

# Economic and Financial Debates in the Portuguese Parliament (1821-1910): Outcome of a Research Project

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## 1. Introduction

This paper seeks to provide an interpretive overview of the information contained in the database constructed as part of a research project dedicated to the study of economic and financial debates in the Portuguese parliament, during the period of the constitutional monarchy.<sup>1</sup>

The database is composed of 5355 records of debates that were held in the Chamber of Deputies of the Portuguese parliament between 1821 and 1910. When considered as a whole, these debates help us to form a precise idea about the situations, problems and vicissitudes that the Portuguese economy and public finances passed through in the course of the period under analysis: from the Liberal Revolution of 1820 until the implantation of the Portuguese Republic in 1910.

The summary that is now being made does not focus on any one specific theme, period or speaker, for these are matters that will have to be taken up by those using this database in order to study the debates as a source for interpreting the vast range of subjects that came under discussion in parliament. By making this research tool available to all those interested in its use, we are seeking to make a contribution towards the recognition and enhancement of an important historical source that allows us to deepen our knowledge not only about the way in which parliament functioned at that time, but also about the way in which the affairs of public life were dealt with in Portugal, in this particular case in relation to economic and financial matters. The purpose of presenting this summary is precisely that of highlighting the heuristic potentialities of the information that has been gathered together and systematized through a computer program easily accessed at <http://cisep.iseg.utl.pt/dpef>.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://cisep.iseg.utl.pt/dpef/> This is a research project entitled *Economic and Financial Parliamentary Debates (1821-1910)*, carried out, under the coordination of José Luís Cardoso, at the Research Center on the Portuguese Economy of the School of Economics and Management of Lisbon Technical University, with the participation of the Faculty of Economics of Porto University and the Institute of Social Sciences of Lisbon University. The project is funded by the Foundation for Science and Technology, under the scope of the POCTI program (Operational Program for Science, Technology and Innovation), co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) (POCTI/HAR/44207/2002) and the Bank of Portugal. I wish to thank the other members of the research team – António Almodovar, Carlos Bastien, Maria de Fátima Brandão, João Carlos Graça, Pedro Lains, Jorge Pedreira and Rui Ramos – for their collaboration and contributions that made this project possible. I should also like to thank the project's research trainee, João Vargas, for preparing the materials that provided the basis for this overview.

Throughout the different phases of the constitutional monarchy, parliamentary debates were the hub for assessing and deciding upon government measures to tackle economic and financial problems. Budgets, taxation and fiscal policy, the public debt, internal and external loans, credit instruments provided by the banking and financial structure, contracts and concessions, customs regimes, the public activities and investment made in support of the agricultural, industrial and transport sectors, the public supply of goods and services in the education and health sectors, the problems occurring in the administration of the colonies and their respective solutions: these are just some of the examples of matters that were brought into and out of parliament, being debated by an enlightened public opinion and testifying to the fervor and enthusiasm of a country bent on solving its short-term problems, as well as determined to define or mark out the possible future directions for its development.

Such paths also led into areas where the vicissitudes of the economic cycle were discussed, along with the causes and consequences of financial crises, the pros and cons of a greater openness to the outside world, the poverty and misery to which less-favored social groups were condemned, the rebellions caused by people's dissatisfaction over taxes, or even the popular discontent that rapidly spread and appeared to condemn the impact of premeditated policies to failure.

The parliamentary debates about these different subjects were fairly intense throughout the period under analysis. Sometimes, the content of the debates reveals some superficiality and lightness in the treatment of matters that one might have thought would have merited greater attention or concern on the part of politicians. On other occasions, however, they are surprising because of the visionary zeal that transcended the actual episodes serving as the motivation or pretext for debate. As a whole, there is, however, no doubt about the important role played by the parliamentary structure in institutionalizing the discussion of themes relating to economic and financial policy in Portugal, during the period of the constitutional monarchy.

In the following sections of this paper, an overall analysis will be made of the contents of the debates, bearing in mind the thematic categories covered, the most relevant subjects discussed under each category, the main references of authority to be found in the debates and the most frequent speechmakers. For each of these levels of approach, an attempt will be made to highlight the most significant characteristics of each decade in the period under consideration.

