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Geography and History

Interest in geography among Portuguese historians emerged in the mid-19th century, particularly in relation to the study of overseas expansion, which was consistently referred to as a geographical discovery. Thus, the Viscount of Santarém gave prominence to geography in his works published between 1842 and 1849, in particular in his *Atlas*, a collection of reproductions of ancient maps, central to the study of the expansion of geographical knowledge during the medieval and early modern periods. In his view, this expansion was due to the Portuguese discoveries, which he defended with well-documented arguments. However, as far as historians were concerned, the support in geographical works was lacking and, in fact, did not yet exist. Therefore, in the absence of a science with its own methods and language, geography as a scientific discipline appeared only later, alongside history. Consequently, in historical works, the search for scattered elements where authors attempt to understand the natural environment is frequently observed (Silva, *Memoria...*).

The chorographies and descriptions produced since the 15th century (such as the *Livro dos Arautos* [Book of the Heralds], circa 1416) should be considered pre-geographical. These texts either emerged as independent works or were incorporated into other narratives. The first text that may be considered a (descriptive) geography of Portugal is by Gerardo A. Pery, dated 1875, containing brief historical references, limited to the context of overseas discoveries and conquests. These sparse elements are included in chapters referred to as statistical sections. At the time, history was not considered a relevant field to enhance (or improve) what descriptive geography was able to achieve. Nonetheless, Pery's *Geographia*, being unique, was used by some historians, such as Oliveira Martins and Alberto Sampaio, who each in their own way attempted to establish a relationship between the two disciplines. This relationship aimed to aid their interpretation of the historical process they sought to master. However, the description of the land was still highly rudimentary, as demonstrated by the insufficient use of geographical concepts and knowledge in historical explanations. While historians felt a strong need to understand the territory, they were not equipped to use geographical knowledge in a satisfactory manner, even if still embryonic in its concepts.

Founded in 1875, the Geographical Society of Lisbon did not promote the study or writing of geographical works on the mainland territory. Its focus was geared towards the colonial territories, which needed to be



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

explored and understood for the purposes of domination. Military personnel played a key role in this regard, studying the colonies through scientific commissions and enforcing control over the native populations as part of European colonisation. These regions had previously been poorly explored and inadequately described (Guimarães, *A Sociedade...*[Society]). Among the best-known explorers attempting to penetrate inland Africa were Serpa Pinto, Roberto Ivens, and Brito Capelo. Meanwhile, the discipline of geography in Portugal was still trying to establish itself, however the *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia* [Geographical Society Bulletin] showed no signs of this innovation (Lautensach, *Bibliografia* [Bibliography] pp. 1 and 15).

Oliveira Martins, who paid so much attention to the Social Sciences as a whole, was not particularly enthusiastic about geographical knowledge. Nonetheless, he included a brief geographical introduction in his *História da Civilização Ibérica* [History of Iberian Civilisation], which he continued in his *História de Portugal* [History of Portugal]. This was concise, perhaps due to his lack of geographical knowledge, as well as his view that the history of Portugal resulted from the desire for independence among the barons of Entre-Douro and Minho, a perspective previously adopted by Herculano. He emphasised that "the cause of Portugal's separation from the body of the Leonese monarchy is neither obscure nor requires lengthy digressions to be defined: it is the ambition for independence of the county's governor, who held it from the suzerain king" (Martins, *Historia*, I, p. 14). Thus, according to him, Portugal "does not owe its formation to geographical dictates: the bold, ambitious, and turbulent barons were at the same time ignorant of theories and systems. They advanced as far as the tip of their swords could reach: everything suited them, everything served them, as long as they expanded their domain" (Martins, *Historia* [History] I, p. 17). In Henry M. Stephens' *History of Portugal*, which was prefaced by Martins, the importance of the natural environment in explaining political independence is entirely dismissed. It states: "The Portuguese nation is a product of its history: this gives the History of Portugal an eminent value. Geographically, this small kingdom is an integral piece of the Iberian Peninsula, without natural borders that distinguish it from the larger portion of the peninsula, today called Spain, a name still applied to the entire Peninsula as in ancient times" (Stephens, *Historia*, p. 2).

