

# Chapter 11

## Fête in the Factory. Solemnity and Power Among Porto's Industrialists (1945–1974)



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This chapter attempts to forge a link between the phenomenological analysis of social interactions and the historical study of the structures of the social space (Bourdieu 1972). We combine a socio-historical analysis (Noiriel 2006) of the processes of class formation among industrialists in the Porto and North Region of Portugal with an ethnographically inspired historical reconstruction of the universe of encounters (Horowitz and Haney 2008, pp. 254–258; see also Lüdtke 2016, pp. 13–34; Schmitt 2001). We chose to analyse 155 news articles published by the magazine *A Indústria do Norte* ('The Industry of the North', AIN) between 1945 and 1974. The magazine belongs to the most important Portuguese industrialist class association of the time – Associação Industrial Portuense (AIP) – and the period of the analysis corresponds to a significant conjuncture of change in the social and economic fabric of the country, spanning the period between the end of the Second World War and the end of the 'New State' regime in 1974.

The multiple manifestations of the meetings and celebrations between industrialists, industrial workers, State officials and personalities from other institutions are depicted in this magazine and encompass a large variety of events: project presentations, breaking ground on construction sites, inaugurations of new factory installations, company anniversaries, as well as social and celebratory lunches. Formal and informal meetings, workplace gatherings, field trips and awards ceremonies were also covered. Using this inventory, we sought to understand the means by which employers (in)vested – in the full sense of the words – in the cognitive, verbal and corporal schemes that expressed and renewed their prerogatives of authority and, therefore, their situation of relative exceptionalness (Bourdieu 1998, p. 112, 1982). We then confronted these solemn acts with an analysis of the composition of the dominant classes of Porto in 1965. For this purpose, we accessed the data collected

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during the 1960's by the North-American researcher Harry Makler (1969)<sup>1</sup> and, in particular, a survey applied to 171 industrialists belonging to the contiguous districts of Porto, Braga and Aveiro – at the time, three of the most relevant industrial districts in the country. The statistical exploration of the database reveals a specific configuration of relations between economics and politics.

## The Order of the Interactions and Its Context

Solemn occasions are opportune moments for actualising practical and verbal responses from industrialists regarding the challenges presented by the imposition and stabilisation of an appropriate and pertinent social order within their companies. Erving Goffman reminds us that the distinctive feature of ceremonial rules of conduct are precisely that they incessantly recreate, through these trivial interactions, the distances and hierarchies between the members of a given society (1974, pp. 48–49). Pierre Bourdieu emphasises the rites of institution that produce distinctive social groups (Bourdieu 1998, p. 110). During these solemnities, the industrialists elicit performances that are variations within a stylistic scale (Burke 2005, p. 41).

These rites of institution do not arise in a social vacuum (Elias 1987). Therefore, besides understanding the socio-historical context of the country during the 'New State' regime, it is important to recognise the specific imposition of these historical dynamics on the structuration of Porto's industrialists. Following the institutional consolidation of the 'New State', in Portugal, if a single feature could describe the State's initiatives, which were more or less inconsistent, more or less planned, it would be 'the increase of State intervention' (Nunes and Brito 1990, p. 306). Signs of economic *modernity* in the country emerged decisively after the end of World War II, a period that coincided with the proposals and projects leading to the *Development Programs* (idem: 339), beginning with the initiatives subsequent to interventions motivated by the Marshall Plan (Rollo 2007). Although it was a period of high economic growth (Rosas 2000, pp. 335–336), the specialisation of the Portuguese economy still appeared to be marked by inertias (Costa et al. 2010, p. 206). Viewed simply, the mode of industrialisation adopted by the 'New State' was subordinate – although influenced by the circumstantial variations in internal balances of bureaucratic power (Garrido 2010; Pereira 2012) – to the conservative design of the socio-political order: 'a "know how to endure" commanded the economy' (Rosas 2000, p. 56; Ingerson 1984; Patriarca 1995).

