

Introduction

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THIS VOLUME of *Portuguese Studies Review* is dedicated to the memory of Professor Ursula Lamb, who was writing Atlantic history long before it became fashionable. She was a scholar of early modern Iberian science and technology (among her many interests) and a distinguished Professor of Iberian History for many years at the University of Arizona in Tucson. Scholar, mentor, teacher, and friend; she would have welcomed and appreciated the essays in this volume.

The collection of papers that forms this issue of *Portuguese Studies Review* focuses on the Portuguese Atlantic, a construction that is both familiar and illusive. With two exceptions, these essays were originally presented at the international conference “The Evolution of the Portuguese Atlantic”, held at the College of Charleston in May of 1998.¹ That conference and its Asian parallel, “The Evolution of Portuguese Asia”, commemorated the 500th anniversaries of the arrival of Pedro Álvares Cabral in Brazil and Vasco da Gama in India.² In addition to the authors included here, we were fortunate to have a number of additional senior scholars in the field leading sessions and commenting. Professors Francis Dutra, Kenneth Maxwell, Laura de Mello e Souza, and Douglas Wheeler all contributed to the success of the conference and ultimately to the quality of this collection of essays.

The Atlantic World, viewed as a unit of historical connections and interactions, is an ambitious and complex construction. In the last twenty or thirty years, Atlantic history has become an increasingly widespread focus for studies, seminars, conferences, and even graduate programs in history. However, “the Atlantic World” as a meaningful phrase was not born in academia but on the lips of those who created it. Sailors, explorers, slaves,

¹ The two additional articles are by Ivana Elbl and Martin Malcolm Elbl. Both address important dimensions of the Portuguese presence in Atlantic Africa. Ivana Elbl’s original contribution to the conference, “Prestige Considerations and the Changing Interest of the Portuguese Crown in Sub-Saharan Africa, 1441-1580,” was published earlier, in *Portuguese Studies Review* 10 (2) (2002-3): 15-36.

² The papers from this conference were published in Vol. 9 (2001-2) of the *Portuguese Studies Review*.

merchants, planters, bankers and many others all participated (willingly or not) in its creation and formed the links that united the Atlantic. “The Atlantic World” would have been a meaningful phrase to a wealthy plantation owner in 1620 Salvador, a planter who made his money from the labor of Africans, exported his sugar to Lisbon, and who depended on trans-Atlantic connections for his livelihood. It would have also carried a great deal of meaning for his slaves and others living in a city that depended on the Atlantic for its prosperity. “The Atlantic World” would have been equally meaningful to people living on the Azores, the Cape Verde Islands, or on São Tomé. As it does today, the exact meaning of “the Portuguese Atlantic” would have varied greatly from one individual and location to another, but all of them would have had an appreciation of their locale and its Atlantic links.

A great deal has been written on the Atlantic World and its connections. I see no need to cover that ground again here. I would like to point out one overlooked aspect that goes straight to the heart of the material in this volume: the Atlantic World was created in stages and layers and it was the Iberians (largely the Portuguese but also Castilians and some Genoese) who made the first links in this Atlantic network. As an undergraduate who studied with Dr. Lamb, I can vividly recall her trenchant advice when I was in the habit of making such claims for the Portuguese. She would say, “Careful, you’ll start a process!” But then, of course, she knew quite well that this *was* the beginning of a global process that would evolve over the centuries from the period of early Atlantic discoveries during the time of Prince Henry (“The Navigator”) to the (largely early modern) triangular trade, into more current forms such as NATO, Mercosul, and PALOP.³

Who were the creators of this “Portuguese Atlantic”? In order to answer that question, we need to examine the first phases of Portuguese expansion beginning in 1415 in Ceuta and ending in 1500 with Cabral’s arrival in Brazil. The fifteenth century was a time when the Atlantic lost much of its mystery. The Portuguese were able to trace the West and Southern African coastlines as well as most of the South American Atlantic shore, and colonize the four strategic island groups of Madeira, the Azores, the Cape Verde Islands, and São Tomé. Concurrently with this process, they were able to negotiate two famous treaties with Castile that marked each

