2013

Pastel de Tentugal: serendipity or cultural syncretism?

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Publication Details
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Abstract
Pastel de Tentugal, a wrapped sweet pastry and a popular item of the traditional Doçaria Conventual Portuguesa, is simultaneously a food and an item of cultural history. As a food, the cigar-shaped pastry constitutes a distinctive item of confectionary. It exhibits most of the culinary attributes that seem mandatory in sweet-making – balanced symmetric shape with perfect texture, colour and flavour. Pastel de Tentugal strikes a flawless balance between visual structure and the gustatory experience, with its multilayered crispy wrapping enclosing a filling that teases the taste buds and senses. One bite breaks through the crunchy, delicate wrapping to expose the yellow, sweet content. Texture and flavour constitute the hallmark of the Pastel de Tentugal.

Keywords
syncretism, serendipity, cultural, tentugal, pasteis, de

Disciplines
Arts and Humanities | Law

Publication Details

This conference paper is available at Research Online: http://ro.uow.edu.au/lhapapers/1115
Pastel de Tentugal: Serendipity or Cultural Syncretism?

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Introduction

Pastel de Tentugal, a wrapped sweet pastry and a popular item of the traditional Doçaria Conventual Portuguesa, is simultaneously a food and an item of cultural history. As a food, the cigar-shaped pastry constitutes a distinctive item of confectionary. It exhibits most of the culinary attributes that seem mandatory in sweet-making – balanced symmetric shape with perfect texture, colour and flavour. Pastel de Tentugal strikes a flawless balance between visual structure and the gustatory experience, with its multilayered crispy wrapping enclosing a filling that teases the taste buds and senses. One bite breaks through the crunchy, delicate wrapping to expose the yellow, sweet content. Texture and flavour constitute the hallmark of the Pastel de Tentugal.

But the Pastel is more than food; it is also an artefact of culinary history, a signifier of cultural identity and an exciting storyteller. Its significance derives from its embeddedness in many different narratives, as for example in the story of the Pastel’s ‘original’ creation by barefoot Carmelita nuns who, working on floors covered with white clean sheets, meticulously stretched the dough to a paper-thin pastry that wrapped and hid the voluptuous filling. But the Pastel also lures us into yet untold stories of plausible links with other cultures, culinary practices and alternative techniques that generate look-alike products.

Pastel de Tentugal’s wrapping is puzzling. It looks like filo pastry yet, according to its traditional artisans, it is a unique product that has been integral to Tentugal’s pastry-making repertoire for five centuries. These claims of originality by the Pastel’s pastry-makers raise
some troublesome questions because of equal allegations made by other similar types of wrapping. For example, filo-like pastry is used in the making of the Turkish börek and baklava; the Greek spanakopita and baklava; the Moroccan bestilla and the Tunisian brik. Likewise, in central Europe, Vienna is famous for its strudels and Bulgaria for its banitsa. These traditional pastry products share a well-documented Arab culinary heritage. Hitherto, the five-century long Arab-Moorish presence in Portugal and its legacy in Portuguese culture have been acknowledged but under-valued.

This paper explores the impact of the Arab-Moorish influence in Portuguese culinary heritage. It specifically examines the possible links between the Pastel de Tentugal’s pastry wrapping and the Moorish culinary influence in Portuguese cuisine. Rather than brazenly amend Tentugal’s pastry legacy, my purpose is to explore a number of narratives that feed into an overarching story about paper-thin pastry that tends to generalize and gloss over many local specificities and techniques. My aim is not re-classification but instead acquiring a better understanding of the broader pastry-making tradition with which Pastel de Tentugal might be associated. Is serendipity or cultural syncretism at work here? Either way, the Carmelita nuns deserve acknowledgement for their accomplishment in producing an item that, although similar to filo pastry, also bears characteristics of its own.

**Stories of Tentugal**

**The nuns**

Tentugal is a small village on the central coast of Portugal. According to the Pastel de Tentugal’s professional pastry makers and cultural gatekeepers, the product was first devised in the sixteenth century by the nuns of the convent Nossa Senhora da Natividade, and it remained an
integral part of its kitchens’ culinary repertoire for three consecutive centuries until the closure of the convent in 1898 upon the death of the last Carmelita nun.⁶

Exploring the Pastel de Tentugal takes us inside the walls of a sixteenth-century convent, where women were forced into celibacy for reasons other than those of their own choice. The institutionalization of the system of Morgadio had a detrimental impact on the lives of young women. Morgadio institutionalized the family lineage such that the elder son was the only lawful recipient of the family patrimony. Initially a customary practice, Morgadio was sanctioned in 1603 during the Iberian unification.⁷ This inequitable system of inheritance particularly hurt females, who fell victim to substantially decreased monetary allowances made to their marriage dowries and were subsequently forced into a life of celibacy. Voiceless and cast out, they faced uncertain futures. Forced to choose between a life of tightened circumstances and voluntary entry into monastery life, the latter was the solution most had to accept.

