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FOLLOWING THE PATH OF AN INGENIOUS IMPRESARIO IN 18TH CENTURY LISBON

The research produced by the Centre for Theatre Studies at the University of Lisbon has brought to light new approaches and new knowledge regarding the theatre that was made in Portugal in the past. Some of the few studies on 18th-century repertoires did not take into account the administration of the theatres in which they were performed, nor the conditions under which the singers, actors and dancers performed. It is along these lines that we find a landscape of theatre management in the 18th century featuring dynamic entrepreneurs such as Agostinho da Silva (1701–1765),¹ João Gomes Varela (1714–1786)² and António José de Paula (17??–1803).³ Compared to them, Paulino José da Silva (fl. 1775–1796)⁴ is a lesser-known name in the history of theatre in Portugal; nevertheless, he assumed a prominent position in the management of Lisbon's theatres in the second half of the 18th century.

The first known document in which he is mentioned in connection with theatre management dates from 1772 when he supplied the Rua dos Condes

1. Cfr. L.R. FERREIRA, «O empresário de teatro no século XVIII. O caso de Agostinho da Silva de Seixas», in *Touros, Tragédias, Bailes e Comédias. Espetáculos e Divertimentos em Portugal no Século XVIII*. Actas do colóquio internacional (Lisboa, 21–22 maio 2015), Lisbon, Centro de Estudos de Teatro, 2015, <https://ceteatro.pt/actas/> (last consultation: 30 June 2025).

2. Cfr. A.R. MARTINS, *A fábrica do Teatro do Bairro Alto (1761–1775)*, PhD dissertation in Artistic Studies-Theatre Studies, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon, 2017, tutor: prof. Doutor José António Camilo Guerreiro Camões; B. HENRIQUES, *O sítio do Salitre em Lisboa. Um século de diversões: teatro, touros e outros jogos*, PhD dissertation in Theatre Studies, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon, 2024, tutor: prof. Doutor José António Camilo Guerreiro Camões.

3. Cfr. M.B. ROSA, *António José de Paula. Um percurso teatral por territórios setecentistas*, PhD dissertation in Artistic Studies-Theatre Studies, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon, 2017, tutor: prof. Doutor José António Camilo Guerreiro Camões.

4. The large number of people with the same name living in Lisbon at that time makes it difficult to identify the empresario with precision.

Opera House with nails and hardware.⁵ For a number of years, he carried on with his ironmongery business supplying the royal theatres, an activity which we think he kept up alongside his other ventures, since documents show – as we will mention later – that in the 1795–1796 theatre season he took out a loan of 400 thousand *réis* to do some works on the Rua dos Condes Theatre; the contract mentions that he has an «ironmongery shop near Rossio» and «he is living in the Calçada do Duque».⁶

We suppose that his familiarity with the theatrical world – theatres flourished in Lisbon between 1771 and 1775 under the auspices of the Sociedade Estabelecida para a Subsistência dos Teatros Públicos da Corte (Society Established for the Subsistence of the Court's Public Theatres) – may have whetted his appetite for theatre management. Besides, he was a supplier of indispensable materials for stage productions: nails and other hardware to set up the wings, curtains, cycloramas (the painted curtains that enclose the back and sides of the stage) and other machinery used in the settings. And so, in March 1775, the year in which the Society was dissolved, Paulino José da Silva was involved in the establishment of a new theatre in Rua de São Jerónimo, on the city border, possibly within the jurisdiction of the new Belém borough, for which he rented a warehouse belonging to fray Jerónimo Barbosa for 57,600 *réis*.⁷ This undertaking was not easy. On March 22nd there was a first attempt to form a partnership that included the Italian dancer Pietro Bacchini,⁸ who would go on to develop his own business activity later that year. On the 26th a new partnership was formed, and a contract was signed by a larger number of partners for one year. On his side, Paulino José da Silva had to supply his playhouse ready for the performances, including all the seats for the audience and scenery for the plays. By unanimity, all members of the company elect Paulino as their «protector» [director] to whom they must obey. The other party was formed by a number of female and male dancers and actors – Margarida Teresa, Margarida de Rosa de Lima, Ana Inácia, Filipa Maurícia de Vilhena, João dos Santos Vilhais, Francisco António de Sousa, Francisco de Sousa, José da Silva Cunha, Diogo da Silva, Joaquim Bernardes, António José Rosa. The company would perform twice a week and Paulino was entitled to a quarter of the revenue of each night and a benefit performance.⁹

5. Cfr. *Contas da Sociedade estabelecida para a subsistência dos teatros públicos da corte, 1772–1781*, ms., Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Coimbra, *Sala Jorge de Faria*.