Among companies, this economic growth did not have equal consequences, tending to concentrate on a restricted set of businesses, 'which clearly shows that only a small industrial elite retained exclusive control over the economic system,

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<sup>1</sup>The authors want to thank Harry Makler for the consultation of his original survey materials, located at the University of Toronto, and for our contact with Berenica Vejvoda, research data librarian in that institution, whom helped with the access to those archives. The sources were kept anonymised in the statistical analysis here conducted.

and thereby retained exclusivity of influence over the apparatus of power' (Caeiro 2004, p. 218). More broadly, we found evidence of an 'upper class', with high 'concreteness' and 'compression', creating a 'community with common interests and social origins, inbred, with common education and culture', wherein the 'concentration and centralisation of economic power' and university 'over-education' prevails (Martins 2006, pp. 105–109). Note, however, that this oligarchy struggles with territorial cohesion (idem, pp. 110) and internal segmentation determined by links with specialised resources. Under these national circumstances, Porto is, then, frequently represented as the 'capital of work' that, throughout the twentieth century, was 'traditionally liberal, querulous and unruly', particularly its 'liberal bourgeoisie' (Guichard 1994, pp. 560–566).

To investigate the relationships between employer sectors and state and corporative bodies in the mid-1960s, Harry Makler conducted an empirical study on the Portuguese industrial elite. Broadly observing Portuguese businessmen, Makler found a relationship between industrialists' socio-economic origins and political leadership that allowed for the ideological orientations of Northern industrialists to be characterised. He concluded that 'in the north of Portugal, those [industrialists] who occupy public positions were, at a certain point, mayors, council members or other municipal employees rather than holders of national positions'. Such a situation can be partly explained by the 'tendency of the regime throughout the last forty years to fill top political positions with individuals from Lisbon, which would have meant that political aspirants from the north would have had to fulfil their political ambitions at a purely local level' (1979, p. 135).<sup>2</sup>

For their part, industrialists 'with origins in the upper class that [oversaw] Northern companies in traditional and economically more stagnant sectors, such as textiles, food stuffs and wood and cork products, had more of a tendency to occupy corporate positions', comparatively more distant from the New State's centres of political power. It is also worth mentioning that, in the North, the prevailing leadership style is one that is personified, which tends to take on a comparatively 'traditional-authoritarian attitude' in contrast with the 'modern' attitude of their Lisbon counterparts. This more traditional bourgeoisie of Porto, in contrast with the more modern sectors that 'went around the corporate system and penetrated the government by more private and direct means, was only able to satisfy their political aspirations through guilds and municipalities. The 'New State', interested in maintaining a state of maximum political immobility, had an expediency to 'offer controlled political expression to the property-owning elite', thus restricting their access to top positions within the 'New State'. Solemn events, under these conditions, acquired a critical meaning for Porto's industrialists.

Through a systematic analysis of the textual corpus we amassed from the *A Indústria do Norte* (AIN), we identified the structural properties of the frameworks of solemn event interactions between industrialists in Porto during the 'New State'.

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<sup>2</sup>The following quotations are coming from the same source (p. 136, 323, 262, 150, 149).

Firstly, these occasions were opportunities to stage grandiosity. For example, on July 28th 1962, semolina production in Portugal was debuted with the inauguration, in Águas Santas, north of Porto, of the first factory in the country of its kind, a circumstance that was also chosen as an occasion for 'company employees to pay homage to its founders' (AIN, 511, pp. 3–4). Following the 'unveiling of the bronzes' of the entrepreneurs, the 'oldest' employee paid tribute to these figures and explained why the factory workers decided to honour them. The ceremony concluded with applause.

These solemn occasions were indispensable for the constitution and reinforcement of the employer's domination, a hierarchical position that was typically negatively defined or open to accusations of arbitrariness or discretion. In these descriptions, the employer is received festively and with entitlement: 'All the personnel, each of them rigorously dressed in suits for the occasion, gave a joyous appearance to that gathering of factory workers' (AIN, 499, p. 34). There is every advantage in seeing that the workers, who appear to be mere extras in these accounts, occupy a decisive position as the necessary counterparts to the role played by the employers. They only appear to be mute because they have been muted. At best, when speaking, they were living allegories for the whole group they illustrate, not truly individualised figures. Although taking place only periodically, *collective ceremonies* fulfil the function of officially reconstructing the social order (Goffman 1968, p. 160), whereby *ostensive practices* – through which the hierarchies, distances and precedents that organise factory social life are highlighted – must be found in the rites of institution that try to legitimise the discursive and practical pretensions through their literal observation (idem, p. 154).

