

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

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Diplomatic History

Diplomatic History traces the evolution of diplomacy itself and is at the origin of the profound changes brought by the 19th century to the historiographical field. Krzysztof Pomian ("L'histoire de la science...", 1975, pp. 935-952) regards it as the belle époque of History, a time when it was considered a "science", not just any science, but one of the fundamental sciences of the spirit, a model of objectivity that described what "really" happened. However, by the end of the century, philosophers, sociologists, and even historians were explaining that the notions previously considered self-evident and which underpinned the "scientific" claims of History—facts deemed established "once and for all," the "laws" of development and progress—were merely a pure delusion, a naivety, or even a deception. Nonetheless, this evolution does not signify the abandonment of the concept of a scientific History, nor does it invalidate the contribution of 19th-century Diplomatic History to the critical and documentary apparatus of History as a discipline.

The origins of the words "Diplomatic" and "Diplomacy" stem from the noun diploma, bringing with it the ambiguity of the terms. In classical Greek, δίπλοή means duplicity and the neutral noun δίπλωμα was formed from the word διπλόος (double, that folds in two) with the suffix μα (indicating an object), in this case specifically a folio with front and back or folded in two, often a travel permit, with the status of an official document as it conferred particular facilities on its holder. In the Middle Ages, the term came to be applied to the solemn documents of royal chanceries, particularly those concerning agreements made between sovereigns.

It was, thus, the product of diplomatic negotiation—the treaty recorded through the signing of a formal protocol—that established the relationship between the words diploma and diplomacy. However, the concepts, that were clearly defined in the early 19th century, should not be confused. Prior to this period, various European languages used the word "negotiation" to describe the actual diplomatic activity. Father Rafael Bluteau defined it as a "political occupation," in the sense of "dealing with the affairs, interests, and conveniences of the Prince or the Republic" (Vocabulário Portuguez e Latino [Portuguese and Latin Vocabulary] 1716). Published in the same year, the manual of François de Callières, an experienced diplomat nearing the end of his "career," bore an enlightening title: *De la maniere de negotier avec les Souverains*. The agent of foreign policy was a *negotiateur*, and diplomacy was the art of negotiation which found its lingua



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franca in French, replacing the Latin. A few decades later, the *Diccionario da Lingua Portuguesa* [Portuguese Language Dictionary] (Morais da Silva, 1789) distinguished the "negotiator" (one who deals with political negotiation) from the "negotiant" (the merchant, the businessman) and defined the words "diploma" as "dispatch, letter, patent, bull, edict, mandate, which bears the sovereign's seal of arms" and "diplomatic," distinguishing the adjective in its application to "diploma" from its reference to the "diplomatic corps," where it means "the foreign ministers residing as ambassadors, envoys, plenipotentiaries, etc." It is therefore clear that the notion of a professional group with the specific functions of conducting negotiations between States, aimed at reconciling conflicts without resorting to force already existed. This instrument of the sovereign's foreign policy called for the organisation of a specific and complex branch of administration, which only stood out from other state matters in Portugal with the reform of the Secretariats conducted by King João V (1736) and the establishment of a series of privileges for diplomatic agents.

It was towards the end of the 18th century that the term "diplomacy" became widespread, most likely popularised through the letters of Edmund Burke regarding the French Revolution (*Letters on a Regicide Peace*, 1796). He opposed the peace attempts with the Directory, led by William Pitt, using the term "double diplomacy". In 1797, the word was definitively entered into the French Academy dictionary to denote the "science of foreign relations," which is based on diplomas or "written acts" issued by sovereigns, clearly distinguishing it from Diplomatics, whose focus is limited to determining the authenticity of documents. Indeed, by the early 19th century, the term Diplomacy clearly appears in the title of the work *Histoire Générale et Raisonnée de la Diplomatie Française*, published between 1808-1811. For its author—Gaëtan de Raxi de Flassan (1760-1845), the chief of staff to Talleyrand at the time and appointed historiographer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs by Louis XVIII after the Congress of Vienna (1815)—"Diplomacy is the expression that has, for some years, designated the science of foreign relations, based on diplomas or written acts issued by sovereigns," with the advantage of precisely defining its instrumental character and its intermediary role in the relations of the decision centre with other states. According to the author, its strength came from containing everything capable of ensuring peace and provoking war, and its origins, abstracting from forms, dated back to the first gathering of men into a national body, since they had properties to defend, neighbours to fear, friends to protect, and satisfactions to demand.

