

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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AZEVEDO, João Lúcio de (Sintra, 1855 – Lisbon, 1933)

João Lúcio de Azevedo came from an Azorean family on the part of his father, António Lúcio de Azevedo. His mother, Teresa Amélia de Azevedo, belonged to a family from Mafra, where her parents had settled in the parish of Santo André. After his mother's death, he was brought up by his maternal grandmother and attended the local public school, but took his exams in Porto.

Enrolled at the Colégio do Sérvulo in Junqueira, Lisbon, from 1868, he took several exams as an external student at the National Secondary School in Lisbon, then enrolled at the Commercial and Industrial Institute in Lisbon, where he obtained his diploma in 1872. His classmates were Guilherme de Oliveira Martins, brother of Joaquim Pedro de Oliveira Martins, and Henrique Lopes de Mendonça, whose friendship he retained throughout his life.

His education continued as he came into contact with other cultures, languages and civilisations. His first experience was provided by Brazil, where he travelled to in 1873 and from where he left only in 1900 to settle in Portugal, but not before he had visited North America (he was in New York in 1896). After returning to Europe, he also visited France (spending some time in Paris), Switzerland, and Germany. His knowledge of several languages is closely linked to his travels. His ability in this field is demonstrated by his reviews of original works in French, English, and German and the fact that he studied Dutch in order to be able to work on the history of the Jews and New Christians, especially Baruch de Spinoza. He translated the biography of Spinoza by Johannes Colerus (only published in 1934).

Following his deep-rooted cultural choice, the opportunity to develop his education in Brazil, provided by his first job at the Tavares Cardoso bookshop in Pará, must have been particularly significant, followed by a job in a rubber company and a river shipping company. In the meantime, he married his cousin, Ana da Conceição Botelho, with whom he had three children. So that he could take over the management of a river shipping company in Belém, in accordance with the requirements of the legislation in force, he became a naturalised Brazilian citizen. He was admitted to the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro [Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute] as a 'national member' (1895).

The human reality of Pará and Amazonas would have been the first stimulus for Lúcio de Azevedo as a historian, inviting him to judge, through his cultural and technical training, a concrete situation of trade and the



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success of a technological culture in a given geographical and human space. His interests are reflected in the scattered writings he prepared for the local press, collected in *Estudos de História Paraense* [Pará History Studies] (1893), which attracted the attention of the public and cultural circles. He continued his literary and historical work in a Belém do Pará newspaper, collected in *Livre Amazonas. Vida Nova* [Free Amazon. New Life] (1899). This is the first phase of his cultural life. Borges de Macedo underlines his characteristics as a historian: in terms of questioning, he sought to understand human civilisation's ability to respond to different environments, which is implicit in an attitude of comparative history; in terms of the method of presentation, he set out a problem and brought in documentation and proposals for interpretation, successively and extensively, testing the result until he arrived at a more comprehensive formulation. This process could take 8 to 10 years. To enrich this first phase, which lasted until his return to Portugal in 1900, the relationship with the cultural and political milieu of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro [Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute], with its programmes and debates, the network of contacts with similar European and American institutions and the search for documentation and bibliography, attested to in private and institutional correspondence, must have contributed a great deal.

In Brazil, the cultural debates were different but no less heated: for example, the discussion on the territorial division of Brazil, the criticism of national and foreign historiography on the history of Brazil and the appreciation given to the works of Robert Southey and Councillor Pereira da Silva; or the controversy and stalemate that led to the discussion of a proposal to hold 'a Universal Exhibition commemorating the discovery of Brazil' in Rio de Janeiro in 1900.

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In the Brazilian community, there was a growing awareness of the nation, which had gained independence, established itself as an empire and, at the end of the 19th century, adopted a republican political form. This is how we can understand José Honório Rodrigues' comment about the historiographical debates in Brazil, which represented an opportunity for Lúcio de Azevedo and his contemporary Brazilian historians to get to know each other. A new circle of friendship was formed that would last throughout his life: Oliveira Lima and Capistrano de Abreu, two of the prestigious Brazilian historians whose works Lúcio de Azevedo would later present and praise. He was also accepted as a corresponding member of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico de S. Paulo [Historical and Geographic Institute of S. Paulo] (1909) and the Instituto Arqueológico e Geográfico Pernambucano [Archaeological and Geographic Institute of Pernambuco] (1915).

