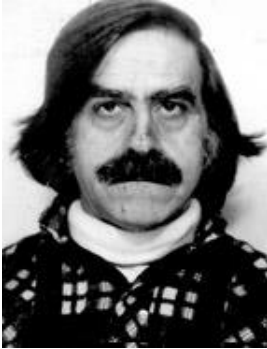


DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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SARAIVA, António José (Leiria, 1917 - Lisbon, 1993)

António José Saraiva, teacher and literary critic, cultural historian, theoretician of the aesthetic phenomenon, political scientist and essayist was one of the most prominent, controversial and surprising public figures in the Portuguese cultural landscape for fifty years. Both within and beyond the scope of research and teaching, he delivered conferences, granted interviews, ignited, or was at the centre of highly impactful controversies that indelibly marked the country's cultural agenda. He was an active citizen from an early age, bearing the profile of a gifted researcher endowed with a unique theoretical and analytical insight and remarkable creative discipline, without enclosing himself in the elitist haven of highbrow culture. His varied, extensive critical activity resulted in a highly erudite and problematic work of a historical-literary, didactic, and doctrinal nature, occasionally verging on philosophical and political thought. Concomitantly, he published extensively in different newspapers and magazines, part of which was later published as a book, and attracted the readership of cultured environments and large circles. He clearly made a multifaceted cultural effort to endure a tough and frequently distressing life trajectory, a feature that should not be overlooked in view of its defining effect.

The first major segment of such trajectory, undoubtedly the most extensive and turbulent (1917-1960), included the initial cycles of primary socialisation and academic education. The impact of the former, the cycle of an urban childhood in the Extremadura province with occasional but intense rural experiences, was traceable or subtly implied like an unmistakable watermark in the convolutions of an often gruelling intellectual path. Both periods, distinct phases of human, cultural and civic growth, preceded his entry into public life and political and party engagement. Upon completion of his academic education, new contexts moulded the long period of his life in Portugal *intra muros*, cut short by expatriation.

.As for the more distant milestones of the impressive socialisation of the historian and politician he was to become, it should be noted that having barely reached adolescence and while still at secondary school, he was challenged by and overcame his first major hurdle: Catholic traditionalism. In this diffuse moment of discovery of the world's complex order and in view of his own strict social and family background, this was an unequivocal demonstration of autonomy, which would last for many years as a predominant trait of his



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

character. He dispensed, seemingly forever, with the world view matrix that had guided him from a sickly and sheltered childhood to a sober, studious, and tranquil youth. As a historian, in several of his texts he later associated these idiosyncratic periods with the mentality and life of inland Beira, from where his family had originated. There is little to report on the period he spent in Queirozian Leiria up to the age of fifteen, punctuated by rare, albeit lengthy and invigorating rural and mountain experiences. During the implementation of the Estado Novo [New State], he moved with his family to Lisbon where he completed secondary school, and where he experienced a different daily pace and a broader, far more troubled existence. His daily life and studies were closely supervised by his father, a scholar in Humanities and head of the secondary schools he attended. A.J.S. established new contacts in Lisbon, widened his readings, and encountered a larger set of mental and ideological alternatives.

His intellectualised perception of such new experiences brought him closer to the rationalist thinking of António Sérgio, a renowned essayist and neo-Kantian whose influence had a swift and efficient emancipatory effect on Saraiva's malleable psychological organisation. This new angle of perception contributed not only to his definitive withdrawal from the "ethical Catholicism" instilled in him by his mother, but it also undermined some of his other certainties. It freed him rapidly, definitively or partially, but undoubtedly for a long period, from the burden of ancestral atavism and old-fashioned theoretical convictions – both the terms and meanings are his own – from Bergson's intuition theory oddly tinted by the positivism of Maurras and Teófilo Braga, this latter influence translated into a poor, confrontational Jacobite rhetoric. From then on, he turned his back on that ideological corpus, viewed at the time as wholly obsolete, and believed himself capable of ascending to the domain of clear ideas "in this our first or second intellectual initiation" (Para a história da cultura em Portugal [Towards the history of culture in Portugal] (1946), preface to the 3rd edition. (1969), 4th ed. (1972), p.19).

