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The Oriental Studies in Portugal

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Ladies and Gentlemen

As a delegate of the Portuguese Government, which I have the honour to represent, I tender my greetings to the XVIIth. International Congress of Orientalists.

Portugal follows with the greatest interest all the manifestations of a scientific spirit, and oriental studies interest it very specially.

A country of notable oriental traditions, many of the most brilliant pages of its history are mingled with those of the history of the East.

In the XVth. and XVIth. centuries, the Golden Age of the Portuguese discoveries, our able and daring navigators not only discovered new seas new lands and new civilizations, but also according to Pedro Nunes, new skies and new constellations.

The East, that unknown and legendary region which showered upon the world new spiritual lights, and where the astral king daily rises amidst a wealth of colour and light, incited our predecessors to daring enterprises. Enlarging the known world, they wrote in the Golden Book of our history the most beautiful epic of modern times, that Camões

the greatest Portuguese poet, sang in the eternal pages of the «Lusiadas». Under such circumstances Portuguese literature dealing with the East cannot but be considered as remarkable.

HISTORY OF
THE EAST

As historians we have: João de Barros (1496-1570), the Portuguese Titus Livius, author of the *Decadas da Azia* (1552) and his brilliant follower Diogo do Couto (1542-1616); Damião de Gois (1501-1574) the chronicler of D. Manuel I and of Prince João and author of the Latin books *Embaixada do Prestes João*, and *Fé Religião e costumes dos Etiopes*; Fernão Lopes Castanhêda (-1550), the author of *Historia do descobrimento e conquista da Índia pelos Portuguezes* (1551-1552); Antonio Galvão (1446-1557) author of *Tratado dos diversos e desvairados caminhos por onde nos tempos passados a pimenta e especiaria veyo da Índia ás nossas partes, e assim de todos os descobrimentos antigos e modernos que são feitos em a era de 1550* (Lisbon 1563); Gaspar Correia (1495-1563?) author of the beautiful book *Lendas da Índia* (1858-1864); Antonio Tenreiro author of *Itenerario em que se contem como na Índia veio por terra... a Portugal* (1560); Fr. Pantaleão de Aveiro, the author of *Itenerario da Terra Santa* (1593); João de Lucena, the author of *Historia da Vida do Padre Francisco Xavier* (1600).

Oriental learning in its essence constituted a valuable chapter in the history of Portuguese literature. Thus the Arabic, Hebrew, Assirian, Ethiopic, Indian, Chinese, Japanese and Egyptian studies had notable specialists amongst us.

In a brief outline I will point out who they were.

ARABIC
STUDIES

The Arabic Studies were very much cultivated amongst us, and the names of the following specialists are worthy of special mention: Duarte Galvão, Fr. João de Souza (*Compendio de Grammatica arabiga*, Lisbon 1795, *Documentos arabicos para a historia portugueza*, Lisbon 1790, *Vestigios da lingua arabica em Portugal*, Lisbon 1830); Fr. José de Santo Antonio Moura (*Historia dos Soberanos Mahometanos por Abu Mohammed Assaleh* Lisbon 1828, *Viagens de Ben Batuta*, translated by Moura, vol. I Lisbon 1840, vol. II Lisbon 1855); João José Pereira (*Historia da Vida, Conquista e religião de Mafoma* Lisbon 1791); Marcelino José da Silva, who composed, in Arabic, verses in honour of king D. José I; Fr. Manoel Rebelo da Silva; Antonio Caetano Pereira (*Noticia Biografica de Fr. Manoel Rebelo da Silva, Breves advertencias sobre os tratamentos e titulos entre os Arabes*, and *Resumo historico sobre o estabelecimento da cadeira da lingua arabe em Portugal*, vol. I 1849 in *Actas da Academia Real de Sciencias*).

And in modern times J. Pereira Leite Neto Joseph Benoliel the wise and learned arabist and hebraist, and Dr. David Lopes the learned professor of Arabic at the Lisbon University and author of many and varied books on Arabic subjects.