The second period of his life lasted until 1921 and was marked by major historical studies. To begin with, *Os Jesuítas no Grão Pará* [The Jesuits in Grão Pará] (1901), *O Marquês de Pombal e a sua época* [The Marquis of Pombal and his time] (1909), the works on Father António Vieira, the first of which was published



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in 1912; the first article on Sebastianism (1916), on Bandarra (1917); and, in 1921, the *História dos Cristãos Novos Portugueses* [History of the Portuguese New Christians]. This period took place mainly in Lisbon, where he continued his documentary research in the libraries and archives of Lisbon, Coimbra, and Évora. During this phase, Lúcio de Azevedo reaffirmed a critical vision based on documents and, with regard to his predecessors, only praised the academic Francisco Luís Gomes, who had expressed an identical attitude in *Le Marquis de Pombal, esquisse de sa vie politique* [The Marquis de Pombal, sketch of his political life] (1869), a work that he considered 'in every respect remarkable, and the first worthy of History that has been written on the subject'. In this respect, he declared that he wanted to 'distance himself from the controversy, consult the documents at the source, listen to witnesses, especially those whose accounts are not intended to be made public'. He chooses Pombal's public life as the basis for his enquiry, starting by studying the embassy to London and then to Vienna and the entry into the reign of D. José, the court and the factions, the earthquake and the attempt on the king's life, the international relations framework in the Seven Years' War, the Jesuit issue, ending with the pages dedicated to the apogee, the decline and the 'end'.

This work is cited by the *Arquivo Histórico Português* [Portuguese Historical Archive] in 1909, but it was not until 1916 that his first collaboration with this magazine was recorded with the article 'A evolução do sebastianismo' [The evolution of Sebastianism]. In 1917, he wrote another article on Pombal's mission to Vienna. The work on the Marquis and his time justifies the attention of the Academia das Ciências. He wrote the first critical presentation of this work. The opinion written by Secretary Cristovão Ayres on his application for membership dates from the session of the Class of Humanities on 12 May 1910. In it, the rapporteur pointed out the basis of his assessment, the works *O Marquês de Pombal e a sua época* [The Marquis de Pombal and his time] and *Os Jesuítas no Grão-Pará* [The Jesuits in the Grão-Pará]: 'The first of these books would be enough to constitute a suitable title for the admission of this writer, but it is a good precept that the work of an applicant for the honour of being admitted to the guild of this learned corporation should be considered as a whole'. As far as the work on Pombal was concerned, a figure that the rapporteur praised almost panegyrically, it would be necessary to study his personality and actions through 'a group of men of literature, or better still (...) an Academy'. Until such a vast study was carried out, 'to be applauded, praised and encouraged are works such as those by Mr Lucio de Azevedo, who in a lucid, impartial and developed summary presents us with the life and work of Pombal, in the light of a critique carried out on authentic documents', especially the Pombaline Collection belonging to the National Library.

Lúcio d'Azevedo committed to the Academia das Ciência several of his works, which were published in the *Boletim da Segunda* from 1912 onwards. These include those dedicated to Father António Vieira (diplomatic missions, correspondence, unpublished works) and Portuguese Jews, erudite works based on documentary collections and Portuguese and foreign bibliographies. The first of these was presented at a session in 1915 and was appreciated by H. Lopes de Mendonça, Pedro de Azevedo, and Edgar Prestage, who encouraged the author to continue 'his valuable work'. His collaboration as a historian continued: the following year, he published 'Os Jesuitas e a Inquisição em conflito no século XVII' [The Jesuits and the



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Inquisition in conflict in the 17th century] and 'Dezanove cartas inéditas do Padre António Vieira' [Nineteen unpublished letters from Father António Vieira] according to documentation from the Évora Library concerning the Marquis of Nisa, which the author presents with comments, bibliography and a long and interesting study.

