

ONE
LIFE IN
MEDICINE

Germano de Sousa

By

Victor Oliveira 

MD, PhD. Neurologist; Board Member of the Sociedade das Ciências Médicas de Lisboa; Editor-in-Chief JSCML; Principal Investigator at Faculdade de Medicina – Universidade de Lisboa

✉ voliveira98@hotmail.com

Germano Rego de Sousa was born in Vila do Nordeste (São Miguel, Azores). At the age of seventeen, he moved to mainland Portugal to pursue medical studies at the University of Coimbra. In keeping with academic tradition, he resided in one of the student “Republics” – self-governed student residences – joining the *República dos Corsários das Ilhas*, which was composed primarily of students from the Azores.

His vocation for medicine was reportedly influenced by a great-uncle who served as *Enfermeiro-Mor* (Chief Medical Administrator) of the Civil Hospitals of Lisbon.

During his time in Coimbra, he held positions of student leadership and became actively involved in the academic protest movement of 1964–1965. As a consequence of this engagement, he was denied access to the general medical internship by the political police of the regime (PIDE).

He subsequently fulfilled his compulsory military service and was deployed to Angola (1968–1970), where he carried out clinical duties both at the military hospital and at the civil hospital in the town of Luso (now Luena).

Upon returning to Portugal, he began his residency in Clinical Pathology (Laboratory Medicine) at the Central Hospitals of Lisbon, specifically

“

Germano de Sousa's professional trajectory combines clinical leadership, institutional responsibility, and a sustained commitment to the History of Medicine.

at Hospital do Desterro, where he later became Director of the laboratory. He subsequently moved to the newly inaugurated Hospital Dr. Fernando da Fonseca (Amadora), where he established its Clinical Pathology laboratory.

In parallel with his hospital career, he developed a private practice, founding a laboratory that would progressively become one of the largest enterprises of its kind in Portugal and a national reference in laboratory diagnostics: Laboratório Germano de Sousa.

He also served as a professor at NOVA University Lisbon and at Universidade Atlântica.

Between 1999 and 2005, he was President (Bastonário) of the Portuguese Medical Association (Ordem dos Médicos), where he was particularly noted for his defense of ethical standards rooted in the Hippocratic tradition.

Alongside his professional career, he cultivated a longstanding interest in the History of Medicine, a passion that dated back to his adolescence. Among his contributions in this field were the republication of *História da Medicina* by Maximiano de Lemos during his tenure as President of the Portuguese Medical Association, as well as the re-edition of *Tractado del Mal Serpentino* by Ruy Gómez de Isla. His most significant original contribution is *A Medicina dos Descobrimentos* (“Medicine of the Discoveries”), recently published in a second edition. This work represents a major contribution to the understanding of Portuguese medicine during the Age of Discoveries, a period that remains comparatively underexplored. An English-language edition is currently in preparation.



FIGURE 1. Germano de Sousa was President (Bastonário) of the Portuguese Medical Association (Ordem dos Médicos) from 1999 to 2005.



FIGURE 2. Germano de Sousa and his 18th-century statues representing the 3rd-century twin martyrs Saints Cosmas and Damian, patrons of medicine and pharmacy.



FIGURE 3. Interior view of the museum space created by Germano de Sousa at the headquarters of his laboratory.

As a culmination of his interest in medical history, he founded a museum at the headquarters of his laboratory. The collection includes historically significant artifacts, such as a Roman unguentarium accompanied by small surgical instruments. It also features dozens of microscopes from various periods, as well as rare books, including an edition of *Vesalius* and a 1572 edition of *Pierre André Matthioli's Commentaires*.

The museum was inaugurated on 26 December 2025 by the President of the Portuguese Republic.

Professor Germano de Sousa continues to direct his laboratory while maintaining an active and enthusiastic commitment to the History of Medicine.

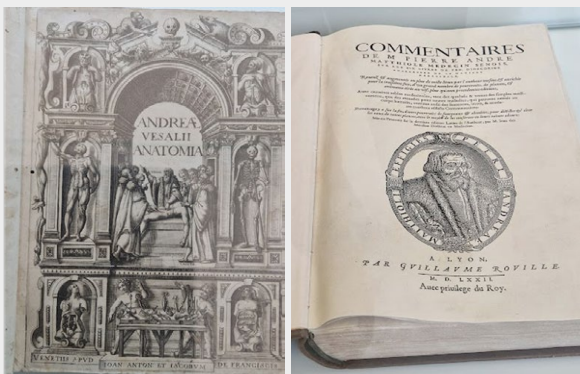


FIGURE 4. Old and rare books in exhibition