³ Mercosul/Mercosur is a free trade network that includes Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay. PALOP is the organization consisting of the former Portuguese colonies in Africa and Equatorial Guinea, African countries which use Portuguese as an official language.

kingdom's sphere of influence, leaving the Atlantic largely Portuguese, with the notable exception of the Canary Islands.⁴ Famous navigators such as Luís de Cadamosto, Duarte Pacheco Pereira, Diogo Cão, and Bartolomeu Dias helped to chart the Atlantic and make sense of its wind and water patterns. Others on shore built ships that could successfully navigate these waters and still others worked on astronomical instruments for navigation and cartographic representations of these discoveries. To this list, we would have to add the numerous ordinary sailors who also contributed to understanding this new bigger Atlantic world. I have already mentioned some of the other figures that initially inhabited and percolated within this expanding Portuguese arena: traders, slaves, merchants, farmers, plantation owners, and officials of the church and state all formed the nexus we refer to as "the Portuguese Atlantic."

In the current rush of Atlantic studies, it is easy to think that the Portuguese Atlantic is new as a historical concept. It is not. Historians have been writing about the Portuguese Atlantic since the age of the first chronicles and travel accounts in the fifteenth century. Just limiting my comments to historians working in the past 150 years, the list could be quite long. I would like to cite just a handful of historians who have worked on aspects of the Portuguese Atlantic. I single out these scholars because I believe their work continues to be relevant today.⁵

Luciano Cordeiro (1844-1900), who wrote on aspects of Portuguese Asia as well as the Atlantic. I would particularly point out his *Questões histórico-coloniais* (3 vols., Lisboa: Agência Geral as Colonias, 1935-6) and the numerous documents he edited, published in the series *Memórias do ultramar* by the Imprensa Nacional in the 1880's.⁶

Joaquim Pedro de Oliveira Martins (1845-94) was the author of several important works on the Portuguese Atlantic, notably *O Brasil e as colônias portuguesas* (1881), *Portugal nos mares* (1889), *Portugal em África* (1891), and *Portugal contemporâneo* (1895).

Jaime Cortesão (1884-1960) was a prolific author and several of his works focus on the Portuguese Atlantic, especially *A Expansão dos Portugueses no*

⁴ Here I am referring to the Treaties of Alcáçovas (1479) and Tordesilhas (1494).

⁵ This list was suggested in part by Alfredo Pinheiro Marques, *A História da descoberta dos descobrimentos*. Coimbra: Minerva, 1991.

⁶ For example, *Viagens, explorações e conquistas dos Portugueses. Escravos e minas de África. Collecção de documentos segundo diversos, 1516-1619, Number 6* (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional- Memórias do Ultramar, 1881).

período henriquino; Os Descobrimentos pré-colombinos dos Portugueses; and Introdução à história das Bandeiras, just to cite three possible examples.⁷

Damião Peres (1889-1976), although not concentrating just on the Atlantic, among his many works wrote an important imperial synthesis, *História dos descobrimentos portugueses* (revised in 1960).

Charles Boxer (1904-2000). Three of Boxer's major works could claim to be Atlantic in their focus: *The Golden Age of Brazil* (1962), *The Dutch in Brazil* (1957) and especially *Salvador de Sá and the Struggle for Brazil and Angola* (1952). Boxer's work on the Dutch period in Brazil, in spite of its age, is still an important (and singular) introduction to the subject. Many consider *Salvador de Sá* to be his finest work and it is certainly a brilliant example of how the biography of one individual can outline much larger issues, in this case the Luso-Dutch struggle and the Angolan-Brazilian slave trade.

Luís de Albuquerque (1917-92) was a historian with wide ranging interests in the age of expansion. His publications are numerous and of a very high quality. Among them I would single out his *História da cartografia portuguesa* (co-authored with Armando Cortesão in 1969), *Os descobrimentos portugueses* (1983) and his detailed study of a fascinating renaissance figure *Obras completas de D. João de Castro* (also co-authored with Armando Cortesão in four volumes, the last published in 1982).