In 1918, it was time for 'A história do futuro – Inédito de António Vieira' [The story of the future-Unpublished by António Vieira], in which he drew attention to the fate of the estate of high literary value that Vieira had left to the Colégio da Baía. In 1920, he presented another work on the Portuguese New Christians, referred to the existing bibliography and reported on the three regiments by which the Inquisition had been governed in Portugal (1552, 1613, and 1640), distinguishing what was debatable in the light of the law and pointing out the result that had not been achieved. In 1921, he offered the Academia das Ciências [Academy of Sciences] the second volume of his work *História de António Vieira*. In this regard, it should be noted that António Baião, later in 1926, in a paper on the family of Father António Vieira, declared that no one should undertake work on the celebrated sacred orator 'without first studying the works on the subject by Mr Lúcio de Azevedo'. That same year, in December, the author presented his paper 'Vicissitudes da moeda portuguesa. Dos Reais de D. Fernando aos Réis de D. Sebastião'[The upsets of the Portuguese Currency. From the reals of D. Ferdinand to the réis of D. Sebastião].

This was his last historical paper at the Academia das Ciências, but his collaboration went further in terms of cultural relations between Portugal and Brazil. He was present at the most significant sessions on these matters, especially during the celebrations of the centenary of the State of Pará (1915). In the session of 17 June 1915, Lúcio d'Azevedo announced that the state of Pará intended to celebrate the third centenary of the founding of its capital and the beginning of Portuguese colonisation in the region in December and that it had organised various forms of commemoration for this purpose. He himself was the bearer of the relevant documentation, which he delivered to the Portuguese Academy. Contacts with Brazilian historians continued. According to Maria Antonieta Soares de Azevedo, José Veríssimo's friendship led to his friendship with Capistrano de Abreu. The correspondence between the two historians provides special information about their work plans, and it is one of the most praiseworthy accolades for Lúcio de Azevedo. He also attended the session of 26 April 1923, together with Oliveira Lima and the Spaniard Planas Suárez, taking the floor to greet the Brazilian historian and remember his predecessors at the Academy, José Bonifácio, Varnhagen and Olavo Bilac, and referred to Oliveira Lima's book *D. João VI no Brasil* [D. João VI in Brazil], in whose dedication the author paid tribute to his predecessors and to the professors of the Higher Course of Arts and Humanities he had attended in Lisbon. Fidelino de Figueiredo, Jaime Cortesão, António Ferrão, and Alberto de Oliveira then took the floor.

For the wider public, the appreciation of *O Marquês de Pombal e a sua época* [The Marquis de Pombal and his time] was due to Fidelino de Figueiredo in *Revista de História* (no. 1, January-March 1912). This journal played an active role in criticising cultural and educational policy and in defending documentary heritage. The writer asked: 'What is the author's conception of History? We believe that he does not adhere to any system but rather endeavours, without obsession, to sift out what is true in each one. This is why, in his



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search for the causes, Mr Lucio de Azevedo points to the most varied determinants, from economic causes, such as the crisis in Grão Pará and Maranhão, which resulted in the establishment of the famous company; intellectual causes, such as when he links the minister's behaviour, so unusually progressive, to the transformation that took place in him during his stay in England; to simple personal causes, as when he explains the division of factions out of spite and resentment or the simple displeasure that the minister's absorbing character produced in everyone. And because Mr Lucio de Azevedo is a supremely orientated spirit, with a solid historical education combined with a vast knowledge of life and people, he is not carried away by his enthusiasm for the Marquis, nor does he go in for absolute statements. That is why he always corrects his assertions carefully and with good reason.' This presentation was followed by Lúcio d'Azevedo's first article in issue no. 2 of the periodical – 'Estudos para a historia dos christãos novos em Portugal' [Studies for the history of New Christians in Portugal], which was followed by others with the same title, works on Portuguese Jews in the dispersion, those dedicated to Father António Vieira and other articles. In the meantime, the periodical died out, but J. Lúcio de Azevedo published the work he had been preparing over the years: *Historia dos Cristãos Novos Portugueses* [History of the New Christians in Portugal].

