

**Góis, Damião de. *Livro de Linhagens de Portugal*
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Today one would hardly expect to come across a wealth of unpublished work by such a leading exponent of Portuguese culture as Damião de Góis. His *Livro de Linhagens de Portugal* is presented here to challenge that assumption. Until recently, this work was only available in the form of manuscripts scattered across various archives and libraries; and now, finally, it has been published in book form. An omission of this nature is startling but perhaps possible to explain.

First, the genealogical nature of this work must be taken into account. The personality of Damião de Góis has been constructed over the centuries to reflect the characteristics of a multifaceted Renaissance man: traveler, diplomat, royal servant, scholar, musician, and, above all, a humanist who rubbed shoulders with some of the most renowned authors and artists of his day. Taking into consideration Góis' role as a writer – not to mention his impressive output as a letter-writer – we should highlight the fact that his writings covered such subjects as historiography, geography and chorography, with some of his opinions being avowedly controversial. Yet such a biographical and literary portrait of Damião de Góis does not do justice to his portrayal as a courtly man. He was educated and raised to enjoy such a life, first as a page to King Manuel I, and then as a valet and chamberlain, ending up as a *moço fidalgo* (a middle-ranked member of the nobility) in the service of King João III. Later, on returning to Portugal after a prolonged stay abroad, the latter appointed him as chamberlain to Prince João (a position he never actually fulfilled) and as chief curator of the royal archives of the Torre do Tombo. His courtly demeanor justified his being chosen to write the chronicles of Manuel I and Prince João (who later became João III). The king did not, however, appoint him chief-chronicler of the kingdom. Damião de Góis' courtliness was, perhaps, clouded by his aura of cosmopolitan humanism, which led to his being persecuted by the Inquisition. This may at least partly explain why a

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work such as the *Livro de Linhagens*, so stylistically removed from its author's traditional profile, remained unpublished until this present edition.

Other reasons may, however, be identified for this omission, reasons pertaining to the nature of the work. Several signs point to a somewhat controversial reception of the manuscript by certain aristocratic houses that enjoyed political prominence at the time, just as had happened with the royal chronicles already mentioned, which Damião de Góis had had to revise and correct. Far from being considered innocuous in nature, genealogical studies were utilized for modeling the social hierarchy, since kinship and lineages were considered to be crucial elements dictating the possession and transmission of the material and symbolic heritage upon which the ranks of the nobility were founded. It is not, therefore, surprising that the manuscript of the *Livro de Linhagens*, whose publication was suppressed, even though the text remained carefully preserved at the Torre do Tombo, should suddenly vanish under mysterious circumstances after the death of the head curator Diogo de Castilho, in 1632 – nor should it seem remarkable that the searches carried out in 1633 and 1637 proved fruitless, as Pestana de Vasconcelos points out in his introduction. Fortunately, several copies had by then been produced, a dozen of which were recovered by this scholar, who proceeded to carefully establish the lineage of the manuscripts once they had been identified by bibliographers. About ten of those documents are still identifiable and are available for study. In keeping with the criteria of authenticity and reliability applied to the existing manuscripts, Pestana de Vasconcelos undertook a comparative reading of those that were most similar to the original work, thus resulting in a properly critical edition of the original text. Taken as a whole, all of these heuristic constraints would have made it unfeasible to arrive at any previously definitive printed version of the *Livro de Linhagens*.

Furthermore, as far as the genealogical genre is concerned, the literary output of this humanist took place at a time when there was an unusual hiatus in the publication of such works. In the Middle Ages, Portuguese authors in this field had been prolific, with the production of such works as the late thirteenth-century *Livro Velho de Linhagens*, or the *Livro de Linhagens do Deão*, in the second quarter of the following century, culminating in the *Livro de Linhagens do Conde Dom Pedro*, compiled shortly afterwards and undoubtedly the most comprehensive genealogical work of the Middle Ages, both in Portugal and the whole of the Iberian kingdoms, where it was profusely copied, augmented and annotated. In the fifteenth century, genealogical writing began to decline, only to return in the following century, albeit modestly and in the hands of only a very few proponents. Finally, from the

seventeenth century onwards, the genre gained fresh momentum. Genealogical works appeared by the dozen, until the late eighteenth century, when the genealogical genre became an important component of historical knowledge. The occurrence of a gap in the production of genealogical literature during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries had an obvious impact on the historiographical preferences of the twentieth century, which has continued until the present day.

