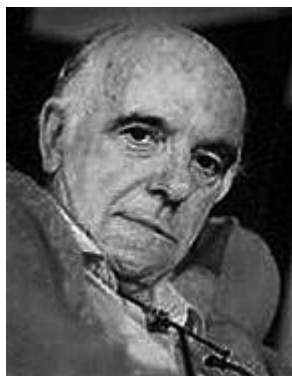


DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

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CINTRA, Luís Filipe Lindley (Lisbon, 1925 – Sesimbra, 1991)

The son of a reserved Bank of Portugal clerk and a Spanish-English lady with a fickle sense of humour, he was an outstanding student at Camões High School, winning the national prize given to the top students. Given his proficiency in foreign languages, and advised to go to the Faculdade de Letras [School of Arts and Humanities] because of the shortage of good lecturers in that field (and to avoid Law, where there would be no shortage of lecturers or lawyers), Lindley Cintra enrolled in the Romance Philology programme in 1942. Although he cultivated a great deal of self-education, much of which was fed by the library of the then Centro de Estudos Filológicos [Centre for Philological Studies] (now the Centro de Linguística da Universidade de Lisboa [Centre of Linguistics of the University of Lisbon]), Hernâni Cidade and Vitorino Nemésio were key figures in Cintra's training in Portuguese literature, while in linguistics the German guest professor Harri Meier played the most decisive role. Cintra's entire activity in higher education, as a student and lecturer, took place at the Faculdade de Letras [School of Arts and Humanities]: here he graduated in 1946 and received his doctorate six years later in Romance Philology; he was an assistant professor between 1950 and 1960, an extraordinary professor between 1960 and 1962 and a full professor from that year onwards.

He created the Department of Linguistics (today the Department of General and Romance Linguistics) as part of a departmental restructuring of the Faculdade de Letras [School of Arts and Humanities] in 1975, and reformed the Centro de Estudos Filológicos [Centre for Philological Studies] the following year. He directed the *Boletim de Filologia* and the new series of the *Revista Lusitana*, and was a member of various scientific organisations, including the Academia Portuguesa da História [Portuguese Academy of History] and the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa [Academy of Sciences of Lisbon] in Portugal and the Real Academia de la Historia [Royal Academy of History] and the Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona [Academy of Arts and Humanities of Barcelona] abroad.

Lindley Cintra graduated with his thesis *O ritmo na poesia de António Nobre* [Rhythm in the Poetry of António Nobre], which, although remembered by the author himself as a pre-structuralist study, nevertheless contained a recognised historical component: "The fact that most poems in *Só* [...] are dated has allowed me to link the study of the verses themselves to the history of how they are employed" [Cintra 2002: 30]. Then, the romantic allure that the Middle Ages exerted on him and the attraction of making critical editions

contributed to the decision to study the General Chronicle of Spain with the aim of carrying out linguistic research.

In addition, the choice of this subject for his doctorate was conditioned by a déjà vu effect following what made him choose the Romance Philology degree – the profusion of lecturers and researchers in the field of literature and the relative scarcity in the field of linguistics [org. Faria 1999: 38-39].

Having started out as a project to edit and carry out a linguistic study of the manuscript from the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa [Academy of Sciences of Lisbon] of the *Crónica Geral de Espanha* [General Chronicle of Spain], the result ended up being, as expected, an edition of the text (still unexcelled to this day) and, unforeseen, a history of the origins of Portuguese medieval historiography, carried out under the guidance of Ramón Menéndez Pidal. At the age of 23, Cintra published the first work at this stage of his academic career, “Sobre o Sumário de Crónicas até ao ano de 1368 da Biblioteca Real de Madrid” [On the Summary of Chronicles up to the Year 1368 from the Royal Library of Madrid], *Boletim de Filologia*, Lisbon, IX, 1948, p. 299-320. Here, one can already discern some of the main strands of his historical thought, which are most fully represented in his doctoral thesis. This work, initially in its original form as an academic paper and later published, is the most imposing and impactful work he left us.

The introduction is “a model of how Cintra practised the philological method in a natural state, without reference to theories or the support of analysis techniques, apart from careful observation of the facts, whose connections were discovered through intuition and common sense” [Castro 1993: 154-155]. The idea, thus put forward, that Cintra practised the philological method in a natural state allows us to understand the claim, made by Cintra himself, that he did not theorise. Indeed, his disconcerting statement, “I simply worked on materials and let myself be led by them as far as they would take me” (org. Faria 1999: 27), may give the wrong image of him as a researcher and a misleading impression of philology as a mode of reflection. To get the image and impression right, it is worth remembering the three questions posed by Wolfgang Mommsen that Lindley Cintra’s work answered affirmatively: “(a) Were the relevant sources used and was the state of the art taken into account?, (b) How close did these historical judgements come to an optimal integration of all possible historical data?, (c) Are the explicit or underlying models of explanation rigorous, coherent and non-contradictory?” [apud Le Goff 1984: 167].