The simple occurrence of the ceremonies themselves overtly underwrites the premises of the employer's discourse, serving to demonstrate by simply paying tribute, praising and thanking, all marked by routine and ritual, the 'naturalness' of the company's social order, acting thus as a true mechanism of self-affirmation. These employers emerge, then, imbued with the visible confirmation of social value, as they see themselves and are seen through the privileges and demands elicited by these solemnities. For their part, the other participants of these gatherings will accept, in an apparently voluntary and spontaneous fashion, the evident grandiosity and generosity of their employers, admiring and requesting the paternal aura of the 'captain of industry'. They cry tears of gratitude, clap enthusiastically or kneel submissively, feelings that are conveyed in these narratives as authentic reactions to the personified appearance of the figure of the employer. Alternatively, the participants feel anxiety and timidity when they feel close to the presence of the authority, the visceral evocation of a sense of their own place and an intuition of the appropriate limits in their relationship with employers.

Secondly, the participants produce and sublimate the industrialists' identity. On the eve of yet another anniversary of the *National Revolution*, apparently the most appropriate of all dates for paying tribute to the great businessman Delfim Ferreira (at that time, one of the most important in the country), a ceremony was organised to exalt 'his civic virtues and worthiness as an active and entrepreneurial businessman'. This event included the presence of ecclesiastic, civil and military

personalities – and the local working classes. ‘His grateful workers are living at this hour moments of intense joy’. On this day, a series of *acts of tribute and appreciation* marked and ensured the recognition of the possession of a superlative honour (‘exemplary citizen’) by that ‘man of work’: the parade of delegates from local associations and bodies as well as their standards, official greetings, the awarding of a medal of honour, the unveiling of a portrait, the unanimous applause of the popular onlookers and the guard of honour of the Portuguese Legion. This performance of recognition must be done ‘with heart in hand’ to match the honouree’s own *dis-interest* in the charitable act. In accordance with this rhetoric (Skinner 2002, pp. 103–127), this businessman ‘made it his motto to leave behind more benefits than trophies, certain that esteem was worth more than celebrity, consideration more than fame and honour more than glory’ (AIN, 377–378, p. 85).

These solemn occasions are literally an investiture that, from the start, extract the honouree from indifference and indistinction, naming him so as to tear him from anonymity. As such, they establish and solidify the formalities and assumptions of the factory social contract. In short, they institute an identity. ‘It is *to signify* to someone what they are and that they should act accordingly. The indicative, in this case, is an imperative’ (Bourdieu 1998, pp. 113–114). All the enthronements of the industrialist, displaying his positive repute, place upon him, together with the privileges and prerogatives of notoriety, the peremptory obligation to act with purpose. The virtuous personification of the industrialist can, therefore, act as a technology for domesticating the sensibility and activity of workers when accompanied by a distribution of material and symbolic counterparts. Putting it bluntly, ‘recognition creates a duty’ (Weber 1964, p. 195).

Thirdly, these occasions contributed to the integration and, without contradiction, the hierarchisation among the dominant class fractions. The material arrangements and conventional norms that organised an event, which could come to constitute a protocol or label in their codified versions, were oriented to provide a simile of the ideal social order. From the composition of the guest lists; to the arrangement of the tables, platforms and seats of honour, particularly according to the up-down, left-right, front-back or centre-periphery system (‘presidency’, ‘big chair’); to the inclusion, sequence and duration of the speeches or toasts to be given by ‘personalities’, who tend to follow an ascendant or descendant hierarchy (‘opened’, ‘finally spoke’); to the references to names or dates made at the beginning, middle or end of speeches; to the prerogatives and privileges of the founding acts, such as starting the operation of a factory with the push of a button or the pull of a lever, cutting a symbolic ribbon or blessing a factory pavilion; to the occupation of positions within the procession (‘the factory visit has begun’); to the attribution of the demand to wait or, perhaps, the attribution to be waited for (‘awaiting they were’, ‘offered welcoming compliments’) – all of these organisational principles behind the solemn events, evident to those constantly exposed to it, were coherent with the prevailing logics of notoriety and grandeur, or those that were trying to be upheld (for a detailed description of these aspects, see AIN, 520, pp. 40–42). Through their proxemics and pragmatics, these occasions try to summon and

reconstitute, on a small scale, the ‘good society’, the ‘social medium’, all the ‘prominent figures’ and the ‘most representative figures of the country’.

