

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire

The Kingdom of Portugal was created as a by-product of the Christian Reconquest of Hispania. With no geographical *raison d'être* and no obvious political roots in its Roman, Germanic, or Islamic pasts, it long remained a small, struggling realm on Europe's outer fringe. Then, in the early fifteenth century, this unlikely springboard for Western expansion suddenly began to accumulate an empire of its own – eventually extending more than halfway around the globe. *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire*, drawing particularly on historical scholarship postdating the 1974 Portuguese Revolution, offers readers a comprehensive overview and reinterpretation of how all this happened – the first such account to appear in English for more than a generation. Volume I concerns the history of Portugal itself from pre-Roman times to the climactic French invasion of 1807, and Volume II traces the history of the Portuguese overseas empire.

A. R. Disney was educated at Oxford and Harvard universities and has taught history at Melbourne and La Trobe universities. His publications include *Twilight of the Pepper Empire* (1978) and numerous articles, papers, and essays, published variously in the *Economic History Review*, *Studia Indica*, *Mare Liberum*, *Anais de Historia de Alem-mar*, and other journals and proceedings.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire

From Beginnings to 1807
Volume I: Portugal

A. R. DISNEY

La Trobe University



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town, Singapore, São Paulo, Delhi

Cambridge University Press

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013-2473, USA

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521603973

© A. R. Disney 2009

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2009

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data

Disney, A. R. (Anthony R.), 1938–

A history of Portugal and the Portuguese empire / A. R. Disney.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-84318-8 (hardback) – ISBN 978-0-521-60397-3 (paper back)

1. Portugal – History. 2. Portugal – Colonies – History. I. Title.

DP517.D57 2009

946.9–dc22 2008039017

ISBN 978-0-521-84318-8 hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-60397-3 paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate. Information regarding prices, travel timetables, and other factual information given in this work are correct at the time of first printing, but Cambridge University Press does not guarantee the accuracy of such information thereafter.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents

<i>Contents for Volume 2</i>	<i>page</i> ix
<i>Abbreviations</i>	xiii
<i>List of maps</i>	xv
<i>Preface</i>	xvii
<i>Maps</i>	xxiii
Introduction: The Geographical Setting	I
1. Hunter-Gatherers to Iron Age Farmers	5
The early hunter-gatherers	5
The Neolithic revolution	7
The metallurgical cultures	8
The coming of the Celts	13
Orientalisation	16
2. The Roman Experience	20
The Roman conquest	20
Towns and roads	23
Villas and mines	26
Free and slave	28
Roman administration and the idea of Portugal	30
The gods	32
3. The Germanic Kingdoms	34
The barbarian invasions	34
The Suevic kingdom	37
The Visigoths	40
Society and economy	42
Church, faith and phobias	46

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

vi

Contents

4.	Gharb al-Andalus	51
	The Muslim conquest	51
	Islamic rule	53
	Social and economic fabric	57
	Muslim faith and culture	61
	Christians and Jews under Islam	62
	The Christian Reconquest of the North	65
5.	The Medieval Kingdom	70
	The <i>condado Portucalense</i>	70
	Afonso Henriques and the founding of the kingdom	74
	Expanding south	77
	The fates of the conquered	82
	Settling and developing	83
	Castles, churches and religious institutions	86
	Crown, seigneurs and ecclesiastical rights	90
	Afonso III and King Dinis	93
6.	The Fourteenth Century	95
	Becoming a nation	95
	The economic base	97
	Towns and the beginnings of commercial capitalism	100
	The ordering of society: theory and practice	102
	The Black Death and its aftermath	107
	Afonso IV and Pedro I	111
	Fernando and the Castilian wars	113
	Dynastic crisis: a Castilian usurper or a Portuguese bastard?	117
	Aljubarrota	120
7.	The Making of Avis Portugal	122
	The coming of João I: a bourgeois revolution?	122
	Settling the dynasty: war, peace and royal marriages	124
	Change and continuity in the noble estate	126
	King Duarte and the regency of Prince Pedro	128
	Regression under Afonso V	131
	João II, noble conspiracies and royal power	133
	João II: the later years	136
	Law and taxes	137
	The changing art of war	140
8.	The Golden Age	143
	The character and contradictions of the Golden Age	143
	The Golden Age economy	145
	The court and the king's majesty	149
	The Castilian connection and the Jews	151
	Elite society, government and bureaucracy	154
	Church reform without a Reformation	159

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

vii

Social welfare and the <i>Misericórdia</i>	162
The Portuguese literary Renaissance	163
The Arts	166
9. The Tarnished Age	172
João III and his fated family	172
Sebastião and Henrique	173
A faltering economy?	176
The coming of the Inquisition	180
The Inquisition in action	182
Portugal, the Council of Trent and the Jesuits	186
The fate of Letters and the Arts	189
The crisis of 1580 and the succession of Filipe I	192
10. Habsburg Portugal	198
Filipe I in Lisbon	198
Institutional change, marginalisation and ambiguous autonomy	200
The Habsburg economy	204
The union of crowns and foreign relations	209
The reform program of Olivares	212
The defection of the Portuguese nobility	215
The revolt of 1640	218
11. Restoration and Reconstruction	221
The Restoration	221
João IV, war and diplomacy	225
Afonso VI and national survival	228
Pedro II and the stabilising of the Bragança monarchy	232
The internal balance of power	235
The seventeenth-century <i>cortes</i>	240
Restoration Portugal in the international economy	243
12. The Age of Gold and Baroque Splendour	249
Setting the scene	249
Gold, diamonds and João V	252
Population and agriculture	256
The wine industry and the patterns of overseas trade	259
Eighteenth-century Joanine absolutism	264
Baroque culture and the royal court	268
The Enlightenment and the Portuguese public	274
13. The Age of Pombal	280
Pombal and Pombalism	280
The 1755 earthquake	283
Pombal and Portuguese trade	286

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

Contents

Pombaline industrial and agrarian reform	289
The cowing of the higher nobility	292
Pombaline regalism and the expulsion of the Jesuits	298
Defence and education	305
14. The Late Eighteenth Century: Finale of the Old Regime	311
Maria I and the <i>viradeira</i>	311
The Marian economy and the Marian Enlightenment	314
Subversion, police and internal security	319
Prince João and a world in turmoil	322
1807: the <i>ano tormentoso</i>	328
<i>Glossary</i>	334
<i>Bibliography</i>	341
<i>Index</i>	356

