

PORTUGUESE STUDIES

VOLUME 18

2002

*THE DEPARTMENT OF PORTUGUESE
KING'S COLLEGE LONDON*

Editor: HELDER MACEDO

Production Editor:
TONI HUBERMAN

Published by
MANEY PUBLISHING
for the
MODERN HUMANITIES RESEARCH ASSOCIATION

Empire, Colonial Wars and Post-Colonialism in the Portuguese Contemporary Imagination

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In his studies on Portuguese society as it operates in a global context and on Portugal's integration into the European Community, Boaventura de Sousa Santos considers the Portuguese state to be the principal steward of the political, economic and symbolic dimensions that constitute the process through which Portugal became part of the European Community. According to Sousa Santos, the political and economic harmonization necessary for the integration of Portugal into Europe has, in general, introduced a 'melhoria das condições gerais de acumulação'. This has given rise within the nation to a feeling of progress and development, overseen and cultivated by the State. As a result, the Portuguese can imagine themselves as 'Europeans'. For Sousa Santos, it is 'através desta dimensão muito complexa que o Estado regula, sobretudo com discursos e actos simbólicos, a dialéctica da distância e da proximidade, da diferença e da identidade, entre Portugal e a Europa'.¹ In other words, through recourse to the symbolic, the State discreetly evades an uncomfortable truth: Portugal was distant from a Europe it had deemed to be central. This truth was hidden behind the movement to turn Portugal into a European country. Portugal's privileged position in relation to Lusophone African countries, a position which set it apart from the rest of Europe, was emphasized from within a European context. Through this 'regulação', 'um universo imaginário onde Portugal se transforma num país europeu igual aos outros, sendo o seu menor grau de desenvolvimento considerado simples característica transitória que cabe ao Estado gerir' was created.² Sousa Santos terms this symbolic construction 'the State as imagination of the centre'. It has presided over and characterized the political performance of the State during the transitional process of Portugal's integration into Europe. The 'imagination of the centre' is, therefore, the concept of 'Portugal como um país europeu no mesmo pé que os demais'.³

Sousa Santos's concepts are applicable to cultural settings, as Maria Irene Ramalho Sousa Santos has pointed out in her analysis of Fernando Pessoa's poetry and philosophy. Read in the light of Portugal's recent

¹ Boaventura de Sousa Santos, 'O Estado, as Relações Salariais e o Bem-Estar Social na Semiperiferia: o caso português', in *Portugal: Um Retrato Singular* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1993), p. 51.

² Sousa Santos, p. 51.

³ Sousa Santos, *Pela Mão de Alice — O Social e o Político na Pós-Modernidade* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1996), p. 136.

history, these concepts confirm that the symbolic dimension of Portuguese politics, which propagates the image of Portugal as the centre, was constructed through empire. Or rather, it was fashioned through a conception of Portugal as an imperial nation that, in the same manner as today, concealed a second image of Portugal more closely related to the reality of life at the periphery, while 'imagining the centre'. This second image symbolically participates in the centre.

The image linking Portugal to a centrality furnished through empire acquired its mythical origin at the time the voyages of Discovery began. It is thus an image that is tied to the consequences of the maritime adventure. *Os Lusíadas* reflects this textually. In the Portuguese imperial imaginary, that image reverberated in Brazil and in the visions of the Fifth Empire propounded by Padre António Vieira.

Throughout the evolution of nineteenth-century imperialisms, and for most of the twentieth century, Portugal was never at the centre of European movements. The same is still true today in relation to Portugal's position within the European Union. However, during the Salazar era, the Estado Novo's increasing desire to isolate Portugal — especially after the beginning of the colonial war in Angola in 1961 — resulted in the 'imagination of the centre' assuming a more abstract and schizophrenic profile in which Portugal was simultaneously the centre and the only member of the space built for itself, safe from 'foreign conspiracies'. According to the myth, this symbolic Narcissus stands before the mirror and reflects his own image, the only image he loves. Nevertheless, this image could not conceal the 'displacement' of this centre towards the imperial periphery, where movements which would determine the future of the metropolis were based. It was the country, in Alexandre O'Neill's words, 'onde nada acontece', or one 'à espera' as Jorge de Sena saw it in 1972 in 'L' Été au Portugal'. As David Robertson remarked in his analysis on colonial war literature, from the beginning of the colonial war 'Africa becomes a mirror in which the unspoken and undisguised face of Portugal is reflected'.⁴ In this imperial central periphery, paradoxically, many Portuguese discovered an emptying of the traditional centre, that is, of the metropolitan space. Similarly, in Africa, others imagined a centre as the corner-stone of 'white bastion' resistance in the war. This group was protected by so-called Christian Western values which reacted against the advance of the 'new infidels'. It constructed a centre grounded in a theoretical base that was as much European as it was Portuguese.

⁴ David Robertson, 'The Vision of Colony and Metropolis in Portuguese Colonial War Literature', in *Literature and War*, ed. by David Bevan (Amsterdam and Atlanta: Rodopi, 1990), p. 156.

The complex mobility of the centre in the space then defined as the Portuguese world was not a new phenomenon. We only have to think, in relation to the empire in India, about the displacement of the centre towards the imperial periphery to which Fernão Alvares do Oriente refers in *Lusitânia Transformada*. Another example is the relationship between Portugal and Brazil when King John VI's court moved to Rio de Janeiro. Padre António Vieira's proposition of a Fifth Empire is yet another case. However, this mobility of the centre, while retaining the same tendency to reveal Portugal's fragilities, took different shapes during the period of the Estado Novo. Concealed behind a discourse which favoured rhetoric over reality, and using a supposedly historical foundation, Portugal's vulnerability, as the centre of its own empire, now transformed into a unique singularity fulfilled only in that empire. This made the distancing between Portugal and the European geopolitical arena possible since it supposedly had, as it used to have in the sixteenth century, other centres of interest that simultaneously defined it and protected it from an ever-uncomfortable need to face up to Europe.

Sousa Santos conceptualizes Portugal as a 'sociedade semiperiférica da região europeia do sistema mundial'.⁵ He analyses this national characteristic over various periods and from different social, political and economic perspectives. An important extension of his argument regarding Portugal's symbolic way of living as a centre, which is particularly relevant to the period of the Empire in Africa, is imagining the centre is only possible after having lived at the periphery. Significantly, Sousa Santos defines Portugal as a semi-peripheral society rather than using the expression 'semi-central', despite writing at a time when national self-flagellation does not characterize the cultural discourse as it once did in the nineteenth century. While his choice is theoretically based on the studies that he uses throughout his argument, it is also the case that the expression 'imagination of the centre' gains greater semantic and ideological contours when juxtaposed with the semi-periphery. In other words, 'imagination of the centre' gains meaning when it enables us to define Portugal as a semi-periphery imagining the centre. The concept of distance becomes fundamental to this definition. Nowadays, this distance is the result of a range of factors outlined by Sousa Santos. It is no longer a consequence of the geographic distance between the various Portuguese imperial spaces and the metropolis. The metropolis has, throughout the three imperial cycles, de-centred Portugal from its initial European centre, weakening its position both as an imperial metropolis amidst an empire and as a European imperial power. However, this has allowed Portugal to imagine itself as the centre from a different perspective. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, the above model

⁵ Sousa Santos, *Portugal: Um Retrato* . . . , p. 20.

was challenged by the independence of Brazil. Towards the middle of the century, the model resurfaced in a form linked to Europe: the Generation of 1870 believed in an empty Portugal, which was for them something catastrophic. There was an insuperable distance between doctrine and reality. Both formed part of daily life in Europe at the time and shaped the outlooks and commentaries of cultural élites. This distance would last for several generations not only because the Estado Novo did its utmost to block the development of the social sciences, but also because the regime transformed all forms of debate, be they political, social, ideological or religious, into a monologue. Portugal was led by a man who loathed dialogue and who conflated politics with discord, disorder and chaos. Indeed, Salazar reduced politics to 'uma prática asséptica, empírica' in the 'administração de coisas'.⁶ In his speeches addressed to an attentive public, which was silent or would be silenced, no discussion was allowed. Despite outward appearances, 'God and Virtue', 'The Motherland and Her History', 'Authority and its Prestige', 'The Family and Morality', 'The Glory of Work and Duty' or 'The Arguments of Opponents' were not open to discussion. Instead, the 'comfort of great certainties' took centre stage. Salazar formulated them into a type of law, as he himself declared in his archetypal speech commemorating the 'Tenth Year of the National Revolution, on 26 May 1936'.⁷ Consequently, as José Gil has pointed out, the dictator promoted 'o desmoroamento originário de qualquer outra palavra'; he nurtured silence.⁸ The opposition was left without a voice and effectively excluded from the political process. According to Eduardo Lourenço in 1972, this gave rise to abstract reflections about Portuguese reality that bore no resemblance to the political situation of the country, and prolonged the dichotomy that characterized Portuguese society without furnishing any basis for a dialogue.⁹

A change only began to take place in the 1950s through literary discourse. Later, civic action, under 'Marcelismo', made it possible for several marginal positions to assert themselves in the public sphere. Examples include the activities of the Portuguese opposition, publications such as *Tempo e o Modo*, student movements, the political dissent of the Liberal Wing, associations of progressive Catholics, the timid yet brave assertion of women's groups and those recognizing the reality of the colonial war. That reality was the 'grande envenenamento que cai sem se saber donde, sobre

⁶ Eduardo Lourenço, *Cultura e Política na Época Marcelista* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1996), p. 50 (interview with Mário Mesquita).

⁷ José Mattoso, *História de Portugal — O Estado Novo (1926–1974)*, ed. by Fernando Rosas, 8 vols (Lisbon: Editorial Estampa, 1994), VII, 292.

⁸ José Gil, *Salazar: a Retórica da Invisibilidade* (Lisbon: Relógio d'Água, 1995), pp. 25–26 and 51.

⁹ Lourenço, *Cultura e Política* ..., pp. 46 and 48.

todas as coisas'.¹⁰ It formed the epicentre of the jolt felt in every 'pequena e grande casa portuguesa'. It compelled the occupants of that 'casa portuguesa', hesitantly, to begin to look for the 'terceira margem do rio'. Eduardo Lourenço, 'uma personagem do terceiro tipo', had already as a quixotic young man in 1949 tried out this route, when he published *Heterodoxia I*. The book entered the terrain of a silent war, dominated by the hegemonic discourses of neo-realism and of the regime. How did these 'characters of the third type', imagine the Portuguese imperial nation and how did they adjust to the monumental changes caused by 25 April 1974?

Drawing on Sousa Santos and literary critics from post-colonial studies, I propose that the expression 'the imagination of the centre', and the concept it signifies, be adapted to become 'the empire as imagination of the centre'. The modified expression encapsulates the forerunning concept behind Sousa Santos's version, an inference that may be drawn from his assertion that Portugal's semi-peripheral position has been related for centuries to its imperial dimension. Even today, it is based on Portugal's ties to its former African colonies.¹¹ However, the 'empire as imagination of the centre', even when it is applied to the imaginary of the Portuguese Empire in Africa, inevitably echoes the whole imperial experience of India, Brazil and the oceans that had to be crossed. This new empire resonates with and represents a longing for these old empires. As a result, the mythical contours of five solid centuries of imperial imaginary are revisited.

My study on 'Empire, Colonial War and Post-Colonialism in Portuguese Literature' is divided into four parts. The first part analyses the various images of Portugal as an empire, both as centre and periphery. The second is dedicated to the image and reality of the Empire in Africa. In it, I discuss the interplay between identity and imagery in the politico-literary imaginary of the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the third part, I analyse what I have termed the long epitaph literature wrote to an empire that was more imaginary than real. This epitaph assured permanence, while refashioning and reformulating or even breaking away from the idea of Portugal as an imperial nation as it had been constructed from the 1960s to 25 April 1974. That period marked the end of the empire and the beginning of the path towards Europe. The fourth part is sub-divided into four sections. Each section offers readings of literary works related to the colonial war, but published after 25 April: *Os Cus de Judas*, by António Lobo Antunes (1979), *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, by João de Melo (1984), *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, by Lídia Jorge (1988) and *Jornada de África*, by Manuel Alegre (1989).

¹⁰ Lídia Jorge, *A Costa dos Murmúrios* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1988), p. 126.

¹¹ Sousa Santos, *Portugal: Um Retrato . . .*, p. 51.

EUROPE, PORTUGAL, THE EMPIRE AND THE CENTRE

Nineteenth-century imperialism had its origins in the English-speaking world around 1870. Over a short period, *pax britannica* was established as the new order in *The Age of Empire*, to paraphrase Eric Hobsbawm. As a result, economic and political factors determined the hierarchy of European nations, which at that time looked on Africa with imperialist desire. Although a direct consequence of modern European capitalism, nineteenth-century imperialism found its historical and moral justification in the European Discoveries of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and in their so-called civilizing, religious mission.¹² At the forefront of that mission was Portugal, closely followed by Spain. The two nations became canonized as the Discoverers of new lands and new peoples. Through *Os Lusíadas*, Luís de Camões inscribed the Iberian Epic into European history, through the voice of Vasco da Gama.

Given the way Portuguese expansion and imperialism developed, Portugal defined itself as the centre of a colonial empire and as a periphery of Europe or, in the words of Sousa Santos, as a semi-periphery. It was characterized both by the construction of images of the centre which were naturally imperial, archetypes of national greatness and by images of the periphery related to a secular decadence and a style of living far from replete with richness or imagination.¹³

Eduardo Lourenço, in several essays written on Portugal and its relations with Europe, when he deals with symbolic reality, does not define Portuguese culture as semi-peripheral but instead speaks of a 'nucléaire', 'centrale', 'plus européenne' continent in which Portugal is positioned as 'périphérique'.¹⁴ Portugal's ambiguous position was, early in its history, inscribed in the frequently mentioned geography of the country. For example, Zurara in his first chronicle on the expansion states: 'ca da ua parte nos cerca o mar de outra havemos muro no reino de Castela'.¹⁵ The idea of a siege inherent in this definition is transformed by Camões in *Os Lusíadas*. He elevates a geographical condition, which was initially blocked, into the identity of a homeland, which was expanding. He describes the 'Reino Lusitano' as a borderland: 'Onde a terra se acaba e o

¹² Maria Irene Ramalho Sousa Santos, 'A Poesia e o Sistema Mundial', in Sousa Santos, *Portugal: Um Retrato . . .*, p. 109. Here, I am also using Maria Irene Ramalho Sousa Santos's studies on Fernando Pessoa's poetry and specifically her analysis of the poetic shape of the semi-peripheral concept. She designates Fernando Pessoa the 'inventor of the semi-periphery'. Compare pp. 91–128.

¹³ Sousa Santos, *Pela Mão de Alice . . .*, p. 59.

¹⁴ Lourenço, *Nós e a Europa ou as Duas Razões* (Lisbon: INCM, 1994), p. 40.

¹⁵ Zurara quoted by Luís Filipe F. R. Thomaz and Jorge Santos Alves, 'Da Cruzada ao Quinto Império', in *A Memória da Nação*, ed. by Francisco Bethencourt and Diogo Ramada Curto (Lisbon: Sá da Costa, 1991), p. 112.

mar começa'.¹⁶ The fact that Portugal shares a border with a hitherto unknown entity, the sea, meant that a large part of its history took place outside European and even metropolitan circles. This helped to formulate an image of a centre, sometimes apparently floating and, as such, rather uncertain. The land which formed the empire was scattered and only the ocean could unite it. That image of dispersed and fragile power would be further compounded through the process of facing up to Europe, particularly from the eighteenth century onwards. It would define Portugal as a periphery in Europe not only in the geographical sense, which it actually is, but also in the political, cultural and imperial senses. José Saramago captures the notion of the draining force of the sea and the resultant emptying of Portuguese territory ('a terra à espera'), when he ironically corrupts Camões's verse and says of Portugal: 'Aqui o mar acaba e a terra principia'.¹⁷ The desired goals in Camões's text — 'Outra terra [que] comece' and 'onde o 'mar acabe' — became dislocated into an analogy for the Portuguese from a European perspective.¹⁸ In the words of R. Cartier, 'cette puissance coloniale a la structure d'une colonie'.¹⁹

The interstitial position that results from an organic, complex tension between the nation and its empire on the one hand, and the multifaceted tension between Portugal and Europe on the other, led to the co-existence of two types of discourse in the Portuguese collective imaginary: an epic and a ruinous discourse 'discurso épico' and 'discurso de perdição'.²⁰ Thus, in Camões's epic poem, Portugal is both at the 'cabeça da Europa' and also a place of 'gente surda e endurecida'. Vieira refers to the Portuguese as the 'cafres da Europa' and the 'povo eleito'. Fernando Pessoa declared, reflecting on his time 'Somos hoje um pingo de tinta seca da mão que escreveu Império, da esquerda à direita da geografia'.²¹ However, at that same time Pessoa suggested the construction of a universal empire. These discourses were produced over time, and each was the product of a particular historical moment of greatness or decadence. But read together, as often happens to the work of Camões, Vieira and Pessoa, these discourses give rise to an imaginary that is characterized by an intrinsically complicit duplicity, as the result of being images of the centre and the periphery.

This dichotomy becomes gradually more complicated when, for example, in *Lusitânia Transformada* by Fernão Álvares do Oriente, written

¹⁶ Luís de Camões, *Os Lusíadas* (Lisbon: Instituto Camões, 1992), III, 20.

¹⁷ José Saramago, *O Ano da Morte de Ricardo Reis* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1985), p. 9.

¹⁸ Camões, v, 14.

¹⁹ Quoted by Lourenço, 'Retrato (póstumo) do nosso colonialismo inocente II', *Critério*, 3 (1976), 5.

²⁰ Luís de Sousa Rebelo, 'Os Diálogos da Identidade no Fim do Século', *Tesserae*, 1 (1994), 22.

²¹ Padre António Vieira and Fernando Pessoa quoted by Maria de Lourdes Belchior, 'Sobre o Carácter Nacional ou para uma "Explicação" de Portugal', *Nação e Defesa*, 21 (1982), 26–27.

in the sixteenth century, the author transfers the centre of the imperial nation to the Eastern Empire and then discovers the 'nação esvaziada'. This 'nação esvaziada' is a contemporaneous Portugal occupied by Spain. Another example of the dichotomy becoming complex is provided by Eça de Queirós who, in reference to the bonds between Portugal and Brazil, stated that 'Nós é que éramos a colónia'.²² After the independence of Brazil, Portugal 'disputed' the sovereignty of Angola with its ex-colony, providing yet another example. At around the same time a phrase became popular and entered the Portuguese vocabulary: 'Calma no Brasil que Portugal é nosso'. A more recent example is the realization by the generation that took part in the colonial war, while in Africa, the periphery of the empire — that the centre, Salazar's Portugal — had been emptied. Images of the centre constructed by Portugal are always haunted by the periphery. In parallel with this, the images of the periphery are frequently impregnated by fantasies of the centre. A maze of images exists, which attests to 'the empire as imagination of the centre'. These images reflect a rarely accepted condition: Portugal is both the precarious centre of an empire and an imperial periphery, which through its empire continued to be able to imagine itself as a centre. Despite being rarely accepted, this condition has been strongly perceived by several politicians and intellectuals.

The decadence of the empire in India and the loss of Brazil, particularly given the complete 'reversal of the colonial pact' and the departure of the royal court to Rio de Janeiro, are very different but none the less significant examples which reflect the experience of this condition, as do the three literary works which I will now discuss. Their authors are men whose imperial experience is reflected in their writings. In different ways, they demonstrate a trajectory from the imperial periphery towards the centre of the empire. Chronologically, these works pinpoint three key periods essential for constructing and developing the image of Portugal as an imperial nation. They are *Os Lusíadas*, by Luís de Camões, written after the great voyages; *Lusitânia Transformada*, by Fernão Álvares do Oriente, written during the Spanish occupation; and the works by Vieira, produced both before and particularly after the Restoration. There is a progression in the way that metaphoric language is used for the literary representation of the empire and the nation. In *Os Lusíadas*, it defines and makes real the surfeit of new things coming into Europe from the New World. In the works of Fernão Álvares do Oriente and António Vieira metaphoric language is used instead to portray abstractions constructed over the years

²² Eça de Queirós, *Cartas de Inglaterra e Crónicas de Londres* (Lisbon: Livros do Brasil, [n.d.]), p. 168.

as a way of replenishing a national and imperial space that was on the wane.

PORTUGAL AND THE IMAGE OF CENTRE — THE IMAGE-DISOURSE OF IDENTITY

In *Os Lusíadas*, Portugal is depicted as God's chosen land. The nation is pre-destined to 'dar novos mundos ao mundo'. It is fated to rule the world as the new Rome on account of its geographical position as a small country placed on the terrestrial limits of the old world, and because of the 'peitos belicosos' it has borne, its sailors, its scientists and its 'cristãos atreventos'.

Portugal is the 'cabeça da Europa', which may be defined more widely as the head of the world given the Eurocentric parameters under which the poem was written. This founding identity discourse is thus elaborated from its inception through a journey that unites the origin the West and the unknown world the East. This discourse is based on both real and symbolic elements taken from the navigators' original world. These elements become consecrated as part of the Self on contact with the Other. They serve to differentiate from and dialogue with the Other.

'Que gente será esta? (em si dizem)
Que costumes, que Lei, que Rei teriam?' [. . .]
Pela Árábica língua, donde vinham,
Quem eram, de que terra, que buscavam,
Ou que partes do mar corrido tinham? [. . .]
'Os Portugueses somos do Ocidente,
Imos buscando as terras do Oriente. [. . .]'²³

In addition, a second founding element contributes to the modern condition of Portugal: its pioneering role as mediator between worlds. This elevates the status of its frontiers to a component of communication and control between worlds. It is driven by a doubly central image of Portugal: Portugal before Europe is the discoverer of the new worlds which gain existence through Europe; Portugal before a variety of Others is the representative of Europe, a type of double-faced head looking at Europe and the Atlantic. The movement of the gaze over the sea suggested by that image renders Portugal the centre that expresses all Renaissance thinking. It is a gaze in search of the universality inherent to the Manueline imperial idea.²⁴

'Dar-te-ei, senhor ilustre, relação
De mim, da Lei, das armas que trazia.

²³ Camões, 1, 45 and 50.

²⁴ Luís Filipe F. R. Thomaz, 'L'Idée Impériale Manueline', in *La Découverte, Le Portugal et L'Europe -- Actes du Colloque* (Paris: Fondation Calouste Gulbenkian, 1990), pp. 35-103.