In order to verify the affirmative answer to these questions in Cintra’s major work, there is an initial concern with the delimitation of the corpus under study, but also a relational broadening. In fact, the accurate transcription of the codex of the Academia das Ciências [Academy of Sciences] went hand in hand with a broad selection of the corpus, given the perception of the Iberian nature of the family of texts he was dealing with. Even before his stay in Madrid, where he carried out research for his doctorate with a grant from the Instituto de Alta Cultura [Institute of High Culture], it is to be assumed that the principles of comparative grammar of the Romance languages, taught by Harri Meier, inculcated in him the gesture of comparison as a key element in the approach to any textual corpus. In the specific case of the *Crónica Geral* [General Chronicle], the comparison between Castilian and Portuguese manuscripts was followed by the survey and



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annotation of significant variants.

The analysis of these variants led Cintra to realise that there were errors of translation from Portuguese in the Castilian manuscripts, while there were no errors of translation from Castilian in the Portuguese manuscripts (although Cintra attributes this to chance, verifying the existence of such errors is only possible with a solid knowledge of historical linguistics). This led to the hypothesis that the *Segunda Crónica Geral* [Second General Chronicle] was a text originally written in Portuguese that had been translated into Castilian. As Cintra demonstrated, it was a reworking of the *Primeira Crónica Geral* [First General Chronicle] but written in Portuguese and then translated into two independent Castilian versions (org. Faria 1999: 40-41). The intricate matter of the origins of peninsular historiography therefore received a decisive contribution from Cintra, who, as well as solving the issue of Portuguese or Castilian priority with regard to the *Segunda Crónica Geral* [Second General Chronicle], attributed the authorship of its collection to Count Pedro of Barcelos – also responsible for compiling the *Livro de Linhagens* [Book of Lineages] and the *Cancioneiro trovadoresco* [Troubadour Songbook] that preceded the *Cancioneiro da Ajuda* [Ajuda Songbook] – and renewed knowledge of the sources of various historiographical texts from the peninsular Middle Ages.

The corpus of choice studied by Cintra allowed for an in-depth practical reflection on concepts of textual history such as source, variant (and extended variant), testimony, interpolation, recasting and, of course, text. These concepts thus gained a density they had rarely achieved until the mid-20th century in Portugal.

Cintra's philological proficiency, which Mattoso says was coupled with "a solid knowledge of historical context and factology" (org. Faria 1999: 580), also became apparent in other texts, such as the versions of the legend of Ourique. A detailed study of the surviving versions of the legend led him to distinguish between three stages: firstly, from the date of the battle until the end of the first half of the 15th century, a traditional account was drawn up leaving its traces or expression developed in the Alfonsine general chronicles and in texts that derive from them; in the second stage, the legend underwent a profound change, fuelled by the episode of the apparition of Christ, to which the *Crónica de 1419* [Chronicle of 1419], a model for later texts, bears witness; the third stage saw the legend undergo new changes and take on a crystallised form by the historians of 17th century in Alcobaça.

In the field of non-literary documents, which Cintra also explored, he produced his thesis for the position of extraordinary professor on *A Linguagem dos Foros de Castelo Rodrigo* [Language in the Charters of Castelo Rodrigo] (published in 1959) and analysed Portuguese documents from the 13th century. The edition and study of the Castelo Rodrigo charters are of interest, as a publication of sources, to historians of language, law and culture. A territory belonging to the Kingdom of León until 1296, it was only following the Treaty of Alcanices in 1297 that it was definitively integrated into Portugal – an opportunity for Cintra to revisit the proposal made by Alexandre Herculano, who suggested that Castelo Rodrigo had been colonised by inhabitants from beneath the Côa (*apud* Cintra 1984: XV). The text of the charters is of interest to anyone looking to study a document of living speech, but it also holds evidence of how the repopulation of the western part of the kingdom of León took place (Cintra 1984: XIX). Another foray into non-literary documents



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by Cintra – the review, classification and orthographic analysis of early documents written in Portuguese – revealed another type of call to History. Cintra's main forerunners in this field had been historians and palaeographers, such as João Pedro Ribeiro and Pedro de Azevedo, and, as a collaborator of Cintra himself, Rui de Azevedo. The importance of crossing the synchronic and diachronic axes can be appreciated in Cintra's care in grouping the documents by region (one of the manifestations of the attention he paid to linguistic geography) and by typology.

Interestingly, in Cintra, who sees himself as an empiricist, Celso Cunha will find the unconscious practitioner of a model that incorporates a plurality of factors: the region where the document was drawn up, the person responsible for writing it, the available spelling currents that condition the practice of the notary or scribe (org. Faria 1999: 27). The analysis of the script, aided by the characterisation of the writing and the inks, led Cintra to a series of conclusions that, according to Ana Maria Martins, revolutionised “the state of the art on the oldest texts written in Portuguese” (org. Faria: 491). Thus, in a parallel path to that of Avelino de J. Costa, he considered the *Auto de Partilhas* [Deed of Partition] (1192) and the *Testamento de Elvira Sanches* [Will of Elvira Sanches] (1193) to be late copies, which gave new prominence to the so-called *Notícia de Torto* [Notice about an Offense], a document from the monastery of Vairão that, alongside the *Testamento de Afonso II* [Will of Afonso II], came to be considered the oldest document written in Portuguese (org. Faria 1999: 491).