Hence, also in Oliveira Martins' works, geography does not assist or contribute to historical interpretation. As noted by António Sérgio many years later, these opening pages are "an admirable tableau [...] but one completely detached from the historical narrative, contributing nothing to its intelligibility" (Sérgio, *História*, p. 51).

The absence of a fully developed and autonomous body of geographical knowledge is evident in the innovative work of Alberto de Sampaio. He references two of Bernardino A. Barros Gomes' works with which he is familiar: *Condições Florestais de Portugal* [Forest Conditions of Portugal] (1876) and *Cartas Elementares de Portugal* [Elementary Maps of Portugal] (1878), which mark the beginning of scientific geography in Portugal (Girão, "Desenvolvimento" ["Development"] p. 532). He also mentions *Geographia* [Geography] by Gerardo A. Pery (1875) and the *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle* by Élisée Reclus (1876) (Sampaio, *Estudos*, pp. 458, 460, 485-89). However, what stands out most in his studies, written between 1880 and 1908, particularly in *A*



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

Propriedade e a Cultura do Minho [Land Ownership and Agriculture in Minho] , is his observation of the land, essentially of landscapes, which is remarkably detailed in its application. His precise knowledge of the soils and the climatic and environmental conditions would not have been out of place in the work of a geographer (Sampaio, *Estudos* [Studies], vol. I, pp. 460-469), compensating for the lack of published geographical knowledge.

At the end of the 19th century and the early 20th, geographical factors did not appear to be a central concern for historians, perhaps due to the relative underdevelopment of this knowledge. Until the establishment of degrees in Historical Geography at the Faculties of Arts in Lisbon and Coimbra (1911), there were no scholars to establish schools and advance research and writing in these fields. Even after this point, it was difficult for geographical knowledge to gain prominence, as courses relied on naturalist professors from science faculties and on lecturers without specialised training. The only geographer was the physician Silva Telles, who had been a professor at the *Curso Superior de Letras* since 1904 and continued in the Faculty of Arts after 1911. He authored the first syntheses of Portuguese geography in 1908, 1924, and especially in 1929. However, they were brief and lacked bibliographies, marking only the beginning of the field.

Silva Telles was regarded as a well-prepared scholar, despite his limited output, and was often credited as the pioneer of scientific geography in Portugal (Ribeiro, "Silva...", pp. 160-161). Another notable professor from the *Curso Superior de Letras*, although not strictly a historian, was Zófimo Consiglieri Pedroso. He considered history within the broader framework of social sciences: "Every historical fact is linked to biological, chemical, or physical phenomena through thousands of relationships. Humankind, as the fundamental unit and factor of history, is what establishes these connections. As individuals, they belong to the field of anthropology; as social beings, they belong to the field of sociology. The influences acting upon them as *animals* are reflected in the historical facts in which they participate as *humans*. Therefore, climates, races, diets, geographical position, altitude, soil composition, etc., all the circumstances that directly or indirectly affect the physical nature of humans, act as modifying elements in history" (Pedroso, *Compendio* [Compendium] pp. 1-2).

The creation of the degree in Historical Geography in 1911 (Amaral, "Geógrafos" ["Geographers"] p. 69) also prompted a reflection on the scientific nature of geography—as far as history was concerned, already steeped in knowledge and positivist theories, there was no doubt. History and geography had already been integrated in secondary education, where exams covered Geography, Chronology, and History. In 1915, Silva Telles published *O conceito científico da geografia* [The scientific concept of geography], followed in 1917 by Aristides de Amorim Girão's *A geografia moderna. Evolução – conceito – relação com as outras ciências* (*Ensaio de síntese*) [Modern Geography: Evolution – Concept – Relationship with Other Sciences (A Synthesis Essay)]. Girão, newly graduated in History and Geography, argued that Portugal was lagging at least 50 years behind in developing the discipline: "There was little or almost nothing on geography in our country" (*Boletim*, p. 3). Both geographers aimed to outline a trajectory for the field and establish an *explanatory* geography—later termed *interpretative* geography by Leite de Vasconcellos (Vasconcellos, *Etnografia* [Ethnography] I, p.