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Contents for Volume 2

<i>Abbreviations</i>	page	xiii
<i>List of maps</i>		xvii
<i>Preface</i>		xix
<i>Maps</i>		xxiii
15. North Africa		I
Beginnings: the conquest of Ceuta		I
The era of neo-Reconquest		5
Retreat and stalemate		10
Economic costs and benefits		13
The disaster of Al-Ksar al-Kabir		16
The fortresses after Al-Ksar al-Kabir		20
16. Exploring the Coasts of Atlantic Africa		27
The role of Prince Henrique		27
The Henrican voyages		30
Coasts and rivers of Guinea		33
Cão, Dias and the South Atlantic		35
Long-distance voyaging and nautical technology		39
Pêro de Covilhã and Prester John		42
17. Engaging with Atlantic Africa		45
Profits on the fringes of the Sahara		45
Dealing with competitors		47
Crown and <i>lançados</i> in Upper Guinea		49
Portuguese origins of Guinea-Bissau		54
The gold of São Jorge da Mina		56
Benin and the Niger delta		61
The kingdom of Kongo		65
The conquest of Ndongo		70

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

Contents for Volume 2

Early Portuguese settlement of Angola	75
The Angolan slave trade	77
18. The Atlantic Islands and Fisheries	84
Portuguese beginnings in Madeira	84
Later development of Madeira: sugar, wine and over-population	87
Discovering, settling and developing the Azores	92
The Azores in the late seventeenth and eighteenth centuries	97
Portugal and the Canaries	99
The Cape Verde Islands: discovery, settlement and early growth	101
The Cape Verde Islands: the later years	107
São Tomé and Príncipe: the slave islands	110
The Newfoundland fisheries and the South Atlantic	115
19. Breakthrough to Maritime Asia	119
Vasco da Gama's first voyage to India	119
Getting to know 'the other'	122
Manueline dreaming	125
Albuquerque	129
Post-Albuquerquean consolidation	134
Escalating diplomacy	137
20. Empire in the East	145
The <i>Estado da Índia</i>	145
The crown and the pepper trade	149
Tapping into the inter-port trade	153
The <i>carreira da Índia</i>	157
Governing from afar	159
Late resurgent expansionism	165
Losses in the seventeenth century	168
21. Informal Presence in the East	172
Introducing the private trader	172
Private trade in western maritime Asia	175
Private trade in eastern maritime Asia	182
Soldiers-of-fortune	187
Informal settlements and settlers	192
<i>Muzungos</i> and <i>prazo</i> -holders in Mozambique	198
Catholics in an alien world	200
22. Brazil: Seizing and Keeping Possession	204
Early voyages and the age of <i>feitorias</i>	204
The Amerindians and their culture	207
Establishing settlements: the first hundred years	210
The disintegration of coastal Amerindian society	216
The impact of the Jesuits	219

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents for Volume 2*

xi

Early-seventeenth-century foreign European intrusions and the Dutch conquest of Pernambuco	221
The rule of Count Johan Maurits of Nassau-Siegen	223
The end of Netherlands Brazil	226
23. Formation of Colonial Brazil	232
Trees and traders	232
The coming of sugar	235
The African slave trade to Brazil	238
Ports and plantations; farms and ranches	241
Portuguese colonists and miscegenation	244
Early colonial slavery and slave society	247
Escapees, the free poor and social control	252
São Paulo and the southern interior	254
The northeastern and northern interiors	259
24. Late Colonial Brazil	263
Post-war reconstruction: sugar, tobacco and cattle	263
The great mineral boom	267
The free population of Minas Gerais in the age of gold	270
Slavery in Minas Gerais	274
Pombaline and post-Pombaline neo-mercantilism	277
The economic resurgence of the late eighteenth century	280
Extending the frontier and establishing borders in the north, west and south	285
Intimations of separation	293
25. Holding on in India: The Late Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries	299
Goa and its European rivals	299
Portuguese, Omanis and Marathas	301
Old and new patterns in the intercontinental trade	305
The late colonial inter-port trade	310
The <i>Estado da Índia's</i> struggle for recovery in the late seventeenth century	314
Conservatism and stagnation in the early eighteenth century	317
Mid-eighteenth-century revival and expansion	319
Goa and the reforms of Pombal	322
The Pinto 'conspiracy'	327
The British occupation of Goa	330
26. Eastern Empire in the Late Colonial Era: Peripheries	332
The <i>Estado da Índia</i> beyond the sub-continent	332
Macau and its trade: from crisis to recovery	332
Macanese trade in the late eighteenth century	335
A glimpse of Macanese society and government	337
Macau and the mandarins of Guangzhou	339

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xii

Contents for Volume 2

Macau's relations with Beijing	342
The Macau <i>câmara</i> and the crown authorities	345
Toehold in Timor	347
The loss of the Swahili coast	350
The ivory, gold and slave trades of Mozambique	351
Enter the Baniás	353
Mozambique: a territorial empire in the making?	355
The Mozambique <i>prazos</i> after 1650	358
Mozambique and the eighteenth-century reforms	363
<i>Glossary</i>	368
<i>Bibliography</i>	377
<i>Index</i>	401

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Abbreviations

AHR	<i>American Historical Review</i>
BAR	<i>British Archaeological Reports</i>
CEHCA	Centro de Estudos de História e Cartografia Antiga
CIP	Antunes M (ed) <i>Como interpretar Pombal? No bicentenário de sua morte</i>
CNCDP	Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses
CP	Marques A H de O (ed) <i>Chancelarias portuguesas. D. Afonso IV</i>
CRB OM	Boxer C R <i>Opera Minora</i>
DA	Turner J (ed) <i>The dictionary of art</i>
DHDP	Albuquerque L de (dir) <i>Dicionário de história dos descobrimentos portugueses</i>
DHP	Serrão J (ed) <i>Dicionário de história de Portugal</i>
DIHP	<i>Dicionário ilustrado da história de Portugal</i>
EI	Gibb H A R et al (eds) <i>Encyclopaedia of Islam</i>
GE	<i>Grande encyclopédia portuguesa e brasileira</i>
HA	Chicó M et al (eds) <i>História da arte em Portugal</i>
HAHR	<i>Hispanic American Historical Review</i>
HEPM	Baião A, Cidade H and Múrias M (eds) <i>História da expansão portuguesa no mundo</i>
HP	Mattoso J (dir) <i>História de Portugal</i>
LMS	Jayyusi S K et al (eds) <i>The legacy of Muslim Spain</i>
MedHP	Medina J (dir) <i>História de Portugal dos tempos pré-históricos aos nossos dias</i>
MHP	Marques A H de O <i>History of Portugal</i> vol 1

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xiv

Abbreviations

NHEP	Serrão J and Marques A H de O (dirs) <i>Nova história da expansão portuguesa</i>
NHP	Serrão J and Marques A H de O (dirs) <i>Nova história de Portugal</i>
PDH	<i>Portugal – dicionário histórico, corográfico, heráldico, biográfico, bibliográfico, numismático e artístico</i>
PHP	Peres D (dir) <i>História de Portugal. Edição monumental</i>
RHC	Rodrigues F <i>História da companhia de Jesús na assistência de Portugal</i>
RHES	<i>Revista de história económica e social</i>
SHP	Serrão J V <i>História de Portugal</i>

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

List of Maps

1. Portugal: physical features.
2. Roman Hispania at approximately the death of Viriatus, 139 BC.
3. Late Roman Hispania showing provinces and provincial capitals.
4. Portugal: major Roman cities and mining centres mentioned in the text.
5. Germanic Hispania: late sixth century AD.
6. Al-Andalus, mid-eighth century.
7. Gharb al-Andalus and the Portuguese Reconquest.
8. Portugal: traditional provinces and some leading towns.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

Preface

Fort Jesus, the Portuguese-built stronghold that stands sentinel over the gently shimmering waters of Mombasa harbour with their clustered dhows, first drew me to Portugal's history. As a boy I lived on a farm in western Kenya. Occasionally, when the price of maize was favourable or coffee had had a particularly good year, my father would treat my mother, my sister and me to a holiday on the coast. There, each time, would be the fort – a quietly brooding monument to Mombasa's turbulent past and to the seemingly mysterious role played in it by the Portuguese.