6. Lisboa, Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (from now on ANTT), 12.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, Ofício A, lv. 95, ff. 58v.–60v.

7. Cfr. Lisboa, Arquivo Histórico do Tribunal de Contas, DC 22, ff. 103v.–104r.

8. Cfr. ANTT, 1.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, Ofício B, liv. 763, ff. 8v.–11r.

9. Cfr. *ivi*, ff. 16–20.

This contract reveals Paulino José da Silva's entrepreneurial genius and the shrewdness with which he convinced the other partners of his honesty and fairness, presenting himself as the ideal person to run the theatre business, and discreetly granting himself advantages that might go unnoticed by others. In this deed, Paulino José da Silva appears as the first party, the founder of an opera house, which, he rents out to a Portuguese company of actors and dancers out of the goodness of his heart. As we read the deed, however, we see that his generosity comes at a price: he will receive a quarter of the profits and is the only partner entitled to a benefit performance. In the end, he is elected director of the company and, invoking the good nature of his character, commits himself to providing the scenery, views and wings in exchange for yet another benefit performance and a higher fee for himself commensurate with his position.

The least that can be said about Paulino José da Silva in these early years of his theatre career is that he was a little restless. A year later, on 4 February 1776, he signed a partnership agreement¹⁰ with Henrique da Costa Passos and Paulo Fernandes César Montenegro to run the Teatro da Graça in Lisbon, a playhouse that presented an old-fashioned repertoire of Spanish comedies and «presépios» – nativity plays, a semi-operatic puppet show loosely based on the Genesis and the birth of Christ, supplemented with pastoral scenes and often adapted to the 18th century context. A performance presented by Paulino José da Silva at the Teatro da Graça was attended by Anna Zamperini, who occupied a box,¹¹ prompting a playful comment from the Master of Ceremonies on the Venetian/Italian singer's hairstyle, as part of the updating of the plot of *Judith and Holofernes*.¹² What is more, two days after founding this company, he bought half of the theatre's shares from José da Silva Cunha, co-owner with Henrique da Costa Passos, who had been with Paulino at the Belém Theatre.¹³

By the end of March, Paulo Fernandes César Montenegro decided to leave the partnership¹⁴ and two months later was replaced by João Baptista do Espírito Santo, who had supplied the wood for the building.¹⁵ However, the following day he regretted it and cancelled the contract.¹⁶ Paulino José da Silva remained at the Graça Theatre until 1779, before moving with his puppets to the Rua dos Condes Theatre.

10. Cfr. ANTT, *ivi*, liv. 764, ff. 127r.-128v.

11. Cfr. *Contas da Sociedade estabelecida para a subsistência dos teatros públicos da corte*, cit.

12. Cfr. ANTT, *Real Mesa Censória*, cx. 183, pasta 1779, f. 23.

13. Cfr. ANTT, 1.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, Ofício B, liv. 771, ff. 33v.-34r.

14. Cfr. *ivi*, liv. 765, ff. 30r.-v.

15. Cfr. *ivi*, ff. 54-55.

16. Cfr. *ivi*, f. 55r.

After his first experiences in smaller theatres, Paulino José da Silva sought his fortune in Lisbon's most important public theatre: on 27 October 1779, he signed a contract with the owner, Henrique José da Silva Quintanilha, to rent the Rua dos Condes Theatre for one year.¹⁷ He was obliged to pay a total of 500,000 réis in rent – less than half the amount paid by his predecessors. The investment was already underway, with the tenant making improvements to the building, suggesting that Paulino José da Silva had a project for the theatre. The contract states that the impresario is free to use the space «for puppet shows, but also for live characters and any other entertainments that the tenant may wish and find agreeable». In fact, during that theatre season, Paulino brought different types of shows to Rua dos Condes, with an emphasis on comedies and *entremeses*.¹⁸ It is true that he brought «artificial figures» to the stage, but he also had a company of actors.¹⁹ In the summer of 1780, he hired José Bruno's company of tightrope walkers, aerialists, and Chinese shadow machines. The company of Portuguese artists and a company of eight dancers led by choreographer Pietro Fumantino performed in November of the same year.

