

ARMANDO MARQUES GUEDES
PROFESSOR HONORIS CAUSA

Laudatio Domini

Armando Marques Guedes

Dear Mr. Dean,

Dear colleagues and guests,

There is a deeper level of inquiry into the nature of things which seems to lie beyond the multitude of goals and perspectives taken by any particular science; a realm transcending specific methods and research aims, of which occasional glimpses are only offered through a peculiar blend of intellectual breadth and theoretical ecumenicism. It takes a special mobility of thinking, a mind courageous and restive, and also a tragic consciousness of sorts – both of one's own limitations and of the uncontrollable polymorphism of what is inquired into. And this is all the more so about the nature of man and society, that is, for all things intentional, the behavior of which nothing can be said about without influencing that very behavior. It is therefore a fair description of the humanities' endeavors, that they are journeys of which the travel is just as important as the destination.

Is it the exemplary value of a distinguished academic career to highlight the formative sense of such a cultural and intellectual odyssey – one that started early on, has gone through wondrous

seas, and is still looking for its Ithaca, I would venture to say, in what he surely envisages as a never ending search. Professor Armando Marques Guedes of Lisbon's *Universidade Nova* is second to none in incorporating the wisdom and contemplation that have crystallized after decades of diligent, painstaking though dearly enjoyed, applied research in various humanities and social sciences. Allow me to jump ahead and point out that Armando carried out intensive, participant-observation, field-research in the Philippines, in Cabo Verde, in São Tomé e Príncipe, in Angola, and in East-Timor.

I want to make this trajectory more intelligible by framing it in some detail. With hindsight, it looks as if, somehow, the academic destiny of Armando Marques Guedes was predetermined. He stems from an illustrious family of Portuguese grand intellectuals, who, generation after generation, offered their country an unfathomable number of university professors, mostly of law and medicine, as well as politicians and *hauts fonctionnaires*. The paternal grandfather, also named Armando Marques Guedes, was a Professor of Financial Law and Economic International Law, and the last Minister of Finance of the Portuguese 1st Republic, in 1926. His brother, Virgílio, was a Professor of Medicine; his wife, Leonor (Armando's paternal grandmother) was a painter and the daughter of an art professor. His son (Armando's father's first cousin) is a Professor of Medicine, and his granddaughter, Ana Isabel Marques Guedes (Armando's cousin twice-removed), is a Professor of Late Medieval and Early Renaissance History. Armando's father was one of Portugal's most celebrated Professors of Constitutional Law, who was also a diplomat and, in 1982 became for six years the

first president of the Portuguese Constitutional Tribunal, in the 3rd Portuguese Republic.

On the maternal line, matters are remarkably similar: the maternal grandfather was a life-long Director General at the Ministry of Justice, under Salazar and then Marcello Caetano. All his cousins and uncles were Professors, most quite famous and influent in 19th and 20th century Portugal. One example will suffice: his maternal grandmother's first cousin, a famous Law Professor at the University of Coimbra, became a long-term Minister of Justice during the Salazar dictatorship, and did so as he had written the Portuguese Civil Code in the 1930s, and had a son who became a Medicine Professor, just as his own son, in turn, later on, did too. Of Armando's maternal cousins, two more are Professors of Law and two more of Medicine. It has been so from the mid-19th century onwards on both sides. Armando's cousins on this side of the family are also, as could perhaps be expected, following on their elders footsteps.

Armando is the eldest of five brethren; his brother Luís, one of the leaders of the Portuguese Social-Democratic Party, is currently serving as the Secretary of State to the Portuguese President of the Council of Ministers. Their sister, Ana, the one born after Armando, is a Professor of History, with a doctorate in Burmese 16th century history. Maria and Pedro, the youngest two, are respectively in politics and business.

