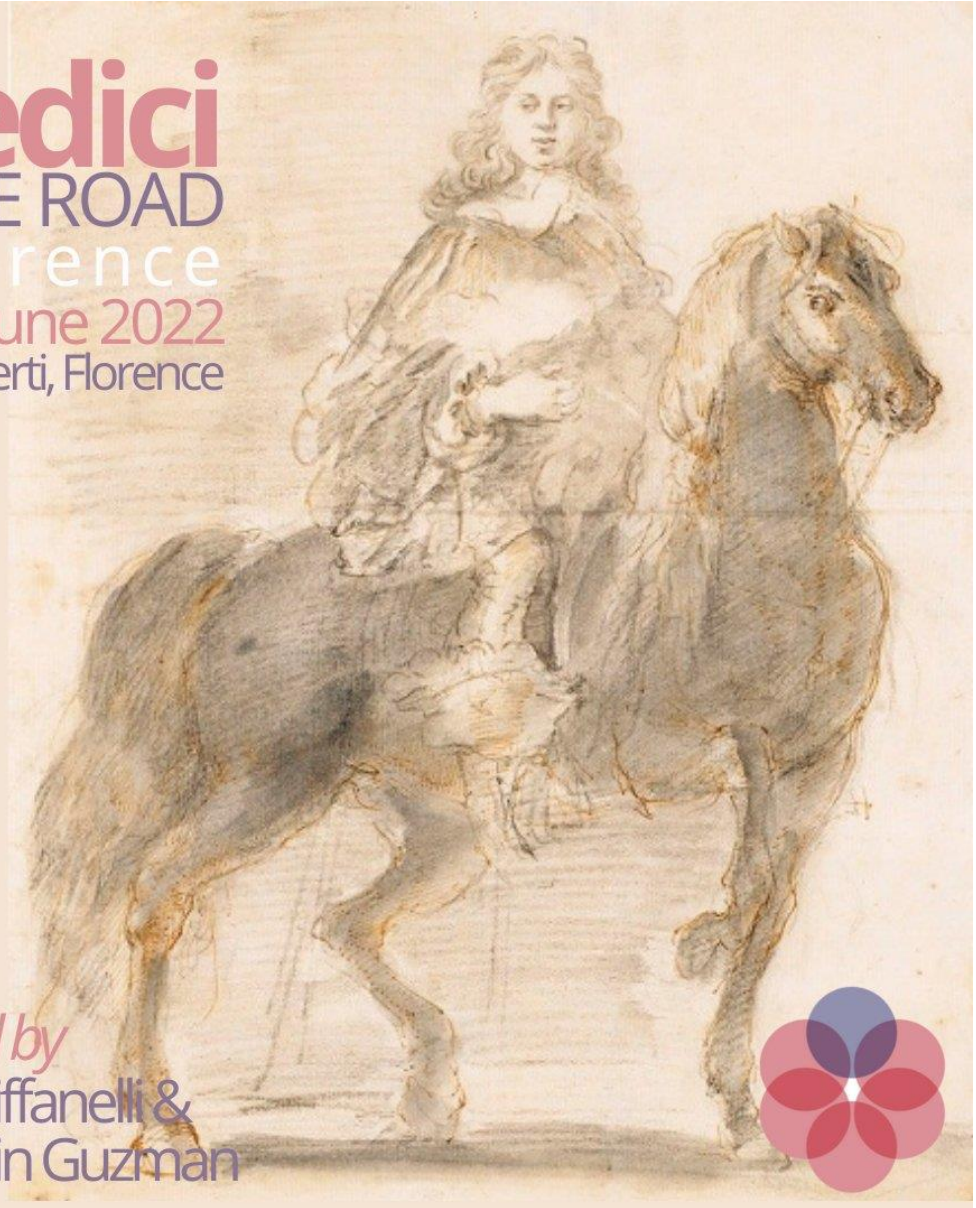


THE Medici
ON THE ROAD
Conference
16 & 17 June 2022
Palazzo Alberti, Florence



Organized by
Luciano Piffanelli &
Miguel Tain Guzman



Pursuing the Portuguese path of Cosimo III

A diachronic overview of the territory since the insight of Lorenzo Magalotti's journal and Pier Maria Baldi's vedutas

João Cabelreira & Natacha Moutinho (Lab2PT, EAAD)

Unpublished paper presented at the conference The Medici on the Road, Florence 16 & 17 June 2022

The present communication deals with the instruments and methodologies of the disciplinary domains of drawing and architecture, focusing upon the written and drawn representations of the European Journey by Cosimo III undertaken between 1668-1669.



Thus, and although having as a background the vicissitudes of Cosimo's journey, it explores the recorded experience of places in their physical, relational and temporal strata. An experience extensively documented by the drawings of Pier Maria Baldi and the journals of Lorenzo Magalotti, alongside those of Jacopo Ciuti, Filippo Corsini and Giovanni Gornia.

Still, we will focus upon a small section of Cosimo's path through Portugal, whose total route, started in Campo Maior, on the 9 January 1669, and ended in Caminha, on the 1st of March, heading to Santiago de Compostela.

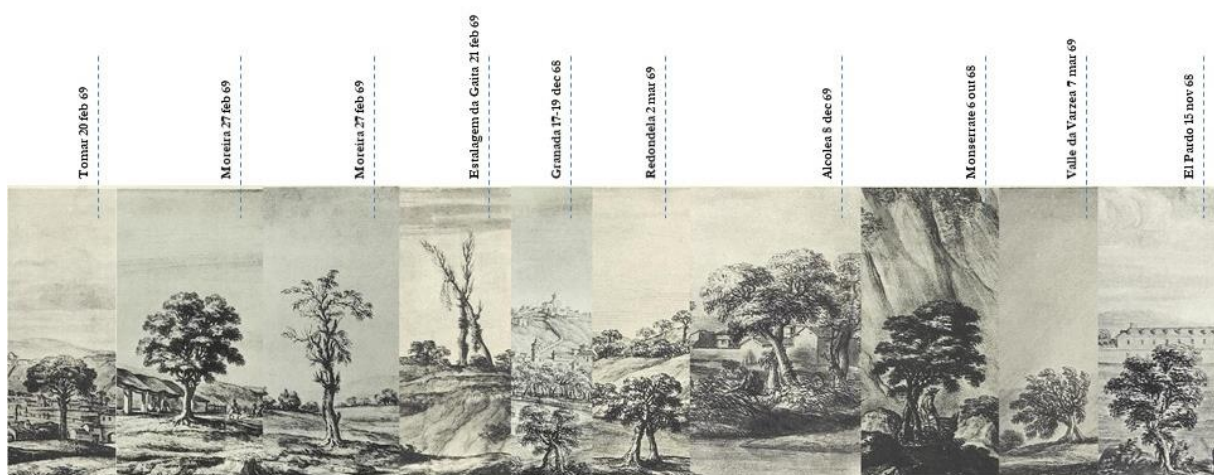
The entire route is the subject of a broader research project, entitled *The European Tour of Cosimo III de' Medici. An insight to the Portuguese landscape, built and cultural environment* that brings together the disciplinary domains of drawing, architecture, landscape, history and geography, aiming to analyse practices of modern spatial representation, to inquire the built palimpsest, to describe the cultural context and to promote strategies for valuing the mapped heritage.

In this presentation we will advance into the recognition of a section of the journey comprising Grijó, Porto, Moreira and São Pedro de Rates, which took place between the 26th and 28th of February 1669, taking advantage from a XVII century overview in order to understand the landscape conformation.