Paulino renewed the lease for the 1780–1781 season, but the royal authorities imposed restrictions on performances – so much so that the impresario and the owner of the building joined forces to apply for a licence to reopen the Rua dos Condes Theatre for male performers only. The Intendência Geral da Polícia (General Police Department) issued a favourable opinion on 15 December 1780, but the next time we hear of performances at the Condes Theatre again was in 1782, by a foreign puppet company led by Giuseppe Castagna. It is possible that the Queen didn't endorse the Intendente's opinion.

Giuseppe Castagna's puppet company, which included his wife and at least two other artists, was of Italian origin («de nação italiana») and the contract²⁰ gives us a little-known insight into the presence of Italian artists in Lisbon in the 18th century. The company, which performed *commedia all'improvviso*, arrived in Lisbon in the summer of 1782 and formed a partnership with Paulino José da Silva to run the Rua dos Condes Theatre with puppet shows. As director of the puppets, Castagna was free to choose the evenings on which to perform, which suggests that there was no resident company of actors at the time. The contract stipulates that the tavern («botequim») will be run entirely by Paulino, who would also receive the profits from a private box in the theatre

17. Cfr. ANTT, 14.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, *Livros de notas*, liv. 68, ff. 82r.–v.

18. Short dramatic compositions, usually of a jocular or burlesque tone.

19. Cfr. L.R. FERREIRA, *O Teatro da Rua dos Condes 1738-1882*, PhD dissertation in Artistic Studies-Theatre Studies, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon, 2019, supervised by prof. José António Camilo Guerreiro Camões, pp. 143–153.

20. Cfr. ANTT, 12.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, liv. 61, ff. 78v.–79r.

and collect the money owed for the rented boxes. He would receive a quarter of the profits from every show Castagna puts on, both inside and outside the Rua dos Condes Theatre. However, in December 1782, Castagna's company was ordered to suspend their performances because they included «obscene acts» and offensive words, especially for the female audience.²¹

Paulino José da Silva was a resilient businessman who faced all the difficulties that came his way – and there were many – when he could have simply given up and devoted himself to his ironmongery shop in Rossio, a central square in Lisbon. In that same year (1782) he was embezzled by a tightrope dancer named José Cortez Romanino, a performer at the Condes Theatre who sailed to Madeira without settling his accounts, carrying all the costumes he had rented from the impresario and failing to return to Lisbon to put on his benefit as agreed.²²

Otherwise, Paulino was an almost visionary entrepreneur. On 27 October 1783, he signed a contract with the Marquis of Nisa to build a theatre in the grounds of the Marquis' palace, on the corner of S. Roque Square and Calçada do Duque.²³ Before it was destroyed by the earthquake of 1755, the palace consisted of several courtyards, stone and limestone buildings, and part of the city's Fernandine Wall. Several of Lisbon's theatres were born out of similar circumstances: the Estrela Opera House, the Bairro Alto Theatre and even the construction of the Rua dos Condes Theatre. This project never came to fruition. Barely 40 years later, in 1823, a theatre called São Roque or Bairro Alto was built there, the third with that name.

Perhaps the most intelligent expression of this impresario's tenacity was the draft of a regulation for the theatre submitted to the Queen in March 1784.²⁴ A ban on performances was in force; it not only affected the impresario but also the public and those who were left without work. Paulino had commissioned Vittorio Perini (who will be mentioned later) to hire three dancers in Italy. The dancers, who had been paid three months in advance in Venice plus money for the journey, were about to arrive in Portugal. The impresario tried to stop them because of the ban, but he couldn't do it in time. He found it impossible to fulfil the contracts and claimed that he had done nothing to justify the ban: no perversions or indecent plays in the theatre, he had always fulfilled his obligations. He argued that his programme for the theatre was that of «a public school for the correction of manners».

21. Cfr. ANTT, *Intendência Geral da Polícia*, liv. I, ff. 494r.-495r.

22. Cfr. ANTT, 14.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, liv. 87, ff. 22r.-v.

23. Cfr. *ivi*, liv. 90, ff. 24r.-25v.

24. Cfr. ANTT, *Ministério do Reino*, mç. 889, cx. 1011.

An appendix to the petition contains a copy of the contracts signed with the dancers, starting with Pietro Diani in Florence on 4 February 1784, brokered by André Campigli (fig. 1). The engagement was for two years, and Pietro Diani was required to «dance dressed as a man or a woman at the impresario's pleasure». He was joined by Luigi Fabbri, who was to «dance dressed as a woman in the role chosen by the impresario», and Pietro Pinucci, who would «attend the necessary rehearsals, dance every night for the duration of the said two years, and do whatever the impresario orders of him». At least one of them, Luigi Fabbri, would dance at the Condes Theatre a few years later (1788).

