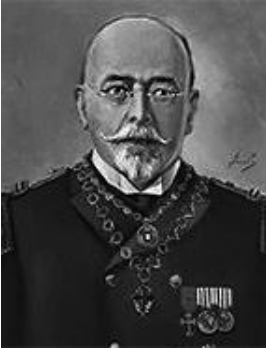


DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

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Eça, Vicente Maria de Moura Coutinho de Almeida d' (Porto, 1852 - Lisbon, 1929)

Vicente Maria de Moura Coutinho de Almeida d'Eça was born on 15 August 1852 in Porto into a family of aristocratic descent. His paternal grandparents, Dionísio de Moura Coutinho de Almeida d'Eça (1778-?) — a Knight of the Order of Christ and Captain of Esgueira (Aveiro) — and Teresa Febrónia de Paiva e Sousa (1784-1849), had a large family of ten children. One of their sons, Vicente de Moura Coutinho de Almeida d'Eça (1819-1888), a nobleman of the Royal Household and an engineer in the *Direção de Obras Públicas* [Directorate of Public Works], married Maria Júlia Barbosa de Lima. This union produced Vicente de Almeida d'Eça, a future naval officer who married Joana de Oliveira de Queirós in Porto in 1877.

As he notes on the first page of his diary, *Anais de Um Guarda-Marinha* [Annals of a Midshipman], the young Vicente Almeida d'Eça joined the Navy as an extraordinary midshipman cadet in 1870 and took his exams at the *Escola Politécnica* [Polytechnic School] the following year. Promoted to midshipman cadet (1871), he completed his second year at the *Escola Naval* [Naval School] in 1873. This was followed by his first embarkation on the frigate *D. Fernando II e Glória*, where he was promoted to naval officer in 1874. Over the next ten years, he served on various sailing ships, including the corvette *Infante D. João*, the frigate *D. Fernando II e Glória*, the corvette *Bartolomeu Dias*, the barge *Martinho de Melo*, and the corvette *Sá da Bandeira*, as well as mixed sailing and steam ships such as the corvettes *Mindelo*, *Estefânia*, and the armoured corvette *Vasco da Gama*. He also served on exclusively steam ships, including the *Quelimane*. Promoted to second lieutenant in 1877 and first lieutenant in 1884, he subsequently applied to teach the sixth subject at the *Escola Naval*: International Maritime Law and Maritime History, which was approved. Thus, by decree of 18 May 1885, he assumed the position of lecturer at the *Escola Naval*, succeeding Admiral Carlos Testa in teaching these subjects to future naval officers. He would continue to teach at the *Escola Naval* until the end of his career.

In 1885, Vicente Almeida d'Eça submitted a dissertation entitled *Do Exercício da Pesca Marítima* [On the Exercise of Maritime Fishing] as a candidate for the *Escola Naval*. It was a study on the "exercise of maritime fishing under international law". One of his conclusions was that fishing was "an immediate consequence of man's ability to make use of the sea." From this perspective, a state's maritime actions were exercised in many



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ways and needed to be contextualised within the history of humanity's use of the sea, which emerged as the main theme of Maritime History.

Influenced by Anglo-Saxon maritime and naval historiography, where concepts and chronology were determined by Admiral Alfred T. Mahan (1840-1914), author of *The Influence of Sea Power upon History 1660-1783* (1890), Almeida d'Eça believed that Maritime History was not merely a succession of naval wars, nor a narrative about these conflicts. However, analysing these confrontations at sea from the perspectives of tactics, strategy, and naval art was of interest. Such wars, he argued, would ultimately be the result of a state's foreign and maritime policy. In 1885, Almeida d'Eça published a literary work, *Contos sem Cor* [Tales without Colour], which undoubtedly reflects his youthful experiences on the long sea voyages he undertook to various parts of the world.