As such our gaze will focus upon the qualities and contents of this 4 Baldi's Vedute, without obviously disregarding the journals that amplify its narrative breadth.

We believe that drawing is not a statement, nor is it intended to be an unambiguous map of a territory; on the contrary: drawing is understood and should be read as an interpretation, a conceptualisation of the landscape or place. It is presented as a narrative, a discourse in which a personal idea on something is given.

In interpreting Pier Maria Baldi's vedutas, one must consider what the artist intended to show, namely the impact of the experience of being there and of drawing these views, but also, what he had to include regarding the assigned task and also the essential elements of the places, which would potentially identify the sites. In perspective, also acknowledging the artistic context, his cultural background, his formative training and his graphic style. All these elements are stakeholders in this task, and will always determine what and how will be drawn.



We should not misinterpret what is drawn with what is seen. How we see is encompassed by the way we have learned to see and the cognitive and formal tools we acquired. Particularly, as draughtsmen we are shaped by our formal and schematic *imagery*.

The fact that Baldi maintains a slightly varied schematic model for trees, for example, enables us to detect his schema but also it means that this information is secondary in comparison to other elements presented.

The formal imagery equips the draughtsmen to draw and see what he is drawing. Adjusting his relationship with the subject through his formal scheme allows a first approach to the subject. A subject will then be com-formed to its schema, but from there it will be progressively adjusted by adding distinctive features. Having seen, studied or copied models from other authors, the draughtsmen will be more equipped to draw, based on that extensive repertoire, with more solutions and potentially more imaginative results.



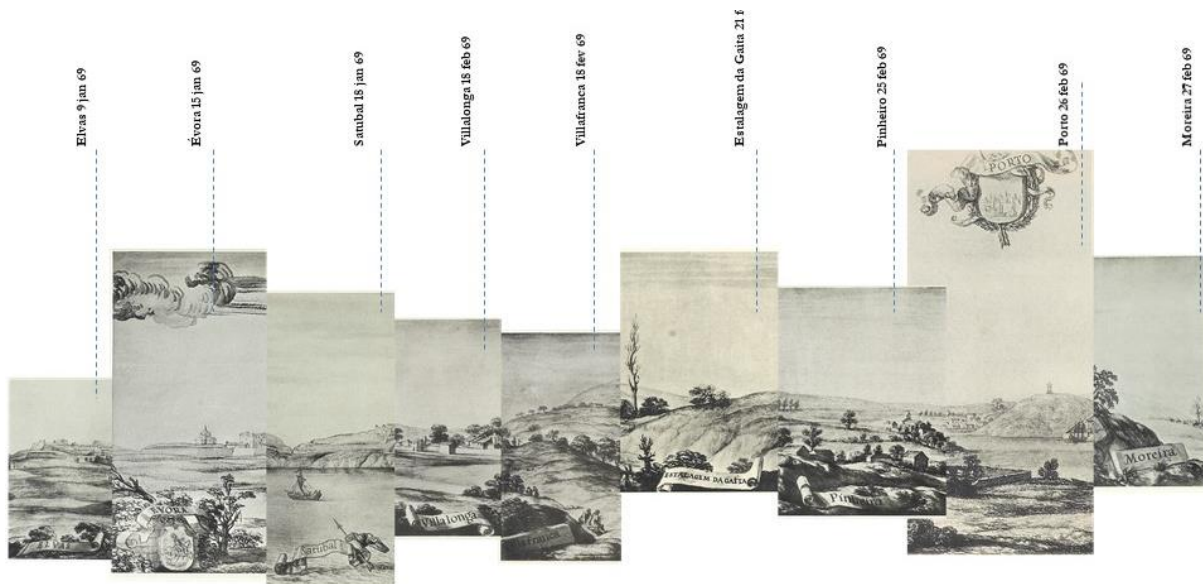
The backdrop is that he will also be more inclined to adapt preconceived schemes to what he sees, thus altering some of the formal characteristics to the existing, when being evaluated by our contemporary gaze. This is in line with what Taín Guzman explains when he tells us that Baldi adjusts what he represents to his Italian background. Being more familiar with the formal repertoire of Italian architecture, he will inevitably match what he is seeing with what he draws better.



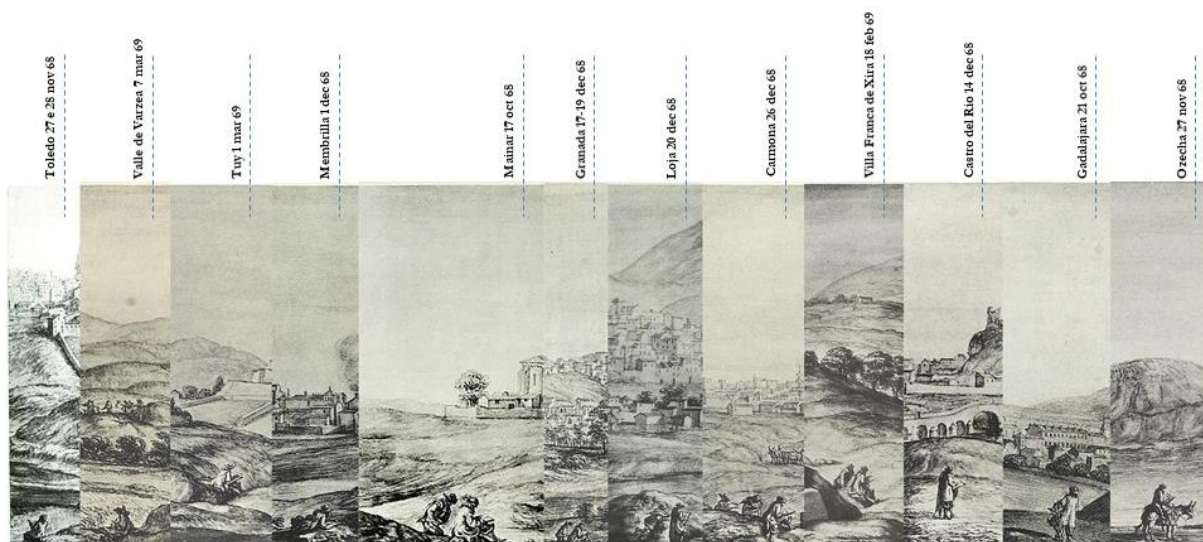
Baldi went to Rome to study and prepare for this task, which means that he would have acquired the necessary technical and instrumental tools, but also the models (often by copy) of what would be the tour's architectural views and landscapes. It is always a greater challenge to draw something not so familiar and in a surprising way. How can we understand what we are seeing if we haven't yet developed the schema or model to do so?

Schema is essential because it enables us to understand what we are seeing and draw it. They provide us with the alphabet for writing the poem, without which it is very difficult to be a poet. This schematic repertoire is so essential that through history they have been copied and adapted, adding new strategies and knowledge.

Drawing is first and foremost an activity. It allows us to see, rather than drawing what we see, the draughtsmen draws in order to see. It is a mental construction obtained from a graphic reasoning that becomes visible through taken decisions and placed marks on paper. A drawing records the draughtsmen actions and thoughts, it shows what was selected and obliterated during the drawing process. One does not draw everything, if that even makes sense, but what one is able to draw, one chooses to see and how this all comes about.



All of Baldi's drawings have an identifying *cartela* that shapes the way we look at the drawing. With this piece of information, we start to adjust our models of reference to what the draughtsman offers. Let us remember that some of the sites in Portugal have not yet been drawn, as far as we know, which makes the challenge of representation all the greater and also more interesting. For Baldi it means that he is inventing his own reference models, sometimes in confrontation with previous ones, but often creating the pioneering image of a place, and complementary with this idea, he may also be creating an image for travel drawings.



