

Antonio Ribeiro Sanches A Portuguese doctor in 18th century Europe

José Luis Doria

Summary

Antonio Ribeiro Sanches was born in Portugal in 1699 and died in Paris in 1783. After his medical studies in Salamanca, he practised for a short while in Portugal. From there, he fled from the Inquisition, never to return. He passed through Italy, England, and France, enrolling afterwards in the University of Leyden to study with Boerhaave. Through this master he was referred to the Russian tsarina to handle important medical functions. He stayed in Russia for more than 16 years, exiled afterwards to Paris, where he lived the last 36 years of his life. He wrote intensely and actively; he kept in contact with the European masters and influenced the cultural environment of his time. In medicine, he is remembered primarily by the studies he developed on venereal diseases (syphilis), and the exchange he established with Chinese medicine; by the reorganization of medical studies in Russia (Moscow and St Petersburg) and at the University of Strasbourg. However his main contribution was his role in the reformation of the Portuguese University. In addition, his interests extended into cultural aspects such as the arts, social and commercial issues, politics and religion. Some of his works were included in The Methodical Encyclopaedia by Diderot and in Natural History by Buffon.

Résumé

Antonio Ribeiro Sanches est né en 1699 au Portugal et est mort à Paris en 1783. Après des études médicales à Salamanque, il exerça pendant une courte période dans son pays natal d'où il s'enfuit poursuivi par l'Inquisition et ne revint jamais. Il passa par l'Italie, l'Angleterre et la France puis il fut élève à l'Université de Leyde, pour étudier avec Boerhaave. Ce dernier le recommanda à la tsarine russe afin qu'il occupe d'importantes positions médicales. Il resta en Russie plus de 16 ans et s'exila ensuite à Paris où il passa les 36 dernières années de sa vie. Il eut une bibliographie intense et active, il garda contact avec les maîtres européens et influença l'entourage culturel de son temps. En médecine, il est tout d'abord connu pour ses études sur les maladies vénériennes (syphilis) et pour les échanges qu'il établit avec la médecine chinoise. On se souviendra également de lui pour sa contribution dans l'organisation des études médicales en Russie (Moscou et St. Petersburg) ainsi qu'à l'Université de Strasbourg; mais principalement pour la réforme de l'université portugaise. Il porta aussi son attention sur des aspects culturels et les arts, sur les aboutissements sociaux et commerciaux, la politique, la religion, etc. Certains de ses manuscrits sont repris dans l'Encyclopédie Méthodique de Diderot et dans l'Histoire Naturelle de Buffon.

Antonio Nunes Ribeiro Sanches was born in the Portuguese town of Penamacor on 7th of March 1699, and died in Paris at the age of 84, on 14th of October 1783. He was the son of new-Christians (1), his father being Simao Nunes, a civilized and wealthy merchant from the Beira

region, and his mother Ana Nunes Ribeiro. His uncle, Dr Diogo Nunes Ribeiro, was a doctor in Lisbon; another uncle was a well-known jurist. He was also a descendant of the famous philosopher Dr Francisco Sanches (2).

At the age of 13, he left his home for the city of Guarda, to improve his knowledge of music and letters. There, due to the influence of his uncle, he

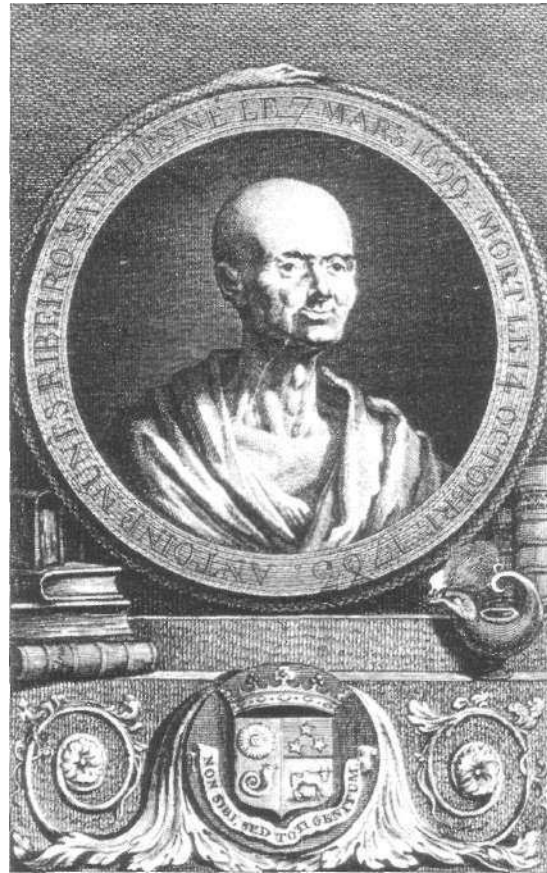
*Jose Luis Doria, Rua Domingos Sequeira, 50, 4º,
1350-122 Lisboa, Portugal*