This project both complements and enriches other partial or thematic studies of the Portuguese case that, in one way or another, take the debates and work of parliament as their central area of reflection.<sup>2</sup> It further adds to studies undertaken for other countries and historical periods,<sup>3</sup> allowing for a better assessment of the requirements and impact of the legislative measures and decisions about economic policy that were prepared in parliamentary sessions. The conclusions and results of this project also make it possible to open up new avenues for approaching parliamentary debates as a privileged source for the study of economic and financial matters.

## 2. Distribution of debates by thematic categories

*Table 1* summarises the distribution of the 5355 debates on economic and financial matters, recorded throughout the period under study, according to the thematic categories resulting from our joining together of the various subjects discussed in parliament. An analysis

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<sup>2</sup> See, in particular, Almodovar and Cardoso 2005, Cardoso 1991, Pereira 1988, 1991, Pinheiro 1991, Silbert 1968 and Valério 2001.

<sup>3</sup> See, in particular, Augello and Guidi 2002, 2003 and 2005, Fetter 1975, 1980, Gambles 1999, Gordon 1976, Grampp 1987, Green 1997, Harris 1997 and Schonhardt-Bailey 2006.

of this table shows that the most frequently discussed subjects were matters relating to the budget, fiscal policy, public works, public expenditure and customs policy. Aggregation of 3 of the first 4 themes (budget, taxes and public expenditure) shows that more than a third of the debates were centered on matters relating to public finance and the financial structure of the State.<sup>4</sup>

	Total	Percentage
State budget and accounts	766	14.3044
Taxation and fiscal policy	646	12.0635
Public works, transport and communications	549	10.2521
Public expenditure and social policies	539	10.0656
Foreign trade and customs policy	486	9.0756
Political and legal framework	435	8.1232
Contracts, concessions and monopolies	327	6.1064
Currency and financial institutions and banks	269	5.0233
Trade and the internal market	263	4.9113
Internal public debt	239	4.4631
Property regime	234	4.3697
External public debt	192	3.5854
Colonial administration and policy	170	3.1746
State education	135	2.5210
Labor and employment	105	1.9608
Total	5355	

Table 1. Distribution of parliamentary debates by themes

Such a fact is not surprising, given that matters relating to budgetary policy and its implications – from the point of view of both income and expenditure – were necessarily a priority of a State committed to the pursuit of developmentalist policies that called for a continuous increase in public expenditure and therefore resulted in the permanent need to increase its sources of financing. It should further be added that the progressive dismantling of the fiscal system of the Portuguese society from the *ancien régime*, namely its ecclesiastical and feudal tax systems, gave some room for manoeuvre and perspicacity in this redefinition of the whole financial structure of the State.

An analysis of **Table 2** allows us to conclude that the themes relating to public finance were particularly important after the beginning of the Regeneration in the 1850s, and that they continued to be so over the next few decades. The hegemony of the debates taking place on the budget demonstrates how this matter was the central subject in the discussion of economic and financial themes, taking up a large part of the work that was done in the legislative sessions. Only in the *vintista* and *cabralista* periods was the predominance of the theme of the State

<sup>4</sup> For the importance of these subjects in Portuguese parliamentary debates and in the organic structure of parliament, see the studies compiled in Valério 2006a and 2006b.

budget and accounts less notable, due to the lack of stability at these times in the presentation of public accounts, a situation that was only achieved during the Regeneration.