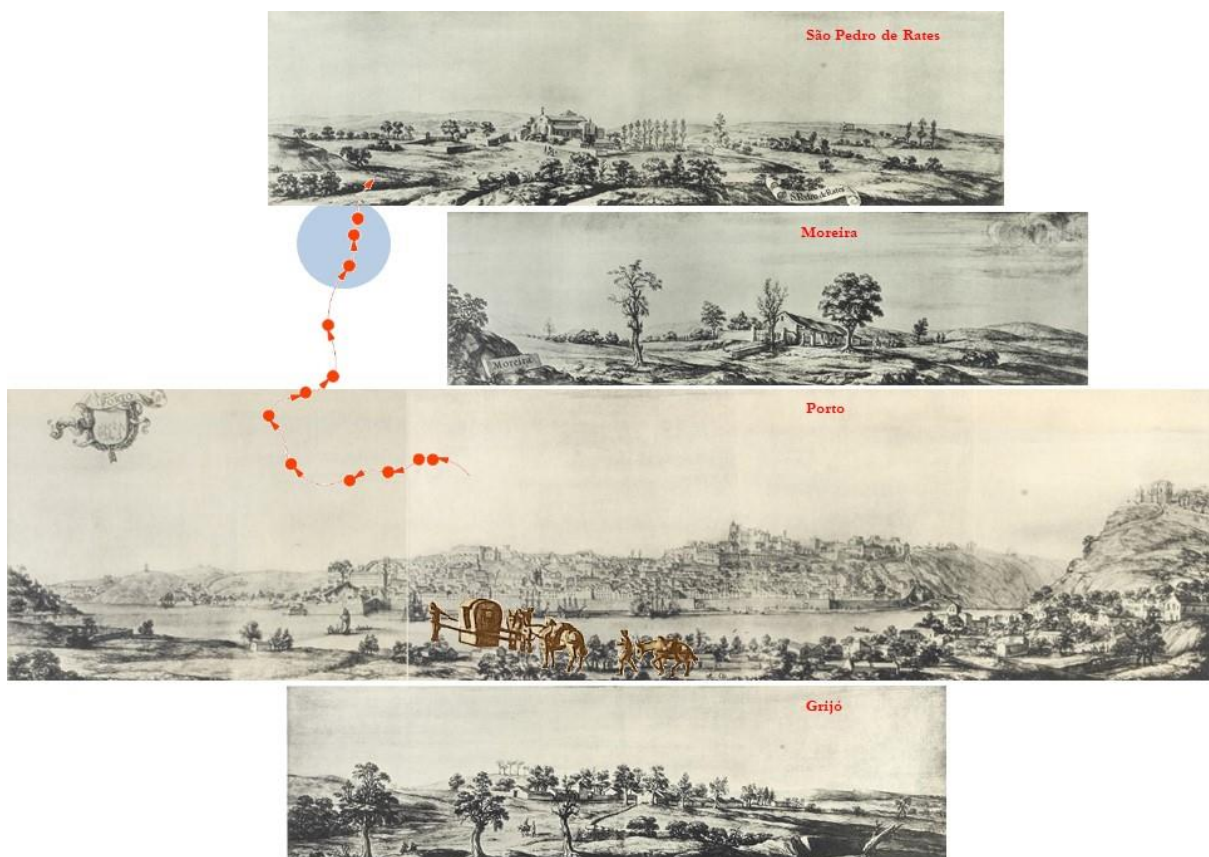
Although the drawings were concluded in Florence between 1670 and 1680, with the invention of the perspective, the representation of the "natural", particularly of the built environment, underwent substantial change. There is a transition from a symbolic representation of the city to an approximation to its visual experience, an idea of legitimisation of drawing *in loco* that leads to the incorporation of the draughtsman in many of the representations, as Federico

Arevalo (2003, 183) explores. Baldi maintains this model of including the draughtsman in these images while experimenting with what could be a graphic journal of the tour.

Shortening, the strategies in depicting the image are:

- high viewpoint
- enlargement of main streets dimension
- decrease of size of the housing giving predominance to referential buildings
- decrease of information and texture with respect to the distance from the observer
- use of the panoramic view (approximation to the cartographic view)
- representation of the main buildings with two elevations, rendering the idea of three-dimensionality
- delineation of the image from the aggregation of several viewpoints

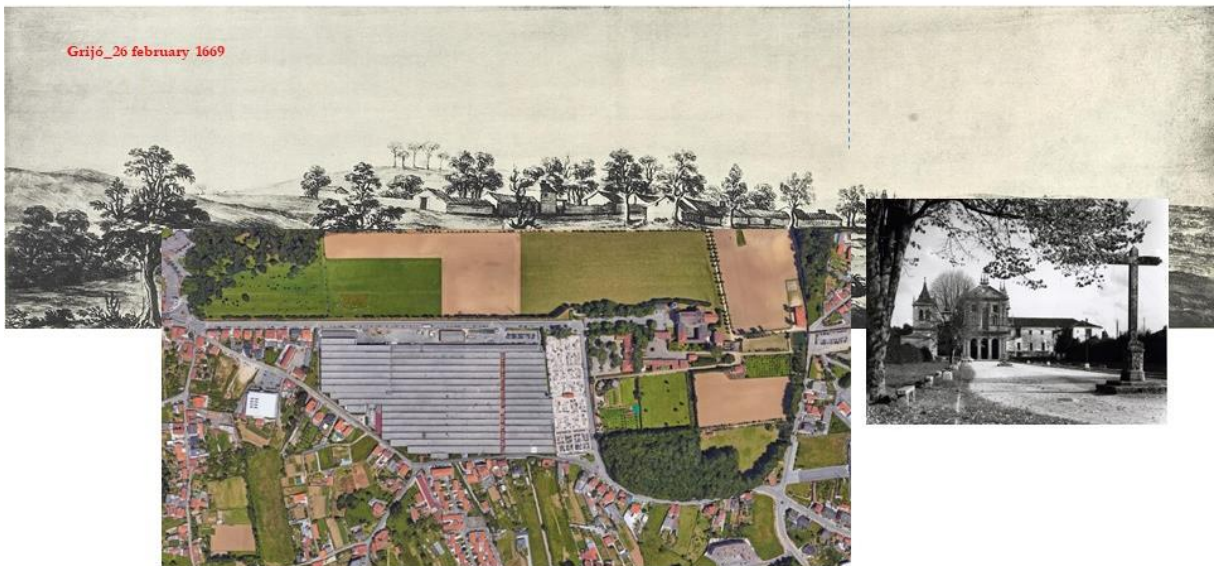
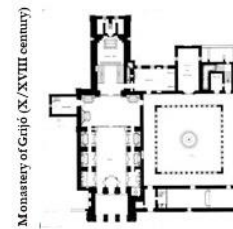
The journey's section under analysis corresponds to approximately 70 km along the Portuguese west coast, within the current limits of the Porto metropolitan area, a territory intensively transformed by the development cycles of the port wine trade, along the 18th century, the industrial revolution, after the liberal wars of 1832/34, and the urban sprawl at the end of the 20th century.