Paulino presented the proposal for a regulation of theatres to the Queen, recalling the decree of 17 July 1771 by her father, King D. José, approving the Society Established for the Subsistence of the Court's Public Theatres. The text of the petition indicates the means to prevent the theatre from becoming a centre of debauchery. The regulations systematise some of the measures already in place, such as the appointment of a theatre inspector («ministro inspector») to attend performances to ensure order, and added a concerted assistance of the military corps (fig. 2). In the proposal, the inspector would be a second instance in the approval (or rejection) of plays, in addition to the Real Mesa Censória (Royal Censorial Board). However, as the Board's permission was based on the written text, the regulation makes it clear that «there will be no expressions and gestures on stage that might be scandalous to honest spectators». We don't know how the Queen reacted, but the lack of news about performances at the Rua dos Condes Theatre in the following years suggests that the impresario's efforts were not rewarded.

After a period of suspension of theatrical activity while the nation mourned the passing of members of the royal family, Paulino José da Silva signed a lease for the Salitre Opera House with its owner, António Gomes Varela (1749-1823) on 26 March 1787, to begin «on the day His Majesty would grant a license to perform in it»²⁵ (we know this was not until 7 July). The contract was for four years and was to end in 1791. A final clause allowed the landlord to participate in Paulino José da Silva's other theatrical initiatives, with the aim of monopolizing Lisbon's theatres by freeing up the Rua dos Condes Theatre, a plan he already had in mind. This ambitious business expansion never materialised.

When Paulino José da Silva took over the management of the Salitre Theatre, he found an opera house that seemed to be in a state of unfinished construction, with possibility of increasing the number of boxes if he so wished, including one on the «Varanda dos Fidalgos» (the Nobles' Balcony), the profits of which he would keep for himself. At the end of the contract, all the im-

25. Cfr. ANTT, 9.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, liv. 61, ff. 62v.-64r.

provements would ultimately revert to the owner of the playhouse. We believe that he even added a new series of boxes and pit rows of seats to increase his profits. In other words, the businessman modified, at his own expense, what was designed as a temporary theatre, transforming it into one with dimensions capable of hosting shows of higher quality and attendance.

Regarding the performers, the impresario had a fixed cast of male actors only. The repertoire was based on the presentation of «elogios dramáticos», which were incidental to the celebration of birthdays of members of the royal family. Sometimes they took the form of «licenças pastoris».²⁶ The first we know of was performed on 25 July 1787 for the birthday of D. Maria Francisca Benedita, Princess of Brazil, with music by Marcos Portugal.²⁷ The following month, another «licença pastoril» was recited and sung, perhaps with music by the same composer, on 21 August, in honour of Prince D. José's birthday, by the Companhia Cómica Portuguesa (Portuguese Comic Company).²⁸ In its Dedication, the impresario and the company allude to the recent difficult times in the theatrical profession, thanking the Prince for his intervention in the resumption of their activities and pointing out that the Prince was responsible for the resumption of theatrical activity and even for the rehabilitation of theatre professionals.

At the end of the year, the actors in Paulino José da Silva's company – José Félix da Costa, António Manuel Cardoso Nobre, Nicola Ambrosini (who usually performed as a dancer), Vitorino José Leite and José dos Santos – played a «brief drama» to celebrate the Queen's birthday (17 December 1787). The play was written by José Caetano de Figueiredo and the music by Marcos Portugal, the theatre's music master; the set was designed by Gaspar José Raposo and the costumes by António Francisco (fig. 3).²⁹

Some private archives from aristocratic houses provide information on the number of monthly performances the theatre offered in 1787 and 1788. The receipts for box seats issued by Paulino José da Silva show an average of 15 monthly performances, taking as an example one of the highest-ranking members of the nobility, the Count of Vila Nova and his wife, as well as the price of the most expensive box seats, 1,600 réis.³⁰ The novelty of the show's structure seems to be one of the impresario's main concerns (fig. 4).

26. «Licença» was a small circumstantial piece of dramatic poetry, usually accompanied by music, generally before the main play or opera. In the present case the theme was pastoral.