In 1854, Alexandre Herculano drew attention to the historical value of genealogical sources. The author then looked at the publication of medieval peerage books, a subject that was discussed in the very first volume of *Scriptores from Portugaliae Monumenta Historica*, in an introductory study that emphasized the issue of source criticism, while also commenting on the interest of medieval genealogical texts for the acquisition of knowledge about political and social history. The path proposed by Herculano was followed by Anselmo Braamcamp Freire, his main heir in terms of genealogical studies, who, in the end, did not publish the peerage book he had so greatly wished to see in print. Throughout the twentieth century, various partial editions of medieval peerage books were published, culminating in the critical edition of the entire set by José Mattoso in 1980, as part of the new series of *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica*. Thus, Herculano's pioneering work was continued and concluded with a paramount study on the challenging issues raised by these various texts.

At the opposite chronological extreme of genealogical production, modern sources dating from the Ancien Régime were not published until relatively late on, when compared to those from the Middle Ages; no historian from the nineteenth century took any interest in them. On the other hand, the twentieth century witnessed the printing, and sometimes the reprinting, of some of the most important genealogical works from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, including those by Alão de Morais, Manso de Lima and Felgueiras Gaio, as well as two reprints of the monumental work by Dom António Caetano de Sousa.

Until now, the only exception to be found in the hiatus between the Middle Ages and the Ancien Régime was the peerage book published by António Machado de Faria: an anonymous manuscript from the sixteenth century, preserved in the archives of the Casa dos Marqueses de Fronteira. The almost exclusive focus on the publication of peerage books from the Middle Ages and the modern period (disregarding the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries) has had an inevitable impact on the extent of the interest shown by Portuguese historians in the genealogical genre, which tends to vary widely between these

three historical periods. Following in the footsteps of Alexandre Herculano and Braamcamp Freire, various historians have devoted their efforts to studying the philological and heuristic issues of the medieval peerage books: Costa Veiga, António Amora, Silva Tarouca, Lindley Cintra, Machado de Faria, Diego Catalán Menéndez Pidal, António José Saraiva, Juan Paredes, and various others. In the above-mentioned introductory studies on the peerage books published in *Portugaliae Monumenta Historica*, José Mattoso included a section on the state of the art of the genre; later, José Augusto de Sottomayor-Pizarro incorporated similar considerations into his own work.

In addition to the question of the links between these different works and their textual interpretation, these peerage books were studied as sources for social, cultural and political historiography. Thus, José Mattoso placed Portuguese works within the context of European genealogical production; on several occasions, the author provided interpretations of certain narratives from a political point of view, while also presenting an annotated anthology; Luís Krus approached peerage books from both cultural and geographical perspectives; Pedro Picoito mostly dealt with their political dimension as a tool for legitimizing nobility, a perspective applied more recently also by Stéphane Boisselier; José Augusto de Sottomayor-Pizarro compiled a work on the state of the art of the Portuguese genealogical production, thus also establishing a socio-cultural framework for looking at the narratives of peerage books, as a way of characterizing medieval lineages.

Skipping over the Renaissance period, we can see that current historiography – under which scholarship on the nobility has regained its legitimacy – has returned to the study of peerage books from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, the scope of self-representation for modern nobility has focused mostly on issues such as the production of treatises and visual culture (such as heraldry), whereas genealogical works have been valued for their practical relevance, helping us to understand family relationships and studying specific cases in order to support the conception of new narratives about lineages. The work by João de Figueirôa-Rêgo is an exception to this rule. Based on the literary production of Dom Flaminio de Sousa, it provided a comprehensive overview of the production and distribution circuits of peerage books, stressing the role played by genealogical knowledge and by its exponents in the depiction of modern nobility, considering them as important elements for the development of an identity and the legitimization of social hierarchies.