Tentugal’s convent was founded in 1565, well before the institutionalization of Morgadio. However, by the time the convent was established, this customary practice was already observed. By 1565 women were already entering monastic life to comply with social expectations rather than in accord with their religious beliefs. As a result, the establishment of a convent in Tentugal was regarded as a positive measure because it fulfilled the need to ‘shelter many orphans and the daughters of many honourable nobleman who could not afford to pay for their marriages’.⁸ The great majority of these women were literate and well educated. Secular habits were not necessarily shed at the convent’s door. Despite their lives of privilege being abruptly denied from the moment they entered the convent, these nuns-to-be brought with them the eating habits of their family homes. From a life of comfort, abundance and perhaps even exposure to exotic foods, they were thrown into a lifestyle of unexpected limitations. Their
engagement in craft and sweet-making offered them respite from the boredom of monastery life. This is how the tradition of confectionary-making in Portuguese convents emerged. It is usually referred to as Doçaria Conventual, and this story and practice are recognized as part of the national culinary heritage.

Cooking in the family home was not an activity in which these women would have been expected to engage. However, once in the convent, cooking turned out to be a soothing and gratifying activity that kept them occupied and gave them sense of self-worth. As Goes asserts, ‘These nuns were women from wealthy families, some of them connected either to the royal family or aristocracy, it is therefore possible that they would have taken into the convent their family recipes and since they did not have any other way to keep themselves motivated, they engaged in sweet-making’. Thus, convents offered the perfect conditions to become busy hubs of culinary practices.

**Pastel and secrecy**

Some of the major convents had very wealthy coffers. Their active role in the kingdom’s territorial organization and development had always been recognized, approved and promoted by the king and the royal house. In return, convents were granted valuables and land, which they leased out in return for cash payment or equivalent value in goods. According to Saramago, convents ranked second only to the royal house in land and wealth.

The institutionalization of Morgadio and the consequent increased demand for female convents made admission highly competitive and costly. This is not to say that every woman entering a convent would have had to pay her right to admittance. However, women from wealthy families opting out of secular life for non-religious motives were expected to pay for
their admission. This sum, although less than what would have been expected as a wedding dowry, could still amount to substantial amount.\textsuperscript{13}

In addition, women were also expected to be accompanied by a glory-box when entering a convent. It could include fine linen, kitchen equipment and expensive ingredients such as spices.\textsuperscript{14} Consequently, convents’ kitchens became well-equipped places with a resourceful female workforce, willing to occupy their free time with the activity of cooking.

Convents had easy access to the ingredients required for sweet-making – flour from the local mill; eggs, milk, honey and fruits from the convent’s farmyard. Sugar, which at the time was an expensive commodity in Europe, was easily accessible in Portugal due to its production in the Madeira Islands and later in Brazil and Africa.\textsuperscript{15} In the sixteenth century, sugar was considered to have remedial effects and was used in confectionary for its alleged therapeutic qualities.\textsuperscript{16} Thus, the sweets made by the nuns were either used as a remedy for sick children and adults or as gifts to the convent’s benefactors, and the leftovers were utilized for the convent’s domestic consumption. The shape and filling of the Pastel indicated its recipient. The traditional cigar-shape made with a filling of Ovos Moles was distributed to the sick and poor. In turn, the half-moon shaped Pastel, with almond meal incorporated in its filling, was used as a gift for the convent’s sponsors.\textsuperscript{17}

Primary evidence of the Pastel’s history is sparse, thus making its validation difficult. For example, there are no recipes or written descriptions of the Pastel-making process. The only written records that survived four centuries of the alleged practice are the convent ledgers and other bookkeeping records, which ought to be acknowledged as a tribute to the literacy levels and organizational skills of the nuns. These records have been essential for our current knowledge of the Pastel de Tentugal. For instance, according to Carvalho, as early as 1611 there
are entries in the Convent’s ledger for products named as ‘pastel’, which she argues are reference to the Pastel de Tentugal. Likewise, Carvalho argues that the Convent’s Livro de Receitas (Receipt Book) and Despesas do Convento (Expenditure Book) illustrate that the purchase of large amounts of flour, sugar and honey match the increased kitchen pastry production. These records, which form the only written documentation witnessing the production of the Pastel, have been essential in piecing together its story.

