Portugal: public welfare and family strategies', *Enfance abandonnée et société en Europe XIV-eXXe siècle. Actes du colloque*, Rome, École Française de Rome, 1991, p. 297.

necessarily coincide with those of other case studies, such as for instance the remarriage of widows¹⁸. Other motives invoked, such as liaisons between masters and slaves or domestics¹⁹, illness of parents or death²⁰ seem more plausible for the case of Porto.

Other authors claim that abandonment was a means of financing maternity to a wide range of the population. This process could occur basically according to two methods:

1 - the families abandoned their children, got to know where they were put to nurse and the mother either managed to be the nurse of her own child or got an acquaintance of hers to go and get hired as its a wet-nurse²¹. In such cases the retrieval of children was not fundamental, since the family never lost contact with the child and could even "adopt" it by the time the institution took leave of it.

2 - abandonment was temporary and limited to breastfeeding, the family choosing the best moment to go to the hospital and retrieve its children. This is the case of nineteenth century Milan, studied by Hünecké, who defined abandonment as a customary right of the poor²².

Either issue can be applied to Porto, simply because both are part of the use of the foundling home as a support system, although the strategy defined by Hünecké seems to be more in use in late eighteenth century Porto, as the percentage of married parents among claimers of children increases²³.

One needs to add to these motives, and specifically for the case of Porto, that of the mobility of the population in an urban demographic context. Porto was a growing city; it is doubtful

18 In a patrilineal system, stepfathers, reluctant to risk a claim on the inheritance from children born outside the patriline, assumed the role of stepfather reluctantly. See Gavitt, Philip, 'Cultural values...', p. 6.

19 Gavitt, Philip, *idem*, p. 5.

20 Gavitt, Philip, *idem*, p. 6.

21 Chacon Jimenez, F., Frasneda Collado, R., 'Aproximacion a nuevas perspectivas y propuestas de investigacion sobre el abandono en la Espana del Antiguo Regimen', *17º Congreso Internacional de Ciéncias Historicas, Madrid 1990, 26 Agosto-2 Septiembre*, p. 495.

22 Hünecké, Volker, 'The abandonment', p. 14.

23 See chapter 5, section "Those who reclaimed children", table 5.61.

whether demographic growth was the product of the increase of the urban population. Even my research, although to a minor degree, has suggested the importance of rural in-migration to the growth of the city²⁴. In a context of demographic change, it is likely that there was a rupture between traditional support systems existing in the women's home towns and the urban context. But it is also probable that it was the collapse of such support systems that first brought the need to emigrate to the city. In both ways, the foundling home could have been a means of dealing with change caused by surplus population, bearing in mind that the intake of foundlings from the countryside is believed to have been high. A second issue must be taken into consideration: the fact that Porto was the main port concerned with emigration to Brazil. In an area of high emigration - a male differential - the stability of the household was endangered by the long absence of men. In a bastardy prone area, such absences endangered the sexual behaviour of the women left behind, a feature that is patent in the notes I have analyzed. The frequency with which the husbands of wet-nurses were declared to be absent - a feature that escaped quantitative treatment - shows a society where women were often left on their own. Male emigration also had an impact on celibacy rates, creating an imbalance in the marriage market and thus leaving a high number of women without possibility of reproduction within the framework of marriage.

In conclusion, we are in presence of a hospital which attracted children and wet-nurses from a wide area, with very high levels of child abandonment - we must bear in mind that there were over sixty thousand foundlings during the whole century in a city that barely reached forty thousand inhabitants in the last years of the eighteenth century. Considering that a parallel market for private wet-nurses is suggested in the sources, we are in presence of an area with *high circulation of children*. The mobility of children caused by abandonment cannot be ignored: foundlings were transported backwards and forwards, from the city to the countryside and vice-versa, leaving their

²⁴ See section on internal wet-nurses, chapter 4, p. 138.

family of origin and being inserted temporarily or definitively in several other households. Certainly, the *uses* for children were numerous:

1) economic, when they came to provide wet-nurses' families with a supplementary source of income or to give an extra cheap work force to families or workshops;

2) biological, if foundlings prolonged the breast-milk of weaned or dead children;

3) military, when foundlings replaced wet-nurses' children in the army;

4) social, when foundlings were used as replacement children for childless couples.

In the first two family strategies the survival of the foundling was not a necessary feature, in a context where there was never a shortage of available children from the hospital. Many wet-nurses could have nourished several children, including their own, with breastmilk from a single birth.

Whether the same pattern of high circulation existed in the southern areas of Portugal - Alentejo and Algarve - with a higher presence of the nuclear family and inferior rates of celibacy and illegitimacy is an open field for research, although the legal and material structures for abandonment were installed nationwide and even extended to the Portuguese colonies. The basic question is always to find out whether the populations were interested in benefiting from such devices, an issue about which Porto's case does leaves no doubts.