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

61)—moving beyond the old *descriptive* geography (Girão, "A geografia" ["Geography"] p. 318). Silva Telles endeavoured to completely separate geography from history: "The geographer is essentially a naturalist, while the historian is concerned only with the place where history unfolds. For the historian, the place is merely a *setting* for human events, while for the geographer, it is the *objective* and the logical product of nature" (Telles, "O conceito" ["The concept"] p. 119).

He emphasised the influence of maritime factors on the country: "the constant dependence on the sea," "the dominant maritime character" (Telles, *Portugal*, pp. 6 and 82).

However, neither the intersection nor the merging of history and geography appeared to be detrimental to either discipline. Both ought naturally to be invoked when addressing issues that require mutual clarification. For instance, geography and history are essential in discussions around the reasons for Portugal's independence. Determining whether there is a clearly defined individuality in the territory where what would later become the Portuguese state emerged and developed is an old debate (Peres, *Como nasceu Portugal* [How Portugal Was Born]). It is important to consider whether a prefiguration of the state can be traced, assuming that the territory was, in a sense, pre-delimited, awaiting the creation of the political structure. This discussion, along with the often contradictory opinions, dates back to Herculano.

Meanwhile, in Coimbra, the "accomplished geologist and geographer" Anselmo Ferraz de Carvalho (1878-1955), a professor at the Faculty of Sciences, was employed in the teaching of geography, where he was reportedly an effective lecturer. He is credited with the first geography of Portugal, published in Barcelona in 1930. Elsewhere, geography professors were hired wherever available, such as Léon Bourdon, who came in 1927-1928 to teach geography courses. Aristides de Amorim Girão, a graduate in Historical Geography and a former student of Anselmo Ferraz de Carvalho, completed his doctorate in 1922 and went on to have a long career as a full professor of geography until his death in 1960. In Porto, at the Faculty founded in 1919, the physician, anthropologist, and ethnologist António Augusto Mendes Correia, who also taught at the Faculty of Sciences, was responsible for teaching geographical subjects in the new Faculty of Arts, with assistants António Luís Gomes and Artur de Magalhães Basto.

Although not strictly a geographer, Mendes Correia dedicated many of the opening pages of his study *Os povos primitivos da Lusitânia (Geografia, Arqueologia, Antropologia)* [The Primitive Peoples of Lusitania (Geography, Archaeology, Anthropology)] to the physical characteristics of the territory that would become Portugal. He made some exaggerated claims, such as suggesting that "the ancient spirit of independence" was already vibrant "in the old people of the *castros*" (Correia, *Os povos* [the people] p. 382). Magalhães Basto also began promising geographical research (*A fronteira* [The border]), but later abandoned it in favour of history, particularly of Porto. He was described as a "geographer whose career was cut short by the obscurantism that led to the closure of the Faculty of Arts in Porto" (Ribeiro, *Opúsculos* [Opuscles] V, p. 307). As a result, geographical studies in Porto were limited and discontinued after the Faculty's closure in 1931.

However, among historians, interest in geography began to develop significantly with the work of Jaime



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

Cortesão. As early as 1930, he asserted that “the determinism of natural conditions, being highly relative, can never be turned into geographical fatalism” (Cortesão, “O problema” [“The problem”] p. 227). Cortesão consistently incorporated geography into his work, whether in his early studies on Portugal and overseas expansion or later in his research on the Brazilian territory and history. He emphasised the need to consider the “deep harmony within a rich diversity and the perfect polarisation of elements towards an Atlantic function” in Portuguese territory. He added: “A zone of complex interaction between geographical elements. Further enhanced by the convergence of these features, this territory facilitated the establishment of an economic system based jointly on land exploitation and maritime activity and trade, and consequently had significant potential for political development..” In Cortesão's view, the economic foundation of the nation lay in long-distance maritime trade supported by agriculture. Although he was confessedly more focused on history than geography, he had no qualms stating that “it is entirely impossible to understand the origins of the Nation without studying its deep connections with the territory, as well as its entire history in relation to the geography of the Atlantic and the two worlds that frame its basin, and, we could almost say, with universal geography” (Cortesão, “O problema...”, pp. 234 and 238).

