



History, citizenship and recent past in times of dictatorship: Portugal in an Iberian context

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide a contribution to the study of the conditions of production of Portuguese historiography in a context of restricted citizenship during the 20th century Iberian dictatorships, with particular emphasis on the complex relationship between present, past, and future expectations. At the fore of this paper is the case of the Portuguese dictatorships (1926-1974), while other national examples are recalled for comparative purposes. Different ways of establishing relations with time are observed, multiple temporalities experienced by different historians from different historical and political backgrounds. Taking into account several individuals - among others, V. Magalhães Godinho, António Borges Coelho and José Tengarrinha and in contrast, João Ameal and Alfredo Pimenta who were supporters of the regime -, to what extent did their life experiences marked by the imposed conditions of the dictatorial regimes restrain their work? How did they experience the tension between political engagement and historiographical practice? Organic historians tried to mobilize their nationals for apologetic and militant causes, assuming their partisanship. Others, more autonomous towards the authorities, inspired by the Annales or somehow marked by Marxism, expressed a tension between the demands of the historian's work and the urge for political action. A tension between the historian's professional ethics which demanded critical distance and the challenges posed by their civic duty.

Keywords

Historiography. Dictatorship. Presentism.

French historiography linked to the *Annales*, in particular Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, has clearly underlined the close relationship between the practice of history and life, and between the present as the historian's historicity and the issues he chooses. However, Bloch and Febvre also highlighted the risk of anachronism: transporting ideas, beliefs and expectations into the past which were inaccessible to those who lived during such times. As far as they are concerned, history is above all commanded by the verb *to understand* (to understand the past and then the present), and they make a distinction between the level of scientific argumentation and the level of political engagement: history is not to be confused with politics, but that does not prevent it from being useful in politics (DELACROIX, 2005, p. 232-236). It may be said, therefore, that in Bloch and Febvre's view, there is a dialectic between past and present, between critical distance in relation to their object of study (which always involves the work of the historian) and the exercise of citizenship, between impartial aspirations and involvement in *Res publica*, or, as suggested by Lutz Raphael, "a difficult balance between scientific distance and political engagement", thus contributing to the autonomy of history (RAPHAEL, 2012, p. 127).

Indeed, historians, in their present, have always found different ways of establishing relations with political life: while many have chosen not to hide their political engagement, namely in favour of or against dictatorial regimes, others have sought to distance themselves from the problems of their time, avoiding engagement and adopting passive attitudes. Yet is it possible to conceive a coldly objective history? By no means so: in some way or another, history always has political implications (BERGER, 2019, p. 5).

During the long period of dictatorial regimes in Portugal - first the Military Dictatorship (1926-33), then the *Estado Novo* [New State] of Salazar and Caetano (1933-1974) - the problem of the relationship between history and citizenship was always in the mind of Portuguese historians (especially those opposed to the dictatorships), and it was considered in a relatively explicit manner, as a result of the difficult conditions arising from the censorship. The relationship between the historian's professional *ethos* and civic intervention duty has often been tense in its expression. In other cases, the tension resides entirely in the political sphere, transported to historiography by different means. In what terms has this relationship between history and politics been expressed? During the time of the dictatorships, in what terms did Portuguese historians relate to the past, present and future? How did their life experiences condition their historiographies?

This paper will examine several Portuguese examples, namely Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, Joaquim de Carvalho, António Borges Coelho and José Tengarrinha - historians who opposed the regime, and in contrast, João Ameal and Alfredo Pimenta, historians who were supporters of the regime. Other national and international cases will be considered whenever necessary.



Res publica and dictatorship

Under the dictatorship of the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, public space and opinion were closely controlled by censorship and the political police. There was no freedom of expression and any form of criticism of the regime was met with persecution. As clarified by Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, the “corporative republic” (a concept used in the 1933 Constitution) was a contradiction: “the republic is based on citizenship, the corporative organisation on interests” (GODINHO, 2010, p. 12)¹. *Res publica* refers to a public thing, to public space and the free debate of ideas. During the *Estado Novo*, the restrictions on freedom of expression drastically restricted the exercise of citizenship (thus, in the deep sense of the term, the dictatorship was not a *republic*, unlike its misleading classification by some: II Republic). This, to some extent, is comparable with that observed in other European authoritarian regimes and in Getúlio Vargas’ first exercise of power in Brazil. In the case of the latter, citizenship was qualified as “passive and receptive”, insofar as although it sought to mobilize masses in its favour, the power “placed the citizens in a position of dependence” towards the leaders (CARVALHO, 2002, p. 126).²

The establishment of the Portuguese *Estado Novo* (1933) was preceded in the 1920s by a revision of national history by the Lusitanian Integralists (Integralismo Lusitano) based on a traditionalist, monarchist, organic and corporative vision, in which the concept of race occupied a relevant position. Integralist intellectuals replaced the liberal and republican narrative of three centuries of decadence and backwardness, projecting it mainly in the nineteenth century and blaming the liberal revolution, freemasonry, and Judaism for this decline. In opposition to the First Republic (1910-1926), they constructed a traditionalist and organic concept of nation, prolonging a dynastic and providentialist theory of legitimacy into the 20th century. Moreover, they tried to construct a new national narrative identity, to use Paul Ricoeur’s concept (RICOEUR, 1985, p. 355-359), returning to an alleged tradition that had disappeared with the liberal revolution, as if the Medieval past still ruled the present.

The Military Dictatorship, and later the Salazar dictatorship, essentially inherited this narrative and paved the way for a new era in terms of conditions for the production of historiography, particularly with regard to public education and universities. Censorship had already been instituted in 1926. The *Estado Novo* rose out of the remains of an unstable military dictatorship that lasted six years and accentuated the rupture with the liberal tradition of the First

1 The translations throughout the text from Portuguese into English were made by the author and by Tania Gregg.

2 For a different interpretation of citizenship in Vargas’ Brazil, valuing social rights and distinguishing them from civil and political rights see Gomes (2002).

Republic (Salazar's political promotion occurred in this context), but nothing comparable to the radical Spanish Civil War. Franco's *pronunciamento* (1936) would cause a much deeper division not only in the political field but also in the cultural field – notably a devastation in historiography. Vicens Vives, who was banned from teaching at the University for many years, would note this demarcation between “a before and after of historical science and the beginning of the ‘long walk in the desert’ of a historiography that would only begin to recover in the fifties and sixties” (PEIRÓ MARTIN, 2013, p. 13; 40).