In Oxford, on a cool November day of 1960, my interest in Fort Jesus was unexpectedly re-kindled. Gazing at a display in Blackwell's window, I caught sight of a new book with a bright, glossy dust jacket: *Fort Jesus and the Portuguese in Mombasa* by C. R. Boxer and Carlos de Azevedo. There, splashed across the front, was a photograph of the fort, its mellowed seawalls supporting their serrated Arab battlements, fringed by gently swaying coconut palms, with the little beach nearby. As soon as I could, I scraped together from my modest student allowance the required twenty-one shillings and bought that book. It was the fort, and the book about the fort, that led me in due course to write *A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807*.

One of the first European kingdoms to establish stable borders, Portugal has had an unusually long and rich history. Emerging in the twelfth century from the confusion of the Iberian Reconquest, it remained for long a relatively small and struggling frontier kingdom – until its fortunes began to change, and its importance to grow, from the early fifteenth century. Underlying this enhancement was the fact that the Portuguese, almost by accident, had begun to accumulate, bit by bit, what would eventually become one of the most remarkable and wide-flung of all the European empires. The aim of the present

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii

Preface

book is to make available to English-speaking readers a quite comprehensive view of how all this happened, tracing Portugal's story from its earliest beginnings down to the demise of the Old Regime at the start of the nineteenth century.

As its title indicates, this first volume is about metropolitan Portugal only. It consists of fourteen chapters which recount the country's history through a succession of epochs, from pre-historic times to 1807. Each chapter contains a mixture of narrative, description, comment and analysis, which I have endeavoured to integrate in such a way that they form a coherent, readable and intellectually stimulating whole. Further, all chapters are divided into sections with headings. If readers so desire, they can therefore easily single out sections that are of particular interest to them and read these in isolation. Nevertheless, all chapters are designed to form integrated wholes – and in my view it is better to treat them as such.

Chapters 1 to 4 are concerned with Portuguese space and the people who lived in it, in the eras before the existence of Portugal as a discrete political entity. They describe how successive waves of Roman, Germanic and Islamic intruders overlaid an Hispanic base that was already much affected by the impact of Mediterranean 'Orientalising' and northern 'Celticising' influences. Although the experiences of these times do not explain the subsequent emergence of Portugal as a kingdom, and as a nation, they were fundamental in the formation of the Portuguese people and their characteristic culture.

The early inhabitants of Portugal did not know that the land they occupied would one day become a separate kingdom with its own language, traditions and institutions. In Chapter 5, it is argued that the decisive steps that eventually led to this outcome were taken in the mid-twelfth century. It was then that the kingdom of Portugal emerged as a by-product of the Reconquest and the evolution of feudal relationships in the northwestern segment of the Iberian peninsula. A long struggle to make the kingdom viable followed. This involved not only consolidating it against various disruptive forces from within but also defending it from residual Islamic enemies without – and from the seductive attractions of pan-Hispanism.

During the two centuries or so after the creation of the kingdom, Portugal experienced a gradual transition into nationhood. This process is discussed in Chapter 6, which also contains an overview of Portugal at the peak of its rather modest Medieval prosperity in the early fourteenth century. It then goes on to describe the demographic, economic and political crises that together almost destroyed the young kingdom from the late 1330s. An account of Portugal's recovery in the fifteenth century, and of the gradual strengthening of royal government under the early Avis kings, follows in Chapter 7.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

xix

In the early sixteenth century, Portugal experienced a remarkable ‘Golden Age’ – which, however, all too quickly tarnished from that century’s middle years. During the Golden Age, some groups and individuals in the kingdom attained considerable prosperity, largely as a consequence of overseas trade and expansion. But the situation gradually changed for the worse as Portugal was overtaken by an array of economic and political problems, culminating in the disastrous defeat of Al-Ksar al-Kabir and the ensuing loss of independence in 1578–80. All this is recounted in Chapters 8 and 9. Then in Chapter 10, I go on to describe how Portugal fared when its crown was united with that of Castile, what eventually caused the union to fail and the manner in which Portugal’s separate identity was recovered in 1640.

Chapter 11 is about the nature of the Bragança Restoration, the struggle to sheet it home and the kind of regime its adherents sought to entrench. It also explains how the situation was gradually stabilised in the late seventeenth century. The first half of the eighteenth century, an ‘Age of Gold and Baroque Splendour’, when Old Regime Portugal was at its apogee, but the seeds of change were also beginning to germinate, is examined in Chapter 12. This is followed by two chapters reviewing in turn the extraordinary ascendancy of Pombal and the associated reform program, the subsequent Marian reaction and the series of events that culminated in the *ano tormentoso* of 1807. That was the year that saw Portugal invaded by Napoleonic troops, causing the royal family and court to withdraw to Brazil – dramatic moves that marked the beginning of the end, if not the end itself, of the Portuguese Old Regime.

I am deeply conscious of the extent to which I have relied on the research of others – particularly of my Portuguese predecessors and colleagues – in the writing of this volume. Only occasionally, when I considered it particularly necessary or desirable, have I gone directly to the primary sources myself. Any reader who wishes to ascertain the precise material on which the volume is based may readily do so by referring to the footnotes, in conjunction with the bibliography. However, I must point out that the latter is limited to works cited in the notes only. It should not therefore be regarded as a comprehensive guide to Portuguese historical writings – though it might perhaps serve as a preliminary indicator. Those who wish to inquire further should consult the bibliographies in the several multi-volume Portuguese histories discussed in the following pages, especially in the *Nova história de Portugal*.

Portugal has a strong tradition of producing quality multi-volume national histories, several of which have been invaluable sources for my own work. This tradition began with the so-called ‘Barcelos’ history, the monumental seven-volume *História de Portugal*, directed by Damião Peres (1928–35). The Barcelos history, which set new standards of rigorous scholarship at the time, still remains of value today, especially for political developments. However, with

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xx

Preface

the major upsurge in Portuguese historical writing from the early 1970s, the need for a new updated synthesis became more imperative. To date, four massive multi-volume publications have appeared in response to this need.