He also served as the director of the *Biblioteca da Escola Naval* [Naval School Library] from 1885 to 1888. Additionally, he was a member of numerous commissions, including one responsible for proposing the subjects of the theoretical course for masters at each of the Navy Arsenal's workshops (1887) and another that presented a project to reorganise the Navy's personnel and logistical services (1887). His participation in these commissions resulted in the publication of technical studies that are important sources for the study of teaching and the organisation of services within the Portuguese Navy, including *A Organização da Marinha de Guerra e as Últimas Reformas* [The Organization of the Navy and the Latest Reforms] (1890) and *Nota sobre os Estabelecimentos de Instrução Naval em Portugal, principalmente sobre a Escola Naval* [Note on the Naval Training Establishments in Portugal, Mainly on the Naval School] (1892). The publication of these texts should be considered alongside his contributions to the *Anais do Clube Militar Naval* [Annals of the Naval Military Club], where he published over three dozen articles on topics relevant at the time, including warships, armaments, conscription, naval education, and maritime law. His early studies critiqued the use of the so-called regressive method, which was prevalent at the end of the 19th century. In fact, it appears that Almeida d'Eça was interested in the study of naval and maritime history from a very young age, initially summarising contemporary events before moving backwards to more distant times, in order to reconstruct history based on familiar realities.

Promoted to lieutenant captain in 1890, he was appointed royal commissioner to the *Mala Real* Company, and shortly afterwards (1891-1892), he became chief of staff to Júlio Vilhena, the Minister of the Navy.

In 1892, he was appointed royal commissioner at the Inhambane Company and elected as a member of parliament for the Regenerator Party in Paredes. He was re-elected in 1894 for Fafe and in 1908 for Braga. During two legislative sessions, he served as secretary of the *Câmara dos Deputados* [Chamber of Deputies] and was a member of several committees. He was appointed to the *Comissão de Inquérito* [Committee of Inquiry] into religious establishments and educational institutions (1893), although his parliamentary activity was notably marked by his involvement in maritime and naval issues. Promoted to frigate captain in 1901 and sea captain in 1907, he participated in the revision of the agreement between Portugal and Spain on coastal



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and fisheries policies in 1913, following the establishment of the Republic. His promotion to vice-admiral in 1918, the highest rank in the Portuguese Navy, recognised his military leadership and the Portuguese state's appreciation for his long career as a professor of international law, historian, colonialist, member of parliament, member of the *Academia das Ciências de Lisboa* [Lisbon Academy of Sciences], and oceanographer, as well as the prestige his studies and scientific activities earned him in national and international academic circles.

Most of Almeida d'Eça's career was dedicated to teaching, and it is from this perspective that we should analyse his contributions to the fields of History and Geography. His teaching activities extended beyond the *Escola Naval*, as he served on exam boards for History, Geography, and English at national high schools in Porto, Guarda, Viseu, Aveiro, and the *Liceu Central de Lisboa* [Central High School of Lisbon] (1887-1888). As both an author and promoter of history, geography, and foreign languages, he was involved in the *Biblioteca do Povo e das Escolas* [Library of the People and the Schools], a popular collection of diverse subjects and disciplines aimed at a wide audience, published by David Corazzi, whose objective was the "scientific education of the people" to promote progress and civilisation. Almeida d'Eça was the author of seven titles: *O Mar* [The Sea] (1883); two for linguistic didactic purposes: *Gramática francesa* [French Grammar] (1883) and *French Methode* [French Method] (1884); and four books that reflect his interest in Maritime History and Geography, centred on the Age of Discovery: *História Marítima* [Maritime History] (1884), *Viagens e Descobrimientos Marítimos* [Maritime Voyages and Discoveries] (1885), *Viagens e Descobrimientos Terrestres* [Land Voyages and Discoveries] (1886), *Viagens e Descobrimientos Marítimos dos Portugueses* [Maritime Voyages and Discoveries of the Portuguese] (1889). In that same year, he was invited to teach Geography at the *Liceu de Lisboa*.

In his extensive and varied oeuvre, four areas stand out: maritime history, law — especially international law — the history of geography and geography itself, and colonial studies.

Among his most representative works are: *Luís de Camões Marinheiro* [Luís de Camões the Sailor] (1880); *Lições de História Marítima Geral* [Lessons in General Maritime History] (1895); *O Infante D. Henrique e a Arte de Navegar* [Prince Henry the Navigator and the Art of Sailing] (1896); *Noções elementares de Geografia, Chronologia e Chorographia de Portugal* [Elementary Notions of Geography, Chronology, and Chorography of Portugal] (1896).