A policy of exclusion

In Spain, the dictatorship forced many historians into exile in the Americas and in some European countries, splitting the historiographical field into two: one in exile, maintaining “the sense of continuity of the liberal values of the profession, the other internal, constrained by the dictatorship's political-ideological control, censorship and intellectual autarchy” (PEIRÓ MARTIN, 2013, p. 13). Among the exiles were Rafael Altamira, Sanchez Albornoz (who was Spain's ambassador in Lisbon during the Civil War), Americo Castro and Bosch Gimpera.³

In the Portuguese case, many opponents of the regime, including some historians, were also forced to expatriate shortly after the military coup in 1926. While it is true that the Portuguese regime was a dictatorship, it did not result from the radicalization of a civil war and did not bring about a mass exile of its opponents (there were, however, violent attempts to overthrow the dictatorship in 1927, which were met with immediate and harsh repression).

In 1954, historian Vitorino Magalhães Godinho published an article in the *Revista de História*, in São Paulo, in which he outlined a critical perspective on 20th century Portuguese historiography. He proposed two historian profiles, corresponding to two historiographical traditions: on the one hand, the historian whose work was guided by an ethical attitude of independence towards the powers of the day, the historian-citizen⁴; on the other hand, the “court chronicler”, the historian who flattered the instituted powers. This alternative was expressed in dramatic terms: “Free historian, court historian, dignity and autonomy of research, complacency with the powers of the day: drama of the 20th century, drama perhaps of the research of our time” (GODINHO, 1971, p. 230).

3 For many, the experience in exile was traumatic and distressing, as suggested by T. Adorno. Enzo Traverso formulated a stimulating “hermeneutics of distance” hypothesis, as the “epistemological privilege of exile”, as if it were a form of compensation for the ordeal experienced by so many exiles: loss, upheaval, deprivation of all kinds (TRAVERSO, 2011, p. 227).

4 The examples given by Godinho were Jaime Cortesão, Duarte Leite and Veiga Simões (GODINHO, 1971, p. 241).



The distinction makes perfect sense if we place ourselves in that period characterized by lack of freedom, in which many teachers, in order to remain in the profession, were forced to sign declarations of commitment to the regime's constitution and a rejection of communism⁵ in 1935 and 1936. Alternatively, a distinction may be established between the organic historians (not far from the concept of the historian-courtiers of Magalhães Godinho) and a large group of accommodated historians (ARAÚJO, 2021), who did not question the regime. But, it must be said that these political criteria classifications do not necessarily imply an order of higher or lower quality of the respective historiographical work. Indeed, some accommodating historians have elaborated innovative historiographical works.

In Portugal, after the military coup in 1926 and thereafter, there were enforced dismissals of numerous university professors, among whom historians such as Rodrigues Lapa (a specialist in literary studies from the University of Lisbon in 1933) and Sílvio Lima (a theorist from the University of Coimbra in 1935) are worthy of mention. Others, whose contracts were not renewed or who were constrained by lack of freedom, went into voluntary expatriation (e.g., Vitorino Magalhães Godinho and António José Saraiva, but also the aforementioned Lapa). Others, who had been dismissed from the University, were forced to dedicate themselves to other activities (CARVALHO, 1974, p. 23-32; ROSAS; SIZIFREDO, 2013). Many would only be admitted to the universities after the fall of the regime in 1974 (Barradas de Carvalho, Borges Coelho, José Tengarrinha, among others), and an important publishing house, Coimbra University Press, directed by the historian Joaquim de Carvalho, was closed down (CARVALHO, 2015, p. 383-396). Citizenship and the writing of history were under surveillance, restricted and in many cases silenced (picking up here on the adjective of Mário Soares' title *Le Portugal baillonné* [1972]).

In Portugal, historians of liberal, republican, socialist and communist convictions continued to publish their works under difficult conditions, closely surveyed by the political police and under tight censorship. Sometimes, with great difficulty, they continued to make their voices heard in non-specialised periodicals such as *Seara Nova* and *Vértice*. As suggested above, Franco's dictatorship severed all ties with the liberal, secular, and republican past in a far more radical manner, and just like Salazar's regime, it fostered and nurtured accommodation, prudence, censorship, and self-censorship behaviours. While in 1936, before the outbreak of the Civil War, 49 professors had occupied positions in the History departments of Spanish universities, by 1939 this figure had fallen to 19 (PALLOL TRIGUEROS, 2014, p. 513). As a result, most historians

5 According to Decree Law 13/05/1935, the citizens who opposed the Constitution of 1933 would be forced to retire ("provided they were entitled to retirement, if not they would be dismissed") and barred from occupying any public position (PORTUGAL, 1936).

distanced themselves from active political life, or adopted a national Catholic rhetoric with regard to their conception of history.

Nevertheless, from the 1950s onwards, in both countries, a number of historiographical communities that had been deeply affected by the dictatorships showed tentative signs of recovery. There were new developments in history writing, which tended to distance itself from the nationalism espoused by the state to become more professional. On the other hand, Iberian historians' contact with other European universities, especially German and French universities, was strengthened.

As in Portugal, the most influential imported culture in nineteenth-century Spain was French, to a large extent through the travel and relocation of professors and researchers (some of them political émigrés). However, in comparison to the Portuguese, there was greater proximity on the part of Spanish intellectuals and historians to German historiography, which was also evident in the greater influence of Krausism from the mid-nineteenth century, and of other philosophical and historical currents in the twentieth century. The highly significant trajectories and defining periods in Germany of Ortega y Gasset and José María Jover are clear examples of this.

However, in the 1950s and early 1960s, Salazarism appeared to have resisted change in its policy towards universities to a greater extent than Francoism. The fear aroused by the 1962 academic strike and the long colonial war on three fronts (1961-1974) explain the fear of expanding higher education. It remained blocked with very small budgets in the field of higher education and research, and perhaps even tighter censorship than that in force under late-Francoism. In Portugal, the growth of the University was stunted drastically until the late 1960s: the number of doctorates in History and the number of teachers (including full professors) in this area was extremely small, in relative terms, compared to the case of Spain: in 1955 there were only 10 professors of History in Portugal (this figure would increase to 79 in 1980), compared to 62 (249 in 1980) in Spain for the same year (DE VEGA; IBASETA, 2010, p. 129; MATOS; FREITAS, 2010, p. 123).

From the 1940s onwards, in both Iberian countries, the following trends can be broadly distinguished. Contrary to what might be assumed, they are not completely separate and watertight, as historians have changed their angle of approach to problems throughout their trajectory:

1. A positive history, inherited from widespread "positivism", restricted to an empiricist practice limited to the surface of documents, often centred on political, diplomatic and military events, and carried out by passive, *desengagé* historians, authors and narratives in which the historian erases himself and allows the past to speak as if



these narratives corresponded to a reality as it would have happened ; but, some of these historians (or mere disseminators) who advocated impartiality actively assumed a providentialist conception of history, to some extent associating their concept of truth with the belief in a revealed religion - national Catholicism as destiny. In the case of Spain, a religious rhetoric may be encountered, even in historians of the calibre of Jose Maria Jover (PALLOL TRIGUEROS, 2014, p. 634-638).

