Comparing Literature and Empire: British-Portuguese Intercultural Contacts and Responses during the Victorian Period

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This paper proposes to address and problematize relevant issues in the Victorian Period that are connected with the comparative analysis of different cultures (showing both transnational and transatlantic perspectives of the Other), with the more specific problems of race and empire and respective discourses, focusing in the literary reception of some major authors and works in Britain and in Portugal. During the long nineteenth century, the two allied imperial nations (and their protagonists) were frequently, and decisively, confronted with one another in the national and international spheres, occasioning multiple contacts and encounters, mutually enriching both the political and literary cultures of the two European countries. In this unprecedented and sometimes unequal exchange, which started early on with the Peninsular Wars, continued with the Liberal and Constitutional conflicts under British control, and ended in the colonial confrontation culminating with the British Ultimatum at the *fin-de-siècle*, many were the intercultural responses – laudatory and critical – on both sides. These varied and interesting responses range from comments in the printing press and in public speeches, to complete travel accounts and some major literary works (in poetry and prose), a brief selection and treatment of which will serve to illustrate the respective attitudes towards the (foreign/colonial) Other and the complex issues (and consequences) of both imperial expansion and decadence.

Brief introduction

The scholarship of postcolonial critics (like Said, Spivak and Bhabha) has taught us that we simply cannot understand the Victorian age without conscientious attention to the complexities of colonial and imperial contexts and ideologies. But over the last few decades, the field of nineteenth-century studies has been increasingly attentive not just to the centrality of foreignness but also to cultural mobility and intercultural relations within Europe (see Sudan, Greenblatt).[1]

In 1817, the London economist David Ricardo (of Portuguese origin) had apparently found the classical case of 'symbiotic trade' in relations between Britain and

[1] Rajani Sudan, *Fair Exotics: Xenophobic Subjects in English Literature, 1720–1850* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002). Stephen Greenblatt, *Cultural Mobility: A Manifesto* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010).

Portugal. If Portugal specialised in wine, and Britain in cloth, both would benefit by exchanging those commodities. But would the same mutual benefits ensue from cultural exchange? In a first stage (that comprised the first 3 decades of the century), the sustained military presence on Iberian soil had also undoubtedly raised British awareness of contemporary Portugal. And English 'letters' had consequently began to see the country as a part of the European landscape, worthy of greater attention.

Yet the relationship between Portugal and the U.K., largely driven by the nations' common interests as maritime countries on the edge of Europe and close to larger continental neighbours, dates back (at least) to the Middle Ages, with the Anglo-Portuguese Alliance (1373).[2] But, in spite of common strategic goals and a close royal kinship (the sons of Philippa and John would be the ones to head the maritime explorations), this long relationship was frequently fraught with rivalries and some (justified) suspicion towards the Other. This became very problematic for Portugal, as the 19th century approached, due to the country's acute historical circumstances and its dwindling sphere of influence in the economic and geopolitical contexts.

The 19th century saw the alliance between Portugal and the United Kingdom come into effect once more when Napoleon built the Continental System, which Portugal refused to join, leading Napoleon to invade. In 1807 (and twice more), his armies attacked Lisbon, causing the Portuguese royal family to flee to Brazil under the forced escort of the British Royal Navy. After the French invaders withdrew, chased by an Anglo-Portuguese force, continental Portugal and its overseas interests were partly ruled by a British consul or regent for a period of 12 years, which came to an abrupt end with the liberal-nationalist risings of 1820. In the latter half of the century, as Portugal's imperial power declined following Brazil's independence, there were disputes between itself and the U.K. in southern Africa (namely the 1890 British Ultimatum), which was another great embarrassment for the Portuguese monarchy and colonial prestige. As is clear, there were reasons enough for a feeling of resentment, especially on the part of Portugal.

Thus, the history of nineteenth-century Portugal consisted of a long, complicated, and frequently violent transition – one that inevitably attracted the concerned attention of many British observers at the time, including well-known writers. It was also a time of conflict between radicalism and liberalism that resulted in the growing republicanisation

[2] Though politically formalised by the Treaty of Windsor of 1386, and the marriage of Philippa of Lancaster to John I of Portugal, it was regularly ratified and adapted throughout the centuries.

of the regime, in which ‘from the founding of constitutional monarchism in 1834, the Revolution became the most powerful agent in Portuguese history’. Therefore, although obviously not intended by the ‘major players’, the ultimate effect of these successive British interventions in our country was in practise to radicalise our society.

Portuguese-British literary intercultural relations during the Victorian Period

In my previous research on Portuguese-British intercultural relations, I have focused on some early Victorian women writers. I have,namely, argued that the Civil War between the two royal brothers D. Pedro (the Constitutionalist) and D. Miguel (the Absolutist) – that followed British rule - may have inspired **Emily Brontë** to write some of her poems that address a similar (fratricidal) conflict within her Gondal saga. Indeed, she and her sisters knew, from reading the newspaper reports, that many British fought on both sides, such as Thomas Stubbs, Sartorius, Charles Napier,[3] MacDonald, and the war involved British politicians, including Wellington (as Prime Minister) and Palmerston. As her sister Charlotte knew, and Felicia Hemans and C.E. Tonna had witnessed indirectly from close family members of theirs that had been doing military service in Portugal, some of these figures had been previously involved in the Peninsular wars and during the regency period that followed. The poems and other writings of these three women indeed contain frequent and direct references (both laudatory and critical) to Portugal.