With regard to hebrew culture in Portugal we will name among the most eminent hebraists of the XVth. centuries: Abraham and José Hayón, Abraham Sabah, the various members of the Yachia family, Isaac Abarbanel and his son Judah Abarbanel or Leão Hebreu; Moses ben Habib ben Schem Tob, Jacob ben Habib ben Schem Tob; Rozzeto, Pedro

HEBREW
STUDIES

Henriques and Gonçolo Alvares; Parvo, Canon of Evora and afterwards Bishop of Cabo Verde, a pupil of Clenardo; the bishop Jeronymo Osorio, the Jeronymian Fr. Heitor Pinto, the two regular canons of Santa Cruz of Coimbra, D. Pedro de Figueiró and D. Heliodoro Paiva, the three Dominicans Fr. Vicente da Fonseca and two oracles from the Concilium of Trento Fr. Jeronymo da Azambuja and Fr. Francisco Foreiro; the two Franciscans, Fr. Roque d'Almeida and Fr. Luiz de S. Francisco, the three jesuits D. Gonçalo da Silveira, Manuel de Sá and Estevam do Couto; Diogo de Paiva e Andrade, Francisco Cano, secretary to Queen Catherine and afterwards elected bishop of the Algarve, João da Costa, professor of Arts in the University of Coimbra, the great philosopher and doctor Antonio Luiz, the doctor Reynoso, and also two distinguished women, namely, Joanna Vaz of Coimbra teacher of Latin to the Infanta D. Maria, daughter of King Manuel, and Luiza Sigea, of Toledo, daughter of Diogo Sigeo, and Francisco de Tavora. In the XVIIIth. century we have: Fr. Francisco da Paz, D. João da Encarnação, Fr. Manuel José de Seixas. In the XIXth. century we have Joshua Levy, David Zagury, Joseph Benoliel and Dr. Mendes dos Remedios the learned professor of Hebrew in the University of Coimbra.

ASSIRIAN
STUDIES

To demonstrate how the Portuguese contributed towards these studies we have the unsuspected evidence of Sir. E. A. Wallis Budge (*The Rise and progress of Assiriology* p. 13) who quotes Antonio de Gouveia, an Augustinian friar and professor of Theology in the College of Goa, who arrived in the Persian Gulf in 1602. He noticed that the writing,

which he saw in many places, was unlike that of Persians, Arabs, Armenians and Jews. Worthy of mention is his book: *Relação em que se tractam as guerras e grandes victorias que alcançou o grande Rei da Persia Xá Abbas do Grão Turco Mahomet e seu filho Achmet, as quaes resultaram das embaixadas, que por mandado da Catholica e Real Magestade d'El-rei D. Filippe II de Portugal fizeram alguns religiosos da Ordem dos Eremitas de Sancto Agostinho à Persia, Lisbon 1611.*

ETHIOPIAN
STUDIES

Regarding Ethiopia we have remarkable works written by Portuguese and published in the collection *Rerum Aethiopicarum scriptores occidentales inedito a saec. XVI ad XX*, published by C. Beccari in Rome, since the year 1903. Notable in this collection are also the works in Portuguese written by Pedro Pais (1564-1622), the studies of Manuel Barradas (born 1572) and the *Historia da Ethiopia*, by the priest Manuel de Almeida, *A expedição da Ethiopia*, by the patriarch D. Affonso Mendes. Apart from this collection must be mentioned the following works: the book of Francisco Alvares called *Verdadeira informação das terras do Preste João*, (Lisbon 1540-1883); the *Historia das cousas que o muy esforço do capitão Don Christovão da Gama fez nos reynos do Prestes João* (Lisbon 1548, 1875, 1900); João Bermudez's work called *Esta he hua breve relacion de embaixada que o Patriarcha dom João Bermudez trouxe do Emperador da Ethiopia* (Lisbon 1555, 1875); the book of Baltazar Telles (1595-1675) *Historia Geral da Etiopia a alta ou do Preste João*, the *Relation Historique d'Abissinie*, of the priest Jeronimo Lobo (Paris 1728) and the interesting book of

Fr. João dos Santos *Ethiopia Oriental*, (Lisbon 1609 and 1891). In modern times Ethiopian studies have been brilliantly kept up by Francisco Esteves Pereira, author of numerous and most learned works.

