

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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GOMES, João Augusto Marques (Aveiro, 1853 – ?, 1931)

João Augusto Marques Gomes, son of Francisco Tomé Marques Gomes and Ana Cândida Barros de Almeida, was born in the parish of Vera-Cruz in Aveiro on 6 February 1853. He studied at the Aveiro high school, then called *Liceu Nacional de Aveiro*. He was a clerk in the Civil Government of Aveiro, but he didn't commit to a career in public administration since, in his words, he needed time to study art history, of which he was an enthusiast. In part, this enthusiasm came from the various documents and historiographical works his father and grandfather had left him, which may have increased his interest in history. He was also a journalist. He began his activity by publishing chronicles in his home district of Aveiro. He was an effective contributor to *Distrito de Aveiro* [Aveiro District] and *O Campeão das Províncias* [Champion of the Provinces] and also collaborated with other periodicals.

His first relevant historical study was *Memórias de Aveiro* [Memoirs of Aveiro], published when he was 22 years old (1875). In fact, Marques Gomes always showed a great concern for the history of his home city and its memory. Two major lines of thought are highlighted in this work: Aveiro's decadence and progress over the centuries—since Aveiro has always accompanied the moments of crisis and prosperity that Portugal has gone through throughout its history—which were characterized, however, by the crises that Europe also went through (the fall of the Roman Empire, the consequences of the struggles between Christians and Arabs in the Iberian Peninsula). Nevertheless, Aveiro began to gain some importance—albeit ephemerally, according to the author—during the reign of King Dinis and his son Afonso IV. This was due to the privileges given by the monarchs to the people of Aveiro (*Memórias de Aveiro*, 1875, pp. XI-XIII).

The history and local memory of the city of Aveiro were constant themes throughout Marques Gomes' career, as was the importance he gave to the citizens of this city who became illustrious in their fight for freedom. He often associated Aveiro with times of progress in Portugal's history. Among these citizens that stood out, Marques Gomes highlighted José Estevão, to whom he dedicated a short biographical summary on the occasion of the first centenary of his birth (*José Estevão*, 1909). It should also be noted that, during the festivities commemorating the first centenary of José Estevão's birth, he joined in the inauguration of a monument in memory of all the people of Aveiro who have died, suffered, and fought for freedom. Marques Gomes carried out a small study of these festivities. (*Aveirenses que morreram, sofreram e combateram pela Liberdade* [Aveirenses who died, suffered, and fought for Freedom], 1909, pp. 29-35).

He also published a work on the centenary of the Liberal Revolution of 24 August 1820. This study began by glorifying the city of Aveiro, mentioning even that the organisation of the *Sinédrio* had ramifications in the city of Aveiro. And he paid tribute to Manuel Fernandes Tomás, one of the founders of the *Sinédrio*, along with Ferreira



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Borges and Silva Carvalho, and the driving force behind the 1820 Liberal Revolution. (*Centenário da Revolução de 1820* [Centenary of the 1820 Revolution], 1920, p. 1; *Aveiro Berço da Liberdade. A Revolução de 16 de Maio de 1828* [Aveiro, the Cradle of Freedom. The Revolution of 16 May 1828], 1928, p. 5).

Marques Gomes' knowledge of constitutionalism and national history was also emphasised throughout his career as a writer. In this sense, one of the most important works on the constitutional history of 19th century Portugal was *Lutas Caseiras—Portugal de 1834 a 1851* [Domestic Struggles—Portugal from 1834 to 1851]. In this book, the author aims to present the history of political parties in Portugal in a period with many partisan revolts until the Regeneration. Marques Gomes made his ideological reading from this range of parties: the Vintists maintained their unshakeable faith in the liberal principles of the 1820 Revolution, the moderates who became "dissidents" of the principles that presided over the liberal revolution, the absolutists who, despite remaining faithful to their ideology, accepted the transition to liberalism even though they did not agree with the new regime, and finally the ultra-royalists, who only recognised the authority of the Kingdom in Carlota Joaquina (*Lutas Caseiras*, p. LXX).

Marques Gomes also reflected on the Revolution of September 1836, which restored the privileges of the Vintist Constitution. For the author, one of the causes of this revolt was the effect of the revolution in Spain—the year before the Setembrista revolution—which established the Constitution of Cádiz in 1812 as the law of the state. Finally, he criticised the myth of the Cortes de Lamego raised by José de Arriaga about the principle of *pure legitimacy* after the death of King João VI. According to José de Arriaga, King Pedro IV, the Emperor of Brazil, could not succeed João VI to the Portuguese crown because he was a foreigner, as proven by the minutes of the Cortes de Lamego, and King Miguel was the legitimate successor to the throne. However, Marques Gomes counters José de Arriaga's view by stating that Pedro IV was indeed Portuguese and that the fact he had assumed the crown of Brazil did not strip him of his nationality, mentioning even that the Lamego Courts only excluded true foreigners from ascending the throne, and not those who had been born in Portugal (*Lutas Caseiras*, pp. 500-501).