Regarding the periodization of the Portuguese language, Cintra seems to follow the compartmentalisation proposed by others with few deviations (Pilar Vásquez Cuesta and Maria Albertina Mendes da Luz, *Gramática Portuguesa*, vol. I, Madrid, 1971, p. 202). One of these deviations is not taking the battle of Aljubarrota (1385) as a signpost for the so-called middle period. Aware, once again without theories, that time has non-coinciding series in different aspects of human life (and that, therefore, politics and language did not necessarily evolve in tandem), he argued in class, as Ivo Castro reminds us, that the middle period began with the generation after Aljubarrota, “when a linguistic pattern based on the dialects of the centre of the kingdom began to be outlined, when modern prose began to be written by those of the Illustrious Generation and those close to them” (org. Faria 1999: 368). Also noteworthy, in the field of the history of the Portuguese language, is the work he wrote on forms of address, to which historians such as Vitorino Magalhães Godinho have paid attention.

Considering the fields where Cintra was most active (medieval historiographical literature, Romance linguistics, and dialectology), it was precisely in medieval historiographical literature that his impact was most noticeable.

Cintra felt that his doctoral thesis had a wider reach outside Portugal than within (org. Faria 1999: 50), although it did receive recognition in his own country, namely within the Academia Portuguesa da História [Portuguese Academy of History], and above all in the next generation, as evidenced by the praise of various Portuguese colleagues, such as Teresa Amado, who considered his study of the *Crónica Geral de Espanha* [General Chronicle of Spain] “one of the most important works of the century for the literary history of our



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Middle Ages”, or Luís Krus, for whom the *Crónica Geral de Espanha de 1344* [General Chronicle of Spain of 1344] was “exemplarily studied by Cintra” [Krus 1993: 189]. José Mattoso believes that the relationship between texts and testimonies in the main medieval Portuguese lineage books was persuasively defined by Cintra, who was also convincing in demonstrating that the so-called *Livro III* [Book III] and *Livro IV* [Book IV] *de Linhagens* [of Lineages] are two versions of the compilation organised by Count Pedro de Barcelos and that the main source of this compilation is the *Liber Regum*, organised in Navarre in the 13th century (org. Faria 1999: 565). Methodologically, Mattoso sees his various works as making an important contribution to the renewal of Portuguese historiography thanks to the way he uses textual criticism, a reputed sine qua non instrument for the “correct interpretation of medieval texts and documents” (org. Faria 1999: 33).

But it was within the Pidalian school that the impact began to be most noticeable and, in this context, the most attentive reader seems to have been Diego Catalán, who, despite distancing himself from Cintra’s proposals in some respects, recognised the capital importance of his study. Thus, for example, in 1962, Catalán did not endorse the hypothesis that Count Pedro was associated with the translation of the *IV^a Crónica Breve* [Fourth Brief Chronicle] (1962: 212). In fact, although Cintra attributes to D. Pedro the slightly expanded translation initiative or the fact that he had the chapters devoted to the history of Portugal in the *Crónica de Onze Reyes* [Chronicle of Eleven Kings] translated and expanded (which gave rise to the *IV^a Crónica Breve* [Fourth Brief Chronicle] preserved in a fifteenth-century manuscript), Catalán finds in Cintra’s own work various pieces of evidence and comments prevent him from endorsing this hypothesis (1962: 286, note 76). Above all, Catalán believes that Cintra has accurately classified all the manuscripts he has analysed, both Portuguese and Spanish, and proposed a convincing genealogical scheme (1962: 292), claiming that, after Cintra’s argument, it would be necessary to abandon the question mark that the Portuguese philologist had placed in the title of his chapter V “and simply state”: “Count Pedro de Barcelos, author of the *Crónica de 1344* [Chronicle of 1344] (1962: 302).

Thirty years later, in a fresh review of the subject, Diego Catalán says that half a century after Menéndez Pidal’s inaugural work, Cintra changed the state of affairs through several very relevant contributions, giving a chronologically tighter picture of the re-founding activity that the Alfonsine chronicle underwent, emphasising that the *CGE* of 1344 had as its source a Galician-Portuguese version of the *Crónica General* [General Chronicle] (Catalán, 1992, p. 94-95).

In political matter, as Ivo Castro points out, a link can be established between Cintra’s progressive ideals and his role in the *Atlas Linguístico da Península Ibérica* [Linguistic Atlas of the Iberian Peninsula], a project under the tutelage of Menéndez Pidal that brought the Portuguese philologist “into direct contact with the people of all regions of Portugal” in 1953 and 1954 (org. Faria 1999: 27). The dialectological experience was a powerful catalyst for social and political awareness, which was cemented by his leading role in the academic crisis of 1962 and continued in different forms of civic and political engagement.

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