Fourthly, these occasions served the invention of ‘communities of interests’ between ‘leaders and the led’, ‘rulers and the ruled’, ‘employers and employees’, ‘capital and work’. During the visit of the engineer Rogério Martins to the CIFA company on July 2nd 1971, the president of the administrative council of this large, artificial fibre-producing company, Carlos de Sousa Magalhães would share these words to demonstrate the need to fulfil the distinct destinies of those present (AIN, 619, 3). Individual wills must converge upon a ‘work of collective creation’, making it urgent that each and every person understand the sphere of action to which they should cohere to guarantee the success of that ‘collective effort’ (idem, p. 3). Even those apparently innocuous events, such as technical congresses or expert panels, bring important contributions to the consolidation of a collective body of business owners. Physically and symbolically presenting the ‘unity of all’ in spite of their particular and competitive interests, they selected and highlighted common challenges of that sector of activity, translating them into ‘grievances’ and ‘proposals’ collectively shared (idem, pp. 31–33).

As arenas of social interaction used to catch up on the relationships between economy and politics under the ‘New State’, these solemn occasions allowed and stimulated meetings between economic and political figures, accompanied by their respective ‘interpreters’, the statesmen and the industrialists themselves. The representative of State power is burdened with expectations to achieve successful ‘resolutions’ to the ‘problems’ presented by the representative of economic power. For industrialists, these occasions present an opportunity to repay or gather ‘support’, for example, through ‘tributes’ purposefully given to prop up a certain ruling figure. ‘Politics is the art of presence’ (AIN 616, p. 29). We must, in fact, interpret this affirmation of Henrique Veiga de Macedo, given during a visit he made to EFANOR on June 12th 1957 for the company’s 50th anniversary, quite literally. For governmental representatives, the visits served then to spread ideological teachings and carry out a strategy of political affirmation. The affirmation of a current of thought and interest in economic activities, as had occurred with the belief in the virtues of industrial progress that is ‘engineerism’ (Brito 1988), was only realised, in part, by proselytising in the *terrain*.

## Porto’s Industrialists and Their Interests in 1965

Let’s turn to a less phenomenological and more structural perspective. Beyond interactions, social structures rule. Given the presence in the archives at the University of Toronto of the original surveys on Portuguese entrepreneurs carried out by H. Makler in 1965, we had the opportunity to revisit (Burawoy 2003) these materials and proceeded in the consultation of more than 18,000 pages of information gathered in this national representative survey.

**Table 11.1** Themes, variables and number of modalities used in the specific MCA

| Themes                                | Variables   | Number of modalities |
|---------------------------------------|---|----------------------|
| Inscription of the company            | Region<br>Economic sector   | 7                    |
| Economic capital of the industrialist | Annual income   | 4                    |
| Cultural capital of the industrialist | Level of schooling<br>Studies abroad  | 7                    |
| Social capital of the industrialist   | Positions held in other companies<br>Relevance of lobbying activities                             | 5                    |
| Social origins of the industrialist   | Place of birth<br>Relevance of ego's father in the company  | 8                    |
| Company's organisation                | Legal form of the company<br>Privileged form of funding for the company<br>Relevance of engineers | 9                    |

Source: The information displayed is based on H. Makler's 1965 survey (Makler [s.d.](#))

