

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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MAURO, Frédéric (Valenciennes, 1921 – Paris, 2001)

A historian associated with the second generation of the *Annales* school and a disciple of Fernand Braudel. He was largely responsible for developing studies on the South Atlantic and Brazil in France, as well as on the Americas, alongside Pierre Chaunu. He was the first to hold a French chair in Latin American History at Nanterre. With a background in economics and a strong awareness of quantitative methods, Mauro also dedicated significant attention to conceptual reflections in historiography.

Born on 24 October 1921 in Valenciennes, in northern France, he was the son of a civil engineer from the Midi region who had trained at the *École Nationale des Ponts et Chaussées*. As a young man, Mauro was involved in the Catholic student movement and developed an early interest in the social sciences, particularly history. This passion was greatly influenced by one of his secondary school teachers, M. Jourcin, who succeeded Fernand Braudel at the Lycée Pasteur in Neuilly-sur-Seine and later served in one of the governments led by Édouard Daladier. Mauro taught at the Lycée Montesquieu in Le Mans, though it lasted only for one academic year (1947-1948). During this time, he attended lectures by Fernand Braudel, then *directeur d'études* at the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* (EPHE). Braudel had been invited by the director of the lycée, the *doyen* Renouvin. Mauro decided to attend Braudel's seminars at the EPEH. Braudel also chaired the jury for Mauro's *agrégation*. After this stage, Mauro met with his mentor to declare that he was ready to embark on research (Mauro, "L'histoire, en quête du temps et de l'espace" [History, in Search of Time and Space] 1989, p. 1). Mauro then travelled to New York to further his training in economics and, at the start of the 1949 academic year, was appointed assistant professor at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Toulouse. For his thesis, Mauro conducted research in Portuguese and Brazilian archives. In Portugal, his research extended beyond Lisbon: he worked in the archives of various cities (Coimbra, Évora, Braga). Notably, he also travelled to the island archives (Madeira and the Azores). In Brazil, he carried out research in the archives of the Northeast and Rio de Janeiro in 1953 and 1954. In São Paulo, where he worked as a visiting professor, Mauro met some of Braudel's former students (Eurípides Simões de Paula, Eduardo d'Oliveira França and Alice Piffer Canabrava). His keen interest in geography led him to visit the Mantiqueira mountain range and the São Paulo coastline. Mauro's doctoral thesis, completed in 1957, positioned him among a distinguished group of historians who, following Braudel's approach, aspired to practise a "total history"—in other words, a methodology that is primarily focused on structures and conjunctures, considering the diverse temporal and spatial frameworks that shaped the actions of the historical actors. His thesis, entitled *Le Portugal et l'Atlantique au XVII^e siècle (1570-1670): Etude économique* [Portugal and the Atlantic in the 17th



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century (1570-1670) Economic Study] (Paris, 1960), was complemented by a critical study of sources: *Le Brésil au XVII^e siècle* [Brazil in the 17th Century] (Coimbra, 1963). In his main thesis, based on a vast array of archival sources and statistical data, Mauro presented an innovative analysis of the Portuguese economy within the Atlantic context. He highlighted the importance of the sugar economy, which enabled Portugal to minimise the negative impacts of the so-called "crisis of the 17th century". This work marked a turning point in historiography, and—despite its outdated content—the original study was reissued two decades later under a new title: *Le Portugal, le Brésil et l'Atlantique au XVII^e siècle (1570-1670) Etude économique* [Portugal and the Atlantic in the 17th century (1570-1670) Economic Study] (Paris, 1983). The new edition emphasised Brazil's central role, not only in the work as a whole but also within the broader Portuguese world. After obtaining his *Docteur ès lettres*, Mauro was appointed professor of modern history at the Faculty of Arts and Humanities of the University of Toulouse in 1958, where he also held the chair of economic history. From then on, he pursued an intense career in research, teaching, and scientific mentorship, expanding his original chronological framework to cover the 19th and 20th centuries and the historical dynamics associated with industrialisation and modernisation in Brazil and the Americas. Focusing on the progress and institutional framework of historical science, in 1963 Mauro published a "state of the art" analysis of university teaching and historical research in Portugal in the *Revue historique*, drawing on insights from Virgínia Rau (Mauro, "L'histoire au Portugal" [History in Portugal], 1963, p. 433). In this article, Mauro presents the organisation of teaching and research in universities, with a division between institutes and centres, and highlights the existence of the *Instituto Superior de Estudos Ultramarinos* [Higher Institute of Overseas Studies] (today the ISCSP at the University of Lisbon), where Vitorino Magalhães Godinho ran an important training "programme" at the time. The most active centre, however, was the *Centro de Estudos Históricos Ultramarinos* [Centre for Overseas Historical Studies], associated with the *Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino* [Overseas Historical Archive], which featured an "impressive" film library. Mauro provided an overview of the archives, libraries, and museums, many of which were in need of reorganisation. He also evaluated Portuguese publications, characterising them as traditional historiography, disconnected from foreign scholarship and social sciences. However, he identified a possibility of renewal thanks to the few Portuguese historians who had gone beyond the Pyrenees and their disciples (Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, Joaquim Barradas de Carvalho, Julião Soares de Azevedo, Luís de Matos, Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, Jorge Borges de Macedo, Joel Serrão). That same year, Mauro co-founded the journal *Caravelle*, which was published by the *Institut d'Etudes hispaniques, hispano-américaines et luso-brésiliennes* of the University of Toulouse and dedicated to Ibero-American territories (Vayssiére, "Caravelle" entre Lettres et Sciences Humaines", 2013, p. 3). In 1964, he organised a colloquium on capital cities in Latin America. During the 1960s, Mauro's reputation as a specialist in economic history and the history of European expansion, especially in the modern period, earned him an invitation to collaborate on the prestigious collection of university textbooks *"Nouvelle Clio. L'histoire et ses problèmes"* [New Clio. History and its problems]. Thus, he wrote volumes 27, *L'Expansion européenne (1600-1870)* [The European Expansion (1600-1870)] (Paris, 1964), and 32, *Le XVI^e Siècle Européen: Aspects Économiques* [The European Sixteenth Century: Economic Aspects] (Paris, 1966). In line with the collection's objectives, and without sacrificing the rigour that characterised his work, Mauro included a 23-page bibliography in his volume about the European expansion. Although not exhaustive, the bibliography was complemented by a chronology and