In a lecture he delivered at the *Liga Naval Portuguesa* [Portuguese Naval League], entitled *Política marítima de Portugal na História; suas origens e consequências* [Portugal's Maritime Policy in History: Its Origins and Consequences,] published in 1907 in the League's bulletin, the main lines of Almeida d'Eça's historiographical thinking regarding the history of Portugal, particularly its maritime aspect, can be discerned. He emphasised the study of three characteristics in a maritime people: race, geography, and economic conditions. The Portuguese population emerged from a mixture of races and peoples, dating back to the formation of Portuguese territory. The common denominator of this anthropological heterogeneity was the "essentially maritime" factors; however, agriculture, constrained by forests and moorland, was also significant for the self-



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sufficiency of the communities that populated the Portuguese landscape and for the export of products such as wine and olive oil.

Indebted to the liberal historiographical narrative, Almeida d'Eça adopted the proposals of the historian Rebelo da Silva, beginning with his *Memória sobre a População e a Agricultura de Portugal desde a Fundação da Monarquia até 1865* [Memoir on the Population and Agriculture of Portugal from the Foundation of the Monarchy to 1865], a work that emphasised the importance of demographic and economic factors in the study of Portuguese history. This work provided insights into the legislation and measures that had developed agriculture and commerce over the centuries. For Almeida d'Eça, who sought evidence to support Portugal's significant investment in the sea and maritime activities, one of Rebelo da Silva's most important lessons was that the Portuguese nation "made itself." Conversely, authors such as the Viscount of Santarém and Oliveira Martins influenced Almeida d'Eça's methodology in writing *História Marítima de Portugal* [Maritime History of Portugal], viewing it as a political entity that, throughout its history, had consolidated itself at sea, through the institutions it established and the legislation enacted by its rulers, asserting itself in foreign relations through diplomacy and alliances with other nations. Portugal's maritime power, materialised in its fishing, trading, and war navies, emerged from internal political and economic reinforcement, which was crucial for overseas expansion. In this vision of Portuguese history, Portuguese society was inextricably linked to the use of the sea from the outset.

Conversely, the explanation for colonial decline could be traced to the weakening of the navy and the absence of a policy prioritising maritime affairs, its ports, and maritime activity.

Almeida d'Eça divided the history of the Portuguese Navy according to the types of ships used in each period: (a) the galley navy, comprising ships employed in the defence of the Kingdom in the 13th and 14th centuries; (b) the ship/barge navy, used for trade and conquests in Africa during the 15th century; (c) the caravel navy, one of the most emblematic ships of the Age of Discovery; (d) the round ship navy, associated with the conquests in India in the 16th century and navigation to Brazil in the 17th century; (e) the line ship navy, prominent during the Napoleonic wars in the 18th century; (f) the corvette navy, a key vessel in repressing the slave trade in the 19th century; (g) the gunboat navy, used for surveillance of the colonies in the 19th century; and finally, (h) the cruiser navy, employed in general services in the 20th century. By outlining this interpretative model, he paved the way for an analysis of Maritime History that would integrate the history of the Portuguese Navy with other technical areas such as cosmography, nautics, cartography, legislation on maritime trade, and the organisation of war and trade navies. This interpretation was closely related to the contributions of studies by other naval officers. In fact, the network of officers in the Portuguese Navy around the *Clube Militar Naval* and its magazine, *Anais*, expanded from the 19th to the 20th century, including notable figures such as Baldaque da Silva, Ernesto de Vasconcelos, João Braz de Oliveira, and Henrique Lopes de Mendonça. Almeida d'Eça belonged to this generation of naval officers who, through a wealth of writings in journals such as *Anais do Clube Militar*, *Boletim da Liga Naval* [Bulletin of the Naval League], *Boletim da*



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Sociedade de Geografia [Bulletin of the Geography Society], and the *Memórias da Academia das Ciências* [Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences], advocated for Portugal's role as a maritime and colonial power. They envisioned Portugal's naval revival as a maritime vocation that should translate into the development of activities such as fishing, maritime trade, cabotage, nautical sports, and the strengthening of the Merchant Navy.

In his *Lições de História Marítima Geral*, Almeida d'Eça closely followed Mahan, both in his use of concepts and methodology, as well as in the themes central to his approach, such as Dutch dominance of the seas in the 17th century, Colbert's reforms of the French navy, and the conflicts at sea from the 18th to the early 19th century.