It would indeed have been difficult against such an intellectual lineage to escape the academic contagion. And he did not, though he first chose to take new paths. He started primary studies in an English school, then a Portuguese one, and finally was

sent by his parents to France to finish it off. During high-school, back in Portugal, Armando was a mathematical prodigy: he was selected in a 20-student national team to receive intensive training in what was then called “new mathematics”. He was subsequently accepted at Louvain, in Belgium, to study astrophysics, a lifelong passion. He gave it up after one year’s thought, however, mostly because he felt it was too early still to be again away from Estoril, his family home, near Lisbon. As the system then required, he had to redo his final two high-school years, for he had prepared to study Law. Nonetheless, he chose instead Political Administration, in which he took his first degree; he was doing extremely well in that course of study when, at the age of 20, already an avid reader, under the spell of Claude Lévi-Strauss’s structuralism and the trail-blazing of other similar intellectual figures, he decided to opt for Social Anthropology – perhaps because with its aura as mother of all human sciences and the exotic attraction of fieldwork in far-away places. Be it as it may, the romantic prospect of such an endeavor could hardly contrast more with the politically stifling and culturally provincial Portugal of Salazar’s dictatorship, in the early ‘70s.

A four-year long scholarship awarded by the Gulbenkian Foundation sent the 20 year-old Marques Guedes to the London School of Economics and Political Science, where he studied with James Woodburn, Julian Pitt-Rivers, and Maurice Bloch; he did his second degree there, with Honors. As a result, upon graduation, he was offered a place in LSE’s PhD program (only two more of his colleagues did too), yet he preferred to go to Paris, to the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* (EHESS). With a one-

year extension of the Gulbenkian scholarship, he studied in Paris for two years, with Georges Condominas and Maurice Godelier as *Directeurs d’Études*. Always keen on widening his scope, Armando did more. While in Paris, he went on a regular basis to the lectures of Claude Lévi-Strauss, Michel Foucault, and Roland Barthes at the Collège de France, but also to seminars on Extra-Galactic Astronomy. The dissertation led by Condominas was on Vietnamese, Thai, Laotian and Cambodian hunter-gatherers in what he called “*la ceinture indochinoise*”. Ferdinand Braudel awarded the young Armando Marques Guedes a “best thesis” prize. The money associated to the prize, destined to support his return to the LSE, was handed to Armando in London by Eric Hobsbawm. In his spare time, he read books and travelled a lot.

In 1979, with British grants from the likes of the British Museum and brand new Fellowships from the Cambridge and Edinburgh Universities, he left for almost three long years to the primary tropical rain forests of Northern Luzon, in the Philippines. There he settled down in the furthest and least advised place (due to the ongoing conflict between Filipino governmental troops and the Maoist insurgency of the so-called New People’s Army). From thickly urban London and Paris, Armando moved to the depths of primary tropical rain-forests. There, he found hunter-gatherer pygmy bands of South-East Asian groups known in the literature as Negritos, the “original” inhabitants of that huge enclave stuck between India and China. They call themselves *Atta*. Although a few notes had been written about them in the early 20s, they had never been studied or even visited. Armando did that as he set out to study the interaction between politics and religion in their

profoundly egalitarian social life. He spent 36 months observing the Atta. He got malaria and dengue fever and many other tropical ailments. Of course, he came out of it, alive and happy, and certainly more accomplished. He sometimes refers to this as the best time of his life. Armando was well on his way to become a world-class Southeast Asianist, yet life did not progress linearly.

Back to London, as he was writing up his doctoral dissertation, a family tragedy struck him very hard: the loss of a younger brother, in a car crash. The restlessness that followed, with incessant trips back and forth between London and Lisbon, turned Armando away from his PhD thesis for half a dozen years. He moved out, as it were, or he changed gears. He took the invitation from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to be Portugal's first "Cultural Counselor" to Angola. He moved to Luanda as a diplomat in early 1985 and stayed there until December 1989. Back then, Angola was the scene of a horrid proxy conflict of the Cold War, with 50 thousand Cuban "internationalist" troops and five thousand Soviet "military counselors." For five years, he was to experience life in a war-thorn, curfew-ridden "siege", but ironically Armando loved that too: in those final years of the Cold War Angola was a world's center of political action, a fulcrum of events, much more so than Lisbon itself. He was once again pushed into another role, that of an "Africanist hand."