He himself acknowledged that his adoption of Marx's theory had been rendered easy by having embraced António Sérgio's ideas as a young man.. His first tentative steps in political activism had been taken discreetly as a student at the Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa [Faculty of Arts of Lisbon] from where he graduated in Romance Philology in 1938 with a laureate thesis on Bernardim Ribeiro - Ensaio sobre a obra de Bernardim Ribeiro [Essay on the work of Bernardim Ribeiro] (1941). Upon completion of his teacher training at the Liceu Pedro Nunes, he returned to the Faculdade de Letras as a teacher (1941), in a position that would allow him to envisage a secure and comfortable career. He submitted his doctoral thesis on Gil Vicente e o fim do teatro medieval [Gil Vicente and the end of mediaeval drama] in 1942 following the same analytical perspective he had used in the essay on Bernardim Ribeiro, and conceptually confined to the hermeneutics of German tradition and to the influence of J. Huizinga's studies on the same period. Notwithstanding his brilliant beginning as a university teacher, the following year he lost his university position for deontological reasons due to pedagogical differences with his supervisor. As a result, he was forced to teach at secondary level, first at the Liceu Passos Manuel in Lisbon (1944-1945), and then at the Liceu Gonçalo Velho in Viana do Castelo (1945-1949). In 1949, his growing commitment to the opposition of Salazar's authoritarian regime culminated in his



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

persecution and arrest. At the time he was member of the illegalised Partido Comunista Português [Portuguese Communist Party] having joined the party in 1944 with the aid of Óscar Lopes, a fellow trainee and philologist. Following his arrest in 1949, and as a means of further retaliation, a government decree expelled him definitively from public and private teaching. This dealt another severe blow to his expectations, one which affected him financially and psychologically, as unequivocally witnessed. Despite his predicament as a result of his expulsion from the teaching profession, A. J Saraiva enjoyed a prestigious reputation, not only among the intelligentsia not directly linked to the regime, but also in other sectors.

From then on, following a period of severe emotional exhaustion in this new and troubled period of his life, he immersed himself in research and writing, two activities that enabled him to support the family he had formed in the interim. Among other didactic or literary criticism books, he began an ambitious research project which culminated in *História da Cultura em Portugal* [History of Culture in Portugal] (3 vols. I, 1950; II, 1955 and III, 1962), undoubtedly his opus magnum and one of the main achievements of mid-twentieth century Portuguese historiography. The findings of previous general or specialised research were used in this study as was the non-specified collaboration of Jorge de Macedo, Luís de Albuquerque and Óscar Lopes in the first two volumes. Both the above-mentioned works on Bernardim Ribeiro and Gil Vicente and the first synthesis on the *Inquisição Portuguesa* [Portuguese Inquisition] (1953) featured in this research. The study also benefitted greatly from the first general approach that had marked the *História da Literatura Portuguesa* [History of Portuguese Literature] (1949), which went on to boast regular editions. This latter text was in turn influenced by the more extensive chapters written against the framework of a wide historical-literary scenario co-authored with Óscar Lopes, *História da Literatura Portuguesa* (1954), his long-standing friend, party comrade and interlocutor. It is particularly noteworthy that this is the most edited, disseminated, and influential work in the field, constituting, despite its underlying sociologism but also perhaps precisely because of it, a breath of critical renewal that shaped the national literary canon in the second half of the 20th century. It should also be noted that the above-mentioned personal *História da Cultura em Portugal*, an extensive, cultural, sociological, and ideological-literary analysis, included some of the findings which had already been discussed in *Para a história da cultura ...* (1946). This collection offered a compilation of texts on the sociology of literature, the epic of Camões – one of the Renaissance writers on whose work A.J. Saraiva had written innovative critical analyses – and an essay on Almeida Garrett, as well as the findings of the first in-depth research inquiries into the work of Oliveira Martins. The latter, a pillar of the *Geração de 70* [the Generation of 1870], was the great historical-literary passion of A. J. Saraiva throughout his life which was characterised by intense camaraderie with the greatest figures of national literature and a predilection for nineteenth-century masters. In that highly productive decade of 1940, among other less celebrated texts, he also published the following works on those very same writers: *As ideias de Eça de Queirós* [The ideas of Eça de Queirós] (1946), a book which was awarded a prize by the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa [the Lisbon Academy of Sciences]; *A evolução do teatro de Garrett* (1948) [The evolution of Garrett's drama]; *Herculano e o liberalismo*