	<i>No. of debates</i>	<i>1821</i>	<i>1821</i>	<i>1855</i>	<i>1851</i>	<i>1861</i>	<i>1871</i>	<i>1881</i>	<i>1891</i>	<i>1901</i>
		-- <i>1910</i>	-- <i>1854</i>	-- <i>1850</i>	-- <i>1860</i>	-- <i>1870</i>	-- <i>1880</i>	-- <i>1890</i>	-- <i>1900</i>	-- <i>1910</i>
State budget and accounts	766	14,30	0,30	9,77	15,75	27,60	20,58	12,55	19,30	20,37
Taxation and fiscal policy	646	12,06	7,92	13,79	7,13	16,82	22,13	10,74	12,57	6,23
Public works, transport and communications	549	10,25	1,52	4,80	15,37	12,74	16,30	15,94	12,20	7,34
Public expenditure and social policies	539	10,07	26,68	15,44	0,96	4,33	5,15	5,19	5,10	11,38
Foreign trade and customs policy	486	9,08	12,38	13,96	5,63	1,77	3,77	11,35	7,83	7,52
Political and legal framework	435	8,12	8,53	8,02	14,74	6,00	7,03	8,45	4,92	5,50
Contracts, concessions and monopolies	327	6,10	7,77	2,27	7,07	4,57	2,40	10,33	7,10	8,99
Currency and financial institutions and banks	269	5,02	3,04	5,50	8,84	3,36	7,03	2,70	4,55	5,32
Trade and the internal market	263	4,91	6,86	3,14	3,05	1,20	3,60	8,12	4,55	8,44
Internal public debt	239	4,46	9,76	4,54	5,71	4,09	2,40	2,09	2,00	5,14
Property regime	234	4,37	6,71	9,07	6,43	10,09	-	0,12	0,55	-
External public debt	192	3,59	-	2,70	9,19	5,04	0,86	1,72	7,83	3,67
Colonial administration and policy	170	3,17	4,57	3,31	0,32	1,20	4,80	1,97	5,28	4,04
State education	135	2,52	3,04	2,09	0,32	0,24	3,08	5,53	4,01	2,94
Labor and employment	105	1,96	2,89	1,49	0,16	-	1,02	4,05	2,18	3,12
<b>Total</b>	5355									

*Table 2. Distribution of themes throughout the period 1821-1910*

The high frequency of debates on taxation also reveals some instability in the fiscal system, which was subject to various reforms and counter-reforms within relatively short periods. The most important of these reforms occurred in 1860 when the various pre-existing taxes were merged together. However, before a decade had elapsed, these same taxes were separated once again. This happened, for example, with the personal property tax and the road tax. Another

important moment in these debates also had to do with the discussion of direct taxation, with the introduction in 1880 of an income tax similar to the one that existed at that time in England. This was a fairly controversial reform, which, perhaps for this very reason, lasted only a short while. Two years after its approval, a new debate on this same theme drastically reduced the scope of this tax.

*Tables 1 and 2* also show a high number of debates on the theme of public works, transport and communications. The attention given to these subjects is particularly evident from the 1850s onwards and arises from the very nature of the developmentalist policy of the Regeneration, which involved expensive and prolonged programs of investment in infrastructures and necessarily called for continued parliamentary debate. Initially, this strategy even generated significant consensus between the different parliamentary forces. The most intense phase of debate on these matters was to be found in the 1880s, when the perverse effects of this model of development became clear: i.e. when the return that had been expected on the investment made finally proved to be insufficient to allow for control of the public debt accumulated in the meantime with the financing of these same investments and when, as a consequence, the Portuguese state began to draw closer to a situation of bankruptcy, which eventually befell the country in 1891.

As far as the theme of foreign trade and customs policy is concerned (fifth in the order of importance of debates), it should be noted that the most productive period was at the end of the first half of the century. It was then that important discussions took place about the direction being followed in foreign policy, the pros and cons of protectionist and free-trade options and the implementation of such policies through the approval of customs tariffs. It was also in the 1880s that an increase was again to be noted in the discussions taking place about foreign policy matters, most notably about the successive adjustments that were made to customs duties, culminating in the approval of a new customs tariff in 1892.

The relative importance of debates on the political and legal framework, as well as on contracts and concessions operated under a monopoly system, shows that the members of parliament had a clear understanding of the dual requirements of discussing matters of an economic and financial nature: on the one hand, economics and finance were an integral part of a much vaster edifice containing all the functions and forms of State performance; on the other hand, the themes of public interest in economic and financial matters were largely dictated and aroused by the need to solve the individual problems and interests that were making their voices heard in the legislature.

### 3. Subjects dominating parliamentary debates

*Table 2* immediately shows that the period between 1821 and 1834 was predominantly marked by debates about public expenditure and customs policies. The high number of debates about expenditure is due, above all, to discussions about the payment of civil servants and the maintenance of the military apparatus (in the most relevant matters, this trend is represented by the frequent discussions about pensions and pecuniary benefits, essentially for members of the military). This predominance can be noted in *Table 3*, which, like the following tables, shows the main subject-themes touched on in each of the significant sub-periods.