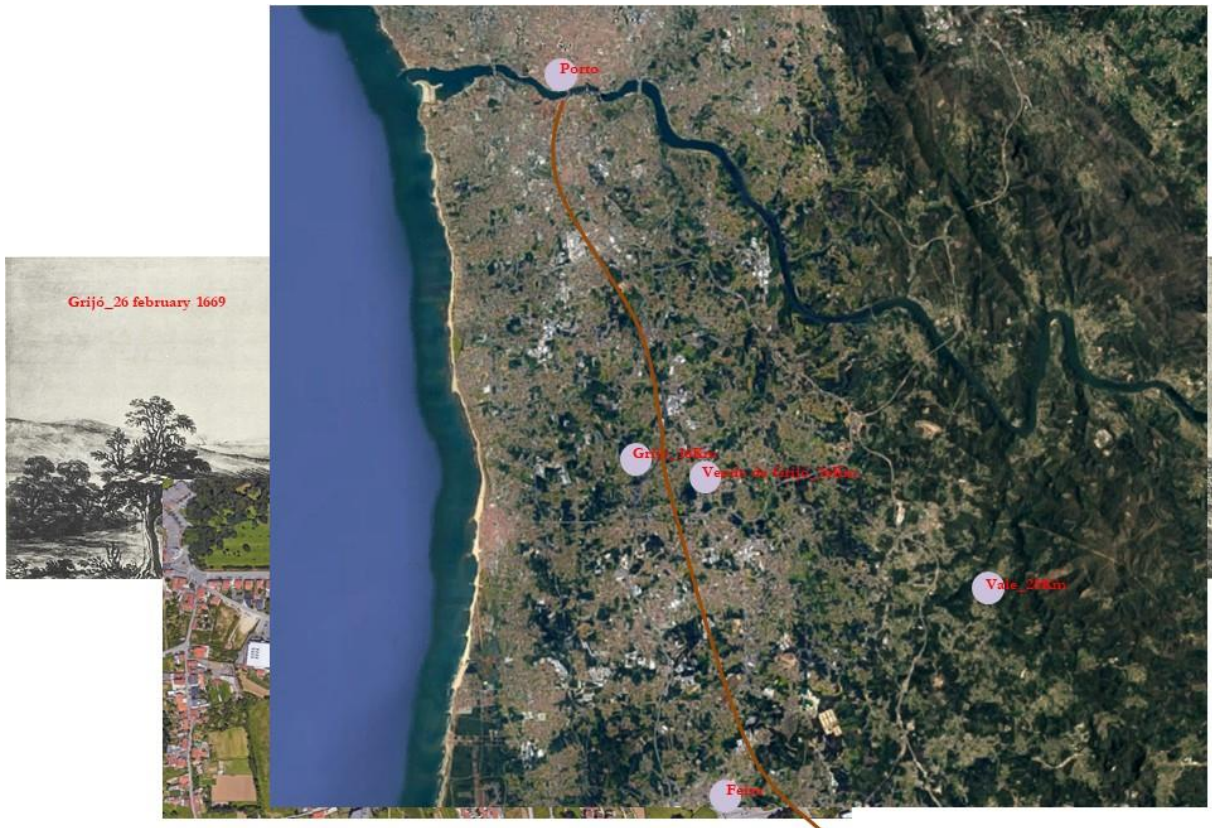


Following the path, and according to Magalotti's journal, Grijó is a *Redoubt of four miserable butts surround of a Harsh landscape*. However, concerning the Prince's passage through Grijó, Magalotti states that *"The prince heard Mass in a parish church dependent from the Jesuits of Coimbra"*. Well, such reference leads us to reconsider the effective path taken by the prince's entourage.

*Redoubt of four miserable butts
Harsh landscape
The prince heard Mass in a parish church dependent from the Jesuits of Coimbra*



From one hand, coeval descriptions of Grijó correspond to a fertile and well-kept territory, whose activity revolves around the Monastery of Grijó.



Since the distance indicated in the diary between Grijó and Porto, 4 leagues, raises no questions, the reference to the parish church dependent on the Jesuits of Coimbra is mysterious. The only (distantly) plausible reference is that of the church of Santa Maria de Vale, which in 1614 was annexed to the patronage of the Coimbra's Jesuits. A place that today is still consistent with the idea of sterile land and huts, but which would increase the route by more than 3 leagues.

Turning back to the journey report of 25th, Magalotti states that *Continuing the path since Pinheiro they passed through Oliveira, leaving Feira on the left, going straight into the direction of the sea*. Bearing this description in mind, the entourage would in fact have followed the royal road from Lisbon to Porto. However, it is still unclear which place is this where the prince attended mass.

Upon arrival in Porto, from the south, Magalotti reports: 3 leagues away, the prince arrives at Vila Nova de Gaia, descending to the banks of the Douro River through a narrow gorge between two mountains.

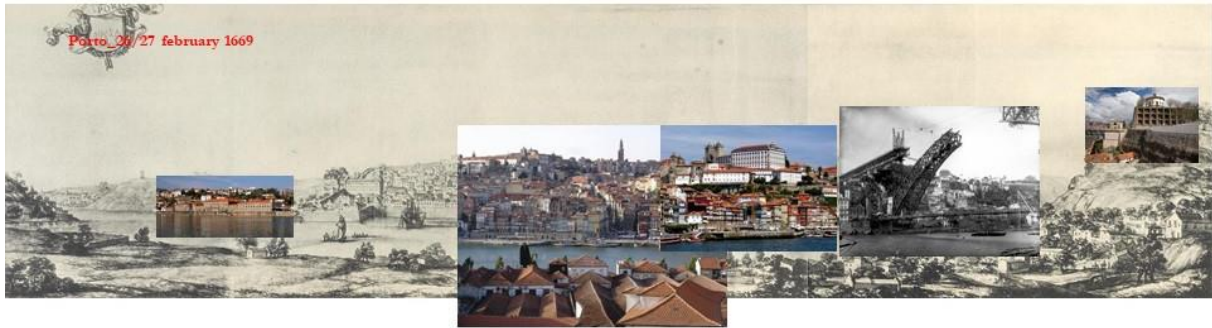


A description consistent with Baldi's drawing marked by the hills of Castelo, to the west, and Serra do Pilar, to the east, showing, from the valley in which Vila Nova de Gaia stands, a full-frontal view of Porto.