- *Antonio Ribeiro Sanches. Engraving from Levillain in : Observations sur les Maladies Veneriennes, 1785.*

became acquainted with Dr Bernardo Lopes de Pinho (3) and became interested in Medicine, disappointing the wishes of his father and his other uncle, who wanted him to practise Law. From 1716 to 1719, he studied at Coimbra where he read Arts, Law, Philosophy and probably Medicine. Nevertheless the environment in Coimbra was adverse; the students were reactionary and the teaching retrograde (4). Following the advice of Martinho de Proenca (5) he decided to follow his studies abroad. In Salamanca, he chose Medicine and at the age of 25, on 5th of April 1724, he received his graduation with the dissertation *Venae rubrae nunquam absorvent*, which has been lost.

On his return to Portugal, he lived in Lisbon, staying in his Uncle Diogo's house. He practised medicine with him for a few months, caring for patients suffering from the yellow fever epidemic, which at that time devastated the Portuguese capital, causing more than 6,000 deaths (6). In 1725 he was appointed as medical doctor in the village of Benavente, where he played an important role against the intermittent fevers, common to the region. Somewhat disturbed by the Inquisition (7), and wishing to acquire new knowledge, he then decided to leave the country.

By the year 1726 he had embarked for Genoa, passed through Pisa and headed for England. In London, for two years, he attended the lessons of Dr Douglas and the mathematician Stirling. A serious illness, attributed to the unfavourable climate, brought him back to the Continent. In 1728, he visited the University of Montpellier, resided in Bordeaux and then went to Marseille, to find Dr. Bertrand, who reminded him of the wise advice he had given to control the plague in Lisbon (6). This French doctor revealed to him the existence of Boerhaave, whose classes in Leyden were attended by the most renowned medical doctors of the time. His reading of Boerhaave's «Aphorisms», which Bertrand lent him, decided Ribeiro Sanches to leave France for the Netherlands, where he enrolled at the University of Leyden. He remained an unknown student



for three years, attending the classes of the master, the lectures of Burmann, the chemistry lessons of Gaubius, the anatomy classes of Albino, the physic lessons of Gravesende and the pharmacology of Baron Van Swieten.

Ribeiro Sanches stood out amongst the students of this very famous school and Boerhaave chose him to respond to a request made by the Tsarina of Russia. Anna Ivanovna requested the master to send her three of his best pupils; honorary posts in her empire were awaiting them. It is said that when Boerhaave transmitted his choice to Ribeiro Sanches and advised him rapidly to conclude his Bachelor's degree, only then did the Portuguese doctor reveal that he was already a doctor of medicine of Salamanca. He could therefore depart immediately. Amazed, Boerhaave returned all the tuition fees that he had received from him.

In October of 1731, at the age of 32, Antonio Ribeiro Sanches arrived in Russia to be immediately appointed chief medical doctor of the city of

Moscow, with honours and profits (8). At the age of 34 he was called by Dr Rieger, president of the Russian Medical Board, to practise in St Petersburg, close to the Russian Court. During 1735 he assumed the post of First Doctor of the Imperial Army, an activity he performed for 6 years. He participated in the Polish campaign, the war between Crimea and Turkey from 1735 to 1737, and afterwards in the Ukrainian struggles. Returning to St Petersburg, he was appointed medical doctor of the Imperial Body of Cadets, next followed by the posts of medical doctor of the Russian Court, in 1740, and afterwards as State Counsellor.