Nem sou da terra, nem da geração
Das gentes enojosas da Turquia;
Mas da Europa beliciosa;
Busco as terras da Índia tão famosa. [. . .]'²⁵

Camões addresses his king and his 'excelentes vassallos' from this most important historical moment celebrated in the poem. He is clearly inciting them to an action aimed to propel the kingdom into future fame. He offers his verses so that they too, through Gama's preferential vision, will grant 'favor ao novo atreimento' embodied in the poem.²⁶

The meaning of the voyage as it is told in *Os Lusíadas*, besides being a celebration of Portugal as the centre of the world, mirrors Portugal's 'fragilities' in its attempt to remain at the centre of action. This explains why the poet, who started his epic poem beseeching the old Muse to stop chanting because 'outro valor mais alto se alevanta', ends it in a melancholic tone: 'na cobiça freio | E na ambição também' referring to the 'apagada e vil tristeza' into which his homeland had plunged.²⁷ Helder Macedo has argued that the sense of mortality with which Camões finishes his poem 'assim tão triste' a sense that led Lourenço to question its epic nature shows that the image of Portugal conveyed upon the poet's return does not coincide with the Portugal from whence the maritime adventure, which gave rise to such glorious homage, began.²⁸ Both the subtle, ambiguous discourse embodied in *Os Lusíadas* and the aesthetic elegance used by the poet help deliver the most representative image of the Lusitanian Kingdom. The image swings between the celebration of the nation as the centre of the world in Western history and the risks that would prompt its downfall. Therefore, *Os Lusíadas* symbolizes the glorious voice wherein both the national and imperial images unite to give rise to the founding discourse of a unique nation among Western kingdoms. At the same time, the poem is the first voice regenerating the homeland. Vieira would later prophetically promote that discourse of national regeneration. Vieira's discourse not only covered the ideal period glorified in Camões's poem but the entire history of the homeland, and would run throughout the nineteenth century.²⁹

The dialogue that has arisen between *Os Lusíadas* and generations of politicians and poets stems from the human, national and aesthetic

²⁵ Camões, 1, 64.

²⁶ Helder Macedo and Fernando Gil, *Viagens do Olhar — Retrospecção, Visão e Profecia no Renascimento Português* (Porto: Campo das Letras, 1998), pp. 125, 128.

²⁷ Camões, 1x, 93.

²⁸ *Viagens do Olhar*, pp. 127, 128.

²⁹ Ronald W. de Sousa, *The Rediscoverers — Major Writers in the Portuguese Literature of National Regeneration* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1981). Sousa outlines the discourses of regeneration of the homeland, and terms Luís de Camões, António Vieira, Almeida Garrett, Eça de Queirós and Fernando Pessoa, 'the rediscoverers'.

questions that the epic raised. Answering those questions involved re-configuring at different historical moments Portugal's image as the centre, which the poem portrays, into various 'imaginings of the centre'. These imaginings were soothingly constructed upon the image of Portugal as an imperial nation, in order to evade a peripheral way of living. Indeed, the questions raised by the poem were not being answered at all. Instead, the verses themselves were redeployed as an answer.

IMAGES OF PORTUGAL IMAGINING THE CENTRE

Prior to the event, D. Sebastião's expedition to Morocco symbolized an acquiescence to the ideology of expansionism that viewed Africa as the natural repository for Portugal's colonial dream. At the same time, it drew on older religious modes of thought, linked to the ideals of the Crusades, and it served to strengthen Portugal's hand in Europe, by asserting its control over the Atlantic.

However, contrary to this glorious dream, the battle actually came to signify a dramatic defeat, which was registered in the national memory as an atemporal symbol of disaster and collective death. Through it, nostalgia for the empire was born. 'O Desejado', the child-king who disappeared on the beaches of Alcácer Quibir, became 'O Encoberto', who would return to free the nation, restoring its earlier grandeur. The inherent duplicity in D. Sebastião's tale, simultaneously the most powerful phantom and the greatest fantasy in Portuguese mythology, reflected an image of Portugal as both a periphery — the nation reaching its end — and as a centre. The re-imagining of the desired nation, consolidated in a mirage of 'returning to what it once was' created that centre.³⁰ Sebastianism effectively spread a doctrine of fatalism — the phantom side of the myth — and Messianism, which embodied the fantasy. Both indicate a key change in Portuguese culture. The belief in the miraculous return of D. Sebastião, and with him, the restitution of former glory, an uncertain glory that was both imperial and redemptive, signals what Eduardo Lourenço terms 'a mudança de sinal' in Portuguese culture and Helder Macedo interprets as the 'fim do que tinha sido a forte via racional no contexto do Renascimento português'.³¹

Lusitânia Transformada, by Fernão Álvares do Oriente, provides an example of this transition. It is an original discourse on Portugal as an imperial periphery. The author, who was probably born in Goa, journeyed

³⁰ Roberto Vecchi, 'La Guerra Coloniale tra Genere e Tema: *Jornada de África* di Manuel Alegre', in *Dalle Armi ai Garofani: Studi sulla Letteratura della Guerra Coloniale*, ed. by Manuel Simões and Roberto Vecchi (Rome: Bulzoni, 1995), pp. 51–58.

³¹ *Viagens do Olhar*, p. 364.

across the Portuguese Empire and accompanied D. Sebastião on his ill-fated mission to Alcácer-Quibir. He fell prisoner in Morocco.

Written during the Spanish occupation, *Lusitânia Transformada* is a bucolic narrative in prose and verse. It describes not only the pilgrimages undertaken by Olívio and Felício across the Empire but also the thoughts and lamentations of the shepherds as they watched faithfulness to Portugal give way to corruption and moral decadence. This regrettably turned 'fama' into 'nódoa':

Fosse pois ambição, que a mor alteza
 Pretende, e não por obras singulares:
 Ou cubiça, Luzmeno, que a pobreza
 Por tais medos fugiu, por tantos mares;
 Fosse, que a gente n'abundância presa
 Que o laço em si lhe armou, tantos manjares
 E cheiros qua Índias Mágicas temperam,
 Em estado tão mísero puseram.³²

However, the mythical Golden Age imagined by these shepherds is not depicted against a bucolic metropolitan background but rather through imperial landscapes populated by other peoples, other languages and other cultures. This contrasts with the classic imaginary characteristic of the bucolic, which is hostile to arms and empires, the consequences of conquest. By making the image of the empire bucolic, Fernão Álvares do Oriente is simultaneously transferring the centre of the Portuguese nation into the imperial periphery and there, in those fragments of a centreless empire, the author discovers 'o reflexo espectral da nação esvaziada'.³³ In other words, he discovers the reflection of 'an empire as imagination of the centre'. The imagination of this centre, openly lost in the melancholia enveloping the characters, is recreated in the imaginary and interstitial space of a memory-island metaphorically represented by the Camonian Ilha dos Amores.³⁴ However, instead of the fullness found in the Camonian island, a place where the Lusitanian universal empire is celebrated, the island in *Lusitânia Transformada* shows the fragments of an empire undone. These fragments are metonymically represented in the fragments of Camões's verses pinned onto the trees on the island. They mark the transfer from the island created by Camões, to celebrate the nation and empire founded in his epic, to a necropolis-island of an empire in terminal decline and of an emptied nation for which Fernão Álvares do Oriente wrote the epitaph in the shape of the poem.

³² Fernão Álvares do Oriente, *Lusitânia Transformada* (Lisbon: INCM, 1985), p. 333.

³³ *Viagens do Olhar*, p. 396.

³⁴ António Cirurgião, 'Introdução a Fernão Álvares do Oriente', in Álvares do Oriente, p. xlviii; and *Viagens do Olhar*, p. 404.

Instead of taking place on an earthly level, the recovery of the empire takes place, by displacement, on a divine level as shown by the characters' pilgrimages.³⁵ They go from death to life. This trajectory no longer suggests a regeneration of the empire but rather a resurrection, opening the way for the visionariness of Vieira.³⁶

In *História do Futuro*, António Vieira constructs a complex synthesis of ideas. He mixes scriptural interpretation, aspects of the Portuguese mindset which gave rise to the Discoveries, and readings of the Sebastianista myth prevalent during his lifetime. This amalgam results in the idea of a universal empire. By projecting this way of thinking into a new arena which was 'mais alta mais complexa tanto do ponto de vista político como mítico', Vieira builds a 'verdadeiro messianismo luso'. According to his prophetic vision of global history, this messianism would place the Portuguese nation at the centre of the world, initiating a Fifth universal monarchy,³⁷ with 'um só soberano, o rei de Portugal, um só pastor, o Papa de Roma, uma só Fé, a Fé Romana'.³⁸

His proposal was both complex and extreme. It was a discourse that originated in the empire in Brazil, and confirmed the reality of a failed empire since it revealed an extremely wealthy and inhuman colony and a peripheral metropolis, occupied by a foreign power. This metropolis was incapable of overcoming the distance separating it from its colony, with profound ramifications for the political, economic and moral control of the empire. The nostalgia for the imperial dream, prevalent in Vieira's visions, reveals the decline of both the Portuguese empire and of European Christendom.

The Fifth World Empire was a synthesis of a Portuguese expansionist mindset and Sebastianista beliefs. It was, above all, the epitome of a type of religious tolerance that proposed the construction of a harmonious and peaceful world 'onde todas as religiões e heresias se sujeitaram à verdadeira fé católica, por um tempo indeterminado de, no mínimo, mil anos'.³⁹ Protected by Portugal, God's 'chosen people', religious unity would be established in the world. Thus Portugal would complete its mission to unite all peoples. Additionally, the throne left vacant by D. Sebastião would once again be occupied since the king of Portugal was to be the universal emperor.⁴⁰ However, to 'see' this Portugal as the centre of the world, Vieira ignores daily reality. He has to project himself into a world

³⁵ Cirurgião, p. xxxiv.

³⁶ *Viagens do Olhar*, p. 397.

³⁷ João Medina, 'Sebastianismo', in *Dicionário de Literatura Portuguesa*, ed. by Álvaro Manuel Machado (Lisbon: Presença, 1996), p. 558.

³⁸ Thomaz and Alves, p. 107.

³⁹ Jacqueline Hermann, *No Reino do Desejado — A Construção do Sebastianismo em Portugal — séculos XVI e XVII* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1998), p. 244.

⁴⁰ Thomaz and Alves, p. 108.

of visions. There, a written memory links the interpretation of prophecies in the Scriptures, Bandarra's ballads and an intense love of God. In this way, Portugal is able to fulfil the biblical prophecy of the Fifth Empire. In this logic of dreamworlds, accurately observed by Fernando Gil in his studies on Vieira, the prophecy will become 'uma previsão histórica'. Vieira 'sees' the prophecy that he narrates. He foresees the image of an ideal time which he wishes to restore, rendering a paradox possible: to produce the history of the future.⁴¹

The above readings suggest that the centrality defined by Camões in *Os Lusíadas* is not far removed from imperial discourses that reveal Portugal as an imperial periphery. These discourses both express Portugal's deficiencies as a political and imagined metropolis and cast it as the metropolis of a universal empire yet to come. These ideas are embodied in the discourse of centrality and, as such, help to create the imagery and ideological humus that corroborates the Portuguese imperial idea: 'the empire as imagination of the centre'. However, the centre can only be imagined after living at the periphery, the images of which will now be analysed.

IMAGES OF PERIPHERY

Alcácer-Quibir did not mark the end of the Portuguese empire in political and economic terms. However, with the loss of national independence, Portugal lost its nobility, its entrepreneurial bourgeoisie and its status among European nations. Invisible to the eyes of a powerful Spain under Filipe II, Portugal watched its empire becoming an easy target for the emerging imperial powers, Holland and England. The Restoration was carried out by a decadent aristocracy dependent on England. It had no support from the enterprising bourgeoisie, which by now had settled in Spain or in Brazil. It did not bring into being the imagined and desired homeland. On the contrary, the reality of a 'baroque and pious' country became visible — a country which survived only through its colonies, and which was incapable of transforming itself into a competent steward and a creator of wealth. It was unable to change into the effective centre of the vast empire it possessed.

The image of subalternity foisted on Portugal by Europe from that time on, both in socio-economic and politico-military terms, mirrors the image projected by Portugal. In the eyes of Europe, Portugal was an emptied centre that existed intermittently:

The great Glory of Portugal at present centers in her very extensive and immensely rich Colony of Barzil in South America; from whence she has her vast Treasures of Gold

⁴¹ *Viagens do Olhar*, p. 442.

and Diamonds, beside immense Quantities of excellent sugars, hides, drugs, tobacco, fine red-wood, etc.⁴²

As far as Europe was concerned, Portugal existed through its colonies. For these colonies, Portugal was the centre because it was in Europe. This transformation of Portugal from a cultural and commercial mediator, as in Camões's nostalgic image, to the mere 'correia de transmissão' between its colonies and European nations, as Sousa Santos puts it, represents the Portuguese historical dimension that Sousa Santos defines in terms of contemporary Portugal as a 'semi-periferia'.⁴³ The terminology he selects to represent this process whereby Portugal is an imperial and European semi-periphery — 'correia de transmissão' — reflects an indisputable decadence. However, the trajectory inherent in the terminology, from the imperial territory towards Europe, enables Portugal to imagine itself at the centre. This is the most blatant example of the 'empire as the imagination of the centre': Portugal existed through its empire and, by virtue of that empire, imagined itself to be a centre.

Portugal's image abroad was a façade. Yet, for a long time the economic development of Brazil and the commercial vitality of the Atlantic gave it an air of credibility. The most peculiar imperial situation, 'de que com a ida de D. João VI para o Brasil, fugido de Napoleão, a colónia ter caucionado por algum tempo a independência da metrópole, convertendo-se então em verdadeira cabeça do império, e a metrópole, em apêndice da colónia, o que constituiu uma autêntica 'inversão do pacto colonial', was endured as if it were natural.⁴⁴ However, it denoted, both symbolically and in reality, the political acknowledgement of economic decentralization within the Portuguese Empire. In effect, the Empire had long before been transferred to Brazil, rendering patent Portugal's image as an imperial periphery. By placing itself far outside of Europe, Portugal was not avoiding the old continent, despite the suggestion implicit in the royal court's departure to Brazil. Instead, it emphasized the emptying of Portugal. The same process effectively invited Europe to enter the country. Metropolitans, discontented with a Portugal decentred in relation to its own empire, ended up promoting the 1820 revolution, which was quickly followed by Brazil's independence. But as Benedict Anderson highlights, a Portuguese man ruled this European empire that had transferred its capital to Rio de Janeiro.⁴⁵

⁴² Adam Anderson, quoted by Kenneth Maxwell, *Pombal — Paradox of the Enlightenment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 37.

⁴³ Sousa Santos, *Pela Mão de Alice* . . . , p. 130.

⁴⁴ Sousa Santos, *Pela Mão de Alice* . . . , pp. 130–31.

⁴⁵ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London/New York: Verso, 1996), p. 191.

As a result, the disintegration of the Luso-Brazilian empire which effectively began at this time, by projecting an image of Portugal as an imperial and European periphery, 'traz consigo a questão da própria identidade de Portugal e do seu lugar no concerto das nações'.⁴⁶

It has been argued that there is an intrinsic relationship between the empire and the nation. Bearing this in mind, Portugal's colonial project in Africa, given its history of interaction with the African coast since the fifteenth century, was theoretically more complex than, and predated, the Scramble for Africa, both in symbolic and real terms. This project explicitly influenced the debate on the nation that dominated the nineteenth century. It is in the context of imperial emptying, between Brazil and Africa, that we must analyse the debate on the decadent nation and the construction of an African empire as the new 'imagination of the centre'.

BETWEEN BRAZIL AND AFRICA: AN EMPTIED PORTUGAL

The great fracture in Portugal's image caused by the loss of Brazil, which was reinforced in the irreversible treaty of 29 August 1825, did not immediately give rise to a literature of mourning or hysteria. In contrast, the loss of Africa, caused by the British Ultimatum of 1890, would later provoke such a literature in the aftermath of a century characterized by traumas and losses. However, that fracture caused the major social and political changes that affected the century. These changes were reflected in the century's finest literature. The work of Alexandre Herculano, Almeida Garrett and the whole Generation of 1870 ponders the identity of the Portuguese nation.

In Europe, discourse on the nation flourished in the nineteenth century as a result of social and political changes brought about by the capitalist system that dominated economic and industrial development. In Portugal, discourse on the nation mirrored both an impaired encounter between Portugal and Europe, and the greatest imperial and national identity crisis endured by Portugal. That crisis was the crossover between Brazil and Africa, which afflicted Portugal throughout the century. This explains why Portuguese historians and writers in the nineteenth century dealt with the burning issue of national identity not so much in terms of enlargement, as was the case in Europe, but rather in terms of the very existence of the nation. 'Are we or aren't we an imperial nation?', 'Are we or aren't we European?' or more bluntly, drawing on the conundrum posed by Garrett through D. João de Portugal in *Frei Luís de Sousa*: 'Could it be that the pilgrim really was "nobody"?'.

⁴⁶ Valentim Alexandre, 'O Processo de Independência do Brasil', in *História da Expansão Portuguesa*, ed. by Francisco Bethencourt and Kirti Chaudhuri, 5 vols (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1998), IV, 45.

Alexandre Herculano's reinterpretation of Portugal's history, and Garrett's trajectory for the nation increasingly elaborated from *Portugal na Balança da Europa* and *Frei Luís de Sousa* to *Viagens na Minha Terra*, sowed the seeds for a tentative answer. What exactly did these enlightened minds come across in their voyage around Portuguese identity? The answer is simple: emptiness; a country torn by civil war; a country dominated by the 'barons' and drained of any national sense of purpose or adventure. So it seemed to Garrett. Later, the Generation of 1870 would add scatological contours to this primary portrait by Garrett. Unsurprisingly, they would use the well-known metaphors of an organic nation, since they were a generation whose mindset was that of the Europe of their time. Between a lost Brazil, an unknown Africa and a mirage of Europe, this generation found, through an intense and tortuous search, an equally empty Portugal. It was distant from the ideas and science of the century. It was manipulated at the behest of foreign powers. It lacked a sense of adventure and was weak. Not only was the emptied soul of Garrett's 'Portugal Ninguém' laid bare in their discourses, the whole body of an ill country was exposed through the metaphor of a doddering nation, 'decrépita e louca'.

These intensely critical positions clashed with those of more traditional sectors of society who considered this 'undressing of the homeland' carried out by the Generation of 1870 to be nothing short of treason. An example of this tension, which highlights the two factions, is the text 'Brasil e Portugal' and the polemic it provoked. Eça de Queirós came into conflict with Pinheiro Chagas. Two visions of the homeland are outlined.⁴⁷ They embody two distinct political, philosophical and aesthetic mindsets. As a result, they extol very different projects for Portugal. In short, a traditional vision is defended by Brigadier Chagas who tenderly contemplates the glories of the nation's history and tends towards an imperialistic position vaguely premised in Africa, as a continuation of what Portugal once was. The other vision is defended by Eça de Queirós and the Generation of 1870. It points towards a new development model for Portugal. This model, following on from Garrett's project in *Viagens na Minha Terra*, rests on re-territorialization, and even suggests the sale of the colonies, as a means whereby Portugal can attain the level of development enjoyed by other European nations.

The issue of Africa surfaces in the debates of the nineteenth century caught between these two tendencies: the 'European dream' on the one hand, and the 'Portuguese imperial dream' on the other. However, these two tendencies are not strictly demarcated. Indeed, they are often highly

⁴⁷ I refer to: 'O Brasil e Portugal', in Queirós, *Cartas de Inglaterra*, pp. 165-74; and 'Brasil e Portugal', in Queirós, *Notas Contemporâneas* (Lisbon: Livros do Brasil, [n.d.]), pp. 42-61. See also Campos Matos, *Dicionário de Eça de Queirós* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1993), p. 140.

fluid and ambiguous. Oliveira Martins's thinking and Eça's rigorous critiques of Europe testify to this. Within these two ways of conceiving Portugal, and in the light of the century's problems, two essential images of the country were reconstructed and would be the determining factors in developing the African project in European terms. The first was the image of Portugal as a centre, due to its pioneering position in the Discoveries, evoked in various contexts. The second was the image of Portugal as a European periphery. This image influenced the whole mindset of the Generation of 1870 and it was also reflected in Portugal's weak position when negotiating with imperialist Europe. For a long time, this weakness had been felt by the national élites, especially after the loss of the Luso-Brazilian Empire and, inseparable from this loss, the decline in South Atlantic trade. The colonial issue, in its Brazilian, African and European dimensions, was crucial to Portuguese nationalism and a major concern to politicians and ideologues throughout the nineteenth century.

Thus an indecipherable paradox can be explained. How could a decadent Portugal at the height of national self-flagellation, a process encouraged by the Generation of 1870 and by intellectuals who considered Brazil to be a 'colónia espiritual', construct, in spite of everything, the empire in Africa?⁴⁸ As Valentim Alexandre argues, one cannot simply conceal the complexity of the Luso-Brazilian Empire by taking a gigantic but half-blind step into the past in the hope of seeing in the African empire the expression of a simple desire to maintain former glories grounded in a mythical India.⁴⁹ Nor can one argue, as Eric Hobsbawm does, that the Portuguese African empire was merely the result of a failure of the great European powers to reach an agreement between themselves.⁵⁰ They did not simply leave a disputed territory in Portuguese hands.

The theoretical complexity of the Portuguese presence in Africa cannot be reduced to a single explanation. The ghost of the break with Brazil haunted Portugal's relationship with its African colonies. It was a spectre that ran through the whole century and came to be reflected both in the conception of the African empire, from a practical and symbolic point of view, and in the Portuguese political presence in Europe. This is one of the aspects most peculiar to Portuguese imperialism. To draw on Sousa Santos's concept, it is a semi-peripheral imperialism. As such, it is simultaneously solid in terms of the national imaginary and frail in the reality of the political arena. It is always identified 'com a defesa da própria

⁴⁸ Fernando Pessoa, *Sobre Portugal --- Introdução ao Problema Nacional*, ed. by Joel Serrão (Lisbon: Ática, 1978), p. 233.

⁴⁹ Alexandre, 'O Liberalismo Português e as Colónias de África', *Análise Social*, 16 (1980), 319-20.

⁵⁰ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empire: 1875-1914* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1987), p. 18.

independência'.⁵¹ But precisely what was that land where a new empire, overshadowed by the ghosts of the old, was to be proclaimed?

In fact, it was an extensive 'império teórico' conceived in the metropolis as a vague and distant territory linked to slaves, illnesses and banishment.⁵² It was associated with books randomly written by men of science engaged in great exploratory journeys. It produced news of wars through which Portugal tried to assert a local and international geopolitical strategy. This strategy was designed to assure Portugal's place in Africa and its corresponding influence on the European stage. More significantly, Africa represented the place where the imperial image could be recuperated.⁵³ Myths and policies that allowed the Portuguese to imagine the centre again, through empire, were attracted to that image. The drawing of the Rose-Coloured Map manifested that impulse.

During the diplomatic build-up to the 1885 Berlin Conference, where Europe carved Africa up, Portuguese politicians sought to defend their national interests by arguing that historical precedence determined territorial possession and by making alliances with European powers. For a home audience, this policy was intended to herald the African project as a 'Brazil in Africa', and thus revive the fortunes of a worn-out monarchy, unsettled by the popularity of the Republican Party.⁵⁴ Abroad, this policy was in line with the colonization practices of the big European nations who planned enormous empires of unbroken territory. The same policy, with different nuances, eventually lead to the famous Rose-Coloured Map which portrayed the Portuguese Empire from coast to coast, and was drawn in 1886, following the Berlin Conference.⁵⁵ However, the map drawn by Portugal clashed with Cecil Rhodes's ambitious projects and therefore, in the competitive European environment of the 'Scramble for Africa', this proposal became but the expression of an illusion.

The concept of a Brazil in Africa articulated in the Rose-Coloured Map was a Portuguese idea that conformed to the European imperialist impulses of the time. It failed because it disregarded the reality of the metropolis — a decadence and dependency in a peripheral Portugal. The whole discourse of the Generation of 1870 had been pointing this out and the Ultimatum of 1890 would demonstrate the same thing. Drawn through a symbolic imperial perspective and with scant regard for its own political and

⁵¹ António José Telo, *Lourenço Marques na Política Externa Portuguesa — 1875-1900* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1991), p. 20.

⁵² Telo, *Economia e Império no Portugal Contemporâneo* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1994), p. 201.