According to Charles de Martens (*Guide Diplomatique...*, 1832), from a theoretical standpoint, Diplomacy "is based on more or less positive precepts and a precise, distinct object, that of regularising the relations that exist or should exist between various states, ordering and directing political negotiations." As for the term "diplomat," which entered political vocabulary in around 1830, it is absent from the final Act of the Congress of Vienna (1815) which, in regulating the protocol hierarchy governing international relations for the first time (Annex XVII), uses the expression *Agens Diplomatiques* and *Employés Diplomatiques*. Neither does it appear in the 4th edition of Morais Silva's Dictionary (1831), which merely distinguishes "the diplomatic art or science



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of understanding diplomas and ancient public documents" from "the science of political negotiators, and their etiquettes and ceremonies, everything pertaining to the occupation, styles, and uses of the Diplomatic Corps."

Just as diplomatic history follows the evolution of diplomacy itself, the development of diplomacy also follows the advances of history. While the systematisation of diplomatic relations began to be sketched in the Italian city-states of the 15th century, the Renaissance marked the idea of a new, global history, increasingly perfected thanks to the advances in method and criticism. However, the approach was dual and ambiguous. On one hand, there was a sense of the difference and relativity of civilisations; on the other, the pursuit of examples and lessons denied History itself by making it a *magistra vitae*.

In the 17th century, the Congress of Westphalia (1644-48) inaugurated the modern international system with the principle of state sovereignty, establishing a broad outline of international life, which remained until the second colonial shock in the 19th century. Diplomacy surpassed its habitual bilateral practice to become multilateral when it came to resolving major European conflicts, and embassies began to become more permanent. In his *Testament Politique* (1st ed., Amsterdam, 1688), Richelieu recommended continuous negotiations, whether open or secret, at all times and everywhere, even if there were no immediate benefits and despite future outcomes remaining obscure. History, in turn, found a method in the work of the Benedictine Jean Mabillon (*De Re Diplomatica*, 1681) based on the use of original documents (diplomas), distinguishing between the false and authentic pieces. The foundation of scientific diplomatics freed History for the pursuit of the truth and the deepening of its rules, based on the testimonies of events. However, despite the novelty of historical and philological criticism, the scholars of the 17th century had a merely material conception of truth. It was based on establishing texts and facts with the difficult aim of reconstructing them, whereby the historian faded behind the meticulously collected materials in the awareness of a historical reality not given, but rather the object of "inquiry".

Simultaneously, the "art of negotiation" was gaining traction with the emergence of early manuals that transcended the commonplaces found in most works on the "perfect ambassador," in particular Abraham Wicquefort's *Mémoires Touchant les Ambassadeurs et les Ministres Publics* (1676) and the monumental *Corps Universel Diplomatique du Droit Gens* (1726-1739) by Jean Dumont, completed by Rousset de Missy, which compiled European treaties from 315 to 1730.

The Enlightenment era had an ambiguous approach to history. On the one hand, the rationalism of philosophers brought undeniable progress to critical thinking, exemplified by Voltaire's *Essai sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations*, while on the other, this philosophical history denied history itself by using it as a weapon against fanaticism and a battleground for ideological confrontation.

With the Revolution, and under the influence of Romanticism and nationalism, Europe experienced a notable surge in studies that began to focus more on archival sources in large repositories, with the latter becoming available to the public as a result of the principle of the dissemination of state archives as national possessions. The possibility of consulting documents prior to 1858—the date adopted by most countries—



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transformed them from mere administrative and bureaucratic repositories into an inexhaustible field of historical study. Even Pope Leo XIII opened the Vatican's *Archivio segreto* in 1881.

Institutions such as the *École des Chartes* (Paris, 1821), the *Institut für Österreichische Geschichtsforschung* (Vienna, 1854), the *Escuela de Diplomática* (Madrid, 1856), and the *Scuola di Paleografia e Diplomatica* (Florence, 1857) significantly shaped the organisation of archives. Scholarly history was developing, finding its first model in Prussia, with prestigious collections such as the *Monumenta Germaniae Historiae* (published from 1826) and the alliance between research and teaching in the form of seminars at the University of Humboldt in Berlin (1810), a model that contributed to securing the effort and continuity of historical research.