As Anthony Pym and John Style have argued,[4] the *translatio imperii* in some senses projected a simplified Other. The purpose was to protect the target culture from having to come to terms with a contemporary foreign culture. There was, for example, scant translational awareness of those parts of Portuguese culture that were politically liberal and usually Francophile (often exiled in France). Similarly concealed were the cultural activities of the Portuguese exiled on British soil. Pym and Style argue that these

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[3] Liberal troops entered Oporto during the Civil War, commanded by Thomas Stubbs, who in 1833 became Baron Vila Nova de Gaia. His descendants still live in Portugal. The Constitutionalist fleet commanded by Sir Charles Napier ("Black Charlie") defeated the Absolutist fleet off Cape St. Vincent in the Algarve. Described as “indomitable, dynamic and eccentric”, he was made Viscount St. Vincent by D. Maria II (1834), later changed to Viscount Napier of St. Vincent. Sir George Rose Sartorius, a Trafalgar veteran, commanded the Liberal fleet during the Civil War, to be replaced by Sir Charles Napier. He received the titles of Viscount of Piedade (1836), Viscount of Mindelo (1845), and Count of Penha Firme (1853).

[4] *Spain and Portugal, 1790-1900,* Version 1.2 (August 2003).Intercultural Studies Group, Universitat Rovira i Virgili, Tarragona, Spain.

complications were removed by translating from a distant Iberian past.[5] At the same time, however, Portugal and Spain continued to appeal to the English imagination as an exotic Near East, providing suitable content for Romantic creation and aesthetic experience, they say.[6] Of course, Barret Browning was similarly exoticised as "the Portuguese" (justifying the *Sonnets from the Portuguese*). Such plays with identity were, nevertheless, within the mediating community; for Pym and Style, they did not involve awareness of a truly contemporary other.

Intercultural communities could also be found the other way, among the Portuguese and Spaniard exiles who took refuge in Britain. The political Liberals who arrived in waves between 1814 and 1823, as well as in the 1830s, formed large ones. For some years, this meant that Iberian intellectual life was probably most active in the London of the Liberals or the France of the *afrancesados*. Indeed, in the late 1820s London was a centre for Iberian literature. Just as there were English-language journals in Portugal, there were Portuguese and Spanish newspapers in Britain, and both communities gave rise to marginal translations.

The Portuguese cultural exile might be represented by the eminent dramatist **Almeida Garrett**, who returned to England in 1828, along with almost 2,500 compatriots, all supporters of the Liberal claimant of the Portuguese throne. Garrett soon moved from Falmouth to Portuguese émigré circles in London, where in an ambassadorial role for his cause he was eventually invited to Holland House, and introduced into London society. Early during this stay, Garrett's play *Catão* (1821, 1830) received four successful performances in the original in Plymouth in 1828 (until then it had only been performed three times in Portugal). The highly enthusiastic audience for these performances was comprised principally of the large number of Portuguese still living in the squalid conditions of the local refugee camps. However, one of Garrett's most popular romances, *Adosinda*, written during his exile in England and admired by London Lusophiles

[5] The greatest example was the proliferation of translations from Luis de Camoes' great epic *Lusiads:* Musgrave in 1826, Quillinan in 1853, Mitchell in 1854, Aubertin in 1878, Burton in 1880, Duff in 1880, and two cantos by Hewitt in 1883. This was the vision of heroic Portugal that would serve the period of the Peninsular Wars.

[6] Of the figures associated with English Romanticism, **Robert Southey** (1774- 1843) was by far the most receptive to Iberian culture. Southey's connection with the peninsula was established through his uncle and patron, the Rev. Herbert Hill, the chaplain of the British trading community in Lisbon. Mr Hill called his nephew to Lisbon in 1795, a visit reflected in Southey's *Letters written during a Short Residence in Spain and Portugal* (1797). Southey again sailed for Portugal in 1800 with the intention of collecting material with which to write his history of that country.

including Southey, was translated by John Adamson in 1828, being a rare example of virtually contemporaneous transfer in that period.[7]

That translation regime would not really change until the rise of international Naturalism in the 1880s, when the Iberian cultures were allowed a fresh narrative voice with which to speak about their contemporary realities. There is little evidence to suggest that the translations of contemporary novels and theatre aroused significant British interest in other genres. Exceptions would include Edgar Prestage's 1894 translation of Antero de Quental's sonnets (of 1881), possibly carried out on a suggestion from Richard Burton, and his 1909 translation of Almeida Garrett's play *Frei Luis de Sousa*. These, however, were only part of one individual's efforts to bring Portuguese literature to the attention of the English-speaking world.

