
Evolutionary theories in Portugal during the dictatorial regime (1933-1974) I – Portuguese botanists’ differentiated stances towards evolution

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Abstract

Session: "A comparative history of evolutionary theories in the mid 20th century (Pedro Ricardo Fonseca, Ana Leonor Pereira, João Rui Pita)". The presentation aims at providing a comprehensive view of the most popular evolutionary theories in Portugal during the conservative dictatorial regime known as the *Estado Novo* (1933-1974), namely Neo-Darwinism, Neo-Lamarckism and Theistic Evolution. Due to the extension of the presentation, we will limit our scope to the analysis of the scientific production of some of the country’s most influential botanists, either conducting and supervising research at Portuguese universities, such as Abílio Fernandes (1906-1994) (University of Coimbra), Américo Pires de Lima (1886-1966) (University of Oporto) and Rui Teles Palhinha (1871-1957) (University of Lisbon), or at other relevant scientific institutions, such as António Câmara (1901-1971) (Estação Agronómica Nacional). After presenting a brief historical survey of evolutionary theories in Portugal before 1933, we will be addressing in greater detail the following three topics: (1) the stances of the cited Portuguese botanists towards different evolutionary theories, especially in their dissertation thesis and popular science works; (2) the influence of different evolutionary theories on their scientific research (and the scientific research of their disciples); (3) the differentiated treatment of different evolutionary theories in secondary and high school textbooks of their authorship and co-authorship. In another presentation, within the same session, we will also be analysing the scientific production of some of the country’s most influential zoologists during the same period.

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