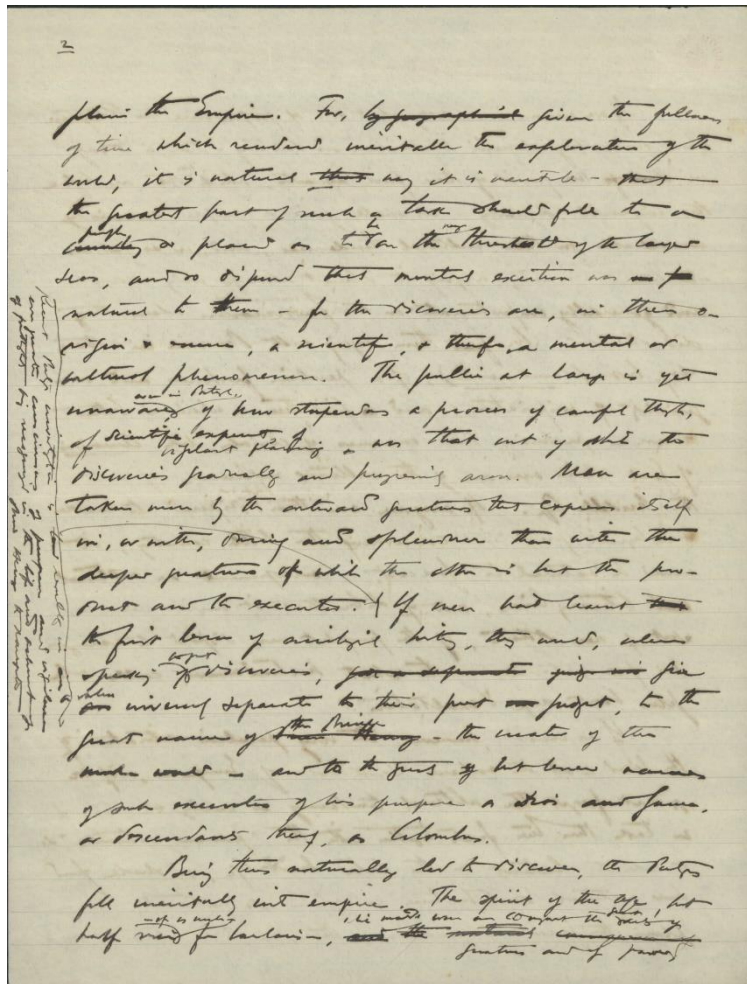


If we examine carefully what sort of people are the Portuguese when first they defined themselves in history - that is to say, in ~~their~~ the period of their first dynasty, which was the one before the imperial dynasty - we shall find a people curiously remarkable for their cultural tendencies, and, is so far as war was concerned, waging it almost always only defensively, and generally unfortunate on the few uncharacteristic occasions when they did otherwise. We find them urging with Provence in their Song-books (*Cancioneiros*), of a peculiar freshness and originality of inspiration; and we find them - which is better known - producing those romances of chivalry, like *Amadis of Gaul* which were one of the cultural influences of and in the Middle Age. If anyone were then fit or disposed to make sociological predictions concerning this little country, it would be natural to forecast a development on cultural and literary lines, and of Lisbon that it might come some sort of new Athens, if the prophet were disposed to carry his pre vaticination to what Nostradamus calls "le plus haut auge d'exaltation."

If we consider, however, the very peculiar situation of the Land - at the extreme Southwest of Europe -, if we do not forget the cultural tendency so early shown, if we take these two facts together with the "pressure outwards" so to call it, latent in the latter Middle Age, we shall find how natural and historic conditions so naturally explain the great Discoveries; then, in their turn ex-