	No. of debates
Civil servants (pay)	22
Pensions and pecuniary benefits	20
Reform and regulation of charters	20
Reform of the <i>Companhia Agricultura e Vinhos Alto Douro</i>	15
Amortization of the public debt	12
Political/commercial relations with Brazil	12
Regulation of religious corporations	11
<i>Companhia das Vinhas do Alto Douro</i>	10

Table 3. Most discussed subjects in the period 1821-1854

As far as the question of foreign trade and customs policy is concerned, the most notable issues were the customs reorganization of the country after the liberalization of Brazilian trade and, subsequently, after the political independence of Brazil (12 debates on Portuguese-Brazilian relations), as well as problems related to the reform of the Douro wine trade. It is not therefore surprising to find that the most frequently used keywords are: public treasury, public expenditure, salaries and pay, agriculture and civil servants.

In the period after the civil war and until 1850, a clear primacy can be noted in the debates on public expenditure, as well as those on taxation and fiscal policy. The importance of the themes covered under the category of public expenditure continues to be connected to the maintenance of the military apparatus and the re-establishment of order, the problems arising from war indemnities and the distribution of pensions. The importance of fiscal policy is, above all, linked to the need for governments after the civil war to consider the increase in State revenue as their priority aim. In this way, amongst the main subjects of debates, we find the liberalization of land ownership, the reform and regulation of charters, authorization for the collection of public revenue, the foundation of the Board of Public Credit and the sale of national assets.

In this and other periods, one should note the importance of debates held in response to the Crown's speech, which represented an opportunity to discuss different matters of economic and financial policy, a chance to review the subjects that had most influenced public opinion. Consequently, besides prolonging reflection on themes that were considered essential each year, they also demonstrated the importance of the parliamentary institution as a space of power with the capacity to set the political agenda.

	No. of debates
Reform and regulation of charters	69
Response to the Crown's speech	49
State budget	47
Authorization for the collection of public revenue	28
Pensions and pecuniary benefits	26
Board of Public Credit	22
Sale of national assets	21

Table 4. Most discussed subjects in the period 1855-1850

For the period from 1851 to 1860, which marked the beginning of the period of the Regeneration, the occurrence of debates was closely linked to the discussion of new projects for public works, transport and communications, with there also being a high number of debates on public accounts and budgetary policy. The Regeneration represented a period of stabilization in government terms that proved to be essential for the pursuit of a policy of investment in infrastructures designed to provide the basis for a growth in public and private wealth. To achieve their aim of *material improvements*, governments resorted to credit and an increase in taxation.

The financing of this development program was fairly widely discussed in parliament and there was a clear increase in the number of debates held on the external public debt (agreements with foreign creditors and loans for public works), beginning in the 1850s, as well as on fiscal matters throughout the 1860s and 1870s. The debate on the State budget became a central feature in financial discussions, since the period of political stability brought about by the Regeneration was accompanied by the stabilization of the process for the presentation of the public accounts. Also notable was the increase in the number of debates on monetary questions throughout this decade, on the adoption of the gold standard and on the relationship between the Bank of Portugal and the State.

	No. of debates
State budget	90
Agreements with foreign creditors and loans for public works	50
Construction of the railway (contract)	47
Response to the Crown's speech	44
Parliamentary appreciation of the actions of the dictatorship	21
Free importation of cereals	20
Award of the tobacco contract	18

*Table 5. Most discussed subjects in the period 1851-1860*

The period between 1861 and 1880 was dominated by budgetary questions, as well as by taxation and fiscal policy. This cycle of the Regeneration placed an emphasis on the increase in taxes and on the fiscal reforms that would make it possible to finance the policy of building infrastructures, as well as to cover public loans in particular. In the 1860s, the relative importance should be underlined of debates on the property regime (disentailment of ecclesiastical property), which followed the same spirit of looking for income to sustain and cover the deficit created by the investment policy.

