

# DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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**MARTINS, José Vitorino de Pina** (Penalva d'Alva 1920 - Lisbon, 2010)

José V. de Pina Martins was born in Penalva de Alva, in the municipality of Oliveira do Hospital, on 18 January 1920. He was the son of António Vitorino de Abrantes Martins, a landowner, and Maria Olímpia Faria de Pina. He attended primary school in Penalva de Alva, the Seminary of Coimbra and completed his secondary education at the Colégio Brás Garcia de Mascarenhas in Oliveira do Hospital. He enrolled at the University of Coimbra in 1942. From the beginning of his stay in this city, Pina Martins participated in activities promoted by Catholic youth circles and made his debut as an author, contributing to various periodicals. After completing his degree in Romance Philology in 1947 with a thesis entitled *Miséria e Grandeza do Homem nos Pensamentos de Pascal* (*The Misery and Greatness of Man in the Thoughts of Pascal*), he submitted a second thesis the following year to improve his grade, entitled *A Ideia de Deus e da Morte na Poesia de Antero* (*The Idea of God and Death in the Poetry of Antero*). It was also in 1948 that he moved to Rome to take up the position of Lecturer in Portuguese Culture at *La Sapienza* University.

In this city, he began working as a journalist for the newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano* in 1950 and directed a programme on *Vatican Radio* dedicated to promoting Portuguese culture. In the same year, he enrolled at the University of Bologna, where he travelled regularly to attend the lectures of Carlo Calcaterra. In 1951 and 1952, he also attended the Course in Library Science and Book History taught at the Vatican Apostolic Library by Lamberto Donati, a great connoisseur of illustrated books from the Renaissance. According to Pina Martins himself, it was at this time that he conceived the idea of creating a library dedicated to Humanism and the Renaissance and that he bought the first copies of rare works with which he began to realise his dream. Also in 1954, he was put in charge of Cultural Services at the Portuguese Embassy to the Holy See, becoming involved in the campaign for the release of the poet Ezra Pound. The following year (1955), he was appointed Portuguese reader in Poitiers. During his stay in this city, Pina Martins devoted himself to studying the collection of old books preserved in the Municipal Library and the University Library and developed a close relationship with Raymond Cantel. It was at the suggestion of the latter and Léon Bourdon that he enrolled his doctoral thesis at the University of Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle, in 1956. On his return to Portugal in 1962, José V. de Pina Martins was admitted as an assistant at the Faculdade de Letras [School of Arts and Humanities], where he taught Modern Cultural History, Classical Cultural History, History



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of Portuguese Literature II and Italian Literature until 1972. In 1969, he began teaching technical preparation courses organised by the Library and Archives Inspectorate at the National Library in Lisbon, aimed at librarians, archivists and documentalists, where he taught the subject of History of the Book.

During his stay in Portugal, Pina Martins gained considerable visibility thanks to his role in organising activities aimed at promoting knowledge and research on major figures in European cultural history. His role in promoting the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Pico della Mirandola in 1963 earned him recognition from the Italian government, which awarded him the Gold Medal for Culture in 1964. The following year, he was called upon to join the committee responsible for organising the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of the birth of Gil Vicente, alongside Vitorino Nemésio, Paulo Quintela and Justino Mendes de Almeida. Also in 1965, he co-organised a *Vicentino Symposium* with Ana Maria Lima Machado and, in 1972, curated the monumental exhibition commemorating the 400th anniversary of the publication of *Os Lusíadas*, which took place in Lisbon at the National Library. In the same year, he was appointed Director of the Portuguese Cultural Centre of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Paris, succeeding Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão. He remained in this position for the next ten years.

During his decade as director of the Portuguese Cultural Centre of the Gulbenkian Foundation, José V. de Pina Martins coordinated a diverse programme of cultural activities, established Portuguese language and culture courses in collaboration with the University of Paris VIII, ensured the continuity of the journal *Arquivos do Centro Cultural Português* and promoted a remarkable series of publications on Portuguese studies. His interest in old books and the history of books led to the enrichment of the Cultural Centre's library, contributing decisively to its transformation into an international reference point. In 1974, two years after arriving in Paris, José V. de Pina Martins defended his *Doctorat d'État en Lettres et Sciences Humaines* at the University of Paris III, Sorbonne Nouvelle, under the supervision of Léon Bourdon and Robert Ricard. Also in 1974, following the award of his degree, he founded, together with Jean Aubin, the *Centre de Recherches sur le Portugal de La Renaissance* at the University of Tours, with the collaboration of the *École pratique des Hautes Études* (IVe section – Études historiques et philologiques), where he was *chargé de conférences*, teaching Portuguese Civilisation for the next nine years. He returned to Portugal in 1983 to take up the position of Director of Education at the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation and resume teaching at the Faculdade de Letras [School of Arts and Humanities], from which he retired in 1990.