⁵³ Telo, *Lourenço Marques* . . . , p. 20.

⁵⁴ Augusto da Costa Dias, *A Crise da Consciência Pequeno-Burguesa — O Nacionalismo Literário da Geração de 90* (Lisbon: Portugália Editora, 1964), p. 60.

⁵⁵ Maria Teresa Pinto Coelho, *Apocalipse e Regeneração — O Ultimatum e a Mitologia da Pátria na Literatura Finissecular* (Lisbon: Cosmos, 1996), p. 47.

economic implications, the Rose-Coloured Map was yet another vision of the empire as an imagination of the centre.

Though obliquely, the counter-discourse to these imperial ambitions was proposed by the Generation of 1870, particularly in the journalism and fiction of Eça de Queirós and in the works of Oliveira Martins. Oliveira Martins saw that the regeneration of the sixteenth-century spirit called for by this 'Portuguese dream' could not be achieved through the colonies. Their abandoned state mirrored perfectly Portuguese decadence, as Eça's work sarcastically portrays. Oliveira Martins also realized that regeneration was not possible through the construction of gigantic empires, however well imagined, the preferred option of the politicians who promoted the Rose-Coloured Map. Instead, Portugal should move for the first time towards internal investment and development at every level. This would create the industrial and mercantile wealth that, along with a scientific and ideological enrichment, had made European nations great. Under this ideal scenario, Portugal could fulfil its imperialist ambitions since the Empire would be a consequence of metropolitan development. However, given the state of Portuguese politics at the end of the nineteenth century, the Empire would inevitably represent a continuation of decadence and, symbolically, a universe designed to compensate for failed home-made dreams: in other words, a new 'imagination of the centre'. Oliveira Martins's project did not include imagining the centre. Instead, his dream was to convert Portugal into a European and colonial centre.

The sense of fragility in Portuguese identity that developed throughout the century, first with the loss of Brazil and later through the devastating discourse of the Generation of 1870, reached its nadir in the 1890 British Ultimatum, as Oliveira Martins stresses. A 'short and dry' document (the description is Eça de Queirós's) it famously demanded that 'dentro de onze horas o Governo português fizesse sair as suas tropas e as suas autoridades das regiões disputadas do Chire e da Mazona'.⁵⁶ Thus the Portuguese dream embodied in the Rose-Coloured Map ended and, at the same time, Portugal became aware of two things: its peripheral position in Europe and the extremity of its own decadence.

Initially, Portugal fought England in the only ways it could: newspapers were emblazoned with headlines denigrating England and anti-British demonstrations, which had a great symbolic impact, were organized. However, the 'Renaissance of Patriotism', brought on by the Ultimatum, compounded the sense of catastrophe. The Ultimatum became a mirror image of Alcácer-Quibir. A space, which represented the death of the nation, turned into a place where the imagination of the desired homeland

⁵⁶ Queirós, *Cartas Inéditas de Fradique Mendes e Mais Páginas Esquecidas* (Porto: Lello & Irmão, 1973), p. 239. See also Campos Matos, pp. 221-22 and 915-16.

burst forth. In 'O Ultimatum de 11 de Janeiro de 1890', Basílio Teles defines the rupture produced by the Ultimatum as the epilogue and prologue to an era:

O *ultimatum* de 11 de Janeiro de 1890 foi uma data memorável, dia que valeu séculos; resumiu, na sua intensa brevidade, todo um passado doloroso, e esboçou, numa fórmula indecisa, o segredo de um futuro perturbante. Foi com certeza um epílogo, e será também um prólogo: se de vida longa e próspera, se de obscuro e próximo extinguir — é o que procuram com ansiedade adivinhar os poucos homens de coração que ainda restam nesta pobre pátria escravizada.⁵⁷

In the immediate literary reactions — *Troça à Inglaterra*, by Gomes Leal and *Finis Patriae*, by Guerra Junqueiro, both written in 1890, and especially *Pátria* (1893) — the traumatic moment of the Ultimatum becomes a rite of passage leading to the Renaissance of the homeland.⁵⁸ This Renaissance would come into being through a new political order: the Republic. For the Generation of 1870, the Ultimatum was the moment that detonated a new national spirit, heralded since the Casino Conferences. For almost everyone, the empire was now an issue which crossed the historical and political spectrum: Portugal in the future would be an imperial power, par excellence. A space reopened where an imperial ideology could be re-elaborated. It combined the European colonial ideology of the century and the Portuguese imperial position that considered the colonies as sacred portions of national territory. However, glancing through the major texts that were reactions to the Ultimatum and analysing the courses of action they propose, the question arises: where on earth was this empire, Africa, which had caused such a huge humiliation? The literary reflection of an imperial ideology, associated with the image of Africa arising from the Ultimatum, becomes apparent not in the above mentioned texts that react to the Ultimatum but rather in the poetry of the time analysed by Maria Teresa Pinto Coelho and in *A Ilustre Casa de Ramires*, by Eça de Queirós.⁵⁹ In poetry the African project has a political aim, evokes the glorious past and all the myths of imperial greatness under the protective character of Camões who legitimizes the imperial endeavour, and satisfies the wave of nationalism which befell Portugal at the end of the nineteenth century.

A Ilustre Casa de Ramires, published in 1900, is the only acknowledged post-Ultimatum novel in which the fate of the central character, Gonçalo, is linked to the debate on the Portuguese Empire in Africa. The novel may be read as a reflective summary of the colonial question that the author, entering into a profound dialogue with the ideas of Oliveira Martins and Antero de Quental, had previously discussed in his journalism and some of

⁵⁷ Basílio Teles quoted by Dias, p. 57.

⁵⁸ Coelho, *Apocalipse e Regeneração* . . ., and Isabel Pires de Lima, 'Ultimatum e Discurso Agónico — os casos de Guerra Junqueiro e Gomes Leal', *Diacrítica*, 6 (1991), 71–84.

⁵⁹ Coelho. See also Campos Matos, pp. 222–23.

his fiction. The novel stands out among the literature of its time principally because it is the 'warning novel' of a generation that would no longer face up to new challenges. However, as Feliciano Ramos has pointed out, Eça's novel highlights the immense significance of what Gonçalo's return reflects:⁶⁰ Gonçalo returns wealthy from the imperial lands of Mozambique to metropolitan Portugal. This also represents a return to the original and provincial land and to the primitive social and political values of a changing society. The relativity of this 'return' has already been emphasized by various critics. Eça refers to it when he ironically and sharply criticizes Castanheiro's proposal of 'revealing Portugal'. He also highlights this relativity throughout his work, in his portrayal of the Portuguese capital as provincial.

The anxiety of 'super civilization' was experienced in Portugal by an élite which tried to be European. Eça describes the anxiety as the 'grande ilusão'. Junqueiro prophesied in his diatribe against England, *Finis Patriae*, that it would 'rebentar em cacos pelo ar'. Oliveira Martins refers to it in *A Inglaterra de Hoje* when he mentions the 'vazio absoluto da riqueza'.⁶¹ However, Eça claimed that the anxiety was not Portuguese. Or rather, Portuguese anxiety came across in models mediated through a European peripheral society. For him, it should be experienced and analysed as such. It is significant that *A Ilustre Casa de Ramires*, in which the protagonist goes forth through imperial lands in the manner of a European nation, ends with a text outlining a return to deepest Portugal. This text is the counter-discourse to the famous text in which João Gouveia draws a comparison between Gonçalo and Portugal. In it, Father Soeiro prays for peace, for Gonçalo and for the nation. *A Ilustre Casa de Ramires*, with its ambiguous duality of deterritorialization — the departure of Gonçalo to Africa — and reterritorialization — his return to Portugal — can be linked to the melancholic tone of *Correspondência de Fradique Mendes*, and the texts 'Europa' and 'Europa em Resumo', both published in *Notas Contemporâneas*. This linkage demonstrates that Eça's later work dialogues with Oliveira Martins and Guerra Junqueiro. Taken together, they provide the overture to the movements that would face up to modern anxiety. Responses to it can be seen in the provincial evasion of the neo-Garrettians, or in the extremely evasive creations of Pascoaes, Pessoa and Álvaro de Campos, who would design the new contours of the empire as the imagination of the centre in a post-Ultimatum Portugal.

In Portugal, the most visible political consequences of the Ultimatum were related to the destabilization of the monarchy and the impetus gained

⁶⁰ Feliciano Ramos, 'Sobre a Significação Histórica e Literária de *A Ilustre Casa de Ramires*', in *Eça e os Seus Últimos Valores* (Lisbon: Edições da Revista Ocidente, 1945), p. 126.

⁶¹ Oliveira Martins, *A Inglaterra de Hoje* (Lisbon: Guimarães Editores, 1951), pp. 261–62.

by the republican movement. However, contrary to what we initially might think, the Ultimatum did not end the discussion on the ability of Portugal to govern in Africa, nor did it fix the borders of the Portuguese colonies. The dream of building a Brazil in Africa remained alive, while some politicians continued to propose the sale of the colonies. The major consequence of the Ultimatum was, in fact, to turn the Empire in Africa into a national issue. From then on, some regimes would fall because of the empire and others would be built on it. Portugal became actively involved in the 'campanhas de África' in order to shore up its African policy in the salons of Europe and in territories where there was local resistance. Portugal took part in World War I and lobbied fiercely in diplomatic circles in defence of its colonial rights. At the same time, in Africa, governors, military personnel, officials and a local bourgeoisie of the 'filhos da terra' developed a more or less modern colonial system, sometimes under the direction of Lisbon, sometimes alone, tired of waiting for the capital to reach a decision. Lisbon overlooked the Tagus from the tiny Terreiro do Paço, and imagined itself the centre of a vast empire.

Portugal would respond to the humiliation triggered by the Ultimatum through metropolitan cultural expression, in which there was a marked change, leading to the development of several movements for a return to a Portuguese universe. The neo-Garrettians created the myth of a return to an 'authentic' Portugal. Pascoaes offered the extreme vision of a Portugal 'literalmente fora do mundo'.⁶² Campos/Pessoa, veering towards the Fifth Empire, overcame the 'português-ninguém' by taking up a 'português-ninguém, imerso e dissolvido no universal de todos'.⁶³ These voices do not construct counter-images. Rather they dialogue dialectically with the interpretation of a decadent reality offered by the Generation of 1870 and given dramatic authenticity by the Ultimatum.

The great innovation that links these movements is that they rendered decadence positive, through recourse to Sebastianism at philosophical and political levels. These characteristics are problematic since they can, at one moment, convey reactionary attitudes — the neo-Garrettians' rediscovery of a 'real Portugal' through the preservation of archaic social and economic models — and at the next, potentially revolutionary attitudes — Pascoaes and Pessoa's conception of the Portuguese soul.

For Pascoaes and Pessoa, who were involved in *Águia*, the fact that Portugal once had empires rendered the Portuguese soul universal. It was capable of nourishing the whole of Pascoaes's 'Era Lusíada', an era which Pessoa would reinvent in the myth of the Fifth Empire.⁶⁴ However, as in

⁶² Lourenço, *O Labirinto da Saudade* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1982), p. 107.

⁶³ Lourenço, *O Labirinto . . .*, p. 120.

⁶⁴ See Manuel Ferreira Patrício, *O Messianismo de Teixeira de Pascoaes e a Educação dos Portugueses* (Lisbon: INCM, 1996).

Vieira's Fifth Empire, Pessoa's project accentuated the failure of the royal empire — 'as colónias portuguesas são uma tradição inútil'.⁶⁵ Like António Vieira before him, Pessoa would restore the empire by displacement, through the imagination of a spiritual empire.

A comparison of these proposals with the ideology underpinning the imperial projects in Africa, and with the discourses of the monarchy and the Estado Novo, reveals the existence of a different philosophical mindset behind the poets' imagined empires. This is easy to discern despite their use of exaggerated, imperial language. However, Pascoaes's 'Era Lusíada', and Pessoa's 'alma atlântica', 'imperialismo espiritual' and Fifth Empire require no overseas political or military domain. Could it be that this new proposal of Pessoa's, excessive and poetically plural, and thus in line with the imperial mindset, is a reincarnation of 'the empire as the imagination of the centre'?

PESSOA AND THE DESIRE FOR A DETERRITORIALIZED RETERRITORIALIZATION

In contrast to Garrett, who invested political capital in the inversion of the Camonian voyage through his 'up-the-Tagus' metaphor, and also in contrast to the neo-Garrettians, who unjustly used Garrett's name simply because they too journeyed into the hinterland, Pessoa travelled to the core of the Portuguese soul. Through Álvaro de Campos, he searched for 'as Índias que não vêm no mapa'. Under his own name, in *Mensagem*, he propelled himself where Portugal is no longer the centre nor the frontier of world history. In this new space, it is a myth, an image of the 'nada que é tudo'.⁶⁶

For Pessoa, Portugal was no longer, like the great European nations, a sum total of parts forming an imperial whole. Instead, it was a space, portrayed in *Mensagem*, where 'Tudo é disperso, nada é inteiro'.⁶⁷ Similarly, it became, to draw on Caeiro's view of nature, a collection of 'partes sem todo'.⁶⁸ In this fragmented, decentred and apparently decadent aspect, we experience his 'poder ser', locating Portugal in the vanguard of new Western empires, as Camões had done, in a different context and with aspirations to a different empire. While 'os mandarins da Europa' were in the clutches of war, provoking the 'medonha' situation foreseen by Eça de Queirós, and both literally and metaphorically disintegrating into Junqueiro's 'cacos pelo ar', only a homeland capable of dreaming on a global scale could undertake the modern equivalence of the Discoveries, once

⁶⁵ Pessoa, *Da República (1910-1935)*, ed. by Joel Serrão (Lisbon: Ática, 1978), p. 305.

⁶⁶ Pessoa, *Obra Poética* (Rio de Janeiro: Nova Aguilar, 1977), p. 89.

⁶⁷ Pessoa, *Obra Poética*, p. 89.

⁶⁸ Pessoa, *Obra Poética*, pp. 226-27.

again as a pioneer.⁶⁹ This imperial glorification finds its ideological anchor in Atlantism which, according to Maria Irene Ramalho Sousa Santos, is expressed culturally through the re-imagination of the centre by the 'utilização das Descobertas não só como metáfora poética, mas também como veículo de ideologia'. She argues that it reveals the re-affirmation of a centre to the rest of the world, as the guardian of Western universal values.⁷⁰

Viewed from within, this imperial glorification retraces a frontier condition that for centuries defined Portugal in accordance with Camões's poetry. It also operated at a geopolitical level — that is, at the level of the relationship between Portugal, the imperial territories and the countries of Europe. Sousa Santos affirms that the fragility of Portugal's imperial position is inherent in the 'frontier condition' which manifests itself in the image of Portugal as a 'correia de transmissão', and, at a religious level, through Vieira: it was a symbol of a Christian soul capable of integrating Christian westernism. Pessoa asserts the cultural difference that this condition bestows on the Portuguese. Following Vieira, Pessoa promises the new empire in *Mensagem* by uniting Portugal and Brazil through language. This empire is heralded in the metaphor of 'mist', which is rendered positive: 'Ó Portugal hoje és nevoeiro/É a Hora!'.⁷¹ There is a shift from the image of a 'sick and dying homeland', which dominated the imaginary of the second half of the nineteenth century, to the image of an 'enigmatic homeland', promised in the future. A change is effected from an image of patriotic greatness reflected in a vast territorial empire, which forever pines for Brazil, to the image of patriotic greatness spread throughout a universal spiritual empire. In other words, the change is from an economic and political imperial order to an imperialism as a 'facto mental'.⁷² This new imperialism is not based on the political nature of the nation, nor on its economic power. Instead, it is rooted in cultural difference. Furthermore, durability is replaced by atemporality.

The *Mensagem* portrait of a Portugal that 'could be' may be read to enter into a dialectic with the *sacrifice of a westerner* present in Álvaro de Campos's poems. This dialectic becomes the most eccentric of Portuguese voyages since its imagined centre is the poet himself. As a result of such a reading, the full implications of Pessoa's imperial project are more easily understood. It is the first example of subverting the empire as the imagination of the centre, as it has previously been defined. In other words, it subverts the recreation of Camões's idealized image of Portugal as a

⁶⁹ I refer to Eça de Queirós, 'Europa' and 'Europa em Resumo', in *Notas Contemporâneas*, pp. 143–52 and 180–84; and to Guerra Junqueiro, *Finis Patriae* (Porto, Lello Editora, 1891).

⁷⁰ 'A Poesia e o Sistema Mundial', p. 117.

⁷¹ Pessoa, *Obra Poética*, p. 89.

⁷² Pessoa, *Pessoa Inédito*, ed. by Teresa Rita Lopes (Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1993), p. 231.

centre — an image dependent on the maritime, territorial empire. Unlike Camões, Pessoa was not positing a territorial empire through which a centre could be imagined or through which Portugal could reach the world. Nor did he suggest that empire was a means of reaching Europe, as the Generation of 1870 had done. Instead, Pessoa wanted to bring Europe and the world to Portugal, and thereby to create a spiritual empire dominated by European humanism. For him, modern humanism was born in Portugal, and was anathema to the capitalism that ran Europe. In fact, in the guise of Álvaro de Campos, Pessoa sends that capitalism 'à merda'.⁷³ Maria Irene Ramalho Sousa Santos rightly states that the poet reinvented the idea of empire.⁷⁴ In the process, he reinvents the very idea of the centre. The centre of his empire would no longer be a territorialized, political and economic centre, as the empires of the great European metropolis had been. Rather, his empire would be deterritorialized — 'partes sem todo' — and represented metaphorically in a Portuguese nation spread in a 'mar sem fim'. That empire would be incarnated by the nation of a culturally cosmopolitan people, who knew how to 'estar num Sagres qualquer'.⁷⁵

Like the other grand imperial ideas with which it dialogued — the Manueline concept of empire, *Os Lusíadas*, and Vieira's Fifth Empire — Pessoa's imperial project is a product of its era. It synthesizes concepts prevalent at the end of the nineteenth century, which had been pushed definitively into modernity by the aesthetic shock that took place at the beginning of the twentieth century. Its message became the new expression of the empire as imagination of the centre, with which generations of poets, ideologues and politicians had been dialoguing. This dialogue had been premised on a deterritorialized, rather than a territorial, imperial nostalgia. Pessoa experienced it in this way. He privileged Humanism within the European and Portuguese imperial idea, over the territorial, economic and political power that provided the practical support for that idea. He preferred the dream to the achievement. He afforded non-occurrence a higher status than an actual happening. In this way, he affirmed his imperial project *avant la lettre* as a globalized expression — 'partes sem todo' — of what the empire had been. Concomitantly, it rested on an emphasized concept of imagination.

⁷³ Pessoa, *Ultimatum e Páginas de Sociologia Política*, ed. by Joel Serrão (Lisbon: Ática, 1980), p. 111.

⁷⁴ Santos, 'A Poesia e o Sistema Mundial' and 'Um Imperialismo de Poetas. Fernando Pessoa e o Imaginário do Império', *Penélope*, 15 (1995), 91–128.

⁷⁵ Pessoa, *Ultimatum* . . . , p. 122.

THE ESTADO NOVO OR THE NEW ROUTES OF THE 'EMPIRE AS THE IMAGINATION OF THE CENTRE'

The Estado Novo, which took power after the military coup of 1926, came to embody the return to a rural and archaic Portuguese universe. This universe was poetically driven by the neo-Garrettians. Nationalist politics drew on tradition, history, empire, catholic moral values, order and national unity, and it opposed internationalism. This was used to justify the increasing distance placed between Portugal and the European centres where important decisions were made. According to the official discourse of the regime, disorder ruled in these European centres and 'they conspired against Portugal'. The corner stone of a national resurrection was a return to the original values of the Portuguese imperial adventure. These shored up, within imperial ideology, the ecumenical Christian vocation of the Portuguese. They were called to civilize and evangelize. The privileging of the empire as an historico-mythical legacy from the days of the Rose-Coloured Map, the Ultimatum and the Republic, regained a hue of religious fanaticism.⁷⁶ The concept of 'national unity', which neutralized social and political struggles at home, meant an unconditional unity between the metropolis and its colonies. Fernando Rosas points out that this unity was not just the result of law, military force and a politico-economic climate favourable to territorial expansion, as was the case in European imperialisms. It included that dimension of national unity which mixed history, myth and religion. It was linked to the nation's identity and to its very survival.⁷⁷

The discourse of return characteristic of the Estado Novo operated at two levels: the first was a return to the essence of imperial mythology, 'a grande casa portuguesa' from Minho to Timor, with a metropolis that, thanks to a 'vigilant father', could imagine itself at the centre. The second aspect of the return harked back to the values of a Portuguese rural and traditional universe or to the 'pequena casa portuguesa'. But the return was false.

Domestically, in the inaccurate propaganda of the Estado Novo, including the school books it produced, Portugal was deemed to be the third or fourth world power in the league of nations.⁷⁸ Internationally, Portugal was a 'small, poor, backward metropolis incapable of defending

⁷⁶ See Alexandre, 'A África no Imaginário Político Português (Séculos XIX-XX)', *Penélope*, 15 (1995), 39-52.

⁷⁷ Fernando Rosas, 'Estado Novo, Império e Ideologia Imperial', *Revista de História das Ideias*, 17 (1995), 19-32.

⁷⁸ Maria Manuela Carvalho, 'O Ensino da História e "Ideologia" Imperial', *História*, 34 (1997), 19.

itself' with an empire 'scattered over three corners of the globe'.⁷⁹ That, at any rate, was the European view. What had changed was the way Portugal saw itself. As a consequence, the way it viewed Europe changed. The need to compare itself to, and to relate with, Europe altered. Nineteenth-century politicians and the Republicans saw Europe as the centre, to which Portugal, by virtue of its empire, 'imagined' itself to belong. From its position of perceived marginality, it had tried to react to policies formulated by Europe, particularly those related to the partition of Africa. In contrast, during the Salazar era, the marginalization of Portugal by Europe, which still existed, became bilateral. Europe marginalized Portugal and Portugal, in turn, marginalized itself from Europe. In fact, Salazar's foreign policy was characterized by a distancing from Europe. The resulting isolation, which was grounded in an uncompromising belief in the territorial integrity of Portugal and its colonies, was ideologically rooted. Foreign policy was based on the conviction that Europe only 'conspired against Portugal'. It assumed that the uniqueness of Portuguese identity could only be fulfilled from within the history that had helped to shape that identity. In other words, through Portugal's union with and contemplation of its empire.⁸⁰

Salazar used the empire as a weapon in the diplomatic arena and as a guarantee of Portugal's independence. He did not develop it, for fear that this would result in notions of independence or, as had happened in Brazil, that the empire would become greater than the metropolis. Salazar seemed to have found a 'magic formula'.⁸¹ From then on, he would always opt for greater isolation until he became imprisoned in a labyrinth of his own making. One of the foundations of this 'preserved world' was a dilemma because only the preservation of the alliance with Britain made the imperial dream possible. The permanence of Portugal as a colonial power depended on it. Once again, as had occurred throughout the nineteenth century and during the Republic, imperialism under the Estado Novo was condemned to be 'anti-britânico por vocação and pró-britânico por realismo'.⁸² The imperialist sentiments of the Republicans were a mixture of nationalistic nostalgia and the policies of imperialist Europe. This resulted in Portugal's involvement in the contemporary European arena. In contrast, the imperial policies of the Estado Novo were formulated inside Portugal. They were portrayed as part of a new and exceptional historical current, or to use the words of Augusto de Castro — the Commissioner-General of the 'Exposição do Mundo Português' — as one of those currents which

⁷⁹ António Louçã, 'A Diplomacia Salazarista e as Propostas de Partilha Colonial 1937-1938', *História*, 34 (1997), 5.