During his residency in Russia (1731-1747), his activity was not limited to clinical practice. His pursuit for new knowledge was a never-ending search; the correspondence he kept with the main cultural institutions and learned persons, gave him a place in the group of the « Enlightened » humanists. Through the commercial caravans that connected St Petersburg to Peking, he maintained contacts with the missionaries to the Chinese Court. From them, he obtained oriental plants and knowledge of their medicinal use, as well as some other Chinese medical practices. He exchanged medicine books for astronomy books. From Cook, a Russian surgeon on a mission to the Persian front, he received diverse plants of medical interest, such as manna and a salt, gathered in Astrakhan, which he thought to be a kind of borax, and sent it to Gmelin for analysis. Contrary to the usual practices, his participation in military campaigns, mainly in the Crimean war, made him propose the ventilation of hospitals and prisons. He gathered, via several notes stolen during the siege of Azof, countless observations on military diseases. To Van Swieten, his former teacher in Leyden, now living in Vienna, he revealed the advantages of the oral administration of mercury chloride for the treatment of syphilis (9). He communicated some of his ethnographic studies to Buffon, who set it forth, referenced, in the 3rd volume of his *Natural History*. He frequently shared letters with Mairan, who assigned him as a « correspondent member » of the French Academy of Sciences. All ranges of

knowledge interested him: from medicine to physics, from history to politics, from ethnography to pedagogy. As a result he kept in contact through correspondence with many of the European learned authorities: Gunz, Schreiber, Amman, Haller, Condoidi, Werlhof, Cruzius, Sinopius, Goldbach and others. In 1737, from Russia and through the Imperial Academy of St Petersburg, he sent a collection of his works, directed to the Royal Academy of History in Portugal.

In 1740 Ribeiro Sanches was asked to assist Tsarina Anna Ivanovna, during the ending days of her life. Against the opinion of the other assistant doctors of the Tsarina, Sanches made the diagnosis of nephrolithiasis with a gloomy prognosis. His arrival was too late to prevent her death. The autopsy confirmed Sanches' opinion and earned him the admiration of his colleagues.

With the death of Anna Ivanovna, Russia entered into a prolonged period of socio-political agitation and dispute over the succession to the Imperial crown (10). Only many years later did some stability return, with the government of Catherine II. Ribeiro Sanches saw himself inevitably involved in palatial conspiracies. For a short time, he was accused of Judaism and imprisoned. He asked for the release from all of his posts in order to abandon Russia, but his request was denied. His reputation as a clinician compelled him to treat the ruler Ana Leopoldovna and the heir Ivan IV. Later, he was asked to help in the care of the Duke of Holstein, which gave Sanches a new personal success following thirty days of constant attendance. He attended also the princess Anhalt-Zerst, who later became Catherine the Great. He was rewarded with the post of State Counsellor. But his desire to leave Russia remained and finally, on 4th. September of 1747, he received the permission to leave the country.

He headed for France (11), and during the trip he caught sight of Frederick II of Prussia, who aspired to meet the Portuguese doctor. Both talked extensively about physics and natural history.



Antonio Ribeiro Sanches' Coat of Arms. Granted by the Empress Catherine II of Russia, 1763.

of arms with the inscription «*Non sibi, sed toti genitum*»-« Not for himself, but born for everyone». By special request of the Empress, the Grand Duke Paul visited him in Paris in the year 1782.

At the age of 48, he arrived in Paris. The period of residency in Paris, the last 36 years of his life, was mainly marked by his literary efforts. His writings covered multifarious issues, such as medicine, social aspects, pedagogical subjects, and even politics. D'Alembert, Buffon, Petit, Falconet, Diderot, Pringle, Fothergill, Mertens and others constituted the list of his most renowned correspondents during this period. He donated the major part of his vast and diverse library, a collection of about 2000 books, to the St Petersburg Imperial Academy of Sciences, who were to nominate him as an «honorary member».

