



***Bracara Augusta***, Braga (1949 – 2007)

One of the most prestigious Portuguese historical and scientific journals, in continuous publication since its foundation, is undoubtedly *Bracara Augusta*. This cultural journal of the Braga City Council, whose editorial origins date back to the first 11 issues of the *Boletim do Arquivo Municipal de Braga* (1935-1945), under the direction of José Constantino Ribeiro Coelho (1886-1967), corresponds to the “first series” of *Bracara Augusta*. Thus, when compiling a first volume with the aforementioned Bulletins, a new title was established, or a “second series” – *Bracara Augusta. Cultural Journal of the Municipality of Braga* – under the direction of Sérgio Augusto da Silva Pinto (1915-1970).

The first issue was published in August 1949, reaching around 60 volumes and bringing together an indispensable collection of documents, becoming a hallmark of Portuguese municipal journals. *Bracara Augusta* remains indelibly a project of a municipal nature and orientation, umbilically connected to the Braga City Council, without forgetting the contributions of the local Municipal Archive or, on another level, the Bracara Augusta Foundation, although our analytical field ends, for methodological reasons, in 2007.

Profoundly established in national academic circles, its primary purpose is to defend and disseminate history, far beyond a restricted academic environment and, despite its content and archival nature, its primary target audience is still, obviously, the residents of Braga, not least because it is named after the city’s ancient Roman name: Bracara Augusta. However, as might be expected, this geographical boundary of readers quickly expanded to international forums, and we dare say that it is rare to find anyone interested in history who has never consulted articles in this periodical. Just as history and historiography require appealing formats, *Bracara Augusta* continues to fulfil its original mission, presenting itself as a forum for debate where researchers of all ages and educational and academic levels can cooperate to promote historical culture, both in print and, enhanced by new information technologies, on digital platforms.

The latest issue of *Bracara Augusta* is now number 132, with two issues currently in press. With a monthly, quarterly, half-yearly and annual publication schedule, it maintains a sober layout with few graphic changes throughout its editorial existence, adorned with engravings and photographs to illustrate academic news. With a variable price over the last few decades, it can currently be purchased at a unit price of 15 euros, with the option of taking out a subscription. Meanwhile, the third series consists of the *Revista Cultural Bracara Augusta*, under the direction of Luís Alexandre Cabral da Silva Pereira (1947-), not forgetting the

special editions dedicated to the “Tribute to Dr. Sérgio da Silva Pinto” and the Sanctuary of Bom Jesus de Braga, among other historical events and celebrities, such as the famous archbishop of Braga, D. Fr. Bartolomeu dos Mártires (1514-1590) or Fr. António do Rosado (c. 1575-1640), for example.

The vast content of *Bracara Augusta* covers all historical periods from Prehistory to Classical Antiquity and, of course, Roman imperial historiography, alluding to the ancient traditions of Romanisation in Portuguese territory. In fact, the immense importance of archaeological research and the promotion of archaeology itself since the early days of this publication, which contains the most distinguished observations on Portuguese Castreja culture, stands out. As a scholarly publication focused primarily on the dissemination of academic work, always guided by scientific rigour, most of the contributors have dealt with topics related to local and regional history around Braga and northern Portugal, appearing regularly in specialised bibliographical references.

Mainly covering cultural topics in their entirety, *Bracara Augusta* features a wide range of genealogical and patronymic studies, focusing on the early days of the Church, following its establishment in the consolidation of the national territory and later in overseas territories. However, its wealth is far from exhausted in these fields, as can be seen in the fruitful works dedicated to medieval arts, crafts and techniques, as well as the interpretation of national architectural trends, particularly in the evolution of our rural and urban planning.

In the field of medieval and Renaissance literature and philology, critical editions of historical sources and documents have been published, mainly of an epistolary nature, including, among other titles, the minutes and books of municipal councils in Braga and its surroundings. The commemorations of municipal and Braga events in the 1950s and 1960s, including those of a civic and religious nature, have not been forgotten, and we also find numerous Roman, Suevi, Visigoth, Muslim and Portuguese numismatic sketches, etc. As if it were a perfect miscellany, we then find reflections of a pedagogical and didactic nature alongside extremely important works on the Restoration (1640-1668), which are extremely useful. This list of subjects includes articles on diplomacy since the dawn of Portuguese identity, not forgetting a wide range of socio-economic studies, bibliographic reviews on demographic dynamics and art history, with important additions to the historical understanding of national painting and music, whose origins are difficult to explore.

Nevertheless, readers and researchers will find other works devoted to the Early Middle Ages – where the figures of St. Damasus (305-384), Paul Orsius (c. 385-c. 420), St. Martin of Dume (c. 510/5-c. 579/580) and St. Frutuoso de Braga (c. 595-c. 665), among other biographical references – to the formation and consolidation of nationality, without neglecting the paths of the Modern Age up to the 20<sup>th</sup> century, addressing an indiscriminate universe between Social History, Political History and Religious History, among other historiographical “topos”. Within the scope of its general historiographical guidelines, although this was not previously stipulated, a fundamentally positive “writing” of history was practised, of a documentary and factual nature, with a criticism of sources close to Methodical History, essentially descriptive and not so much interpretative – in this sense, see, among others, the articles “A História: função do espaço e tempo humanos” [History: function of human space and time], by Vitorino de Sousa Alves (*Bracara Augusta*, vols.