Some major responses to Portugal from famous Victorian travellers

An interesting and unusually favourable response to Portugal is **Dorothy Wordsworth**'s *Journal of a Few Months' Residence in Portugal and Glimpses of the South of Spain,* of 1847, published without an indication of authorship, as it was not common at the time for women to sign books.[8] A second edition was published in 1895, including an introductory "memoir" by Edmund Lee.[9]

The second Dorothy Wordsworth (1804–1847), known as 'Dora', was named after her famous aunt — and in many ways followed in her footsteps. But Dora showed herself to be even bolder than her aunt, when, in 1843, at the age of thirty-nine, she married the Anglophone poet and Portuguese translator Edward Quillinan —very much against her father's wishes. Quillinan's fluency in Portuguese made him a British Lusitanian, who translated *Os Lusíadas*, by Luís de Camões, and *História de Portugal*, by Alexandre Herculano. He was also the son of an Irish wine merchant and a widowed soldier.

Two years later, she travelled with Quillinan to Portugal (where he had been born), and wrote a memorable account of her impressions and experiences there. Her descriptions of Portugal reveal a very keen eye and a warm sense of humour. They also

[7] Perhaps part of the explanation why *Adosinda* and not *Catão* was the first Garrett work to be translated also resides in its affinity with the host culture, as it was modelled on Walter Scott's *Minstrelsies* in the first place.

[8] D. Quillinan (1847). *Journal of a few Months' Residence in Portugal and Glimpses of the South of Spain* (London: Bradbury and Evans).

[9] London and New York: Longmans, Green&Co.

reveal her homesickness. The trip southward had been undertaken for the benefit of Dora's health — she was suffering from tuberculosis, and sunny countries like Portugal were usually recommended. In the end, she remained away from England for about a year.

Unlike other visitors, whose itinerary was restricted to the Lisbon area, Dora's travels took her from Oporto into the lush north Portuguese countryside, where she observed the beaches, forests, hills, and vineyards. Some sites indeed reminded her of Britain – "many of our prospects today were of Cumbrian feature". Yet, despite her *mal du pays*, Dora was obviously alive to her surroundings. In the process, she learned a great deal about Portuguese literature and culture, and recorded her reactions, not only to the heat, but also to the beauty of the Lusitanian countryside. Sadly, Dora would soon succumb to her consumptive disease, in 1847, only a little more than a year after returning from continental Europe.

Her travel diary has recently (2020) come out among us, in a good translation by Francisco Gonçalves, who provides many enlightening notes.[10] In the original, the book included two volumes. The first part begins with the departure from Southampton on 7 May 1845, arriving in Porto in three days. In the North, Dora visited all the main towns and the Gerês mountain. The second volume begins with her trip by boat from Porto, in March 1846, to Lisbon; from where, after a short stay, which included walks in the surroundings, she left by sea, on April 6, 1846, for the south of Spain.

In Portugal, Dora was almost always accompanied by her Lusophile husband, although she does not mention him explicitly (perhaps in order not to denounce the authorship of the work), a company that certainly facilitated contacts with the locals. In her Diary, she also inserts long descriptions of her husband's pen, both literary (there are verses from the *Lusíadas* in Portuguese and English) and historical ones, which help to contextualise but make the work not very homogeneous (one of her father's arguments in preventing its publication).

Importantly, the author seeks to be impartial in the observations she makes about the uses and customs she saw. Unlike other visitors who say the worst about the Portuguese,[11] Dora is kind to the natives of the land she visited. She begins in the preface

[10] Dorothy Wordsworth, *Diário de uma Viagem a Portugal e ao Sul de Espanha*, Trad. Francisco J. Gonçalves, Alfragide: Edições Asa, 2020.

[11] The most famous was another romantic writer, Lord Byron, who, despite having greatly appreciated the beauties of Sintra, the "glorious Eden", belittled the Portuguese: "Wretched slaves, despite being born / Among the noblest scenes! With such people, / O Nature! why did you waste your favours?"

by praising the security she felt in Portugal, thus dispelling usual fears concerning women: "As far as I am concerned, […], I cannot say that I feared misfortune, […] off the beaten path, in a country where few British ladies ever dared to travel." Then she confesses her intention to make amends for Portugal:

> The main reason that leads me to publish this disorganized diary is, in fact, the desire to contribute to eliminating the prejudices that make Portugal a country shunned by so many of my wandering compatriots, both men and women. Who could find much there to please them, if they could be persuaded that it is not worthy of the discredit of being only the land of impetuous and filthy barbarians and of too strong port wine. (12)

Further on, undoing ingrained prejudices, she sensibly writes:

> We often hear about the meanness of the Portuguese when it comes to … merely conventional issues, and to which we apply the censorship …, just because they differ from our way of doing things. Many of our customs are open to the same kind of censure from them, should they choose to make their own notions the arbitrary rule for judging right and wrong. (13)