In Paris he did not completely abandon medical practice, neither would his reputation allow it. Notwithstanding, this activity was significantly reduced, practising only for friends and fellow-countrymen, Russians and some of the poor. Consequently he encountered economical difficulties that weighed heavily upon him during this last stage of his life.

The Portuguese government granted him, from 1759 to 1761, an annual pension of 300.000 *reis* (old Portuguese currency). After, knowing of his financial difficulties and in light of his refusal to return to Russia claiming health problems, Catherine II established in 1763 an annual pension of 1000 roubles. Additionally, she granted him a coat

In respect to medicine, syphilis was definitely one of his principal areas of interest. He registered the clinical manifestations of the disease and indicated possible remedies, such as the utilization, already mentioned, of corrosive sublimate. He believed in hereditary syphilis but was wrong to include it in the same diagnostic group as the other transmitted venereal diseases. He collaborated in Diderot's *Encyclopaedia*, where he wrote about «venerable diseases», also the theme of one of his books causing great repercussions : *Dissertation about the Origin of Venereal Disease...* translated to English by Jacob de Castro Sarmiento. Dr Jacob de Castro Sarmiento has also presented to the London Royal Society, an *Observation on the Paralysis of the Intestinal Caecum* made by Ribeiro Sanches.

Ribeiro Sanches was also concerned in diverse aspects of Public Health and Hygiene. As a young physician he wrote a *Memoir about the Waters of Penha Garcia*. He worried about the hygiene of the urban latrines, air pollution and wrote a *Dissertation on Russian Baths*. Following the great earthquake of Lisbon in 1755, by request of the Portuguese first minister Marquis of Pombal, he wrote the *Treaty on Health Conservation of the People*, where he explained his theory about earthquakes and made a demonstration how the Lisbon climate had improved since the catastrophe. His brother Marcelo, a refugee doctor in Sicily, translated the work to Italian.

In Paris, along with Payen, he undertook research on the utilization of clay from Mafra (12), which he thought beneficial for the cure of cancer. In France he introduced the cantharides tincture and the Colombo root, unknown in the west and revealed to him when he lived in Russia. Also by request of the Marquis of Pombal, he wrote a paper entitled the *Speech on Portuguese*

One of Ribeiro Sanches' books on Syphilis
(Posthumous edition by DrAndry, Paris 1785).

OBSERVATIONS
SUR LES
MALADIES VÉNÉRIENNES,
Par feu M. ANTOINE - NUNÈS-
RIBEIRO SANCHÈS,
PUBLIÉES PAR M. ANDRY.

Je voudrois que chacun écrivit ce qu'il fait . . . car tel pour avoir quelque particulière science, ou expérience de la nature d'une riviere, ou d'une fontaine, qui ne fait au reste, que ce que chacun fait; il entreprendra courses, pour faire courtir ce petit loquet, & s'enquerra toute la Physique, de ce vice foudroyant plusieurs grandes incommodités.

Essai de MONTAGNA, Livre I. Ch. XXX, page 206.
Édit. de Londres, par M. COEY.



A PARIS,
Chez THÉOPHILE BARROIS le jeune, Libraire
Quai des Augustins, N^o. 18.

M. DCC. LXXXV. C.
Avec Approbation & Permission.

Treaty on People's Health Conservation, by
Ribeiro Sanches, with an explanation on
earthquakes mainly the Lisbon one of 1755
(Reprinted with corrections, from Lisbon, 1757).



America, which most of which has been lost. Few chapters are still remaining: 1 - About the colonies; 2 - The Portuguese Colony in America; 6 - The Agriculture; 7 - The Culture and Commerce of Sugar; 8 - About the Tobacco Plant, its Preparation and Commerce; and also a few paragraphs about clergymen, the government of Paraguay by the Jesuits and the religious Government of Brazil, its bishops and priests.

