

DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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MORATO, Francisco Manuel Trigoso de Aragão (Lisbon, 1777 – Lisbon, 1838)

In the first years of parliamentary life after the Liberal Revolution of 24 August 1820, politician and academic Francisco Manuel Trigoso de Aragão Morato – one of the upmost personalities of conservative liberalism – stood out for his intelligence and sublime oratory. Despite his busy public life, he proved to be a passionate researcher of history, more specifically the history of medieval law, and showed a solid knowledge of the historiographical trends in vogue. He wrote numerous books of historical and legal nature that were considered works of high quality, and was one of the most pertinent political thinkers of his time. The son of Francisco Mendo Trigoso Pereira Homem de Magalhães and Antónia Joaquina Teresa de Sousa Morato, his education was initially directed towards an ecclesiastical career. Between 1790 and 1793, he began his preparation studies at the *Colégio dos Nobres* [Noblemen College] in Lisbon and entered the University of Coimbra, finishing his doctorate in Canon Law (1799) when he was only 22. With clear signs of being an exceptional student, he began his academic career as a lecturer in "Canonical Institutions" at the University.

A few years later he was appointed Commissioner of Schools and Studies for the *Corte e Província da Estremadura* [Court and Province of Estremadura] (1806), distancing himself completely from any collaboration with the French invader. He played an active role in the reform and standardisation of weights and measures in Portugal by becoming a member of a commission appointed by the Regency to examine the old charters (1810) under the responsibility of the *Academia Real das Ciências de Lisboa* [Royal Academy of Sciences in Lisbon], of which he was elected vice-secretary (1812) and later became a full member (1814).

After the Liberal Revolution, he was elected a deputy to the Extraordinary and Constituent General Courts, having chaired the plenary sessions five times. He left Lisbon because of the *Vilafrancada* but returned later to take part in the conception of the Charter of Fundamental Law — later known as the Constitutional Charter — promised by King João VI and never granted. In 1824 he married his eldest niece, Mariana José Trigoso (1807-1834), the daughter of his brother Sebastião Francisco Mendo Trigoso Pereira Homem de Magalhães (1773-1821).

He was proposed for the position of Minister and Secretary of State for the Affairs of the Kingdom (1826) by Regent Queen Isabel Maria (1801-1874), and later appointed permanent Councillor of State, a government role he held between 1 August and 6 December 1826. With the rise to power of King Miguel, he decided to withdraw from politics, only to return in July 1833 with the final victory of the liberal army.

In 1834, after the liberal regime was established, he was appointed a Peer of the Realm and quickly rose to vice-president of the House of Peers of the Realm. He held this position until his sudden death in Lisbon on 11 December 1838, at the age of 61. He was publicly honoured by Francisco de Almeida Portugal (1797-1870), the Second Count



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of Lavradio and a close friend of the author: "No one will dare to say today that the services that Mr Trigo rendered to his country were not many and of great value, even though he never received the slightest reward (...). We should add that he didn't need to refuse any honours, since none was ever offered. The weight of his virtues and merit was far too great to be honoured by those who were lacking in these qualities. This is yet another example of Portuguese ingratitude, so often seen since the reign of the ungrateful King Manuel. However, now that Mr Trigo is no more, we hope that everyone will do justice to his memory and recognise him as one of the most distinguished scholars of the nation, one of the most eloquent speakers of our Parliament, a man of the state, both honest and enlightened, alas one of the most virtuous citizens of our times" *"Apontamentos para o Elogio Histórico..."* [Notes for the Historical Eulogy...], 1840, pp. 33-34).

He excelled in the examination of legal and ecclesiastical issues, including famous parliamentary debates. In 1836, after the *Revolução de Setembro* [September Revolution], he insistently tried to bring together the *cartistas* [chartists] with Manuel da Silva Passos (1801-1862), the leader of the *setembristas* [September revolutionaries]. In the meantime, he was a member of a commission that began talks with the Holy See to normalise relations with the Portuguese state. Defining himself as a conservative liberal and faithful to *vintism* [1820 revolution], he never lost his political connection to Pedro de Sousa Holstein (1781-1850), the First Duke of Palmela.

He left behind a vast body of published work, mostly on legal matters and the history of institutions, although he should not be considered strictly a *historian* but rather a *memoirist* or a compiler of historical and political facts, in the current sense. He undoubtedly contributed to the historiographical renovation promoted by the *Academia Real das Ciências de Lisboa* in the context of the academic study of Portuguese institutions, clearly supporting a documentary and positive conception of history. Many of his manuscripts are thought to remain unpublished and mostly gathered at the *Academia das Ciências de Lisboa*, bequeathed there by the author and his heirs. These should be *rediscovered* based on the current historiographical knowledge.

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