In conclusion: “The Portuguese people emerged from the close interaction between Land and Sea, with their distinctive way of life, character, language, religious sensibility, and artistic expressions—the ultimate flower of a unique spirituality.” (Cortesão, “Causas...” [“Causes”], p. 251). Years later, he continued to emphasise the importance of the territory's position, describing it as “the most advanced Atlantic and western outpost of two peninsulas: the European and the Iberian” (Cortesão, *Os Descobrimentos* [The Discoveries] vol. I, p. 191). This highlights geography, but the emphasis remains on history.

Published in 1931, although written in 1928, Hermann Lautensach's article, *A Individualidade Geográfica de Portugal no Conjunto da Península Ibérica* [The Geographical Individuality of Portugal within the Context of the Iberian Peninsula] in the *Boletim da Sociedade de Geografia de Lisboa*, sparked considerable objections. Unlike Ferraz de Carvalho and Amorim Girão, Lautensach argued that Portugal's physical-geographical identity was “clearly defined.” He described it as “a coastal region on the western edge of the Iberian Peninsula, strongly influenced by the ocean, while simultaneously forming a transitional area from northern [...] to southern, subtropical forms..” Regarding the Castilian centre, he conceded that the transition was gradual. Echoing Silva Telles, Lautensach insisted that “the strongest foundation for Portugal's political autonomy was its advantageous maritime position on the Atlantic coast (a benefit also enjoyed by the Netherlands), a characteristic that equally shaped both its physical-geographical and political facets” (Lautensach, “A Individualidade...” [“Individuality...”], pp. 382-383, 187). This stance established a divergence of opinions on the geographical basis of Portugal's political independence, and while the historical argument was frequently reiterated, it was never disputed.

In his classic work, *Como Nasceu Portugal* (1938), Damião Peres reviewed various opinions, some attributing the origins of the nation to geographical factors (alongside ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and historical-



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

administrative imperatives) and ended by citing Anselmo Ferraz de Carvalho, who stated that Portugal “is distinguishable from the rest of the Peninsula” (Peres, *Idem*, pp. 28, 38). Many of these opinions were not from geographers or writers with serious geographical knowledge.

Even in the 1930s, there were still few geographers, even for university teaching. Among those mentioned by Damião Peres were Teófilo Braga, Leite de Vasconcellos, Ricardo Severo, António Sardinha, Mendes Correia, and Jaime Cortesão. Some historians and geographers, including Amorim Girão, argued that the Western Iberian Peninsula contained “diverse but indistinct nationalities, which only later gained coherence and defined lines through political bonds.” He also added, “the Portuguese territory is not distinct from Spain” (*apud* Peres, *Idem*, p. 16).

This led to an inevitable debate between Damião Peres and Mendes Correia. While Correia viewed geography as the *determining* cause of Portuguese independence, Peres preferred to refer to the environment as merely a *conditioning* factor. Indeed, he acknowledged that “scientific explanations for the origin of Portugal are quite fragile” (Peres, “Portugal”, pp. 5, 8). Nevertheless, whether related to the origins of the state or national identity, geography became a necessary element in historical discourse—oddly neglected by Fortunato de Almeida, a geography methodologist at the *Escola Normal Superior de Coimbra*, in his *História de Portugal*. This was not the case with Damião Peres in the *História de Portugal* known as the “Barcelos edition,” even though Mário Vasconcelos e Sá’s chapter on “Geographical Conditions” received little attention, which drew considerable criticism. Nonetheless, geographical insights supported many chapters of this history, particularly those written by Ângelo Ribeiro, Manuel Ramos, Damião Peres, and especially Jaime Cortesão.