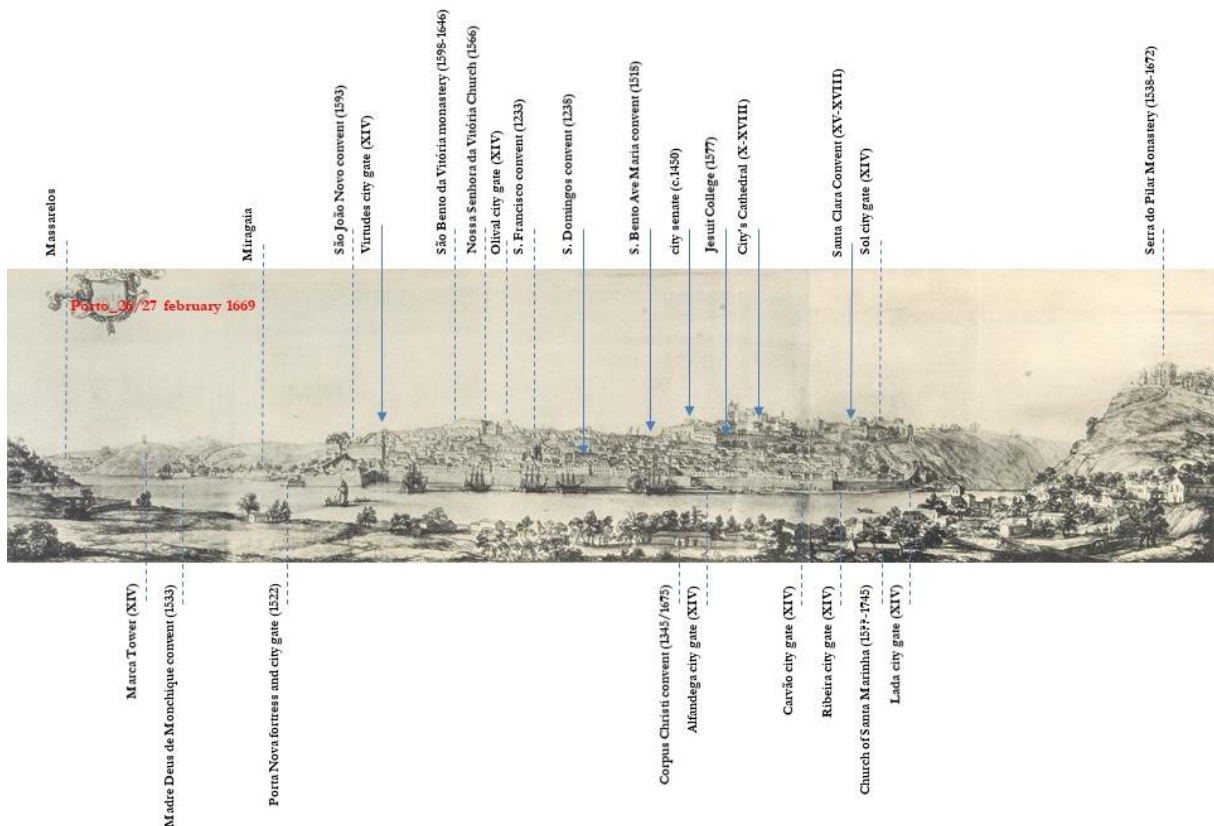
A strategy consistent with an earlier view of the city by Pedro Teixeira Albernaz, from 1634, which, however, was produced under distinct instrumental circumstances. Albernaz's drawing portrays the orography of the place in generic terms, not identifying specific values of the urban settlement, while Baldi points to elements of spatial reference structuring the global image of the city and pursues a simulacrum of the visual experience of the natural, which, by the way, is in accordance with the latter representation model adopted to show the city.





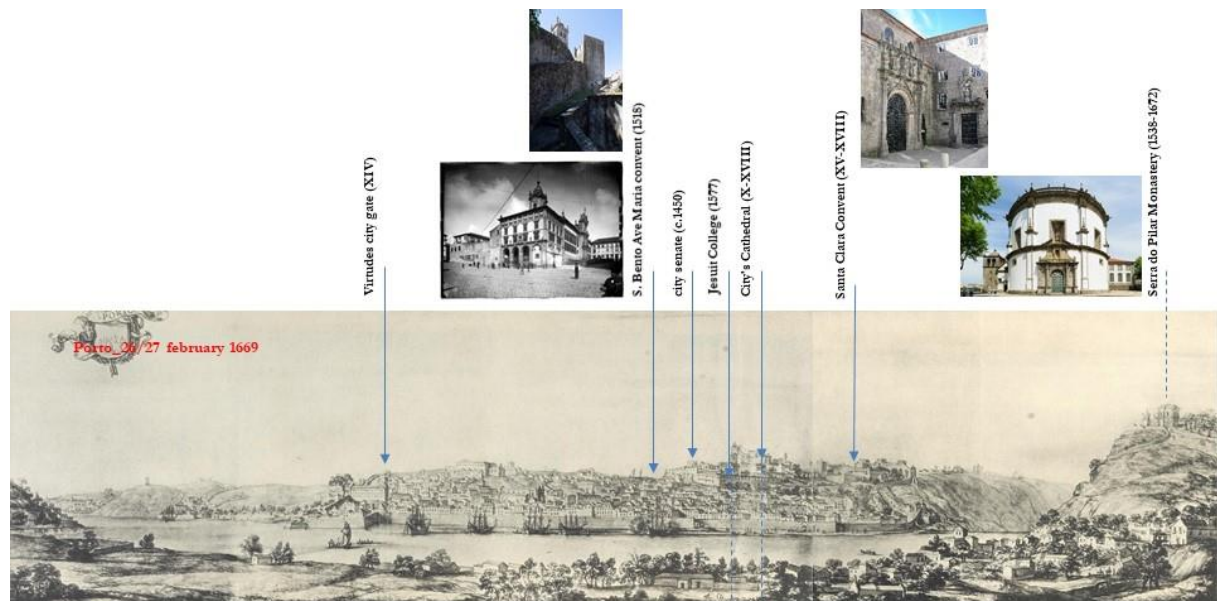
A viewpoint that allows us to unravel the progressive process of urban transformation and expansion, whether in the Enlightenment with the modernization of public squares and the tearing down of the city walls, or during the industrialization, with the construction of the new customs house and bridges.

Crossing the river, the Prince was received with pomp. His majesty's vessel passes through the merchant ships being fired cannonballs and the city bells ring. On the other side Jesuit priests and the city hall Chancellor received him, together with the city's main personalities and population.



In fact, Baldi's image highlights the presence of the river Douro, with several vessels that characterize the commercial dynamism of the city's port, as well as its main buildings, namely the Monte da Pena Ventosa where the Cathedral, the bishop's palace, the city senate tower and the Jesuit college stands.

A wide-ranging image that is not restricted to the spaces attended by Cosimo. An image tracking that allows to attribute space and imagery to the journal's narrative, describing the programmed visits, receptions and audiences, together with music events or even offered delicacies, encounters and reported individuals.



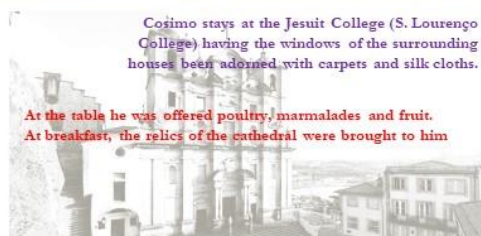
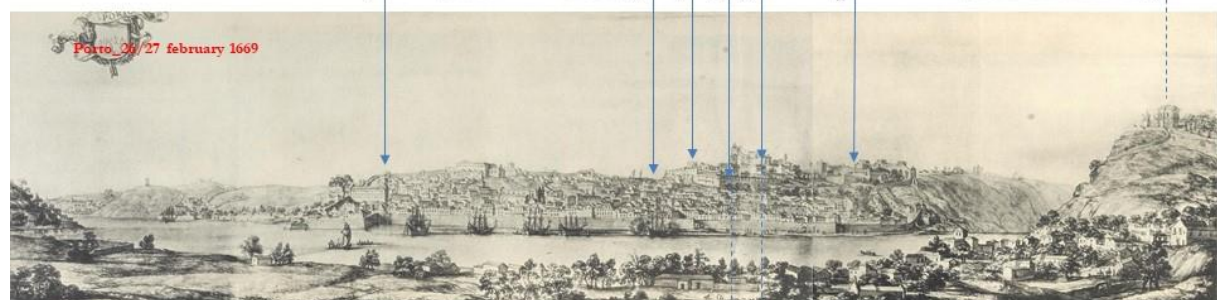
Lobo Pereira de Castro Ball de Leça – Knight of the Order of Saint John
 D. Sebastião de Cesar Menezes – former major inquisitor and archbishop of Lisbon
 Count of Miranda - Chancellor of the City Chamber
 Stefano Ferrara – Rector of the Jesuit College
 Thomas Hill - English merchant

Royal audience - composed of 12 scholars (among them Count Miranda), 7 judges, 1 judge of the crown regiment, 2 protonotaries and ministers.