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

em Portugal [Herculano and liberalism in Portugal] (1949); A obra de Júlio Dinis e a sua época [The work of Júlio Dinis and his era] (1949).

As might have been predicted, and as illustrated in some of Saraiva's previous analyses in which the attempt to establish a methodological shift and a new conceptual strategy was already perceptible, the vast trilogy devoted to the culture of a European multi-secular country with diverse and premature transcontinental acculturations was framed by the principles and methods of Marxist sociologism. He then resorted to general history for which, from an evolutionistic angle, he provided a broad introductory framework. Later, once disconnected from the social and economic paradigm of a dialectical matrix, Saraiva rejected this work. However, José Mattoso, the historian who offered the best appraisal of Saraiva's contribution to historiography, encourages the reader to dismiss this radical attitude by emphasising the renewal effect of the sociological contextualisation that Saraiva's works brought to historical-literary analysis ("António José Saraiva", *Penélope*... no. 12, pp. 129-132).

Yet it should also be noted that those concepts and methods were filtered by his awareness that the text could not be reduced to an aesthetic manifestation. A text where fiction and reality, imagination and history are mingled in a magma of intuitions and reasonings, and where the collective whole is characterised by the plight or formal irreverence inherent to the creative act – the indelible impression of subjectivity – comprehending ipso facto a "diversity of possible coherences", allows for a broad, renewed variety of interpretations. Overall, this led to the creator of such an impressive Portuguese historical and cultural production being ranked alongside the literary critics and social historians who approached the work of art devoid of any strict monochromatic and mechanistic perspective. He was therefore convinced that the reception of a text, in other words, its reader and interpreter, was per se, a constituent entity of the work's actual recreation and survival. This was not only viewed as writing capable of inducing sensory delight but also as a source of intellectual pleasure in the form of an instrument used to understand the world in its permanent and unpredictable reconfiguration (*Ser ou não ser arte... [To be or not to be art...]* (1993), pp. 74 and passim). These viewpoints were compiled in an anthology between 1959 and 1973. This understanding was thus imbued with all the diffuse conceptual influx of Husserlian phenomenology and of its proliferating space of emotional experiences, as well as the theories that followed, particularly post-Heidegger's transcendentalism, another of the implicit critical frameworks of Saraiva's rigorous aesthetic-literary pattern. On the other hand, his academic and principal hermeneutics and linguistics background was also evidenced and thus, his sensitivity to the multi-vectorial tessitura of the imaginary expressed in literature and of the polysemic density of the word, an obscure and disturbing domain of the being, the raw material of the writer and poet.

However, as far as production of a doctrinal nature and the sphere of social political realities are concerned, themselves the domain of denotative discourse, a rigorous methodological standard was called for, as well as the strictest univocity when formulating a concept or constructing an interpretation proposal. Thus, "... terms must be rigorously defined, and their connections painstakingly inspected" (*ibid.* p. 38). In other words, upon



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

careful consideration and by way of an appraisal, these stances, as suggested above, placed Saraiva in a rather heterodox ideological position vis a vis the “ordinary” version of historical materialism as regards both the deterministic view of the cultural sphere and the uncontrollable finalism and positivism of the doctrine. And contrary to what one might be led to assume, as will be seen anon, some conjectural programmatic stances adopted in his post-university years in the context of harsh political, doctrinal, and intra-party fighting proved to have the same effect. Indeed, alongside the impressive afore-mentioned discursive collection—rarely can any author boast such remarkable and vast work at such an early age—the above-mentioned highly controversial writings were included in this cycle of historiographical and critical work, conferring upon him, within the space of almost two decades, the status of maître-à-penser of the national Marxist left wing.