	No. of debates
State budget	96
Response to the Crown's speech	29
Public loans	19
Disentailment of ecclesiastical property	17
General tax on consumption (establishment)	16
Construction of the railway (contract)	16

*Table 6. Most discussed subjects in the period 1861-1870*

	No. of debates
State budget	98
Construction of the Beiras railway	19
Royal water tax	19
Colonial administration	18
Reformulation of personal property tax	18
Response to the Crown's speech	16

*Table 7. Most discussed subjects in the period 1871-1880*

During the period between 1881 and 1890, an analysis based on the thematic categories and subjects that were most frequently discussed shows that there was relative equality in their frequency of occurrence, although more debates took place on public works, transport and communications. This greater importance given to the theme of public works is a reflection of the debates in which members of parliament discussed shipping contracts, road building, the construction of the stretch of railway between Barca d'Alva and Salamanca or the improvements of the port of Lisbon. Another fact that can be highlighted from the period in question is the central place occupied by the discussions on the budget, due in particular to the change in the methodology used for the discussion and presentation of the public accounts for parliamentary control under the form of a rectified budget.

As far as the period from 1891 to 1900 is concerned, the most easily recognized feature is the predominance of the customary thematic categories: budget and public accounts and taxation and fiscal policy. These years were particularly marked by the situation of a financial crisis, naturally leading to greater discussion in parliament of themes relating to budgetary policy and an increase in revenue, both through taxation (stamp duty) and customs duties (reform of the customs tariffs). Although this is not perfectly visible through an analysis of categories, it is important to mention matters relating to the public debt, not only because of the great frequency with which debates occurred about the conversion of the external debt into an internal debt, but also because of the fact that most debates on the State budget and the response to the Crown's speech were filled with references to matters of this nature.



	No. of debates
State budget	46
Rectified budget	37
Response to the Crown's speech	29
Indemnity bill	25
Payment of debt to tobacco contractors	20
Shipping contracts	18
Nationalization of the manufacture of tobacco	17

*Table 8. Most discussed subjects in the period 1881-1890*

	No. of debates
State budget	86
Reform of customs tariffs	20
Stamp duty	18
Response to the Crown's speech	17
Conversion of the external debt into an internal debt	17

*Table 9. Most discussed subjects in the period 1891-1900*

At the end of the period under study, i.e. between 1901 and 5 October 1910, the predominance of budgetary matters remained the norm. One should, however, point out the significant increase in the number of debates on public expenditure and social policies. The importance of these debates is due to the greater participation of the Republican members of parliament in the discussions taking place on expenditure on the royal family and the control of such amounts. This decade was also marked by an increase in the number of parliamentary debates on trade and the internal market. The high percentage of records of these debates is essentially due to the discussion of the measures taken to overcome the crisis affecting the wine growers in the Douro region.

	No. of debates
State budget	95
Steps taken to combat the wine growers' crisis in the Douro region	31
Public loans	21
Appropriations and expenditure with the Crown	20
Response to the Crown's speech	17

Table 10. Most discussed subjects in the period 1901-1910

#### 4. Authors referred to and figures of authority

The study of parliamentary debates not only allows us to accompany the pace of legislative activities or to better understand the parliament's role of supervising and controlling the government, or just purely and simply to get to know more about the themes and problems on which the members of parliament focused their main attention at each phase of the constitutional monarchy. Besides all this, it also helps us to know more about the way in which political decision-making was legitimized with regard to matters directly related to the functioning of the economic and financial system.

For this reason, it is essential to understand the parliamentary performance of both the members of the chamber and those in government who enjoyed greater doctrinal and theoretical preparation for discussing the matters on the agenda. Just as, generally speaking, it is important to understand the degree of permeability of the parliament to messages originating from the academic fields on which their speeches were grounded, namely in the fields of political economy and public finance.

The discourse of economists and the language of political economy are undeniably present in the minutes of parliamentary meetings.<sup>5</sup> However, the references made to economists in debates specifically about economic and financial matters were much fewer in number than the references made to those who were directly responsible for the implementation of economic policy, both in Portugal and abroad, whose example would seem, in the view of the members of parliament, to have greater legitimizing power than that of any theoretical or doctrinaire economist. This even happened in cases in which those responsible had long ceased to be in office, as is manifestly the case with the Marquis of Pombal, the author who was most frequently referred to in parliament throughout the period between 1821 and 1910.