And she criticizes the English women from the Porto community: "English ladies don't even bother to read the Portuguese language, making lofty reasons a comfortable cloak to hide from themselves the real reason for it, indolence"; and she mimics them: "'It is a great waste of time to learn to read *a language that has only one book worth reading*, Camoens'. - A huge mistake, by the way." She thus attacks these expatriate ladies' ignorance of Portuguese literature and culture, a typical phenomenon of English 'self-isolation' abroad, duly analysed in M. Clara Paulino's study "The *Alien* European" (2013).[12]

There are also some informed references in the text to the Napoleonic invasions, the Portuguese civil war and to political instability. For example, when she comments on the situation in the country, expressing her contempt for the "little wars",[13] which never seem to have an end:

> But the "little wars" of retaliation are never ended in Portugal. Miguelites and Pedroites, Hump-backs and Thumped-backs, Chartists and Septembrists, etc., etc., for ever re-appear under some new nickname or other, and fight their little spites, and never fight them out. (Journal, vol. I: 66-67).

[12] "To all intents and purposes the British created a world apart, a world as similar as possible to the one that they had left behind. Little attempt was made to learn the Portuguese language, and interaction with the local population was kept to a minimum. Such self-isolation must have impeded a deeper understanding of their surroundings. In this context it is significant, as well as understandable, that British travellers turned to these well-established communities in Oporto and Lisbon as soon as they arrived. As a consequence, perhaps inevitably, the resulting travel accounts present a marked uniformity of description, commentary and judgement." Paulino, M.C. (2013). "The 'Alien' European: British Accounts of Portugal and the Portuguese, 1780–1850". In: Farr, M., Guégan, X. (eds) *The British Abroad Since the Eighteenth Century*, Volume 1. Britain and the World. Palgrave Macmillan, London.

[13] Some government measures even led to popular uprisings, such as that of Maria da Fonte and Patuleia, which took place exactly during the course of her trip, that is, in 1846.

In the structural organization of her speech, when she consciously seeks the connection between the English, European, so-called civilized world and the marginal regions of Portugal that welcomed her, she is involved, not a few times, in a double process of confrontation and negotiation between values and conceptions of profoundly different cultural universes. This rhetorical process reveals a desire to understand the "other", but also a clear (and honest) intercultural positioning.[14]

About 10 years later, another even more famous literary figure would venture into Lusitanian land, undoubtedly motivated by enthusiastic reports of previous literary travellers, but offering now a (renovated) male perspective of things: **Lord Tennyson –** Britain's Poet Laureate.

In 2009, the translator Octávio dos Santos refers to Alfred Tennyson's momentous but brief visit to Portugal in the summer of 1859.[15] The reason for it is not mentioned, but health issues seem less likely than purely recreational ones. The laureate apparently arrived in Lisbon on the 21st August, along with two friends, Francis Palgrave and Florence Grove, having visited several landmarks of the Portuguese capital (including the Jerónimos Monastery). They afterwards travelled to Sintra to see the Moorish castle and three palaces.[16] Before returning to England, on the 7th September, he and Palgrave made a trip to Santarém. One wonders if the visit to this town made famous by Almeida Garrett in his major work of Portuguese Romanticism, *Travels in My Homeland* (1846),[17] could have constituted the major motivation for Tennyson. As Santos comments, based on the letters the poet sent to his wife Emily, Tennyson was somewhat troubled by the summer heat and unimpressed by the 'parched barren look' of much of the landscape.

But, after an initial disappointment, he admitted to 'liking the place much better as I know it better', as if referring to the need of a long acquired taste. Tennyson had been greeted by several personalities on his arrival, one of whom was the Duke of Saldanha, who impressed him as the Field Marshall who had fought under Wellington in the Peninsular War, and who would fulfil posts as ambassador in England and as Prime

[14] See also Luisa Azuaga, Org. of *Relatos de Viagens. Representações e Codificações Linguísticas de Portugal no Século XIX* (Vol. II, CEAUL, 2019).
[15] "Alfred Tennyson in Portugal. A Double Celebration", The British Historical Society of Portugal, 36th Annual Report and Review.
[16] One of which (Monserrate) was being reconstructed by the same architect that later designed the poet's final residence - Aldworth House.
[17] The novel narrates his thirteen-day trip to Santarém, wittily intermingling personal experiences with a sentimental novel. Influenced by Laurence Sterne's *Sentimental Journey*, Garrett's masterpiece paved the way for great writers like Eça de Queirós and Machado de Assis and helped foster modern Portuguese prose.

Minister of Portugal. In a letter sent in October to his friend George Campbell, Tennyson wrote about Byron and Beckford's 'Romantic Cintra', lamenting that 'the orange trees were all dead from disease and that the crystal streams were either dried up or had been diverted'. But he imagines the dramatic scenery from the topmost tower of the castle, where he believed the Portuguese king had awaited the triumphal arrival of Vasco da Gama at the river Tagus – 'a moment worth having been waited for', he adds.