plain the Empire. For, ~~by geographical~~ given the fullness of time which rendered inevitable the exploration of the world, it is natural ~~that~~ way it is mental - that the greatest part of such a task should fall to a ~~country~~ people so placed as to be on the way threshold of the larger Seas, and so disposed that mental exertion was ~~natural~~ natural to them - for the discoveries are, in their origin and essence, a scientific, and therefore a mental or cultural phenomenon. The public at large is yet unaware even in Portugal of how stupendous a process of careful thought, of scientific expect of vigilant planning {...} was that not of what the discoveries gradually and progressively arose. Men are taken more by the outward greatness that expresses itself in, or with, daring and splendour than with the deeper greatness of which the other is but the product and the executor. Recent Portuguese investigation is ~~tend~~ essentially in one even greater consciousness of purpose and vigilance of Portugal being recognized in the life and achievement of Prince Henry the navigator. If men had learnt ~~that~~ the first lesson of sociological history, they would, when speaking of the great discoveries, ~~give a separate judge in~~ give an value inversely separate to their first ~~own~~ judgment, to the great name of ~~Prince Henry~~ the Prince - the creator of the modern world - and to the great ~~of~~ but lesser name of such executors of his purpose as Dias and Gama, or descendants thereof, as Columbus.

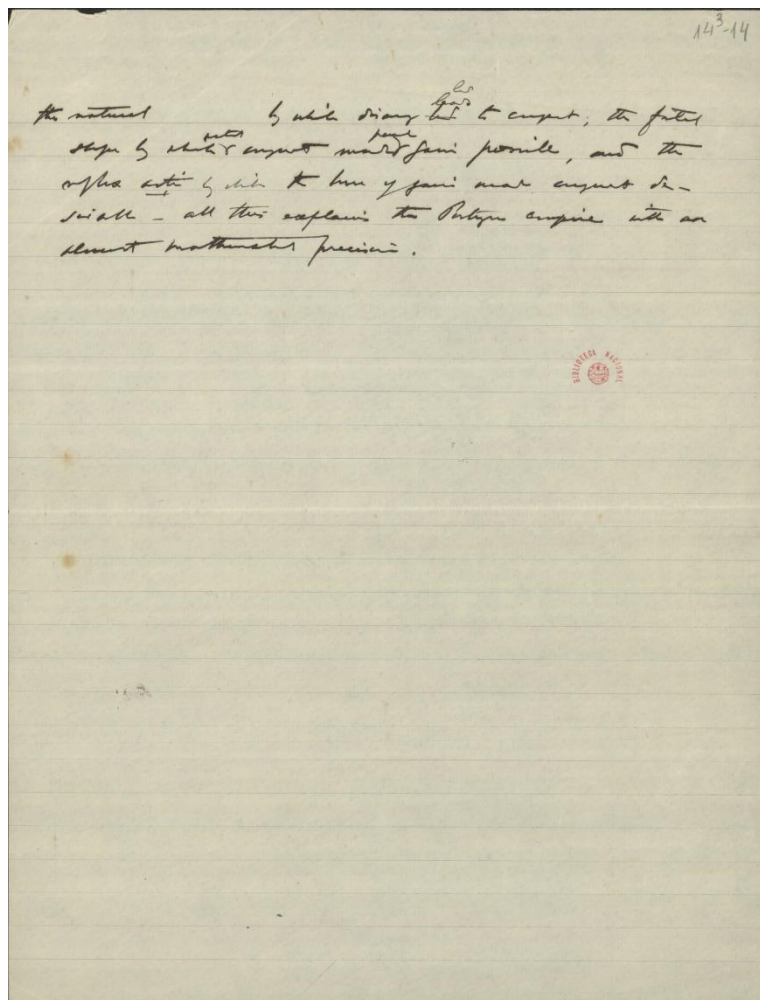
Being thus naturally led to discoveries, the Portuguese fell inevitably into empire. The spirit of the Age, but half science - if as much - for barbarism, ~~and the natural~~ ~~consequence~~ of which made use and conquest the great acts of greatness and of proves,

MODERNISMO

Arquivo Virtual da Geração de Orpheu

BNP/E3, 14³ - 14⁴

Transcrição



the natural {...} by which discovery ~~led~~ leads /led\ to conquest;
the fatal shape by which natural conquest made personal gain
possible, and the reflex |notion| by which the love of gain made
conquest desirable - all this explains the Portuguese empire
with an almost mathematical precision.

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