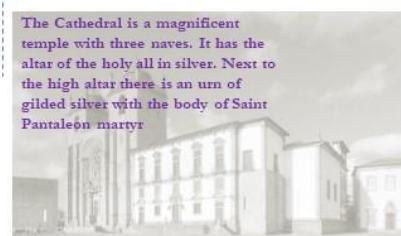
Walks through the city and leaves it through the door where you can see the countryside and the sea.

Goes to the nuns of São Bento listening to music there

On the other side of the river, at the top of the hill, there is a new convent of "large and beautiful construction". Although it is not finished, "the architecture is round, all made of stone, and almost isolated".



Cosimo stays at the Jesuit College (S. Lourenço College) having the windows of the surrounding houses been adorned with carpets and silk cloths.
 At the table he was offered poultry, marmalades and fruit.
 At breakfast, the relics of the cathedral were brought to him

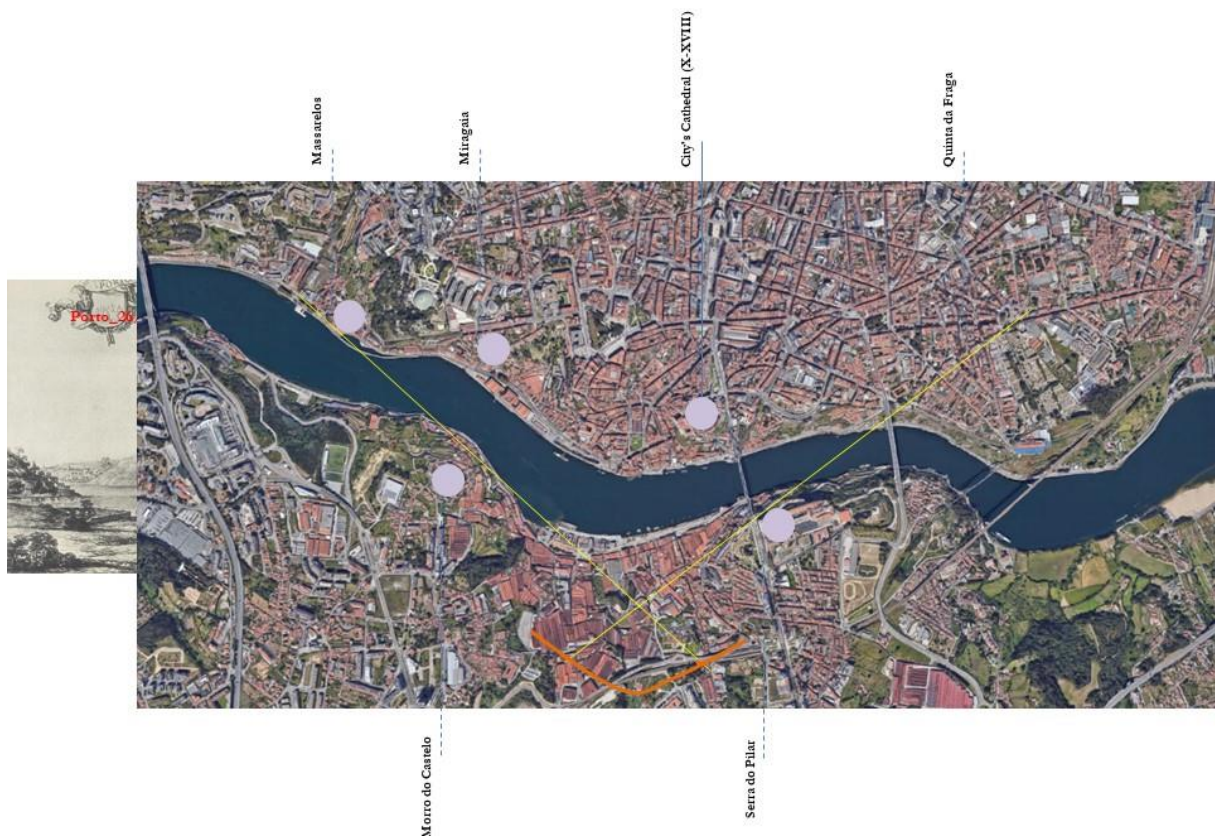


The Cathedral is a magnificent temple with three naves. It has the altar of the holy all in silver. Next to the high altar there is an urn of gilded silver with the body of Saint Pantaleon martyr

Encompassing the city from Massarelos, on the west, to Quinta da Fraga, on the east, the breadth of Baldi's view could not be taken from a single point even though, due to its position, we could associate it with the panoramic view of Porto taken from Devesas, a point coincident with the followed royal road arriving Porto. Such impossibility would imply following one of two strategies:

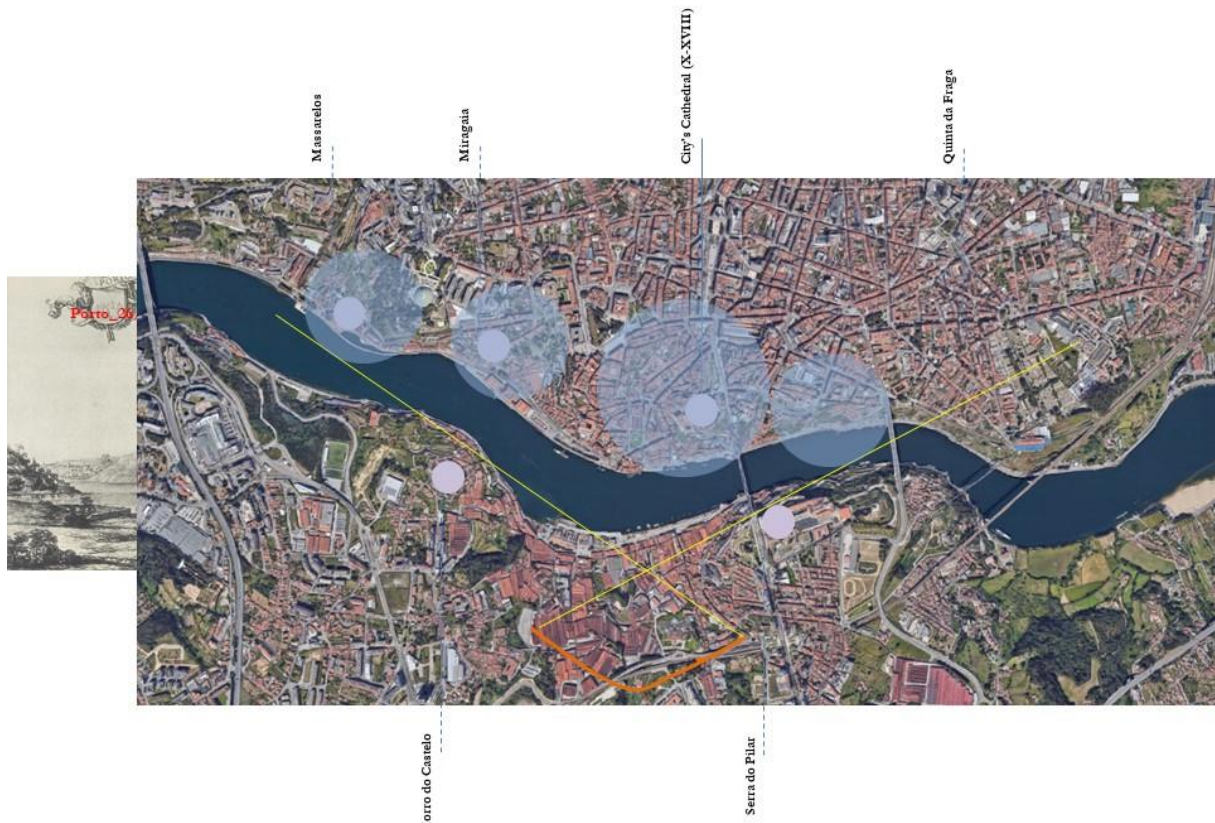
one, a Fixed observation point, but with rotation of the gaze;

two, the consideration of Different viewpoints and its combination in a single panorama



The first hypothesis is refuted, since, due to the tangency of the visual cone to the elevations in the foreground, it would be impossible to have such a distant view of the river valley.