The earliest of these four works is Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão's *História de Portugal* (Editorial Verbo, Lisbon, 1977–2001). This publication comprises fourteen volumes, of which the first six together take the history of Portugal down to the start of the nineteenth century. Veríssimo Serrão offers the reader a reliable, well-documented empirical history, written from a generally conservative viewpoint. Next, there is the lavishly illustrated eight-volume *História de Portugal*, directed by the distinguished Medievalist José Mattoso (Editorial Estampa, Lisbon, 1993). The first four volumes of the 'Mattoso' history are relevant to the period before 1807. However, although there is much of value in this work, the various volume editors have adopted widely different approaches. This has resulted in considerable loss of overall coherence and left major gaps.

A third collective history is the *História de Portugal dos tempos pré-históricos aos nossos dias* (Clube Internacional do Livro, Amadora, 1995). This was written by various contributors, under the overall direction of the Lisbon historian João Medina. There are fifteen volumes in the 'Medina' history, the first seven of which take us down to the end of the eighteenth century. I found volume 7, which deals with the Habsburg period, especially useful, but again, there are major gaps, notably the late seventeenth century.

The fourth and most important in this sequence of multi-volume national histories is the *Nova história de Portugal*, directed by Joel Serrão and A. H. de Oliveira Marques (Editorial Presença, Lisbon, 1986–). At the time of writing, this projected thirteen-volume collective history is still incomplete. However, of the first eight volumes – which are the ones relevant here – all except volume six (on the Habsburg era) and volume eight (on the second half of the eighteenth century) are now published. This history prioritises 'structures' over political and narrative history. It is also indisputably the most comprehensive, the most balanced and the most scholarly of the national histories briefly reviewed above – and it was a fundamental source for the present work.

Before finishing with the general sources, it might be useful to mention briefly what is available in English. National histories of metropolitan Portugal in English that devote substantial attention to the pre-nineteenth-century period are, it has to be said, rather rare, but there is no doubt which is the most authoritative. It is A. H. de Oliveira Marques's *History of Portugal* (2 vols., Columbia University Press, 1972). This history, which includes chapters and sections on the empire as well as the metropolis, again downplays politics in favour of structures. However, it was written before the post-1974 upsurge in new historical writing and is therefore now somewhat outdated.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Preface*

xxi

H. V. Livermore's *A New History of Portugal* (Cambridge University Press, 1966) still remains useful as a traditional political history.

Apart from the general histories discussed above, a rapidly growing number of more specialist works concerning Portugal's past – monographs, regional studies, case studies, biographies, journal articles and so forth – have appeared in the now almost four decades since the change of regime in the early 1970s. One of the aims of the present volume is to draw on a wide selection of these works to inform a fresh synthesis – an overview, for English-speaking readers, of new scholarship. However, I must stress that in writing this volume no attempt has been made to take into account *every* significant work on Portuguese history of the last generation. Rather the aim has been to utilise a sufficiently representative selection of such works, while also not neglecting meritorious older sources. Again, the present volume is fully documented, so that by referring to the footnotes, in conjunction with the bibliography, the reader may go back to the particular sources on which the book is based.

A question that inevitably arises for historians writing about Portugal in English is how to present and standardise foreign names. In what follows I have, with few exceptions, left non-English European names in the forms in which they are customarily written in their respective languages, rather than Anglicising some and not others. This means a few historical personages appear in a guise that may at first seem unfamiliar to English-speaking readers – such as Prince Henrique rather than Henry the Navigator, or Fernando and Isabel of Spain rather than Ferdinand and Isabella. It seemed to me that this would be a small price to pay for greater consistency, while also enabling Portuguese names to be clearly distinguished from their Castilian equivalents. The relatively few names of individuals and places in Arabic that occur in the text have simply been transcribed into Roman script, without the use of diacritical marks.

In the course of writing this volume, I have incurred many debts of gratitude – to mentors, fellow scholars, university colleagues and friends. I owe particular thanks to the late António H. de Oliveira Marques, a giant figure in Portuguese historiography; Luís Filipe Reis Thomaz, who generously gave me the run of his library at Parede; Maria Augusto Lima Cruz, who so kindly showed me round Braga and took me to see the remarkable ruins of Citânia de Briteiros; the patient and ever-hospitable Artur Teodoro de Matos and Maria de Jesus dos Mártires Lopes; Teotónio de Souza, who so kindly secured for me various books I could not access in Australia; João Zilhão, Alfredo Pinheiro Marques and Jorge Filipe de Almeida, who also all kindly sent me publications; Sanjay Subrahmanyam; Dauril Alden; Jorge Flores and Malyn Newitt. I acknowledge gratefully the indispensable financial support of the Australian Research Grants Commission that enabled me to travel and to undertake research in Portugal

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

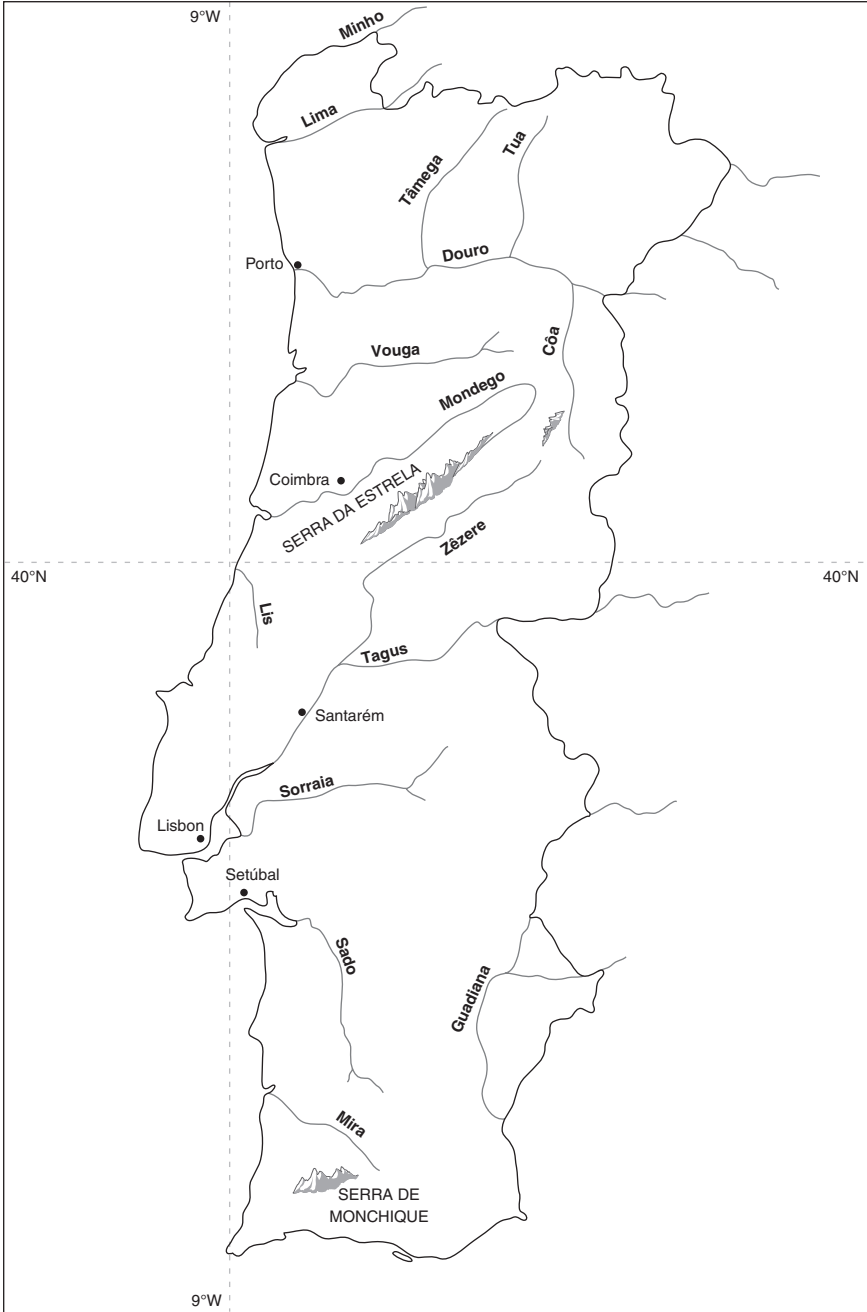
[More information](#)