In the politico-social area he left some other writings, a *Dissertation About the Method to Conserve the Conquests and the Portuguese Colonies*, another *On the Administration of Justice*, some considerations on *The Marriage of the Clergy*, a booklet on *the Origin of the Name of Old Christian and New Christian in Portugal* and another *About the Culture of the Sciences and the Fine Arts in the Russian Empire*.

In the area of Pedagogy and Education his writings include: *Projects for the Establishment of a School of Agriculture*; *Plan for the Education of a Noble Young Man*, and *Letters on The Education of Youth*.

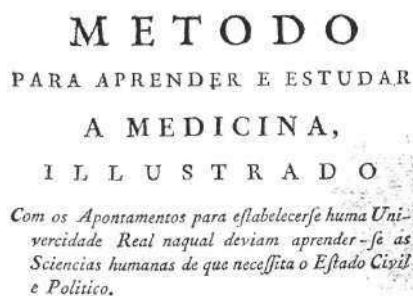
On medicine, he wrote a memoir about the teaching of pathological surgery, requested by the Strasburg School of Medicine; some notes on *Thoughts about the Government of the Medical University and the Physicians*, with statements he communicated to the School of Moscow in 1754. Nevertheless his main work in the area of medical pedagogy is the *Method to Learn and Study Medicine* written in Paris in 1763, where he was a pioneer in extolling the hospital linkage to the schools of medicine, and in the unification of the teaching for medicine and surgery, «in such a way, that would extinguish this separated class of men known as surgeons». He proposed that medical studies should follow Aristotle's *Aphorisms* and Boerhaave's *Medical Institutions*, joining therefore the traditional and the innovative.

In many ways the ideas expressed by Ribeiro Sanches, as pedagogue, influenced the Marquis of Pombal. Based on it, the Royal College of Noblemen was established in Lisbon in 1761, which closely followed the *Plan for the Education of a Noble Young Man* and the *Letters on the Education of Youth* (13), (14). The *Method to*

Learn and Study Medicine also inspired, in 1772, the Pombaline reform of the Portuguese University, in particular the teaching of medicine.

In November of 1782 he attended the Portuguese Ambassador in Paris, D. Vicente de Sousa Coutinho. His dedication and knowledge won the following recognition, written in a letter from the ambassador sent to Aires de Sa, one year later, when Ribeiro Sanches was close to death: «The poor Dr Sanches is now on his death bed. I cannot forget the tears that I saw him shed during my two illnesses, neither I can omit he is one of the great men that the republic have ever had...».

Ribeiro Sanches was an Honorary Member of the St Petersburg Impérial Academy, Correspondent Member of the Lisbon Royal Academy of Sciences, member of the Paris Academy of Sciences, and member of the Royal Society of Medicine. When he died, on 14th of October 1783, aged 84, Vicq-d'Azir gave the funeral eulogy.



M. DCC. LXIII.

- *Method to Learn and Study Medicine, with some notes to organize a Royal University (1763)*

Filinto Elisio translated it to Portuguese (15) :
*What does it matter, oh Sanches, that you searched
From the deity, Epidaurus, high secrets
If you will reach (a little later on)
The inevitable goal.
In vain, with the light of a hodiernal Hypocrates
You entered the sanctuary naturally.
The reaping scythe does not dull itself
Like dying grass,
In vain with high gifts, the gracious Heavens
Enriched your heart, your skills,
And you were useful to the cold Tartars,
And to the very ungrateful Alyssa.*

Dr Sanches left more than 27 volumes of unpublished manuscripts. Andry, a physician in Paris and his personal friend, inherited some of them, and later gave a posthumous printing.

