

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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GUERREIRO, Manuel Viegas (Querença, Loulé, 1912 - Carnaxide, 1997)

Manuel Viegas Guerreiro was an important Portuguese ethnologist and a follower of the work of Leite de Vasconcelos as well as one of his essential collaborators. The son of Manuel Joaquim Guerreiro and Inácia Gertrude da Conceição, he was born into a rural family and maintained a close relationship throughout his life with his country origins, that were structural in his work.

At the age of three he moved with his parents to Vila Nova de Portimão, where he completed primary school. In 1922 he moved to the city of Faro, where he attended secondary school. The geographical distance, however, did not create an obstacle to maintaining a close relationship with his family. He made multiple visits to Portimão and attended regular family reunions in Querença, where the extended family gathered annually.

These reunions also fed Viegas Guerreiro's interest in folk traditions and rural structures, which resulted, in 1927, in the collection and writing of a study on 'the poems of Mr. Francisco Martins Farias', and later in 1930, in his first publication – an essay on '*O Homem através dos Tempos*' (Man Through the Ages), in the *Comércio de Portimão* newspaper, in which his interest in the issues of anthropology and ethnology was already evident.

In 1931 he completed secondary education with a final grade of 17 points, and the next year he left for Lisbon to continue his studies. Between 1932 and 1936 he studied Classical Philology in the Faculty of Arts and Literature at the University of Lisbon, completing his degree at age 25 with a dissertation on '*A Adivinhação na primitiva epopeia grega e na Eneida. Subsídios*' (Divination in the Early Greek Epic and *Aeneid*. Data), with a final score of 16 points. In the 1936-1937 academic year he completed his first year of teaching practice at the Liceu Normal Pedro Nunes secondary school.

Studying in Lisbon allowed him to come into contact with a network of researchers and scholars who would represent a significant influence on his future work. A colleague of Orlando Ribeiro (1911-1997), the two joined the circles led by Rodrigues Lapa (1897-1989), Agostinho da Silva (1906-1994), Alberto Araújo (1909-1955) and Leite de Vasconcelos (1858 -1941), who would become Guerreiro's mentor.

In August and September of 1937 he carried out the first military officer's course at the Machine Gun Barracks (*Quartel de Metralhadoras I*) in Lisbon, which extended to a second course, from August to October 1938. During that academic year, he taught at the *Escola Industrial de Marquês de Pombal* in Lisbon, and in late 1938 he returned for the second year of teaching practice at *Liceu Pedro Nunes*, where he later passed the state examination for teachers, with the defence of a research paper on Sá de Miranda, obtaining a final score of 16 points.



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His teaching career led him to many parts of the country, including: Santarém, where he taught at *Liceu Nacional*; Braga, at the *Liceu Nacional Sa de Miranda*; Lisbon again, at the *Liceu Nacional Passos Manuel*; and Lamego, at the *Liceu Latino Coelho*, where he became a permanent teacher in February 1940. That same year his teaching activity was suspended once again due to mandatory military service, first in Mafra and then in Lagos.

In 1941, according to the Portuguese Government Gazette of 6 July, he received a grant to 'assist Dr. Leite de Vasconcelos' in his literary work, but did not end up using it, continuing nevertheless to work actively with his professor. That same year, he accompanied his sister in her move to Lisbon, returning to the city and helping her finance her studies. In March he took over the professorship at the Military College, where he worked until September 1944, teaching simultaneously at the *Colégio Infante de Sagres* school. That same year he moved back to the Algarve, establishing himself as a professor in the *Liceu* in Faro, where he remained until 1948, the year he became a teacher at the *Liceu de Diogo Cão* in Sá da Bandeira, Angola.

During the 1940s, influenced by his colleague and friend Agostinho da Silva (who at that time was in exile in Uruguay) he considered immigrating to South America, however his destination ended up being the African continent. On that first trip to Angola he became acquainted with Catholic missionary Carlos Estermann (1896-1976), a leading researcher on African ethnic cultures, in particular Angolan culture, and whose work formed a fundamental influence on the research of Viegas Guerreiro.

His teaching work in Sá da Bandeira allowed him to create a foundation from which he organized a series of trips within Africa, where he had the opportunity to develop his observation skills, collect materials and record the oral and literary traditions of the populations with whom he came into contact. The next year, this research was translated into the publication of his first articles on Africa: 'Caçada aos elefantes' (Hunt for Elephants) in *Portugal em África. Revista de cultura missionária* (1950) and 'Relatório da excursão de estudo realizada de 23 a 30 de Setembro de 1949' (Report on Study Excursion from 23-30 September 1949) in Luanda's *Revista de Ensino* (1950). That year he also went back to Portugal, returning to his teaching position at the *Liceu de Faro*.