The second hypothesis gains prevalence, given the analysis of the represented buildings (namely its elevation angles) and the consequent determination in space of the different viewpoints that aggregate different portions of the view. However, we should bear in mind that, for this purpose, the consequent distortion in the distance between reference elements is adjusted by displaying houses in between. Thus, it is evident that the veduta is composed of the sum of the observation points constructing a horizontal visual rendering of the city.



Still in relation to Porto, Magalotti describes it as “not very big, but the buildings are good, the streets are decent, cheerful and paved in the style of Florence, although with smaller stones” but very well laid and in good condition



Old town famous for its port, which is highly praised by the French. Very irregular site with the slope of several mountains. The walls are built in the old way, with a beautiful structure and a good cut of stone. After Lisbon, she is reputed to be the most gallant and beautiful of the kingdom. It's not very big but the buildings are good, cheerful, clean and paved streets just like Florence (albeit with smaller stone pieces, but well maintained). The City depends on the port, but the traffic and commerce is in the hands of unknown people, mostly English. The bar is less than half a league away. It is bad for the narrowness and obliquity of the channel. The river is very safe. Around, fertile lands are cultivated, having villas and fountains.



In Porto there are nine houses of English merchants, one of French, three of Dutch and of Hamburg. There are no Italian houses. Traffic to Brazil is intense. There are few boats to Angola. With the Indies there is no activity. From the port to Brazil follow: immense ordinary paintings; small olives, flour, fish, roaps and brandy. The boats return with sugar, later sold to Castilian merchants. From England come clothes and cloths (black and colored), lead and pharmaceuticals, etc. The cloths come from Colchester and the clothes from Plymouth. For England follows olive oil, wine, sugar and Zamagre (berb for tanning leather). From the hinterland arrives 30,000 wine tunnels.



Pier Maria Baldi: Porto (1669).

On the other hand, and once Portugal regained its independence in 1640, cities like Porto sought to demarcate themselves from a previous subordinate and peripheral position. Aspects that are expressed in the drawings and travel diaries according to two dimensions:

the dominance of defensive structures to support the restoration wars shaping the space and imagery of the city;

and the political and economic activation of Porto according to its positioning in the Portuguese empire, namely through the presence of foreign trading houses and overseas and hinterland routes.

Leaving Porto on 27th February, the Moreira veduta, an intermediate point of this stage, does not present more than an apparently barren terrain, punctuated by trees and farmhouses.



Magalotti Journal – *Moreira is just a miserable hut. The Prince dines at Moreira and then departs through wild terrain to the Ponte de Peira over the Ave river arriving to the village of S. Pedro de Rates*

Corsini Journal – *His highness leaves (Porto) through a landscape well cultivated and grown, and arrives to a convent, a league away, and enters the church, which, although not finished, allows us to recognize its magnificence.*

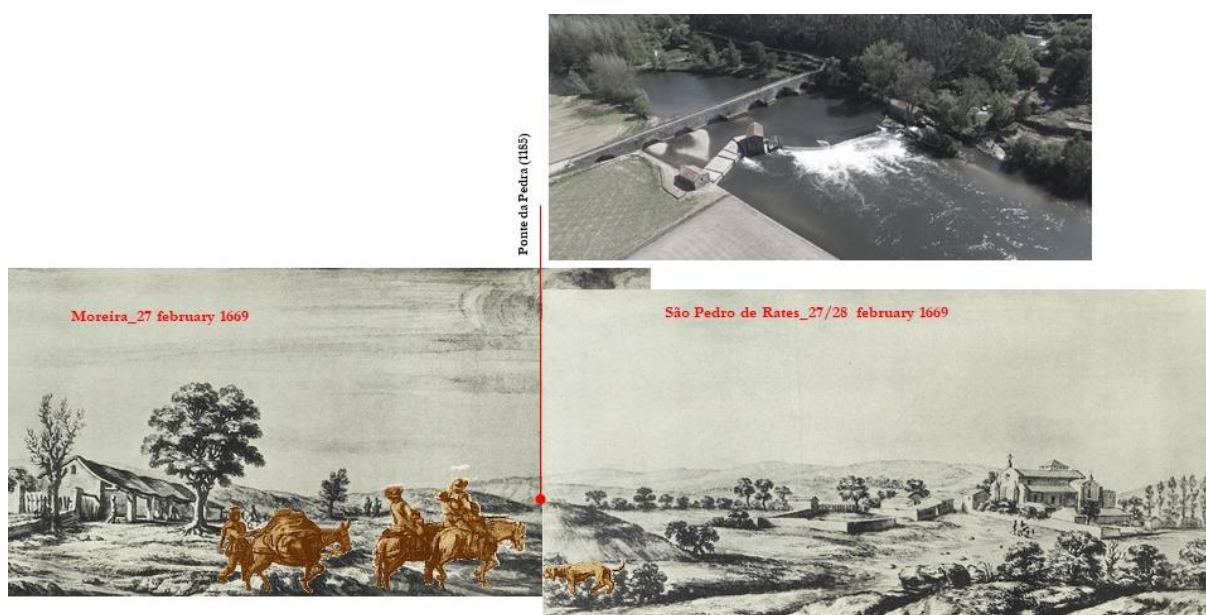
Mosteiro do Divino Salvador de Moreira (1822-1895)



If the image, as well as the journals don't reveal any identity feature of the place, let us bear in mind two aspects: on the one hand, the place of Moreira was dominated by large monastery of the crosier monks, the same community from Grijó; on the other hand, information contained in different journals is contradictory.

In Magalotti's Journal, the place is described as just a miserable hut. The Prince dinner at Moreira and then departs through wild terrain. There is no mention of the occupation of the territory nor its orography, even less of the monastery in a tangent position to the royal road.

However, Corsini's journal states that His highness leaves Porto through a well cultivated landscape and arrives at a convent, a league away, where he enters the church, which, although not finished, allows one to recognize its magnificence. Now, in addition to the description of the local orography and agricultural activity, it also mentions the cenobium.



Even so, and despite this disparity of the references, what is certain is that Cosimo did not stay for long at Moreira, proceeding to the Ponte de Pedra do Ave, in order to reach S. Pedro de Rates where he spent the night.

Village of 40 houses with an old parish church dedicated to São Pedro de Rates, the first archbishop of Braga



São Pedro de Rates_27/28 february 1669

Main street (Rua Direita)

Chapel of Saint Anthony (XV century)

Church of São Pedro de Rates (X century)

Despite the extensive history of S. Pedro de Rates, the Magalotti's Journal just underlines the size of the village “40 houses” and the existence of “an old parish church dedicated to São Pedro de Rates, the first archbishop of Braga”.