Santos finally wonders if the poet's short visit to Portugal has had any visible influence at all on his work. 'Some say', he mentions tentatively, that the beautiful sights of the Botanical Garden of Ajuda may have inspired poems like "Enoch Arden". Santos alludes to the fact that Tennyson's voyage along the Portuguese coast may also have led him to later write the following passage in "The Revenge: A Ballad of the Fleet": 'At Flores in the Azores Sir Richard Granville lay…'.[18] Santos ought to know, since he also published a pioneer translation of several of Tennyson's *Poems* in 2009 (about 50 in all), at the poet's 200th anniversary.

Some years later, in July 1873, the enlightened widow of an English aristocratic diplomat, **Lady Catherine Jackson**, landed in Lisbon, coming from London.[19] She would stay in Portugal until October of the same year and, when she left, it was not without deep regrets that she said goodbye to 'Formosa Lusitânia'. Back in England, the following year, she published her account, which, just three years later (in 1877), was translated by one of the greatest figures in Portuguese literature (of the Romantic period), **Camilo Castelo Branco** (1825-1890).[20] In the Warning, and in the delightful Notes that accompany his translation, Camilo, recognising that it is "a worthy and honourable book", does not fail to criticize, correct and comment on the errors, "inaccuracies" and "eccentricities" contained in the work, sometimes with irony and sarcasm: "This lady, when she pretends to write our language, takes usurious revenge for the affronts we do to the pronunciation of hers." (2-3)

Like Dora Wordsworth's text, *Fair Lusitania. Portugal in 1873* is a narrative in the first person, based on a diary and letters that the author penned during her trip, and organized linearly, according to the chronological order of the travelled itinerary. Though

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[18] English explorer and MP, who died at the Battle of Flores against the Spanish Fleet, in 1591, near Azores. On board the galleon *Revenge,* he allowed the other English ships to escape.

[19] Catherine Hannah Charlotte Elliott Jackson, Lady Jackson (1824-1891), was the wife of Knight Diplomat Sir George Jackson (1785-1861), whom she married in 1856, and a prolific author in her own right, especially in the area of history and the court of France in the 16th century.

[20] *Lady Jackson, A Formosa Lusitânia – Portugal in 1873*, Translation and Notes by Camilo Castelo Branco, Casal de Cambra, Kaleidoscope edition, 2007.

within the tradition of British travel literature about Portugal, it distinguishes itself from it in the author's greater open-mindedness and politically liberal views. She is always available to let herself be enchanted by what she sees, and without the barrier of many negative pre-judgments about the Portuguese reality that usually conditioned the gaze of the English who visited us. It is also a feminine look at Portugal during the reign of D. Luís.

In fact, Lady Jackson put herself, from the beginning, in a radically contrary position to that of her fellow compatriots, who invariably adopted towards Portugal and southern Europe as a whole, a phobic attitude, and constantly affirmed their civilizational superiority.

> There! Demeaned Portugal! How can such a beautiful country, whose capital is second in beauty among the cities of Europe, whose people are so policed, kind, hospitable, (…), be defiled, as is the case, by the rest of the world, and considered less valuable and interesting from the kingdoms of Europe? (10)

Explaining right away, in the Introduction to the work, that it was her intention to fight the berated image of Portugal as a backward, uneducated, barbaric country, which had long circulated in England and Europe; and that it was the result only, in the author's opinion, of ignorance (namely, of the language) and prejudice.

She meant to send to print a volume of travel impressions that did justice to Portugal, recognized the richness of its historical and literary heritage, its countless beauties and natural resources, the picturesque of its customs; including as well the effort to modernize that, in the last two decades, had been registered. Being aware, also, that the arrogance of the English and the shortcomings of the Luso-British alliance had long been distorting its image in the eyes of the Portuguese, and arousing in them Anglophobic feelings, the author is confident that, with her testimony, she will contribute to a better understanding between the two peoples, and to an improvement in the opinion of the Portuguese in relation to their old allies. [21]

Typical Portuguese responses to the Victorian traveller

The scholar Maria Castanheira (University of Lisbon) has analysed a number of texts published in the Portuguese periodical press featuring travelling Victorian Britons as a

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[21] Though projecting a very favourable image of the country, it still mentioned the more negative impressions of travel, namely the strong popular superstition, the many beggars who swarmed through the streets of Lisbon or the bedbugs that infested the beds of hotels and inns.

particular stereotype of the period, one evoking intercultural responses that are quite revealing.[22]

As she explains, a recurring strategy is that of the narrator's account of boat and train journeys effected in the company of Britons, as occurs in "From Jersey to Granville" (1843), by **Alexandre Herculano** (1810-1877), the result of a painful experience of exile in Britain in 1831, into which the writer was forced because of his Liberal militancy. Whether the writer travelled from England to France, wandered around Italy or set off from Terreiro do Paço to Minho, there was always an inevitable Briton on board.