Artefacts and the convent’s architectural drawings constitute valuable secondary evidence in Carvalho’s argument. Reference to thirty cazas de cozinha (kitchens) and separate casas de amassar (dough-making rooms), illustrate the high level of kitchen productivity and the need for specialization of space and tasks. Likewise, textual descriptions of ‘two flour chests, bowls, trays and flour sieves’ give an accurate idea of the equipment and practices carried out in those spaces. According to the Associação do Pastel de Tentugal, this equipment has remained unchanged with exception of adopting electric dough-mixers.

The convent’s inventory includes a puzzling piece of equipment. It refers to bacias de lavar os pés (foot washing basins). According to Carvalho, this equipment is uncommon and not generally required in kitchens unless, she argues, the basins were meant to be used by the nuns to sanitize their feet before entering the rooms where the dough was stretched. The presence of the foot washing basins together with the evidence provided in earlier paragraphs has been used by the Associação and the Confraria de Tentugal to substantiate their claim of a dynamic and unique practice of pastry-making which gives the Pastel de Tentugal its legitimate claim to regional authenticity.

Pastel’s Claim to Authenticity
In 2011, the *Associação dos Pasteleiros de Tentugal* (APT) and *Confraria do Pastel de Tentugal* submitted an application to the Portuguese government requesting a Protected Geographic Indication nomination. When approved, this nomination will officially recognize and legitimate the *Pastel* as a unique item of the Tentugal area. Their case was based on the alleged specificity of the *Pastel*, its unique relationship with the locale’s cultural history and its geographic distinctiveness. The forty-two-page document is thorough, referenced and clearly defines and codifies the specificities of the *Pastel*: ‘Classified as Doçaria Conventual, the dough is a mix of flour and water, and the filling made by mixing eggs to sugar-syrup cooked to soft-ball stage (105 degree Centigrade). The *Pastel* has two presentations – the *Palito* (cigar-shape) and the *Meia-Lua* (half-moon or crescent).’ The document is a detailed and precise description of a process that complies with rigorous standards of production. The dough is stretched over floorboards covered with white sheets to a thickness ranging between 0.06 to 0.15mm. The ingredients’ quality is clearly specified and so is the technique required for the shaping of the *Pastel (armar o Pastel).* According to the professionals involved in this process, the application of butter between the layers of pastry can only successfully be achieved with the traditional use of a chicken’s feather. In their experience, only this technique can guarantee the delivery of the precise amount of butter required for a crunchy pastry. Finally, the *Pastel*’s shape is of paramount importance. It is prescribed in accordance with tradition: *Palito* (cigar) or *Meia-Lua* (half-moon). The former has a filling of *Ovos Moles*, the latter with added almond meal.

The strict guidelines established for the confection of the *Pastel* safeguards its PGI nomination which depends as much on the methodology of production as it does on the specificity of its geographic location in Tentugal. According to the document, the *Pastel*’s uniqueness results from its embeddedness in Tentugal. The local optimum temperature-humidity
ratio makes ‘the natural conditions that are specific to Tentugal […] paramount for a successful end product’. Only they can guarantee a pastry with the required degree of crunchiness. This constitutes the product hallmark and underpins its claim to authenticity.

The association between the Pastel and Tentugal is framed by the discourse of authenticity. It implicitly and explicitly reflects a natural, rooted and inherent relationship between locale and product. The Pastel’s embeddedness makes it legitimate, authentic and unique. However, the document also pays tribute to the essential human factor by acknowledging the ‘original’ producers – the Carmelita nuns who kept an oral tradition alive and developed a ‘very specific know-how that created the Pastel’. According to the same document, the last nun, D. Maxima de Loreto, later passed down this oral tradition to the laywomen of Tentugal who perpetuated and promoted it.

No recipes or written descriptions of the practice survived the ravages of time, especially given the effects of the nineteenth century French Napoleonic invasion and the religious persecution that accompanied Liberalism. Instead, oral tradition has ensured the rigorous preservation of a practice that would have otherwise been lost.