xxii

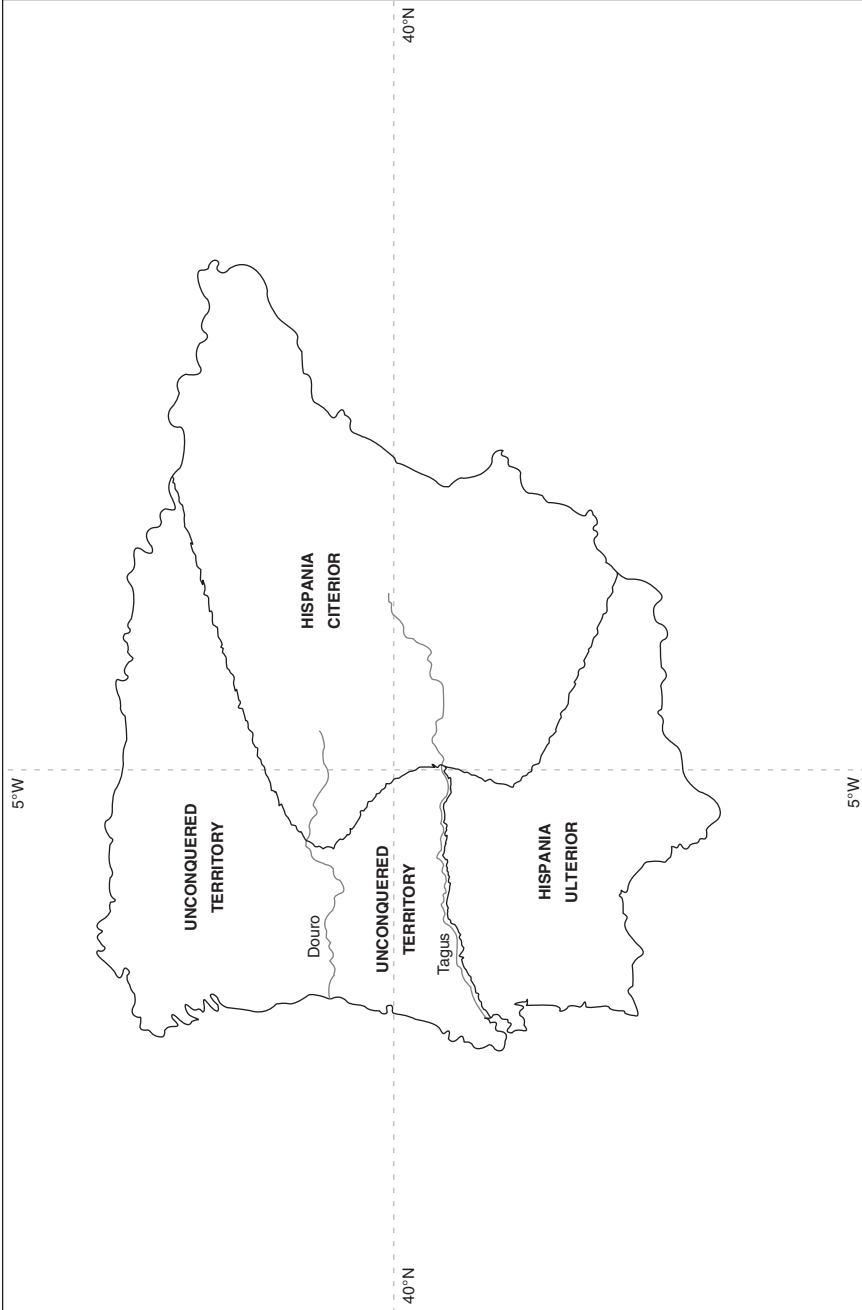
Preface

itself and released me for time to write. Likewise, I thank La Trobe University for its generous grants of study leave in the past – and for its continued support extended to me as an honorary associate, after my retirement from teaching. Last, but not least, I thank my wife, Jenny, who has listened to me long and patiently and read through the manuscript, offering many suggestions and drawing attention to errors.