27. The score is kept at the Biblioteca da Ajuda, in Lisbon (48-II-33).

28. The manuscript is kept at the Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro (47-4-4).

29. *Pequeno drama para se representar no Teatro do Salitre em obséquio dos felicíssimos anos da Rainha Nossa Senhora, no dia 17 de Dezembro de 1787*, Lisboa, Oficina de José de Aquino Bulhões, 1787.

30. Cfr. ANTT, *Casa de Abrantes*, cx. 71, mç. 219, doc. 4447.

The following season, an idyll was performed for the birthday of the Infanta Carlota Joaquina on April 25th 1788,³¹ and exactly three months later was the occasion for Princess Maria Francisca Benedita's to be celebrated with another idyll.³² Both shows combined recitation and dance. The recitation was performed by basically the same cast, with the addition of José Procópio Monteiro, who began to combine acting with his work as a writer. Marcos Portugal was in charge of the music. In the second idyll, dance was present at different levels in the show: the main ballet performance, which included the idyll, was interspersed with numbers performed by Vittorio Perini, Antonio Villa, Giuseppe Benvenuti, and 16-year-old Sebastiano Ambrosini (Nicola's son), who danced female roles. Choreographer Nicola Ambrosini was responsible for the duet that concludes the main ballet, and the following extradiegetic *novino finale* was choreographed by Antonio Marrafi and performed by the nine dancers of the company, including the choreographers, in a mixed Portuguese-Italian ensemble: Antonio Marrafi, Vittorio Perini, Antonio Cianfanelli, Sebastiano Ambrosini, Luigi Grazioli Schizza, Félix de Freitas da Silva, and the newcomers to this theatre Camillo Bedotti, Francisco Anastácio and Anastácio José do Vale. Throughout the years of Paulino José da Silva's company, dance has played an important role in the performances at the Salitre. Paulino made a point of hiring Portuguese dancers as well as Italians who can be considered as resident artists, for some of them, such as Diogo da Silva and Luigi Grazioli Schizza, had worked with the impresario at the Belém Theatre and later performed at Salitre perhaps at the end of their careers.

In the 1789-1790 season, the impresario maintained the strategy of performing «elogios» on the occasion of the royal family's Christmas celebrations alongside the season's calendar with the same cast, joined at least by António José da Serra, Francisco Manuel Madeira, and 15 year-old Vítor Porfírio in the role of female characters. The larger cast also includes a number of extras and/or dancers, allowing for larger-scale performances. Paulino José da Silva's businessman side was also evident in the demands he made of his debtors, no matter how illustrious they might be, and the difficulties he could cause in recovering his investments. After the issue with the Count of Vila Nova, in the 1787-1788 season, it was now the Marquis of Tancos who racked up debts from box rentals in the 1789-1790 season.³³

31. Cfr. *Idílio aos felicíssimos anos da senhora infanta Carlota Joaquina*. Lisboa, Oficina de José de Aquino Bulhões, 1788.

32. Cfr. *Idílio que se há de representar no Teatro do Salitre em obséquio aos felicíssimos anos da senhora D. Maria Benedita, augusta princesa do Brasil*, Lisboa, Oficina de José de Aquino Bulhões, 1788.

33. Library of Congress, P-289.

A year before the end of the four-year contract signed with Paulino José da Silva, on 18 February 1790, António Gomes Varela, who found himself in financial trouble, ceased to be the sole owner and landlord of the Salitre Theatre and entered into a two-year partnership (1790-1792) with the impresario, several actors, dancers, and also with the music master Marcos Portugal, Teodoro Bianchi, the man in charge of the stage machinery, and Pedro Feliciano Pacheco, the company's prompter.

The clauses of this contract define specific roles for each of the partners.³⁴ The impresario – now also a partner – is responsible for providing: the costumes and all the scenery, the props he owns that are needed to the dances and comedies, the music for the dances and arias, duets and all the other pieces of music he has, the comedies, tragedies and «entremezes». The ballet is still prominent, particularly dances with an exotic atmosphere that require a large «corpo di ballo» and soloists, like *The fabulous story of Idame and Thiorestes*, choreographed by Antonio Cianfanelli. All characters are still performed by men.³⁵

It is worth noting the increasing presence of Italian dancers who joined the «corpo di ballo», and whom the impresario hired when they were passing through Lisbon. The large number of foreign artists meant that he had to provide accommodation for them, as can be seen from an order from the theatres' inspector «to prepare the houses where Rodolfo Butti, a dancer at the Salitre who has now been dismissed, used to live to accommodate the dancers who have just arrived for this same theatre».³⁶ Over a little more than two years, and under the management of Paulino José da Silva, a number of dancers have trodden the stage of the Salitre Theatre (see table 1).