XIV-XV, nos. 1-2, January-December 1963, pp. 27-28); or “A História e o Método Experimental” [History and the Experimental Method], by Duque Vieira (*Bracara Augusta*, vols. XVIII-XIX, nos. 41-42, January-December 1965, pp. 408-411). All volumes of *Bracara Augusta* are, therefore, an extraordinary repository of Braga’s historical experience, an excellence enhanced by the heuristic impulse of the Municipal Archive of Braga and other scientific organisations.

Not forgetting the period between 1935 and 1949, more than 500 Portuguese and foreign authors contributed to *Bracara Augusta*, a collaboration that resulted in over 900 published titles, revealing the high scientific and cultural level of its participants, such as António Álvaro Dória (1902-1990), Marcello Caetano (1906-1980), Avelino Jesus da Costa (1908-2000), José Pedro Machado (1914-2005), Francisco José Veloso (1918-2009), Raúl de Almeida Rolo (1922-2004), Amadeu Torres (1924-2012), Fernando Castelo Branco (1926-), A. H. de Oliveira Marques (1933-2007), Humberto Baquero Moreno (1934-2015), José Mattoso (1933-), José Marques (1937-) and Aurélio de Oliveira (1944-), to name but a few historians from a long list of academic figures.

Among the foreign authors who actively participated in *Bracara Augusta*, the contributions of Galician philologist Ramon Otero Pedrayo (1888-1976), Galician journalist and writer Luis Bouza-Brey Trillo (1905-1980), the Galician priest and historian Enrique Chao Espina (1908-1989), the American historian Robert Chester Smith (1912-1975), Galician doctor and historian Manuel Rubén García Álvarez (1915-1980) and Belgian medievalist Charles Verlinden (1907-1996), among other internationally renowned figures.

In the scientific array developed by the contributors to *Bracara Augusta*, reflections of a specifically historiographical nature did not feature prominently in its pages, although we can point to some authors that reflected on historiography, even if such exercises did not reflect the editorial dictates and dissemination aims of this publication. In this context, we would like to mention the particular contributions of José Baptista Barreiros (1893-1965), Mário Brandão (1900-1995), Bertino Daciano Rocha da Silva Guimarães (1901-1965), António da Silva Rego (1905-1986), Sérgio da Silva Pinto (1915-1970), Vitorino de Sousa Alves (1915-2002), Cândido Lima (1939-) and Luís A. de Oliveira Ramos (1939-), without neglecting other exercises where historiographical reflection found some expression.

Thus, the dissemination of history was also greatly promoted, as evidenced by the publication of the proceedings of the Congresso Histórico de Portugal Medieval [Historical Conference of Medieval Portugal] (Braga, 1959), jointly organised by the local council, the Sociedade Histórica da Independência de Portugal [Historical Society for the Independence of Portugal] (Braga Delegation) and the Faculdade Pontifícia de Filosofia de Braga [Pontifical School of Philosophy of Braga]. In this field of action, multiple historiographical conclusions can be found in other proceedings published by *Bracara Augusta*, namely the I Congresso Internacional de Estudos Martinianos [First International Conference on Martinian Studies] (1950), the Congresso Comemorativo do IV Centenário do Nascimento de Francisco Sanches [Conference Commemorating the Fourth Centenary of the Birth of Francisco Sanches] (1951), the III Congresso Espanhol de Arqueologia [Third Spanish Conference of Archaeology] (1953), the Colóquio Bracarense de Estudos Suévico-Bizantinos [Bracarense Colloquium on Suevo-Byzantine Studies] (1957), the Congresso de Estudos

da Comemoração do XIII Centenário da Morte de S. Frutuoso [Conference of Studies Commemorating the 13th Centenary of the Death of St. Frutuoso] (1966) and the Congresso “A Arte em Portugal no Séc. XVIII” [Conference “Art in Portugal in the 18th Century”] (1973), without excluding other academic initiatives also held in Braga.

Despite the invaluable wealth of *Bracara Augusta*, bibliographical references to the editorial history of this municipal periodical remain scarce and difficult to find. This seems to be a real contradiction, as it remains a leading example in its field and there is almost no work exclusively dedicated to this essential periodical. We therefore consider it urgent to encourage research in this area, which could support master’s and doctoral theses with fruitful results, providing new hermeneutic perspectives on the strategic and scientific choices of this publication, including the subtleties and historiographical nuances of its publishing activity, which has been tireless in promoting history and culture.

**Bibliografia:** (Os títulos dos artigos publicados na revista *Bracara Augusta*, acompanhados dos respectivos sumários e palavras-chave em inglês, estão disponíveis no ‘site’ da Biblioteca Pública de Braga: [www.bpb.uminho.pt](http://www.bpb.uminho.pt) ou através dos ‘e-mails’: [revistabracaraaugusta@cm-braga.pt](mailto:revistabracaraaugusta@cm-braga.pt); [cultura@cm-braga.pt](mailto:cultura@cm-braga.pt))  
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