⁸⁰ Mattoso, p. 297.

⁸¹ Ana Calapez Gomes, 'Aspectos da Ideologia na Época das Descolonizações', *Vértice*, 13 (1989), 70-75.

⁸² Rosas, p. 25.

rendered Portugal part of a 'número limitado de povos que escreveram a História do mundo'.⁸³ The imperialist and centralizing commandments of the Estado Novo were defined and a whole series of initiatives was launched by the regime in the 1930s and 1940s, in order to promote, for all Portuguese, the construction of the imperial nation. From these many initiatives I will briefly analyse the construction of this imperial image, as it appears in the symbolic representations linked to the commemorations. I will also consider their presence in literature as a way in which Portugal's image as an imperial nation is constructed and legitimized.

While Europe began to tear itself apart at the beginning of World War II, Portugal celebrated, with the opening of the 'Exposição do Mundo Português', its long history. As Salazar commented, this celebration glorified eight hundred years of independence, as well as commemorating the three-hundredth anniversary of the Restoration. In this atmosphere of multiple commemorations, António Ferro added a new important date, consecrating the Estado Novo:

1140 explica 1640, como 1640 prepara 1940. São três anos sagrados da nossa história, o ano do nascimento, o ano do renascimento e o ano apoteótico do ressurgimento! O que vamos festejar não é tanto o Portugal de ontem, mas o de hoje, não é tanto o Portugal de D. Afonso Henriques e de D. João IV mas o de Carmona e de Salazar.⁸⁴

Salazar's regime constructed itself as the legitimate heir to the civilizing mission of Portugal in the world. This manoeuvre had both a spiritual and a material dimension, and guaranteed Portugal's recovery of its central role as mediator between worlds. Hence the driving force, who steered Portugal into the centre of the world centuries before, became the central figure of the exhibition. The exhibition monument — the 'Padrão dos Descobrimentos' — accentuated the 'sábio de Sagres'. This figure, portrayed by Fernando Pessoa in *Mensagem* as 'O único imperador que tem, deveras, | O globo mundo em sua mão', was appropriated by the regime.⁸⁵ The identification of Salazar with Henry the Navigator completed the scenario. This particular choice, out of all the possible national heroes, confirmed the commitment, inherent in colonial policy of the Estado Novo, to identify the regime with the golden age of Portuguese history, as it had been portrayed in the national epic.

Portugal became a protected space. It felt the world revolved around it and, from this privileged position, could construct and in fact imagine itself as the centre of an empire. This had been reflected in the Portuguese World Exhibition: it had taken place in a rigorously ordered environment, and

⁸³ Augusto de Castro, *A Exposição do Mundo Português e a sua finalidade Nacional* (Lisbon: Empresa de Publicidade, 1940), p. 108.

⁸⁴ António Ferro quoted by Yves Léonard, 'O Império Colonial Salazarista', in *História da Expansão* . . . , v, 28.

⁸⁵ Pessoa, *Obra Poética*, p. 76.

was protected from 'foreign' interference. The language used to define Portugal was grandiose. It did not correspond to reality but rather an image that was created of a mythical country put on display at the exhibition. There, the centre of the world and centre of the Portuguese world became one. As the image became reality, one could see a country in a time warp. It was caught between being a 'pequena casa lusitana', protected from the horrors of Europe by a 'vigilant father', and portrayed in 'Vida Popular' and 'Aldeias Portuguesas' as the decent, hard-working and poor Portuguese folk, and the period of imperial greatness of the 'grande casa lusitana'. This latter period was an historical dream. It contained the mythical denial of reality as it was lived. This reality was present in the huge pavilions that evoked the expansionist period. It was also present in the cocktail of African peoples presented in their natural 'habitats', which had been relocated to Lisbon's Jardim do Ultramar.

Was this image really convincing? The newspapers that covered the event offer interesting perspectives. The *Diário da Manhã*, dated 4 December 1940, asserts that, through the exhibition, 'todos ficamos senão mais portugueses ao menos mais orgulhosos do nosso passado e mais confiantes no futuro'.⁸⁶ As Margarida Acciouoli pointed out, only one article, published by Jorge Borges de Macedo in *O Diabo* on 14 December 1940, drew attention to the dangers of presenting history through 'stories'. The exhibition was pure propaganda for the Estado Novo, something which the journalist does not call into question.⁸⁷ He does reveal the importance of the press and the commemoration activities for the way in which 'imagined communities' are constructed within a dictatorial system characterized by censorship. His article challenges the inefficiency of the methods used and puts in doubt the identity which could result from them. These same doubts are articulated by some characters in Mário Cláudio's novel, *Tocata para Dois Clarins* (1992), when they visit the exhibition. However, there is a difference between Borges de Macedo's worries and Mário Cláudio's fictional portrayal. The former is concerned that this new feeling of community was fragile because it was rooted in an improbable fiction. The latter, writing nearly fifty years after the exhibition, shows how the alienation and infantilization of the Portuguese, practised by the Estado Novo, worked. The main couple in the narrative begin their family life in 1940, journey through Salazarism and reach 25 April 1974. The question they raise is precisely 'whose imagined communities?'. Like Partha Chatterjee, who reclaims the voice of the margins implicit in the creation of

⁸⁶ Quoted by Margarida Acciouoli, 'A Exposição de 1940—ideias, críticas e vivências', *Colóquio-Artes*, 87 (1990), 20.

⁸⁷ Acciouoli, pp. 18–25.

Anderson's 'imagined communities', Mário Cláudio questions who imagines the nation's identity and how it is transformed into a collective identity.⁸⁸ Colonial literature, as it portrays another reality, based in the colonies, may help us to see the strengths and weaknesses of this renewed experience of 'empire as the imagination of the centre'. It shows, often accidentally, that beyond official rhetoric, 'termos colónias não foi um simples a mais, resultado de um excesso de poder e vitalidade, mas necessidade de fracos e pobres dispostos a pagar caro um lugar ao sol um pouco mais confortável do que o caseiro'.⁸⁹

In line with other policies promoted by the Estado Novo to advertise and mediate 'the Portuguese world', special attention was given to literature. It was believed that this medium would bring back to the metropolis a greater knowledge of the reality of Portuguese Africa, and stimulate everyone's commitment to the construction of Portugal overseas. Two distinct initiatives should be emphasized: the writing of the 'Cadernos Coloniais' and the relaunching of the Literary Competition of the Agência Geral das Colónias, begun during the Republican period. The Estado Novo dictatorially promoted the standardization of the literary genre. It tried to control it by excluding works that did not conform to its colonial ideology. In reality, despite the attractive prizes, this genre was marginal and never captured the literary imaginary.

As Isle Pollack has pointed out, the prize-winning novels in the Literary Competition, from 1933 to 1952, portray a diverse range of situations.⁹⁰ Above all else, up until the 1950s, they promote the Lusitanian hero who, in Africa, becomes the farmer of large tracts of land. He always loves African territory as if it were Portuguese. An example of this is the prize-winning novel published in 1933, *O Vélo d'Oiro*, by Henrique Galvão. Galvão constructs the prototype novel of the Estado Novo. He reproduces the Portuguese identity that would later be displayed at the Portuguese World Exhibition. It is rural, traditional and imperial. This identity is relocated to a fascinating and exotic Africa, replete with opportunities. Rodrigo, the main character, after several adventures, transforms into the model of a 'new colonizer': a great farmer who becomes the 'unidade espiritual de uma Pátria que está na Europa e na África' and marries the

⁸⁸ Partha Chatterjee, 'Whose Imagined Communities', in *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), pp. 3–13. On Mário Cláudio's *Tocata para Dois Clarins* see Ellen W. Sapega, 'Memória Pública e Discurso Oficial: Visões da Época Salazarista na obra de Irene Lisboa, José Saramago e Mário Cláudio', *Discursos*, 13 (1996), 99–112, and Moacyr Laterza Filho, 'Os contrapontos de Mário Cláudio, ou os improvisos de uma tocata que, a dois clarins, fora composta para um solo de guitarra', *Revista da ABRAPLIP*, 1 (1999), 313–28.

⁸⁹ Lourenço, 'Retrato (Póstumo) . . .', p. 11.

⁹⁰ Isle Pollack, 'Literatura Colonial Portuguesa — Uma Aventura Malograda', in *Actas do 4º Congresso da Associação Internacional de Lusitanistas*, ed. by Maria de Fátima Viegas Brauer-Figueiredo (Lisbon: Lidel, 1995), pp. 755–65.

'noiva gentil', to use Maria Archer's term.⁹¹ The bride came from the metropolis, and becomes the guarantor of the Lusitanian home in imperial lands. The moral of the story is that colonization in Africa serves to extend Portugal. This colonization is promoted as a way of respecting the legacy inherited from all those who fought to construct Portugal overseas. The overseas is part of the centre which is Portugal. However, this literary and ideological 'model', which lasted until the 1960s, began to mutate. The characters of some colonial writers denounced the decentring of the imperial centre that Portugal imagined it was constructing for its imperial lands.

Africa would be more fully portrayed in colonial literature, from the works of Castro Soromenho onwards. He was a frequent competitor in the Literary Competition from the end of the 1930s. His stories, which targeted both colonial and metropolitan readers, could easily have been considered as part of the esteemed genre that portrayed exotic places and peoples. Unlike most colonial literature, they were of great literary quality. However, Castro Soromenho insisted on writing his 'revelation work' on Africa, situating the action in his later stories outside the African sphere. This sphere could be classified as 'theirs'. The narratives now took place within a sphere that was 'ours' or, rather, in a world created by colonialism. It was a space where blacks, mulattoes and whites mixed. It was a place full of tensions, violence, poverty and exile as seen in *Terra Morta*, published in 1949. The writings of Castro Soromenho, a pioneering representation of the real dimension of the colonial world, clearly and undoubtedly herald the end of the Estado Novo's hegemonic, unilateral, mono-dimensional and static vision of Africa, Portugal and its empire. Africans were no longer 'innocent creatures', waiting to be civilized by the Portuguese, as they had been portrayed in the Jardim do Ultramar during the Portuguese World Exhibition. The colonizers were no longer heroic agents of Portuguese civilization, another image used in the exhibition where Portugal still imagined itself as the centre of an idealized world. That Portuguese world had been a model for all but, in reality, it never existed.

Literature from Africa began to show other possibilities for the future. Besides African writers who actively started revealing another Africa, censored by the Estado Novo, *Terra Morta*, by Castro Soromenho and *Natureza Morta*, by José Augusto-França are two examples of a reversal of exoticism and colonial adventure. They give rise to other images of Africa, Portugal and its empire.

Published in 1949, both novels evoke the idea of death in their titles. Their narratives take place in Africa and reveal the aggressiveness of the

⁹¹ Henrique Galvão, *O Vélo d'Oiro* (Lisbon: Livraria Popular, 1936).

Angolan hinterland, characterized by 'abandonment, illnesses and fever' or by the violence of the tropical climate that consumes the delicate bodies of white women. The stories also call to mind a human nature that is alienated and suffocated by the social conditions brought on by colonialism. The empty lives of the colonizers in *Natureza Morta* and in *Terra Morta* exemplify this. They have fled from the misery of Portuguese villages that the Estado Novo had presented as a happy paradise during the Portuguese World Exhibition. Through the eyes of Julia, in *Natureza Morta*, or in the more complex vision of colonial society present in *Terra Morta*, we witness the antithesis of the colonial world image. This older image had been viewed through rose-tinted spectacles, through the stories of dreams fulfilled and happy endings enjoyed by the Rodrigues and Daniéis, paradigms of the Estado Novo's colonial literature. In the antithetical image, the atmosphere is tense. Blacks, mulattoes and whites live, interact and think together. The colonial space in *Natureza Morta* and in *Terra Morta* differs from the Estado Novo's imperial image. Only a few words uttered by the colonizers of Camaxilo, revealing a belief in a shared space, hark back to that image. The new colonial space is the result of a policy of abandonment by the Estado Novo: the colonizers are poor wretches, inscribed in a hierarchy of misery which distinguished between old colonizers, fathers of mulatto children, and new colonizers, who are identified by their marriages to barren white women. Blacks ran naked or wore loincloths, and mulattoes, whose faces revealed a duplicity, were eyed suspiciously by all. Could it be that the unfortunate *cipaios*, traitors to blacks and despised by whites, were the 'happy' product of the Portuguese civilizing mission? Could this colonial drama portrayed in the novels represent the Portuguese colonial mission in Africa? Was this the society that the Estado Novo would soon choose as its multiracial example?

As Vasco Serra observes, in Castro Soromenho's *A Chaga*, 'a realidade em África é toda ao contrário da propaganda que dela fazem em Portugal, o que não admira, porque há duas Áfricas, a dos negros e a dos colonialistas'.⁹² That was the multi-faceted society where, to use António Vieira's example from colonial Brazil, men are in search of 'como hão-de comer e como se hão-de comer'.⁹³ Through that society, José Augusto França and Castro Soromenho portrayed the violence and the inhumanity of the 'mundo que o português criou', or in other words, as Laura Padilha pointed out, following Albert Memmi, a world that at the end of the

⁹² Castro Soromenho, *A Chaga* (Matosinhos: União de Escritores Angolanos/Contemporânea Editora, 1988), p. 186.

⁹³ António Vieira, *Sermão de Santo António*, ed. by Manuel dos Sousa Santos Alves (Lisbon: Livraria Popular de Francisco Franco, 1978), p. 41.

process 'terá apodrecido o colonizador e destruído o colonizado'.⁹⁴ However, this colonial world continued to make an effort to imagine farms full of happy Rodrigues and Estelas. But *Terra Morta* and *Natureza Morta* had now been written and a vast and diverse Africanist literary movement had begun. World War II had taken place, and the movement for decolonization had come into being. So, of which empire — of which Africa — could Portugal continue to be, and imagine itself to be, the centre? The answer was apparently very simple: by creating and promoting a 'new old myth', a 'Novo Encoberto' Lusotropicalism as the 'empire as imagination of the centre'.

The Constitutional Revision of 1951, principally caused by foreign but also by some internal pressure, revoked the Colonial Act and changed the surface of Portuguese imperialism. An 'história de cinco séculos de colonização' was converted into 'cinco séculos de relações entre povos e culturas diferentes'.⁹⁵ A colonial society became 'pluriracial'. An imperial nation changed into one that was 'pluricontinental'. The colonies were turned into 'províncias ultramarinas', and the unique Portuguese civilizing mission into the no-less-unique 'integração portuguesa nos trópicos'. The ideological sub-text behind this apparent change could be found in the lusotropical theses of the Brazilian Gilberto Freyre. His reworking of Portuguese colonial ideology appealed to the regime which was looking for a philosophy to support, and lend credibility to, the 'changes' of 1951. His work retained an aspect of uniqueness for Portuguese colonization, and supposedly made it scientific and modern.

Thanks to Gilberto Freyre, who was adopted as the regime's ideologue, the Estado Novo was able to 're-write' its discourse through what Yves Léonard terms the 'história de uma apropriação'.⁹⁶ Léonard notes that Gilberto Freyre identified 'os fundamentos do luso-tropicalismo (miscigenação, fusão cultural, ausência de preconceito racista) com o papel histórico de Portugal, apresentado como 'missão evangelizadora'. In this way, Gilberto Freyre canonized the link between heritage and what he considered to be the unique Portuguese appetite to 'confraternizar lírica e franciscanamente com os povos dos trópicos'. Freyre provided the ideological basis for the Estado Novo to transform the 'mística imperial' of the 1930s and 40s into a 'mística luso-cristã de integração'. A re-evaluation of historical and religious heritage, which re-centred Portugal as the centre of the lusotropicalism, reached its peak with the elevation of Henry the Navigator to the

⁹⁴ Laura Padilha, *Entre Voz e Letra — O Lugar da Ancestralidade na Ficção Angolana do Século XX* (Niterói: EDUFF, 1995), p. 106.

⁹⁵ Quoted by Cláudia Castelo, 'Congressos e Conferências Culturais', in J. M. Brandão, Fernando Rosas, *Dicionário de História do Estado Novo* (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1995), p. 191.

⁹⁶ Yves Léonard, 'Salazarisme et Lusotropicalisme, histoire d'une appropriation', *Lusotopie* (1997), pp. 211–27; 'O Ultramar Português', in *História da Expansão*, v, 37–44.

status of initiator of the process that 'concorreu decisivamente para dar às relações de europeus com não-europeus, de brancos com povos de cor, um rumo peculiarmente luso-cristão'.⁹⁷ As in the Portuguese World Exhibition, Salazar was once again designated as the guardian of that process. The element, which allows for the adaptation of this Brazilian discourse by a Portuguese discourse, is the messianic tone that proclaims the 'new order'. Like the Fifth Empires of Vieira and Pessoa, lusotropicalism is an identity under construction. Its prophetic and visionary nature depends on the providential voice with which the message is delivered. That nature explains its appeal across the political spectrum. The use of Camões's symbols of empire, which were characterized by an ethnic and territorial multiplicity, and of Pessoa's promised future provided lusotropicalism with a cultural anchor deeply rooted in the Portuguese imperial imaginary.

Europe, at the time, was engaged in decolonization and caught between the economic hegemony of the United States and the 'communist danger' of the USSR. Lusotropicalism as a foreign policy would first be used to defend the concept of an 'Iberian bastion', suspicious of a democratic Europe. It would then be used to articulate a defence of the whole of Europe, whose survival was threatened by the emergence, at the end of World War II, of the two super-powers. It claimed that the future of Europe and of Western Christian civilization could only be guaranteed through the creation of a Euro-African space. Portugal, the pluricontinental nation and creator of multiracial societies, Brazil being Freyre's paradigm, was once again at the centre of the world. It led the way for Europe. It signalled the creation of a 'Euro-Africa', and skirted round the problem of decolonization.

Portugal left behind its recent isolationist past. It no longer turned its back on Europe, as it fulfilled a civilizing mission and imagined itself as the centre, in search of new identities. It became a guiding country with theories on how to stabilize Europe. As Ana Calapez Gomes pointed out on this twentieth century 'Novo Encoberto' Portugal was again 'numa posição-chave, como grande potência e motivo de admiração para os outros povos, assim essa inata capacidade de fusão inter-racial transformaria Portugal e os Portugueses num paradigma do mundo moderno, por indicar a via para alcançar na prática o ideal da fusão universal'.⁹⁸

In fact, it pretended not to be dissimilar to the Portugal which had once spread Europe throughout the world. There appeared to be a new 'magic formula', based on recapturing the past, which would render Portugal a great power once more. This was also the 'magic formula' doggedly used by Salazar to preserve his colonial regime which the world now rejected. In

⁹⁷ Gilberto Freyre quoted by Léonard, 'O Ultramar Português', p. 42.

⁹⁸ Gomes, p. 74.

certain respects, he was completely out of kilter with the universalist invocations that had been imagined in diverse ways, and with the empires of Vieira, Pascoaes and Pessoa. They placed Portugal at the centre of a world empire (or post-empire) which was to be. But they never demanded the human sacrifices that Salazar's empire did. The regime's appropriation of their works became the cultural mark of the vaster immorality, both political and ideological, that gagged Portugal and its empire. An empire celebrated by Camões in *Os Lusíadas* and poetically constructed 'sem mentir/puras verdades' was transformed into an immense deceit only exposed in literature by those who, in the darkest hour of fascism, fought for another Portugal and for a liberated Africa.

Through narratives written by those who fought the colonial war, everything would fall apart. This destruction was a direct result of the destruction of poets, narrators or characters who, on a long African journey, would learn other 'puras verdades' through an African experience.

Portugal's peripheral geographic position in the sixteenth century led it to be the first European empire. This frontier geography had been poetically elevated to an identity in Camões's famous verses, which put the Lusitanian kingdom at the head of Europe. Its peripheral position in Europe from the 1950s to the 1970s allowed it to be the last European empire. The colonial war, to which this peripheral condition led Portugal and its empire, sought to defend the fiction that Portugal was a centre. This fiction had been updated in the mythologies and crusading ideology of the 'Novo Encoberto'. The war also served to defend a regime that hid behind a rhetoric that replaced reality. The inglorious epitaph to the Portuguese empire did not take hold through the discourses of lusotropicalism that survive even today. Rather, it was inscribed in a discourse of war. This discourse was inherent in the ideological intolerance of a regime that supported war and which relied on it. Of course, the discourse was cloaked in a lusotropicalism that converted the war into a sovereign mission. Similarly, rape became an 'acto de dádiva e de partilha', and mutilation or death was an heroic gesture in defence of the homeland. But the war would also undo that fiction, and initiate the journey home to Portugal, from a 'potência mundial imaginária, a País real; de Império mítico, ou de futurante Império, a Pátria actual'.⁹⁹

EPITAPH TO EMPIRES

The events of 1961, with the start of the war in Angola, called into question for the first time Portuguese society's position vis-à-vis the so-called

⁹⁹ Fernando Piteira Santos, 'Império/Colonialismo/Descolonização', in *Seminário --- 25 de Abril 10 Anos Depois* (Lisbon: Associação 25 de Abril/Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1985), p. 267.

Portuguese world. However, in spite of the background of violence, and in contrast to the nineteenth century, there did not seem to be a collective awareness of the crisis. Public opinion was controlled and misinformed. It was far removed from the problems in Africa, and educated in an 'imperial mysticism'. As a result, the regime could add to the traditional mythification of Portuguese colonization, a mythification of the Army and its actions. These had the effective support of the Church, which legitimized Salazar's position. His mantra, 'Para Angola rapidamente e em força', summarized his position, and pointed to the inevitability of an armed conflict. There was a small amount literature of dubious quality which pushed the official discourse, with its nationalist, mystic façade. It justified the Portuguese military intervention in Africa and its underlying ideology. It gave a new dimension to the myth of the empire and Africa. There were also, from 1961 onwards, a number of poets who began to write about the increasing state of siege experienced by Portugal in its imperial territories. These poets used words and tones that revealed the face of the war, and pointed to human and historic devastation. Some examples include 'armas'; 'barcas como armas'; 'balas'; 'morte'; 'corpo desertor'; 'cor da carne'; 'cadáveres'; 'soldados'; 'guerra'. From 1961, the empire began 'to write back to the metropolis', not only through 'official' writers, and Africans engaged in the liberation struggle, who had been active though censored for some time, but also through those sent to the war in Africa from the metropolis. Through their letters, poems and other texts, they began to lift the veil that had concealed a fiction created by the doubly peripheral condition of the Portuguese: Portugal on the periphery of Europe and its own empire. The movement of ships mentioned by Foucault in his 'epitaph to European colonialism', as Phyllis Peres sees it, 'dans les civilisations sans bateau, les rêves se tarissent, l'espionnage y remplace l'aventure et la police, les corsaires', would be, in the Portuguese case, characterized by the movement of ships taking out and bringing home soldiers and weapons.¹⁰⁰ Fiamma Hasse Pais Brandão draws on this image in the well-known poem 'Barcas Novas', published in 1967. This movement of ships, which were full of blood, helped outline the routes to a desired change.