In France, the opening of state archives following the Revolution drew attention to the importance of international relations in national futures. The historical method became increasingly rigorous, decisively focusing on a scientific basis supported by textual knowledge and criticism. Guizot—who was an ambassador and minister as well as a historian—initiated a collection of *Documents Inédits sur l'Histoire de France* (1834). Works such as François Combes's *Histoire générale de la diplomatie européenne* (1854), on the formation of European equilibrium from the Peace of Westphalia to the Treaty of the Pyrenees, and the *Étude sur l'Histoire Diplomatique de l'Europe de 1648 à 1791* (1880) by the former diplomat Count de Barral, alongside the establishment of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études* (1868), the documentary compilations such as *Recueil des instructions données aux ambassadeurs et ministres de France* (published from 1883 under the auspices of the *Commission des Archives Diplomatiques* of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs), and the creation of journals such as the *Revue d'Histoire diplomatique* (1887), even though merely descriptive, contributed to raising awareness of the importance of international relations in national futures.

The publication of Albert Sorel's *Histoire Diplomatique de la guerre franco-allemande* (2 vols., 1875) left a critical mark on the so-called scientific diplomatic history, supported by textual knowledge and criticism, albeit with a focus on state relationships and national interest, regardless of the governing ideology. This normative realism, with its emphasis on politics and the centrality of the state, produced a history that favoured events, prominent figures, and negotiations between chanceries, creating a paradigm often characterised by legitimising and patriotic discourse. Langlois and Seignobos's *Introduction aux études historiques* (1898) established the rules of the method, yet was unable to surpass the paradox: on the one hand, undeniable scientific progress in terms of rigour; on the other, a limitation of the historian's scope of action, prioritising events and the surface of the past.

In Portuguese historiography, the publication of the monumental and pioneering works of the 2nd Viscount of Santarém, continued by Rebelo da Silva, provided an essential documentary foundation for the analysis of national diplomacy. A diplomat and keeper of the Torre do Tombo, Santarém was definitively exiled to France following the Liberals' victory, where he gained access to abundant material and continued his historical work. He published the *Quadro Elementar das Relações Políticas e Diplomáticas de Portugal* [Elementary



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Framework of the Political and Diplomatic Relations of Portugal] (15 volumes, 1842-1854) and *Corpo Diplomático Português* [Portuguese Diplomatic Corps], Vol. I (1846), detailing the relations between Portugal and Spain from 1168 to 1383. According to Santarém, this work aimed to "truly understand the important science of negotiating", linking political decisions enacted through treaties not only with the negotiations that prepared them but also with the physical, moral, commercial, and political statistics of each power involved. However, his successors diverged between those who preferred transcribing documents in full and those who advocated for their summarised extracts, with the latter view supported by the Viscount himself, arguing that this approach would facilitate a swifter collection and broader dissemination of sources. The result was the slow and incomplete publication of the *Corpo Diplomático Português* (1862-1959), which was reinitiated by Rebelo da Silva. The 15 published volumes are based on the relations between Portugal and the Roman Curia, from the reign of King Manuel to the regency of the future King Pedro II.

In line with the large documentary collections being published in Germany, France, England, and other countries, the Lisbon Academy of Sciences commissioned Alexandre Herculano to undertake the project of compiling the *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica*, with its publication beginning in 1856. Ten years later, the brief third government of Joaquim António de Aguiar (4 September 1865 to 4 January 4, 1868) tasked Luz Soriano with writing the *História da Guerra Civil e do Estabelecimento do Governo Parlamentar em Portugal* [History of the Civil War and the Establishment of Parliamentary Government in Portugal]. Completed in 1884, the work spanned 17 volumes and was particularly important due to the numerous and important documents it contained.

The need to reorganise sources was also felt by António Ferrão, who was inspired by his visit to the historical archives of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He published his reflections regarding *Da importância dos documentos diplomáticos em História* [The Importance of Diplomatic Documents in History] (1917) and presented a proposal to the Academy of Sciences advocating for the uniform organisation, inventory, and cataloguing of Portugal's historical archives: Torre do Tombo, the National Library, the Ajuda Library, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Following the French example, he urged the publication of instructions, official correspondence, and memoirs of diplomats, particularly those who, in his view, best represented Portuguese foreign policy from the first embassies of the Restoration to the mid-18th century. A journey through foreign diplomatic archives—France, England, Italy, the Vatican, Belgium, the Netherlands, Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Spain—allowed him to report on the work accomplished in organising these services and publishing their documents, which he hoped to see replicated in Portugal. He was particularly outraged by Portugal's indifference to the opening of the Vatican archives, where official missions and institutes from various nationalities were already operating.