Admiral Avelino Teixeira da Mota (1920-82). Teixeira da Mota's Atlantic was largely West African and scientific. His two volumes of *Guiné Portuguesa* (1954) remain the best single overview of the former colony's history. A collection of his articles, *Mar Além Mar* (1972) shows his wide-ranging interests that tended towards scientific and technical themes related to navigation. In spite of his very solid work on West Africa, he will undoubtedly be better remembered for the massive *Portugaliae monumenta cartographica*, which he published with Armando Cortesão in 1960.

This list is by no means a complete one. It would be easy to expand it by adding Luciano Pereira da Silva (1864-1926), Joaquim Bensaúde (1859-1952), and Armando Cortesão (1891-1976), since all these figures and many others, such as Frédéric Mauro and Orlando Ribeiro (1911-97) have all been critical in the conceptualization of Portuguese Atlantic in our own times.

This field has not been fueled only by individuals and their published works but also by a number of important conferences that marked anni-

⁷His complete works (*Obras Completas de Jaime Cortesão*) were published in the 1960s by Portugalia and have been republished by Horizonte in the 1970's and 1980's.

versaries during the past century. Two of these stand out: the 1940 Congresso do Mundo Português (and the multivolume publication that followed) and the 1960 Commemorations in Honor of Prince Henry. Of course there have been many others since, including several in 1998, but none that focused exclusively on the Portuguese Atlantic.

It is against this backdrop that we can now turn to this collection. In the opening article, Professor A. J. R. Russell-Wood outlines the legal framework that allowed for the implementation and settlement of the global empire as well as the differing interactions between the Portuguese and their neighbors in a wide variety of locales. In the next article, Professor Ivana Elbl discusses what it meant to be Portuguese, to be a part of this Atlantic World, and even to be a marginal figure at its edges. She also points out that in Portuguese descriptions of “the other” the meaning of identity, at least in the Portuguese case, was frequently equated with a core combination of factors, principally religion, culture, language, social standing, and the needs of the situation. The collection then turns to Madeira and the contribution by Alberto Vieira on the initial colonization of the island. In this work, Vieira clearly shows the who, why, and when behind the colonization of the Portuguese Atlantic, and that it was frequented by many non-Portuguese as well. Vieira’s article traces the importance of Portuguese, foreigners, Africans, and indigenous peoples in the early history of the Atlantic islands. Martin Elbl’s article reminds us of the concurrent struggle the Portuguese faced in North Africa while also pushing down the African coast and charting the Atlantic. Using military plans, iconography, narrative evidence, and archival documents, the article offers a “virtual archaeology” of the Moroccan city of Tangier as it evolved during the Portuguese occupation from 1471 to 1662.

São Tomé island would be easy to overlook if it were not for its critical role in this Atlantic. After the Portuguese arrived on the island towards the end of the fifteenth century, the island became a quasi-penal colony with European convicts (*degradados*) overseeing slave labor producing sugar for the European market. Lorenzino’s article on the *Angolares* highlights the major linguistic differences between this group and the others living on the island. It is also a reminder that this fascinating runaway community was able to survive in spite of the limited size of the island, forming a distinctive third community on São Tomé.

From Africa, the collection turns to Brazil, beginning with César Braga-Pinto’s analysis of the writing of one of colonial Brazil’s most famous authors: Father Antonio Vieira and his messianic *History of the Future*. Next,

both Geraldo Pieroni and Janaína Amado examine convicts exiled to Portuguese America by the state's courts. Pieroni outlines the process as it was applied to the Brazilian colony for the first sixty years of Portuguese presence and underlines the importance of convicts (especially male convicts and their labor) during this early period. Amado's article examines female convict colonizers in Brazil at the end of the colonial era. More specifically, her article condenses the data from ten books of registry for convicts begun in the 1740's and focuses on the 125 cases of female convicts she encountered. Of these 125 women, eighty-eight would be sent to Brazil (mostly Pará), while the others would remain in Portugal (30 cases) or be sent to Africa. In addition to the state's courts, sinners convicted by Inquisitorial courts would also become forced colonizers, as was the case of the false mystic Maria de Jesus. In his study of her case, Mark Emerson outlines how the Inquisition functioned and provides a concrete example of one person crossing the Atlantic and the impact of her sentence of exile.