In 1953 he returned to Lisbon, living in Paço de Arcos and re-establishing the contacts he had made during his student years, while holding the position of permanent teacher at the *Liceu de Oeiras*, where he remained until 1970. The following year, in 1954, he was invited by his colleague Orlando Ribeiro to collaborate in the Center for Geographical Studies at the University of Lisbon, which had been created the previous year. In 1955, after a proposal by the same friend, he was awarded a grant from the Institute of High Culture for the ordering and publication of Leite de Vasconcelos' manuscripts, a project he had already begun before his teacher's death, and that would also be complemented by the publication of a series of biographical notes (he was the author of the 'José Leite de Vasconcelos' entries in *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, directed by Joel Serrão and in the *Enciclopédia Luso-Brasileira de Cultura*).

In 1955 he published *Contos Populares Portugueses* (Popular Portuguese Tales), the result of ethnographic work he would advance over the following years and which resulted in the compilation, organisation and publication, in 1956, of the fourth volume of the *Etnografia Portuguesa* (Portuguese Ethnography), a collection started by Leite de Vasconcelos, and in the 1957 edition of *Adivinhas Portuguesas* (Portuguese Riddles). That year he also became assistant to Jorge Dias (1907-1973) in the



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Missão de Estudos das Minorias Étnicas do Ultramar (Study Tour of Overseas Ethnic Minorities), giving him the opportunity to develop his research and data collection that would allow him to promote and coordinate the execution of important workshops on African ethnography throughout the 1960s, and to structure and consolidate some of the key studies on this issue, particularly those concerning the specific cases of Angola and Mozambique (such as *Conto maconde de tema universal*, 'Universal-theme Makonde Tales' in 1962, *Rudimentos de língua maconde*, 'Basics of the Makonde Language' in 1963 or *Os Macondes de Moçambique Sabedoria, Língua, Literatura e Jogos*, 'The Makonde of Mozambique. Wisdom, Language, Literature and Games' in 1966).

In the 1960s he also cultivated interdepartmental studies at the University of Lisbon's Faculty of Arts and Literature, becoming closely acquainted and working with names like Ruben Andersen Leitão (1920-1975), Maria de Lourdes Belchior (1923-1999) and Luís Lindley Cintra (1925-1991). In 1966 he was chair of General Ethnology and Regional Ethnology at the Faculty of Arts and Literature, and definitively left secondary school teaching. In 1969 he defended, at the same school, his doctoral dissertation in Ethnology on the *'Khú Bushmen of Angola. Ethnographic study*, with a score of 19.

The following year he completed the exams for the position of Extraordinary Professor of Ethnology, and in 1971 he took over the position of full professor. In 1973 he was responsible for the creation, within the Centre for Geographical Studies of the National Institute of Scientific Research, of the "Recolha e Estudo de Literatura Popular" (Collection and Study of Popular Literature) line of research, constituting an extended team of collaborators, including scholars such as Lindley Cintra, Maria Aliete Galhoz (born 1929), Paul Caratão Soromenho (1912-1985), Antonio Machado Guerreiro (1919-2007) and Michel Giacometti (1929-1990). With this team he coordinated an important project collecting oral and musical traditions in Portugal.

He was also awarded the Prémio Ocidente in 1973. Primarily from ethnological and anthropological perspectives, he structured an important contribution to contemporary Portuguese historiography, reflecting on the issue of Jewish and Islamic communities in the history of Portugal (*Dicionário de História de Portugal*, 'Dictionary of Portuguese History', 1965) and also working on the history of the Age of Discovery, particularly on the approximation to new cultures, which resulted in the publication of works such as *Carta a El-Rei Dom Manuel sobre o achamento do Brasil*, (Letter to King Dom Manuel on the discovery of Brazil) in 1974 or *Carta do Achamento das Antilhas 15 de Fevereiro – 14 de Março de 1493*, (Letter on the Discovery of the West Indies, 15 February) in 1992.

In 1974 he cooperated on the restructuring of the Faculty of Arts and Literature at the University of Lisbon motivated by the Carnation Revolution, taking a leading role in initiatives such as the creation of the non-degree course in Anthropology and of the 'Student Civic Service', under which dozens of young university students actively participated in the national collection of ethnographic sources (which would later be integrated into the current Labour Museum in Setúbal). During this period he was also director of the Dr. Leite de Vasconcelos Ethnological Museum and promoted the 'Work and Culture Plan', structured on the systematisation of various components of popular culture, with a special regard for orality, since he argued that the spoken word "is the miracle of the intelligence that governs the world, the divine communication between God and men, and among themselves. It is order in chaos, the world made whole, man made God" (*Para a História da Literatura Portuguesa*, 'For the History of Portuguese Literature, 1978, 12). That work



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was a major influence on the creation, in 1976, of the Traditional Oral Literature subject at the Faculty of Arts and Literature, and key to the publication, the same year, of the *Guia de Recolha de Literatura Popular* (Guide to Collecting Folk Literature) and, in 1978, of the work *Para a História da Literatura Popular Portuguesa*, grounded in the understanding of this literature as one that 'runs between the people, the entire literary work that passes through it, with much or little delay, recent or ancient [...] anonymous and that which has a name, given orally or in writing. [Which] does not require, let it be repeated, the stamp of time, the traditional seal, but that has been or is authentic, living, functional.' (*Para a História da Literatura Portuguesa*, 1978, 8).