I will now discuss the various shades and implications of the process of marginalization which became more marked in Portuguese society, as manifested in a variety of texts. That society's movements contributed to the emptying of the centre and to the widening of the margins and, consequently, to the visualization and simultaneous denunciation of

¹⁰⁰ Michel Foucault, 'Des Espaces Autres', *Architecture, Mouvement et Continuité* (1984), p. 49. Phyllis Peres, in 'Love and Imagination Among the Ruins of Empire: António Lobo Antunes's *Os Cus de Judas* and *Fado Alexandrino*', in *After the Revolution — Twenty Years of Portuguese Literature 1974-1994*, ed. by Helena Kaufman and Anna Klobucka (Lewisburg: Bracknell University Press, 1997), p. 191.

Portugal as an 'empire as imagination of the centre'. It also became empty itself both politically and culturally.

In May 1961, the year war broke out in Angola, the *plaquettes* of *Poesia 61* appeared. These drew together five young poets: Fiamma Hasse Pais Brandão, Luiza Neto Jorge, Maria Teresa Horta, Casimiro of Brito and Gastão Cruz. They referred to the place where they lived as being the 'cais dos barcos pequenos de papel', where one 'dormia, apodrecia e sufocava', postulating themselves as citizens as 'a escultura de amanhã'.¹⁰¹ To the painful enunciation of a moribund Portuguese spirit voiced in various poetic forms during the fifties, *Poesia 61* added ground-breaking elements. At a semantic and historical level, it questioned the link between the collective imaginary and the sea/maritime adventures. It also questioned the traditional, closed morality, symbolized by the 'casa portuguesa' and by family relationships. These projected and refracted the public institutions that constituted society. This questioning is conveyed semantically through the obsessive references to pieces, body fragments, corpses, bits of life, death, and abbreviated words, which suggest a fragmentation in the material to which they refer. Syntactically, questioning occurs in the economy of words and a textual fragmentation that characterizes this poetry.

In *Portugal Maio Poesia 61*, Jorge Silveira analyses the connections between the text and history. He stresses that this poetry corresponds to a prophetic state of mind at the end of an era. It was not just an empire and national identity, drummed in from school onwards, which was ending. An out-dated national, family morality was also on the wane. In 'Balada Apócrifa', Luiza Neto Jorge subverts the armed forces' slogan, 'o corpo pela pátria', and a family morality that safeguarded girls' bodies. In the poem, these same girls' bodies are offered to soldiers. The offering affirms sexuality, repressed by society and the Church, and brings into focus death caused by war. Two distinct but linked elements, which restrained the daily life and freedom of men and women at the time, were thus subverted.¹⁰²

Olhai os lírios do campo
meninas da saia rodada
íris de teia de aranha
desvendam o mar nas searas [. . .]
Os soldados em manobras
têm noite por espingarda
Colhei os lírios do corpo
Meninas da saia travada.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ Luiza Neto Jorge, *Quarta Dimensão*, in *Poesia 61* (1961), p. 5; Gastão Cruz, *A Morte Percutiva*, in *Poesia 61* (1961), p. 16; Neto Jorge, *Quarta Dimensão*, p. 3, respectively.

¹⁰² Jorge Fernandes Silveira, *Portugal Maio Poesia 61* (Lisbon: INCM, 1986), p. 178.

¹⁰³ Neto Jorge, *Quarta Dimensão*, p. 10.

Fiama Brandão, in 'Barcas Novas', and Gastão Cruz, in 'A Morte Percutiva', poetically denounce the corpse-carrying ships and the dead men that signal the tragic end of the maritime epic venture. Published in 1967, 'Barcas Novas' is based on João Zorro's medieval poem. In it, the meaning of the boats launched from the Lisbon of her day is exposed. They were blood-stained, and marked an historical change. The mythical or stagnant ships, celebrated in Portuguese poetry from Pessoa/Campos to Cesariny, became the ships laden with men, and weapons of war, portrayed by poets in the sixties. Bodies which long for the sea, as in António Nobre or Álvaro de Campos, became bodies fighting spiritually and physically against the ships in order to escape the 'cemitério verde' that their present-day sea has become.¹⁰⁴ The new ships that Lisbon launches into the sea no longer leave on a voyage of discovery as in Camões. Nor do they hint at the sexual metaphor implicit in João Zorro's medieval poem. Instead, they are going to war, filled with men and arms, and destined to a death foretold. The poem invites us to reflect on the present moment as the ships leave and simultaneously revises the story of the departures that embodied Portuguese history. They mortgaged the country's economic development, as commentators from Antero de Quental to António Sérgio have pointed out. Fiama stresses this in another poem, which looks towards the land and no longer at the sea: 'a guerra esvaziou, | antes de secos, sítios | de campo'.¹⁰⁵ Women were left to wait, as Teolinda Gersão also highlights in *Paisagem com Mulher e Mar ao Fundo*.

Paisagem com Mulher e Mar ao Fundo was written after 25 April 1974. It is a reflection on a Portuguese landscape that has been emptied and feminized by the troop departures of the sixties and seventies. The landscape is dominated by O.S., for which we can read Oliveira Salazar. The narrator, Hortense, is female. *Paisagem* tells of the emotions of those who resignedly stand at the quayside and watch the ships taking 'meninos, de sua Mãe' away. They imagine the reverse of this failed epic venture: the ship turning back. This thought points to a clandestine landscape: an alternative to their lot. The desire for an alternative leads to underground changes at school, at home and in the female characters who begin to notice that 'em todas as janelas, portas, cancelas, havia sempre finalmente um fecho abrindo-se, uma saída, desenhando-se entre as duas tábuas mal unidas'.¹⁰⁶ In a similar way, Elisa, in Maria Velho da Costa's *Casas Pardas*,

¹⁰⁴ Cruz, p. 16.

¹⁰⁵ Fiama Hasse Pais Brandão, *Obra Breve* (Lisbon: Teoerma, 1991), p. 73.

¹⁰⁶ Teolinda Gersão, *Paisagem com Mulher e Mar ao Fundo* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1996), p. 136.

also escapes from her 'casa do pai'.¹⁰⁷ Similarly, a long-suffering people began to see that it was possible to escape O.S.'s domain and cross the border in search of a better life: they escaped their Portuguese home, exchanging it for a European one. Thus, the space/island of isolation, as the country represented itself abroad through the colonial war, was subverted from within. The historically corroborated transformation embodied in Fiama's poem, in which the Portuguese move from a time of mythical ships to ships full of blood, brought about both a collective and personal change in the perception of Portugal as a quay from which people departed. It was no longer the 'cais de uma saudade de pedra' of Álvaro de Campos. It had become the 'cais de desastre' from which Hortense's son leaves for the war. It resurfaces in the suffering caused by his loss overseas and by a devastating guilty conscience: 'Sou culpada deste navio e deste cais'.¹⁰⁸ As such, it leads to the cry of revolt and to the historical awareness both of the individual and the collective.

Words like 'os cadáveres construídos na água' from Fiama's poetry, or Luíza Neto Jorge's 'estátuas', or Gastão Cruz's bodies under ships, slowly began to demote the status of imperial icons. The empire had been definitively shaken, both as a reality and as an image. The whole structure of the 'casa portuguesa', established during the Salazar era — from nation to family, from school to church, and even the Portuguese language itself — was in tatters. The movement for change was signalled by the poets of *Poesia 61*. In Fiama Hasse Pais Brandão, Luíza Neto Jorge and Maria Teresa Horta's poetry and in works such as *Casas Pardas*, by Maria Velho da Costa and *Novas Cartas Portuguesas*, by Maria Velho da Costa, Maria Isabel Barreno and Maria Teresa Horta, this movement acquires a female face that reclaims women as agents of history. Change, on this side of the ocean, included the feminine.

The political awareness among Portuguese youth in the 1960s and 1970s of a siege situation, as was manifested in the war or in Paris, was visible in the poetry of the time, and would become evident on the streets in student demonstrations. These began during the academic crisis of 1962 and gradually swelled. They challenged the regime and the war it had ordered. Manuel Alegre, a charismatic name in that generation, who read and sang his poems *Praça da Canção* and *Canto e as Armas*, opens his first novel, *Jornada de África*, with a strong image of his age group's anguish. He highlights the changes brought about by the war. New solidarities and habits were being forged through a subversive underground that questioned

¹⁰⁷ Maria Velho da Costa, *Casas Pardas* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1977); see also Ana Paula Ferreira, 'Casas Pardas, de Maria Velho da Costa: Uma vinda à Escrita na Casa-do-Pai', in *Escrever a Casa Portuguesa*, ed. by Jorge Fernandes da Silveira (Belo Horizonte: UFMG, 1999), pp. 157-75.

¹⁰⁸ Gersão, p. 55.

the whole system. Women's attitudes towards the youth who fought against the regime and the war at home changed. They formed alliances with those who left the country-prison, and who opted for Europe and freedom. These refugees rejected the Portuguese imperialistic vocation. They shared the fate of a long line of Portuguese who, in the past, also emigrated across the border. Opting for Europe eroded, from home, the Portuguese maritime vocation. Poems like 'Trova do Emigrante', 'Exílio', 'Portugal em Paris', 'Vão-se os Homens desta Terra', 'Lusíada Exilado', 'Pátria Expatriada', all registered in the Portuguese poetic imaginary the dimension of that denied Portuguese diaspora and the sorrows it caused.

Manuel Alegre's discourse is utopic. Lobo Antunes's discourse, in contrast, is strongly dysphoric. In *Fado Alexandrino*, he outlines the other margins of Portuguese society. He portrays those in the underground who wanted a revolution. They were drawn from a variety of social groups. One character is the Transmissions Officer, who upon his return from the war in the 1970s, becomes actively involved in the resistance. The cruel picture of Salazar's country, delineated by Lobo Antunes, is similar to the one drawn by Jorge de Sena in 'L'Été au Portugal', where revolution seemed to be an unattainable dream:

As paredes esfarelavam-se devagarinho em grumos de pó, fragmentos de calíça despegavam-se do tecto, o soalho abaulado rangia: tudo desbotado, monótono, sem vida, e o Tejo pela janela, também pardo, gemendo igualmente o seu protesto manso se o calcanhar de um barco o pisava. A revolução surgia-me de tal modo impensável, de tal modo absurda num país carunchoso, resignado e vago, que a minha existência se me afigurava desenrolar-se como um sonho no interior de um sonho, no qual flutuassem ao acaso fragmentos impalpáveis de palavras de ordem e de bandeiras vermelhas.¹⁰⁹

Jorge de Sena wrote 'L'Été au Portugal' in 1971 and published it in *Exorcismos* in 1972. There is a sense of the *finis patriae* in the mournful vocabulary with which the poet describes a people waiting for nothing. It is a folk which is ill, moribund, and full of youngsters with no arms and legs. They dream of France. The poem lacks the tragic dimension linked to an awareness of crisis, which can be found in texts from the end of the nineteenth century. That tragic dimension was conveyed by the apocalyptic imagery of an abyss. Sena's portrait of Portugal is paradoxically of a passive apocalypse. As such, no resurrection is expected as it was in the nineteenth century. Indeed, any thought of resurrection is voluntarily postponed:

Que Portugal se espera em Portugal?
Que gente ainda há-de erguer-se desta gente?

¹⁰⁹ António Lobo Antunes, *Fado Alexandrino* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1989), p. 78.

Pagam-se impérios como o bem e o mal
— mas com que há-de pagar-se quem se gacha e mente?
Chatins engratados, pelengentas fúfias
Passam de trombas de automóvel caro.
Soldados, prostitutas, tanto rapaz sem braços
E sem pernas — e como cães sem faro
Os pilhas poetas se versejam trífias.¹¹⁰

In the same year, 1972, that Jorge de Sena's poem was published, another portrait, supposedly from another era, was published in Mozambique. Frey Ioannes Garabatus Dias's or António Quadros's *As Quibyrycas*, a 'poema ethyco em oitavos', was described by the Instituto Internacional de Moçambicologia as 'um grosso caderno [. . .] de estâncias à maneira de Camões em que há falas del-rei D. Sebastião'.¹¹¹ From the beginning of the poem it is easy to see an obvious intertextuality with Luís de Camões's epic. There are other intertextual resonances with Sena. The blunders and blindness, which characterize D. Sebastião's reign in this new epic, and which reach their zenith at the disaster of Alcácer Quibir, serve as a parable for the war experienced by the poet.¹¹² This colonial war was declared by the 'senhor da casa lusitana', to whom the poem is dedicated through the voice of a 'Camões em Restelo'. The poet is inspired by the same desire for truth that drove the author of *Os Lusíadas*. Like Diogo do Couto's *O Soldado Prático* or Fernão Álvares do Oriente's *Lusitânia Transformada*, both of which interpreted, from the imperial peripheries of India at the end of the sixteenth century, the 'apagada e vil tristeza' characteristic of Portugal in *Os Lusíadas*, Frei Ioannes Garabatus's poem, arising from the imperial peripheries of the war-torn 1970s, tried to interpret the sense of expectation and somnambulism experienced in the Portugal of Salazar and Caetano. Although it uses the metaphor of Alcácer Quibir and relies on an historical and moral perspective, the poem is not really about a grave military defeat. Instead, it seeks to 'assumir a consciência do insucesso e das acções que o determinaram'.¹¹³

Só o luso não vê que isto assim é.
Olhando o mundo como quinta sua
supõe-se dominando essa mercê
que lhe caiu do céu em meio da rua.¹¹⁴

¹¹⁰ Jorge de Sena, *Exorcismos* (Lisbon: Moraes Editores, 1972), pp. 113–14.

¹¹¹ Sena, 'Um Imenso Inédito Semi-Camoneano e o Menos que Adiante se Verá', preface to Frey Ioannes Garabatus, *As Quibyrycas* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1991), p. 28. Frey Ioannes Garabatus is the pseudonym of António Quadros.

¹¹² Vítor Amaral Oliveira, 'As Quibyrycas — Um Clássico Esquecido', *Peregrinação*, 14–15 (1987), 9.

¹¹³ Rebelo, 'As Quibiricas de Garabato Dias ou o Discurso da Ruptura', *Colóquio-Letras*, 99 (1987), 23.

¹¹⁴ Garabatus, p. 87.

The poem is a cry against war, blindness and the intolerance which led the country on that Sebastian-like journey. The result of the journey was the transformation of Africa, through the war that took place there, into the archetypal place of destruction. The destruction was not just physical. It was both ethical and moral, and there was no way out of it.

The trajectory in the poem suggests a fundamental change in direction: it is no longer the ship that sails away leaving the country empty, but rather the ship that comes back from the imperial periphery to the centre carrying a dead homeland: 'Aqui jaz quem foi Rey de Portugal'.¹¹⁵ This new direction confirms the suspicions and anxieties of those waiting in the shadows of the quay that was the homeland. The narrative ends with the poet looking at the boat that returns the dead king; the fog becomes clear. In a reversal of Vieira, the poet does not see an imperial future for a regenerated Portugal, but rather the image of a past that is reproduced in the present, and impedes the future. It leaves Portugal suspended, and its frustrated lament assumes the shape of an embittered epitaph:

Vejo repetitiva e adicionada
a mesma causa abúlica ao efeito
sempre chegado pela nau mais tarda
que busque pelo Tejo o pátrio leito.
Vejo ao futuro a mesma nau parada
Num fundo de passado que perfeito
só aparece por falácia rica
dos mil açores na ronda da carniça.¹¹⁶

The ship's change of direction acknowledges a decentring, and becomes even more relevant because of its double meaning. It is not just the ship that performs this movement from the imperial periphery to the centre. The discourse of the poem itself mirrors this. Like *Lusitânia Transformada*, the poem *As Quybyrycas* was written in imperial exile, at a time when a change of course loomed. In it, the centre of the Portuguese imperial nation shifts to the periphery. From this decentred perspective, in an empire without a centre, the poet recognizes 'o reflexo espectral da nação esvaziada', to paraphrase Helder Macedo. Once again, there is 'an empire as imagination of the centre'.

As Quybyrycas differs from post-Renaissance work in its construction of the future. It points towards a new order of fraternity and recognition of the Other, positioning its discourse in the modern era. The poem is a warning to the metropolis. Not only does the Other exist, but the metropolis itself is fragile and deluded by notions of centrality. The poem becomes an instance of when, in Salman Rushdie's words, 'the empire

¹¹⁵ Garabatus, p. 353.

¹¹⁶ Garabatus, p. 358.

writes back to the centre'. In the text, the author forges, in a very individual way, the characteristics of the era in which he places his poem, and his own civil and artistic identity. Like the texts sent home by those who went to fight the colonial war in Africa, the poem shifted the centre of the imperial nation to the imperial periphery. Those conscripted combatants sent news of the African siege back to Portugal. They represented the imperial nation in the empire. They transformed the empire, and the experience of living in it, into something that gazed at Portugal.

As Quybyrycas was written from a Mozambican imperial exile that had been chosen. In contrast, those texts that bear witness to the colonial war were written by people from the metropolis, living in 'compulsory exile'. They were at the centre of a structure especially created to defend the imperial centre through the preservation of its colonies. This compounds the sense of 'writing back to the centre'. The latent spatial relationship contained in this movement becomes, in the texts, a semantic relationship that reflects the structure of the works. These were works that, by reporting what was happening at the periphery of the empire, disrupted and spoke from the centre. They became, in a manner different from *As Quybyrycas*, a serious warning to a metropolis that was arrogantly intolerant and only heard the voices of ghosts from the past. The metropolis had driven the country's youth to a complex position of ex-centricity. They were on the inside, while being outside. They were complicit, but critical. They were exiles from themselves.

As Quybyrycas is an epitaph to a nation drained by the pursuit of an imperial image. *Lusitânia Transformada* is similar, though it also has that paradoxical dimension, absent from *As Quybyrycas*, of a nostalgic celebration of the empire. The fact that *As Quybyrycas* does not possess that aspect indicates that exile had become the metaphor of a lost nationality. Colonial war literature, in turn, appeals to similar metaphors from the Portuguese imperial imaginary such as the emblematic atmosphere of Alcácer Quibir. It is both an individual and a collective version of this painful epitaph.

These texts were the starting point for a reconsideration of the conflict in which the Portuguese were involved. Similarly, the practices, images and even the well-worn vocabulary about the Portuguese presence in Africa were re-thought. What it meant to be Portuguese began to be questioned. Unrest from the margins was echoed in an even greater transformation that was taking place on the other side of the sea. It was there, in the midst of a war and throughout that 'percurso africano', that many Portuguese became aware of the terrifying complexion of an empire as imagination of a centre that had emptied itself.

News on the African siege began to reach the metropolis through the poetry of Fernando Assis Pacheco, José Bação Leal, Manuel Alegre and

José Correia Tavares, to name but a few. Their poetry had an anti-situationist, anti-colonialist and interventionist tone. It was the product of the end of the 1960s and the beginning of the 1970s. Prose by Álvaro Guerra and Modesto Navarro was also part of this wave.¹¹⁷ Their texts are ex-centric not just because they disagree with perspectives from the centre, but also because they question it from the imperial periphery. I define them as a way of 'writing back to the centre'.

The poems and letters of the aforementioned poets bear witness to the war and stand out in Portuguese literature written before 25 April 1974. José Bação Leal was sent to Mozambique where he died in an accident. His *Poesias e Cartas* were published posthumously. Assis Pacheco and Manuel Alegre are linked by several aspects of their lives and poetry.

José Bação Leal's letters reflect the young poet's experiences as a reluctant soldier in the colonial war. They are an account that gradually unveils the process of geographical and human deterritorialization. This process goes hand in hand with the disintegration of a being that no longer wishes to be: 'a única porta é o suicídio: Tó Manuel'.¹¹⁸ The geographical dimension of deterritorialization, inherent in going to war, does not disturb the poet as much as the frightening human and political effect that deterritorialization has, both immediately and in retrospect. This effect is visible in the misery of the population, as well as in the human suffering endured in the barracks. It can also be seen in a psychological and physical awareness of what Portugal was, in the light of such a vast empire.

Ai deve-se ignorar o que se passa. Lógico: Evitar o pânico, morreremos todos sem pânico. [...] Não posso, não quero. Recuso! As crianças magríssimas de estômago proeminente. [...] Ficas também a saber que as cartas são abertas. E que estou farto, farto, farto.¹¹⁹

The poet is painfully aware of the distance that separated Portugal, from where he came and to where he sent news, from the reality he experienced. As a result of this distance, his letters could only disturb a serene and somnambulant Portugal, which sat on its humanistic laurels and was imbued with a worn-out colonialism. His letters ensured that Africa's cry for liberation, and the physical and moral decay that Portugal handed down to its youth, reached the metropolis. According to the poet, the ships that took out and brought home the men, who paradoxically returned

¹¹⁷ Regarding poetry I refer to *Poesias e Cartas*, by José Bação Leal (1966, 1971); Fernando Assis Pacheco, *Cuidar dos Vivos* (1963), *Cau Kiên: Um Resumo* (1972) and *Viagens na Minha Guerra* (1972); Manuel Alegre, *Praça da Canção* (1965), *O Canto e as Armas* (1967); José Correia Tavares, *Três Natais* (1967). Prose: Álvaro Guerra, *O Disfarce* (1967), *O Capitão Nemo e Eu* (1973); Modesto Navarro, *História de um Soldado que Não Foi Condecorado* (1972).

¹¹⁸ Leal, *Poesias e Cartas* (Porto: Tipografia Vale Formoso, 1971), p. 100.

¹¹⁹ Leal, p. 85.

from this trip of no return, could only return with the 'pátria morta' of Frey Ioannes Garabatus.

In 1963, Assis Pacheco published the book *Cuidar dos Vivos*, which contains the pioneering poems that condemn the war, 'Há um Veneno em Mim...' and 'O Poeta Cercado'. After nine years of experience in the conflict, Assis Pacheco wrote *Cau Kiên: Um Resumo*, published in 1972. It deals entirely with the war. It is a collection of poems in which the vocabulary of Vietnam cleverly disguised the Angolan bush where the war was fought. This strategy was undertaken to evade the censors, but simultaneously it also placed the Portuguese colonial war in a universal context of senselessness and aggression, symbolized by the Americans in Vietnam. The key to this analogy, used by several writers and poets of this generation, was revealed in 1976, in *Catalabanza, Quilolo e Volta*, in which the Vietnamese place names and vocabulary are replaced by the Angolan originals.

Throughout *Catalabanza, Quilolo e Volta*, the poet uses, to various rhythms, the geographical co-ordinates of the war: Lisbon, Dembos, Luanda and again Lisbon are the place names that open the four sections of the poems.¹²⁰ The book is thus divided between the various arenas of the war. Lisbon becomes affirmed as a place of war, because the war was not restricted to Africa, as the regime wished. In fact, the war came back to Lisbon on the ships and it affected those left behind at the quayside. The thematic circularity was conveyed through the toponyms that indicated the ports of call on the voyage to war. The first poem, 'E Havia Outono?', answers its own title. It points to what existed in Africa: 'Havia um coto de sangue'; 'Minutos como horas'; 'as minas'; 'armadilhas'; 'risos'; 'lágrimas como risos'; 'lágrimas'; 'morte'.¹²¹ Throughout the book, many other poems add to this answer, offering a heart-to-heart dialogue based on live testimonies. These highlight the physical and psychological degradation of the men in the war. They compromise the reader by telling the truth.

In the last poem of the book, 'Genérico', a dialogue between the poet and his father — the first verse is 'E tu, meu pai?' — reflects a profound questioning and discussion within the family, characteristic of many of the poems. That private situation, of an implicit dialogue found in Assis Pacheco's poetry, mirrors the social process to which the war eventually led. The war contributed to the raising of political awareness among the Portuguese about what was going on. It led them to question the values in which they believed and claimed to defend, something which, in time, would help to drain the power of the centre.