*Table 11* records the twenty authors most frequently referred to in the Portuguese parliament for the period as a whole, and for each of the decades considered one by one. In the first column, the table shows the total number of parliamentary debates on matters relating to economics and finance, in which the authors identified are either referred to or quoted. It should be noted that, besides the names of important economists, politicians and statesmen, the database also includes a record of the names of members of parliament or ministers whenever these were mentioned in debates as important authors of reference in the discussion of themes

<sup>5</sup> This theme has earned the attention of the members of the research team associated with this project. Some of the provisional results of this type of approach can be found in Bastien and Cardoso 2006 and Brandão 2006.

in which they had played a crucial role (examples of this situation in the table are provided by the names of Mouzinho da Silveira and Passos Manuel).

Table 11. Authors most frequently mentioned in Parliamentary Debates

	No. of debates	1821	1835	1851	1861	1871	1881	1891	1901
		-- 1834	-- 1850	-- 1860	-- 1870	-- 1880	-- 1890	-- 1900	-- 1910
<i>Marquis of Pombal</i>	131	34	33	27	5	10	15	3	4
<i>Robert Peel</i>	101	--	24	38	8	16	7	2	6
<i>Napoleon</i>	64	17	12	15	12	4	2	1	1
<i>Thiers</i>	62	--	8	10	5	22	9	5	3
<i>Adam Smith</i>	57	17	12	10	6	7	1	--	4
<i>J.-B. Say</i>	56	22	16	4	4	5	1	3	1
<i>Bentham</i>	48	21	17	7	--	1	2	--	--
<i>Mouzinho Silveira</i>	45	--	4	15	7	4	11	2	2
<i>Gladstone</i>	43	--	--	4	6	13	12	2	5
<i>Pitt</i>	43	6	13	10	8	2	2	3	--
<i>Michel Chevalier</i>	41	--	5	23	2	8	3	--	--
<i>Dom Manuel</i>	37	31	5	1	--	--	--	--	--
<i>Colbert</i>	36	7	11	7	1	--	--	--	--
<i>Guizot</i>	34	--	7	4	9	6	5	2	1
<i>Dom José</i>	34	25	8	1	--	--	--	--	--
<i>Bismarck</i>	32	--	--	--	--	6	17	3	6
<i>John Stuart Mill</i>	32	--	--	2	7	12	7	1	3
<i>Montesquieu</i>	31	7	8	4	5	5	2	--	--
<i>Bastiat</i>	30	--	2	8	6	10	4	--	--
<i>Passos Manuel</i>	28	--	--	--	4	10	12	--	2

Table 12 makes it possible to form an overall view about the use made of the main economists quoted, bearing in mind the thematic categories of the debates in which their works or teachings were evoked. Because these were political debates about economic and financial themes, it is obvious that one cannot expect the mention of economists in parliament to represent a fully grounded recognition of their worth or a detailed assessment of the importance of their works. Members of parliament did not have either the time or the interest – not to mention other attributes that they certainly did not possess – to discourse at length about the authors that they quoted, since they rarely referred correctly to the work that they

were talking about, and even more rarely showed any profound knowledge about these authors through the reproduction or discussion of substantive theoretical or doctrinaire arguments that they had gathered from somewhere.

In this way, the references to economists and political economy as a science that helped the legislature to correctly conduct the affairs of State functioned, above all, as a kind of political guarantee that protected the speakers by providing them with a safety net.