For today's scholars, the comparison between João Lúcio de Azevedo's preparatory essays and the final works to which they gave rise is particularly significant. A work of heuristics and hermeneutics, such a comparison will allow us to understand the contemporary life of the author and how this contemporary life and experience aggravated the questioning to which he subjected the documentation. There is a constant concern to update data on the presence of Jews in the communities of the 19th and 20th centuries, on their occupations and organisations, in foreign and national authors. The situation of the Jews in Portugal was understood in comparison with the situation in Europe and America.

The author alluded to an issue of his time, the question of which races were superior in terms of qualities, pure or mixed races, as indicated by biological data, an issue he commented on by saying that, when enquiring about the decadence of nations and races, other aspects such as soils, climates, social conditions, accidents and nature, the actions of foreign peoples, the repercussions of events and facts, and many other aspects, should be brought to the fore.

He also questioned the influence of African blood on the history of Portugal, a possible transfer to Portuguese history of the polemics of Brazilian history. As for the New Christians, he praised their intelligence, adaptability to different circumstances, and role in international relations in the 17th century. Father António Vieira would have been sympathetic to this role, 'less, it must be said, out of feelings of humanity and tolerance than out of political inspirations'. This, at least initially. This is what he maintained ever since lamenting the consequences of the Inquisition's establishment in the country; he considered that, by the fatality of history, the disastrous institution had fulfilled the role that D. João III, like the other absolutist rulers of modern times, had given it – to guarantee the identity of the political principle, an indispensable complement to the unity of royal power. Lúcio d'Azevedo emphasised that everywhere, the intolerance of the state in religious matters was a reason for government and not for conscience. This was the case in Portugal,



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as it had been among the Huguenots, among the American colonists, in France at the time of Louis XIV or in the German principalities.

As seen from reading the writings of these years, this period represented an internal and cultural, historiographical and civilisational debate that the author experienced intensely. This heralded the third phase of his cultural life, according to Jorge Borges de Macedo's critical appraisal: the second editions of some of his works appeared: *Os Jesuítas no Grão Pará* [The Jesuits in Grão-Pará], *O Marquês de Pombal e a sua época* [The Marquis de Pombal and his time], *Judeus* [Jews], *Cristãos Novos e a Inquisição* [New Christians and the Inquisition], *Sebastianismo* [Sebastianism], the great overviews of economic history in *História de Portugal de Barcelos* [Barcelos' History of Portugal] at the invitation of Damião Peres, his participation in Albino Forjaz de Sampaio's *História da Literatura Portuguesa Ilustrada* [History of Illustrated Portuguese Literature] (vol. III, Lisbon, 1928), *Épocas de Portugal Económico* [Times of Economic Portugal], *Esboços de História* [Sketches of History] (1929), 'Algumas notas relativas a apontamentos de História Social' [Some notes on Social History], in *Miscelânea de estudos em honra de D. Carolina Michaelis de Vasconcelos* [Miscellany of studies in honour of D. Carolina Michaelis de Vasconcelos] (1930), *Novas Epanáforas, Estudos de História e Literatura* [New Epanaphors, Studies in History and Literature] (1932).

Lúcio d'Azevedo also collaborated with other publications and journals, including *Arquivo de História e Bibliografia* [History and Bibliography Archive], *Lusitânia, O Instituto* [The Institute], *Portugalia, Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* [Journal of the Brazilian Historical and Geographical Institute], *Revista do Brasil* [Brazilian Magazine] and *Revista de Língua Portuguesa* [Portuguese Language Magazine]. It would be in the interest of Portuguese culture to deepen the relationship between all these Portuguese and Brazilian journals. In the author's cultural production in this 3rd phase, *Nação Portuguesa* [Portuguese Nation] stands out. There is a cultural relationship between the two periodicals, *Revista de História* [History Journal] and *Nação Portuguesa* [Portuguese Nation], which was confirmed at the start of the latter's 2nd series in 1922, as well as in other events. While in the former, the author presented the sketches of his *História dos Cristãos Novos Portugueses* [History of the Portuguese New Christians], in the latter, in no. 2, as early as 1922, the writer mentioned this work with the highest praise: 'We have the highest intellectual regard for Mr J. Lucio d'Azevedo. We may not agree with some aspects of his work or others. That does not inhibit us from recognising that it does great honour to our historiography. Apart from the natural exception of the illustrious master Gama Barros, if there is a historian in Portugal at the present time worthy of such a name, it is, in all fairness, Mr Lúcio d'Azevedo'. The work *História de António Vieira* [History of António Vieira] is also mentioned, but with certain criticisms because, according to the review, there was a certain anti-Jesuitism and 'a poorly repressed Romanesque commiseration for the Jews', which is why *Historia dos Cristãos Novos Portugueses* [History of the Portuguese New Christians] was considered a 'fundamental work, although not (...) definitive'. In short, the *Nação Portuguesa* [Portuguese Nation] considered that the author's work marked 'the advent of a new spirit in the fields of national historiography'.