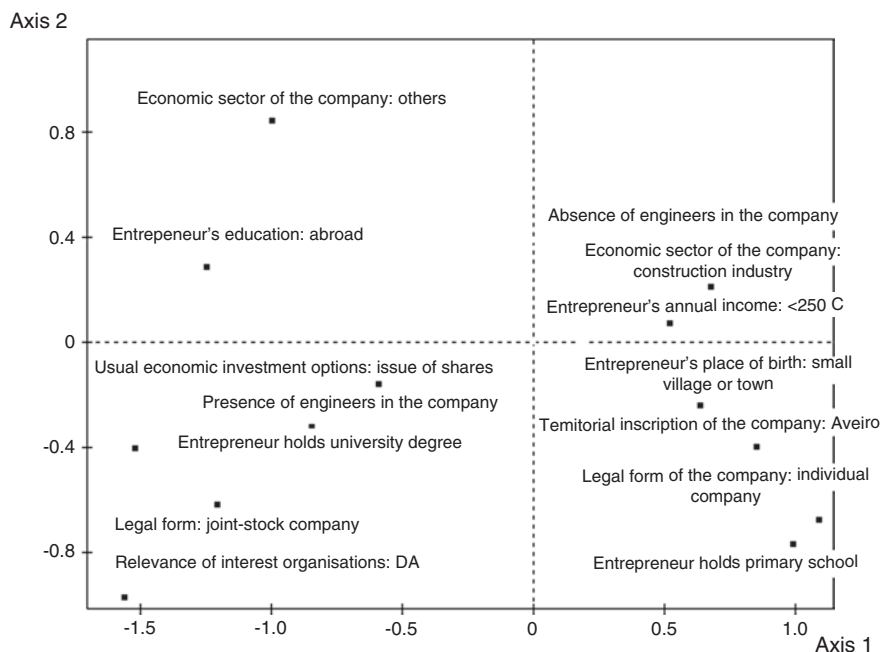
From these sources, we selected 12 variables, belonging to six themes that comprised detailed information about the industrialists and their firms. Besides data about the economic inscription of the firms and their organisations, it was possible to identify meaningful information about the industrialists' economic, cultural and social capital, as well as information about their social origins (see Table 11.1). Using 40 active modalities, the data herein was submitted to a 'specific' Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA) (Le Roux and Rouanet 2010, pp. 61–64).

With this procedure, we defined the social space of the industrialists of the Porto region and its surroundings in 1965 and revealed a well-demarcated configuration of social forces. For the purpose of giving an overview, our reading retains the first two axes of the 'specific' MCA. In this reading, it is possible to combine statistical and sociological interpretability and to show significant divisions within the employers.

The first axis has a modified rate of 39.11%. Its structure is configured around power differences (see Fig. 11.1). On the right side of the figure, we can identify industrialists with a less powerful social positioning: in this region of the space, industrialists have, in relative terms, less economic capital and, in absolute terms, less cultural capital. These industrialists were born in small villages or towns, and their firms are individual companies, operating in the construction industry, in the region of Aveiro, and without engineers in the companies' staff. In the opposite region of the space, industrialists have university degrees, usually obtained abroad. Their firms are modern: they take the legal form of joint-stock companies and include the presence of engineers. For these industrialists, issuing shares is also part of the usual economic investment options.

The second axis has a modified rate of 17.37%. As shown in Fig. 11.2, it separates the industrialists in terms of region, economic sector of activity and social



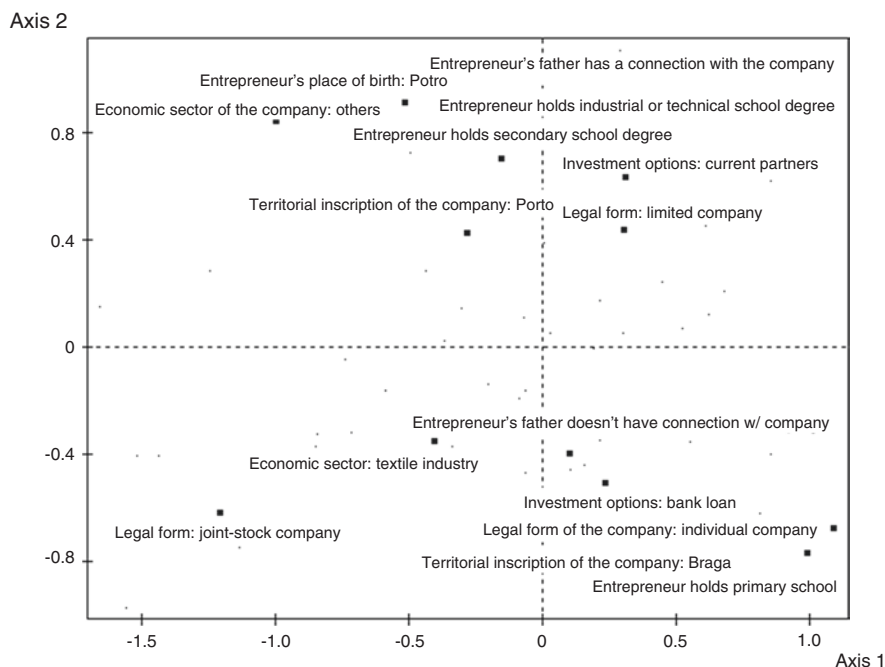


**Fig. 11.1** Axis 1 of the Specific MCA. 14 categories selected to interpret Axis 1 in plane 1–2

background. In the upper region of the figure we can identify industrialists from Porto, working in different sectors of economic activity in the same district. Their companies take the legal form of limited companies and their respective investment strategies involve current business partners. Holding an intermediate level of cultural capital, these industrialists are often the heirs of the enterprises they run. In contrast, in the lower region of the figure, we can identify textile factory owners from the Braga district. Their companies have different configurations (joint-stock companies, but also individual ones) and are highly dependent on bank loans for investment strategies. In addition to reduced cultural capital through their attainment of primary school education only, these industrialists are newcomers to their businesses and have fathers with no ties to their properties.