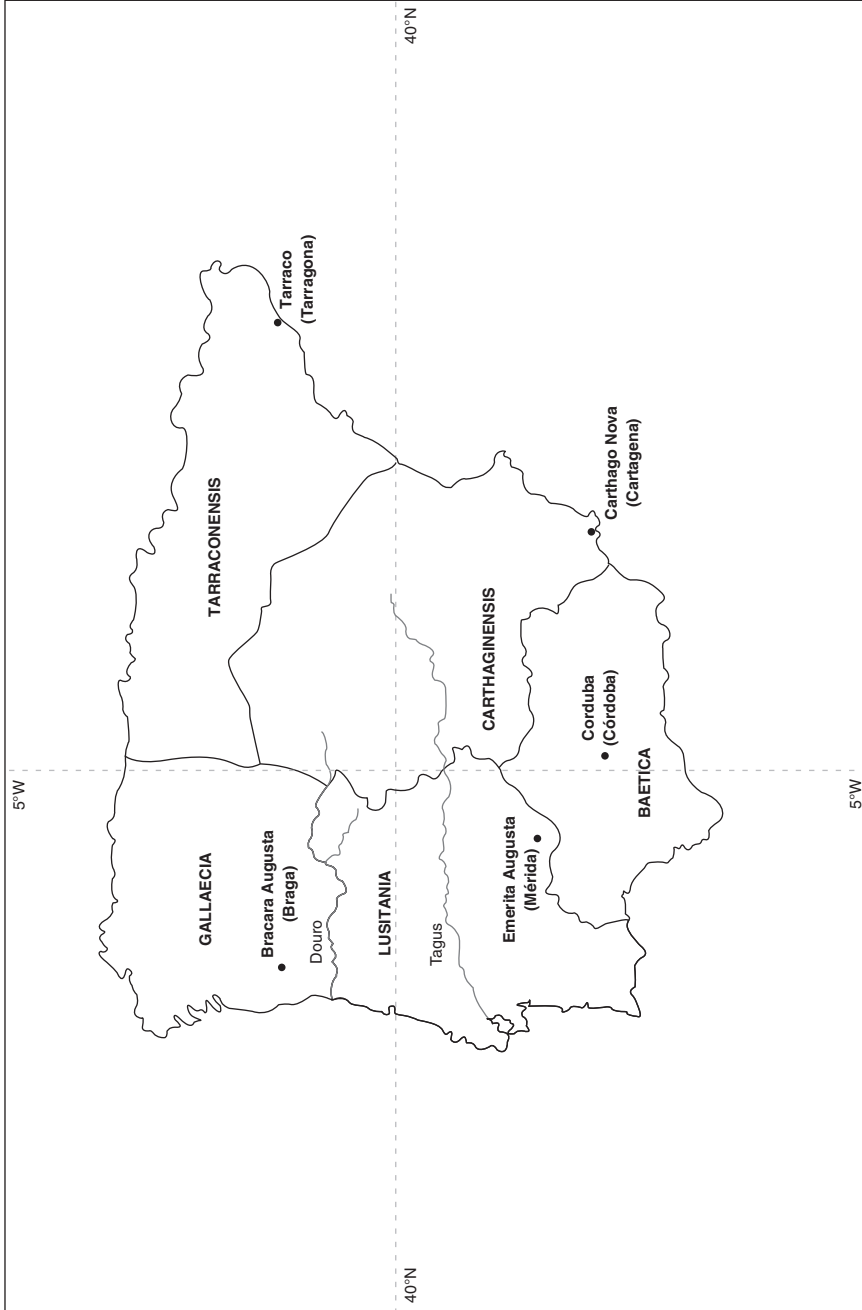
Anthony Disney
March 2008



MAP 1. Portugal: physical features.



MAP 2. Roman Hispania at approximately the death of Viriatus, 139 BC.



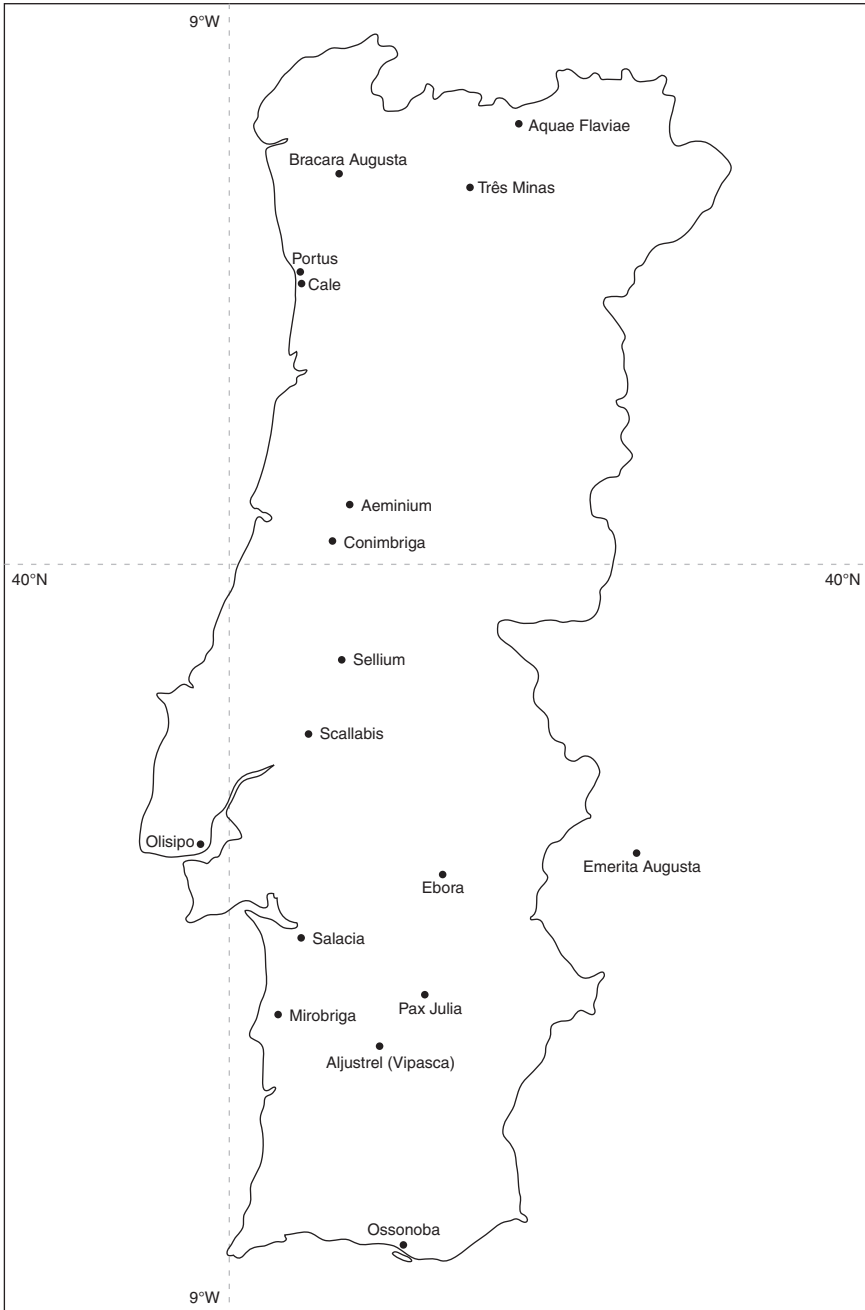
MAP 3. Late Roman Hispania showing provinces and provincial capitals.