It is generally accepted that the convent’s special recipes were kept in secrecy to zealously preserve their ‘uniqueness’ and to enable differentiation from the products of competing convents. The mother superior was the only person with access to any of the existing written records, thus assuring their confidentiality. Amongst the nuns, oral tradition was the mainstay of cooking practices. To guarantee recipes would not go beyond the convent walls, any nun exiting or being transferred to another convent was required to pledge her silence about the convent’s culinary practices. Within the convent, oral tradition efficiently preserved the passage of knowledge and skills over generations of nuns. However, it also safeguarded them against the
devastating effect of looting and the destruction of written records during the nineteenth century. The institutionalization of liberalism, secularization and the progressive closure of convents and monasteries could have been the fatal blow to the nuns’ sweet-making practice had it not been preserved orally.

For three centuries oral tradition protected the nun’s secret recipes and later became the vehicle that divulged it to the outside world. Oral tradition gave the women of Tentugal the chance to learn the technique through the teachings of the last Carmelita nun before her death in 1898. Today’s female pastry-makers preserve the ‘know-how’ that makes them the twenty first century cultural gatekeepers who diligently assert the Pastel’s originality and authenticity.

Other Claims to Authenticity

Pastel de Tentugal’s claim to authenticity needs further analysis. Thus far, the argument has been based on secondary sources which ground the originality of the Pastel as much in its local embeddedness as in its social legacy and culinary specificity. The challenge that needs to be met is to acknowledge the Pastel’s distinctive traits whilst exploring its place in a broader context where new findings can expand its already rich culinary and cultural narrative. My aim here is to locate the Pastel de Tentugal within a conceptual framework that discursively recognizes culinary practices as markers of regional and national identities but also takes into account the dynamic characteristics of cultural syncretism.

Thus, this paper uses the Pastel de Tentugal as a launching pad to articulate and encompass different narratives. On the one hand, it acknowledges the claims made by the Pastel’s gatekeepers who name it as an icon of national cuisine and declare it to be in a class of its own. On the other hand, it recognizes the need to explore the apparent resemblances between
the Pastel’s paper-thin wrappings and similar products that equally assert themselves as integral to traditional local culinary practices.

It is important to consider the diverse geographic locations that incorporate paper-thin pastry in their traditional culinary repertoire. Such a consideration alerts us to the potential common cultural legacy, but at the same time as it highlights the pastry’s versatility and wide range of utilization. However, it also underscores contested claims to authenticity. Analyzing some of the most popular items that use the paper-thin pastry takes us to many places and introduces us to a wide range of foods. It is not my intention to analyse in detail the differences amongst these wrappings. However, I can briefly note that, for instance, in the Mediterranean basin we find the Moroccan bestilla made with paper-thin warqa, the Tunisian brik made with paper-thin malsouqua, the Turkish börek and baklava, the Egyptian göllash and the Greek baklava and spanakopita, all made with filo-like pastry.25

As Davidson suggests and the thirteenth century Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook illustrates, paper-thin dough was documented in recipes for the khabis and the muwarqa musammana which technically resemble the making of the Moroccan warqs.26 The commonalities represented by these techniques in traditional dishes of the Mediterranean basin strongly suggest their shared culinary and cultural legacy despite a time gap of seven centuries.

Likewise, in Central Europe the Austrian strudel and the Bulgarian banitsa also use paper-thin pastry in their production.27 Both Austrians and Bulgarians admit their confectionary icons to be a culinary legacy resulting from the Ottoman presence in Central Europe in the sixteenth century.28 In turn, the dispute over the origins of the well-known baklava is a topic of contention between Greeks and Turks, with claims made by the former being disputed by
counterclaims of baklava’s Turkish heritage made by Charles Perry and echoed by Alan Davidson.29

Perry traced the origins of filo pastry to the Turk nomads who, due to lack of ovens, devised the technique of making bread by multi-layering sheets of thin dough cooked on a grid. Later technical developments in the kitchens of the Topkapi Palace led to the ‘invention’ of the Turkish baklava whose distribution in the streets of Constantinople during Ramadan became integral to the celebrative Baklava Procession.30

As these examples illustrate, there are grounds to support the claim that the paper-thin pastry might indeed have a common cultural and culinary heritage perhaps indebted to the expansion of the Ottoman Empire in these areas. But what is the link with the Portuguese Pastel de Tentugal?