During the entire study, I have refrained from mentioning emotional issues, such as popular attitudes towards foundlings, the strength of blood ties within the family and its relationship with non-biological members, as well as the insertion of such foundlings in their communities of adoption. It is likely that they could change their situation further in adolescence, as I have

traced their lives only until the age of seven. Nothing is known about the way in which foundlings themselves lived and represented their status. Here, I go back to the first issue referred to in chapter 1 - feelings towards children - a problem about which my ignorance has only grown during the research. Only one thing is clear: the users of Porto's foundling hospital were certainly not rhetorical about children and rhetoric seems to be the only instrument available to the historian of feelings. Abandoners could show deference towards administrators, recommend children to them and to the wet-nurses, but said little about their own suffering or about their concern for their children as human beings. Laslett mentioned the principle of not leaving people in old age to die; one wonders if the same principle could not be applied to children whose social existence only began after baptism. Their survival was left to chance in a context where parents tended to lose control of their rearing and high infant mortality turned having children into an hazardous business. This is yet one more question which underlies research into the abandonment of children, whether in Porto or elsewhere in Europe.

Appendix 1

Available information on charitable institutions in eighteenth century Porto

Part I - Independent of the Misericórdia

Name: Colégio de Nossa Senhora da Graça
Alternative names: Colégio dos Meninos Orfãos
Location: Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Graça, outside Porta do Olival
Buildings: constructed anew after 1651
Date of foundation: 1651
Recipients of assistance: orphaned boys
Founder: Padre Baltasar Guedes
Administration: under the protection of the council
Ruling bodies: rector and vice-rector, approved by the council
Statutes: laid down by the founder and approved by the council in 1653, approved by the king in 1655
Sources of income: alms collected by orphans; pious legacies; also admitted pupils with fees ("porcionistas"); rents of houses; money invested
Selective criteria: boys; legitimate; orphaned of father
Capacity: 70 orphans and 28 fee paying (in 1789)
Obs: orphans devoted mainly to a ecclesiastical career, some of them being sent to Brazil
Sources: Guedes, Padre Baltasar, *Breve relação da fundação do Colégio dos Meninos Orfãos de Nossa Senhora da Graça, sito fora da Porta do Olival desta cidade do Porto, em a qual se contém tudo o que na fundação dele sucedeu*, Porto, Edição da Câmara Municipal, 1951; Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, 2nd edition, Porto, Progredior, no date (1st edition in 1789), pp. 157-158.

Name: Hospício de Santo António da Cordoaria
Location: Cordoaria
Date of foundation: 1730
Recipients of assistance: old and sick members of religious order
Property: "religiosos menores reformados da Província da Soledade"
Administration: members of the order
Funds: property of religious order
Selective criteria: membership required
Capacity: unknown
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 158-9.

Name: Hospício de S. Francisco de Paula
Locations: parish of Lordelo
Date of foundation: 1780
Recipients of assistance: members of order
Property: "Ordem de S. Francisco de Paula"
Administration: members of the "Ordem de S. Francisco de Paula"
Funds: alms
Selective criteria: both clergymen and laymen admitted
Capacity: 7 persons
Sources: P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 159.

Name: Terceiros de S. Francisco
Locations: Ferraria de Baixo
Recipients of assistance: invalid members

Property: Ordem Terceira de S. Francisco
Administration: members of the order
Selective criteria: membership required
Capacity: 26 persons
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 162

Name: Hospício do Senhor do Além
Date of foundation: 1140
Recipients of assistance: invalid members of the order(?)
Property: Ordem dos Carmelitas Descalços
Administration: members
Ruling bodies: 5 resident friars who took care of the confessional and the chapel
Selective criteria: membership required
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 159.
Obs: cult in chapel with an image of Jesus Crucified

Name: Senhora da Caridade
Recipients of assistance: members of order
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 162.

Name: Recolhimento do Anjo
Locations: outside the "Porta do Olival"
Buildings: convent-type, with a church
Date of foundation: 1672, opened 1674
Recipients of assistance: adult noble women: widowed/ absent husbands/ in conflict with husbands/ girls waiting to marry
Administration: under royal protection
Sources of income: regular payments by boarders
Selective criteria: nobility; royal authorisation needed
Capacity: 72 persons (in 1789)
Obs: conventual rules; use of habit
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, pp. 159-160; A.D.P., *Secção Monástica, Recolhimento do Anjo*, Livros 1 a 9.