Contrasting with its predilection for the Middle Ages and the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Portuguese historiography appears to have neglected the output from

the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. During the second half of the latter century, in the context of the Habsburg period, Guillén Berrendero conducted research into the production of treatises and the legitimizing mechanisms of the noble class, based on established categories and practices. His favored sources were, nevertheless, treatises, to the detriment of a thorough investigation of Portuguese peerage books, with the exception of the afore-mentioned anonymous work by Machado de Faria, which until that time was the only peerage book source to have been published.

This cursory historiographical review of Portuguese genealogical literature thus highlights the timely nature of this publication of the *Livro de Linhagens* by Damião de Góis. The relevance of this work emanates not only from the reputation its author enjoys in Portuguese culture, but also from the fact that this book fills a gap, serving as the missing link between the medieval and the modern peerage books published previously. This edition allows for the establishment of relevant connections between peerage books from both periods, highlighting the ways in which such texts were transmitted, propagated and integrated (or rewritten). An entire philological universe is thus unveiled with the publication of Góis' genealogical work.

But the pertinence of the *Livro de Linhagens* is not limited solely to philology or genealogy. It is important to understand that the genealogical oeuvre of Damião de Góis does not merely purport to continue and update the medieval peerage books. The author strove to establish genealogy as a field of history in the way that it was regarded and practiced at the time. This approach resulted in significant outcomes as far as procedure is concerned. In his work, Góis presents a fresh concern with examining and crosschecking sources. This new approach is quite evident in the research he undertook in order to determine the ancestry of Conde Dom Henrique.

Yet, the *Livro de Linhagens* is important for historians of the 16th century, particularly because it reflects a new standard for noble courtiers. In fact, a new model of nobility had emerged since the 15th century, which not only served, but was also centered on the king in a progressively more complex structure, the court. The increasingly pivotal role of the court developed alongside the institution of its own hierarchy, within which noble families established intricate structuring mechanisms. These hierarchies were manifested in the categories determined by the Crown (the so-called *moradias*, wages paid from the royal treasury) and materialized in dispositions of a normative nature, but they also functioned as instruments of a visual culture, most noticeably the appropriation and manipulation of heraldry by the royal authority. Hence, Góis' sixteenth-century

genealogical work differs substantially, in both purpose and criteria, from those of his medieval counterparts. Although it was similarly centered on the question of lineages, Góis' peerage book hints, particularly in its structure, at new standards related to the pivotal influence of the royal dynasty and to the hierarchy at court.

Therefore, the *Livro de Linhagens* by Damião de Góis mirrors the courtly society on which it was based. Its internal structure reflects a certain hierarchical order, while all the time contributing to its establishment, as a strategy for promoting lineages within the hierarchy of the court. Accordingly, as previously stated by Sottomayor-Pizarro, Góis' peerage book is closely related to the imposing Portuguese royal armorials from the first half of the sixteenth century, and even to the heraldry-laden great hall (the *Sala dos Brasões*) at Sintra royal palace. In fact, all these enterprises can be understood as ways of establishing and perpetuating a certain social order, under the tutelage of the Portuguese Crown. It is also important to stress the influential role played not only by the figure of the king, but also by his closest kin, who embodied the significant concept of being part of the royal dynasty and who were placed in an intermediate tier between the sovereign and the court nobility. Manuel I's younger children were recognized as important patrons in this field. Among the works they supported, the following are worthy of mention: the illuminated genealogy of the Infante Dom Fernando; the Infante Dom Duarte's armorial (unfortunately yet to be published); and the *Livro de Linhagens* by Góis, since this is supposed to have resulted from a commission placed with him by the Infante Dom Luís.

In this way, the king, his closest family and the remaining nobles at court all gave their support to different tools in the establishment of the court hierarchy, with its respective ideals, interests and codes. Note that Damião de Góis is also identified as the author of a book called *Avizos que deve guardar hum Cortezão*, another work which contributed to the formation of this humanist's underestimated viewpoint as a court nobleman. This is why the publication of the *Livro de Linhagens* is indispensable, not only for a more complete understanding of Damião de Góis' writings, but also for providing a portrait of sixteenth-century Portuguese culture, particularly regarding the role that genealogy played in this. This critical edition by Pestana de Vasconcelos paves the way for an investigation of fields that still remain as yet unexplored.