António Sérgio also highlighted the role of territory in his *História de Portugal. Introdução Geográfica* [History of Portugal. Geographical Introduction]. This work, after being seized, was later reissued under the title *Introdução Geográfico-Sociológica à História de Portugal* [Geographical-Sociological Introduction to the History of Portugal]. This volume of the *História de Portugal*, even though it focuses solely on the geographical introduction, deeply irritated the political authorities of the time, with Alfredo Pimenta ending his scathing critique by saying, “If I were in power, I would silence him” (Pimenta, *A História...*, p. 44).

However, Sérgio, who was neither a geographer nor a historian but rather a stimulator of minds, knew how to complement his text with purpose-drawn diagrams that illustrated his points (it should be noted that Sérgio had naval training, and he did not refer to these sketches as maps). In his geographical introduction, he declared that he did not believe that “the geo-physical characteristics of our land explain the existence of the political entity known as Portugal.” He argued that in “all of medieval Europe, the new states that emerged seemed to be the result of the will of leaders and their accompanying warrior class, without any racial, national, or tribal basis” (Sérgio, *História*, p. 43). This allowed him to propose his theory, namely that the key factor was the territory’s position within the Peninsula, especially the “ports for European maritime-commercial activities and the value of the coastline and climate for exploiting marine resources (fishing, salt)” . “The northern peoples needed salt and were not in a position to obtain it from the sea; the climate of the Portuguese, unlike



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

theirs, was ideal for salt production: therefore..." (Sérgio, *História*, p. 42). This was the main thesis Sérgio sought to defend, which provoked the anger of his political opponents, who were attached to an agrarian monarchy with integralist overtones. Sérgio argued that Portugal "was only of primary importance as a supplier of products derived from maritime exploitation: fish and salt." He continued, "The northern peoples needed salt and were not in a position to obtain it from the sea; the climate of the Portuguese, unlike theirs, was ideal for salt production: therefore..." (Sérgio, *Em tórno*, pp. 43 e 51). To some extent, his main argument, aligned with Silva Telles, his co-author of the *Guia de Portugal* [Guide to Portugal] in 1923-1924). For Sérgio, who was neither a geographer nor historian, it was necessary to use "geographical-historical notions that help us understand certain aspects of history where the land and humankind appear united as correlating factors of social evolution" (Sérgio, *História*, p. 51). Thus, Orlando Ribeiro would state that the "relationship between history and geography is correctly positioned—provided the author follows through with the programme he has outlined." (Ribeiro, *Introduções*, p. 147).

In the 1930s and 1940s, Aristides de Amorim Girão's teachings at Coimbra became influential. His *Lições de Geografia Humana* [Human Geography Lessons] (1936) provided "a suggestive geographical interpretation of history, while applying rigorous observation to the analysis of social phenomena."

He considered history and geography "inseparable": "There is no history without geography, nor geography without history: one gives us the element of space, the other of time" (Girão, *Lições*, pp. 1, 17). He continued along this path, authoring study texts and materials such as *Geografia de Portugal* [Geography of Portugal] (1941), *Atlas de Portugal* [Atlas of Portugal] (1941), and *Geografia Humana* [Human Geography] (1946), without neglecting the organic relationship between History and Geography that he had always cultivated. This approach also informed his proposal for the regional division of the country, which was accepted by the government. However, it faced considerable criticism and objections: from those who believed that the physical regions were poorly defined, as well as from those who argued that the relationships between local communities should be respected. The position advanced by Lautensach was rejected, arguing that "a state or political region is something entirely different from, and often antagonistic to, a natural region" (Girão, *Geografia*, p. 432).

After the death of Silva Telles (1930), the Faculty of Arts in Lisbon also took a long time to equip itself with duly qualified teaching staff for geography. Luís Schwalbach was more of a journalist than a geographer, and perhaps did not appreciate the presence of better-prepared colleagues. As a result, Orlando Ribeiro, who completed his doctorate in 1936 only after having served as a Portuguese lecturer in Paris (1937-1940) and as a professor in Coimbra (1940-1942), finally took up a chair in Lisbon in 1943. In his view, the relationship between geography and history was well defined. "The land of a people is no longer a mere natural element, but a portion of space shaped by generations, imprinted over time with the marks of the most varied influences. An original and fruitful combination of two elements: *territory* and *civilisations*." Further on, he added: "Within the broad indeterminism of human actions, the territory sustains and conditions history" (Ribeiro,