Name: Recolhimento do Patrocínio da Mãe de Deus
Alternative names: Ferro
Locations: Rua Escura; rua do Codeçal from 1757
Buildings: convent-type, with church
Date of foundation: before the 1521 incorporation
Recipients of assistance: adult women
Ruling bodies: probably under direct supervision of the bishop
Sources of income: work of boarders; donations of the bishop; alms
Capacity: 36 persons (in 1789)
Sources: , P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 161; A.D.P., *Ordens do Bispo do Porto para se recolherem ao Recolhimento de Nossa Senhora do Patrocínio várias concubinas*, 1786.

Name: S. Crispim e S. Crispiniano
Alternative names: Hospital dos Palmeiros
Location: Rua da Ponte de S. Domingos in front of the Rua das Cangostas
Date of foundation: 1307
Recipients of assistance: initially designed for pilgrims in transit to or from Santiago in Galicia

Founder: noble family who donated it to the shoemakers' guild
Property: guild of shoemakers "Confraria de S. Crispim e S. Crispiniano"
Administration: guild
Obs: Exempted from incorporation into the Misericórdia in 1521
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 162; Novais, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial', in AA. VV., *Biblioteca Pública Municipal do Porto, Collecção de manuscritos ineditos agora dados à estampa, IV, Anacrisis Historial*, vol. II, Porto, Biblioteca Municipal, 1913, pp. 170-2.

Name: Senhora da Silva: Hospitals of Santa Caterina and S. João Baptista
Location: Rua dos Caldeireiros and Rua de Trás
Date of foundation: medieval
Recipients of assistance: members of guilds of metalworkers
Property: several guilds of metalworkers (latoeiros, ferreiros, caldeireiros)
Selective criteria: families of members of guilds
Obs: Exempted from incorporation into the Misericórdia in 1521. The Hospital de S.João Baptista was designed for the widows of its members
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 162; Ferreira, J. A. Pinto, *Nossa Senhora da Silva. Bosquejo histórico*, Porto, Publicação da Confraria de Nossa Senhora da Silva, 1967; Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial'..., pp. 174-175.

Name: Hospital dos Ingleses
Locations: Cima do Muro
Recipients of assistance: British subjects
Property: English community
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 162.

Name: Mulheres Pobres
Location: Rua da Biquinha
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto*, p. 162.

Part II - Administered by the Misericórdia

Name: Hospital Real de D. Lopo de Almeida
Alternative names: Hospital de Rocamador, Hospital de D.Lopo
Locations: Rua das Flores
Date of foundation: medieval
Recipients of assistance: sick poor
Date of incorporation: 1521
Property: Misericórdia, king
Administration: Misericórdia
Ruling bodies: provedor
Funds: Misericórdia
Selective criteria: indiscriminate(?)
Capacity: over 2000 persons a year (in 1789)
Obs: Legacy of D.Lopo de Almeida allowed the construction of a large hospital; own chemists; medical school
Staff: doctors; surgeons; blood leechers; nursing staff
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto*, pp.162-165; A.M.P., *Livros 6 das Lembranças*, fl. 73 v., 407 v., 420, *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, fl. 51 v.; Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial'..., pp. 164-8.

Name: Casa da Roda
Alternative names: Hospital dos Expostos
Location: Rua dos Caldeireiros, Padrão de S. Eloi
Buildings: house communicating with the Royal Hospital's yard
Date of foundation: 1685, opened 1689
Recipients of assistance: foundlings; children with sponsored lactations
Starting funds: royal donations; funds of the council
Property: started as a Misericórdia administration with a subvention of the town council
Administration: Misericórdia
Ruling bodies: "provedor", "escrivão" (scribe), treasurer, "mordomo"
Statutes: inexistent; sparse regulations gathered in A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*
Sources of income: allocation of council's money every three months
Selective criteria: inexistent to foundlings; anonymity concerning abandonment
Capacity: 900 entrances annually, 4600 children at nurse (in 1789)
Staff: 5-6 internal wet-nurses; a dry nurse to serve as head-nurse
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 161; A.A.D.P., *Livro 1 do Registo*; Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, in *Collecção de Manuscriptos ...*, pp. 169-170.

Name: Recolhimento de Orfãos de Nossa Senhora da Esperança
Locations: Campo de S. Lázaro
Buildings: constructed anew (1724-1743); church completed in 1763
Date of foundation: 1722
Recipients of assistance: orphaned girls from age 7 to 25
Starting funds: inheritance of Rev. Manuel de Passos Castro, died in 1718
Date of incorporation: started as a Misericórdia hospital
Property: Misericórdia
Administration: Misericórdia
Ruling bodies: scribe, treasurer, "mordomo da bolsa", solicitor and alms collectors ("irmãos do peditório")
Staff: rector ("regente"); vice-rector ("vice regente"), porter; teacher; cook ("servente de dentro"); go-between ("servente de fora"); gardeners ("hortelãos")
Statutes: approved internally in 1725; approved by the king in 1731
Funds: alms, donations, collection of alms in Brazil; girls' work
Selective criteria: orphaned at least of father; baptism certificate with reference to the names of parents and of the four grandparents; purity of blood; good health; absence of physical deformities; residence; daughters of noblemen or members of Misericórdia preferred; other being equal, the prettier to be admitted; age between 7-14; presentation of "fiador" (men to give a guarantee).
Capacity: 50 persons, including paying pensioners ("porcionistas") (in 1789)
Obs: girls slept in individual beds
Sources: Ferreira, J. A. Pinto, *Recolhimento de Orfãos de Nossa Senhora da Esperança (fundado na cidade do Porto no século XVIII)*, Porto, Publicações da Câmara Municipal, s/d.; Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, pp. 160-1.