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a summary, both of which prioritised economic aspects. The book—in the words of his colleague Pierre Chaunu, a quantitative historian who was equally attentive to theoretical formulations—revealed "la ligne vigoureuse d'une pensée personnelle" (Chaunu, "Le rythme trentenaire de l'expansion européenne" [The thirty-year pace of European expansion], 1966, p. 886), was innovative in its presentation of the cyclical rhythms of European expansion. Mauro's analysis established itself as a solid contribution to the field of economic history. In the volume on European economy, Mauro used concepts from economic theory and once again drafted a rigorous synthesis, breaking new ground for his valuable contribution to the Hispanic world and because he had integrated the overseas territories into the economy of 16th century Europe. Also, during this period, Mauro began publishing "programmatic" texts—which would continue over the following decades—in which he debated the paths French historiography should take to develop studies on the Americas, especially Latin America (Mauro, "Comment développer les recherches françaises..." [How to Develop French Research], 1967; Vayssière, "Frédéric MAURO," 2002, pp. 299-301). In 1967, Mauro was appointed the first French chair of Latin American history at the Faculty of Letters and Human Sciences in Nanterre. From that point onwards, he divided his time in France between this institution and the *Institut des Hautes Études de l'Amérique Latine* [Institute of Latin American Studies], founded in 1954 by geographer Pierre Monbeig, where he led a research seminar. Mauro's ties to Portugal remained strong, and in 1968 he was elected a corresponding member of the *Academia Portuguesa da História* [Portuguese Academy of History]. Two years later, at the suggestion of Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, Mauro compiled a selection of his post-doctoral texts into the collection *Études Économiques sur l'Expansion Portugaise (1500-1900)* [Economic Studies on the Portuguese Expansion] (1970). Despite its title, the collection also examined social groups, such as merchants, and explored the interplay between economy, culture, and social institutions in Brazil. It included a section dedicated to "Comparisons and Perspectives", thus emphasising the structuralist and comparative matrix of the *Annales* school. In subsequent decades, Mauro continued to develop his work as a scientific supervisor. Over his lifetime, he oversaw more than 100 theses, including 28 theses on Brazil between 1972 and 1997. Among these were works by scholars such as Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, who would later hold the chair of Brazilian History at the University of Paris-Sorbonne, and Guy Martinière (Silva, *O Brasil construído de fora...* [Brazil built from outside...], 2014, pp. 41-43). Mauro followed the work of Brazilian historians in Paris, though his critiques were not always favourable (Machado, "Dois tempos de um percurso de experiências historiográficas..." [Two times in a journey of historiographical experiences], 2015, p. 148). Mauro authored and coordinated works dedicated to the history of Brazil and Latin America, and economic history more broadly. The collective work *La pré-industrialisation du Brésil: essais sur une économie en transition (1830/50-1930/50)* [The pre-industrialisation of Brazil: essays on an economy in transition (1830/50-1930/50)], published in 1984, was the result of research conducted at CREDAL, a laboratory associated with the CNRS⁴⁷. In 1991, Mauro coordinated a volume included in the *Nova História da Expansão Portuguesa* [New History of Portuguese Expansion], directed by Joel Serrão and A. H. de Oliveira Marques: *O Império Luso-Brasileiro 1620-1750* [The Luso-Brazilian Empire 1620-1750]. After his academic jubilation, it is worth highlighting the tribute paid to the great historian by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation through its Cultural Centre in Paris. In 1995, the thick volume 34 of the *Arquivos do Centro Cultural Calouste Gulbenkian* [Archives of the Calouste Gulbenkian Cultural Centre] (1995) was published under the title *Mélanges offerts à Frédéric Mauro* [Miscellaneous offered



to Frédéric Mauro]. Coordinated by Guy Martinière, a former student of Mauro, this collection gathered contributions that covered Mauro's vast range of scholarly interests, including Portugal, Brazil, the Atlantic, and the Americas.

Frédéric Mauro's distinguished career in the French academy earned him several awards. He was awarded the Silver Medal of the *Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique*, and he was elected a full member of the 5th Section of the *Académie des Sciences d'Outre-mer* in December 1978. Sometimes unjustly forgotten and omitted from recent studies and bibliographies on the Atlantic world, Frédéric Mauro should be remembered as a historian who, following in the wake of Fernand Braudel and his work on the Mediterranean, and alongside Pierre Chaunu, contributed to ensuring that the Atlantic, particularly the South Atlantic, was properly recognised as a historiographical territory (O'Reilly, "Genealogies of Atlantic History," 2004, p. 74; Schaub, "The Case for a Broader Atlantic History," 2012), long before *Atlantic history* formally claimed that achievement. His contribution to historiography extended beyond his specific research into analytical categories. The concept of the "Atlantic Mediterranean", first introduced by Fernand Braudel, gained broader recognition through Mauro's work. His legacy lives on through his former students, who continue to address and expand upon the questions he raised during his career.

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