2. The historiography linked to the *Annales*. It is easy to identify this trend, which developed through the readings and travels of young researchers to France and direct contact with French historians such as Lucien Febvre, Marcel Bataillon, Fernand Braudel, etc., and Portuguese historians, namely Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, Jorge Borges de Macedo and Joel Serrão, among others. Jaume Vicens Vives, Jose Antonio Maravall and Jose Maria Jover Zamora were among the Spanish historians. In Portugal, knowledge of Marc Bloch's work dates back to the early 1940s.
3. Historical materialism, emphasizing class struggle as an explanatory factor for the great historical transformations - the case of António Borges Coelho - , sometimes also emphasizing economic determinism - Armando Castro; in this view, patriotism and social progress are on the side of the working classes; in conflicts with other powers, the powerful, the members of the dominant classes, were those who sided with the enemy; the revolutions (1383, 1640, 1820) were promoted by the people and the bourgeoisie. In the Spanish case, Tuñon de Lara and Josep Fontana are examples, among others.

Until the outbreak of World War II (1939), dissemination of the *Annales* was rather limited outside France (RAPHAEL, 2012, p. 123). Multiple references to the journal, to Lucien Febvre and to M. Bloch appeared among Portuguese geographers as of 1935 (GIRÃO, 1935) and among historians, such as Torquato Sousa Soares, in the early 1940s, in the *Revista de História*. These references emerged not only in Coimbra, but also and especially in Lisbon, in the historical thought of Vitorino Magalhães Godinho and his former students, and in the classes of Ferreira de Almeida, both at the Faculty of Arts of Lisbon. In the 1950s, marks of historiography linked to the *Annales* were quite evident in Spain, for example through the work of Vicens Vives (JOVER ZAMORA, 1999, p. 46).

The topic of citizenship, together with a reflection on the difference between present and past, was formulated in different terms by Portuguese historians in the 1940s. The problem was related to a concept of history that clearly moves away from the antiquarian history and methodical history that were still dominant in Portuguese universities at that time. It has much in

common with the reflection of historians linked to the *Annales* and, on the other hand, with the legacy of a critical historiography practiced by major thought figures in Portugal, connected to the journals *Seara Nova* and *Vértice*.

As stated by Magalhães Godinho in the 1950s "History is not the past dragging on, nor is it the evasion of the present. As history is the understanding of the march of men through time, the march of all men, with all their aspirations, their longings, their failures, their victories, *history is the liquidation of the past*" (GODINHO, 1971, p. 247, emphasis added). This idea of liquidating the past bore an obvious Sergian mark - of António Sérgio, the essayist who fought against the historian attitude that still dominated the historiographical field in Portugal in the early twentieth century. But it was also related to a fundamental distinction, advocated very early on by Magalhães Godinho, between the logic of commemorativism (the illusion of repeating in the present a past that was deemed model) and the comprehensive rationale of the historian (GODINHO, 1947). A distinction, indeed, between memory policies focused on ideological propaganda and a historiographical practice capable of differentiating the present and the past and guided by critical distancing. A permanent consciousness that historians' agenda is always marked by the lived experience of their times.

But later, in 1977, in a context still close to the revolutionary transformations of 1974-75 and the consequent political polarisation, when structuralism was still in vogue, Godinho distanced himself from theoretical models and from the formulas that had been imported and adapted to societies with other characteristics. In the introduction to *Estrutura da antiga sociedade portuguesa* (1977) and in *Ensaios II* (1978), he warned of the risk of an undesirable lack of differentiation between different temporalities, between past and present. However, the ethnic nationalism of the *Estado Novo* prolonged myths in the present. He affirmed that "Both the mythical fascist apology of the angelic crusade and the unappealing indictment of the abominable colonialism, source of all evils, are to be rejected. Let us seek the naked truth, *without falling into the sin of anachronism, which is one of history's worst adulterations*" (GODINHO, 1978, p. XV, emphasis added). On the other hand, the historian acknowledged that scientific work is conditioned by the multiple epochal factors (social, cultural, "battles of interests") of the present time in which researchers are conducting their work. But the "ethics of scientifically conducted research [...] inescapably implies *tenacious efforts of impartiality*". And one is only a scientist "insofar as he plays with the constraints *in order to become as independent of them as possible* – insofar as he seeks the gap through which objectivity, that which is verifiable by all, may pass" (GODINHO, 1978, p. XIV, emphasis added). Because Godinho also saw the role of the historian as an expression of civic virtue (SOUSA, 2012, p.110).



A very different (and opposite) point of view was held by the traditionalist “organic” historians, supporters of the *Estado Novo*, who cultivated the retrospective utopia of a flourishing nation prior to the Enlightenment and the liberal revolution. João Ameal is one such example. Initially linked to the Lusitanian Integralists and their master António Sardinha, he joined the *Estado Novo*. Returning to the ancient *topos* “history master of life”, he justified his *History of Portugal* (1940) with the need to carry out a historical revision that involved replacing the values of the “fateful nineteenth century”, which he considered “false, illusory, perfectly unsuitable to guide or lead us” (AMEAL, 1941, p. 7-8). A replacement of values which he understood as restoration in light of a traditional philosophy, since modernity, in his view, was a lack of orientation⁶. It was a militant history, apologetic to the Salazar regime, marked by a clearly assumed political agenda. A history seen as a summary and complement to the Commemorations of the double centennial of the founding of Portugal (1140) and the Restoration of Independence (1640), promoted in 1940 by the dictatorship. In the name of an urgent need to restore historical truth. In a “counter-offensive” to defeat the liberal and democratic national historical narrative, Ameal rejected the impartiality of the historian and the status of “pure science” for history (coinciding also on this point with Alfredo Pimenta, according to whom the nineteenth century had been a “civil war” in Portugal). And he claimed the “apostolic vocation” of the Portuguese as a guiding principle, connecting it to a “will of Empire” (AMEAL, 1941, p. 39-40). This official history was supposed to serve “the truth of the Faith and the Homeland” - in other words, the truth sustained by the regime. In Spain, after the Civil War the national Catholic current, identified with the Francoist nationalists, accentuated this religious component.

History, present time, political action

The difficult working conditions of Portuguese historians during the dictatorship, marked by the absence of freedom, the tight vigilance of censorship and control over cultural life – particularly for universities - drastically conditioned the writing of history in Portugal, even more so with the implementation of the *Estado Novo*, from 1932-1933. The historiographical agenda itself, as regards the topics and periods of study, was subject to bias. Also, the state of the archives and the poor equipment of the libraries did not facilitate the work of researchers. These difficult working and living conditions meant that the opposition historians were forced to resort to other professional activities. The latter, in turn, served to broaden their knowledge of the present time and to challenge the historiographical agenda.