Name: Lázaros
Location: Campo de S. Lázaro
Date of foundation: unknown
Recipients of assistance: male lepers, syphilis patients after 1721

Date of incorporation: 1721
Administration: Misericórdia
Ruling bodies: one "mordomo" from the Misericórdia
Statutes: approved in 1769
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, pp. 161-2; A.H. M.P., *Livro 6 das Lembranças*, fls. 534-537; *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, 'Regimento dos Hospitais de Entrevados e Lázarus de 20 de Janeiro de 1769', fl. 287.
Obs: Transformed in a house for syphilitics

Name: Lázarus
Location: Campo de S. Lázaro
Date of foundation: unknown
Recipients of assistance: female lepers
Date of incorporation: 1721
Administration: Misericórdia
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, pp. 161-2; A.M.P., *Livro 5 das Lembranças*, 'Regimento dos Hospitais de Entrevados e Lázarus de 20 de Janeiro de 1769', fl. 287.

Name: Santa Clara
Alternative names: Velhas
Location: Rua dos Mercadores
Date of foundation: unknown
Recipients of assistance: old women
Date of incorporation: 1521
Administration: Misericórdia
Ruling bodies: "mordomo", serving for one year
Selective criteria:
Capacity: up 20 persons according to Novaes
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 161; Compromisso, p. 63; Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial'..., pp. 172-3.

Name: Hospital de Santo Cristo
Alternative names: Entrevados
Location: Porta de Cimo de Vila; Ermida de Nossa Senhora da Batalha
Date of foundation: unknown
Recipients of assistance: invalid men and women
Date of incorporation: 1521
Administration: Misericórdia
Ruling bodies: "mordomo"
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 161; A.M.P., *Livro 7 das Lembranças*, 'Regimento dos Hospitais de Entrevados e Lázarus de 20 de Janeiro de 1769', fl. 287; Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial'..., pp. 173-4.

Name: Entrevadas
Location: Santo Ildefonso
Buildings: in front of the parish church of Santo Ildefonso
Date of foundation: unknown
Recipients of assistance: poor old and sick women
Date of incorporation: 1521
Administration: Misericórdia
Sources: Costa, P.e Agostinho Rebelo da, *Descrição topográfica e histórica da cidade do Porto...*, p. 161; Novaes, Manuel Pereira de, 'Anacrisis Historial'..., pp. 175-6.

Appendix 2

The organization of the Misericórdia

Membership 250 "irmãos", divided between noble and non noble

Ruling bodies Provedor
Escrivão Mesa (13)
Noble counsellors (5)
Non noble counsellors (6)

Definitório (10 or more)

Financial structure

treasurers "tesoureiro da casa" (1)
"tesoureiro dos depósitos" (1)
"tesoureiro do Hospital" (1)
mordomos "mordomo da bolsa" (1)
"mordomo do celeiro" (1)

collectors of alms (all the churches of the city + all the parishes of the district) *

Legal structure

"mordomos dos testamentos" (2)
"mordomos das demandas" (2)
"mordomo do cartório" (1)
"escrivão do hospital" (1)
lawyers or sollicitors (2) *

Religious structure

mordomo da igreja (1)
capelão da casa (1)
capelães (variable)
choir boys * (2)

Assistance duties

mordomo dos presos (2)
"visitadores" (domestic relief) (4)

Medical staff

doctors * (variable)
surgeons * (variable)
blood leechers *
nursing" staff *

Other

"Serventes do azul" (male servants) *

*the functions marked with asterisks correspond to paid duties, whilst all the rest were voluntary services developed within the context of the obligations of membership.

Source: *Compromisso da Misericórdia do Porto* (1717 edition, Coimbra, Real Colégio da Companhia de Jesus).

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- Tables 4.2. to 4.6.: A.A.D.P., Livros 1 e 2 das Entradas e Termos das Amas
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Abbreviations used

- A.A.D.P.: Arquivo da Assembleia Distrital do Porto
A.H.M.P.: Arquivo Histórico Municipal do Porto
A.M.P.: Arquivo da Misericórdia do Porto
A.D.P.: Arquivo Distrital do Porto