The subject of General Maritime History encompassed naval tactics, manoeuvring, maritime law, and the history of fishing (*História Marítima*, p. 5). It is worth noting that Almeida d'Eça connected his students and readers with Alfred Mahan, even translating excerpts from his classic work, *The Influence of Sea Power upon History*.

However, the Maritime History he taught had a much broader chronology, incorporating the entirety of Portuguese maritime history. Topics such as the School of Sagres in the 15th century were of particular interest to him. He denied the existence of a Henrican academy in Sagres, arguing that its institutionalisation was merely a legend. Even if this was a correct premise, he suggested that certain authors sought to denigrate and diminish the image of Prince Henry the Navigator. In his writings, the Infante appeared with attributes of leadership, along with exceptional qualities of organisation and tenacity, which contributed to the success of the navigations — essentially, a character who made a decisive contribution to modern times. The Infante de Sagres surrounded himself with men experienced in various disciplines pertinent to navigation. "This is what the School of Sagres was called; it was not an institute of naval science but a gathering of diverse knowledge, where everyone was both master and pupil" (*O Infante D. Henrique*, p. 11). Regarding the "Plan of India," Almeida d'Eça argued that Henry the Navigator was already contemplating the sphericity of the Earth and the sea route to India. However, these achievements and discoveries only became feasible through the art of navigation and the "genius" of the Portuguese, who contributed to technical progress in navigation through the adoption of flat charts, the invention of the nautical astrolabe, the determination of latitude by the Sun, the discovery of the variation of the compass needle, and efforts to calculate the value of longitude (*Ibidem*, p.13). This established, for the first time, an overview of the technical aspects of the Discoveries. The editions of unpublished documentary sources by Luciano Cordeiro (1883) and Sousa Viterbo (1892) were no exception.

Almeida d'Eça sought to "settle once and for all" the historiographical problem related to Fernão Magalhães, which he regarded as a problem of "historical psychology" (*Fernão de Magalhães*, p. 4). In a text presented in the form of a dialogue, based on well-known sources of the time — Jerónimo Osório, João de Barros, Gaspar Correia, Faria e Castro, Luís de Camões — he stated that "only three names from the grandest epic of the Portuguese Discoveries" accompanied Fernão de Magalhães: Prince Henry the Navigator, Bartolomeu Dias,



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and Vasco da Gama.

Of these three "heroes" of the Discoveries, Magalhães would have been "the greatest sailor" (*Ibidem*, pp.10-11). While defending the heroism of certain figures and the glories achieved by Portugal, Almeida d'Eça provided his students with "synoptic and bibliographical tables" and emphasised the importance of chronologies. He increasingly focused on technical issues related to navigation, cartography, and nautical instruments. In a strongly positivist view, which was dominant at the time, he valued the role reserved for documents, handwritten diplomas, and primary sources, which were key to correcting errors and reconstructing the events of the past. However, the lack of documents should not lead to the denial of facts, an idea already defended by the Viscount of Santarém (*Viagens e Descobrimentos Marítimos*, p.40). Diplomatic science, which rescued documents with historical and evidential value from the dust of the archives, emerged as the instrument that verified, rectified, and certified dates, assertions, and analyses, contributing to an understanding of past eras. Aimed at a wider audience, Almeida d'Eça did not believe that this scientific validation was necessary (*Ibidem*, p. 42). Like Alexandre Herculano, who proposed that historians should mobilise all knowledge that aids research, he noted that "the processes of writing history have improved, but this is why it has become more challenging to write it well. Today, the historian must be a philologist, ethnologist, geographer, archaeologist, economist, and much more; above all, they must be a consummate sociologist, and they are required to be absolutely impartial, almost indifferent" (*A abertura dos portos...*, p.10).

