

CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

LISBON UNIVERSITY ACADEMIC MEDAL

Portugal, Lisbon

Casa João Anjos

20th cent.

Metal and gorgorão ribbon

Pendent: D 7,5 cm x L.0,6 cm x W 178 g

Ribbon: L 120 cm x W 7,5 cm

MAH.R.2010.0496

This medal, which is part of the Angra do Heroísmo Museum Faleristic Management Unit, was awarded to the writer Vitorino Nemésio by the Faculty of Arts from Lisbon University, a school where he taught the subject areas of Portuguese Literature, Brazilian Literature and History of the Portuguese Culture.

In its obverse is materialized the seal of the mentioned university, prior to 1983, surrounded by the inscription UNIVERSITAS OLISIPONENSIS / AD / LVCEM – the name of institution and its leading motto, a Latin maxim meaning *Towards the Light*. In the centre, there is a Portuguese ship [nau], a ship with a larger load capacity comparing to the caravels, developed by the Portuguese for the increasingly frequent expeditions of commerce and exploration, during the 15th and 16th centuries. Over the ship, two birds are landing, one in the bow, the other in the stern, most probably the same crows that figure in Lisbon coat of arms. Alongside the ship, two classic columns take us to the Graeco-Roman source of our Culture.

Vitorino Nemésio (Praia da Vitória, 1901 – Lisboa, 1978) was one of the most outstanding personalities of the 20th century Portuguese Literature and Culture, taken in account the quality of his literary production, his influence at the cultural panorama level, that poured out by a large amount the university magisterium. Poet, story teller, novelist, chronicler, essayist, lecturer, regular collaborator in newspapers and magazines, communicator in radio broadcasting and TV shows, the projection of his work and personality made of him one of the most important writers in the 20th century, an author studied in his country and abroad, in countless doctoral and master thesis.

Nemésio attended the elementary school at Praia da Vitória, the high school at Angra do Heroísmo and studied in the Coimbra (where he even attended Law studies) and Lisbon Universities. Still a teenager, he was a student at Liceu da Horta for one year, a time that turned to be fundamental, since the town of Horta and its scenic and social contexts would inspire the environment for his novel *Mau Tempo no Canal* (1944), which was pointed out by Vasco Graça Moura as one of the three masterpieces of the Portuguese classic novel, together with *Amor de Perdição*, from Camilo Castelo Branco e *Os Maias*, from Eça de Queirós. In our memory stood also his 1932 text, named “Açorianidade” (*Revista Insula*, 7-8, Agosto), later included in *Sob os signos de Agora* (1932), marking the 5th Centenary of the Azores Discovery, when it is used, for the first time, the word “açorianidade”, as a definition of the regional identity contents, which will gain a special projection after the creation of the Region Government (1976).