	A. Smith	Say	Bentham	Chevalier	Stuart Mill	Bastiat
Taxation and fiscal policy	16	8	7	4	13	7
Public works, transport and communications	1	-	-	9	3	2
Political and legal framework	4	3	10	6	5	4
Contracts, concessions and monopolies	2	1	4	5	1	3
Foreign trade and customs policy	13	17	5	3	2	6
Currency and banking and financial institutions	6	6	-	14	2	3
Public expenditure and social policies	4	2	11	-	1	-
Trade and the internal market	2	2	3	-	-	-
External public debt	-	-	1	-	-	-
Internal public debt	2	1	-	-	-	1
Budget and state accounts	1	4	-	-	3	4
Colonial administration and policy	5	7	2	-	2	-
State education	1	-	1	1	1	2
Property regime	5	3	10	2	2	1
Labor and employment	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	57	56	48	41	32	30

Table 12. Debates with references to economists by thematic categories

## 5. Main parliamentary speakers

The speeches made by members of parliament and representatives of the government are the raw material inventoried, analyzed and recorded in this database of parliamentary debates on economic and financial themes.

Regardless of the importance of the subject-matters that gave rise to debate and confrontation, the essential concern here is to capture the arguments put forward by the main speakers polarizing parliamentary discussions. In their capacity as members of parliament or ministers with government responsibilities and therefore under an obligation to account for and explain their actions, the speakers are the active presence that frequently dictates the interest and public impact of the debate itself and, in this way, its importance for understanding the problems at issue and helping in the search for a solution.

The personality and personal attributes of the speakers are elements that determine the intensity with which debates develop, with levels of emotion and vehemence that come across quite clearly as one reads the parliamentary gazettes. For this reason, it is undoubtedly important to question and analyze this database with a view to studying the speakers in parliamentary debates, whose presence proved to be fundamental not only for the way in which these same debates were conducted, but also for their eventual outcome.

Some speakers clearly displayed greater parliamentary rhetorical talents than others. The desire, capacity and predisposition to encourage the parliamentary audience to adopt certain stances or take particular decisions are characteristics that distinguish speakers from one another and differentiate between their missions. In all parliamentary sessions, one can clearly see the leadership qualities naturally displayed by some members of parliament, their voices standing out amidst both the peacefulness and the heatedness of the disputes taking place.<sup>6</sup>

*Table 15* shows the most important speakers for the whole of the period under analysis, listing them

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<sup>6</sup> It is now possible to enjoy detailed knowledge of the activity of Portuguese parliamentarians by consulting their collected biographies in Castro 2002 and Mónica 2004.

	<b>Total Debates</b>
ÁVILA, António José de	540
MELO, António Maria de Fontes Pereira de	471
CARVALHO, Mariano Cirilo de	457
MAGALHÃES, José Estêvão Coelho de	394
CARNEIRO, Manuel Borges	361
SILVA, Carlos Bento da	340
PINTO, Agostinho Albano da Silveira	318
MIRANDA, Manuel Gonçalves de	285
FRANCO, Francisco Soares	276
NOGUEIRA, António Cabral de Sá	273

*Table 13. Main speakers (1821-1910)*

according to the number of debates in which they took part. *Tables 14 to 21* show the most frequent speakers for each of the decades.

FRANCO, Francisco Soares	276
MIRANDA, Manuel Gonçalves de	241
BORGES, José Ferreira	212
CASTELO BRANCO, João Maria Soares	196
QUEIRÓS, José Peixoto de Sarmiento	188
FREIRE, Agostinho José	186
TOMÁS, Manuel Fernandes	186
SARMENTO, Alexandre Tomás de Morais	185
MACHADO, Manuel de Serpa	166

*Table 14. Main speakers (1821-1854)*

PINTO, Agostinho Albano da Silveira	311
ÁVILA, António José de	262
MAGALHÃES, José Estêvão Coelho de	227
CAMPOS, José Alexandre de	217
MAGALHÃES, Rodrigo da Fonseca	213
GRANDE, José Maria	200
NOGUEIRA, António Cabral de Sá	198
SILVA, Augusto Xavier da	187
MAGALHÃES, Joaquim António de	169
CASTRO, José Joaquim Gomes de (1st Count of Castro)	168

*Table 15. Main speakers (1855-1850)*

ÁVILA, António José de	235
MELO, António Maria de Fontes Pereira de	227
SILVA, Carlos Bento da	160
MAGALHÃES, José Estêvão Coelho de	153
RIBEIRO, José Maria do Casal	131
ÁVILA, Joaquim Tomás Lobo de (1st Count of Valbom)	92
SOTTO MAIOR, António da Cunha Pereira	88
RIBEIRO, José Silvestre	80
VIEIRA, Rodrigo Nogueira Soares	74
CALDEIRA, António Correia	63