The partnership between Paulino José da Silva and António Gomes Varela was not always peaceful. In addition to debts, there was the sensitive issue of the stage sets, which led to disagreements that were only resolved in court years later. The solution was to draw up an amicable agreement between the two parties. The problem arose from the mixing of sets that António Gomes Varela had inherited from his father and built himself with those that Paulino José da Silva had brought with him to the theatre, which he had accumulated since the days of the Belém Theatre together with those that he had had built or painted. While describing the efforts to differentiate and separate the sets, the deed discloses some information – which researchers seldom get to know – about the number of views (curtains, wings, props) that made up the thea-

34. Cfr. ANTT, 9.º Cartório Notarial de Lisboa, liv. 69, ff. 54r.-58r.

35. Cfr. *História fabulosa de Idame e Teorestes*, Lisboa, Oficina de José de Aquino Bulhões, 1790.

36. ANTT, *Intendência Geral da Polícia*, liv. 193, ff. 232v.-233r.

tre's useful assets: «when the said master craftsmen carried out this investigation in the presence of all, they found that the number of sets in the Theatre was a total of four hundred and forty, of which two hundred and eighty-two belonged to António Gomes Varela, as specified in his father's inventory, and Paulino José da Silva was entitled to two hundred and forty-nine on account of his mortgage».³⁷

On 2 August 1796, they signed a document of discharge that closed the matter.³⁸ It details the time Paulino José da Silva spent operating the Salitre Theatre, including the periods of suspension, revealing his meticulous mind. His company performed for a period of 24 months and 15 days. These vicissitudes prevented the planned payment of 2 million *réis* for the lease of the theatre. To make matters worse, Paulino José da Silva dissolved the contract at the end of the 1789–1790 season, paving the way for a society of actors and dancers with the theatre owner and impresario, who joined in with sets, making it difficult to settle the accounts: he was only able to pay 850,000 *réis* as rent for the sets and costumes, which Varela accepted. Nevertheless, Paulino José da Silva was responsible for one of the golden ages of the Salitre, leaving fertile ground for the next entrepreneur, António José de Paula, to flourish. A solid repertoire of luxury and good taste, quality artists, some of whom also performed at the royal theatres, attracted an audience of high social standing that could sponsor expensive initiatives.

It wasn't until 1795 that Paulino was mentioned again, now as a leaser of the Rua dos Condes Theatre, asking for a loan of 400,000 *réis* to renovate the venue. The following year (1796), another contract reveals the impresario's constant bankruptcy – consigning the payment of a debt to the collection of the value of the royal boxes.³⁹ Later, we discover that Paulino had even stopped paying the theatre's rent, so the owner took possession of the scenery and costumes of Condes Theatre and sold them to the new manager, António José de Paula.

In conclusion, Paulino José da Silva is an inescapable name in theatre management at the end of the 18th century.⁴⁰ He was the only impresario to manage all of Lisbon's public theatres in the last quarter of the 18th century. The professionals he hired were some of the best in Lisbon at the time. Nicolau (or Nicola) Ambrosini, for example, had come to Lisbon with his father and

37. ANTT, 12.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, Ofício A, liv. 92, ff. 47v.–49v.

38. Cfr. *ivi*, liv. 99, ff. 82r.–83v.

39. Cfr. *ivi*, 7.º *Cartório Notarial de Lisboa*, Ofício B, liv. 142, ff. 92r.–v.

40. Although he did not follow to the letter the pattern of the Italian impresarios as studied by John Rosselli in his *The opera industry in Italy from Cimarosa to Verdi: the role of the impresario* (Cambridge University Press, 1984, *passim*), it is evident that he was familiar with some management procedures adopted in Europe, based perhaps on the Italian model.

brother, where he worked with Pedro António Avondano at the end of the 1750s; in the beginning of the 1760s he joined the company of the Bairro Alto Theatre. Finally, Paulino was probably the first Portuguese impresario to advertise his productions in the Almanacco Dramatico *L'Indice de' teatrali spettacoli*, 1764–1823.