Works of Ribeiro Sanches:

Published Works:

- «*Dissertation sur l'origine de la maladie vénérienne, dans laquelle on prouve qu'elle n'a point été apportée d'Amérique, mais qu'elle a commencé en Europe par une épidémie*». Paris 1750, in 8°; Paris 1752, Durand et Pinot; Paris 1756, Didot (with a slightly different title)
«*A Dissertation on the Origin of the Venereal Disease*» is the English translation done by Jacob de Castro Sarmiento, London 1751, Griffiths,
- «*Tratado da Conservação da Saúde dos Povos: obra util, e igualmente necessária aos Magistrados, Capitaes Gênerais, Capitaes de Mar e Guerra, Prelados, Abadessas, Médicos e Pais de Família; com um apêndice - Considerações sobre Terramotos, com a notícia dos mais consideráveis de que faz menção a História, e dos últimos que se sentiram na Europa desde 1 de Novembro de 1755*», Paris 1756, selling in Lisbon at Bonardes e du Beux; Lisbon 1757, reprinted and corrected at the office of Joseph Philippe, 1757; and also an Italian translation by Marcelo Sanches.
- «*Cartas Sobre a Educação da Mocidade*», Koln, 1760
- «*Método para Aprender e Estudar a Medicina, ilustrado com os Apontamentos para estabelecer-se uma Universidade Real na qual deviam aprender-*



Dr Antonio Ribeiro Sanches. Détail from an oil painting by Veloso Salgado, 1906, The Portuguese Physicians, at Sala de Actos of the Faculty of Médical Sciences, Lisbon

se as Ciências Humanas de que necessita o Estado Civil e Politico», Paris 1763

- «Examen historique sur l'apparition de la maladie vénérienne en Europe et sur la nature de cette épidémie», Lisbon 1774 (16).
- «Observations sur les maladies vénériennes, par M. Antonio Nunes Ribeiro Sanches, publiées par M. Andry», post-publication made by Dr. Andry, Paris 1785, Théophile Barrois le jeune
- «Affections de l'âme», article of l'Encyclopédie Méthodique; Médecine, 1787, article in 4°, 1, pp. 245-277
- «Observação da Paralisia do Intestino Cego», which Dr. Jacob de Castro translated and presented to the Royal Society of London, *Phil. Trans.* n°494, art. XVI
- «Maladie vénérienne chronique», article in Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences et des Arts

Of the various manuscripts left to Dr. Andry we mention :

On the venereal and infectious disease :

- «Pensées sur les effets de l'inoculation faite avec le poison de la petite vérole en différentes maladies et particulièrement dans la maladie vénérienne»
- «De cura variolarum Vaporarii ope apud Ruthenos omni memoria antiquioris usu recepta»
- «Remarques sur l'ouvrage intitulé Parallèle de différentes méthodes de traiter la maladie vénérienne»
- «Réflexions sur les maladies vénériennes»

On philosophy, pedagogy, policy and social interest:

- «Dissertação sobre as paixoes d'alma», 1753
- «Lettre adressée à l'Université de Moscou sur la méthode d'apprendre et d'enseigner la médecine. Instruction pour le Professeur qui enseignera la chirurgie dans les Hôpitaux de S. Petersburg», 1754
- «Plan sur la manière de nourrir et d'élever les enfants trouvés dans l'hôpital de Moscou», 1764
- «Dissertation sur les beaux-arts, leur utilité, leurs

inconvenients, leurs avantages», 1765

- «Traité sur le rapport que les sciences doivent avoir avec l'Etat civil et politique, appliqué à l'état présent de l'Empire de Russie», 1765
- *Moyens pour conserver le commerce déjà établi en Russie et pour le faire fleurir à perpétuité», 1766*
- «Moyens pour lier et attacher de plus en plus les Provinces conquises à l'empire de Russie de la même manière que fit Auguste par rapport aux Provinces de son Empire», 1766
- «Réflexions sur l'économie politique des Etats, appliquées particulièrement à l'Empire de Russie»
- «Réflexions sur l'état désavantageux des Laboureurs de Russie, des Esclaves des Domaines et des seigneurs; lesquels souffrent les plus grands charges de l'Etat, de manière qu'ils diminuent tous les jours....., avec les moyens propres à pouvoir recruter les armées de terre et mer, sans y employer les laboureurs et récompenser les soldats et les officiers qui ont servi pendant 20 ans»
- «Traité sur les moyens propres pour augmenter le commerce de Russie» «Traité sur le commerce de l'empire de Russie», 1770
- «Traité dans lequel on prouve que l'introduction d'une meilleure administration de la justice contribue à l'amélioration de la société»
- «Projet pour l'établissement d'une Ecole d'agriculture»
- «De l'origine des hôpitaux», 1772
- «Du mariage des prêtres»
- «Plan pour l'éducation d'un jeune seigneur»
- «Lettre sur les moyens de faire entrer un cours de morale dans l'éducation publique»
- «Dissertation dans laquelle on examine si la ville, appelée par les Romains Pax Augusta est celle de Beja au Portugal ou celle de Badajoz, en Castella»
- «Origem da denominação de cristão velho e de cristão novo no reino de Portugal e das causas destas denominações, assim como da perseguição dos Judeus, com os meios de fazer cessar em pouco tempo esta distinção entre súbditos dum mesmo estado...»
- «Dissertação sobre os meios próprios para governar e conservar as conquistas e colônias de Portugal»