Among Saraiva’s key theoretical and historiographical skirmishes in this troubled period, for which he used the *Seara Nova* (Lisboa) and *Vértice* (Coimbra) cultural journals as his main editorial platform, the controversies leading to his clashes with Jacinto do Prado Coelho and João Gaspar Simões (1945-1948) are worthy of mention. He accused these historians and literary critics of aesthetic idealism, psychologism, and mysticism, among other supposed or real weaknesses. He had used the same perspective to deconstruct the “mystical Hegelianism” of the mature work of Oliveira Martins during the period the latter had engulfed himself in Schopenhauer’s final and bleak pessimism. The ideology of a renegade, it may be said, quite aloof from his former youthful, euphoric, anti-capitalist, Proudhonian radicalism. Adopting the very same line of interpretation, Saraiva, still in his youth, had detected an analogous philosophical scepticism with a strong conservative tendency in the late works of Eça de Queirós and Ramalho Ortigão. (*Crónicas [Chronicles]*, 2004, pp. 64-68).

However, his doctrinal scrutiny reached its climax and resonated across educated circles in the sour exchange of texts with his former ideological mentor António Sérgio. In his most lengthy response to António Sérgio, *O caprichismo teórico do sr. António Sérgio [The theoretical whims of Mr. A. Sérgio]* (1952), an epigonic and therefore ironic title in itself, Saraiva used both the most forceful and most subtle arguments to target the ambiguity and theoretical contradictions of the thinker, with particular emphasis on the gnoseological dichotomy implicit in the subject-object relationship which, at the time, was a sore point in all the debates on the theory of knowledge. He was also involved in another controversy during that troubled period that extended well into the first half of the 1950s and which ignited the very intellectual cénacle to which he belonged from 1952 onwards. His minority position, Zhdanovian in tendency, eventually garnered the approval of Álvaro Cunhal (António Vale), incarcerated at the time in a Lisbon prison, and who had already gained considerable political prominence among his fellow party members (J. Pacheco Pereira, Álvaro Cunhal. *Uma biografia... [Álvaro Cunhal. A biography]* (2005), vol. 3, pp. 219-262).

Several years after this controversy, in the late 1950s, while he was preparing the last volume of *História da Cultura [The History of Culture]* (1962) and a new essay, *Dicionário Crítico ... [A Critical Dictionary...]* (1960)—one of the most ambiguously insinuating pieces to emerge from his quill which rapidly soared to the status of



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

theoretical catechism amongst his admirers and comrades— for a variety of reasons he came to the difficult decision of leaving the country. Undoubtedly, the relentless political and professional persecution to which he had been consistently subjected prevailed amongst such reasons.

In 1960, having been granted support by the French university, he took up residence in Paris, the city to which he had travelled in the autumn of the previous year. It was there that he encountered one of the liveliest and most liberating spaces in the developed world for cultural reflection and ideological debate, and against this background that a new segment of his life path would take root in terms of ideas and research and at a social and affective level (1960-1974). It may be said that his life was divided into two cycles. The first included his French exile (1960-1970), marked by the vast recycling of theories and information, followed by his much wished-for return to university teaching in Holland (1970-1974). A novel experience, removed from the Catholic-Latin world and mentality, where he experienced other forms of sociability and the coarse Nordic liberalism rooted in Protestantism and subjugated to Orwellian bureaucracy (...Correspondência [...Correspondence] (2004), pp. 384-385)

It is worth noting that during his decisive French cycle he severed ties with Marxist militancy and ideology, the foundations of which had already been shaken since the 20th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) (1956) when the crimes committed under Stalin and his personality cult had been exposed. For Saraiva, this had given rise to a gradual but steady fading from his impatient and inquisitive mind of the vague hopes he had held for a collectivist society. The principle of democratic centralism upon which he had based his belief in the democratic nature of real socialism regimes had been made forcibly clear to him by comparison with the French democracy as an endocentric fallacy which had shattered the illusion of shared decision-making powers with the joint community of activists and citizens. Within this framework, and in the field of historical-literary analysis, political and ideological dissidence steered him away from his erstwhile sociologism. Likewise, his party activism ended in 1962 when he formally severed all ties with the Communist Party, following his second visit to the USSR, on the pretext of a censorial episode in Moscow involving A. Cunhal, the party secretary general, under Soviet orders. By distancing himself from that political ideology after almost twenty years of essentially ideological activism, he became embittered by the isolation and ostracism imposed by parties of the same ideological spectrum on those who dared to think without observing official directives .

In France, as a researcher he had initially been connected to the Collège de France (1960), moving the following year to the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (C. N. R. S). In 1966, as a result of theoretical contentions within the circle of renowned Hispanist Marcel Bataillon's protégées, Saraiva lost both his trust in and connection to the institution. He survived a year without support, focusing on studying and writing, only to experience yet another traumatising event as head of the Liga Portuguesa de Ensino [Portuguese League of Education], one that re-weakened his already fragile and hypersensitive psychological makeup. The Liga Portuguesa de Ensino was a cultural association devoted mainly to the civic education of



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

Portuguese immigrants in the Paris area, and a breeding ground for immature young men divided by distinct and often conflicting left-wing ideologies. From then onwards, Saraiva was determined to leave France, but he was reluctant to accept the several invitations from universities in Brazil because of the distance from his home country imposed by the Atlantic, despite his continued vocation to teach.

He continued his research in the École Pratique des Hautes Études (E. P. H. E - 5e section), the embryo of the future École des Hautes Études en Science Sociales (E. H. S. S.), under Fernand Braudel, with whom he shared mutual admiration. His research was cut short in 1969, presumably by the hand of Israel S. Révah, who had already succeeded in having Saraiva removed from the C.N.R.S. and who had managed to poison the E.P.H.E against him. He was once again confronted with a critical situation and considered accepting the University of Brasilia's invitation, among several other teaching positions he had been offered outside Europe. However, decades after his removal from teaching, he won an international tender and was able to resume his teaching activity as head of the Department of Portuguese Studies of the University of Amsterdam (1971-1974).

He continued to visit France regularly, all the while securing active collaboration with Portuguese newspapers and journals, having taken a keen interest in the work of António Vieira and the Baroque. The findings of his research were published regularly in diverse publications, and several years later were compiled in Brazil under the title *O discurso engenhoso* [The ingenious speech] (1980). In the highly inspiring 1960s, he also published mainly literary criticism essays in acclaimed journals in Paris (*Temps Modernes*, *Annales E S.C*, *Poétique*). Additionally, he prepared other works among which the updated reedition of the 1953 book on the *Tribunal do Santo Ofício* [the Inquisition Court] which was published under the title *Inquisição e Cristãos novos* [The Inquisition and the New Christians] (1969), his new and resounding editorial success. In the first edition of this book, his discussion of the objectives and mechanisms of the Inquisition had been approached from an economic viewpoint and, surprisingly enough, this was not altered in the second edition except for a timid hint at Freudian analysis. This may be seen as a remnant of the old Marxist paradigm he had abandoned in other analyses and theorizations in the same decade. This edition rekindled the former deadly feud with his fierce intellectual opponents. This conflict was re-launched in (May-June) 1971, at the time Saraiva, as already mentioned, had already left Paris for Amsterdam. This increasingly impassioned debate, in the form of successive venomous responses, greatly enthused the readers of *Diário de Lisboa*. Whatever opinion one may have on the matter today, in essence the epistemic distinction between an authentic document and a true document, the hegemony of the economic factor and the relevance of other levels of the social process, Saraiva's book, when analysed from the viewpoint of the Weberian "ideal type", is particularly striking for the vigour of its arguments and plasticity of its writing. This is yet another of his unequivocal masterpieces.

Around the same time, in the wake of the publication of *Maio e a crise da Civilização Burguesa* [May and the Crisis of Bourgeois Civilisation] (1970), another resounding controversy emerged within the circle of Portuguese intellectuals and militants still staunchly loyal to Kremlinian Marxism or other such variants. The



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

pretext lay in how Saraiva viewed and conceptualised the 1968 Paris uprising, shortly to become a large-scale upheaval of citizens and workers that would have a worldwide impact. Saraiva's work, scarcely more than an opuscle, connected the account of his direct experience of those unprecedented events to an interpretation grounded on a critical view of the industrialist model and, therefore, of bourgeois civilisation, in both the liberal and Marxist structures that tutored the so-called "popular democracies" in Eastern Europe.

The May 68 protests and their initial anarchic demands, experienced with adolescent enthusiasm by Saraiva – in France he felt like an outcast, a *métèque* and a pale shadow of the image that had characterised him in his home country – were to a large extent in keeping with his recent Marcusean critical options and his very premature libertarian pedagogical conceptions, patent in his rejection of hierarchy and "diplomacrazy".

In fact, from a rather heterodox Marxism coupled with the afore-mentioned outbursts of conjunctural youthful radicalism, according to his compact political and ideological autobiography of 1983 (*Dicionário Crítico...[Critical Dictionary...]* "Prólogo da edição de 1984", [Prologue to the 1984 edition] reedited in 1996), over a twenty year span, since the year of 1963, Saraiva had rapidly evolved towards a position verging on critical theory. Critical in the sense of any theory that globally contests a historical order. He therefore adopted the ideology of the young humanist and Hegelian Marx and also held Gramsci, the dissident Italian theoretician of Stalin's vulgata, as a reference. In other words, Saraiva was guided by a diffuse cultural Marxism which overshadowed the social economic paradigm and the above-mentioned driving force of the proletariat in history.

In the meantime, Saraiva expressed and consolidated his true and definitive world vision, one he regarded as essentially liberal. In the above-mentioned prologue, he not only theoretically clarifies his seemingly contradictory prior "liberal Marxism", but also speculates on the slow autonomization process with regard to the materialistic strand of the same doctrine. Considering the explanation offered therein as to his adoption of Marx's theory and his later Soviet political version, resulting from his ignorance of the effective nature of Stalin's regime, such a commitment was merely an equivocal pragmatic option imposed by the Portuguese social and political climate and the urgency in fighting against Salazar's regime. Therefore, his real eschatological horizon would never have been a state-ruled, authoritarian society but rather a space for freedom that would foster the full manifestation of individuality. "My 'socialism' [...] was held within my liberalism" (*Dicionário...*, op. cit., pp. 9-11, passim up to p. 33). Consequently, he was once again able to claim his formerly renounced sympathy for António Sérgio's liberalism and thereafter to resume and theorize some of the long-lasting traces of his youthful experiences and feelings while consolidating his axiological, social and political universe. In these belligerent years of his late maturity, a fertile period for ideological nuances, he progressed towards a vague sense of ecologism, a school of thought that had been widely theorized and disseminated in the international public arena of the early 1970s, while always tending towards distinct forms of libertarian ideology, albeit not explicitly.



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

In the controversy triggered by his view on the extraordinary events of the Paris uprising published in Maio... (1970) [May...], a true writ of emancipation from the traditional model of revolutionary Marxism signed by the former and much celebrated ideologist of the Portuguese radical left wing, Saraiva found himself up against a number of dumbfounded adversaries from the various lines of national Marxism. Álvaro Cunhal, his former comrade and secretary-general of the Portuguese Communist Party, was one of them. But it was undoubtedly Mário Sottomayor Cardia, a qualified philosopher, who presented the greatest theoretical difficulties. It was also Sottomayor Cardia who penned the most structured critical response to Saraiva's article in the name of, it should be noted, a remarkably flexible type of Marxism. It is worth mentioning that Sottomayor Cardia, a future Socialist Cabinet minister, atoned for the harshness of his arguments by paying Saraiva one of the most emphatic intellectual tributes he had ever received in his life (Sobre o antimarxismo contestatário ...[On the anti-Marxism protest] (1971), p. 11).

In the meantime, in Amsterdam, Saraiva found himself once again at the centre of various conspiracies with discrete xenophobic undertones, which wove a real Kafkaian web around him. Once again, as a result of psychological exhaustion, he considered leaving the city in search of a new professional destination. However, the well-timed Portuguese revolution of 1974 facilitated a much longed for return to his home country, thus breaking the evil spell that had seemingly been cast upon him, condemning him to the fate of an eternal intellectual wanderer .

This was the third, final, substantial part of his intellectual and life trajectory (1974-1993). In a country which had just ceased to be a dictatorship, A. J. Saraiva did not enjoy a peaceful, conflict-free environment in certain dimensions of his teaching career or in his public activities. He eventually left the Universidade Nova [New University], his first haven, to go to the Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa (Clássica) [the University of Arts of Lisbon (a.k.a. Classic] where he found some stability as a professor but where he soon sensed the foreboding wind of adversity. This was the very same school he had abandoned in 1943, under the afore-mentioned conditions, and where, in January 1974, he had been awarded a doctorate Honoris Causa, superfluous in his case. In the politically troubled period of the new regime, A.J. Saraiva was elected president of the Conselho Directivo [Governing Board] for a one-year mandate (1976-1977). He remained at the Faculdade de Letras until he retired in 1987 with no other responsibility than to teach and supervise those undertaking master and doctoral degrees.

In a country finally released from suffocating authority and seeking to find its own feet in democracy – despite being subjected to new forms of ideological repression – Saraiva's ingrained anti-conformist mechanism soon prompted him to rebel against mainstream political opinion and challenge the mythology of that very revolution with unprecedented formal bluntness and argumentative fearlessness, particularly as far as mass nationalisations and Portugal's political and military presence in the overseas territories were concerned. His libel, decrying how the new regime had handled the decolonisation process of the Portuguese empire, gave rise to violent reactions in several of the more left-wing social sectors and within the military



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

group involved in the revolution. Relying on the weight of his widely acknowledged intellectual and civic authority, Saraiva, at the time, was the embodiment of critical national consciousness and very much concerned with *Portugalidade* [Portugueseness, the true essence of Portugal], a widely discussed theme in the 20th century. The compilation of Saraiva's texts in *Filhos de Saturno* [Saturn's Children] (1980) are a testament to his blunt newspaper articles during Portugal's troubled post-revolution period. His warnings of the threat of a new, more dogmatic, totalitarian autocracy are particularly noteworthy. Occasionally, in some of his writings, he was unrestrained, effectively distancing himself from an objective social and historical analysis and from a multifaceted view, becoming caught up in the reductive dichotomy of the most heated ideological combat. At the time, it must be said, this latter dimension overrode his other features, undermining any serene dispassionate disposition. Yet in such critical situations, surely the militant praxis falls to the ideologist, not to the historian. And it was the urgency of the ideological combat that spurred him.

As far as this last segment of his life is concerned, both in history and literary criticism, as already mentioned, Saraiva reappropriated an interpretation model grounded on hermeneutics in reiterated opposition to the distinct forms of positivism and evolutionism. This choice implied rewriting some of his most important studies, not only on historiography but also on theory, to distance himself from the sociological model that had conditioned them. He thus proclaimed or lost his footing in lines that converged with the subjectivist course of an emerging post modernity. On this matter, see *A Cultura em Portugal* [Culture in Portugal], Livro I [Book I] (1982), Livro II [Book II] (1984), *O Crepúsculo da Idade Média em Portugal* [The Twilight of the Middle Ages in Portugal] (1988).