In early 1990, Marques Guedes was back in Portugal, and back into academia. He was invited to *Universidade Nova*. There, he jump-started an academic career in Anthropology, then flew into History and Theory of Ideas, but he probably felt too restless and in 1995 he co-founded the Department of Political Science

and International Relations at the Faculty of Human and Social Sciences. Also, he became the president of the Oriental Institute of *Universidade Nova*. Was he back home? Most certainly, his hands were once again untied, and in 1996 he defended his PhD dissertation and got a unanimous *summa cum laude*. All the while he remained at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as a cultural counselor on Africa. It seemed as if his path was set, but that was not to be.

In 1999, Nova's Faculty of Law was created and Armando was invited to teach Legal Anthropology. Expectedly, he also brought up some of his other academic valences. In 2001, he was asked to take on International Relations and African Legal Systems; then, one year later, Political Science was added to the mix. In 2005 he did his *Agregação (Habilitation)* in Law. In Portugal, as elsewhere, this is a demanding task. The outcome was a 400-page tractatus of Legal Anthropology – *Entre Factos e Razões (Between Facts and Reasons)* – a theoretical effort referred to as a fundamental work of the domain – and yet another book based on his "inaugural lecture", on the applicability of the concept of "civil society" to the case of Angola (*Sociedade Civil e Estado em Angola*), a political and legal theory in-depth case study. Quite like his Legal Anthropology work, this was a first in Portugal.

On a par with his academic career, his professional one continued to loom. While head was firmly in the academia, his hands were elsewhere. By 1999 he had built a long-lasting connection to the Portuguese military and began teaching and publishing at the Portuguese Ministry of Defense. Always groping. His family complained, but he went on: he could not stand still by the book stack, he had to move on, and he did. In 2005, the Minister of

Foreign Affairs invited him to become president of the Diplomatic Institute and asked to create and chair a think-tank for Policy Planning within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Portugal was about to move into its 3rd presidency of the European Union; Romania and Bulgaria were about to enter it. One year later, Armando visited Romania and remained ever since a close and precious friend. His trips here became regular as clockwork.

In late 2008, Armando left the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and returned to academia. There he rooted himself, but nevertheless kept up his disciplinary and geographical mobility. Professor Marques Guedes holds numerous academic positions of prestige. Among them, President of the General Assembly, Portuguese Society of International Law (SPDI) – a branch of the International Law Association (ILA); Vice-President of the Board of the *Movimento Europeu*; Vice-President of the Consultative Counsel of the Portuguese Observatory on Security, Organized Crime, and Terrorism (OSCOT); Vice-President of the International Relations Commission, Lisbon's Geographical Society, and quite a few other positions of note, some of them here, in Bucharest, many in the Balkans, the Central and Eastern Europe of old that he regularly comes back to easily half a dozen times every year.

Every year since some ten years ago, he also goes to talk, teach, write and publish in North Africa, in sub-Saharan Africa, in North and South America, in Russia, in China, in East-Timor. There is no stopping him. He is the author of almost 100 scientific articles and studies, and of 16 books on International Relations, Political Science, Security Studies, Diplomacy, African Legal Systems, and Legal Anthropology. He has published in 13 countries, from