Other writings under his authorship :

- «Venae rubrae nunquam absorbent», 1724, Doctorate's dissertation in Salamanca
- «Memória sobre as águas de Penha Garcia»
- «Dissertação sobre os banhos Russos»
- «Pecúlio de varias receitas», about syphilis

- «*Memoria acerca do ensino da cirurgia patologica*», by request of the Strasburg Medical School
- "*Ramal de observagoes sobre todas as partes da Medicina e principalmente sobre a pratica*»
- «*Discurso Sobre a America Portuguesa*»
- "*Fundamentos da Sociedade Crista e Politica*», 1760

Ribeiro Sanches was also the promoter of an edition of «Os Lusfadas» by Luis de Camoes, which came to light in Paris, in 1759. (In 1959 the University Press of Coimbra printed a collection of the writings of Antonio Ribeiro Sanches.)

Notes and references

1. New-Christians was the name given to the Jews "converted" to Catholicism, and usually they were asked to testify that they follow the Catholic rules. As it was left written by Ribeiro Sanches himself, Father Domingos Mendes baptized him on March 17th, 1699.
2. Francisco Sanches (Valence? 1550/1551 -Toulouse 1623). He studied in Braga, Bordeaux and Rome, earning his Bachelor's degree in Medicine, at Montpellier, in the year 1574. He taught Medicine and Philosophy in Toulouse. His main philosophical work «*QuodNihil Scitur*», of 1581, influenced Descartes in the area of philosophy and Bacon in experimental knowledge. He also published the «*Opera Medica*» in 1636.
3. Referring to Dr. Lopes de Pinho, Ribeiro Sanches wrote in his article «*Affections de l'ame*», from the *Methodical Encyclopaedia* : «My master, Doctor Pinho, medical doctor in the village of Guarda...».
4. The students of Coimbra at that time were harassed by «The Shrub Gang», led by Francisco Jorge Aires, who was beheaded in 1722, and consisted of D. Manuel Alexandre da Costa, a student of Theology and later on the parish-priest of Santa Cruz do Minho, Jose da Horta and Antonio da Costa e Silva - «the Whiting», who both died in prison.
Ribeiro Sanches narrated about the time he spent in Coimbra: «If one knows the manner in which the student goes to Coimbra to study, armed with offensive and defensive weapons, with gun powder, bullets and dogs,.....if one still remembers the atrocious assaults of Coimbra, the barbarous excesses that «The Shrub Gang» committed in the years 1719 and 1720, one will understand the precautions that were necessary... and that only one infantry battalion, armed with rifles, bayonets and loaded cartridge-belts, will be able to tame the fire of the Portuguese youth».
5. Martinho de Mendonca Pina e Proenca was a member of the Royal Academy of History and was High Usher of the Tombo Tower and the Royal Librarian.
As Ribeiro Sanches asserted, in every letter written at the age of 61, it was Pina e Proenga who led him «...to get out of Portugal, to know what I never could learn in the Country».
6. «I've seen and treated many sick people from this disease in Lisbon» he affirmed in «*Dissertation sur l'origine de la maladie venerienne...*».
In this plague outbreak, the Portuguese government resorted to the advice of various renowned European doctors, amongst them Dr. Bertrand, from Marseille, later to have importance in his acquaintance of Boerhaave by Ribeiro Sanches.
7. Dr Diogo Nunes Ribeiro, accused of the practice of Judaism, was imprisoned by order of the Duty Court for twelve years (from 1704 to 1716). Ribeiro Sanches would refer many times, in his letters, to this religious persecution (see note #11).
8. What he earned from this post permitted him to subsidise the surgical studies of his brother Manuel in Italy. His father died before his departure for Russia and his mother lost the whole of her money in a legal dispute.
9. This is the famous liquor of Van Swieten. Ribeiro Sanches obtained this information through a Russian doctor, who learned about it from a Siberian use.
10. The lover of the late Tsarina, Buhren, governed for three weeks. Marshal Munich dismissed him on November 8th, and gave the governmental regency to Anna Leopoldovna, in the name of the heir Ivan IV. After a new palatial blow led by the surgeon Lestocq Anna Leopoldovna was dismissed, and the power given to the Grand Duchess Isabel, daughter of Peter the Great.
11. It would have been fear of the Inquisition that prevented his return to Portugal. In a letter from St Petersburg addressed to Dr Valadares, about his brother, a medical doctor in Italy who aspired to return to Portugal, Ribeiro Sanches expressed his fears in this way: «he tells me that he wants to go to Portugal, asks me to give him my consent... and I tremble to give him my permission... because this boy, knows nothing about the Inquisition... and he thinks Portugal is like France...»
12. Mafra is a small village in the neighbourhood of Lisbon, with an old potter industry. It is also well known for the Royal Palace and a Monastery with an old library, an apothecary and one of the best working carillons of the World.

