

Cultural Diplomacy in Southern Europe

Spain, Portugal and Greece in the Twentieth Century

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5 Science diplomacy in a climate of nationalism

Archaeology in Portugal between the world wars

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and Elisabete Pereira*

Introduction

The National Education Board (*Junta de Educação Nacional*, JEN), established in 1929, enabled Portugal to play a role in the European and American drive to create scientific planning and funding institutions after the First World War, enhancing the importance of the Portuguese scientific community as an agent of science diplomacy and soft power. This chapter shows that JEN funding facilitated the participation of Portuguese scientists, researchers and professors in both formal and informal international science networks and enabled them to establish relationships with peers and persons in positions of power, thereby enhancing the role of science in diplomacy and international relations during the postwar period.¹

This finding contrasts with the dominant historiographical view that the Portuguese academic community played no role in international networks between the world wars and lacked state support. Though established during the military dictatorship (1926–1933), the JEN traces its origins to the positivist, scientific ideas of the Portuguese republican movement. Republican ideologues aimed to promote science by fostering scientific research and the internationalisation of science. They envisioned researchers as agents of political and social change and drivers of scientific and intellectual modernisation. Thus, they also sought to enhance Portugal's standing among the scientific nations.²

The JEN was markedly influenced by the operational model adopted by two similar institutions abroad, namely, Spain's *Junta para Ampliación de Estudios e Investigaciones Científicas* (JAE), whose main objective was the Europeanisation of science and education in that country, and Belgium's *Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique* (FNRS), established in 1928, which played a vital role in the development and internationalisation of science in the interwar period.³

The *modus operandi* of these two institutions was well known to prominent JEN figures, including Augusto Pires Celestino da Costa (1884–1956), vice president and president from 1934, and Luís Robertes Simões Raposo (1898–1934), who served as the JEN's first secretary, preceding Francisco de Paula Leite Pinto (1902–2000), who, in 1935, while general secretary of the JEN, visited the JAE and the FNRS. The