Despite the collections of treaties by Judice Bicker (1881-87), Borges de Castro (1890-1921), and the Lisbon Academy of Sciences, that continued the work of the Viscount of Santarém, little to no progress was made in publishing minutes, protocols, instructions, dispatches, reports, or the private correspondence of



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diplomats, unlike the efforts in France, in particular the afore-mentioned initiative to publish ambassadors' instructions, with Volume III referring to Portugal, prefaced and annotated by the Viscount of Caix de Saint-Aymour (1886). Forty years later, Ambassador Luiz Teixeira de Sampaio documented the collections of the Historical Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (1926), and António Ferrão's *Os Estudos de História Diplomática em Portugal* [Studies on Diplomatic History in Portugal] (1928) again emphasised the importance of publishing documentary repositories and highlighted the inadequacy of the progress made thus far.

The idea of consolidating unused documents from diplomatic offices into a single archive was only realised in 1950, during the final year of Caeiro da Mata's second tenure as Foreign Minister (Order No. 13152 of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs). However, throughout the second half of the 19th century, several series of books and documents from the Secretariat of State for Foreign Affairs had already been transferred to the National Archive of Torre do Tombo, then housed in the old monastery, currently the São Bento Palace. This collection comprised correspondence from that office and various Portuguese legations abroad, starting from the regency of D. Pedro and the signing of the Luso-Castilian peace treaty (1668). Although the documentation was rather incomplete for the period before the 1755 earthquake as a result of the fire that consumed the Paço da Ribeira, it was inventoried by Maria do Carmo Jasmins Dias Farinha (1990), but documents postdating 1833-34 remained within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The use of these records for historical research was authorised in 1921, however it was not until 1965 that access to these collections was granted, along with a recognition of the need to provide services for public access. Only after Portugal's accession to the European Union was there greater liberalisation of the General Archive of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which was renamed the Diplomatic Historical Archive. Its first regulations (1987) established a general rule of a minimum of 30 years from the document's date for consultation access. At that time, the Selection and Declassification Committee was also created.

Portuguese archives are extremely rich and fertile but remain scattered and somewhat unsystematised. Notably, despite the separation of the Secretariats of State for Foreign Affairs and War (1822), part of the documentation remained consolidated and was incorporated into the War Council section of the Torre do Tombo. This collection includes important sources for Portuguese diplomatic history, inventoried and classified (1866-89) by Captain Cláudio de Chaby, and completed by Madureira dos Santos (1957-68), resulting in a catalogue that includes all the decrees promulgated by the War Council from its creation (December 11-12, 1640) "to address matters related to war" until its dissolution (1 August 1834).

Other documentary collections should not be overlooked. The Torre do Tombo also houses the São Vicente Collection, consisting of documents originating from the Mafra convent/palace, which formed the state's inactive archival records, and the *Manuscritos da Livraria* [Library Manuscripts], with items from the nationalisation of the assets of religious orders, the Jesuits, the Holy Office, the Real Mesa Censória [Royal Censorship Board], and also of private origin, particularly those belonging to the 2nd Viscount of Santarém, which served for the creation of his work. The library of the Lisbon Academy of Sciences also inherited the



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libraries of the dissolved convents, notably the collection from the former Convento of Nossa Senhora de Jesus, also known as the "Documents of the Friars," catalogued as the Série Vermelha [Red Series]. The Ajuda Library holds a valuable repository of manuscripts consisting of 2,439 volumes of codices belonging to the former Fundo da Coroa [Crown Collection], which travelled with the royal family to Brazil and returned in 1821. The "Reserve" sections of the National Library of Lisbon, the Public Library of Évora, and the General Library of the University of Coimbra hold notable collections concerning Portugal's relations with other powers during the 17th and 18th centuries. Finally, regarding foreign archives, there are several catalogues of manuscripts relevant to Portuguese diplomatic history: those in the British Library were inventoried by Frederico Francisco de La Figanière (1853) and the Count of Tovar (1932); Morel-Fatio listed those of the Fonds Portugais of the National Library of France (1892), and Luís Ramalhosa Guerreiro (2000) provided a detailed summary of these documents. Similar work was also conducted by Charles Boxer concerning the State papers of Portugal (1979-1983), archived in the Public Record Office of London, which opened in 1838.