13. Before Sanches two other Portuguese undertook work concerning this : - Martinho de Mendonca in the «*Apontamentos para a Educacao de um Menino Nobre*», 1734 and Luis Antonio de Verney in the «*Verdadeiro Metodo de Estudar*», 1746
14. Camilo Castelo Branco in «*Noites de Insonia*» wrote about this : «The Marquis of Pombal, did not want it or, in spite of his omnipotence, could not assure a secure rest in the motherland for the grandson of Hebrews.... The ungrateful took advantage of it, hiding the origin of his learned oracle and the advices and projects of good administration that he suggested to him from Paris. The foundation of the Nobleman College, by a law dated March 7th, 1761, was recommended by a letter of Ribeiro Sanches, dated in Paris on November 19th, 1759»
15. About Ribeiro Sanches and his drama of the persecution by Judaism, Filinto Elisio would write the following verses :
- «Oh Sanches, running through far away lands / Fugitive of the homeland that persecutes you / That torments the family, and the friends / With fires, with tortures;
Sitting at the table with more of the outlaws / From the unrighteous court of justice, the shame of Europe / Taken by a heavenly enthusiasm, / Like this it was torn with a cry:
It still lives, it still reigns, for harming / From the kings, that do not confuse, for the scorning / of the aluminous People, and displeasure / of the Learned, and honest Men,
That cave of priestly assassins, / that, new Polyphemus, will they tear apart / the innocent flesh of the young ladies? / That knowing this put gags /...
When will come a Hercules, that with anger, / the ones who burn will burn themselves ? That the serpents / from the most rotten of Lerna, in solid arms, / Vindictively suffocate ?
May Anastasio have his revenge, and the good Lourenco have his revenge, / And Sanches, and Filinto, and various others, / who to the mother country would illustrate, if that mother country / did not wage these crimes?»
16. This work along with the previous one was reunited into one volume, with a preface by Gaubius, edited in Leyden in 1778, by Henry Hoogenstratten.

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Biography

Jose Luis Doha, MD, has taught History of Medicine at the Faculty of Medical Sciences (Faculdade de Ciencias Medicas / Universidade Nova de Lisboa), in Lisbon, Portugal since 1981. As Ophthalmologist he works at the Hospital Egas Moniz in Lisbon and also teaches Ophthalmology at the Faculty. He is now the President of the National Board of Ophthalmology (2000-2003) and the Portuguese representative at the UEMS (European Union of Medical Specialists)/Ophthalmology.

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