INDIAN
STUDIES

On this topic I must mention the names of José Pereira Caldas, Joaquim Heliodoro da Cunha Rivara (1809-1879), José Joaquim da Costa Macedo, Guilherme Augusto de Vasconcellos de Abreu (1842-1906), learned professor of Sanskrit, and more recently Mons. Sebastião Rodolfo Dalgado, Dr. Panduranga Pissurlencar, Mario Saldanha and Dr. Santana Rodrigues.

STUDIES
ON CEYLON

The works dealing with the Portuguese influence in Ceylon had as their greatest chronicler João Ribeiro, author of *Historia do Ceylão*, written in 1685, and in modern times the authorised studies on the *History of Ceylon during the period of 1539-1552* by G. Schurhammer and E. A. Voretzsch, and the essay on the *Tombos do Ceylão*, by M. A. Hedwig Fitzler (Lisbon 1927).

CHINESE
STUDIES

On China there are also important works, such as the books of Manuel de Faria e Sousa *Imperio de la China*, Lisbon 1731, of Gabriel de Magalhães *Nouvelle Relation de la Chine*, Paris 1688, of Alvares Semedo *Histoire Universelle de la Chine*, Lyons 1667. On the Chinese language we have the remarkable studies of the XIXth. century of the priest Joaquim Afonso Goncalves entitled: *Gramatica latino-china* 1828, *Arte China* 1829, *Diccionario Portugues-China* 1833, the *Vocabulario latim-chinez*

1836; and I cannot omit mentioning the more recent books of José Ignacio de Andrade, *Cartas escritas da India e da China nos anos de 1815 a 1835* (Lisbon 1847) and of Joaquim Heliodoro Callado Crespo, *Cousas da China, costumes e creanças*, (Lisbon 1898).

JAPANESE
STUDIES

Among the Japanese studies it is our duty to mention in the first place Fernão Mendes Pinto (1514-1583) the author of the famous book *Peregrinaçoens, remarkable for its description of the muytas e muyto estranhas cousas que vio e ouvio no reyno da China, no da Tartaria, no de Sornau que vulgarmente se chama Sião, no de Calaminhan, no de Pegu, no de Martavão e em muytos reynos e senhorios das partes Orientais*. Regarding the history of the Portuguese in Japan (1549-1578), the book of the priest Luiz Frois recently published in German by Schurhammer and Voretzsch must be borne in mind. The Japanese language was cultivated and studied by many Portuguese, such as the priests João Rodrigues Girão, João Fernandes, Manoel Alvares, João Rodrigues Diogo Calado and others, who in the XVIth. and XVIIth. centuries wrote both grammars and dictionaries in Japanese. When speaking of Niponic studies it would be unfair not to make reference to the interesting works of Wenceslau de Moraes and to the book of Gastão Mesnier, *Japão (estudos e impressões de viagem)*.

EGYPTIAN
STUDIES

The studies on ancient Egypt were dealt with, amongst us, by João Verissimo Mendes Guerreiro in the memoir *Monumentos egypcios, noticia sobre a sua conservação* (2 vols. Lisbon 1909).

With such noble and brilliant traditions, and with such a remarkable group of cultivators of Oriental studies, very briefly and deficiently enumerated here, Portugal could not but associate itself with the work of the XVIIth. International Congress of Orientalists and express its earnest wish that the works of the Congress may flourish and prosper.