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

Introduções..., p. 19). With a degree of modesty (authentic or otherwise), he remarked on a topic in history and ethnology that “might benefit from being examined by someone with experience of the Portuguese land, who has often scavenged in the works of others for materials to understand fundamental aspects of its human originality, through the past” (Ribeiro, *A formação...*, p. 12). In another passage, in his memoirs, he stated: “Geography, in all that concerns humankind, was a way of seeing and feeling what has persisted from History up to the present. I never again ceased to closely associate the two sciences, and with all that I have learned, I continue to believe that without a deep investigation into the past, our understanding of most aspects of human geography remains superficial and incomplete”(Ribeiro, *Portugal*, p. 73).

As his colleague and life partner Suzanne Daveau notes, Orlando Ribeiro “never felt any contradiction in his dual training as a naturalist and historian” (Ribeiro, *Opúsculos III*, p. 8). On the contrary, he perceived it as a kind of “conspiracy between Nature and History” (Ribeiro, *O Ensino*, p. 11). In fact, in Orlando Ribeiro’s work, there is a wise interplay between history and geography, which mutually support and influence each other. It may not be entirely accurate to speak of interdisciplinarity—a term he sometimes uses in quotation marks. This is because, in his thinking, methods and concepts from different fields are not separated or set against each other, even if they appear intertwined. They are, simultaneously, one and the same. His historical reasoning does not seek support from geography as it is already inherently geographical, and his geographical methodology employs history seamlessly. To use his words: “By observing its complex realities, the geographer cannot help but see through time, places, people, and things. I believe, moreover, that history, within the scope of the human sciences, is both a core and a pathway to knowledge” (Ribeiro, *Portugal*, p. XVI).

Finally established at the Faculty of Arts in Lisbon, Orlando Ribeiro founded the Centre for Geographical Studies, initiating the training process for geographers, which led to the formation of an outstanding group of researchers. Historical analysis was always a priority, beyond the influence of its main founder, with contributions from Raquel Soeiro de Brito, Ilídio do Amaral, and later Carminda Cavaco, António de Brum Ferreira, Carlos Alberto Medeiros, Jorge Gaspar, and many others. In the 1960s, the team benefited from the remarkable addition of Suzanne Daveau, who was keenly interested in history and ancient literature, fields she continues to study today, and as a sharp observer, she began her exemplary work on Portugal in 1962 and has steadily expanded her work since 1966. (Garcia, “Suzanne”, p. 23).

From the start of his research career, Vitorino Magalhães Godinho displayed a marked interest in geography.

In 1947, his *História Económica e Social da Expansão Portuguesa* [Economic and Social History of Portuguese Expansion], which was limited to Morocco (vol. I, the only volume published), and his study “A Economia das Canárias nos Séculos XIV e XV” [“The Economy of the Canary Islands in the 14th and 15th centuries”] (1952) and the “*Mediterrâneo*” *Saariano e as Caravanas do Ouro. Geografia Económica e Social do Sáara Ocidental e Central do XI ao XVI Século* [The Saharan “Mediterranean” and the Caravans of Gold:



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

Economic and Social Geography of the Western and Central Sahara from the 11th to the 16th Century] (1956), featured carefully constructed texts on economic geography, accompanied by purpose-drawn maps. And that was not all. In his works, especially those dating from the 1940s and 1950s, geography was consistently and clearly present. In the following decades, his focus shifted more towards sociology and other areas of the social sciences, yet geography can still be detected as an implicit element in his works. His attempt to integrate concepts led to his proposal of *Noções Operatórias na Abordagem Global das Sociedades* [Operative Notions in the Global Approach to Societies] where he proposed a way of “approaching a singular reality, which is both the individual man and humanity as a whole.” (Godinho, *Noções*, p. 174).