In short, the social space of the industrialists of Porto is defined by significant social divisions. The first axis presents a clear divide between qualified big factory owners or directors and less qualified small industrialists. Big factory owners and directors are defined by a mode of reproduction dominated by the school. Small industrialists try to win their position and are clearly dependent on family resources and their personal 'initiative'. The second axis involves the specificities of time-space inscriptions of industrial ownership. Established medium-sized industrialists, who inherited their properties, have their businesses in Porto, and recent textile industrialists have theirs in the district of Braga.

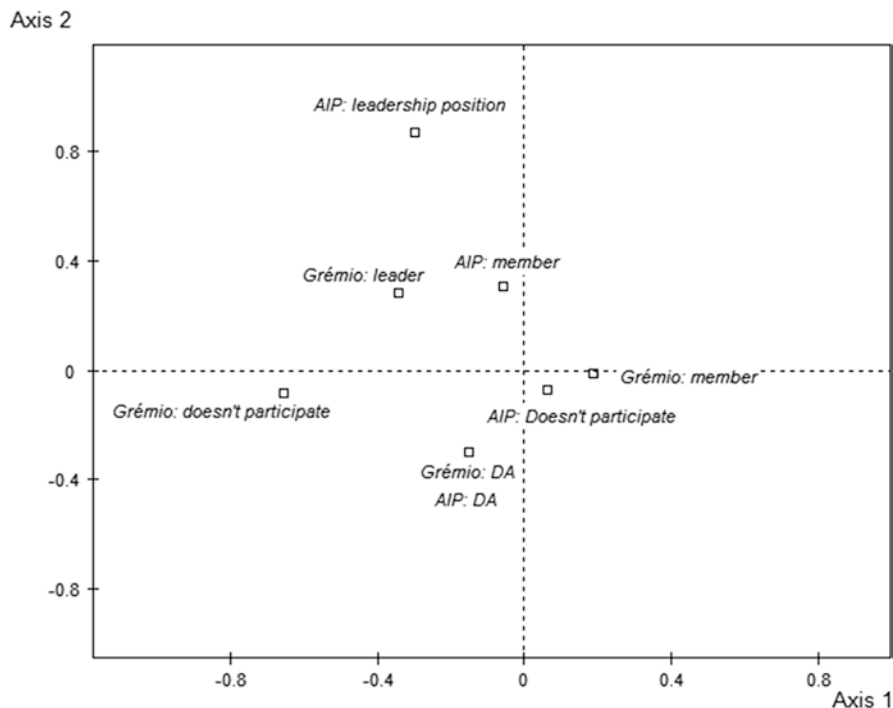




**Fig. 11.2** Axis 2 of the Specific MCA. 15 categories selected to interpret Axis 2 in plane 1–2

The survey also included additional information about the industrialists' interests and associative priorities, among other facets. Figure 11.3 projects in the social space two supplementary variables indicating the industrialists' involvement in the official employers' representative organisation – *Grêmios* –, as well as in the industrialists' association – AIP. Divisions in the social space in terms of power are characterised by notable differences in the involvement with *Grêmios*. Small industrialists are members; big factory owners are not involved or, when involved, take on leadership positions. The divisions between Braga's textile industrialists and Porto's medium-sized industrial heirs are also informed by notable, or large, deviations in this domain. Traditional textile industrialists do not answer to these questions, while Porto's employers are leaders of *Grêmios* as well as members and leaders of AIP. Influence over structures such as the *Grêmios* is a top priority of these same industrialists, as we can see by analysing the information projected in Fig. 11.4.