Canada to Australia, from the UK to Angola, from Montevideo and Bahia to Moscow, Vienna, and Macao, or Maputo, Vilnius, and Belgrade. His work is translated into ten languages – one of them Romanian; another Bulgarian. Chinese and Russian too, as well as French, Spanish, and Italian. In all of his work, he is incessantly attempting to open up new grounds, widening scopes, blending perspectives and generating novel ways of understanding things. Also, he is member of some twenty national and international scientific associations and societies. He gave papers in about 450 conferences in Portugal and abroad; he attended many more, and a number of domains. He presides over three book collections on Foreign Policy and Diplomacy, and is an Editorial Board member of nine scientific journals on politics, law, security and culture. He is supervising fourteen doctoral dissertations in five Portuguese public universities (FDUNL, FCSH-UNL, ISCSP, ISCTE-Military Academy, the Lisbon Catholic University) and four in three foreign ones (Bergen, Leiden, and Oxford). He has Dutch, Angolan, Lithuanian, Norwegian, and Romanian post-doctoral researchers some of whose endeavors, he likes to say, he tries to “help orchestrate”. Armando is also in charge of Geopolitics in the Military Higher Staff and Command College in Lisbon, as well as the representative in Portugal of a Centre for Political and Strategic Studies housed in Brazil's Ministry of Defense; he was also invited to be part of the Board of Trustees of the Yitzhak Rabin Academy in Tel-Aviv, Israel. Recently returned from East-Timor, from a bout of field-research in that war-torn Australasian island-state, he is intent on soon going back to Angola and Brazil, as he is now working on a book on the progressive and potentially very rapid degradation

of South Atlantic stability, given the lack of a sufficiently robust security architecture there.

Indeed, Armando roams quite a bit: he has given talks in over 40 countries, on a variety of subjects. All the while, he nurtures a cottage of young students, guiding them through their doctoral research projects in areas as diverse as African politics and constitutionalism, Southeast Asian nation-building, civil society awakenings, cyber-warfare, the minutiae of the topology terrorist cell and networks, the dynamic energy battlegrounds lighting up in Europe and Central Asia, and the specificities of the fast-changing politico-administrative structures of small South Atlantic archipelagos. He wrote a monograph on the genealogy of diplomatic training which was published in 2008 by Vienna's prestigious *Diplomatische Akademie*; a trail-blazer of the field, that work was launched at the *Collège d'Europe*, in Bruges. In 2010 he wrote a book, published by the Portuguese Ministry of Defense, about the August 2008 Russian invasion and partition of Georgia. In 2011 he edited and extensively annotated the weekly letters sent home by the field commander of the Portuguese Special Forces operating in Afghanistan – adding to it a 30-page long *post-facium* dwelling on the emergent *jus post bellum* growing, but as yet mostly unseen, in battle fronts as brutal as those in the outskirts of Kandahar.

He works as if talking to one another: as I began by stating, Armando brings to his academic efforts a peculiar blend of intellectual breadth and theoretical ecumenicism, indeed. He tries to live in and map, I think, some snippets of the rarified transdisciplinary realm I alluded to. A rare *mélange* of erudition, creativity, charisma and good humor, Armando Marques Guedes

is a moral and intellectual model: he is cosmopolitan (his wife and three children – Constanza, Leonor, and Francisco – are Norwegian nationals, his wife Christina being a designer trained in Italy, born in Horten, south of Oslo, to a Spanish Professor and a Norwegian painter with an American twin sister) and meanwhile a subtle knower of cultural differences (he has lived a bit everywhere and speaks 11 languages); he is liberally tolerant, but nevertheless holds firm principles and convictions; intransigent and impatient about shallow or ideological discourse, Armando is careful to always take stands based on facts and solid arguments. Some of his closer friends sometimes say he often behaves like a *yeshiva* scholar, and he is understandably proud of that. A polymath, a man of culture, a fervent lover of music and literature, a keen consumer and student of technology and an avid user of social networks, a theoretical thinker and an experienced knower of (any) theory's limits, he is a prolific writer and a minutely methodical scientist. This bundle of precious qualities make today's ceremony an honor to the Faculty of History, just as much as an honor to the recipient himself.

Armando, certainly, still has a long way to go. Part of the journey still ahead of him lies here, with us. In a way, we brought him home.

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