In many cases the publication of sources often accompanied the synthesis of historical narratives. After the *Apontamentos para a história diplomática de Portugal desde 1826 até 1834* [Notes on the Diplomatic History of Portugal from 1826 to 1834] by Advisor Félix Pereira de Magalhães (1871), the four volumes of *Apontamentos para a História Diplomática Contemporânea* [Notes for Contemporary Diplomatic History] by António Vianna provided a remarkable reorganisation of essential documents for subsequent works on Luso-Brazilian diplomacy and politics, particularly those of Ângelo Pereira, Oliveira Lima, and António Ferrão. Published between 1901 and 1958, they cover the period from 1789 to 1815 (the *Introdução* [Introduction]) and from 1820 to 1828 (the remaining volumes). Additionally, the works of Ambassador Eduardo Brazão (published between 1932 and 1980) revealed indispensable sources for studying Portugal's diplomatic relations in the 17th and 18th centuries, beginning with a presentation of the facts, supplementary information, and by correcting judgements based on unfounded assumptions before embarking on a comprehensive synthesis, which he never completed. Nevertheless, he succeeded in drawing attention to the history of Portuguese diplomacy and foreign policy.

From the late 19th century to the mid-20th century, the dynamics of bilateral relations captured the attention of the Luso-Brazilian Bernardo Teixeira de Moraes Leite Velho, who published *Estudo histórico das Relações Diplomáticas e Políticas entre a França e Portugal* [Historical Study of Diplomatic and Political Relations between France and Portugal] (1895), covering the period from the monarchy's foundation to the fall of Napoleon. Edgar Prestage, an English historian, contributed with a series of works on Portuguese diplomatic history, ranging from biographical monographs such as *D. Francisco Manuel de Melo* (1914) and *Frei Domingos do Rosário* (1926) to studies on relations with France, England, Holland (1928) and Sweden (1943), not forgetting the ancient Anglo-Portuguese alliance (1936). The vicissitudes of this longstanding connection were also studied by his fellow Englishman Charles Boxer (1958) and other historians, such as Armando Marques Guedes (1943), Eduardo Brazão (1957), and Caetano Beirão (1942), the latter specifically on the



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negotiations for the marriage of Catherine of Braganza to Charles II, a subject that also interested Virgínia Rau (1941).

The issue of Portuguese independence and the diplomatic relations of the Restoration attracted the attention of foreign historians. Among others, Alessandro Ademollo (1878) studied the question of Portuguese independence in Rome from 1640 to 1670; Jules Tessier (1877) focused on the mission of the Chevalier de Jant and Franco-Portuguese relations during the time of Mazarin; Henri Lacape (1939) examined France and Portugal's Restoration; and Charles Du Bus (1940) explored the history of Portugal through French manuscripts. Additionally, the Congress of the Portuguese World, held from 1 July to 30 November 1940, in close connection with the dual centennial celebrations (1140/1640) and the Exhibition of the Portuguese World, brought together scholars from various countries in Portugal. Despite being closely monitored by the Estado Novo regime, the event allowed for an assessment of the state of the art and the internationalisation of the national scientific community.

Diplomatic History was not necessarily episodic, nor was it destined to be, but it struggled to break free from the brief timeframe imposed on it by the positivist belief that truth resided in documentary authenticity and could be uncovered through court or parliamentary debates, ambassadorial correspondence, or analyses of treaty negotiations and alliances. The so-called "high politics" hovered above the contingencies of more concrete trivialities. As early as 1929, Henri Hauser had begun to offer critiques by drawing attention to the "underlying layers," foreshadowing Pierre Renouvin's concept of "deep forces" (1953). However, it was the historians associated with the Annales School in France who would discredit Diplomatic History: first, Lucien Febvre, during the challenging years of the Great Depression, and then Fernand Braudel, after World War II, who saw the significant political events of Diplomatic History as mere "surface agitation" or a *poussière de faits-divers*.

By integrating history into the broader field of social sciences, Lucien Febvre and Marc Bloch highlighted the importance of studying the constraints, factors, and rhythms of human behaviour transformation over time. The Annales paradigm rejected the primacy of political, individual, and chronological elements that characterised Diplomatic History, seeking a comprehensive history of societies that encompassed a multitude of new domains. Against the linear and continuous concept of time, Braudel proposed a plurality of historical times. This approach represented a kind of "cultural revolution," as termed by Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, which swept political history, diplomatic history, and biography away from the historiographical questionnaire deemed intelligent, even though American, English, and German historians continued to study the relations between states. However, the connections between the new historians and their predecessors' legacy were much stronger than they themselves acknowledged.

