

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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HOURCADE, Pierre (Châlons-sur-Marne, 1908 - Aix-en-Provence, 1983)

Pierre Hourcade came from a modest social background and owed his rise through the ranks to the encouragement he received from his teachers and the help of the state. He was a brilliant student. After his degree in *Lettres Classiques* [Classical Letters], he joined the prestigious *École Normale Supérieure* [Superior Normal College] on *rue d'Ulm* in Paris. Léon Bourdon, who had just founded the Lisbon *Institut Français* [French Institute], and Georges Le Gentil, founder of the first Department of Portuguese Studies at the *Sorbonne*, suggested to the Director of the *École* that he should encourage Lusophile vocations among the students. Hourcade took over this task and received a grant to set up in Coimbra the equivalent of the current master's degree, a work entitled *Guerra Junqueiro et le problème des influences françaises dans son œuvre*. This first stay led him to apply in 1931 to the position of reader in French at the *Faculdade de Letras de Coimbra* [Faculty of Letters in Coimbra]. In 1932 he was received into the *Agrégation de Lettres Classiques* [Aggregation of Classical Letters] (a demanding national recruitment competition for secondary School teachers), and in 1934 he was appointed Reader in French at the *Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa* [Faculty of Letters in Lisbon]. In 1935 he was sent to São Paulo, where he taught French literature at the newly founded *Faculdade de Filosofia* [Faculty of Philosophy] until 1938. He was then appointed director of the newly created *Institut Français* in Porto. From 1941 until 1962, he was cultural attaché at the French diplomatic mission in Portugal and director of the Lisbon *Institut Français*, with a brief interval: he was sacked in 1943 by the Vichy government and replaced at the *Institut* by Jacques Vier, a disciple of Maurras, who took possession of the eastern part of the Palace de Santos by force on 18 October. Pierre Hourcade was supported by the vast majority of professors (Teyssier and Guibert, among others) in the opening of an *Institut* in Rua das Praças. By then he was already involved with the organisations resisting collaboration with Nazism, which from June 1944 would make up the *Gouvernement provisoire de la République française* [Provisional Government of the French Republic]. In September 1944 Hourcade returned to the Palace of Abrantes, and until 1962 he carried out a remarkable Franco-Portuguese cultural dissemination activity.

He was later appointed director of the *Institut Français d'Amérique Latine* [French Institute in Latin America] in Mexico and cultural and technical co-operation attaché of the French Embassy, also in Mexico. He ended his career in Ankara, working the same job since 1968, and retired in 1973. He retired to Aix-en-Provence, where he would once again devote himself to Portuguese studies, collaborate in the magazine *Colóquio/Letras* [Colloquium/Letters] and teach Portuguese and Brazilian literature to students of *Agrégation* at the university. He died in 1983.



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Pierre Hourcade, who played an important historical and cultural role throughout his life, had an intellectual career strongly linked to Portuguese literature. Very early on, he had the good fortune to become part of the *Presença* [Presence] generation, particularly José Régio, Adolfo Casais Monteiro and João Gaspar Simões. He would meet Carlos Queirós, Ofélia's nephew, who introduced him to Fernando Pessoa in 1930. That same year, in the small, short-lived Parisian magazine *Contacts*, Hourcade recounts his meeting with the poet, to whom, he says, he owes his vocation as a Lusitanianist. However, it was in 1933 that the French were introduced to Fernando Pessoa's itinerary in the Marseillais magazine *Cahiers du Sud* [Notebooks from the south], with a penetrating analysis entitled *Brève Introduction à Fernando Pessoa* [Brief introduction to Fernando Pessoa], which was followed by the translation of five poems, one of which signed by the orthonym. In 1931, Hourcade had offered the readers of the *Cahiers* [Notebooks] a beautiful *Défense et illustration de la poésie portugaise* [Defence and illustration of Portuguese poetry]— the first presentation of Portuguese modernism in France, completed in the small magazine *Yggdrasil* in 1938 under the title *Panorama de la poésie portugaise moderne* [Panorama of modern portuguese poetry]. In *Défense*— after denouncing the confusion still present in the minds of Spain and Portugal— he showed how history and poetry are intimately linked in Portugal and insisted there was cosmopolitanism in Portuguese literature, emphasising the importance of France in that same literature. In the *Introduction* to Pessoa, he characterises the creator of the heteronyms as "the most European" of all Portuguese poets, subtly analysing nostalgia as the heart of heteronymy, while at the same time stressing that this "solitary planet /.../ is the most worthy of the universality of the Portuguese poets of our time."