⁶ He took Jacques Bainville’s *Histoire de France* (1924) as an inspirational model of royalist narrative (BAINVILLE, 1924).

But how did the experience of limited political intervention by historians in the public (or clandestine) space also contribute to widening their field of experience and concrete knowledge of social realities? And how did the shift to professions other than teaching and conducting research - namely journalism and the translation of books, among others - also contribute to widening this experience?

The experience of political engagement in adverse conditions would have made historians more aware of the relevance of themes such as *social movements, class struggle, revolutions, the role of the press and of political action in the media and in the formation of public opinion, the problem of the lack of a spirit of citizenship, the role of teaching and education in the formation of political consciousness.*

In this context, the role played by the exercise of professional activities, such as teaching (in private or public education) and journalism, was to broaden their knowledge of their present time. This may be well understood in the trajectories of two historians, Borges Coelho and José Tengarrinha. Their cases are highly significant in this respect.

These two historians had life trajectories which, in their relationship of opposition to power, highlight the immense difficulties with which they were confronted in carrying out their historiographical work and, at the same time, developing political action, in a permanent tension between political combat and dedication to historical research. They lived in tension between the drive for civic and political action (in the present) and the study of the past (historical research). Back and forth between the present and the past.

Both were connected to the PCP (Portuguese Communist Party) and Democratic Unity Movement (*Movimento de Unidade Democrática* (MUD)⁷ in the 1940s, and both were prevented from teaching in state education. António Borges Coelho was imprisoned from 1956 to 1962. In prison, along with other political prisoners, all connected to the Portuguese Communist Party (among them the communist leader Álvaro Cunhal himself), in very precarious conditions, they developed historical studies on the Middle Ages and the modern era in Portugal. One of the motives that led Borges Coelho to study the Middle Ages in Portugal was to understand why Islamic culture had been neglected in Portugal. Reading Alexandre Herculano's *História de Portugal* (HERCULANO, 1980) (which also focuses on the period of Arab domination, admittedly from a political point of view) was a fundamental starting point in this respect (other key themes in Herculano's historiography and essays left a strong mark on the generation of historians that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s: the distance between the legal country - the country of the

7 The MUD was a Frontist political movement which brought together militants from various anti-fascist sectors.



political elite - and the real country or the absence of a spirit of citizenship among the Portuguese in the nineteenth century, related to the difficulties faced by the liberal revolution). When he was released from prison in 1962, Borges Coelho decided to become a historian and to teach in private schools, but he was severely restricted in the exercise of citizenship: he had to present himself to the political police (PIDE) every month and could not exercise the profession of state teacher.

José Tengarrinha, who had been arrested on several occasions, was also forbidden to exercise the professions of journalist and teacher due to his political activity. In his case, it is particularly clear that his work as a journalist motivated him to broaden his knowledge of the history of the press and its impact on public opinion, on censorship and its consequences. The study of history contributed significantly to his political education (ARAÚJO, 2021, p. 976). Beyond the University, he wrote on outstanding figures of liberalism and political life in nineteenth century Portugal (Rodrigues Sampaio, José Estevão, etc.). In the early 1970s, he had even registered a doctoral thesis at the University of Sorbonne, under the supervision of Albert Soboul. However, he did not pursue this path and returned to Portugal, giving priority to political combat - he was in prison at the time of the 1974 revolution. In an interview in 2016, Tengarrinha said that "one cannot establish a clear separation between historiographical thought and people's lives", and that when he chose to study the disadvantaged classes it was "a political decision" (ARAÚJO, 2021, p. 975, footnote 298). In this interview, Tengarrinha acknowledged that his political training had owed much to his historical studies. In fact, the opposite was also true: as suggested above, engagement in political life broadened knowledge and posed a challenge to the historiographical agenda. If the outcome of political combat is uncertain and always unpredictable (and Borges Coelho was well aware of this), also in a broader sense, change in history is unpredictable, although trends, possibilities and probabilities can be noted. After the fall of the dictatorship in 1974, Tengarrinha and Borges Coelho were admitted to the University of Lisbon (Faculty of Arts) where they remained as professors in the History Department until they retired after almost 30 years of teaching.

In the difficult life conditions of the opposition historians, whether underground or in prison, the study of history contributed to giving meaning to their political combat and to nurture confidence in the present and future. The study of the past can be seen as a kind of journey to another, more or less distant time (Léo Strauss), in which the historian opens himself to the suggestions of the sources (KRACAUER, 2006, p. 153). It is in this sense, in this close contact with the legacies of other men, he subjects himself to changes of identification. On the other hand, this visit to the past brings distance and rationality to the understanding of the present, without forgetting the "effect of estrangement", comparable to that produced by photography, as

suggested by Siegfried Kracauer (KRACAUER, 2006, p. 157). But also proximity with that other time. As mentioned by Borges Coelho in an interview in 2018:

the information is so vast, we have to soak it up, *almost live in that time, listen to the voice of that time*, even the sentence of the time that is not the same as the sentence of today. And sometimes *the word itself* no longer has the meaning it has today (COELHO, 2018, p. 6, emphasis added).⁸

In the certainty that history is the study of changes, according to the teachings of Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre. And that there are advantages in thinking beyond the short term.

From this point of view, the historical themes studied by a group of *Estado Novo* opponents connected to the PCP in Peniche prison in the late 1950s and early 1960s are highly significant: the study of topics such as class struggles in the Middle Ages (Álvaro Cunhal), the Revolution of 1383 (Borges Coelho), the time of D. Sebastião (Francisco Martins Rodrigues) and the *Castreja* civilization (Carlos Costa) had, to some extent, a therapeutic function (COELHO, 2003, p. 38).⁹ As recalled by Borges Coelho, history books were allowed into the cells of Peniche prison (but strictly limited: one at a time). Although he was a political prisoner, he could read and take notes of the works of chroniclers and historians and, in the intervals, even if with considerable constraints, discuss ideas (COELHO, 2018). Thus, an informal historical “study centre” was established in Peniche prison. Clearly, this refers to a self-taught initiative.

