

“PORTUGALIAE PHYSICA”, The Scientific Journal of the Portuguese Physical Society

In 1943, when the World War in Europe was coming to its end, a new scientific journal appeared in Portugal as a result of the effort of a small group of physicists who were trying to support Physics in a climate of adversity (Salazar, who was ruling at that time was not a particular supporter of science). Their idea was to disseminate, at an international level, original works in all areas of Physics of theoretical, experimental and applied character. The journal “*Nature*”, dated 15 July 1944, welcomed the new journal: “*At a time when the study of pure science has been necessarily replaced for so many by sterner pursuits, it is pleasant to realize that there are still countries where it is growing and needs new mediums for publication*”.

The title—“*Portugaliae Physica*”—was taken from the Latin and most certainly inspired by the journal, which has been founded some years before, in 1937, by Portuguese mathematicians—“*Portugaliae Mathematica*”—and which still exists today. The founders were Manuel Valadares (1904–1992), Aurélio Marques da Silva (1905–1965), two nuclear physicists, who were doctoral students of Madame Curie, together with Cyrillo Soares (1883–1950) and Manuel Telles Antunes (1905–1965), all of them located at the Physics Laboratory of the Faculty of Sciences at the University of Lisbon (the journal was associated, in those early days, with that Faculty). Portuguese science is indebted to those men who tried hard to implement a discipline, which was in decay after the golden period of the Marquis of Pombal, who, in 1772, made a Reform of the University of Coimbra, calling science teachers from abroad, buying new equipment (the Coimbra Physics Cabinet is world famous) and constructing new premises. However, in 1947, the Salazar regime dismissed Valadares, Marques da Silva and many other scientists from public office. The former had to go to Paris, where he worked with the daughter of his former mentor, Irène Joliot-Curie.

During the war some physicists sought refuge in Portugal, namely the Austrian Guido Beck, well trained in relativity and quantum mechanics, and the Romanian-French Alexandru Proca, the author of a relativistic equation for spin 1 particles. However, they had to abandon the country, Beck to Argentina and Proca to England, without leaving much scientific heritage. Both were contributors to the first volume of “*Portugaliae Physica*”.

The journal, which never published any papers in Portuguese, since French, at the beginning and English later on, were the only accepted languages with the goal of being internationally accepted. A total of 21 volumes were published with around 5000 pages on a more or less regular bases (in the second half of the fifties and first part of the sixties there was an interruption). World famous physicists, like the French Nobel prize winners Louis de Broglie and Pierre de Gennes, published there. In the beginning, the contents was more focused in nuclear physics and macrophysics but the journal hosted all Physics subjects and open small sections within each volume devoted to different subjects, with a clear interest in condensed matter physics. Many Portuguese physicists published there trying to give cohesion to a small, but progressively larger, community, which nowadays is working at a full international level, as the founders of “*Portugaliae Physica*” wished.

The Portuguese Physical Society was created in 1974, the same year of the April Revolution, as a natural splitting of the Portuguese Society for Chemistry and Physics, which existed since 1911 (Chemistry only) and was refounded (including Physics) in 1926. The new society took over the journal in 1979 and this, now based at the University of Oporto, under the lead of José Moreira de

The European Physical Journal

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B: Condensed Matter and Complex Systems
C: Particles and Fields
D: Atomic, Molecular, Optical
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E: Soft Matter and Biological Physics
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Araújo, came out with a volume per year. The title, which ceased publication in 1992, joined in 1999 the consortium formed by several European Physics journals to establish “*The European Physical Journal*” (in 1987 the Portuguese Society had already joined other European societies establishing the “*Europhysics Letters*”). The Portuguese Physical Society goes on publishing its information bulletin, “*Gazeta de Física*”, which started in 1946.

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