In spite of the crown's best efforts, this Portuguese Atlantic was not airtight; Lisbon was not always able to regulate it in the manner to which it aspired. Ernst Pijning's article on illegal trade makes this clear and highlights the importance of local authorities in the implementation of royal laws defining legal and illegal trade. Pijning also examines the very close and interdependent trading relationship between southern Brazil and Buenos Aires. Finally, we end this collection with Kirsten Schultz' article on the transfer of the royal court from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro, a move that would eventually end the colonial era in Brazil. In her article, Schultz discusses the meaning of the arrival of the royal court in Rio de Janeiro and how the end of Brazil's status as a colony was understood. In fact, as she and others have articulated, this presence had the effect of reversing the relationship: Portugal became the colony and Brazil became the center of the Portuguese Empire. Her article explores political and economic ideas of empire in print at the time, and examines how this new Brazilian kingdom would be understood and interpreted by individuals such as José da Silva Lisboa.

In this brief introduction, I have tried to outline the achievements of scholars in the past 100-plus years and underlined how their works have helped form our concept of the Portuguese Atlantic. What sort of possible avenues of research remain for scholars interested in this Portuguese Atlantic? While a great deal of work has been published on the histories of the Azores and Madeira, it strikes me that we understand little about the development of São Tomé. This statement is applicable to a lesser extent

to the Cape Verde Islands. Both island groups offer great potential for a better and more complete understanding of the Portuguese Atlantic. Three other avenues of research that have not been fully explored are: the nexus of intra-island connections; emigration from the Azores and Madeira to Brazil; and the roles played by the Cape Verdes and São Tomé in the Atlantic slave trade. Another possibility for research is the first few generations of contact between Portuguese and non-Portuguese along coastal Africa and Brazil. Alida Metcalf's very solid and readable new study of this process in sixteenth century Brazil, *Go-Betweens and the Colonization of Brazil* (2005), and Walter Rodney's *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800* (1970) both clearly demonstrate dynamic exchanges between the Portuguese and others, I suggest that more could be done along these lines. These are just some very broad ideas that strike me as worthy of future research. I am sure the readers of this collection will have their own ideas to add to this short list.

The conference "The Evolution of the Portuguese Atlantic" and the initial presentation and discussion of these papers was made possible by the generosity of the CNCDP (Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimientos Portugueses), the Luso-American Development Foundation, and the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian. These last two foundations were also kind enough to provide additional support to the *Portuguese Studies Review*, to ensure the publication of these important contributions to the field. A combination of dead-ends and obstacles delayed the publication, and I regret it has taken so long to finally see them in print. I thank all the institutions and participants who have made this endeavor a success.

Appendix

*Some Recent Books Relating to the History of the Portuguese Atlantic,
Especially 1400-1800*

While the general field of the Portuguese Atlantic does not have a specific printed bibliography (at least not one of which I am aware), good starting points for the literature are two printed bibliographies: Alfredo Pinheiro Marques, *Guia de História dos Descobrimentos e Expansão Portuguesa* (Lisbon: Biblioteca Nacional, 1988); and Artur Teodoro de Matos and Luís Filipe F. Reis Thomaz, eds. *Vinte Anos de Historiografia Portuguesa 1972-1992* (Lisboa: CNCDP, 1993). The list that follows is a select bibliography of books published since 1992 that focus on the Portuguese Atlantic.

N.B.: Abbreviations: CNCDP (Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimentos Portugueses) and CEHA (Centro de Estudos de História do Atlântico).

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Vol. 7. Ed. Frédéric Mauro. *O Império luso-brasileiro 1620-1750* (1991).

Vol. 8. Ed. Maria Beatriz Nizza da Silva. *O Império luso-brasileiro 1750-1822* (1986).

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