During this period, the impossibility of being a professional historian due to political reasons became evident. Without relinquishing his political conscience and the exercise of citizenship to the degree possible, upon his release from Peniche prison, Borges Coelho chose to return to the historical studies he had interrupted in 1958, by attending the Faculty of Arts in Lisbon once again. He also decided to dedicate himself to philosophy and history classes in private education. The teaching of history - one of the fields of history communicated in public - fosters the testing of interpretations, situated readings, syntheses, interaction with an interested audience, which is of great use to the historian. While many opponents to the regime were barred from teaching in state schools, in the late 1960s, despite the limitations imposed by censorship, journalism was one of the fields in which they could write in the field of history (such as in the weekly magazine *Vida Mundial* or the daily newspaper *A Capital*). Journalism considers the near

8 On the importance of listening to the voices of the past, see Fernández Sebastián (2021).

9 Which would also have been the case, albeit on different terms, with the reading and re-reading of Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* by Borge Coelho.



past and demands an immediate interpretation of the event when its unfolding and implications for the future are still unknown. Sometimes it imposes the training of a language geared towards the concrete real. In the case of Borges Coelho, his experience of some years at *A Capital* (1968-1970) will have in some way marked his unmistakable writing, characterised by short, artistically refined sentences.

Other poorly paid activities adopted by the opposition historians were book publishing - especially history books - and advertising. In the case of the former, two examples. Following his politically driven resignation from teaching at the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas Ultramarina (ISCSPU) (1962), Vitorino Magalhães Godinho worked in several publishing houses: Arcádia, Cosmos and Sá da Costa. José Tengarrinha worked in an advertising company where other opponents of the regime were also involved. Each of these diverse professions contributed in their own way to strengthening the relationship between historians and the world of literature, but also with the highly varied real world of the public.

Censorship in the historiographical field

As was the case in other authoritarian and totalitarian regimes, in the Portuguese *Estado Novo*, censorship and the political police were key instruments of surveillance and control over the education system (especially state education) and the public space, including the historiographical field. Censorship prohibited the circulation of books such as *Introdução geográfico-sociológica à História de Portugal* (1940), by A. Sérgio - which was to become the first volume of his planned but not achieved *História de Portugal –, Geografia e Economia da Revolução de 1820* (1962), by Fernando Piteira Santos and *Raízes da expansão portuguesa* (1964), by António Borges Coelho. Other types of historiographical works were censored. For instance, in a text of self-reflection on his work in 1970, during Marcello Caetano's "*primavera*" [spring], Victor de Sá's passage in which he referred to Portugal's dependence on England¹⁰ was partially cut. In Spain also, among many other works, one of the tomes of *História Social e Económica de España y America* under Vicens Vives was not approved by the censorship (GELABERT, 2004, p. 82, footnote 125).

Portuguese historians and essayists spent periods of varying duration in the regime's prisons: António Sérgio five times, sporadically (the last of which in 1958), Fernando Piteira Santos in the post-war period (1945-1946) and, as already mentioned, Borges Coelho for six years (1956-1962).

10 "We barely noticed the country's state of real subjection (a longstanding situation) in relation to England ..." (SÁ, 1975, p. 53).

Moreover, while many historians were teachers, some were expelled from teaching and forbidden to exercise their profession. In his research, Christophe Araújo detected a total of 12 historians barred from teaching in higher education during the dictatorship. Others were forced into exile: the case of Jaime Cortesão in 1926 in Madrid and Paris and later, in 1940, in Brazil. Additionally, in what appears to be a contradictory measure, others were occasionally forbidden to leave the national territory to conduct their research - Joel Serrão and António José Saraiva (ARAÚJO, 2021, p. 599-600). In other words, depending on the cases, the *Estado Novo* adopted reverse coercive measures, but with the same purpose of exclusion. However, while in the case of the former - imposed exile - the outcome (undesired by the political power) was that of the regime's opponents strengthening ties with the countries of destination and encouraging opposition from abroad - in the latter, isolation was imposed, creating serious obstacles for the internationalization of the historians.

Censorship was one of the most salient repressive instruments, and in order to sidestep this obstacle, historians adopted a number of strategies. Indeed, "censorship is aimed at disabling all dissent" and generates a "censored reader" (BLAS, 1999, p. 292). Historians, journalists and fictionists were forced to resort to a variety of practices to avoid censorship (or self-censorship) and these practices had the effect of modifying the original messages. In the case of historians, such practices included:

1. *The use of pseudonyms in the translation of historiographical and literary works.* For example, Fernando Piteira Santos used the pseudonym of Arthur Taylor in the translation of *As grandes doutrinas económicas*,¹¹ and abbreviations of his first name (F. dos Santos and Fernando dos Santos, in other translations). Jorge Borges de Macedo used the name of Carlos Carvalho in the translation of Henri Wallon and George Teissier's book, *Modern rationalism and the biological and psychological sciences*;¹² and that of Albertino Gonçalves, in the translation of Máximo Gorki's *A Night's Lodging* (COELHO, 2021, p. 270-271).¹³ Undoubtedly formulas to sidestep censorship. Even so, one cannot underestimate the depersonalising effect these practices must have had on the authors or translators.
2. *The elision of names of historical personalities* that might lead the censors to cut. In one of his essays, António Sérgio referred to the authors of *The Holy Family* instead

11 TAYLOR, Arthur. *As grandes doutrinas económicas*. Lisboa: Europa-América, 1965.

12 WALLON, Henri; TEISSIER, Georges. *O racionalismo moderno e as ciências biológicas e psicológicas*. Introdução: Paul Langevin. Notas: Jorge de Macedo. Tradução: Carlos Carvalho. Lisboa: Edições Universais, 1947.

13 GORKI, Maxim. *Albergue nocturno*. Tradução: Albertino Gonçalves. Lisboa: Europa-América, data.



of Karl Marx and F. Engels. In 1951, in the 1st edition of the historiographical work with which he made his public debut, Jorge Borges de Macedo quoted Karl Marx without mentioning his name or the provenance of the quotation, taken from *The 18th Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*: “Men make their own history, however they do not make it as they please; but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past” (MACEDO, 1982, p. 21).

3. Joaquim da Carvalho, a historian at the University of Coimbra, a man of liberal and democratic thought and one of the few who had published notable overviews on the recent past (liberalism and republicanism), stated in correspondence with his friend Alfredo Pimenta (a historian who, in terms of political ideas, was pro-dictatorship), without hiding his convictions, that he was not a politician. The intended recipients of this message were probably the censors - it was known that they violated correspondence. And Alfredo Pimenta was a man who was close to Salazar (CARVALHO, 2016, p. 168; 212).

Encrypted messages managed to bypass censorship, its serious repressive effect on historiographical practices was unquestionable. One such obstacle was the conditioning of historians' own historiographical agenda. A climate of fear spread through part of the population. Considerable courage was needed in the face of such adversity and in order to work under the close surveillance of the authorities. The study of the near past (i.e., the First Republic and the *Estado Novo*) was one of the most closely surveilled areas by the authorities.

Relationship with the recent past

One of the most significant topics for understanding the memory strategies of the dictatorial regimes is that of the indirect imposition of a cautious attitude by historians to avoid more recent historical memory. Evidently, it was known that any less favourable judgment in relation to the *Estado Novo* would not be tolerated. The study of the recent past was often identified with journalism and politics - a common sense judgment that was a way of disqualifying contemporary history, which was avoided by university teachers.