A translation of a work directed by Vladimir Potemkin emerged in Paris in 1946 under the title *Histoire de la Diplomatie*. This work examined international relations from antiquity to 1939, with the aim of "contributing to the understanding of foreign policy issues and evaluating diplomatic actions." It had an unexpressed but



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evident concern—particularly in the voluminous third volume, entirely dedicated to the twenty-year period between the two World Wars—of justifying the USSR's foreign policy. However, despite the clear influence of Marxist dialectics, the approach was still distinctly political.

The epistemological shift that sought to transcend traditional Diplomatic History—highlighting the excessively narrow focus on relations between governments, chanceries, and diplomats—toward studying what truly mattered, namely the relations between peoples, was pioneered by Pierre Renouvin. This was embodied in his monumental work *Histoire des Relations Internationales* (8 vols., 1953–1976) and the programmatic article he published in *Revue Historique*, titled “L'Histoire contemporaine des relations internationales...” (1954, pp. 233–255). For over twenty years, Renouvin had been developing the notion of “deep forces,” linking it with the context of events. Alongside “material forces”—such as geographical conditions, demographic movements, economic and financial interests—he considered the influence of “spiritual forces” or “collective mentalities” on the development of international relations, particularly currents of thought, national sentiment, and nationalisms. His studies and those of his disciples, notably Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, who described and analysed these various “deep forces” in more detail in *Introduction à l'histoire des relations internationales* (1964), marked the transition from traditional Diplomatic History to the History of International Relations. This work was enthusiastically received in the *Annales* journal, in a review by Marc Ferro (1965, pp. 175–178), which highlighted the importance of Raymond Aron's contributions to the ongoing renewal in this field.

Duroselle's contribution was crucial insofar as he studied the “statesman,” which led him to consider the influence of “deep forces” in the political decision-making process, considering the position the decision-maker occupies in society, the quality of their education, the choice of their advisors, their social networks, and the circumstances and environment of the moment. In *Tout empire périsse* (1981), he accounted for the progress made, which was essentially the result of an extensive interdisciplinary survey, especially reflecting the most recent contributions of Anglo-Saxon political science.

The study of international relations involves not only foreign policy but also private relationships. In other words, the evolution of “deep forces,” should be observed over the long term. With this concept, in the sense of what is collective and enduring, a formula was found capable of reconciling structural history with merely factual history, the “old” diplomatic history. In essence, by considering the contributions of economic history, social history, and the history of mentalities, these historians embraced the core of the *Annales* revolution without neglecting political history or underestimating the weight of events or the role of the individual.

The personality of the statesman inspired one of the most important works in Luso-Brazilian historiography, *Alexandre de Gusmão e o Tratado de Madrid* [Alexandre de Gusmão and the Treaty of Madrid] (Lisbon, 1950), by Jaime Cortesão, structured around biographical documents and the extensive correspondence concerning the negotiations of the Treaty of Madrid, scattered in the archives of Lisbon. In the words of its author, there one may find “the multiple determining circumstances, the portraits of all those who participated in the



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negotiations, and the divergent efforts that led to the final agreement; all is revealed there, along with surprising revelations about the character, culture of the men, and the fierce struggle of interests at play." The studies of Luís Ferrand de Almeida—from his monumental undergraduate dissertation (1957) on Portuguese diplomacy and the southern boundaries of Brazil, through his doctoral thesis on Colonia del Sacramento during the War of Spanish Succession (1973), and numerous other publications—although rooted in the lessons of the French "methodical school," opened up to interdisciplinary themes inspired by the Annales school.

The social and economic aspects neglected by traditional diplomatic history have drawn historians' attention to the study of their influence on relations between states without denying the autonomy of political phenomena. In his work on the Bloqueio Continental [Continental Blockade] (1962), Jorge Borges de Macedo emphasised the importance of studying political, military, and diplomatic phenomena in light of economic and social history. Between 1964 and 1974, he supervised several undergraduate theses, focusing particularly on the diplomacy of the Restoration—relations with Venice, Denmark, Spain, France, and England—but also on the role of the diplomat and the impact of the economy on political decisions.