Apparently, as suggested in another text, "The Englishman" by **Almeida Garrett** (1799-1854), the 'Englishman' was created exclusively to live in his island – when he leaves his natural habitat, he becomes a figure of fun wherever he may travel. His physical type, his behaviour, and sartorial appearance, at once identified him, because of his difference and singularity. In one of his novels (of 1851-52), Bulhão Pato (1829-1912) suggests that some of the features indeed stem from Victorian Britain's colonial policies: circumspection, terseness, and haughtiness (Pato, 445). Other writers also highlighted the brevity of British dialogue; Herculano's text had already satirised this British peculiarity. Describing two of the 'Englishmen', his fellow-travellers en route to France, he notes the telegraphic concision of their speech, even counting the number of words one of them utters during the day.[23]

It seems that Herculano, as an historian, did not forgive imperial, capitalist Albion for its hold over Portugal's recent past and the political and economic influence it exerted on Portuguese life. The 'Englishman' full of boredom and existential angst, despite his material well-being and civilizational progress, was also targeted in Lopes de Mendonça's novel: "famous English travellers, covered in bank-notes and spleen, who, in frock-coat and white gloves, wander around the ruins of Pompeii." (*Memoirs of a Madman,* 1850). In "Three Letters" (1862), Júlio César Machado (1835-1890), describing his journey to Victorian London, hints at another distinctive trait – the monotonous uniformity of the 'English', as Machado observes in the mordant style which characterises him:

> The Englishman does not heed that well-known etiquette which he so loudly preaches, except in his own land. […] In his land, every scruple of good manners, every sartorial

[22] See Castanheira, M. Z. B. S. V. (2015). "The Victorian Traveller as Other: Stereotypes and Humour in the Periodical Press of Portuguese Romanticism". *Revista de Estudos Anglo-Portugueses*, (24), 187-204.

[23] "Mr Graham Junior, just as soon as his respectable brother stopped reading, turned his sad face to him, and murmured after a sigh: Aye! – Very good! With the three preceding Yes, it all amounted to six words, or croaks, which Mr. Graham Junior had spent that day." (43)

> care seem too little for him: *in other people's lands they walk around as if they were going out into the garden*… (27)

The idea is conveyed that this is an unalterable national type, however much he may have travelled and no matter how many other lands he may have visited; convinced of his superiority, his nomadic instinct leads him to travel everywhere but he returns home unchanged. This precise point is remarked upon in a text entitled "The English Literature" (1860), signed with the single initial M. and published in Coimbra: "There can be in history no more turbulent people in appearance nor more immutable in essence. They ceaselessly travel to the four corners of the world, and return just as they were; and in the places they inhabit what they find of greatest interest is themselves." (57)

As Castanheira concludes, the entire discourse surrounding British travellers and their idiosyncrasies should be read against the backdrop of the history of Anglo-Portuguese relations, since it is there that we find most of its justification. Although the two countries were linked by a centuries-old alliance, many Portuguese voices denounced the way Britain harmed Portuguese interests, serving itself. The laughter aimed at the Victorian on his travels thus appears, on a deeper level, as a way of critiquing capitalist and imperialist Britain, the exploiter of those who were weaker, including Portugal.

Perceived as a cultural Other, whose peculiarities contributed to the construction of an image of outlandishness and eccentricity, the Victorian traveller was also taken as a symbol of an economic and political Other, whose interference in Portuguese affairs and the conflicts between the two nations throughout the nineteenth century gave rise to feelings of dislike.

More informed Portuguese responses to Victorian Britain and Britons

The educated Portuguese traveller usually sought in Victorian London the spectacle of the accelerated pace of progress. Therefore, the visit to the mighty and gigantic metropolis represented a kind of trip to the future. The use of adjectives in Portuguese accounts of the English capital – "immense", "grandiose", "magnificent", "splendid", "majestic", "haughty", "rich" – is precisely the expression of amazement and admiration for a model of development that you would like to see implemented in Portugal.

In 1879, the co-founder of the major periodical *Diário de Notícias* (1864), the journalist **Eduardo Coelho**, published the volume *Tours Abroad*, the Second Part of which concerns a "Walk to London" that the author made in August 1878, following a

visit to the Universal Exhibition in Paris of the same year.[24] Despite being impressed with the city, Eduardo Coelho does not adopt an attitude of total surrender in his report. In line with the representations of England and its capital found in the work of major writers from the 70s Generation, such as Eça de Queirós, Ramalho Ortigão and Oliveira Martins, he leaves us with a mixed and contrasting picture:

> (…) the moral physiognomy, so full of contrasts, of this amazing city, which shows the world two dissimilar faces, - grandeur and misery, magnificence and disgrace, the imperturbable and Olympic poise of the lord, and the cynical activity of the pick-pocket, the candid and angelic virtue of the beautiful lady, which blooms in smiles in the pure and soft atmosphere of the family, and the repellent and crapulous vice of the drunk and wanton woman, who provokes and attacks the carefree wayfarer in the streets. (Walks Abroad, p. 267).