Cambridge University Press

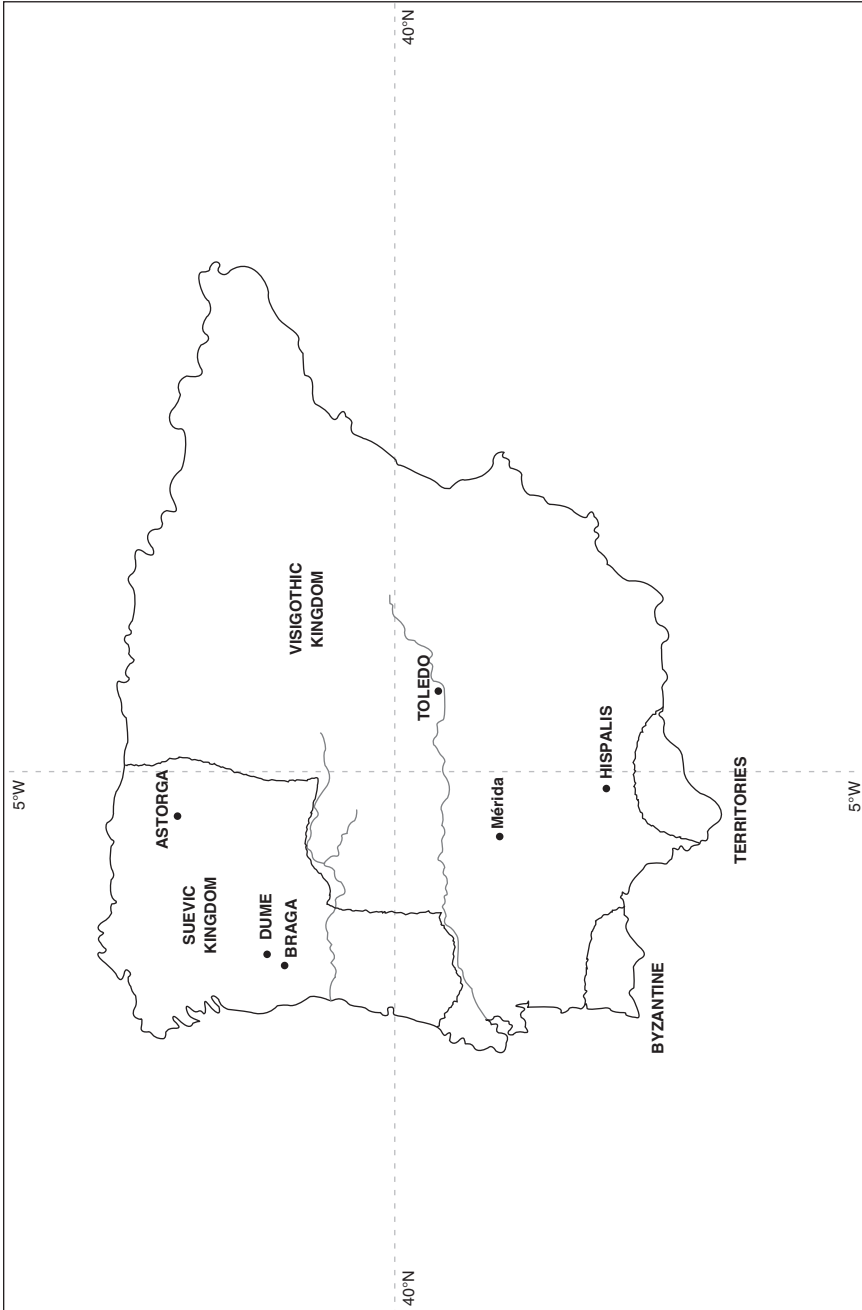
978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MAP 4. Portugal: major Roman cities and mining centres mentioned in the text.



MAP 5. Germanic Hispania: late sixth century AD.

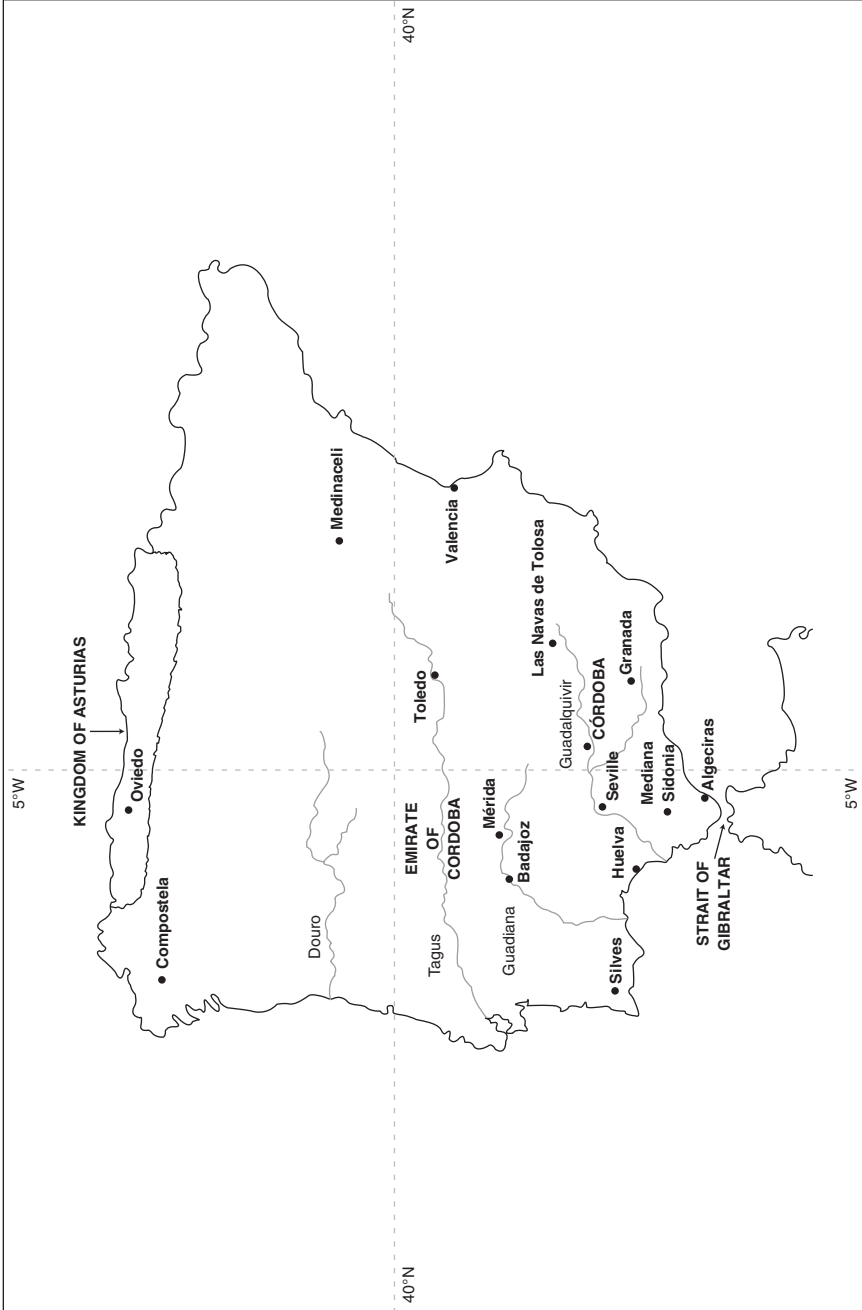
Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