In brief, in 1965, class associations and their activities have different inscriptions in the social space of the industrialists. The leadership of the *Grêmios* and of class associations such as AIP is part of the priorities of established medium-sized industrialists of regions such as Porto. We can thus see that the transmutations between the economy and politics, as well as the other characteristics associated with factory celebrations, had a marked relationship with the priorities and interests of specific fractions of industrialists, in this case, Porto's established 'intermediate' industrialists. In this context, and for these specific industrialists, true 'insiders' of the city's



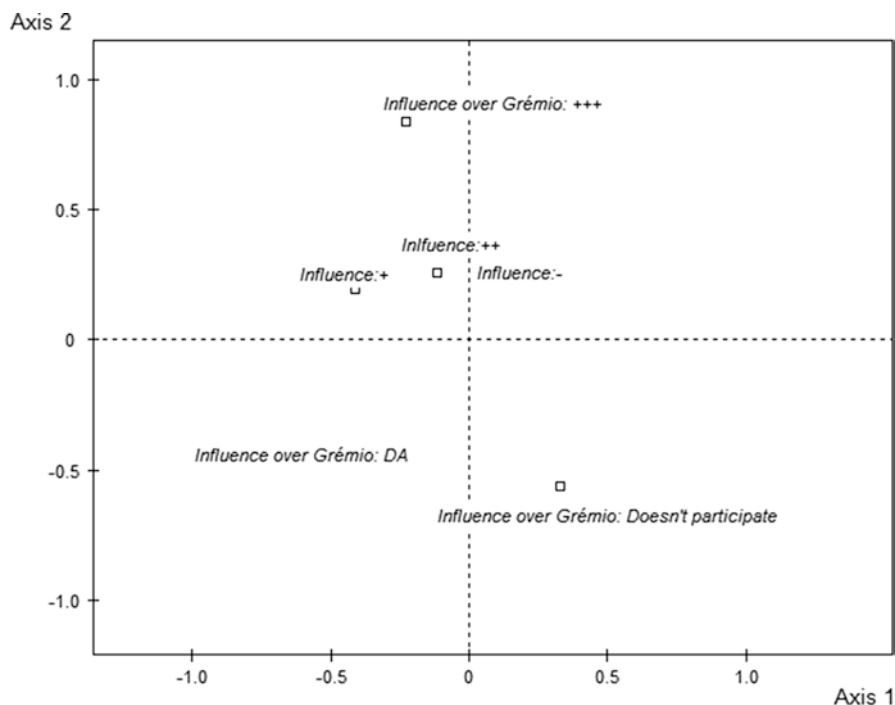
**Fig. 11.3** Involvement in industrialists' representative bodies and associations projected, as supplementary variables, in plane 1–2 of the MCA

business world at the time, factory celebrations offered the means and the circumstances for identifying political priorities and economic opportunities to the New State's officials and representatives.

Monitoring and influencing industrialists' associative and representative structures was, thus, critical. Public ceremonies in the factory gained additional political force.

## Conclusion

Our research into the order of interaction of industrialists' solemn occasions, grants us the possibility of more than simply contextualising these events. Following the line of research outlined by Erving Goffman, we were concerned above all in capturing the *situationality* of the events, that is, 'in passing from that which is simply situated to the situational, which means passing from what is casually inserted into social situations (...) to that which can only happen in face-to-face meetings' (1998, p. 196). At the same time, it is possible to explore the mutual implications between interactional situations and social positions. For understanding the pertinence these



**Fig. 11.4** Perceived importance of the industrialists' need to influence *Grêmios* projected, as supplementary variables, in plane 1–2 of the MCA

occasions have for Porto's industrialists, it is therefore necessary to remember their particular social positioning within the contemporary field of power (Bourdieu 1989). In carrying out these solemn acts, the industrialists express their specific strategies of legitimation and intervention on their contemporary social world, which articulates with the associative and political standings seen in the statistical analysis of the social space. Through the exploration of the *loose coupling* between interaction order and social structures, we can move toward an approximation of the lived reality of these industrialists' that benefits at the same time from the textual hermeneutics of occasions and the statistical analysis of survey and prosopographic databases. In the phrasing of Max Weber, we aspire to articulate and, by doing this, challenge the very idea of their insurmountable separation, the ideographic interpretation and nomothetic explanation about the social experience of Porto's industrialists. This paired research, although it can progress much more in its entanglements in subsequent studies, enables already a mutual compensation of the respective biases originating from an exclusivist use of either archival sources or extensive surveys.

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