

Vitorino Magalhães Godinho (1918-2011)

The great Portuguese historian Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, Emeritus Professor at the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, formerly Director of the Biblioteca Nacional de Lisboa, passed away on 26 April 2011 at the age of 92. He was greatly influenced during his formative years by the Annales School, of which he was to become a leading spokesman, and for his ability to conceptualize and renew methodology he is universally considered to be the last major figure in Portugal's golden era of nineteenth century history and at the same time the first great historian of contemporary Portugal.

Pioneer of the rebirth of history and social science in Portugal, Vitorino Magalhães Godinho renewed the study of the epoch of Portuguese explorations in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, placing it in the wider context of global history and showing its relevance to the present, as is borne out by his two most important works which have been translated into many languages: *A Economia dos Descobrimentos Henriquinos* (1962) and *Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial* (2 vols, 1963 and 1970).

Vitorino Magalhães Godinho was born in Lisbon on 9 June 1918, the son of Vitorino Henriques Godinho, an army officer and an important political figure under the newly born Portuguese Republic. He completed his studies in Lisbon, where he graduated in Historical and Philosophical Science in 1944 with a dissertation on "Reason and History" and soon after the Liberation he moved to Paris where he was taken on as a researcher at the CNRS. It was then that he began his close collaboration with the great names of the *École Pratique des Hautes Études*, who came together to form the Annales School (including Fernand Braudel, Ernest Labrousse and Lucien Febvre), and he quickly gained great recognition among French scientific circles, as is shown by the flattering judgement expressed by Fernand Braudel on several occasions.

In 1954 Vitorino Magalhães Godinho moved to Brazil at the Universidade de São Paulo and in 1959 he discussed the *Thèse d'État* on *Os Descobrimentos e a Economia Mundial* at the Sorbonne. Returning to Portugal, he was appointed to the Chair of Economic

History at the Superior de Estudos Ultramarinos in Lisbon (1960-62) but he was quickly forced to give up teaching and to return once more to France due to his opposition to Antonio de Oliveira Salazar which was very evident in the publication of writings that were widely received, such as "O Socialismo e o Futuro da Península", published in 1970 (four decades later the writer still recalls with what passion Vitorino Magalhães Godinho retraced his opposition to the Salazar regime).

At the beginning of the 1970s, Vitorino Magalhães Godinho came into contact with the Istituto Internazionale di Storia Economica at Prato, with Federigo Melis and with Luigi De Rosa who co-opted him onto the Editorial Board of "The Journal of European Economic History".

He returned to Portugal after the Revolution of the Carnations on 25 April 1974 and was appointed Minister for Education and Culture in the Provisional Government. He subsequently took up his Chair again at the Faculdade de Ciências Sociais e Humanas della Universidade Nova de Lisboa where he remained until 1988. From 1984 to 1988 he was Director of Lisbon's National Library.

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