Notwithstanding, outside the University, the opposition historians valued the study of the then near past, i.e., the nineteenth century and the First Republic. In 1947, Joel Serrão stated “we are all children of that century”, describing it as “luminous” and stressing the need to further develop the legacy of the great figures of nineteenth century historical thought: historians such as Alexandre Herculano and Oliveira Martins and philosopher-poet Antero de Quental (SERRÃO

1947, p. 137). In 1965, shortly before publishing a pioneering study on the periodical press of the Republican Revolution of 1910 (a revolution which he characterized as “tolerant and conservative”), Jacinto Baptista wrote a very interesting reflection on the relevance of the study of the near past and the relativity of the point of view of the observer of that same past: beyond the experience lived by each individual, there is a kind of wilderness that has not yet been studied by historians. And it is their work that allows us to go beyond individual and affective memory (BAPTISTA, 1965). In the early 1970s, Oliveira Marques published several pioneering studies dedicated to the First Republic (beginning with MARQUES, [1970?.]). He sought to understand the failure of this political experiment which had had modernising intentions and had fallen by the force of arms in 1926.

There was a growing awareness that the study of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the following century was indispensable to understanding Portuguese problems. At the Grémio Literário, in 1970-1971, a Centre for Nineteenth Century Studies (1969-1974), led by Joel Serrão, José Augusto França and José Tengarrinha, organised a series of conferences dedicated to that period. These initiatives were made possible thanks to the support of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. But at the university the atmosphere was quite different.

Miriam Halpern Pereira recalls that her decision to study the contemporary period in the mid-1960s gave rise to “profound hostility” on the part of Virginia Rau (who was head of the History department at the Faculty of Arts of Lisbon at the time) since this choice was associated with a political and methodological option - Marxism (PEREIRA, 2010, p. 19). In general the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were forgotten and students left University knowing little or nothing about the history of those historical times. Only in the 1960s did incentives emerge in Coimbra and Lisbon for research related to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The undergraduate theses defended at the Faculty of Arts of Lisbon on these centuries were rare, such as those of Julião Soares de Azevedo, Fernando Piteira Santos (both on the Revolution of 1820) and Mário Soares (on Teófilo Braga and Oliveira Martins). The vast majority chose to study medieval or modern history themes.

In the 1960s, the *Dicionário de História de Portugal* (1963-71), under the direction of Joel Serrão, did not go chronologically beyond 1926 (when the dictatorship in Portugal was established) and brought together a highly varied set of historians with quite diverse historiographical and political tendencies. Joel Serrão justified this chronological limitation by referring to the inconveniences of writing contemporary history: subjectivity, “a danger which [...] had already been decried by Fustel de Coulanges” (SERRÃO, 1963, p. VIII). But there was undoubtedly another reason for this choice: to avoid the censoring of entries that might be deemed unacceptable by the censors. Even so, this chronological criterion was adopted in his Dictionary, with some exceptions: entries on twentieth



century historians and legal and economic institutions. José Tengarrinha's *História da Imprensa periódica* (1989) covers the period from the late seventeenth century to the Republican revolution of 1910 (with particular emphasis on the nineteenth century press). He later declared that it was impossible for a single author to provide a "global, reflected and serious critical analysis" of the later twentieth century journalism (TENGARRINHA, 1989, p. 13-14). In spite of that, one might suspect that another reason for this chronological restriction was to avoid censorship.

From the forties to the sixties, studies situated in the traditionally defined periods of the Middle Ages and Modern Ages were still dominant. It was as if the study of the contemporary might contaminate historians and prevent them from having the necessary distance in relation to the sources. Nevertheless, this criterion was not always followed, not even by the historians who were supporters of the dictatorship. For example, João Ameal dedicated 178 pages of his *História de Portugal* to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (the latter up to 1940) (24.2% of a total of 733 pages) (AMEAL, 1962). This is understandable, when one bears in mind that Ameal was a historical dissemination agent, and that his work won the Alexandre Herculano Award granted by the National Secretariat for Information (SNI). Moreover, the regime needed to legitimate itself in an apologetic narrative concerning the near past. As already known, the following year, in 1941, the censors seized the first volume of António Sérgio's *História de Portugal*. This sparked indignation even among sectors close to the Salazar regime: the essayist received a letter of solidarity from Henrique Galvão, a man who was still close to the regime at the time (GALVÃO, 1941).

Of the 117 doctoral theses defended in Spain between 1940 and 1950, only 10 were related to nineteenth century themes, while in Portugal, there were no doctoral theses at all and very few undergraduate theses in the nineteenth century (to our knowledge, only 4). In the 1940s, at the universities of Lisbon and Coimbra, only two doctoral theses were defended, neither of which corresponded to the nineteenth or twentieth century. As already mentioned, the study of the so-called contemporary period was disadvised. The "historical" category applied only to a past prior to the sixteenth century, at the very most until the eighteenth century. For example, Magalhães Godinho was discouraged from writing a thesis on the thought of Oliveira Martins since allegedly it was "not history" (GODINHO, 1950, p. XXVII). When Mário Soares was preparing to defend his dissertation in 1950 on the thought of Teófilo Braga (a historical republican who was one of the main disseminators of positivism in Portugal), the idea spread that it was "political speculation" (SOARES, 2020, p. 40). Undergraduate theses on the nineteenth century would only be encouraged in the mid 1960s. Doctorates in all the historical specialties were extremely rare, on another scale to that of the university itself, and the number of teachers and students in

History courses at the university was extremely low during this period. This clearly points to the policy of divestment in university by the Salazar regime.

Yet there is a contrast between the two peninsular cases as far as contemporary history is concerned. In the case of Spain, the first professional historians were also not as committed to addressing the contemporary as prior eras, driven as they were by the illusion of the neutrality of historiographical work. In the journal *Hispania*, from 1940-44, articles on the contemporary period did not exceed 2% of the total (while over 50% focused on the medieval period). The scarce few devoted to the recent past were, in large measure, controlled by the *Instituto de Estudios Políticos* (FERNANDEZ GALLEGO, 2023, p. 600-615). Yet while there was less dedication to contemporary history, it was the traditionalist and integralist historians who took the initiative to cultivate the political history of the nineteenth century. And, in 1970-1971, the total number of theses defended at the Complutense University of Madrid on nineteenth and twentieth century themes was equivalent to those on Ancient, Medieval and Modern History taken together (JOVER, 1999, p. 51).¹⁴