Meanwhile, the Iberian issue resurfaced. In 1925, Lúcio de Azevedo published his insightful article



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'Anotações à margem de um capítulo de Alberto Sampaio' [Margin notes of a chapter of Alberto Sampaio] (1925). In the following years, Lúcio d'Azevedo would praise Henrique da Gama Barros in the article 'A great historian', as well as the Brazilian historian Afonso Tawnay (1927) and tests his articles 'A Índia e o ciclo da pimenta' [India and the pepper cycle] (Volume I of the IV series, 1926/7), and 'África e o primeiro ciclo do ouro' [Africa and the first gold cycle] (Volume I of the V series, 1928). At the same time, he reflected on Hispanicism in his article 'À memória de António Sardinha. Notas breves sobre o Hispanismo' [To the memory of António Sardinha. Brief notes on Hispanicism] (Volume II of the V series, 1929).

In these notes, he returned to the topics that the journal had covered in previous years, echoing a lecture given by António Sardinha in Madrid, in which he had refuted Spengler's theses on the decadence of the West, emphasising the spiritual values of the Iberian race, insisting on the distinction between individual and person, which Thomism had deepened, and distinguishing between the concept of life for the English, Germans and Spaniards in order to understand the Portuguese. In terms of civilisation and culture, António Sardinha preferred to use the term 'Hispanics'. Spanish writers had appreciated Sardinha's positions, and so had the Rio de Janeiro journal *A América Brasileira* [The Brazilian America], edited by Elísio de Carvalho. For Lúcio d'Azevedo, it was not a matter of reviving Iberism but of embracing the values of Hispanic-Luso-American culture and civilisation. In an effort of clairvoyance, the author outlined his interpretation of António Sardinha's positions and said that he believed that some, like Sardinha, saw in the union of the peninsula the chimaera of the Universal Empire. He, therefore, understood that, in the past, Jerónimo Osório had voted for Felipe II but commented that 'the point seems to me to be more subtle than demonstrated'. And he called on Francisco Manuel de Melo to dispassionately judge the motives behind the Restoration of 1640, again invoking António Sardinha: 'The experience of this kind of Hispanism has been made, and the proponent of the peninsular alliance rationally and convincingly asserts, never to be repeated'. And he went on to quote him when he said that Felipe II's political thinking was reborn, awakened from the tomb in which it seemed to have lain like a corpse, taking on a new form of Hispanism, a new Sebastianism, a Fifth Empire that would encompass the nationalities beyond the ocean. However, the whole issue took on another dimension and meaning in the debate between cultures and civilisations on a global scale in the 20th century in an effort to preserve human, civilisational and spiritual values. This quest was common to both sides of the Atlantic after being an essential and survival issue in Spain and Portugal. It was another perspective and another dimension, and António Sardinha certainly contributed to them.

Lúcio de Azevedo died on 5 November 1933. On 10 November, *O Século* published an obituary paying tribute to the 'eminent academic and erudite historical researcher' with a portrait of the historian. The news of his death by Robert Ricard in the *Journal de la Société des Américanistes* [Journal of the Americanists Society] was even more appreciative, although brief. The journal *Nação Portuguesa* [Portuguese Nation] also paid him a heartfelt tribute (issue III, 1933). Issue IV of 1934 devoted a nine-page article to him, signed by Manuel Múrias, the first comprehensive assessment of his life and work. In 1934, at a session of the Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro [Brazilian Historical and Geographic Institute], he was recognised as 'the



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Portuguese Capistrano de Abreu'.

