



Title: Portuguese India in a reassessment of the conception of Empire: Luís Mendes de Vasconcelos, 1608

Abstract

Luís Mendes de Vasconcelos publishes in 1608 *Do Sítio de Lisboa. Diálogos* [About Lisbon. Dialogues]. He hoped that King Philip III of Spain, and II of Portugal, would turn Lisbon into the head of the Hispanic Empire. It situates the Dialogue between an advisor to the king, a captain, and a philosopher in the reign of D. João III, drawing inspiration, as we affirm, from historical figures of that time.

Was Luís Mendes de Vasconcelos an arbitrator (arbitrista)?

His ideas extended to the Portuguese East. He developed a reform project that could make Goa the seat of the State of India (Estado da Índia), a major power if it attracted more Portuguese settlers through trade. At the same time, it would relieve the metropolis of continuous expenses. The author also developed strategies to solve the failure of the Crown as a commercial agent.

Although with some political considerations on monarchy (against tyranny), his discourse has the main objective of valuing a less Castilian concept of Empire. Instead of an Empire of conquests, by valuing Lisbon and thinking about reforms in the Empire of the East, he is thinking about a great maritime and commercial Empire.

Keywords: Spanish Empire, Portuguese Orient, arbitrator, reform project, Luís Mendes de Vasconcelos