Pina Martins' relationship with the Lisbon Academy of Sciences grew closer in 1978, when he was elected associate member, but it was from 1983 onwards – the year in which he was also elected member of merit of the Portuguese Academy of History – that his work at that institution became particularly significant. Indeed, after being elected corresponding member in 1985, Pina Martins took up the position of Inspector of the Library of that institution in 1986. In this capacity, he coordinated the production of descriptive catalogues of the old collection (old Portuguese, Spanish and Italian books), added the collection of incunabula to this important bibliographic collection and made efforts to provide the Academy's library with a work room that would allow it to be opened to the public. In 1991, he was simultaneously elected President of the Literature



# DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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

Class and Vice-President of the Academy. José V. de Pina Martins played an important role in the modernisation, internationalisation and opening up of the Academy of Sciences to civil society, developing intense activity as an academic. Between 1989 and 1996, he was elected a member of prestigious foreign academies and scientific societies (Rome, London, Madrid, Salzburg, Rio de Janeiro, Venezuela and Moscow). During this period, he was also awarded two honorary doctorates: by the University of Lisbon (1991) and by the Moscow Academy of Sciences (1996). In addition to these distinctions, Pina Martins received several decorations (Portuguese, Italian, French and Brazilian) and awards (Pen Club essay award in 2008 and Pedro Hispano award in 2010) throughout his life. He died in Lisbon in 2010.

*Work and main lines of historical thought:* It was in 1941, at the age of 21, that José V. de Pina Martins published his first book in Coimbra: a collection of “ascetic-philosophical poems” entitled *Pregunta de Pilatos* (*Pilate’s Question*) and signed with the pseudonym Duarte de Montalegre. This publication marked the beginning of his involvement with the intellectual circles that animated the various poetry journals then in vogue in Coimbra. In fact, in 1943, he became editor-in-chief of *Estudos. Revista de Cultura e Formação Católica*, published by the ‘Centro Académico Democracia Cristã’, signing a “Manifesto da Poesia Nova” (Manifesto of New Poetry) which set out the principles of the movement of the same name in which he participated, alongside José V. de Pina Martins, Miguel Trigueiros and Eurico Colares Vieira. Among other scattered literary collaborations, there is a collection of poems published in *Altura. Cadernos de Poesia* (*Poetry Notebooks*) – where José Régio and Pedro Homem de Melo, among others, also published during the same years – and also the dissemination of scattered poems in *Alma Nova* in 1945, and the publication of essays in *Via Latina*, always under the name Duarte de Montalegre. Between 1941 and 1963, Pina Martins published around 70 titles under this *nom de plume*. During this period, although he produced some critical studies on the history of books (such as *Elogio della Bibliofilia* in 1956, *Note su Libri Cinegetici Italiani e Francesi dei Secoli XV e XVI* in 1958, and *A Biblioteca Universitária de Urbino e os seus Incunábulo*s in 1959) and on topics related to literature and culture (such as *Ensaio sobre o Parnasianismo Brasileiro* in 1945, *Reflexões críticas sobre Eça de Queirós* in 1947, *Literary Criticism in Portugal* from 1949, *The Constitutional Portuguese and the Revolution of September 1836* from 1959, for example), his interests seem to have been oriented mainly towards philosophical and aesthetic inquiry, in a search for meaning anchored in a very critical view of materialism, which was intended to be renewing within Catholicism.

It was also as Duarte de Montalegre that he published, in 1954, during the international campaign for the release of Ezra Pound, the text of the broadcast by the Vatican station and Radio Italiana on 30 March 1945 (*Prométhée enchainé. Émission de la Radio du Vatican sur le cas de Ezra Pound – Prometheus Bound. Vatican radio Broadcast on the Case of Ezra Pound*, Rome, 1945). The last work he signed under a pseudonym was *Ensaio de Literatura Europeia* (*Essays on European Literature*), published in 1963, in the same year that, as a result of collaboration with the antiquarian bookshop ‘O Mundo do Livro’, he published in Lisbon, under his own name, an anastatic edition of *Apologia propositarum suarum: text from the 1532 edition* by Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, with an introductory study.



## DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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

This date, which coincides with the celebrations of the 500th anniversary of that author, marks a turning point in the intellectual career of José V. de Pina Martins, who seems to have definitively opted, from then on, for themes related to the history of books and the history of humanist and Renaissance mentalities. The patient gathering of volumes intended to feed the Library of Rare Works on Renaissance Themes, begun in 1951 – which the bibliophile called the “Library of Humanistic Studies” – was accompanied by increasingly focused research, both in what we would now call “material bibliography” and in the historical exploration of documentary sources relevant to the history of the circulation of ideas, texts and images in early modern Europe. A considerable part of his studies focus on key figures – such as Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, Dante Alighieri, Francesco Petrarca, Pietro Bembo, Aldo Manuzio, Garcilaso de la Vega, Erasmus of Rotterdam, Thomas More, Sá de Miranda, Bernardim Ribeiro, Damião de Góis, Camões, Jerónimo Osório – which have enabled him to focus, through case studies, on working hypotheses and broad theoretical and methodological questions.