Table 1. *Artists hired by the impresario Paulino José da Silva to perform in Lisbon*

Year	Theatre	Actors / Singers	Dancers
1775	Belém	Margarida Teresa, Margarida de Rosa de Lima, Ana Inácia, Filipa Maurícia de Vilhena, João dos Santos Vilhais, Francisco António de Sousa, Francisco de Sousa, José da Silva Cunha, Diogo da Silva, Joaquim Bernardes, António José Rosa	Diogo da Silva
1780	Rua dos Condes		José Bruno, Pietro Fumantino
1781	Rua dos Condes		José Cortez Romanino
1782	Rua dos Condes	Giuseppe Castagna	
1784	Rua dos Condes		Pietro Diani, Luigi Fabbri, Pietro Pinucci
1787-1789	Salitre	José Félix da Costa, António Manuel Cardoso Nobre, Nicola Ambrosini, Vitorino José Leite, José dos Santos, Custódio José Graça, José Procópio Monteiro, José Cardoso, Vítor Porfírio de Borja, António José da Serra, José Martins, Francisco Manuel Madeira, Diogo da Silva, José Arsénio da Costa	Antonio Marrafi*, Vittorio Perini, Antonio Cianfaneli, Luigi Grazioli Schizza, Camillo Bedotti*, Francisco Anastácio, Sebastiano Ambrosini, Anastácio José do Vale, Félix de Freitas da Silva, Nicola Ambrosini, Antonio Villa*, Giuseppe Villa, Giuseppe Benvenuto*, Diogo da Silva, Pedro Joaquim Simplicio, Antonio Torres, Alessandro Zucchelli*, Filippo Cesarini*, Gaetano Cesari, Gaspero Braccesi, Giacomo Gatuli, Antonio Turelli, Gaetano Guidetti, detto Constantini, Maurício, Rodolfo Butti*, Luigi Tamagni

* Artists who also perform at the court theatres at the same time

N.º 2.

Nos Pedro Badano, Consul Geral pela Serenissima
 Republica de Genova, natos Filhos, e seus Dominios.

Certificamos, em como nos foi apresentada humma Cartula, cujo
 thavo traducido do Italiano para Portuguez, he o seguinte:

As quatro de Fevereiro 1784. em Florença.

Pela presente Cartula, que ainda que privada, tem o mesmo valor, como se fosse
 por meio de publico Instrumento Florentino, desliza-se em como d.º Andre Campigli, por
 commissão de Insignuario do Theatro da Rua dos Condes em Lisboa agitada em sua com-
 panhia d.º Pietro Diani Dançarino, por dois annos, que principiarão desde o dia da a-
 chegada d'ellobra; para dançar valado de homem, ou de mulher, á satisfação do Imper-
 torio, obrigando-se de se achar em Genova no fim da primeira semana de Quaresma
 para prontamente se embarcar para Lisboa, e fazer as pueras necessarias, e dançar la-
 das as noites que lhe semo destinadas, no decorrer dos ditzos dois annos, e fazer tudo o
 que ordenar o ditzo Insignuario, porque assim convierão d.º d.º Victorio Pirini, em
 nome do ditzo Insignuario se obriga de pagar ao ditzo Sr. Pietro Diani em recom-
 pensa do seu trabalho devarcis Techini, ou, ou posto valor por cada mez, alhe se pa-
 daram os vinte e quatro mezes; e vinte e quatro Techini para a viagem; e este pagame-
 to será feito á provata das recibas, sem contradicção alguma, porque assim expre-
 mente convierão; e tambem convierão por modo exprezo, que no exco de assignação ou
 prohibição do Theatro, não em obrigudo a pagar o d.º Victorio Pirini e d.º d.º d.º
 de, que a provata das recibas que tiverem sido feitas, ou que se fizerem, sendo remova
 humma tal assignação; e isto tudo sem contradicção alguma; e Para nos lare de qua-
 quer infortunio de Theatro, obrigao em qualquer parte suas pueras para o cum-
 primento ditzo agite, em fe do que sera a presente assinada pelo Sr. Pietro
 Diani, e contra semelhante pelo Sr. Andre Campigli, por commissão do Sr. Victorio
 Pirini (Pietro Diani) — E

Nada mais se continha na sobreditta Cartula;
 a cujo original nos reportamos; em fe do que vii a presente por Nos
 assinada, e da com o nase dello Consular. Dado em Lisboa
 aos 15. Março. Meitenta e quatro

Pedro Badano
 Consul Geral, da Serenissima
 Republica de Genova

Fig. 1. Translation into Portuguese of the contract of the dancer Pietro Diani, in Florence, to perform at the Rua dos Condes Theatre, Lisbon, 4 February 1784 (Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Ministério do Reino, mç. 889, cx. 1011).