Let’s for a moment ponder the Moors legacy in Portugal.31 Their presence in the Iberian Peninsula dates from 711 CE. They inhabited the southern areas of the Peninsula and named them Al-Andalus (Spain) and Garb-Al-Andalus (Portugal). The Catholic repossess of these territories is generally referred to as Reconquista (re-conquest). In Portugal it took place in 1249 under the monarch Afonso III and in Spain under the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castile, who claimed the Moors’ last bastion – Grenada – in 1498. This five-century presence of the Moors in Portugal is historically documented. Porto, Coimbra and Lisbon were consecutively claimed by the Catholics in 868, 1064 and 1147. Faro, the Moors last stronghold in Garb-Al-Andalus, fell in 1249.32

The presence of Mozarabs in Coimbra has been a topic of research.33 Curiously, one of the relevant figures referred to by Saraiva and Carvalho is Mozarab Sesnando, born in Tentugal.34 He studied in Seville, was elected Seville’s Vizier and became an eminent Moorish
figure. Later, in 1064, Sesnando returned to Coimbra where he held important administrative roles in the Moorish political system. The evidence of Sesnando’s political role in Coimbra and his birth filiations to Tentugal illustrate the ethnic and religious inclusiveness of the Moorish cultural system. But more importantly, it also demonstrates that Tentugal is no alien to the presence and influence of the Moorish culture.

In fact, the Moorish legacy is patently illustrated in many aspects of Portuguese culture. For example, the Portuguese language includes up to a thousand words of Arabic derivation. Most of these words are related to concepts newly introduced by the Arab’s more advanced technology which therefore did not have referents in the local vernacular. Agricultural practices and irrigation techniques were introduced, dramatically changing and improving the hitherto archaic methods. Likewise, the Moors are credited with the introduction of many new foods, cooking techniques and eating habits which are still currently integrated in everyday practices. According to Lima-Reis, the wide use of fresh coriander, bread-based soups (migas and açorda) as well as the renowned Portuguese ‘sweet-tooth’ bear witness to the Moorish influence in Portuguese cuisine.

The scarcity of primary evidence attesting the Moorish legacy should not be equated with its absence, in particular since the signs that substantiate it are still strongly embedded in language and everyday practices. Unlike Spain, Portugal does not have the equivalent of the Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook yet, as illustrated, the evidence of Moorish influence on cooking is still present and cannot be discounted.

José Saraiva and Alfredo Saramago assert that during and since the process of territorial Catholic Reconquista there was a conscious effort by Catholic hegemonic elites to erase any previous signs of the Arab presence in Portugal. Saraiva calls it ‘cultural genocide’ which
methodically aimed to erase any cultural or religious evidence of the Muslim and Jewish
traditions, a process that dramatically culminated in the Inquisition.39 Ironically, and
demonstrating the power of embedded cultural practices, the attempt to erase the totality of those
vestiges failed. Ingrained oral traditions, tastes and preferences that resonate in the everyday
practices of eating and cooking have lasted and still prevail in the twenty-first century, thus
speaking more meaningfully than any written document or preserved artefact.

Let’s return to our rhetorical question – where does the paper-thin wrapping of the Pastel
de Tentugal sit in this continuum of narratives, evidence and speculation?

Is there any link between the layered bread of the nomadic Turks and the stretchable
dough that the barefoot nuns skilfully and patiently pulled and tugged over the clean white sheets
spread out on the floor? Are these two separate culinary moments in the culture of two
geographically distant places and peoples? Are there any yet undiscovered links? Did the nuns
learn about the technique used in the Topkapi Palace from books or travellers to the Middle or
Far East? Or alternatively, did they revive a dormant practice from the previous presence of the
Moors in Tentugal? Is the pastry wrapping of the Pastel de Tentugal an act of serendipity or, is
its similarity with those other wrappings that I have mentioned the result of cultural syncretism?

At this stage it is difficult to find a convincing answer to these questions. However, the
specific techniques used in the making of the Pastel de Tentugal, in particular the stretching of
the dough, need to be recognized because to my knowledge they are unique to Tentugal.
Nevertheless, as I have demonstrated, the wide geographic distribution of similar pastries needs
to be investigated to substantively assert the place of the Pastel’s wrapping in the narrative of
paper-thin pastries.
Doçaria Conventual Portuguesa (Portuguese Conventual Confectionary-Making) is a branch of traditional dessert-making, purportedly made only in female convents. It is usually rich in eggs, sugar and almonds.