His frequent visits to the international book market and his in-depth knowledge of the techniques of the early days of movable type printing in the West, combined with his study of the expansion and evolution of this art in various European regions, led to the identification of unknown or falsely attributed Portuguese works, which Pina Martins rescued for the national bibliographic heritage. This was the case with the oldest printed book in Portuguese, the *Tratado de Confissom*, published in Chaves in August 1489, whose existence the scholar announced in a feature article in *the Diário de Notícias* in 1965, which he published in 1973, and whose purchase by the National Library of Portugal in 1982, which he promoted and mediated. This was also the case with the pamphlet *Modus curandi cum balsamo* (c. 1530), a medical text printed in Portugal in the 15th century, of which only one copy is known, identified by Pina Martins from an analysis of the woodcuts used on the frontispiece. This work, which is believed to have come from the Lisbon workshop of Germão Galharde, was also acquired by the National Library through his intermediary in 1985. Pina Martins is also credited with the discovery of the only copy of an edition of *Poesias de Garcilaso de la Vega* published in Lisbon in 1587 by Manuel de Lyra, which the bibliophile acquired in 2004 for his ‘Biblioteca de Estudos Humanísticos’ (Library of Humanistic Studies), and whose existence he reported both in the scholarly circles he frequented and in the press.

To understand the importance of Pina Martins’ intellectual legacy, it is essential to bear in mind the historical context in which his work saw the light of day. At a time when direct access to old books in Portuguese libraries and archives was extremely difficult, when freedom of movement between countries was restricted by political and institutional barriers, and when the idea of nationhood was a fundamental principle in the conceptual architecture of historical and literary studies, not only the integrated and dynamic view of the European space that his works on iconography and book history presuppose, but also the research methodology based on the direct physical examination of the works studied, were exceptional. It can be said that, in the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s, investment in a scientific, comprehensive and transnational approach to the literary phenomenon, supported by direct examination of primary sources, represented a break with



# DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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

established practices and habits in the field of literary studies. This attention to sources seems to explain Pina Martins' efforts to promote the dissemination of fundamental texts in facsimile editions, preceded by critical studies aimed at showing readers their cultural and bibliographical relevance, examples of which are the publications of short works by authors such as Boccaccio, Pico della Mirandola, D. Francisco Manuel de Melo, etc., which Pina Martins produced in the 1960s in conjunction with the bookshop 'O Mundo do Livro', and those he promoted while head of the publications department of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation in Paris and Lisbon.

One of the most important studies carried out by José V. de Pina Martins was his proposal for a conceptual and periodological review of the approach to Humanism and the Renaissance proposed in 1948 by Ernst-Robert Curtius (1886-1956), which had been accepted as standard until then. The article "Humanism and the Renaissance. A study of Ernst-Robert Curtius," published in 1969, and the study "On the concept of Humanism and some historical and doctrinal aspects of Renaissance culture" the following year, based on direct knowledge of Italian bibliographic sources, contributed greatly to reformulating the way these notions were viewed. However, Pina Martins' research on material bibliography, visual culture and the history of books – which forms the basis of numerous bibliographic exhibitions and catalogues and inventories of antique books that he coordinated – the particular attention she devoted to the history of the textual transmission of works and their publishing fortunes, and even her familiarity with Italian and French culture, are at the origin of other attempts to reconfigure and renew perspectives on Portuguese cultural history in the 15th and 16th centuries. In this vein, studies such as *Pico della Mirandola e o Humanismo italiano nas origens do Humanismo português* (1964), *O Livro Português no Reinado de D. Manuel I* (1970), *The Iconography of the Printed Book in Portugal in the Time of Dürer* (1972), *Humanism and Erasmus in 16th-Century Portuguese Culture* (1973), *Thomas More au Portugal* (1983), as well as proposals for the renewal of the periodisation of the history of Portuguese literature (as can be seen, for example, in the study "Sá de Miranda and the reception of a revived 'dolce stil nuovo' in the sixteenth century", from 1985), in his reluctance to admit the existence of a Mannerist period in Portuguese textual production in the 1500s (set out in the essay "Camões et la pensée platonicienne de la Renaissance" from 1972), or even in the revision of the hypotheses put forward until then by critics about the novel *Menina e Moça* by Bernardim Ribeiro, in the lengthy study accompanying the facsimile edition of this text, published in 2002.

A comprehensive assessment of Pina Martins' work and career will inevitably encounter dated aspects and conclusions that subsequent research has corrected, reconfigured or taken further. Nevertheless, the broad, transnational, interdisciplinary, and integrative and dynamic approach she took in her work on the history of books, cultural history, and literary studies makes her studies valuable landmarks in the career of any researcher.

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# DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

DA ACADEMIA REAL DAS CIÊNCIAS AO FINAL DO ESTADO NOVO

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# DICIONÁRIO DE HISTORIADORES PORTUGUESES

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

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