*Table 16. Main speakers (1851-1860)*

SILVA, Carlos Bento da	85
MELO, António Maria de Fontes Pereira de	76
ÁVILA, Joaquim Tomás Lobo de (1st Count of Valbom)	66
NOGUEIRA, António Cabral de Sá	53
SILVA, João António dos Santos e	41
PIMENTEL, António de Serpa	37
ALMEIDA, José de Morais Pinto de	36
CORTE REAL, José Luciano de Castro Pereira	35
ALMEIDA, José de Morais Pinto de	34
RIBEIRO, José Maria do Casal	32

*Table 17. Main speakers (1861-1870)*

CARVALHO, Mariano Cirilo de	158
CUNHA, António José Barros e	137
CORTE REAL, José Luciano de Castro Pereira	104
FREITAS, José Joaquim Rodrigues de	101
PIMENTEL, António de Serpa	90
ARROBAS, António Maria Barreiros	75
MELO, António Augusto Ferreira de (Viscount Moreira Rei)	68
MACHADO, Adriano de Abreu Cardoso	67
FERREIRA, Tomás António Ribeiro	65
MELO, António Maria de Fontes Pereira de	57

*Table 18. Main speakers (1871-1880)*

CARVALHO, Mariano Cirilo de	195
RIBEIRO, Ernesto Rodolfo Hintze	111
CORTE REAL, José Luciano de Castro Pereira	105
NAVARRO, Emídio Júlio	99
CARVALHO, António Maria de	90
CARRILHO, António Maria Pereira	78
ARROIO, João Marcelino	71
FERREIRA, José Dias	69
SOUSA, D. José de Saldanha de Oliveira e	68
CASTELO BRANCO, João Pereira Franco Pinto	67

*Table 19. Main speakers (1881-1890)*

CARVALHO, Mariano Cirilo de	95
CASTELO BRANCO, João Pereira Franco Pinto	72
SOUSA, José Adolfo de Melo e	70
ARROIO, João Marcelino	59
MONTEIRO, Luciano Afonso da Silva	55
SOUSA, António Teixeira de	47
GARCIA, Frederico Ressano	42
BURNAY, Henrique (Count of Burnay)	41
FERREIRA, José Dias	40
BRITO, Elvino José de Sousa e	38

*Table 20. Main speakers (1891-1900)*



SOUSA, António Teixeira de	58
ESPREGUEIRA, Manuel Afonso	55
NOGUEIRA, António Rodrigues	49
SANTOS, João Pinto dos	47
CAMACHO, Manuel Brito	46
CENTENO, António	42
LIMA, José Maria Pereira de	40
RIBEIRO, Ernesto Rodolfo Hintze	39
COSTA, Afonso Augusto da	35
MOREIRA Jr., Manuel António	35

*Table 21. Main speakers (1901-1910)*

## 6. Conclusion

The results presented here are but a small sample of the wide range of different research studies that can be undertaken based on the information contained in the database constructed under the scope of the research project entitled *Economic and financial debates in the Portuguese Parliament (1821-1910)*.

This presentation has also sought to provide some suggestions of possible avenues to be followed in the overall interpretation of the debates recorded. An analysis was made of the fields of information that best served to characterize, in a summarized form, the nature, contents and protagonists of the economic and financial subjects under discussion throughout the different legislatures formed in the course of the constitutional monarchy.

The identification of the date and number of the parliamentary gazette in which each debate is transcribed can be obtained via the research facilities accessible online at the following address:

<http://cisep.iseg.utl.pt/dpef/>

Once you have identified the debates that correspond to the research undertaken, these can also be consulted and read (preferably in a digital format) at the address provided by the Portuguese parliament (Assembleia da República) at:

<http://debates.parlamento.pt/monarquia.asp>

It is hoped that, in the future, it will be possible to make a more direct and functional link between these two addresses. In any case, the research facilities that have already been obtained make it possible to adopt an optimistic stance about the possibility of renewing Portuguese historiography in those fields of study where the study of parliamentary debates is regarded as indispensable or advisable.

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