The *Escola Naval* professor recognised the necessity of integrating different areas of knowledge to write history, emphasising that historians must be completely impartial. However, as he valued a national education grounded in history, he realised that readers often rejected long and tedious books. In his opinion, this prolixity, found in some works and authors, stemmed from "Michelet-style impressionist" historians, who embellished the narration of facts with vivid colours and striking effects. When the "general subject was History," it encompassed "everything that exists or has existed." Closely following one of his mentors, Herculano, who had concluded that "there is only one historical truth," Almeida d'Eça argued that history could be narrated based on the events that have occurred up to the present and the causes that determined them, through "the material objects of both the globe we inhabit and those we observe in limitless spaces, the psychological or artistic manifestations of humanity, and even errors and mistakes" (*Maritime History*, Vol. 1, p. 3).

Exhibiting an unusual interest in a "grammar of civilisations" for his time, he advised researchers not to confine their studies to what the writers of Classical Antiquity had documented but to extend their research to other peoples who had been overlooked: the Chinese, Japanese, Indians, and Amerindian peoples (*ibid.*, p. 6). Almeida d'Eça contended that the Portuguese had been entirely different during colonisation, as they had produced Creole sub-races and mestizos, resulting from marriages facilitated by Afonso de Albuquerque and even among the soldiers and workers of the plantations of his era. "All over the world, Portuguese blood is mixed with that of the conquered peoples" (*A Abertura*, p.18). The best example of this would be Brazil, which he illustrated with readings from Sílvio Romero and Artur Guimarães.



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Seeking to reconstruct past events, Almeida d'Eça recalled that "Every man is of his time, and can only be evaluated when viewed within that context; this is why it is good criticism, both convenient and indispensable, to study the time in order to appreciate the man" (*A Obra Científica do Visconde de Santarém*, p.7). He closely followed the works of the Viscount of Santarém and Latino Coelho, as well as Alexander von Humboldt, the driving force behind modern geography, to which he associated Major Guizot, Frédéric Lacroix, and Engelmann. *As Noções elementares de Geografia, Cronologia e Corografia de Portugal* [Elementary Notions of Geography, Chronology, and Chorography of Portugal], a synthesis by the Naval School teacher, became one of the most widely used geography textbooks in schools, from Jaime Moniz's 1894 curriculum reform until the introduction of Republican programmes for primary education in 1921. In Almeida d'Eça's view, "Geography should be considered and recognised as the compendium, the transcript, the synthesis of all human knowledge" (*Ibidem*, pp. 10-11). He believed that maritime discoveries were the most significant aspect of studying the history of geography (*Maritime Voyages and Discoveries* p. 5). In the times following the Discoveries, there was a tendency among certain foreign authors to downplay Portugal's significant role, diminishing the glory that rightfully surrounded the Portuguese nation (*Viagens e Descobrimento*, p. 38). Almeida d'Eça's foray into biography is also noteworthy, as he studied the lives and works of Admirals José Baptista de Andrade and Carlos Testa, as well as the works of Luciano Cordeiro, Prince Henry the Navigator, and Afonso de Albuquerque.

Almeida d'Eça proposed an educational programme for naval officers that encompassed a wide range of knowledge and disciplines essential for life at sea.

The "sea officer" could no longer be the rough sailor of ancient times; instead, they should be an educated citizen, attentive to the societal issues of their time Well-versed in astronomy, physics, and mathematics, as well as in history, literature, and geography, the naval officer needed to be prepared for various roles, including administrative services in the navy or overseas, in maritime industries, and in merchant shipping or fisheries. For Vicente Almeida d'Eça, who was constantly seeking examples from history, Afonso de Albuquerque was one of the few captains who could aptly be considered a precursor to modern "sea officers." He combined the essential qualities of command, maritime knowledge, manoeuvre, and navigation.

Throughout his life, Almeida d'Eça held significant academic positions and was a member of various academic and scientific institutions. He served as a member and one of the vice-presidents of the *Conselho Geral da Liga Naval Portuguesa* [General Council of the Portuguese Naval League], was an honorary member of the *Academia de Estudos Livres* [Academy of Free Studies], and a corresponding member of the *Instituto de Coimbra* [Coimbra Institute], the Society of Geographical and Historical Studies of Santa Cruz de Bolivia, the Geographical Society of Colombia, and the *Academia de Ciências de Lisboa*. Additionally, he held the positions of interim director of the *Escola Naval* in 1919, president of the *Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa* [Lisbon Geographical Society] from 1922 to 1924, and director of the *Escola Colonial* [Colonial School] in 1925.

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