In subsequent years, the socio-economic primacy characteristic of the Marxist paradigm led Portuguese researchers away from political phenomena. Nonetheless, two synthesis works emerged, both resulting from the authors' university teaching: *História Diplomática de Portugal* [Diplomatic History of Portugal] (1986) by Pedro Soares Martinez and Jorge Borges de Macedo's lectures at the National Defence Institute (1987), published under the title *História Diplomática Portuguesa. Constantes e Linhas de Força* [Portuguese Diplomatic History. Constants and Lines of Force]. The former argues that the study of the evolution of the Portuguese community can hardly be done without integrating it into the frameworks of international life, assigning diplomatic history a fundamental role through its sources and methodological possibilities for personalised inquiry, which goes beyond a purely sociological perspective to encompass the personal vision of interests and the problem of political decision-making. The latter considers Portuguese diplomacy from a geopolitical perspective, using the concept of a "situated nation" as a guide for a comparative history concerning the conditions and forms of survival of small states. It links foreign policy to the history of society as a whole, drawing attention to elites and the problem of political decision-making in the face of international conditions, domestic defence possibilities, and the collective ability for national cohesion and independence. José Calvet de Magalhães, an experienced diplomat, also published *Breve História Diplomática de Portugal* [A Brief Diplomatic History of Portugal] (1990).

The empirical-descriptive tools of traditional historiography, the emphasis on the state, and the power relations were insufficient to capture all aspects of reality, including the irrational and imaginary forces in decision-making processes. Political Science and Historical Anthropology gave the first signs of renewal. On the one hand, in the face of globalisation, there is a tendency to devalue the autonomy of the state. From a sociological perspective, analysis starts from the grassroots, examining the practices and symbolic repertoires of violence. From the standpoint of some transnationalist currents, the constitution and action of economic



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flows or ideological movements beyond the state are highlighted. On the other hand, Historical Anthropology also contributes to a re-evaluation of political action. Thus, diplomacy can be interpreted as a ritual practice, belonging to a system designed to give meaning to the relationship between states. While not denying the centrality of the state in diplomatic history and international relations, it is clear that although essential, it is not the only actor. Far from being homogeneous, it is underpinned by a series of interactions carried out by societies.

Traditional diplomatic history, just as it originated in the 19th century, based on textual criticism and the collection of handwritten documents from royal chanceries to reconstruct events, lacks the methodological tools for studying the history of international relations, viewed as the set of connections established among human groups through political borders. Does this mean that the markedly political strand of Diplomatic History makes it a separate discipline, included in the broader study of international relations?

Robert Frank succeeded Pierre Renouvin, Jean-Baptiste Duroselle, and René Girault, with whom he collaborated on *Histoire des relations internationales contemporaines* (1988, 1993), while Lucien Bély's studies contributed to new perspectives on international relations and diplomacy in the 17th and 18th centuries. Jeremy Black (2010) also explored the historical-cultural antecedents of diplomacy in the transition from the negotiation system of European courts to the increase and progression of multiple global interests and the establishment of the current embassy model. In Portugal, issues related to negotiation processes and protocol rituals have garnered the interest of numerous researchers, without forgetting recurring themes of Portuguese Diplomatic History, such as the definition of borders in the Middle Ages, relations with the Holy See, the United States, Russia, and Spain, the English alliance, the Restoration, the period of the French invasions, the First Republic and Portugal's entry into the First World War, the Estado Novo, and Portuguese neutrality during World War II, in addition to the problem of colonialism and the colonial war.

The research project *Optima Pars – As Elites da Sociedade Portuguesa do Antigo Regime* [Optima Pars – The Elites of Portuguese Society in the Ancien Regime] drew attention to the social profile of diplomats, the nature of their functions, and the types of missions they performed. There has been a renewed interest in the statesman, the political ideology of elites, and in diplomacy, which have emerged as central themes of various master's and doctoral theses. A modest revival in the publication of sources has also been seen.

The history of international relations has an ambition that goes beyond history itself by providing unique insights into the complexity of problems in the interactions between peoples. A new Diplomatic History, aware of its limitations, may continue to play an important role, both through its remarkable research tools and new research directions. These go beyond the descriptive-explanatory level of traditional diplomatic and military history to focus on the state decision-making process, while considering the economic and social context of political struggles and international politics, the relative importance of deep forces, the diverse forms of mentality, communication and personal issues, and the structure and functioning of institutions.



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