In 1932, also in *Cahiers du Sud*, Hourcade wrote a *Lettre Portugaise* [Portuguese Letter]: a brief and vibrant tribute to Portugal in which he emphasises that the country not only conquered half the world but also methodically prepared its discoveries, increasing knowledge of astronomy, geography, and nautical architecture, and at the same time inaugurating what would become modern economy, the science of the new times, and giving incipient Europe a true image of an Empire which imposed its mark— names, linguistic elements— on unknown continents, like Africa, America, and Asia.

The *Bulletin des Études Portugaises* [Bulletin of Portuguese Studies] was created in 1931 in partnership with the University of Coimbra. This publication included two articles by Hourcade in its first issue: *Panorama du modernisme littéraire en Portugal* [Panorama of literary modernism in Portugal] and *La seconde génération de Coimbra et la revue* [The second generation from Coimbra and the review]. He began his frequent collaboration with chronicles and reviews in *A Folha* [The Sheet] (1868-1873). Hourcade's stay in Coimbra also allowed him to write a short and beautiful essay— *L'esprit de Coimbra* [The Coimbra Spirit], published in 1937 in that same city— in which he celebrates the university's centuries-old ongoing history.

From 1936 onwards, the political climate in Portugal was characterised by Salazar's support of the Falangists as soon as the Spanish Civil War broke out, and above all by Portuguese neutrality declared in 1939 in relation to the conflict between France and Germany, which triggered World War II. The situation of the French diplomatic corps was not easy, especially as the celebrations of the 1940 Congress of the Portuguese World, inaugurated on 23 June— the day after the Armistice and five days after the *Appel du 18 juin* by De Gaulle— resulted in messages from various French organisations, which prudently avoided meddling with Portuguese political news.

In this context, Hourcade was asked to translate several of Salazar's speeches that might interest Maréchal



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Pétain, in a book that was written at the end of 1938 and published in France by publisher Flammarion with a date of February 1939, i.e., before the start of the Franco-German war. A special issue of *Cahiers du Sud* was also published in 1940 regarding the Congress, with the support of the SPN and António Ferro, and an introduction by Raymond Warnier (then director of the Lisbon *Institut Français*) and a preface by Salazar himself. In this issue, Pierre Hourcade wrote a valuable article entitled *La vocation universaliste du Portugal* [The universalist vocation of Portugal], a topic dear to Portuguese historians such as Jaime Cortesão and Magalhães Godinho. In this text, the author characterizes the country of Camões by the tension between permanence and movement, by "being" rather than "doing", emphasising that the Discoveries did not depend solely on geographical and historical constraints, but rather on the definitive need to be "présent au monde". He goes on to make a contrast between the concept of empire and that of expansion, thus differentiating the transitory from the lasting, before emphasising the affective propensity of the Portuguese, even though they were attached to their homeland. However, in Hourcade's opinion, universalism seems to stem from the originally Catholic concept of solidary human fraternity on Earth.

In *Temas de literatura portuguesa* (1978) [Portuguese Literature Themes], a book that brings together some of his diverse productions translated into Portuguese, Pierre Hourcade wrote a brief preface in which he recalls his journey as a Lusitanianist, emphasising his desire to write about the literature of Portugal in order to "break the indifference of the cultured French public towards Portuguese authors, which is due to ignorance", considering himself as an "initiator" and a "revealer". In the first essay *Panorama da literatura portuguesa* [Panorama of Portuguese literature], the author insists on the national originality of literary production, which resisted a possible suffocation by "powerful Spain", and again discovers, throughout the ages, a search for balance between "narrow particularism and the aspiration to the universal", somewhere between "the national vocation" and "the surrounding world". He gave the examples of Camões, Eça de Queiroz— creator of a "Portuguese novel of universal interest"— and Pessoa, among others. Having studied the "French influences on Portuguese literature", he considered that broad European culture had enriched Portuguese literature and that literatures that close in on themselves become stagnant. He returned to this idea in *Eça de Queirós e a França* [Eça de Queirós and France], arguing that the author of *Os Maias* [The Maias] was not only not a denationalised writer, but, on the contrary, found in French culture "the means to regenerate national culture".

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