Here, he simultaneously paints London's splendours and miseries, with its light and its shadows; the opulent, progressive, enterprising, positive, useful, organized, exact, systematic London, and the sinful London of prostitution, drunkenness, pickpockets, of unbridled capitalism, of the 'objectification' of the individual. We could even say that, in Eduardo Coelho's text, there is a certain rejection of the English capital, similar to what happens in the famous poem 'The London Moon' by the ultra-romantic João de Lemos (1819-1890).

A very important intercultural response comes from **Eça de Queiroz** (1845-1900), who in his lifetime – the *fin-de-siècle* – was already considered one of the greatest European novelists,[25] and whose mostly satiric works illuminate nineteenth-century Portuguese society as those of Dickens reveal Victorian England. But Eça was also a distinguished diplomat and journalist, who happened to live abroad in Cuba, England and France in the course of his consular duties. Although he struggled to adapt to a new life in Newcastle, his first UK posting, he spent more than a decade in various locations of HM's country (namely, Bristol), and wrote arresting articles and reports on contemporary social and political problems, where he proves to be a keen observer.[26]

Eça, a cosmopolitan figure who was widely read in English literature, had apparently no admiration for English society or the British Empire, though they undoubtedly fascinated him. His earliest and perhaps most bitter sketch of the British in

[24] See Castanheira, M.Z. "Troca de olhares entre Portugal e a Inglaterra na literatura de viagens da segunda metade do século XIX: Lady Jackson e Eduardo Coelho." *Dedalus. Revista Portuguesa de Literatura Comparada* 14-15 (2010-2011): 391-408.

[25] For Zola, he was 'far greater than my own dear master, Flaubert'.

[26] Eça de Queirós was assigned as Portuguese Consul in Newcastle for 4 years (1874-1878) and in Bristol, for another 10 years (1878-1888). This foreign experience is partly reproduced in "Cartas de Inglaterra" (1905) and "Cartas de Londres" (1940), both published posthumously.

their Empire comes from the six-article series *Os Ingleses no Egipto*, "The English in Egypt" of 1882,[27] which reveals a very good knowledge of the English presence overseas, as well as of the habits of the British expatriate communities:

> What a strange people! For them it is a matter of certainty that no one can be moral without reading the Bible; no one can be strong without playing cricket; no one can be a gentleman without being English. And this is what makes them hated. They never blend; they never become *un-English* ... The Englishman falls on foreign ideas and customs as a block of granite falls on water. There he stays, with his Bible, his clubs, his sports, his prejudices, his etiquette, his self-centredness ... *Even in countries where he has lived for hundreds of years, he is still the foreigner*.(267, my emphasis)

Notwithstanding this, and other very critical comments in the author's correspondence, scholars as Teresa Pinto Coelho (Univ. of Lisbon) do not wholly believe in Eça's supposed Anglophobia. She argues that the periodicals Eça himself conceived and edited were modelled on dozens of Victorian ones, such as the *Contemporary Review*, the *Review of Reviews* or *The Idler*, as well as on some American ones. In this sense, she thinks Eça is undeniably an Anglophile, one long seduced by the diversity and originality of English thought, and increasingly distant from the French cultural model which had marked his education.

> This is a paradigm that, while in England (from 1874 to 1888), he perceives as being too restrictive - if it were not complemented by the vast Anglo-Saxon universe which he was given to discover and for which he nurtures a greater fascination, or we could even say a greater passion, than that to which critics and he himself are willing to admit.[28]

According to the modern publisher of Eça's *English Letters* (Carcanet, 2000), these are 'solemn, grand, vulnerable - and a little absurd' in their curious depiction of England in the 1880s. As a young consul, Eça de Queirós begins by writing letters to his Brazilian readers, giving a typically dry, amused, but not impartial account of the events of the day. With his talent, he thus brings alive people and places, 'blowing stylish raspberries at venerable institutions'. A corrective to the British propaganda of the period, his letters provide timeless amusement from their vantage point in history - 'a vision of Victorian Britain *less eminently civilised* than it thought itself to be.' And the amused editor proceeds to enumerate Eça's anecdotal highlights.

Regarding specifically Britain's most recent imperial and economic ambitions, involving the control of Egypt, Eça has no illusions whatsoever. He wrote about the crisis

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[27] Published for the first time in Rio de Janeiro's periodical *Gazeta de Notícias.* In *Eça's English Letters*. Translated by Alison Aiken and Ann Stevens with an Introduction by Jonathan Keates. Carcanet Press, Manchester, 2000.
[28] Pinto Coelho, T. (2014). *Eça de Queirós and the Victorian Press*. Boydell & Brewer.

in 1881-1882 that resulted in the bombing of Alexandria, Egypt, by a British fleet.[29] Eça seems to 'hit the nail on the head' in his Letters, by using his sharply lucid but florid style:

> John Bull will not be satisfied with anything less than a solid, long-lasting result: an English Egypt, and running through its territory, like a corridor in a private house, the Suez Canal, the route to India. A government which, after burying millions of English pounds and thousands of English lives in the sands of Africa, will not offer this, will instantly receive John Bull's boot in his posterior. (263-4)

Despite his amused criticism of imperial Britain, Eça was equally critical of Portuguese colonial policies, eventually proposing a more effective and also considerate management of the African territories and their people. This attitude indeed contrasted with the majorly adopted position of other contemporary writers, like the poets de Quental and G. Junqueiro.