Senhora.

Paulino José da Silva, querendo promover os seus estudos, sobre os que ao mesmo tempo fazem do Publico, em serviços da Pátria, e da Sociedade, se lembrou de pedir Licença a V. Mag.^a para abrir o Theatro da Rua dos Condes, considerando, q' os q' não são bem regulados se regulam em todas as Necessidades civis, e da huma. Escola publica do Amor da Pátria: e da Política: Do Valor: Da Moral: Do Tello: e da Fidelidade de com q' os Povos devem servir os seus Soberanos: Já corrigindo os Vícios q' são dos mesmos q' os cometem: Já destruindo insensivelmente os vícios de barbaridade, q' deixaram os infelizes Juizes da ignorancia: E por q' agora que esta Licença se lhe concede, em virtude do empenho, e Clemencia, com q' V. Mag.^a promove todos os meios de instruir os seus Vassallos, e de os fazer felizes, apresenta a V. Mag.^a hum Directorio, ou hum Estatuto do Theatro, para q' dirigindo se V. Mag.^a de aprovallos, conformallos, e protegellos, não appareça ali coisa, q' não seja propria, e conducente á pureza, que os fazem permittidos, e necessarios na Regulacao seguinte.

I.

Para que a Policia, e boa ordem do Theatro, se conserve, e para q' os Espectadores, se contenham na devida moderação, he V. Mag.^a servida ordenar, q' seja, na forma do costume hum Ministro, q' com o titulo de

Fig. 2. Theatre regulations proposed by Paulino José da Silva, Lisbon, 15 March 1784 (Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Ministério do Reino, mç. 889, cx. 1011).

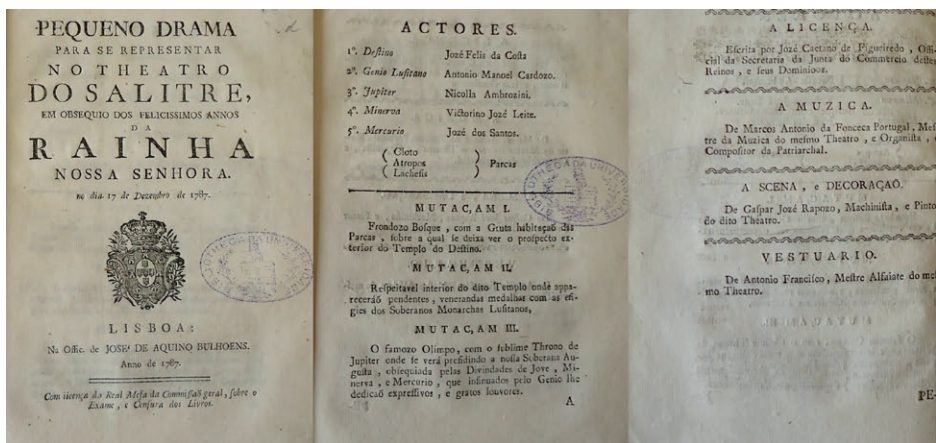


Fig. 3. *Pequeno drama para se representar no Teatro do Salitre em obsequio dos felicíssimos anos da rainha Nossa Senhora, no dia 17 de Dezembro de 1787, Lisboa, Oficina de José de Aquino Bulhões, 1787.*

Conta dos Camarotes que deve o Ex^{ma} S^{ra} Conde de Vila Nova, no Theatro do Salitre de que he Impresario Paulino José da Silva, das Contas q^{as} tiveram principio em 1^o de Agosto e findaram em 9^o de Setembro de 1788

15	Receitas que se fizeram em Ag ^{to}	2000	300 000
5	ditas em Setembro	100 000	
<hr/>			400 000
20	Abatimento a 10 p ^o C ^{to}	100 000	
			300 000
1	Camarote auxilio em Ag ^{to}	100 000	
1	ditas em Setembro	100 000	
<hr/>			200 000
			300 000

T

Pagant^o a soma de 12 de Setembro de 1788.

Paulino José da Silva

Emposta Supra	390 000
Augmentum daq ^{as} mais	30 000
Emposta total	420 000

Fig. 4. Account of the boxes owed by the most excellent Count of Vila Nova at the Salitre Theatre, owned by Paulino José da Silva, for the performances that began on August 1st and ended on September 9th, 1788 (Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Casa de Abrantes, cx. 71, mç. 219, doc. 4447).