However, as a historian keenly aware of the needs of an educated audience and students, it was Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, along with a commercial company unrelated to the university or academic circles, who was responsible for the *Panorama da Geografia* [Panorama of Geography] series, published by Edições Cosmos from 1952 to 1957. The coordinator was joined by collaborators Alfredo Fernandes Martins and Joel Serrão. The series included a collection of translated works from French: Emmanuel De Martonne's *Traité de Géographie Physique*, Lucien Febvre's *La terre et l'Évolution Humaine*, Pierre George's *Démogéographie*, J. J. Juglas's *Géographie économique*, and an appendix on economic geography by Henri Hauser. The initial project also included references to social, political, and cultural geography. In any case, it was the most enriching bibliographic enterprise to have been received by the scientific discipline in Portugal during the mid-20th century.

Since 1955, Magalhães Godinho had raised two names in geography for a broadened history encompassing the social sciences: Orlando Ribeiro and Fernandes Martins (Godinho, “A Historiografia,” [“Historiography”] p. 16). Strongly influenced by his long stay and studies (or further refinement) in Paris, by 1965 Magalhães Godinho envisioned an expanded scope for human geography.

“Instead of the traditional geographical 'framework' serving as an introduction only to be quickly forgotten, history considers the actions of men in each era in relation to a concrete space (and not merely a map of toponymic locations). It seeks, as it were, to conduct retrospective human geography (Roger Dion) or geohistory (Braudel), that is, to reconstruct the landscapes of the time and the forms that characterised human interactions with them” (Godinho, “Sobre,” p. 147). He consistently relied on the cartographic approaches of Jacques Bertin, which he encouraged his collaborators to study. With similarly long stays in France, Luís de Matos and Joaquim Barradas de Carvalho conducted their research in cultural history, never neglecting geography. Whether dealing with the Latin literature of the expansion or delving into Duarte Pacheco Pereira's *Esmeraldo de Situ Orbis*, the study of lands and seas required the support and insights of geographical science.

At the Faculty of Arts in Lisbon, Virgínia Rau began her career studying the Middle Ages: her focus in 1943 was on fairs; she then turned to research on the *sesmarias* (1946) and moved on to a different period with *A exploração e o comércio do sal de Setúbal – estudo de história económica* [The Exploration and Trade of Salt



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

in Setúbal – A Study in Economic History] (1951), alongside numerous articles and dispersed contributions. Initially, she paid some attention to pre-history and geography, maintaining “intense interactions” with geographers (Ribeiro, *Introduções*, p. 129, n. 6)—to the point of co-authoring a guidebook for the 1949 International Geography Congress on the Ribatejo and Estremadura regions with geologist G. Zbyszewski. However, she eventually abandoned this focus, despite her close association with Orlando Ribeiro. Jorge Borges de Macedo only appears to have paid more attention to geography with his study on Portuguese industry (1965), which inevitably required explaining the locations chosen by the various establishments. However, even in his studies on foreign policy, he did not appear to give geography its due importance, as his scope leaned more towards cultural and diplomatic history. For A. H. de Oliveira Marques, geography also played a role in historical reasoning and construction, as highlighted in his thesis (which he was not allowed to defend), *Introdução à história da agricultura em Portugal. A questão cerealífera* [Introduction to the History of Agriculture in Portugal: The Cereal Question] (1962). Whenever dealing with the natural environment, the use of geographical knowledge became imperative.

In 1962, Alfredo Fernandes Martins succeeded Amorim Girão in the geography chair at Coimbra. Having earned his doctorate in 1949, he clearly expressed his views: “Let us not be deceived into seeking a full interpretation of historical events in the physical environment, but let us say, with Vidal de La Blache, that if such an expectation is illegitimate, it would be equally unreasonable to dispense with geography in explaining history” (Martins, “À Guisa...,” [“By way of...”] pp. 9-10). He and his school are credited with a remarkable integration of historical knowledge with geographical concepts and analysis. He set an example in a notable pamphlet dedicated to the history and geography—or geography and history—of his native Coimbra (Martins, *Esta...*). As he himself states in the preface to his translation of La Blache’s foundational work, “it is not this or that geographical factor that can assist in interpreting History, but rather the geographical study of the relationships between humans and their environment” (Martins, “À Guisa,” p. 13). Thus, geographers with a strong awareness of history, who were able to use history in geographical construction, stood out following the work and research activity of Orlando Ribeiro. Let us consider the case of José Manuel Pereira de Oliveira, who worked closely with Fernandes Martins and did not hold back when writing: “Human geography cannot legitimately dispense with history in its theoretical process” (Oliveira, *Trabalhos...*, [Works...] p. 419), or, in a different context, regarding the work of Aristides Amorim Girão: “A geography that seeks to move beyond mere description to assert itself scientifically as an explanatory field must root itself in the knowledge of the past” (*Ibidem*, p. 413). This was the approach that guided his interpretation and explanation of the urban layout of Porto (Oliveira, *O espaço...[Space...]*).