¹²⁰ See Fernando J. B. Martinho, 'A Confissão e a Guerra: uma leitura de *Catalabanza, Quilolo e Volta*, de Fernando Assis Pacheco', in Simões and Vecchi, pp. 21–28.

¹²¹ Fernando Assis Pacheco, *A Musa Irregular* (Porto: Asa, 1996), pp. 39–40.

The same toponym, Lisbon, is used both to open and close *Catalabanza, Quilolo e Volta*. It is not a place of arrival but rather of departure. The two poems 'E Havia Outono?' and 'Genérico' are the expression of a journey made in reverse. This inversion is not strictly situated inside the chronology of war, with its outward and return journeys. Instead, it is placed in the timeframe of the poet's memory, and serves as a metaphor for a failed circular adventure, devoid of a homebound ship. Within this timeframe, the fertile uprisings possible through Almeida Garrett's *Viagens na Minha Terra* cede to the sterility of *Viagens na Minha Guerra*, written by Assis Pacheco in 1972. The return of the warrior from today's Alcácer Quibir is the return of a ghost. In contrast to the empty return of *Frei Luís de Sousa's* pilgrim, who declares himself 'ninguém', the poet returns as the living-dead, 'para contar':

Assim eu só voltei para contar-te [. . .]

Tu vivo me querias? Porém morto
venho de merda, sangue, frio, pó,
que é a vida que fica dessa morte
na pistola aprendida, na pistola.

Cala já. Não perguntes. Tenho medo
que ao som da tua voz acabe a minha.¹²²

He reveals to the Portuguese the empire's deceit, and the terrifying contours assumed by an 'empire as an imagination of a centre' once that empire has been found, in Africa, to be emptied. Assis Pacheco's poetry is one of the most lucid denunciations of this war, from the perspective of an individual that reflects the collective. It is an important instance of 'writing back to the centre', in which the poet could only announce his own death.

Manuel Alegre, the poet who wrote *Praça da Canção*, in some ways reflects attitudes towards empire present in *As Quybyrycas*. He is the voice of a 'Camões em Restelo', who dreams about changing the 'tempo triste', 'sem barcos ideias', for a 'verso marinheiro' that would herald a new era. Like Assis Pacheco's work, *Praça da Canção* denounces the war as an excessive and monstrous extension of Salazar's 'país triste'. Nambuanguongo becomes inscribed as a symbolic place where physical and spiritual death are experienced collectively. But whereas in Assis Pacheco the name Nambuanguongo is linked to doom, Manuel Alegre uses the powerful transnational, moral and textual echo of Hiroshima to speak openly about the war in Angola. He constructs a Portuguese 'Hiroxima moral', as Eduardo Lourenço terms it, and names it Nambuanguongo.¹²³

Em Nambuanguongo tu não viste nada

¹²² Pacheco, p. 69.

¹²³ Lourenço, 'Manuel Alegre ou a Nostalgia da Epopeia', in Manuel Alegre, *Obra Poética* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1999), p. 37.

não viste nada nesse dia longo longo
a cabeça cortada
e a flor bombardeada
não tu não viste nada em Nambuanguongo. [. . .]
É justo que me fales de Hiroxima.
Porém tu nada sabes deste tempo longo longo
tempo exactamente em cima
do nosso tempo. Ai tempo onde a palavra vida rima
com a palavra morte em Nambuanguongo.¹²⁴

In *O Canto e as Armas* of 1967, the voices and tone of revolt appear and the themes broaden. The poet speaks for a nation that had been gagged but which resisted. Like Camões, the poet of *O Canto e as Armas* places his epic at a time of impasse. This impasse is conveyed sometimes through the Sebastianista image of Pessoa's mist, sometimes by Almeida Garrett's image of a Penelope-homeland. These images contain within themselves the hope of an emerging new era. Also like Camões, Manuel Alegre offers his work to his contemporaries, so that they can fill up the emptied present and prove they can accomplish 'o novo atrevimento', to which the poems call them. They must show their capacity to steer towards a new era that would put an end to silence and to the 'noite dentro dos homens do meu país'. In this new era, the departures to France, the 'Lusíadas Exilados', men dying at Nambuanguongo/Alcácer Quibir would all be a thing of the past. As Lourenço has pointed out, 'para não assistir à morte do Rei escreveu Manuel Alegre a epopeia por defeito de *O Canto e as Armas*', in the Pessoa-like hope that this African disaster, 'como a de Alcácer, paradoxalmente nos restituísse à nossa verdade de "país por achar neste país"'.¹²⁵ This interpretation turns the poems that evoke this myth into a 'requiem pelo império', not a 'requiem pelo país'. The distinction becomes obvious in Canto III where the poet draws on the desire to return 'ao país por achar', where it is necessary to bury D. Sebastião, as Garrett had done in his reconfiguration of the sebastianista myth, in *Frei Luís de Sousa*.¹²⁶

Sending his messages not only from Africa but also from exile, and articulating in his poetry the history, the myth and the lived experience, Manuel Alegre rewrites in *Praça da Canção* and in *O Canto e as Armas* the meaning of Portugal's history. This history had been devalued by the intransigent and anachronistic attitudes of the regime. Alegre weaves into his poetry the discourse of an 'epopeia da anti-epopeia', as João de Melo called it. Hence, his message has both political and cultural force. The poet frames his contemporary discourse in a Portuguese humanistic tradition, appealing to the struggle for freedom. He provides an alternative way of

¹²⁴ Alegre, *Obra Poética*, pp. 125–26.

¹²⁵ Lourenço, 'Manuel Alegre . . .', pp. 42 and 38.

¹²⁶ See Macedo, 'Garrett no Romantismo Europeu', *Leituras*, 4 (1999), 35–41.

conceiving what it means to be Portuguese that rejects the official rhetoric. In this way, he creates what may be termed an imperial version of an 'empire' that 'writes back to the centre' since he frames Portuguese discourse outside the official line. In his discourse, which due to his era occupies a space characterized by imperial relationships, the centre cedes its position to the margins, to paraphrase Linda Hutcheon.¹²⁷ This lays bear the inherent contradictions in the power structure of the Salazar regime. Alegre renders the period of the colonial war an era of Portuguese caravels, whose intentions though not their meanings have been sunk. In this new era, the poet is committed to fight continuously for the freedom to enjoy that moment when both Portugal and its colonies will be liberated. His is an 'acto cultural', as defined by Amílcar Cabral. He aims to inscribe a 'Liberated Africa' for the African nations, as Garrett had inscribed a 'Brasil Liberto' for a young Brazilian nation.

Manuel Alegre's poetry bears witness to a war experience that takes away 'meninos de sua mãe'. It mourns for them at their never-possible burial, for example in 'Canção com Lágrimas'. It also uncovers the disintegration of personal identity, and the total fragmentation inherent in the official national image of Portugal and of its empire. This empire is revealed to be emptied, in Africa. Manuel Alegre's poetry is part of the memory of a generation that, after the African experience, ended up imagining and constructing the 'barco de regresso a Ítaca', where a Penelope-homeland preserved them for a new time. His place in that memory is guaranteed through the politics, ethics and aesthetics of his discourse. Unlike the previously mentioned poets, Alegre's discourse was part of a political opposition that saw a place for its utopia and its spirit in the future country announced by the poet. His was a discourse that decentred by re-centralizing. In other words, the discourse imagines itself as a centre. It may be in the future. It is democratic, utopian, and somewhat fictional. But it is a centre, nevertheless.

José Bação Leal, Assis Pacheco, and Manuel Alegre, with different nuances, synthesize the ways in which poets in a time of crisis were able to report what was happening in Africa. They showed that the centre was shifting towards the periphery, the imperial periphery of social and political margins. These margins were underground. They denounced the bloody contours of 'an empire as imagination of the centre', and contributed to the emptying of the centre.

In the 1960s, there was a broadening of the margins. These margins took the place of former margins and were receptive to influences both abroad and in Portugal. The international *élan* of the decade that characterized the

¹²⁷ Linda Hutcheon, *Poetics of Postmodernism — History, Theory, Fiction* (New York/London: Routledge, 1996), p. 59.

Western imaginary had an effect on those margins. So did the vicissitudes in Portugal where deterritorialization took two forms: colonial war and emigration. The broadening of the margins was extraordinarily important politically because of its scope. It involved sections of society that were not necessarily politicized or educated, but were significant through the act of leaving the country. It also involved higher social classes, who became part of the margins not because they naturally belonged there, but because they were denied a voice. The crisis of legitimacy experienced by the Marcello Caetano regime, principally from 1969 onwards, was based on the loss of power within its traditional support structures, namely the financial and agrarian bourgeoisie together with the Church and the army. While in Portugal, the spineless bourgeoisie opportunistically caused trouble, in Africa the splits in an exhausted, disbelieving and disinterested army already signalled the beginning of the end. Those African 'cus de Judas', as Lobo Antunes called them, would trigger the changes leading to 25 April 1974. They subverted the system and the imperial institution, paralleling the experience of nineteenth-century Brazil. With 25 April, the movement inscribed in the texts of José Bação Leal, Assis Pacheco, Manuel Alegre and Frey Ioannes Garabatus was fulfilled. These texts had brought, in different ways, a warning message back to the metropolis. The political reply to these texts appeared in the 'Proclamação e Programa do MFA'. In it, there is the assertion that 25 April resulted from the fact that the regime 'ao fim de treze anos de luta em terras do Ultramar' had still not been able to define 'concreta e objectivamente, uma política ultramarina que conduza à paz entre os portugueses de todas as raças e credos'.¹²⁸ 25 April was the outcome of an internal crisis that was social, political and military. This crisis reflected, and was the result of, a great crisis in the space occupied by the Portuguese nation who had their blood-filled stage in Africa. The April Revolution was, above all, the end of the dictatorship and the moment of Portugal's return to its European fold. This return closed five centuries of imagining an empire, onto which the nation had projected greatness, wealth and a dream that did not exist at home. That empire had been the mechanism through which Portugal had imagined itself as a centre. Could the Portuguese return from their ex-centric adventure?

WHAT WAS LEFT OF THE SEA

In Portugal, 25 April 1974 triggered a new *élan*. The 'tempo dos barcos' was over, its demise assured by shouts from the street: 'Nem mais um soldado para as colónias'. Soon, one part of the MFA's 'DDD' mantra was

¹²⁸ Quoted by António E. Duarte Silva, *A Independência da Guiné-Bissau e a Descolonização Portuguesa* (Porto: Afrontamento, 1997), p. 161.

fulfilled: decolonization took place. 25 April also ended the era of an anti-democratic and dictatorial Portugal. As a result, post-colonialism in Portugal is intimately linked to post-Salazarism and post-Caetanism, and to the beginning of the democratic process. However, this does not mean that 25 April ended the problems bequeathed by Salazarism and Caetanism. Rather, it was the outcome of a search for alternative solutions to the hesitancy and impasse that characterized Marcello Caetano's dictatorship. While there were clear ruptures in political thinking, there was also a certain continuity. This continuity is principally manifested in the same inability to find quick and effective political answers. Due to the enormous upheaval in all sectors of Portuguese society, and the redrawing of the nation's map, fiction, essays and then the historiography of the last decades have continually reflected, in different ways, on the question of Portuguese national identity.

Straight after the events of 25 April 1974, a profusion of literary and non-literary works revealed, in Maria de Lourdes Belchior's words, 'uma espécie de consciência de crise e demanda de identidade'.¹²⁹ In fiction, various examples from *Os Lusíadas*, by Manuel Silva Ramos e Alface (1977), and *Portuguex*, by Armando Silva Carvalho (1977), to *Lusitânia*, by Almeida Faria (1980), provide a first sample of the new hues to the ever-obsessive question of Portuguese identity. The same theme would be broached, in a diverse and polyglottic way, in the novels narrating a return from the margins, which followed 25 April. As Isabel Allegro de Magalhães points out, post-25 April, journeys back to the homeland occurred: emigrants and exiles returned from abroad; soldiers came back from the ex-colonies; the 'retornados' disembarked from their journeys home from África.¹³⁰ The returnees were not only from Africa, but also from all the other margins that made up Salazar's Portugal.

In his essays, Eduardo Lourenço began to interrogate, in a political way, what it meant to be Portuguese. His works greatly influenced post-Revolution Portugal, and stand out. The question of Portuguese identity interested many scholars. There are, in essence, two lines of thought that characterize the large number of publications whose titles include such works as *Portugal*, *Repensar Portugal*, *Identidade Nacional-Cumprir Portugal*. The first group proposed reuniting Portugal and its former empire on the basis of democracy and cooperation. This group lent towards a Third-World vocation for Portugal, which distanced the country from the democratic, capitalist models of the European Common Market and the United States. The second line of thought was the legacy of a mindset which linked colonialism and empire to the abandonment of the

¹²⁹ Belchior, p. 14.

¹³⁰ Isabel Allegro de Magalhães, *O Sexo dos Textos* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1995), pp. 196–97.

metropolitan territories. Mário Soares inscribed this view in *Portugal Amordaçado*, where he signals Europe as the natural horizon for the 'país europeu que somos'.¹³¹ The nuances may be different, but the nineteenth-century debate between those who favoured the European project, principally the Generation of 1870, and those who wanted what would become the third empire, now ruined but still capable of triggering nostalgia, was re-rehearsed. Once again a brief reflexion on the empire, Portugal and Europe is relevant.

THE END OF EMPIRE, PORTUGAL AND EUROPE

After 25 April, Portugal changed from a 'nação colonizadora a país criador de novas nações'.¹³² This transformation provided the foundation necessary to redeem Portugal's young democracy. Unlike the nineteenth century, when the Portuguese exorcized the loss of one empire by recourse to another, the key image of 25–April movement was the end of Portugal as an imperial nation. This new image quickly found expression in the first post-Revolution works on the colonial war. Without exception, they repudiated the old mythical image that had led to so many real and recent sacrifices. That imaginary space became defined as the *Lugar de Massacre*, in José Martins Garcia's narrative (1975), or as Lobo Antunes's *Cus de Judas*, or as a place from where João de Melo's *Memória de Ver Matar e Morrer* was drawn (1977). The notion of an end visible in these first works on the colonial war was compounded in a wide range of fiction and chronicles from the 1980s onwards. Examples include 'Para mim Portugal acabou'; 'A Guiné apagou-se. Varreu-se do mapa'; 'Acabou-se Moçambique'; and 'Angola deixou de existir'.¹³³

Portugal's entry into the European Common Market may initially have been viewed as the *volteface* necessary for rapid relief from imperial traumas; it neutralized the vague dream of reconnecting with that emotive, cultural geography linking Portugal to the image of its former empire. It was also the political mechanism through which Portugal could quickly pass into the European, post-colonial era. Lourenço has noted that it was not merely a case of the Portuguese going into Europe. Europe had also arrived in Portugal. The famous slogan of the time, 'A Europa connosco', highlights this subtlety. By changing the direction of the search, which for centuries had originated in the periphery and been towards the centre, the

¹³¹ Mário Soares, *Portugal Amordaçado* (Lisbon: Arcádia, 1974), p. 497.

¹³² Lourenço, 'Da Ficção do Império ao Império da Ficção', *Diário de Notícias — Suplemento 10 Anos de Democracia*, 24 April 1984, p. 26.

¹³³ Augusto Abelaira, *Sem Tecto, Entre Ruínas* (Lisbon: Sá da Costa, 1979), p. 161; Álamo Oliveira, *Até Hoje (Memória de Cão)* (Lisbon: Ulmeiro e Autor, 1986), p. 73; Lobo Antunes, *Fado*, p. 19; Rocha de Sousa, *Angola 61 — uma crónica de guerra ou a visibilidade da última deriva* (Lisbon: Contexto, 1999), p. 498, respectively.

Portuguese were able to sit comfortably at the table of European nations. They could imagine themselves at the centre. As Boaventura de Sousa Santos emphasizes, the slogan contained the promise that Portugal could 'construir uma sociedade democrática e estável, uma sociedade como as da Europa Ocidental' since 'estar com a Europa é ser como a Europa'.¹³⁴ Europe nurtured Portugal's fledgling democracy, ensuring that it followed the Western model. Concomitantly, Portugal projected a European identity. Following on from Oliveira Martins's idea of Portuguese history, a range of studies began to relate Portuguese history, the Discoveries, and the epic adventure with Europe. The most important example of the rethinking of Portuguese identity are the essays of Eduardo Lourenço.

At that moment of returning to the quayside, Lourenço felt the need to critique those discourses, especially the literary ones, that narrated a Portugal constructed through voyages. Disregarding Portuguese imperial sensitivities, and the temptation to treat 'o império da ficção como o substituto da realidade historicamente perdida', Lourenço warns that 'nalguma realidade e muito na ficção nós fizemos África e África, na realidade e nalguma ficção se terá feito também portuguesa. É nessa inter-realidade e nessa inter-ficção — com o máximo de realismo — que nos podemos encontrar'.¹³⁵ Lourenço proposes a difficult and ambiguous compromise between past and future. The past needs to be cleansed of the fiction and misinterpretations of the Estado Novo. The future heralds Europe, and must be constructed as a response to the new political, geographical and cultural situation. This future will incorporate a past that is more mythical than historical, since it includes the images that constitute the Portuguese. Through this compromise, Lourenço reinvents the Portuguese. He falls back on Pessoa, in recurrent metaphors of voyage, the most expressive of which is Portugal as a 'navio-nação'. The Portuguese are seen anew through the most charismatic national symbol through which the nation was won and lost. The non-substitutive replacement of the symbol of Portuguese identity present in Lourenço's discourse points towards an image of a European Portugal, which is 'mais diáspora que fronteira'. This resonates with the fragmentation and dispersion of Portugal caused by its colonial adventure and wars. It also chimes with more recent Portuguese wanderings, caused by emigration and exile. Members of this latter group would find their identity in the vast space of the Portuguese language.

Camões, the poet of the Portuguese language, could not, in the short term, provide the poetic discourse for the end of the colonial adventure — characterized by carnations in the barrels of guns after thirteen years of war in a far-away Africa. However, Camões could be the patron of a

¹³⁴ Sousa Santos, *Portugal: Um Retrato* . . . , p. 49; and *Pela Mão de Alice* . . . , p. 58.

¹³⁵ Lourenço, 'Da Ficção do Império . . . ', p. 26.

culture and language that was scattered over the globe as a result of the voyages. He attains this status under the auspices of the other patron of the Portuguese language, Pessoa. An *avant la lettre* post-modernist re-reading of the outcome of Camões's adventure, Bernardo Soares's initially discreet phrase 'minha pátria é a língua portuguesa', through its repeated citation, has bestowed that status on Camões.¹³⁶

Lourenço, through his essays, reconfigured Portugal's image, where Pessoa's imperial idea, an empire of language and culture, had finally won its place in the sun through the politics of a post-imperial Europe that Portugal now joined.

It is not the aim of this article to analyse the rich and complex imaginary of Lourenço's essays, but instead to underline that his discourse was important because it reflected and refracted the fiction and poetry written after 25 April 1974 that questioned national identity. A dialogue arose that became more intense from the 1980s onwards, as older writers published or were re-published, and a new generation, including Lídia Jorge, Lobo Antunes, João de Melo or Olga Gonçalves, whose first books were released at the beginning of the 80s, came to the fore. A basis was provided for dialogue and creative tension. This helped to construct what Lourenço termed 'uma imagem positiva de nós próprios' expressed in these works through the constant mixing of times and spaces. The narratives represent a possible calling to account of the epoch endured, and of the country and world.

Within the wider corpus of literature that revises individual and collective identities, to which post-25 April work belongs, consideration will now be given to literature written on the journey home from the war in Africa. This literature ponders the question of Portugal's image as an imperial nation. It graphically presents the crisis assailing the Portuguese sphere. This crisis is played out between the ruins of the empire and a Portugal that would come into being on their return.

In an article published in *Diário de Notícias* in 1984, entitled 'Da Ficção do Império ao Império da Ficção', Eduardo Lourenço expressed his surprise that Portugal's recent history, namely colonialism and the colonial war, had not been manifested culturally within the disciplines of history and literature. Lourenço's provocative observation was the antithesis of a no-less-provocative warning to the reader in Luísa Costa Gomes's *O Pequeno Mundo*:

Leitor! Este livro não fala do 25 de Abril. Não se refere ao 11 de Março e está-se nas tintas para o 25 de Novembro. Pior, não menciona em lugar nenhum a guerra de

¹³⁶ Bernardo Soares, *Livro do Desassossego* (Lisbon: Ática, 1982), p. 17.

África. Não reflecte sobre a nossa identidade cultural como povo, o nosso futuro como nação, o nosso lugar na comunidade europeia.¹³⁷

Luísa Costa Gomes had indicted the ubiquity of themes specifically related to the colonial war, within Portuguese literature after 25 April. Lourenço's statement privileges the historiographical, political and social silence but overlooks the novels and war poetry that since 1975, and especially from the 1980s onwards — with works like *Nó Cego*, by Carlos Vale Ferraz, *Fado Alexandrino*, by Lobo Antunes, *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, by João de Melo and *A Costa dos Murmúrios* by Lídia Jorge — very much dealt with the theme from a literary angle. In contrast, Luísa Costa Gomes's comment ignores the silence, and over-emphasizes the literary presence of the theme.

The concealment of the war that occurred post-25 April, to which Lourenço alludes, was not the result of an authoritarian artifice. It happened because people were unable to come to terms with the reality of such a painful and explosive legacy. Consequently, former combatants were left in an ambiguous and uncomfortable position. They were caught between being the victim 'de uma engrenagem monstruosa' and being the image of the former power that everyone wanted to forget.¹³⁸ Thus, the concealment of the war effected by the former regime, who strove to project a picture of uneventful calm, was followed by a concealment of the war driven by a desire to undo what had been done. It was as if everything had been a mistake, 'a misunderstanding', as the old 'enemy', Samora Machel, termed it. But the war really had happened far away in Africa, as the first wave of literary titles indicated: *Os Cus de Judas* or *Lugar de Massacre*. 25 April was not the uniquely peaceful liberation that everyone, under the spell of a new democracy, wanted it to be. From its first movement, from the imperial periphery to the centre, the Revolution was stained by blood, shed far away in Africa, as had been the ships that, for years, sailed between Portugal and an Africa fighting for liberation.

The new wave of literature presents the compromised relationship between a collective loss of memory and an excess of personal memory, or between history and a fancifully elaborated testimony.¹³⁹ It fills the historiographical, social and political silence to which Lourenço referred. It opens itself up as a space to reflect not only on the conflict that had taken place, but also on the Portugal that departed and the Portugal that came

¹³⁷ Luísa Costa Gomes, *O Pequeno Mundo* (Lisbon: Quetzal, 1988), p. 7.

¹³⁸ José Martins Garcia, *Lugar de Massacre* (Lisbon: Edições Salamandra, 1996), p. 108.

¹³⁹ See Vecchi, 'Experiência e Representação: dois paradigmas para um cânone literário da guerra colonial', in *A Guerra Colonial: Realidade e Ficção*, ed. by Rui Azevedo Teixeira (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 2001), pp. 389–99; and Paulo de Medeiros, 'Hautings — Memory, Fiction and the Portuguese Colonial Wars', in *The Politics of War Memory and Commemoration*, ed. by T. C. Ashplant, G. Dawson, M. Roper (London/New York: Routledge, 2000), pp. 201–21.

home; the Portugal that was taken as an image, and the Portugal found on return. It is through this perspective that I read this literature. It is more than war literature. It is the space in which the violent process of deterritorialization and re-territorialization, marked by individual and collective loss, manifests itself. It requires a new way of looking at Portugal, which originates once again, and for the last time, from a recently dismantled empire.