In the early 1980s, along with Maria de Lourdes Belchior and Lindley Cintra, he recovered the work of Leite de Vasconcelos between 1887 and 1943 and created the *Nova Série* of the *Revista Lusitana* magazine, structured around the themes of Portuguese philology and ethnology.

In 1982, when he was seventy years old, he requested his retirement, maintaining, however, a constant presence in the Faculty of Arts and Literature and continuing his research. His retirement did not, therefore, represent a departure from teaching.

In 1984 he travelled to Brazil at the invitation of the Federal University of Bahia, to teach a course on Portuguese Folk Literature and in 1985 he travelled to Cape Verde, where he taught a course on cultural anthropology. The following year he was in charge of arranging the first Portuguese-French Colloquium on 'Popular - Traditional - Oral Literature', held at the Portuguese Cultural Centre in Paris and in 1987 continued that momentum with the organisation, at the Modern Art Centre of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, of a Colloquium on 'Portuguese Folk Literature and Theory of Oral - Traditional - Popular Literature'.

In 1986 he published *Temas de Antropologia em Oliveira Martins*, where he developed his historical analysis, with a strong anthropological inclination, through a grounded critique of the 'systematic evolutionism' of Oliveira Martins. Viegas Guerreiro counterposed the need for recognition of the multiplicity of processes of cultural development (not necessarily continuously progressive) and the importance of individual behaviour as an engine of change to the linearity of that evolutionary perspective. Completely rejecting the use of the concept of 'race', he condemned the way 'scientific progress of European cultures brought about, naturally, a deep conviction of superiority, a rambling ethnocentrism, which came to fruition in the most heinous forms of racism' (*Temas de Antropologia em Oliveira Martins*, 1986, 51), defending the autonomy of the concepts of race, culture, religion and morals, and, above all, detaching them from any kind of causal or deterministic relationship. He advocated the study of culture purged of any kind of value judgment, understood as an addiction of European ethnocentrism.

In 1988 he finished editing *Etnografia Portuguesa* ('Portuguese Ethnography', started in 1933), publishing the 10th volume of the work, and in the same year, along with Agostinho da Silva, he created the 'Association of General Non-Degree Studies'. Looking to promote free public education, Viegas Guerreiro took over the Association and actively participated throughout the following years in the activities it promoted, resulting in multiple conferences in cooperation with various local authorities and universities.

In 1993, following his work on the 'Collection and Study of Folk Literature', he was responsible for founding the Centre for Portuguese Folk Traditions. In the Azores in 1995, at the age of eighty-three, he produced his final last research paper, entitled *A Ilha de São Jorge: uma monografia* (São Jorge Island: a



monograph). On 1 May 1997, following a stroke that had left him unable to work, he died at Carnaxide Hospital.

He was a corresponding member of the Brazilian Association of Folklore (since 1967), corresponding associate of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon (elected in 1976) and later Full Scholar of the Arts and Literature of the same Academy (in 1989). Currently, of the various institutions that inherited Viegas Guerreiro's research, three stand out for explicitly honouring his thinking and his name: the Professor Manuel Viegas Guerreiro Centre for Portuguese Folk Traditions, a research unit of the Faculty of Arts and Literature at the University of Lisbon, the Manuel Viegas Guerreiro Centre for African Studies, a research center in the same Faculty, and finally, the Manuel Viegas Guerreiro Foundation, created in 2000 and whose headquarters is located in the birthplace of its namesake, Querença.

Works by Manuel Viegas Guerreiro: *Contos populares portugueses* (Selection and Preface), Lisbon, 1955; *Adivinhas Portuguesas* (Selection and Preface), Lisbon, 1957; *Conto maconde de tema universal*, Lisbon, 1962; *Rudimentos da língua maconde*, Lourenço Marques, 1963; *Os Macondes de Moçambique. Sabedoria, língua, literatura e jogos*, Lisbon, 1966; *Bochimanês 'Khú de Angola: estudo etnográfico*, Lisbon, 1968; *Guia de Recolha de Literatura Popular*, Lisboa, 1976; *Para a História da Literatura Portuguesa*, Lisbon, 1978; *Pitões das Júnias: esboço de monografia etnográfica*, Lisbon, 1981; *Temas de Antropologia em Oliveira Martins*, Lisbon, 1986; J. Leite de Vasconcelos - *Etnografia Portuguesa: tentame de sistematização*. Volumes IV to X are organised by Manuel Viegas Guerreiro, with Alda da Silva Soromenho, Paulo Caratão Soromenho and Orlando Ribeiro, Lisbon, 1933-1985.

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APOIOS:

