



Arquivo Historico Português, Lisbon, 1903-1917

First published in 1903, the *Arquivo Historico Portuguez* was a monthly publication (in instalments) until 1916/17, but with a short hiatus between 1910 and 1914 as a result of the transition between regimes. It was later grouped into 11 volumes (with a single price of 4\$800 *reis*). An initiative of Anselmo Braamcamp Freire and D. José da Silva Pessanha, who were its directors, the *Arquivo* occupies a prominent place in the landscape of periodical publications on history in Portugal and is widely regarded as the country's first history journals in the historiographical sense of the term. The publication of the *Arquivo* owed much to its main promoters, who to a large extent ensured the journal's relative longevity (including financial support). It was no coincidence that its directors were involved in or distinguished themselves in the field of historical studies in its many aspects: for example, Silva Pessanha was curator of the Torre do Tombo and A. Braamcamp Freire, who at the time had not yet published most of the works for which he became known, was nevertheless a prominent figure in Portuguese political culture (a peer of the realm, he had already held public office in local government and went on to hold important positions in the First Republic).

In the "Warning" published in the first issue, with the aim of setting out the principles underlying the journal, and signed by the editors, we can list the following aspects: (i) a criticism of the state of conservation and organisation of historical sources, "In countries where history is, and has been, studied seriously, where archives and libraries are organised in such a way as to facilitate research by scholars (...) but among us, unfortunately, this is not the case" (AHP, vol. I, p. V); (ii) at the same time, a criticism of the historiographical environment or dynamics that existed at the time and a social criticism, which exposed – albeit very superficially, it must be said – the idea of "decadence", a concept very much in vogue in part of the political (and historiographical) culture of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, "The general indifference to historical studies, which still prevails in Portugal today, is yet another symptom of the profound decadence into which the present generations have fallen. They are blinded by the independence and haughtiness of many of their predecessors, and, so as not to have to blush, they prefer to ignore them. This is perhaps why historical studies are so despised among us and find so little enthusiasm among the public, which, poorly educated, sometimes takes for gold what is nothing more than shiny tinsel." (Idem, p. VI). Thus, the promoters of the *Arquivo* understood their target audience to be a specialised audience of academics and

scholars: “It is not, therefore, for the public that this *Arquivo* is intended; it is exclusively for scholars.” (Idem, p. VI). This journal thus contrasted with the legacy of several generalist periodicals for the general public that began to appear in the 1830s (e.g., *O Panorama*), in which we find an important section devoted to historical subjects, but also to other topics.

Criticism of the state of historical studies in Portugal was later taken up once again by A. Braamcamp Freire, in the “Warning” to his collection *Crítica e História – Estudos* [Critic and History – Studies] (1910), which brought together several studies published by him between 1901 and 1902 in the *Jornal do Comércio*, in Lisbon, under the pseudonym Silex. It should be noted that his criticism did not focus on the lack of publication of sources, “Documents are now being published among us in sufficient numbers” (*Crítica e História – Estudos*, 1996, p. III) (was he already thinking, among other projects, of the contribution of the *Arquivo* on this point?), but rather on their quality for writing the “social history” that the author considered to be “certainly the most interesting [speciality] of history” (Idem, p. III), and essential for the transition from the 15th to the 16th century.

The “Warning” from the promoters also foreshadowed the historiographical orientation that would shape the journal: “send us the notes on the documents found and extracted, accompanied by excellent articles, or alone, with no other emphasis than their own value” (Idem, pp. VI-VII). Despite some exceptions, such as the contributions of João Lúcio de Azevedo and Costa Lobo, the historiographical line of the methodical school prevailed in the *Arquivo*, as noted by José Amado Mendes, with greater emphasis given to political factors and the dissemination of sources, mainly from national history. Furthermore, “the very activity of archivists and palaeographers, carried out by some contributors – such as Pedro de Azevedo and António Baião – ended up favouring this type of concern. The orientation of the *Arquivo* was similar to that of the prestigious French journal *La Revue Historique*, founded by Gabriel Monod in 1876” (J. A. Mendes, “Revistas de História”, pp. 213). The orientation of the *Arquivo*, taking into account its objectives, concepts and, to a large extent, its collaborators, thus represented the scholarly and documentary concern of historical studies. In a sense, it was a continuation of the work developed by Alexandre Herculano (and others), a historian who greatly influenced Anselmo Braamcamp Freire. For example, the latter went on to direct the *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica* project at the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa [Lisbon Academy of Sciences]. Nevertheless, despite its importance, the journal model proposed by the *Arquivo*, which was still very much in vogue at the time, began to show signs of wear and tear – or, at least, other complementary journal models began to appear. In this sense, although with other more ambitious purposes, the appearance of the *Revista de História* [History Journal] (1912-28), the structure of the Sociedade Portuguesa de Estudos Históricos [Portuguese Society for Historical Studies], and roughly contemporary with the *Arquivo*, is revealing, as it already had a modern structure – with three sections: “Articles”, “Facts and Notes” and “Reviews”.