This literature gives the impression that the Portuguese fell apart on their own. There is a recurrent obsession among authors and poets about their identity. They strive to rediscover their own faces and the face of the Portuguese subject, against a backdrop of violent signs that signify a physical, psychological and social rupture. This face emerges in the slain, putrid, mutilated, amputated and mangled bodies of twenty-year-old men. It also becomes apparent in the states of fatigue, insanity, inebriety, neurosis, solitude and listlessness suffered by many of the literary characters who are involved in lonely and desperate acts of masturbation. It is visible in the sterile, blocked relationships between men and women, and in the disguised Others onto which the Portuguese projected the happy *alter egos* that they never achieved. Examples of this strategy include Romeu in João de Melo's *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, and Domingos da Luta in Manuel Alegre's *Jornada de África*. All these taken together form powerful images of a homeland waiting in a vacuum (the image of masturbation); or of the homeland that allows itself to be consumed from within (the image of gangrene). It is fragmenting — mutilated, amputated bodies. It is destroying itself — slain and mangled bodies.

Faltam braços, mãos, pernas, pés.

O hospital absorvia toneladas de carne esfacelada, múmias recentes, arrobas de membros partidos.

O Lopes espreitou lá para dentro, sem perceber imediatamente que aquela massa de carne, sangue, tripas era o resto de um corpo.

O furriel Costa, operador de transmissões, jurara em Lisboa que atravessaria a noite daqueles dois anos de comissão obrigatória submerso por uma única bebedeira.

Pois é! Estamos todos doídos!

A masturbação era a nossa ginástica diária.

O cansaço horizontalizava-os, na satisfeita lassidão duma masturbação colectiva.¹⁴⁰

Will there be a return from this position of non-being? As far as the individual subject is concerned, António Lobo Antunes' narrator in *Os Cus de Judas* clearly does not think so:

¹⁴⁰ Alegre, *Jornada de África* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1989), p. 168; Garcia, p. 172; Carlos Vale Ferraz, *Nó Cego* (Lisbon: Editorial Notícias, 1982), p. 40; João de Melo, *Autópsia de Um Mar de Ruínas* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1992), p. 51; Garcia, p. 104; Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1991), p. 19; Oliveira, *Até Hoje . . .*, p. 80.

deixei de ter lugar fosse onde fosse, estive longe demais, tempo demais para tornar a pertencer aqui, a estes outonos de chuvas e de missas, estes demorados invernos despolidos de lâmpadas fundidas, estes rostos que reconheço mal sob as rugas desenhadas, que um caracterizador irónico inventou. Flutuo entre dois continentes que me repelam, nu de raízes, em busca de um espaço branco onde ancorar [...] a minha esperança envergonhada.¹⁴¹

For Sebastião, in Manuel Alegre's *Jornada de África*, a collective return also seems unlikely:

Portugal fez-se para fora, não sei se conseguirá regressar, ou melhor, não sei se voltará, se é que se pode voltar de uma viagem assim.¹⁴²

War narratives, and also narratives of return, the *corpus* of literary works about the colonial war, are replete, in Portuguese fiction, with an inherently complicit, double meaning. They both reflect on the European/Portuguese way of being in Africa, particularly during the twilight years of empire, and are indispensable to an understanding of today's Portugal. This crossover between those two aspects, which represents both a cumulative history and a particular epistemology, defines the interstitial threshold in which colonial war literature is situated. From this crossover, I will now consider four books: *Os Cus de Judas*, by António Lobo Antunes (1979), *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, by João de Melo (1984), *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, by Lídia Jorge (1988) and *Jornada de África*, by Manuel Alegre (1989). The period of ten years spanned by the publication of these books is relevant to this article. 1979, when *Os Cus de Judas* was published, is the year in which decolonization had supposedly become an 'historical', though as yet unhistoricized, fact. It opened a new stage in Portuguese life, with the application to join the EEC. In 1989, the year of *Jornada de África's* release, Portugal had been a full member of the European Community for four years, and moves were afoot to institutionalize what would become, in 1996, the Comunidade dos Países de Língua Portuguesa. This literature, therefore, was produced in a decade, the 1980s, during which Portugal 'forgot' the discourse of anti-colonialism and revolution, and integration into the EEC became the great national objective. Portugal ceased imagining the centre through the empire and began imagining it through Europe. It was a decade in which the shadow of the former empire was no longer spurned. How do these works that recall that crucial episode in Portuguese contemporary history, painfully inscribing it in the nation's post-25 April imaginary, re-imagine Portugal? In what ways do they reformulate, break and give continuity to what characterized the Portuguese national imaginary during its last empire — what I have termed 'the empire as imagination of the centre'.

¹⁴¹ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 226.

¹⁴² Alegre, *Jornada*, p. 228.

'OS CUS DE JUDAS', BY ANTÓNIO LOBO ANTUNES

In 1979 António Lobo Antunes, a name then unknown to Portuguese literature, published *Memória de Elefante* and *Os Cus de Judas*. The following year he published *Conhecimento do Inferno*, bringing to an end a trilogy characterized by autobiographical traces and straddling the sphere of psychiatry and memories of war. The immediate and symptomatic success of *Os Cus de Judas* was due in no small part to its literary quality and innovative style. It also brought the theme of the colonial war into the public domain. Its success shows that the excessive, disorientated and solitary discourse of the narrator, who from the beginning appears marginal, found an echo in the various layers of Portuguese society through which the generation raised in the Mocidade Portuguesa were scattered. That generation was destroyed in the 'cus de Judas'. Its members sullied their hands and souls in the final shipwreck of the empire and, after 'experiencing hell', returned to children who no longer recognized them, to women who no longer understood them, and to a country that had lived without them and now found them strange. It was as if the war had taken them away forever.

A complex dialogue with the society found on return from war is the theme of an extensive, intransitive conversation between the narrator and a woman who accompanies him through the night. It constitutes the narrative of *Os Cus de Judas*. The book reflects the failure to connect between the men who departed and the women who were deprived of the rite of initiation represented by Africa and the war:

O que de certo modo irremediavelmente nos separa é que você leu nos jornais os nomes dos militares defuntos, e eu partilhei com eles a salada de frutas da ração de combate e vi soldarem-lhes os caixões na arrecadação da companhia.¹⁴³

The novel opens with a fictional reference to a childhood world understood as a world of regimented adventure. There are the wild animals that fill the adventurous imaginations of children, but they are governed by the urban and domesticated structure of the zoo. Throughout the text, the zoo functions as a metaphor for the city in which other beings live imprisoned, though not behind bars.

This childhood atmosphere is made complete through the description of the 'casa das tias', an example of the 'casa portuguesa' prevalent in Salazar's bourgeoisie. This social group was typified by the decadence of the former military and tradesmen, and represents a powerful metaphor for the immobility of Salazar's regime. The description is enriched by suggestive comparisons with school and church. Together they encapsulated the social, cultural and religious cocoon from where the 'larvas civis'

¹⁴³ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 174.

of the 'seminário domesticado', into which Salazar had turned the country, sprung.

This society of the 'casa das tias' leads the narrator to the departure quay on route for Africa, along with many other young men entrusted with the solemn mission of defending the national integrity of Salazar's 'casa portuguesa'. That Portuguese household may be understood not only in its metropolitan social, moral and political dimensions but also as part of the 'grande casa portuguesa', which stretched from Minho to Timor, and was threatened, according to the regime's rhetoric, by external subversive elements.

According to the narrator, the war that was supposed to defend this traditional world was directed by a weak country, lead by a 'virgem sem útero mascarada de homem' — Salazar — and by 'ministros eunucos' or 'eunistros' who tried to postpone their own deaths.¹⁴⁴ Their deaths were inevitable because of their sterility, which was reflected in the country's failure to move with the times. The family parted with the 'guerreiro' at the Alcântara quay, the point of departure for youth trained in an impotence represented at the quayside by a people who applauded and cried out for the 'tragédia de ser povo e português'.¹⁴⁵ It is also represented by the pathetic show staged by the ladies of the National Women's Movement, themselves old, flabby and sterile:

e eu perguntava a mim próprio o que fazíamos ali, agonizantes em suspenso no chão de máquina de costura do navio, com Lisboa a afogar-se na distância num suspiro derradeiro de hino. Subitamente sem passado, com o porta-chaves e a medalha de Salazar no bolso [. . .] sentia-me como a casa dos meus pais no Verão, sem cortinas, de tapetes enrolados em jornais, móveis encostados aos cantos cobertos de grandes sudários poeirentos, as pratas emigradas para a copa da avó, e o gigantesco eco dos passos de ninguém nas salas desertas.¹⁴⁶

The reversal of the ship's role in the national imaginary seen in this last departure from the mouth of the Tagus, and foretold in Portuguese literature, is treated tragically in *Os Cus de Judas*, as it is in a substantial part of the other war literature that describes this departure. Like the soldiers masturbating when training for war, the ship, an isotope for the Portuguese nation, manoeuvres rhythmically into a void. Aboard ship men lay 'agonizantes em suspenso', heading towards a death foretold in the defence of the 'grande casa portuguesa'. The route of the ship's voyage, from Portugal to Africa, attempts to render that household eternal. However, the emptiness of the household finds a mirror image in a Lisbon agonizingly longing for its 'heróis do mar' in a 'pequena casa portuguesa',

¹⁴⁴ Lobo Antunes, *Memória de Elefante* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1983), p. 43; António Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 129.

¹⁴⁵ Oliveira, *Até Hoje*, pp. 9–10.

¹⁴⁶ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 23.

'a casa dos meus pais', covered by 'sudários' leaving only the 'gigantesco eco dos passos de ninguém' proclaiming the end of the household through its emptying. The Garretian echo enclosed in the above citation resonates with the agitation experienced at the departure quay where webs of silence, confession, bashfulness, rules and regulations gradually turn inaudible the gigantic void that fills the impotent spirits of those present. They cry out against a past contained within a present that can still be heard, in the manner of a colossus, as if in a 'Carnaval Negro', to use the title of the well-known short story by Urbano Tavares Rodrigues.¹⁴⁷ Enclosed in that great national coffin embodied both by the ship carrying 'ninguéns' and by the many 'ninguéns' left behind to agonize at the quayside in Lisbon, the nation sacrifices itself far away in Africa, through those 'cus de Judas'. The sacrifice is not performed there at the mouth of the Tagus, through impotence, inability and fear. There is thus a delay in realizing the premonition conveyed by the narrator of the two universes, the household and the Portuguese imperial nation, that on the quayside merge into one idea: an end. The phantoms foreseen by the enlightened fool in Guerra Junqueiro's *Pátria* triumph through the 'procissões de defuntos a marchar!'.¹⁴⁸ They turn into flesh and bone for this final departure.

From Chapter D onwards, the novel's title begins to be reflected in the narrator's destinations: Nova Lisboa; Luso; Gago Coutinho; Chiúme; Ninda; Cessa; Marimba; Lucesse; Luanguinga; Terras do Fim do Mundo. These are the principal locations on his journey into the Angolan world and the universe of war. The reader enters that universe between dazzled descriptions of an 'homem de um país estreito e velho' facing the vast horizons of Angolan territory, and the glittering mirrors of a Portugal that the reader comes across in lost 'Olivais Sul que o capim e os arbustos rapidamente devoravam', 'Moscavides' and in neighbourhoods such as 'Madre de Deus de ruas geométricas e casas económicas plantado no planalto do Bundas, no espírito *Portugal dos pequeninos* corporativo'.¹⁴⁹ The scenery begins to be laden with the terms of exile, war and inhumanity, and the title of the novel, 'cus de Judas', gains every aspect of its meaning as the signifier of geographical and human distance:

As Terras do Fim do Mundo eram a extrema solidão e a extrema miséria, governadas por chefes de posto alcoólicos e cúpidos a tiritarem de paludismo nas suas casas vazias, reinando sobre um povo conformado, sentado à porta das cubatas numa indiferença vegetal.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁷ Urbano Tavares Rodrigues, 'Carnaval Negro', in *Casa de Correção* (Lisbon: Publicações Europa-América, 1987), pp. 129–55.

¹⁴⁸ Guerra Junqueiro, *Pátria* (Porto: Livraria Chardron, 1896), p. 133.

¹⁴⁹ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, pp. 148, 41–42. See Arlindo Castanho, 'Os Cus de Judas', in António Lobo Antunes: *Memória de uma guerra absurda*, in Simões and Vecchi, pp. 195–202.

¹⁵⁰ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 148.

Signs of death, illness and emptiness were common to the decrepit, alienated colonial administration. For its part, the people were resigned to be an excessive caricature: the mirror image of a country left behind, where other dormant people were resigned to live a sad life in the diminutive. Admiral Tomás's yellowish picture on the wall stared vacantly out from 10,000 kilometres away. His decrepit tentacles of power stretched over Africans, not only through the symbolic picture on the wall but also erratically and in a non-hegemonic manner, through the rich colonizers of Luanda, the administrators, the military chiefs and the secret police. The African landscape portrayed in Lobo Antunes's narrative is essentially human and the bearer of an alienated identity. It is depicted through the guilty eyes of a narrator as martyred and desecrated by Portuguese colonialism. This image of Africa and of Africans has no connection with the 'alegres lusotropicalismos' conveyed in the regime's pedagogic discourse.¹⁵¹ Instead, it is linked to the 'tristes trópicos' reminiscent of *Terra Morta*, by Castro Soromenho and *Natureza Morta*, by José-Augusto França. In 1949, they had characterized this colonial world as ill. Similarly, the European image of Africa as a space of disease and misery remains unchanged, as Luís Madureira and Phyllis Peres both point out,¹⁵² assuming a grotesque scale in Lobo Antunes's prose, a fearless denunciation of 'Uma Europa repleta de furúnculos de palácios e de pedras da bexiga de catedrais doentes':¹⁵³

O senhor Jonatão, o enfermeiro negro da delegação nominal [...] distribuía as pastilhas na majestade macabra de um ritual eucarístico para desenterrados vivos, alguns dos quais, já cegos, voltavam para ninguém as órbitas desabitadas, reduzidas a uma névoa azul-húmida de muco repugnante. Miúdos sem dedos, afligidos de moscas, agrupavam-se numa pinha muda de espanto, mulheres de feições de gárgula segredavam-me diálogos que os céus da boca em ruína tornavam uma pasta de gemidos.¹⁵⁴

For Lobo Antunes's narrator, the 'mundo-que-o-português-criou' became a rancid and excessive mirror to the great lie of the Portuguese household, officially happy and in order. Like the Africans who were displaced from their original lands, imprisoned in *sanzalas*, deprived of dignity and fed on charity and carnivalesque fantasies, and like the soldiers displaced from their country and imprisoned behind barbed wire in military quarters, the Portuguese metropolitans lived under surveillance, castrated of their dreams of freedom in their dismal country. Lobo

¹⁵¹ The expression is from Cristiana Bastos, 'Tristes Trópicos e Alegres Lusotropicalismos: das notas de viagem em Lévi-Strauss e Gilberto Freyre', *Análise Social*, 33 (1998), 415–32.

¹⁵² Luís Madureira, 'The Discreet Seductiveness of the Crumbling Empire: Sex, Violence And Colonization in the Fiction of António Lobo Antunes', *Luso-Brazilian Review*, 32 (1995), 17–29; Peres, pp. 168–86.

¹⁵³ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 58.

¹⁵⁴ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, pp. 45–46.

Antunes's narrative outlines the gigantic prison in which the 'pequena casa portuguesa' mirrors and refracts the 'grande casa portuguesa'. There is a shift from the empire to the metropolis and from the metropolis towards the empire, in which the centre and periphery become confused. This aspect, combined with the experience of war, bestows on the book the meaning behind the second significance of its title. The narrator is the victim of treason by his own country and family who had sent him away on that ill-fated journey. Simultaneously, he has betrayed himself since he did not rebel and refuse the 'vinte e sete meses de escravidão sangrenta'.¹⁵⁵

The return of the 'cus de Judas' to a small, paralyzed Lisbon is felt by the narrator as living in a labyrinth. Lisbon, long-imagined at night during the war, turns out to be a 'quermesse de província', characterized by signs of death and decay.¹⁵⁶ The aunts still live in their gloomy houses. The arms and body of the beloved woman end up closed in the quick kiss of a divorce. Signs of death invade his home which, as the empire slowly falls apart, leaves him shelterless:

lentamente, insidiosamente, a casa morre; as pupilas fundidas das lâmpadas fitam-me numa névoa de agonia, da boca aberta escapa-se o hálito de corrente de ar das respirações exaustas; sentado à secretária do escritório sinto-me na ponte de comando deserta de um navio que se afunda, com os seus livros, as suas plantas, os seus manuscritos inacabados, as cortinas que não há sopradas pelo vento pálido de uma felicidade difusa.¹⁵⁷

The anthropomorphized images that convey the death of the Portuguese household find their metaphoric mirror in bodies torn by war: the same melted pupils; the same foul stench of death; the same restless cessation of breathing; the same physical destruction seen in the description of the soldier Mangando's suicide. The narrator stands in the same impotent position of command. Images of death surround the construction of a new Portugal, giving the faint impression of a loose continuity with the past that is now lived between Portugal and the memory of Africa in a circular movement without a centre. This confirms the negative premonition that haunted the narrator from the moment he departed from the Alcântara quay, and the certainty of '[se ter] tramado em vão de se ter gasto sem sentido'.¹⁵⁸ As a result, the revolution cannot be seen as a healing, redemptive force. From the narrator's perspective, the crowds seem to have

¹⁵⁵ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 193. About the title see Francis Uteza, 'Os Cus de Judas: Mirage au Bout de la Nuit', *Quadrant*, 1 (1984), 121–45; António Lobo Antunes, 'Le Point de Vue de L' Ecrivain', *Quadrant*, 1 (1984), 154; and 'Os Cus de Judas foram arranjados depois, na altura da obra sair. A expressão quer dizer traidores, para os negros', in Lobo Antunes interviewed by Fernando Dacosta, 'António Lobo Antunes: os escritores têm-me um pó desgraçado', *Jornal de Letras*, 5–18 January 1982, p. 5.

¹⁵⁶ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 115.

¹⁵⁷ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 113.

¹⁵⁸ Lobo Antunes, *Fado*, p. 33.

returned home again after the meteoric joy of the revolution, and resumed the Portuguese 'dia a dia funcionário'. Portugal has returned to a place of curtains that are opened at seven in the morning and drawn at eight at night, of houses packed with market-place trinkets that satisfy the country's poor taste and illusion of greatness. They also cover up the sores of an 'humidade que se infiltra', and disguise things that 'empenam' — images of a country that deceitfully attempts to rise to its feet while trying to hide wounds and ignore the 'lázaros' hidden in the margins. All that remains is a future blocked by the signs of death that have caused the emptying of the 'casa' and that are projected into the future, impeding love and life:

Estas casas, não acha, são aliás construídas à medida das nossas ambições quadradas e dos nossos pequeninos sentimentos: a humidade infiltra-se, tudo empena, os canos entupidos gorgolejam guinadas de arrotos, as alcatifas descolam-se, inevitáveis correntes de ar assobiam nas frinchas, mas compramos móveis em Sintra para ocultar as misérias e manchas atrás de volutas de talha pretensamente antigas.¹⁵⁹

The crisis of space tackled in *Os Cus de Judas* through a narrator who never finds a place to be, floating, as he does, between Portugal and Africa, metaphorically denounces the crisis of space in post-imperial Portugal that, as Frederic Jameson argues, can only be solved by creating a new space.¹⁶⁰ Lobo Antunes's text clearly demonstrates the impossibility of imagining the nation rising from the last imperial shipwreck. This is visible in an inability to convert ruins into new houses, and encounters into loving relationships. In short, it is not possible to construct something on top of the imperial rubble. It is a time where all renewals are blocked and there are no alternative spaces. The 'casa' is a place of death, an empty, rigid tomb:

Esta espécie de jazigo onde moro, assim vazio e hirto, oferece-me, aliás, uma sensação de provisório, de efémero, de intervalo, que, entre parêntesis, me encanta: posso ainda considerar-me um homem para mais tarde, e adiar indefinidamente o presente até apodrecer sem nunca haver amadurecido.¹⁶¹

The subversiveness of the narrator, a solitary man, neurotic because of the war, lies in the construction of the text which therapeutically strips him of his excesses while it fills him with what he is denied: that empty space surrounding him and behind which a contradictory self can hide, protected and disguised by the dense filter of language. This provokes the reader's fury and pity. It is a discourse that straddles self-hatred and commiseration, bounty and destruction, death and non-life. Controlled by his opinion and deceived by a dense language replete with raw images of death and disintegration, the reader follows in his steps incapable of imagining a

¹⁵⁹ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 140.

¹⁶⁰ Peres, p. 192.

¹⁶¹ Lobo Antunes, *Os Cus de Judas*, p. 155.

beyond, and constructing with the narrator a textual house that assembles all the fragments dispersed in a structure of apparently disconnected unions. These fragments constitute the work and no longer shelter a character but rather the ruins of a character.

The non-conclusive nature of the text corroborates the idea of a multiple fragmentation. It also shares with post-25 April narratives the active blending of past and present, as parts of the same time period, a period which defines the omniscient narrator and single narrative voice as a fixed mark around which time, space, action and memory all become organized either by dispersing or dissolving into a space/time with no frontiers, and no centres or peripheries. There, the narrator, like the country itself, becomes an issue 'para mais tarde'. In the meantime, everything ends as it began: with the 'casa das tias' that remains safe from any change, while the narrator, with no home like the poet who also lost his Mozambican house, survives 'apenas no precário registo das palavras'.¹⁶²

AUTÓPSIA DE UM MAR DE RUÍNAS, BY JOÃO DE MELO

The title of João de Melo's novel, *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, suggests the forensic examination of a corpse. An autopsy depends on the observation of an inside as the means of determining the cause of death. During one of the novel's central episodes, a group of Portuguese troops is badly injured in an ambush. It is not clear what has happened. We are made to follow the group of men who respond to the radio emergency call. They apprehensively rush to the aid of the 'castaways'. Through the quartermaster Borges, we are unequivocally shown, without recourse to metaphors, the content behind the second part of the title, 'Tudo morto. Tudo morto. O alferes Abílio morreu. Está tudo cheio de mortos'.¹⁶³ We also witness this through the 'slow asphyxia' that only death would ease, in the case of Gonçalves. The account of his death crystallizes the metaphor for the agony of a sinking homeland — a ship ashore — that was set adrift in Angola's bush:

O furriel desandou a correr, mas parou a dois metros do sítio onde o Gonçalves se afundava sem remédio. Como um barco, pensou, como um barco a ser devorado pela grande e definitiva tormenta.¹⁶⁴

The sea in this 'navegação da terra', to paraphrase the title of a book of poems João de Melo dedicated to the colonial war, is a sinking space where

¹⁶² Rui Knopfli, *Monhé das Cobras* (Lisbon: Caminho, 1997), p. 56.

¹⁶³ Melo, p. 127. See Margarida Alves Ferreira, 'Fero Mar, Dura Memória', in *Cleonice Clara em Sua Geração*, ed. by G. Santos, Teresa C. Cerdeira da Silva, Jorge F. Silveira (Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ, 1995), p. 407; Luiz Fagundes Duarte, 'Coisas da Guerra e do "Outro"', *Jornal de Letras*, 12–18 June 1984, p. 14. In both studies the reference to the origin of the word 'autópsia' is highlighted as an important way to analyse the book.