The new historiographical trends that emerged in the 1950s, largely originating from or inspired by researchers associated with the Parisian *Annales* school, did not ignore the environment. Likewise, post-war geographers did not overlook history. This is evident in the work of the American scholar Dan Stanislawski, who studied Portugal (1959) and the Algarve (1963) since, as has been noted, the “new history is, to a large



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

extent, a child of geography” (Hervé Couteau-Bégarie, *apud* Silbert). The French historian Albert Silbert, a disciple of Marc Bloch, stated unequivocally: “For this geography, primarily concerned with the relationships between humans and the natural environment, the historical conditions of the distribution of landscapes and activities were of great importance” (Silbert, “Modernidade...”[“Modernity...”], p. 327).

Silbert’s methodology closely followed the approach initiated by Godinho in his study of Morocco and applied experimentally to the Canary Islands. This methodology intertwined history and geography, as well as economics and ethnography, in an interdisciplinary and mutually influential framework. In his thesis, *Le Portugal Méditerranéen à la fin de l’Ancien Régime* (1966), Silbert demonstrated the significance of “agrarian collectivism” in the late 18th and early 19th centuries in Mediterranean Portugal.

In Coimbra, among more modern historians, geography was also deemed necessary for the explanations they sought. This was the case with António de Oliveira and Luís Ferrand de Almeida. The former sought to reconstruct the reality of 16th-century Coimbra, while the latter studied the southern borders of Brazil and later the River Plate Basin—“an open gateway to the river routes that provided access to the inland regions of the continent” (Almeida, “A Colónia” [“The Colony”], p. 163) and the establishment, trajectory, and decline of the Colony of Sacramento. In the introduction to his doctoral dissertation, António de Oliveira left a caution: “The studies undertaken centre on two areas: the city of Coimbra and its hinterland. Predominantly. Larger areas, including the natural and geographical frameworks they belong to, cannot be excluded” (Oliveira, *A Vida* [Life], p. 3). In various studies where knowledge of the land and natural constraints is consistently present, Luís Ferrand de Almeida consistently highlights the presence of human groups in specific landscapes. It is no coincidence that he studied and examined notable aspects of the introduction and spread of maize in Portugal, where his careful reading of the work of Orlando Ribeiro is noteworthy, alongside those of professional historians. However, one should not overlook his excellent study titled *Aclimação de plantas do Oriente no Brasil durante os séculos XVII e XVIII* [The Acclimatisation of Oriental Plants in Brazil during the 17th and 18th Centuries], which involved understanding and explaining the natural conditions that enabled these botanical transfers, with far-reaching implications not only for the Portuguese Empire but also globally.

Perhaps influenced by the French schools of history and geography, the attention given by historians and geographers to each other’s fields became widespread in research—though not always as much as it should have been. This was summarised by Fernand Braudel: “Our fortune is always tied to the land. However slow this foundational history may be, it is still a history, a reality of life.”

Braudel also aimed to “explain the shifting and complex substance of human geography,” for the object of both historians and geographers is “society in space” (Braudel, *Les ambitions...*, pp. 76, 78, and 114). This was also tirelessly proclaimed by Orlando Ribeiro, “because time is a dimension of everything human, and the life forms inscribed in the land and their transformations are one of the driving forces behind any collective fate.” (Ribeiro, *A evolução* [Evolution], p. 9).



DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

<http://dichp.bnportugal.pt/>

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