With ‘Borek the wrapper is… characteristically either filo or rough puff paste…the filling is usually savoury of meat or cheese, but sweet versions have been made throughout the pastry’s recorded history’ (Davidson, p. 91). For a comprehensive reading on baklava see Charles Perry, ‘The Taste for Layered Bread Among the Nomadic Turks and the Central Asian Origins of Baklava’, A Taste of Thyme: Culinary Cultures of the Middle East, eds. Sami Zubaida and Richard Tapper (London: Tauris Parke) and Davidson. According to Davidson, ‘Bestilla is a round pie made with numerous layers of paper-thin pastry called warqa (leaf), inside which are separate layers of three different fillings, two savoury and one sweet’ (p. 518). The most popular form of briq is known as briq ‘a l’oeuf which is ‘an egg cooked (by deep-frying) inside a triangle of paper-thin folded pastry (warq) perhaps with a little tuna added’ (Davidson, p. 812).

Strudel is an Austrian pastry made with paper-thin pastry and filling of apples; Banitsa is a Bulgarian creation of ‘paper-thin pastry-wrapped around a cheese filling which is often served with coffee’ (M. and F. Field, A Quintet of Cuisines (Nederland: Time-Life International, 1972): p. 142).

Clive Seal defines ‘gatekeeper’ as the ‘sponsors, officials and significant others who have the power to grant or block access to and within a setting’ (Researching Society and Culture (London: Sage Publications, 1999): p. 221). I name the Associação dos Pasteleiros de Tentugal (APT – Tentugal’s Pastry Makers Association) and the Confraria dos Pasteis Conventurais de Tentugal (CPCT) Pastel de Tentugal’s gatekeepers. The Nossa Senhora da Natividade convent was founded in 1565 in the village of Tentugal by the Carmelita nuns.

Goes, pp. 20–21.


Saramago.

Goes.

Saramago.

The Arabs had brought sugar cane to the Iberian Peninsula. There were some plantations in the Algarve but the plantations in Madeira were enough to produce enough sugar for local production and export (Goes, p. 12).

Ovos Moles are a filling made with sugar syrup cooked to reach 108 degree centigrade and to which egg yolks are added.

S. Carvalho, ‘*Levantamento Histórico do Pastel de Tentúgal*’, *Revista Monte Mai* (Montemor-o-Velho em Colaboração com o Arquivo da Universidade de Coimbra, 2007).

Protected Geographic Indication (PGI) is a program instituted by the European Union to register certain foods and agricultural products.


The document’s technical specifications include Flour: ‘wheat type 55 or 45’ (p. 5); egg yolks: ‘category A, Class Land’. The yolk’s specifications - colour characteristics ‘between 12 and 14 in the Roche scale’.

*Pastel de Tentugal – IGP*, p. 11.

The *Anonymous Andalusian Cookbook* was compiled by a scribe in the 1400s borrowing directly from several well-known cookbooks. One is usually referred to as al-Baghdadi (1239AD) yet some of the recipes are recognized as being authored by gastronome Abu Ishaq Ibrahim ibn al-Mahdi (b.779-d.839). This book has been translated into English by Charles Perry and is available free on the net at http://italophiles.com/andalusian_cookbook.pdf. See p. 33 and p. 147.

Field and Field, p. 142.

29 Perry and Davidson.

30 Perry, p. 91.

31 Moors refer to Northern African populations and connotes the word’s etymological link to Mauritania (Blackmore, p. 29). They were converted to Islam after the Arab territorial invasion of North Africa. In 711 they invaded the Iberian Peninsula.

32 Saraiva, p. 34.

33 Carvalho; Saraiva. *Mozarab* is a Christian living in territories under Moorish jurisdiction. A *Mozareb* has kept his/her religious affiliation but is completely integrated in the Moorish cultural lifestyle (Saraiva, p. 76).

34 Saraiva, p. 43.

35 Saraiva, p. 34. Coimbra is located 20Km from Tentugal.


37 Moors recognized by introducing sugar cane, rice, wheat (*Fagopyrum esculentum*), olive and almond trees as well as new fruits and vegetables such as eggplant, oranges, lemons, almonds, pomegranate and lentils (Lima-Reis, p. 38).

38 Lima-Reis, p. 39. My research includes interviews with Portuguese chefs. Unanimously they acknowledged wide use of fresh coriander in southern cuisine as a Moorish legacy. Lima-Reis signals that the Moors made soups with bread and called them *ath-thorde* (*açorda* in Portugues). Davidson also refers to *shorba* as the word for soup in most Islamic countries and *çorba* in Turkey (Davidson, p. 719). *Livro de Cozinha da Infanta D. Maria* (fifteenth century) is recognized as the first Portuguese collection of manuscripts containing recipes. Recipes for *almojavenas* and *alfitites* (p. 18 and p. 78) share recognised Arab legacy.

39 Saraiva, p. 79; p. 78.