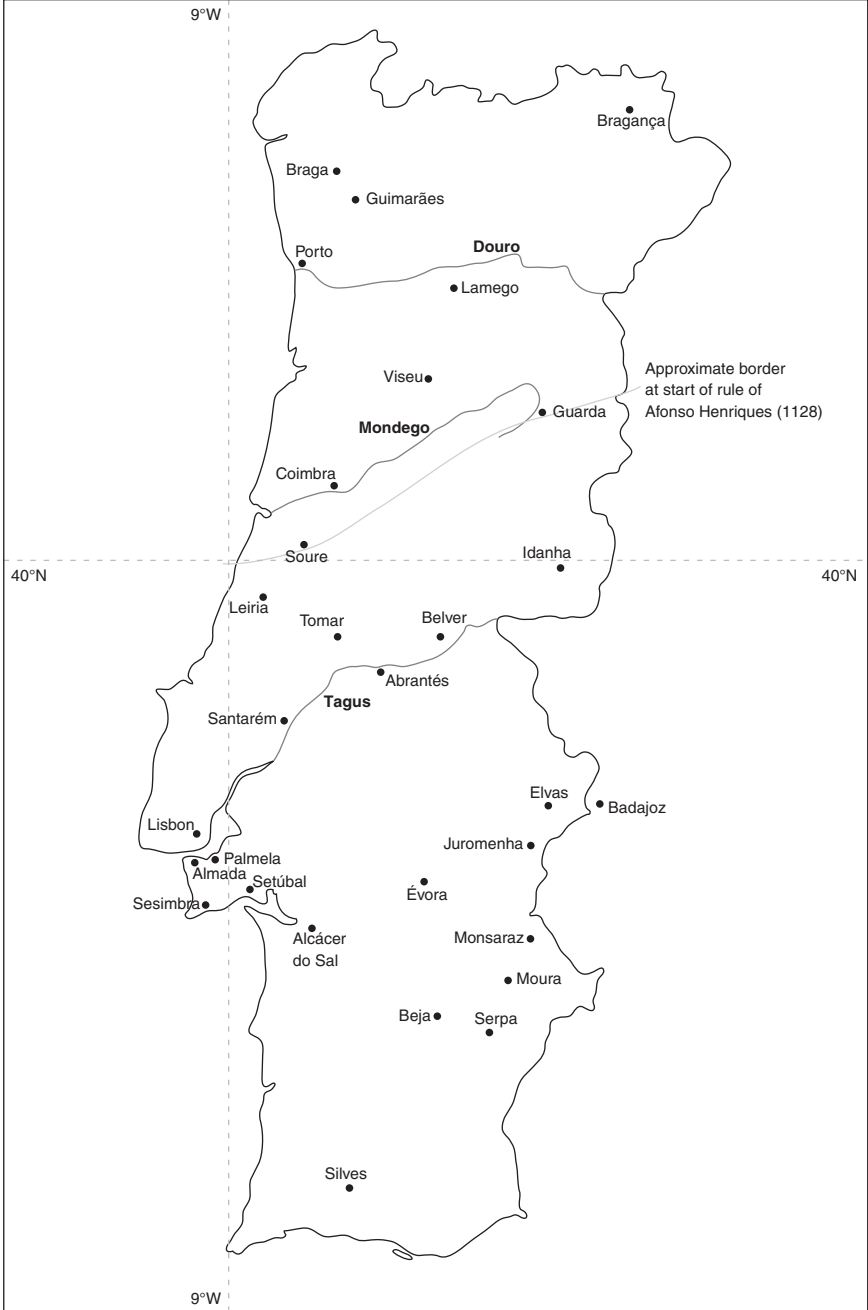
A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)



MAP 6. Al-Andalus, mid-eighth century.



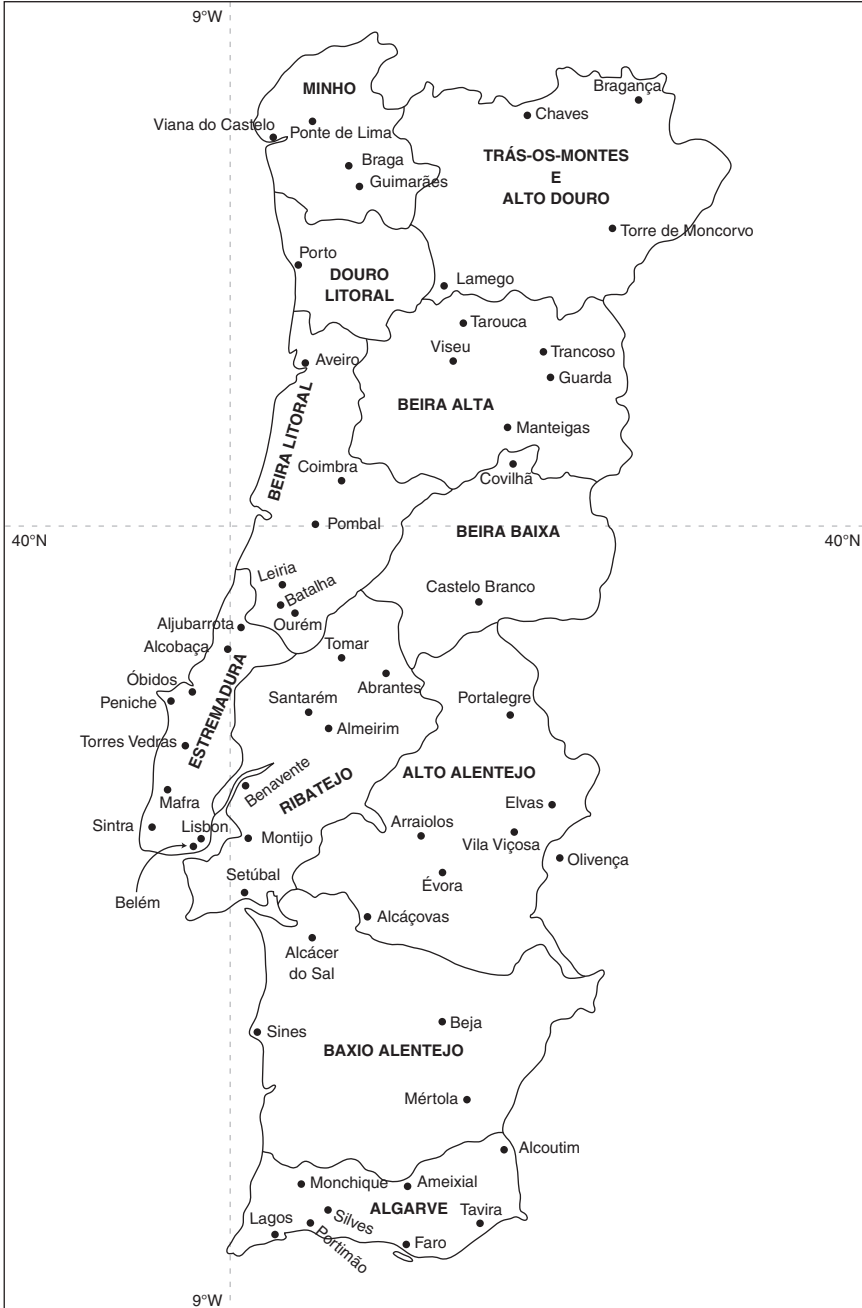
MAP 7. Gharb al-Andalus and the Portuguese Reconquest.

Cambridge University Press

978-0-521-60397-3 - A History of Portugal and the Portuguese Empire: From Beginnings to 1807, Volume I: Portugal

A. R. Disney

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

MAP 8. Portugal: traditional provinces and some leading towns.