In his work on liberal constitutionalism, in which he defines a specific chronological period (1834 to 1851), Marques Gomes tried to create a chronicle based history with quotes from members of the Courts. He also sought to describe the bases or principles that the political parties established between themselves, as well as the ideological confrontation between them. There's a strong attachment to the concepts of "revolution" and "counter-revolution": the author also tended to side with the liberal principles of the time in which he lived. He takes sides at the beginning of the book, in which he glorifies the 1820 Liberal Revolution, also linking its success to the participation of his home city, Aveiro, in the outcome of the event.

Marques Gomes took part in the production of the 12th volume of *História de Portugal popular e ilustrada* [Popular and Illustrated History of Portugal] by Manuel Pinheiro Chagas. In this work, his contribution is more wide-ranging and covers not so much local history as a series of important political events in national life in the second half of the 19th century, from the beginning of the period known as Regeneration (1851) to the English "Ultimatum" of 1890.

The first chapters place a particular emphasis on the public works policies undertaken by Fontes Pereira de Melo, such as the construction of roads, bridges, and railways. In addition, the political movement of 1851—the Regeneration—was a period that brought calm in politics, greater freedom and tolerance, and the infrastructure development policies emphasised the idea of progress in the country. The strength of the first republican ideas in Portugal in the context of a constant decline of constitutional monarchy is another key point highlighted by Marques Gomes in this work. Another obvious aspect that Marques Gomes took up as a feature of his historical studies was



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the celebration of the centenaries of Camões in 1880 and of the Marquis of Pombal in 1882. On the three hundredth anniversary of Camões, Marques Gomes looked at Portugal's historic role in the march of modern civilisation and its epic tale of freedom, fraternity, and progress (pp. 505-507). With regard to the centenary of the Marquis of Pombal, and unlike what had happened with Camões in 1880, it was up to the government to organise the event, having appointed a commission chaired by Rodrigues Sampaio. The author develops a historicist interpretation of Pombal, presenting him to 19th-century Portuguese society as "(...) one of the forerunners of liberalism and democracy itself." (*História da História em Portugal. Séculos XIX-XX* [The History of History in Portugal. 19th-20th Centuries], 1996, p. 623). Another of the particularly important historical moments highlighted in this work by Marques Gomes is the English *Ultimatum* of 1890. This political event, which would mark "the progress of the decadence" of the Constitutional Monarchy, came in a context in which Portugal sought to define its borders in Africa and, to this end, drew a map that would unite the territories of Angola and Mozambique under Portuguese administration, which was accepted internationally—a map that became known as the "pink map."

In short, this participation by Marques Gomes in volume XII of the *História de Portugal* under the direction of Pinheiro Chagas confirmed the importance of his historical writings in the national context and made him one of the members of the *Academia de Ciências de Lisboa* [Lisbon Academy of Sciences]. He had an obviously liberal view of national history, as well as local history and memory. However, in the last quarter of the 19th century, he made a transition to republican ideology. The creation of this ideological outlook is clearly evident in the concepts used throughout his studies. Concepts such as *freedom* and the moral *progress* of men are widely used by Marques Gomes in his studies, which strongly highlighted his hometown (Aveiro) as a bastion of the defence of these principles throughout the episodes of decadence in Portugal's history. This idea of freedom is also shared by Oliveira Martins (*História de Portugal*, s.d., p. 529). One example of this liberal historiography is the valorisation of the celebrations of the centenary of the 1820 Liberal Revolution.

In his work *Lutas Caseiras*, he made strong use of quotations from deputies of the Constituent Courts and the military, intellectuals, ministerial decrees, and the periodical press of the time, the constituents of the various governments, and biographical notes on the ministers. Concepts such as *revolution* and *counter-revolution* are also frequent in the various ideological tendencies included in these quotations. There is no critical interpretation of this political-constitutional period of 19th century liberalism, but rather a narration of the political events of this time. As for his participation in volume XII of the *História de Portugal* by Pinheiro Chagas, there's clearly a transition in Marques Gomes' thinking—from liberal to republican ideas. Political events such as the Casino Democratic Conferences, the centenaries of Camões and Pombal, and the English *Ultimatum* confirm—according to Marques Gomes—the decline of the constitutional monarchy and the need for change that would make way for a future of progress and hope, which, in this case, would be the Republic. This was why Marques Gomes joined the new republican regime established on 5 October 1910.

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