In the meantime, the renowned university master widened his vast experience of the world with new journeys. Those by invitation of various universities and institutions to the Federal Republic of Germany and to the German Democratic Republic, to Venezuela, Brazil, the U.S.A., and Israel are particularly noteworthy. The subversive and radically innovative reflection he had dedicated to the problems of education in his younger years continued to motivate his regular interventions. His pro-ecologism shift in the wake of the French May 68 protest would not vanish from his mind. The last text he published in his lifetime in the *Expresso* newspaper fell under this area of political combat. In the last decades of public intervention, while decrying the illusions of the inevitably alienating technological progress he envisaged a nostalgically rural world which contrasted with contemporary hyper consumerism. A legacy left by Romanticism, reactivated by Heidegger at a contagious reflective-poetic level, and disseminated by the ecological movement in the early 1970s. To his mind, such progress would always condition new forms of social oppression and pose an exponential threat to the balance and sustainability of the planet. Scientific and technical progress inherent to the determinism and teleological beliefs of the positivist cognitive area, from which he also distanced himself in the name of a frugal life grounded on friendly unhierarchized interaction. His political vision was disseminated mainly in *Raíz e Utopia* [Roots and Utopia], a publication co-founded and managed by Saraiva, which ran between 1977 and 1981 and made him a media icon. This was also his last enthusiastic group ideological experience.



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As regards his last historiographical or theoretical contributions, the award-winning P.E.N Club prize *Tertúlia Ocidental* [Western Tertulia] (1990) one of Saraiva's most elaborate, formally subtle texts is worthy of mention. This was the last spark of a literary drive which, duly calibrated, was also present in his academic writings. By way of farewell, in this study he revisits the *Vencidos da Vida* [Life's Vanquished], the above-mentioned *Geração de 70*. His posthumously published synthesis *Cultura* [Culture] (1993) is also noteworthy, in which he explains his most personal views on the theme with laconic precision from a clearly anthropological perspective. *Crónicas* [Chronicles] (2006) is also recommended to the readers of this note, a compilation of his most varied texts dispersed among different publications of a periodical nature with hundreds of surprising pages.

And, finally, his impressive correspondence published under the title *António José Saraiva, Óscar Lopes, Correspondência* [António José Saraiva, Óscar Lopes, Correspondence] (2004) notably illustrates decades of his vast political and cultural interests. In the correspondence he exchanged with Óscar Lopes he pursued a vibrant, dense, occasionally belligerent dialogue which, in addition to revealing unknown dimensions of his unique philosophical and critical prowess, also shed light upon other unrevealed circumstances of his life, which may often have been precarious and anguished but always intellectually combative. A compelling dialogue indeed. Both interlocutors were connected by a steadfast friendship in a complex intellectual affinity characterised by convergences and divergences. Both were major figures of the country's 20th century political and cultural scene, and in their extraordinary correspondence their approach to issues was so intense that at times they appeared to be on the verge of dramatically severing the affectionate ties that bound them. The publication of that book owes much to the efforts of the late historian Leonor Curado Neves, who transcribed and annotated the text and authored a subtle introductory synopsis to A.J. Saraiva's thinking and work.

And to conclude this note, reference must be made to Saraiva's prominence in the national literary scene. Very few contemporary writers can boast such cultivation of the Portuguese language, as briefly mentioned above, the prose of A. J. S. was unique in its quality of communication and aesthetics. His writing was characterised by graceful fluidity, lexical propriety, harmoniously balanced syntax, and reflected, didactic use of figures of speech. It is writing that inexorably attracts and charms the reader. So much so that, in reading one of his texts we encounter a multifaceted scholar charmed by the high voltages of the philosophical and aesthetic debate, by political activism while remaining equally attentive to the performative dimension of the very act of writing. All of this without prejudice to any doctrinal tension vested therein.

Notwithstanding the relevance of his vast critical, historical, and literary legacy, his composite intellectual heritage is still barely known and its dense theoretical literary component and multiple social, ideological, and historical interactions are yet to be braved. Likewise, his work still awaits an editorial reorganization, greater visibility and more fitting public recognition. António José Saraiva was never fond of great tributes, nor did he ever accept official distinctions or rewards. He wished to be buried in Donas (Fundão). To immortalise this

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agitator of public conscience, the municipality of Lisbon named a square after him, in some hidden part of the capital.

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