In Portugal, the *contemporary* was deemed impure by the archival historians who dominated the national historiographical scene in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. The justification for a lack of distancing inhibited them from writing the history of a recent past which, in their view, ought to be impartial. But the issue was evidently political. Historians were afraid of constructing a narrative of more recent times that would not be accepted by the censorship. And at times, this was related to the profile of a passive historian, detached from the problems of his time.¹⁵ Even so the history of the recent past (the late nineteenth century) was cultivated by republican and liberal historians and disseminators, such as the contributors to Luís de Montalvor's *História do Regimen Republicano em Portugal* (1930-1932), particularly Joaquim de Carvalho. The afore-mentioned Alfredo Pimenta, a traditionalist who supported the *Estado Novo* and was above all a medievalist, even believed that the historiography focusing on the fifteenth century onwards was not history, but rather politics and journalism - a common idea up until democracy was established in Portugal. Joaquim de Carvalho's criticism of his friend Alfredo Pimenta regarding the manual *Elementos de História de Portugal*, published by

¹⁴ In 1954, a seminar on the nineteenth century was launched at the University of Madrid. Its main researcher was Hans Juretschke, From the 1970s onwards, another Modern History seminar of the University of Navarra began to include contemporary studies (information kindly provided by Alba Fernandez). At CSIC, the Contemporary period occupied a very small place, and this situation only began to change in 1969 (FERNÁNDEZ GALLEGO, 2023, p. 161-162; 600-615; 709-713).

¹⁵ In the *Revista da Faculdade de Letras do Porto*, during the final years of the dictatorship (1970-74), the articles focusing on the Contemporary Period represented only 11.4% of the total (JANEIRO, 2021, p. 17).



the latter in 1934, is particularly interesting, where a traditionalist and very negative narrative of the liberal revolution and the Portuguese Constitutional Monarchy is depicted while the former political regime is praised. In a private letter, Joaquim de Carvalho considered it both “praise and a manifesto” and very clearly distanced himself from his reading of the nineteenth century: “thus treated, it is at least unfair and scientifically a work of passion” (CARVALHO, 1992, p. 140-141). Although critical of a teleological and unilinear concept of progress, Joaquim de Carvalho’s conception of history was marked by an anti-dictatorial ethic that led him to value the liberal system and devalue despotism (CARVALHO, 1989, p. 170-171).

In fact, the nineteenth century, deemed a stupid century (Léon Daudet) by traditionalists, dominated by liberalism and revolutions and hegemonized by liberal memory, called for a profound historical revision. In the case of Portugal, all the same this revision only came with the Lusitanian Integralism generation: mainly in the 1920s with Sardinha and in the 1930s, through Alfredo Pimenta and João Ameal, in general history manuals of unequal value and scope (until then, only a few essays by other authors were available, including articles by the master of Integralism himself, António Sardinha).

The specialised study of the nineteenth century, excluded or relegated at university, as already explained, was cultivated beyond its sphere by historians influenced by the *Annales* (Joel Serrão, Magalhães Godinho, J. Augusto França) and by Marxism (Armando Castro, Costa Dias, Victor de Sá, Alberto Ferreira, José Tengarrinha). It should be noted, nevertheless, that in France, at the same time, higher education also expressed a minor interest in contemporary history - and this remained so until the 1970s. It is therefore not surprising that in Portuguese universities the study of the medieval and modern eras also continued to be dominant.

The Portuguese *Estado Novo* imposed an exclusivist retrospective and historicist nationalism that valued a temporality in which key topics were dominant: the evangelical mission of the nation and its empire, the Lusiad civilisation, the myth of the crusade in the resistance to Islam, mythical traditions such as the identification of the Portuguese and the Lusitanians (and even, in certain cases, the miracle of Ourique¹⁶) and model heroes of the past such as Nuno Álvares Pereira and Prince Henry the Navigator. In terms of the history adopted for teaching in April 1932 (when Gustavo Cordeiro Ramos was Minister of Education), it was expressed in a rigid state programme based on the instrumentalization of the nation’s memory: the principles to be glorified (family, faith, authority, firmness of government, respect for hierarchy) and censured (weakening

¹⁶ A providentialist tradition invented in the early fifteenth century, according to which King Afonso Henriques had a premonitory visit from God, announcing his victory in a battle against the Muslims, which would take place the next day. The battle occurred in 1139 and took on a decisively mythical dimension.

of confidence in the future, absence of hero worship) were identified. It was a programme of total nationalist indoctrination that would be systematically widened from 1936 onwards, with Carneiro Pacheco in the Ministry of Education: only that which praised national glory should be taught and anything that diminished it should be omitted. But this was not a totally consensual programme, there were significant differences of opinion among the supporters of the regime (MATOS, 1990, p. 129-131).

It was a defensive nationalism, although in terms of language it might sometimes appear to be the opposite (Franco's dictatorship was certainly more offensive in its initial phase), a nationalism that did not move towards an enlargement of the public space of citizenship but rather towards ideological and sectarian mobilisation towards the dominant ideology. A nationalism without a nationalist movement? (the National Union was a party of cadres and not a party of the masses). Alongside the devaluation of politics as an exercise of civic rights, demobilisation and a reflux into the private space was encouraged, as was the case in Spain (SAZ, 2006, p. 152-164). It is therefore not surprising that opposition historians made the issue of the absence of the spirit of citizenship a central problem in nineteenth century liberal Portugal already present among nineteenth century liberals and republicans (SERRÃO, 1973, p.112; 142) The opposite to what occurred in Francoist Spain.

On the other hand, the late 1930s saw a strong neo-realist counter-culture invading the plastic arts and literature. Furthermore, a critical thought that had inherited the republican and secular narrative of the national historical path was asserting itself in and beyond the university, in cultural associations such as the *Ateneu Comercial de Lisboa*, *A Voz do Operário* and in informal boat trips such as those to Vila-Franca de Xira along the Tagus river. The new generation that asserted itself during this period in the fields of history and essay - V. Magalhães Godinho, A. José Saraiva, Óscar Lopes, Joel Serrão, Fernando Piteira Santos, Barradas de Carvalho, Jorge Borges de Macedo, Armando Castro, to mention only a few historians - stimulated by the defeat of the right-wing totalitarian regimes, began to criticise the cultural environment of the time, including the historical commemorativism of the *Estado Novo* as an expression of sterile nationalism (GODINHO, 1947).

Concluding remarks

In both Iberian countries, the generation that emerged in the 1940s and 1950s experienced cultural and territorial exile - some of them were expatriated - and a counter-narrative was gradually constructed, one that clearly diverged from the traditionalist, ethnic and conservative historical narrative of the dictatorships.