Jorge Borges de Macedo emphasised how J. Lúcio d'Azevedo renewed and perfected the interpretation of economic history, drawing attention to the importance of economic conditions in the history of societies, seeking to adapt a new vocabulary to his account. Prepared by reading and critically reviewing foreign authors and drawing on the examples of Alberto Sampaio in his essay on towns in the north of Portugal and Costa Lobo on Portuguese society in the 15th century, Lúcio de Azevedo projected his syntheses of economic history for Portugal in the form or concept of era. We are well aware of how historians when presenting syntheses, make use of tables and sequences, and the concept of era has the particularising role of drawing attention to man in time, to the conjuncture, to what is specific to the expert's treatment in analysing the particular without neglecting the general. This is how it was understood by Fidelino de Figueiredo at the time (*Revista de História* [History Magazine], no. 2, April-June 1912).

Underlying the concept of era and in order to define two specific situations, the Author also used the concept of cycle when talking about India and the 'pepper cycle' and, subsequently and in a way Vitorino Magalhães Godinho considered appropriate, the 'first gold cycle', without exhausting his explanatory resources with this concept. In addition, in the form that Lúcio d'Azevedo gave it, and perhaps due to his knowledge of German historiography in which the theorisation of the *Ideal Type* arose, another virtue stands out: the essayistic account, the search for the significant terms among the others, a perspective that was not understood by some critics.

Borges de Macedo considered the author's framework still valid in the second half of the 20th century. In looking for the dominant product by era (land, sugar, pepper, gold, wine), he did not intend to present it as exclusive. As regards the chronology or periodisation, he accepted an audacious conception for his time, 1128-1411 (not 1383-85), 1411-1557 (the end of the reign of D. João III, not 1580) and 1557-1640. In his economic history, he considered geographical and demographic conditions, labour conditions, the state's finances, and its participation in trade, seeking a comprehensive understanding. In this attitude, he was close to that of Oliveira Martins. These issues are evident in his participation in Damião Peres' *História de Portugal* [History of Portugal], in the different weight he gives to each aspect in the overviews of volumes II (1929), III (1931) and V (1933). Following his death, Damião Peres did not replace him with another historian: he personally took charge of the economic history overviews in the following volumes.

Lúcio de Azevedo's presence in Portuguese-language historiographical production in Brazil and, for Brazil, in Lisbon's cultural and academic circles should also be noted. While at first, he argued for the position of Brazil, as well as the United States of America, in world history, in the third phase of the author's historiographical production, it was clear that he was once again looking at the history of his country, re-evaluating Portugal's role in the Iberian Peninsula, Europe and the world in the period between the two great wars of the 20th century. Both his life experience and his contacts with the great historians he studied, including Stewart Chamberlain, Werner Sombart and Max Weber, contributed to this. His ability to synthesise, the concept of society as an organism, the search for internal coordination and a sense of evolution are



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remarkable. With these values, he took part in the historical debate led by *Seara Nova* [New Plantation] and *Nação Portuguesa* [Portuguese Nation], which called for renewal, opening himself up to the fields of aesthetics, science and technology, and legal studies. He did so with emotion and sensitivity, distinguishing between circumstances, seeking to understand men in their time, evaluating fundamental issues of Portuguese culture in the tension between the renewal of an ideal, the concept of the Fifth Empire resurrected in the 20th century through Hispanic cultures, and the other extreme, the negative and disenchanted extreme, with which he sometimes observed previous eras.

His cultural participation was also the contribution of someone who was a lucid observer and interpreter of the national and international situation, an expert on political and economic issues who was more than just that. As a writer, he was an intervening, vibrant and sensitive voice, as can be seen, for example, in the pages he dedicates to the inquisition trial of António José da Silva. He was responsible for the renewal of political interpretation, the study of institutions, and the improvement of the approach to mentalities, in addition to the more commonly cited aspects of improving economic interpretation. And it was certainly this broader appreciation that marked his contemporaries and persisted in foreign academies and other cultural circles, in specialised meetings, in the acknowledgement of the Royal Society of History in London, and in the testimony of admiration from historians such as Henrique Lopes de Mendonça, Edgar Prestage, and, later, V. Magalhães Godinho and Jorge Borges de Macedo.

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