A general observation of the journal’s contents shows that the publication of sources constituted the bulk of the contributions, thus assuming the logic of an “archive”. This fact was symptomatically reinforced a few years after the first issue by the journal’s administrator, Fernando Brederode: “*Arquivo Historico* is not a

journal for leisurely reading in your spare time; that is not its nature, and it has remained so. It should mainly be, and has been, a repository of reliable sources for the study of national history” (AHP, vol. IV, p. V). In addition, the *Arquivo*’s universe of contributors was relatively extensive and included important figures from the cultural and historiographical milieu of the time. In addition to those already mentioned, we find, for example, Maximiano Lemos, Sousa Viterbo, Júlio Castilho, Vitor Ribeiro and foreign figures such as Edgar Prestage and J. Denucè. It should be noted that this group included the collaboration of a woman, Carolina Michaëlis de Vasconcelos.

The diverse universe of contributors allowed for a wide range of topics to be covered in the *Arquivo*. There is a clear focus on the period of Expansion and Discovery, with a significant number of contributions, many of which are by Pedro de Azevedo, A. Braamcamp Freire and Sousa Viterbo, with more than 30 titles each (Maria Sidónia Tavares, *Descobrimientos e navegações no Arquivo Historico Portuguez*, p. 26). Other topics that were little developed by Portuguese historiography at the time were given space in the pages of the *Arquivo*. These include, for example, studies of an economic but also technological nature, such as Victor Ribeiro’s “Artes e Indústrias em Portugal no século XVIII” [Arts and Industries in Portugal in the 18th century] (vol. IX, 1914); the ongoing study of the Inquisition by António Baião, “A Inquisição em Portugal e no Brasil” [The Inquisition in Portugal and Brazil] (vol. V, 1907 and vol. VI, 1908); the interesting study by Pedro A. de Azevedo, “Os ciganos em Portugal no séc. XVI e XVII” [Gypsies in Portugal in the 16th and 17th centuries] (vol. VII, 1909); and an interesting study on “feminism” by A. Costa Lobo, “Um campeão do feminismo no século XV” [A Champion of Feminism in the 15th century] (vol. II, 1904). Equally important is the stimulating work by João Lúcio de Azevedo on Sebastianism, published in 1918, but already well developed in the pages of the *Arquivo*, “A evolução do sebastianismo” [The evolution of Sebastianism] (vol. X, 1916). The trend towards specialisation, with the systematic treatment of specific topics, was thus evident in the *Arquivo* (J.A. Mendes, “Revistas de História”, p. 213). Also revealing of this historiographical dynamic was the choice of biographical studies, clearly evident in the journal, with diverse examples such as those by Francisco Leitão Ferreira, “Notícias da Vida de André de Resende” [News from the Life of André de Resende] (vol. III and IX) or by Edgar Prestage, “D. Francisco Manuel de Mello. Documentos biográficos” [D. Francisco Manuel de Mello. Biographical Documents] (vol. VII, 1909).

The internal structure of the *Arquivo* was relatively simple: it always featured a short “Summary” of the authors and their articles in the volume on the first page. Each also had important alphabetical indexes and chronologies (in the last pages), which were essentially the result of the methodical persistence of A. Braamcamp Freire and were undoubtedly a useful tool for work or quick research – there were cases, such as in 1910, when publication was delayed because these indexes were not completed. In fact, the creation of indexes on different themes or subjects became a hallmark of A. Braamcamp Freire’s historiographical production, as António Baião would symptomatically refer to years later (*Elogio Histórico de A. Braamcamp Freire*, 1925, p. 7). However, one volume deserves special mention, volume IV, from 1906: it not only contains a short financial report, in which we can see that the *Arquivo*’s finances were (chronically?) in deficit



(*Archivo*, vol. IV, pp. VI-VII), but also an interesting list of subscribers to the journal (another, shorter list appears in the following volume), which is notable for its relative geographical diversity, both national and foreign (but also at the institutional level).

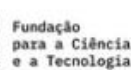
The reasons why the publication of the *Archivo* came to an abrupt end are unknown.

Source: *Archivo Historico Portuguez*, 11 vols., Lisbon, 1904-1916. (volumes 1, 4, 5 e 6 available online at <https://archive.org/details/arquivohistoric00pessgoog>)

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