Portuguese-British colonial conflicts with an impact on intercultural relations

As Hugo Silveira Pereira (2018) explains in his study on "Colonial Railways",[30] Portuguese hopes in southern Africa, in the course of the 1880s, came to extend to all Matabeleland and the Lake Nyasa region. They conflicted with British projects of annexation northward from the Cape, and the Scottish mission foundations made Nyasaland a sensitive area; anti-Portuguese sentiment roused by Livingstone's Missionary Travels and his denunciation of the slave-dealers was still fermenting. Altogether the religious revival in 19th-century Britain, and its outpouring of tracts and missionaries, made for diminished respect for Portugal as one of the more benightedly Catholic countries.

The 'historical arguments' of Portugal (as first to discover) generally prevailed in these conflicts. That was the case of the dispute regarding the colonial sovereignty of the island of Bolama, near what was then Portuguese Guinea (now Guinea-Bissau), the site of an attempt to establish an English colony, led by Philip Beaver.[31] Another dispute, this time over the sovereignty of the bay of Lourenço Marques in Mozambique ("Delagoa Bay"), was also arbitrated in Portugal's favour by the French President (MacMahon), again based on Portugal's historical arguments.

[29] The leader of the popular uprising and of the army, Egyptian Colonel Ahmed Arabi Pasha (ca. 1840-1911), was blamed by the British press for stimulating turmoil in Egypt and instigating the riot that took place in Alexandria on June 11 1882, resulting in the killing of hundreds of people. The uprising served as the foundation for Great Britain to consider Egypt to be in a state of anarchy, justifying the military intervention that occurred on July 11.

[30] "Colonial Railways and Conflict Resolution Between Portugal and the United Kingdom in Africa" (c. 1880–early 1900s). In *Journal of History of Science and Technology* 12, pp. 75-105.

[31] None other than the American President Ulysses Grant favourably arbitrated this.

But soon enough the great, and greedy, powers gathered in Berlin[32] would give priority to the new doctrine of 'effective occupation' of those territories, a stage that Portugal had not yet achieved in many cases. The British "Ultimatum" to Portugal under Prime Minister, the Marquis of Salisbury, was caused by a clash regarding Portugal's ambition to unite Angola with Mozambique (symbolised by the 'Pink Map') and the British ambition (advocated by Cecil Rhodes) to unite Cairo with the Cape (by train). The incident that provoked the ultimatum (of January, 1890) took place in the Shire Valley, in what is today Malawi: it demanded the immediate withdrawal of an expedition headed by a prestigious officer named Serpa Pinto.[33] The Ultimatum eventually forced Portugal to back down, which had an enormous impact on Portuguese public opinion, and probably contributed to the fall of the Monarchy in 1910.[34]

At Lisbon there was an outburst of indignation against Britain,[35] in which many long-smouldering resentments found expression (especially among the intellectual elite), and the ministry fell. The terms of the Ultimatum, and the subservience of King D. Carlos to them, aroused violent anti-British feelings all over Portugal.[36] As T.P. Coelho argues,

> At a time when several European nations were consolidating their position in the African continent, the Ultimatum meant the official acknowledgement of British sovereignty over territories Portugal had been claiming for centuries. (13)

In Britain and elsewhere, Portugal was mostly seen as a weak and uncivilized nation unable to administer her African possessions. The Ultimatum did find some echo in the British press, but the affair was seen in a very different way. All this 'noise' avowedly helped to promote republicanism, against the Anglophile monarchy, but the link between radicalism at home and imperialism overseas was unwholesome. For English observers, it helped to save Portuguese left-wing politicians the trouble of thinking out a social programme, by diverting discontent into illusions about Africa as a new Eldorado.

As Silveira Pereira argues, the scramble for Africa in the 1880s illustrates the importance of technology as a "tool of empire" to assert dominance in the colonial

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32 Article 35 of Chapter VI, of the General Act (1884-85 Berlin Conference agreements).

33 Although some continental crossings had been attempted before, only in 1875, when the Geographical Society of Lisbon was founded, was there a real effort to explore and colonize major parts of Africa.

34 See Teresa Pinto Coelho's article "British and Portuguese Attitudes towards the British Ultimatum of 1890", in The British Historical Society of Portugal's Annual Report (21st, 1994).

35 Journalists, poets, novelists, students and the public in general protested violently against what they saw as an outrage.

36 Demonstrations were held, the British consulate stoned and economic sanctions against Britain demanded.

landscapes, but also the importance of money in the implementation and development (or failure) of settlements. Thus, wealthy Britain would keep a regular presence in the Portuguese colonies, exerting a form of informal imperialism. Though the conflicts did not lead to a final situation of frustration or violence, neither did they foster development and dynamism in the relationship between Portugal and Britain in Africa.

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