Among the problems discussed in the Portuguese historiography of the 1960s, already very much marked by the *Annales* trend and Marxism (only later, in the 1970s, by structuralism), were the concept of revolution, the social nature of the liberal revolutions, the alleged failure of the industrial revolution and construction of a bourgeois society in 19th century Portugal, the limitations of the social and economic reforms undertaken by the elites, relations with colonial and post-colonial Brazil, dependence in relation to Great Britain and, of course, the problem of problems, economic backwardness - seen mainly in comparison with Britain, considered the benchmark (but also with France and Spain). It should be noted that the alleged failure of the industrial revolution and the persistence of the social and economic structures of the former regime were also highly popular theories in the Spanish historiography of the time (as in the case of Jose Maria Jover, Tuñón de Lara and Jordi Nadal, among others).

How did the Marxist historians deal with the concepts of *class and nation*? One might assume that in the name of communist internationalism they would reject a nationalist point of view. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, Marxist-inspired historiography has valued the national point of view. And it has not infrequently identified the enemies of the nation - for example, in 1383 and 1580 sections of the dominant social groups - with Spanish interests. Álvaro Cunhal, the communist leader of the Portuguese Communist Party (PCP), was one of the authors who disseminated the theory according to which the ruling classes always preferred foreign domination to the seizure of power by progressive and revolutionary forces. He considered that it was the "bourgeois revolution" of the late fourteenth century which led Portugal to accomplish "the eposée of the Discoveries" (CUNHAL, 1975, p. 66; 97) - an idea to some extent shared by António Borges Coelho.¹⁷ Victor de Sá also gave value to the economic protectionism defended by *Setembrismo* (radical liberalism) - in other words, economic nationalism, and associated this with a commitment to productive activities (industry, agriculture). This historiographical nationalism was also present in the Marxist orientation that can be found in the early 1960s in Brazil, in the *História Nova do Brasil* directed by Werneck Sodré, with the collaboration of young historians (CLEMENTE, 2013, p. 156-157).

Until the end of the twentieth century, the assertion of history as an autonomous discipline in relation to the established powers occurred in a movement of critical distancing from the intrusions of an exclusivist nationalism cultivated by the dictatorship and, on the other hand, from an undifferentiation of the present and past - Presentism -, the origin of anachronisms. This assertion also entailed an aspiration to impartiality and limited involvement in the public space. It is often said that the work of historical research is solitary. Hannah Arendt once recalled that the

¹⁷ The book has a Spanish edition: CUNHAL, 1977.

impartiality of the historian is, among other forms of existence, one of the different forms of being alone and of “telling the truth” (ARENDR, 1972, p. 331).

As already seen, the professional *ethos* of historians, which always involves the pursuit of critical distancing, and the need for political action, both in word and in practice, has not been easy, and these two dimensions of their lives have often expressed themselves in a tense relationship. In some cases, this tension may be encountered in the texts themselves while in others it may be more easily identifiable in the political field, in the ever-unpredictable action. Political action has, in its own way, widened the field of knowledge of human reality - although the logic of agitation and propaganda has often involved a reduction of the world to a Manichaean logic, especially in an age of extremes, as was the totalitarian era.

Indeed, partisanship can broaden the interest in certain political and social issues and problems and, in this sense, can be a challenge for historians. However, Hobsbawm also recognised that “much partisan scholarship is trivial, scholastic [...] and aimed at proving the predetermined truth” of orthodox doctrine (HOBSBAWM, 1998, p. 145). For well-known reasons, it is impossible to eliminate the subjective dimension in the writing of history. Partisanship and aspiration to a degree of objectivity may not be contradictory: as suggested by Jorn Rusen, the possible objectivity “would result from a specifically scientific rationalisation of partisanship” (RUSEN, 2010, p. 135).

Nonetheless, when the political field is transported to the historiographical field in a rather immediate and simplistic manner, history becomes mingled with political propaganda. In other cases, in Portugal during the dictatorship, this tension also involved excellent public debates - some without mentioning the addressees. But this is a topic for another study.

In conclusion, in Portugal it is possible to differentiate the ways by which historians were related to the political field, the different degrees of expression of tension between history and politics, corresponding to different types of relationships with the present, and especially with the recent past. Organic historians tried to mobilize their nationals for an apologetic and militant cause. These historians assumed their partisanship, one which was perfectly aligned with the regime’s unofficial ideology. Historical truth was that adopted by the regime and the institutions such as the historical academies and the university, all under the dictatorships’ doctrinal control.

Some of the Historians inspired by liberal, socialist or communist convictions, the Annales and Marxism, expressed a strong tension between the professional ethics that demanded impartiality and the challenges posed by their civic engagement intention. Nevertheless, the issue surrounding the autonomy of the historiographical operation (Michel de Certeau) and of the University was at the heart of the problems.



Historians inspired by communist ideas can equally be regarded as organic historians (such as Armando Castro and Victor de Sá). But it should be acknowledged that there was no consensual conception of history among the historians who supported the communist idea: for instance, there are profound differences between Armando de Castro and Borges Coelho in their relationship with the past. Where the former imposed an abstract model, directly marked by a range of concepts tied to historical materialism, while the latter was always attentive to a multiplicity of past voices and experiences and has maintained a critical attitude vis-à-vis the problem of conceptualisation.

Politically non-aligned positivist and methodical historians tended to erase themselves, practicing an apparently neutral history in its descriptive nature at the level of documentation, taking refuge in themes of medieval and modern history seemingly detached from the problems of the present, and refraining from taking a stand at the civic level - which tended to annul the tension between knowledge and politics. As if the historian who studies the past can sever ties with the present aseptically when he immerses himself in historical documentation.

Yet none of these tendencies corresponds linearly, necessarily, to a specific relationship with time. While it is true that an ancient historicity regime (HARTOG, 2003) tended to prevail among some traditionalist historians - as if the medieval past were a veritable Golden Age that could return as a regressive utopia -, examples can also be found in their works of an enhancement of the dictatorship as an ideal future time, a redeemer of decadence, within a concept of progress that is the exact opposite of that inherited from the Enlightenment. And while expectations may be glimpsed among the historians marked by the *Annales*, of a new time in the making, precautions against anachronism, against economic and social determinisms, and the promotion of an attitude of differentiation between past and present may also be observed, in an effort to be impartial. However, among the erudite, passive historians, who placed the "truth of the document" above any interpretation, the values of the past and its languages tended to override the values and conceptualisations of the present.

It can thus be concluded that the trend in which the present/past tension was most present, along with expectations for the future, was that of the historians whose critical approach was partly inspired by the historiography linked to the *Annales* and, sometimes, to a Marxist inspiration (but also in a critical tradition cultivated by former Portuguese historians and essayists: Herculano, Oliveira Martins, António Sérgio and Jaime Cortesão, among others). This is not surprising: their life experiences were marked by political action under difficult conditions imposed by dictatorial regimes, conditioning their work even in terms of a chronological agenda.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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