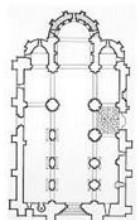
Village of 40 houses with an old parish church dedicated to São Pedro de Rates, the first archbishop of Braga



São Pedro de Rates_27/28 february 1669

Main street (Rua Direita)

Chapel of Saint Anthony (XV century)



Church of São Pedro de Rates (X century)

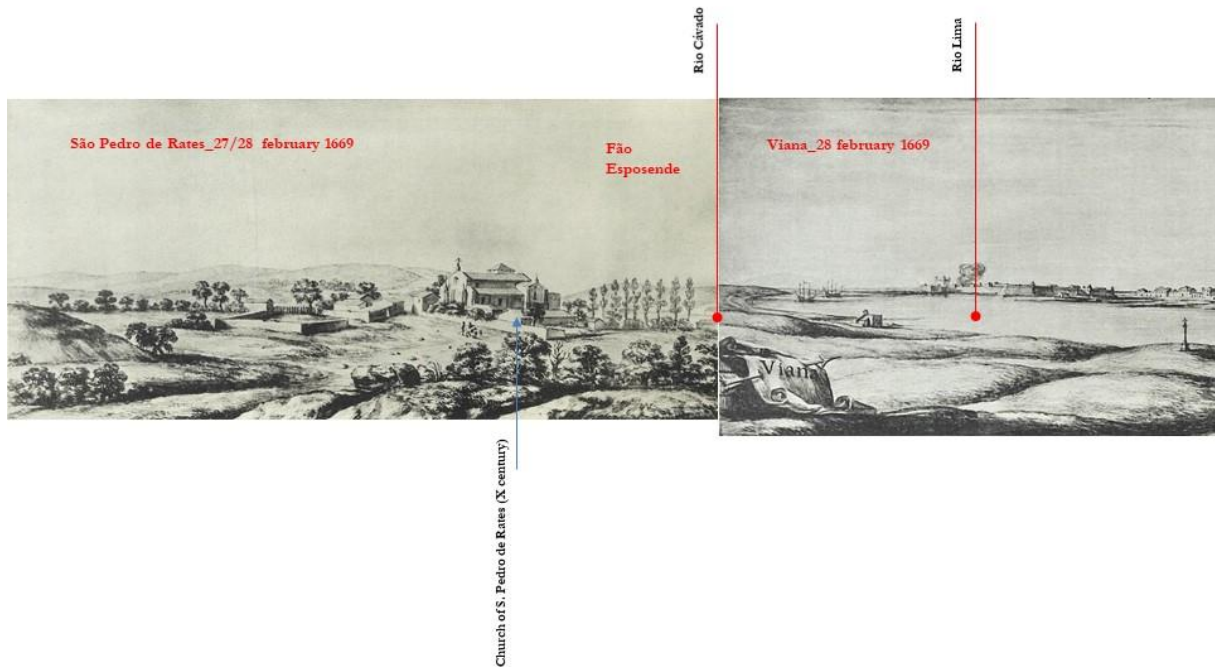


This time, it is Baldi's veduta that goes further, representing the former Benedictine monastery church, now a parish church, in its Romanesque basilica appearance.

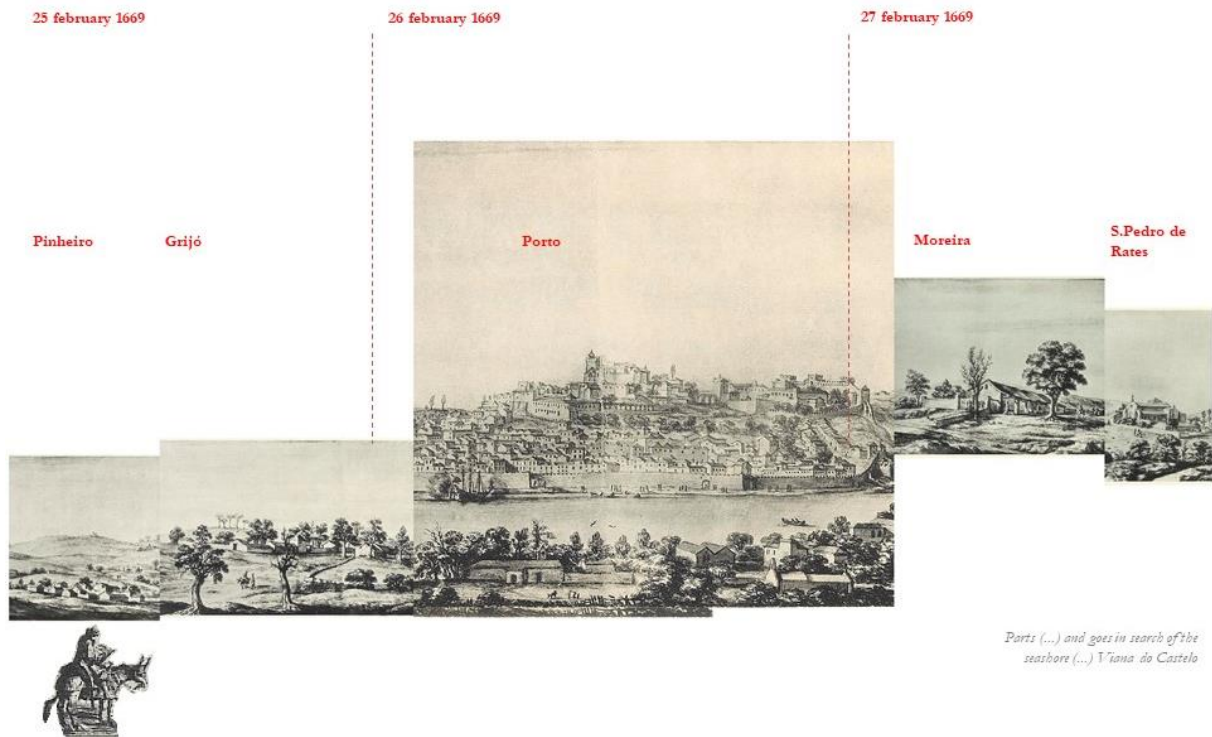
In the same way, revealing a careful observation of the site, in contrast to the drawings of Grijó and Moreira, Baldi represented from the south the village and the Chapel of Santo António.

Early in the morning of the 26th, with light rain, His Highness crosses the Prado River [Cávado river] in barges towards the sea shore woods located north of the village of Fão and Esposende, at the mouth of the mentioned River.

From there, the route was made between the beautiful beaches and the rough mountains of naked stones, finding cultivated areas interrupted by leafy trees.



The next day, early in the morning of the 28th, with light rain, His Highness crosses the Prado River [Cávado river] in barges towards the sea shore woods located north of the village of Fão and Esposende. From there, the route was made between the beautiful beaches and the rough mountains of naked stone, finding cultivated areas interrupted by leafy trees. Viana was then the next stop.



Just to close, in Baldi's drawings, a seen and an intuited reality are simultaneously projected, being the drawing populated by motifs and graphic codes from the author's cultural and spatial background. Hence, a critical inquiry, in permanent confrontation with other iconography of the places and historical data, is of interest to the careful observation of the drawing.

Written reports, such as Magalotti's journal, amplify the narrative provided by the images, focusing on aspects that go beyond the breadth of the veduta. They provide us with particular features of the places, their occupants and carried out actions, while at the same time delve into scales not always compatible with that of the landscape that serves as setting.

Between Magalotti and Baldi's documents and the coeval experience of the journey, the Cosimo's travel narrative allows us to get inside a specific time and space strata with its personalities, relations and activities.