¹⁶⁴ Melo, p. 139.

men are like wrecked ships from which only loose parts and fragments of young bodies remain. They are described in terrified positions, evoking the horrific death that leaves an imprint, on their faces and bodies, of lives cut short. These corpses, seemingly stable in their immobility, their countenance scarcely reveals the level of their laceration, represent the paradigmatic images of an 'officially happy and orderly' homeland that had sent its men on a 'mission of sovereignty'. Behind this homeland-metropolis lies a group of dead, destroyed men. The heads of the rotting dead mirror this concealment. Additionally, a group of wretched blacks, inhabitants of the *sanzala*, lies hidden behind this national façade. A social structure imprisons them and thrives in the interests of the bishops and governors, the generals and corporals, colonials and the ladies of the Movimento Nacional Feminino. *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas* is both an analysis of the dead bodies and a journey inside the maze of a moribund power that the war seemed to revive but which was approaching its end. Through its title, the threshold of the book, we are urged to conduct an autopsy not only on the dead, but also on the living. These are imprisoned either in military barracks, where the writing on the walls forbids the mention of war and represents a clear metonymy for the country's situation, or in a *sanzala* occupied by a frightened, wretched people. The established power classifies this group as 'recuperated', through the mantra 'Sanzala da Paz — Povo Recuperado', providing an obvious metonymy for the imperial Portuguese household in silent rebellion.¹⁶⁵

Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas has twenty-four chapters, alternately narrated by a Portuguese and an African. The narrators are deemed equal from the beginning because of their analogous humble social origins, a factor that balances this double-voiced narration. Both the Portuguese and the Angolan are linked as victims of a power that has deterritorialized them and determined their lives.

As we read alternately the Portuguese and Angolan voices, we are presented with an echo structure, caused by the intertwined juxtaposition of both discourses. In this structure life's ambiguities, ideological complicities, similarities and differences are revealed. It becomes apparent that there are far more elements that unite, than separate, these men and women. The echo structure thus has a dimension beyond its narrative role: it also functions at an ethical and political level.

There are a number of ways in which the echo structure is manifested. First, in both discourses there is a suspension of history reflected in the spaces and times occupied by the characters. Second, the characters' transition from one place to another and especially the portraits of the two

main characters in *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, the quartermaster-nurse and Renato the soldier, are gradually sketched through both discourses. Third, there is an invasion in both discourses by the discourse of the supposed Other. Last, there is a circularity in the narrative evidenced by the merging of the narrative voices and the narration in the first and last chapters.

The circular narrative structure recognizable in the first and last chapters, as well as the significant alternate juxtapositioning, determines the narrative development and legitimizes the order followed. The echo effect is propagated. The novel opens with a hesitant Portuguese voice and finishes with an Angolan voice, leaving us with the memory of Romeu's smile and gaze — the image of a humiliated Africa that struggles on. Moreover, from the opening chapters there are two spaces and times that correspond to the two narratives: the barracks with its frightened, exhausted soldiers and the Africans who inhabit the *sanzala* and are part of a time of resistance. Both poles are apparently unified by the shared experience of waiting, while Africa becomes a mirror of the country-prison.

In the novel, the experience of a frozen, inward-looking, suspended time finds its counterpart in the closed space of the Calambata barracks, a 'promontório suspenso'. The barracks are described from the beginning as a cemetery, the place to which the dead return; a place peopled by sleepwalkers. Aggressive spaces outside, such as the bush and its paths or the city, correspond to a time of tension and expectation. Inside the barracks, chronological time marked in chalk on 'calendários suspensos' is transformed into the psychological time experienced by the characters, a time that stands still and merges with an historical time that appears to be suspended. It seems as if the war happened in a hiatus in history. There, ethereal characters move through a ghostly space, and make themselves at home in the nooks and crannies of the barracks by practising military drills as a means of annihilating time.

The closure of the barracks becomes obvious through news brought from the outside by Gonçalves, just as Portugal's closure on the subject of the colonial war becomes visible through the news printed in the major's foreign magazines 'que lia claro no escuro das cidades'.¹⁶⁶ They highlight the widening of the siege. It is no longer viewed from Portugal towards Africa, as at the beginning of the narration, but from Africa to Portugal, from the imperial periphery to the centre. Africa epitomizes the protected Portuguese household's gigantic, grotesque mirror. Judging by Gonçalves's information, that household, even in Lisbon, was beginning to fall apart.

¹⁶⁵ Melo, p. 81.

¹⁶⁶ Melo, p. 91.

Portugal was like Calambata: a 'promontório suspenso'. It was the cape of Europe, and a country adrift in space like an island cut off from history.

Some, both in Africa and Portugal, tried to avoid this fate of petrification in the time of the Portuguese household and the imperial home. They believed that the meaning of time could not be allowed to drain away on this moribund journey. The main characters in the novel illustrate this. Like the protagonists in *Jornada de África*, they wish to 'escrever outra jornada' — not that of the abolition of time reminiscent of sebastianism, but one of the rebirth of time, as proposed by Manuel Alegre. In *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas*, we come across the quartermaster-nurse, a man who 'opposes from within'; Renato, the soldier, who metaphorically embodies the many soldiers that inhabited Calambata and who personifies the several unanswered questions that tormented them all; and Gonçalves who brings news of the siege.

The quartermaster-nurse might appear to be a flat character. In essence, his development only conveys a growing horror and nausea, and a physical and psychological exhaustion. In contrast, Renato's path is one of initiation. His constant suspicion and interrogation of the world around him reflect an individual identity in crisis. This mirrors a collective identity that, in real and symbolic terms, has lost itself in the bush of Angola, to the extent that the discourse of the Other has become the discourse of the Self. The regret that he did not follow a different path, when he could have done, is echoed in the restless polyglossia of the other youths in the company. They have been transformed, like him, into cannon-fodder, 'barris de pólvora para arder', by a war that was not of their choosing. Like the Angolans, they claimed the right to a country.¹⁶⁷

— Se eu tivesse sabido como isto era — disse o Lamas, daí a instantes — bem que me tinha pirado para França ou para o Luxemburgo, como fizeram muitos rapazes da minha aldeia. [. . .]

— É-se mais livre, quando se deserta para França ou para o Luxemburgo? — perguntou o Ricardo, ao fim de algum tempo. — A gente não tem a obrigação de andar fugida durante a vida inteira. Temos direito a um país.¹⁶⁸

The trajectories of Renato and Calambata's men illuminate the bipartite structure of the book. The echo of two semantically independent texts reverberates. These texts come together and produce a suspended state that places on one margin all the de-centred elements which denounce the emptying of the centre itself. Thus, the interrogated frontier was not the one dividing the empire and the metropolis, but rather the one separating the metropolis and the colony from imagined free nations. How does this suspended state operate and negotiate with the other discourse in *Autópsia*,

¹⁶⁷ Melo, p. 202.

¹⁶⁸ Melo, pp. 201–02.

that of the Angolan narrator, which along with the barracks defines the edge of Calambata?

The *sanzala*, one of the 'hybrid forms' over which the barracks are suspended, is another space generated by war. The population were forcibly brought there by the political police and they lived, to paraphrase Francisco Bungo, as if in a prison. This was the mirror image of what had happened to the Portuguese 'prisoners' inside barracks. In the *sanzala* there were the same loin-clothed or naked men found in *Terra Morta*. At the entrance, 'sentinelas apodrecidas de tanto esperar' reflected the 'silêncio de esperar na vida' that formed life within the *sanzala*.¹⁶⁹

In the *sanzala*, as in barracks and the whole of Portugal, people were waiting. However, the subtext of this wait is of a different nature. This ensures the diegetic autonomy of the narrative sections told by the Angolan narrator since they posit another time that, though echoing Portuguese time, points to another space: the bush, a metonymy for the country-to-be, the other 'hybrid form' over which the barracks were also suspended. Thus, while the passing of time inside the barracks leaves scars on the soldiers' faces and spirits, as they incessantly direct their gaze to a 'sítio nenhum', in the *sanzala* the passing of time, which also leaves visible signs, is felt as a pathway on the road to freedom. The bush becomes a natural extension of the *sanzala*.

Only the quartermaster-nurse, an ambivalent character, is welcomed in the *sanzala*. From the beginning, he is placed at the margins of the military structure and flees to the *sanzala* in search of the means for his lonely and silent struggle, within his time and space. His character's complexity is fully revealed. In the *sanzala*, the hybrid spatial limbo where he circulates, the quartermaster-nurse displays his nature as a third type. His utopia is placed within the space of the Other. His discourse is concomitantly transformed into the discourse of the Other. Thus he becomes a narrator who is implicitly the Angolan narrator, and also a mediator between discourses. He is narratively concealed by the elusive figure that we consider to be the narrator and who is responsible for the echoes that provide the work's thematic, narrative and ideological cohesion.

The quartermaster-nurse, in a manner similar to the women, Romeu and the soldier Renato, is in a limbo between two spaces and two times. This bestows a narrative permeability on him. It allows him explicitly to endorse a marginal discourse within the institutional space to which he belongs. It also allows him implicitly to assume the discourse of an Other, of the supposed Angolan. He constructs, via African mediation, a denunciation and an absolution: he exorcizes the doubt, guilt and hesitation of all those that, like him, to different degrees, were in opposition. He

¹⁶⁹ Melo, pp. 87 and 118.

builds the bridge between the margins, the marginalized and the marginalizable. These margins are constituted by the women, Romeu, the people from the *sanzala* in general, Renato, the nurse himself, the other soldiers, the lieutenant doctor, the major with the foreign magazines and even the officers who thought 'Pode ser hoje o dia da minha morte. Mas mandavam formar os pelotões'.¹⁷⁰ They are united by the experience of a suspended condition, expressed through sentences that attempt to impose a time that is not theirs in the chaotic spaces where they are forced to live. 'É proibido dizer que há guerra' echoes in the *sanzala* through the phrase 'Sanzala da Paz — Povo Recuperado'. These phrases urge them to search for the truth hidden behind these words and consequently to interrogate the time in which they happened to live. They seek to flee from this time by imagining new centres that imply the imagining of the future African nations.

The structure of *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas* appears to restore the prevailing order: the war. However, a difference is introduced that is subversive. The structural juxtaposition of alternate narration, mediated by the voice of that concealed ambiguous narrator who establishes the inter-relationship of the discourses, links the two narrative discourses through the narration of a suspended condition. This is represented both in time and space, and though relating the war, appeals for peace.

The echoing structure on which *Autópsia de um Mar de Ruínas* is based is discursive and, more interestingly, ideological. It is grounded in the reciprocal mirroring of the experience of time and space. The frontier questioned by both the Portuguese and the Angolan narrators was not merely the one dividing the empire from the metropolis. Nor was it only the one that separated the metropolis and the colony from the imagined free nations. It was also the frontier that separated a time of life from a time of death, the corpse of an imperial country from the several countries that would be united by a common language and history, but through a different memory. This authorizes a political reading of the novel and its structure. It becomes the political basis that finds in 25 April a revolution of shared liberation. That revolution, in spite of everything, could soothe the two sides identified in the struggle.

The sea in ruins could be re-opened to the original meaning of the Portuguese sea, the *Open Sea* of Luciana Steggano Picchio's joyful expression. It could transform into a space of imagined dreams and future navigation, a poetic *locus* between the Self and the Other, where the future could be inscribed.

¹⁷⁰ Melo, pp. 45–46.

JORNADA DE ÁFRICA, BY MANUEL ALEGRE

Manuel Alegre can be read as the third component in a triumvirate of Portuguese writers whose work aspired towards freedom. The first and greatest is Camões who asserted a 'bem nascida segurança/da Lusitana liberdade'. The second is Almeida Garrett who sought to exorcize the nation's ghosts. Manuel Alegre, in his poetry, reflects both these trajectories. His novel, *Jornada de Africa*, published in 1989, continues that quest. Its title intertextually resonates with Jerónimo de Mendonça's *Jornada de África*, published in 1607, that narrated the events of Alcácer Quibir. Alegre equates the mythical locale of Alcácer Quibir with the arena of the colonial war.

Writers over the centuries have revisited Alcácer Quibir both as a symbol of the irredeemable loss of the homeland and as the archetypal place of the rebirth of the nation through the return of its absent king.¹⁷¹ In *Atlântico*, which Alegre published in 1981, the myth takes on an organic duplicity. In this poetry, the textual, conceptual, discursive and symbolic structure is the same as that of *Jornada de África*: colonial war; the end of the empire; the end of a cycle linked by an obsession; physical and spiritual death at Nambuagongo/Alcácer Quibir.¹⁷²

In Alegre's novel, the narrative opens with warnings from Lázaro Asdrubal, head of the PIDE in Angola, the Portuguese Secret Police, to Salazar. A rebellion, according to his information, was being prepared in the colony. These warnings recall the earthly and celestial warnings that, four centuries before, D. Sebastião had also received and stubbornly ignored. Parallel to the atoning and redemptive sacrifice of D. Sebastião, who in the hope of redeeming his kingdom from the 'vã cobiça' signalled in *Os Lusíadas* had gone to battle in Christ's name, Salazar appealed for a 'necessary sacrifice'. It was as if a divine ordeal were essential for Portugal to rise from the shadows and take on its historical role as guardian of the West against the new infidel, communism, which assailed Africa.

Manuel Alegre subverts this order by suggesting that the Apocalypse was brought on by those self-proclaimed defenders of the 'Lusitanian house' and not by the Other. In the first chapter, as well as the PIDE's information to Salazar about a possible revolt in Angola, we hear the news that 'algures' in London, in Lisbon, in Mexico, in Coimbra, in the tin shacks of Luanda, in a word, in Angola, 'o destino já está em marcha'.¹⁷³ Different voices and points of view correspond to these geographical areas

¹⁷¹ See Vecchi, 'La Guerra Coloniale . . .', and Lucette Valensi, *Fables de la Mémoire — la glorieuse bataille des trois rois* (Paris: Seuil, 1992).

¹⁷² Rodrigues, *Os Tempos e os Lugares na Obra Lírica, Épica e Narrativa de Manuel Alegre* (Lisbon: Universidade Lusitana, 1996), pp. 11–12.

¹⁷³ Alegre, *Jornada*, p. 21.

of uprisings and subversion. The voices are represented throughout the novel in opposition to those who defend the centre, and who are anchored to and hidden by the view of national history propagated by the Portuguese World Exhibition. The opposing voices are revealed through the young officials sent to counter subversion, or through Lázaro Asdrúbal, the PIDE representative. They also manifest themselves through names that duplicate those of Alcácer, or through disbelieving officials such as António Maldonado, or even in the thoughts and actions of Domingos da Luta. His actions are presented in the text in parenthesis, and recall the time in the bush — the space where a new nation was woven. The sliced demarcations graphically described by the parenthesis metaphorically break down and overcome the limits of the bush and the bracketed text. They appear in the minds of all the subversive elements, from Maldonado to Sebastião, from the Colonel to the Writer. These multiple voices are united through the constant interrogation of signs from the time and of the roles being portrayed. The intertextuality of their names, of their voices and their discourses lends a profound, reflective character to that interrogation and goes beyond the present to question Portuguese history, presented in the following terms:

Tropas do Quinto Império, embarcam na *Mensagem*, não n' *Os Lusíadas*, a cada tempo o seu cantor e o seu profeta, já foi a hora da grandeza, esta é a hora absurda.¹⁷⁴

As in medieval stories, Sebastião's wanderings from the metropolitan centre to the empire's periphery in the Angolan lands of Luanda-Nambuangongo are structured around the series of challenges experienced by him. *Jornada de África* tells the story of Lieutenant Sebastião and his loves during his stay in Africa. It reflects, in modern terms, on Sebastianism, on the twentieth-century meaning of the Camonian epic and on the idea of the Fifth Empire.¹⁷⁵ This story of a modern-day Sebastião, at the point of initial contact with the world of colonial war, is constituted by contemporary elements that successively decentre him and by fragments of a collective history. Sebastião gradually deciphers the signs of that history until they form a complete puzzle, which identifies the present day with the time of the unfortunate disaster of Alcácer Quibir.

The decentring experienced by Sebastião is multiple. Geographically, it is manifested in the shift from Portugal to the imperial territories. Socially, it becomes apparent through the margins of the opposition to the war. Diagetically, it appears throughout the narrative in Sebastião's assumption of and flight from the historical personality whom he seems pre-destined to reincarnate. In this 'somewhere' where destiny was underway, Sebastião

¹⁷⁴ Alegre, *Jornada*, p. 179.

¹⁷⁵ Rebelo, 'Os Diálogos . . .', pp. 29–30.

meets his 'tribe'. He meets the namesake of the author of the other *Jornada de África*. This person initiates him into an atmosphere of conspiracy where another fate and another chronicle is to be written.

Despite the failure of the conspiracy to achieve its quite well supported revolutionary goals, it pointed to an emptying of the metropolis by the élites. Through the character Sebastião and the military élite, the ill-fated conspirators on this African journey, the author recentres the space of Portugal and its élites. This recentring occurs despite its necessary manifestation through a decentring and affirmation of the margin, the aim of which is to recover the centre or, as he states in one of his poems, 'a pátria infielmente traída'. As a political activist, the multiple chronicler of *Jornada de África* fights against all forms of national decadence represented by the war, his ultimate aim being to regenerate the centre. Like various fundamental moments in Portuguese imperial history, the change that would free a dormant metropolis would come from the imperial margins — 'Em Lisboa na mesma'.¹⁷⁶ Everything pointed to a situation in the metropolis that would be resolved in Africa, a repetition of Alcácer Quibir. In other words, everything would take place at the imperial peripheries, where the war raged; so it seemed to Sebastião.

From then on, the narrative development of *Jornada de África*, on the roads of North Angola, takes three dynamic spatiotemporal paths. First, Lieutenant Sebastião moves on the mythological and historical paths of national history through the evocation of the time and place of Alcácer Quibir. Second, he moves through the winding and ambiguous tracks of a personal experience of the colonial war in Angola between paths, ambushes and the barracks in the north. Finally, in the shadow of the paths, he discovers the presence of the 'comrade enemy' to use the oxymoron from the famous poem by Mutamati Barnabé João.¹⁷⁷ This Other, given a voice in the chronicle, appears in the words of Agostinho Neto, Amílcar Cabral and Angolan poets that surface in the text. It also becomes evident through the movements of Domingos da Luta and the messages of Panzo da Glória, and even through Bárbara, Sebastião's Angolan lover who is an MPLA militant. Sebastião believes that the only possible way to regenerate in this war without a time lies on the other side of history, which chroniclers normally ignore.

Similar to Frey Ioannes Garabatus in *As Quybyrycas*, and like Camões, Manuel Alegre travels from his Self to the Other through love. Throughout his African wanderings, Sebastião falls in love with the Other. This Other has been described as barbarian, an onomatopoeic term which points to a sub-humanity that Camões had already denied in 'Endechas a Bárbara

¹⁷⁶ Alegre, *Jornada*, p. 142.

¹⁷⁷ 'Camarada Inimigo', in Mutamati Barnabé João, *Eu, O Povo* (FRELIMO, 1975).

Escrava': 'Bem parece estranha | Mas bárbara não'.¹⁷⁸ Bárbara, from *Jornada de África*, is a 'daughter of the empire', the child of a Goan father and a Cape Verdean mother, who self-identifies as Angolan and is an MPLA militant. Sebastião describes her through the eyes of a seduced metropolitan, in a discourse which is lusotropical. She confronts him with his duplicitous and unsustainable situation, to be part of the colonial war and to be anti-colonialist. She stresses that coincidences do not abolish difference and that history does not repeat itself: it is a continuous process:

Sangues cruzados, pensa Sebastião, só as grandes cruzas são capazes de uma tal beleza, Europa, África, Ásia, viva a grande peregrinação lusiada.

— A nossa cultura é uma cultura de mestiçagem. [. . .]

— O nosso pai é um português de Goa, a nossa mãe cabo-verdiana, pelo lado paterno temos uma avó chinesa.

Sebastião não aguenta:

— Aquela cativa que me tem cativo [. . .]

— Por causa dela é que o meu pai me chamou Bárbara. [. . .]

— É tudo a mesma crónica — responde Sebastião. [. . .]

— Eu sou angolana e a liberdade de Angola será conquistada pelos angolanos.

— Eu sou português e digo-lhe que não haverá liberdade em Angola enquanto não houver liberdade em Portugal.

— Os angolanos não lutam apenas contra um regime, lutam pelo direito à independência.

— MPLA

— Vitória ou Morte — responde Bárbara [. . .]

— E eu sou o inimigo, mesmo sendo anti-colonialista.

— Você é um soldado.

— E um resistente.

— Isso é problema entre portugueses, aqui você faz parte do exército colonial.¹⁷⁹

The times were against them and their love, forcing the two lovers in different directions: Bárbara into exile and Sebastião to Nambuanguo/Alcácer Quibir. Only the child that Bárbara wanted with Sebastião could have been the mark of the new era, sought by the pair, which would transcend nation and identity. The last hope for the 'salvation' of Sebastião was thus denied and with it, that of the nation itself. However, the Camonian love of Bárbara transformed 'appetite' into 'reason', to paraphrase Helder Macedo, furnishing, in Camões's words, 'entendimento as cousas que o não tinham'.¹⁸⁰ Love made sense of Sebastião's mission by removing him from the lack of logic inherent in the useless war and placing him into the logical framework of the war for liberation. From this moment on, the texts which had hitherto appeared between parenthesis, relating all the activities and thoughts of Domingos da Luta, open up as a space for

¹⁷⁸ See Macedo, 'Love as Knowledge: The Lyric Poetry of Camões', *Portuguese Studies*, 14 (1998), 51–64.

¹⁷⁹ Alegre, *Jornada*, pp. 156–57 and 162–63.

¹⁸⁰ *Viagens do Olhar*, pp. 371 and 389–90.

dialogue between the Angolan and the Portuguese. But the times are absurd and what could have been a dialogue of love, in a novel about love and dialogue, becomes a dialogue with death and the novel itself becomes a death novel, where myth erupts and tries to recuperate a rebirth.

The disappearance of Sebastião at the end of the novel represents the 'reencenar o outro para o esconjurar' and, as such, it is an act of self-determination, as Clara Rocha points out.¹⁸¹ His final declaration, left with his friend the poet, leads us to the deep dialectic that underlies this *Jornada de África*: the top and bottom of being able to be Portuguese in Alcácer/Nambuanguo over which an eternal cycle had reopened. Sebastião's fate revitalizes the double meaning encoded in the myth surrounding his royal namesake. He disappears like Sebastião the king. In doing so, he gives rise to another 'Encoberto' for another generation, and a whole nation waiting for its freedom and for a subversive D. Sebastião.

There surfaces a Sebastianism, a new 'Encoberto', and even a prophetic vision of history which is definitively turned towards the future and no longer the past, as it was in the mindset of the Estado Novo. To bury the old system, Lieutenant Sebastião was sacrificed — a metaphor for a generation sacrificed in this final Alcácer Quibir. Hope is reborn from this sacrifice. This repeats a pattern of crusading behaviour that was taken to the extreme of belligerence and religious madness by Sebastião's other namesake — the character in the other *Jornada de África* written by Jerónimo de Mendonça. Pessoa had recuperated him in his poem 'D. Sebastião'. As in the old chronicles, in *Jornada de África — Romance de Amor e Morte do Alferes Sebastião*, the revisiting of Alcácer Quibir represents the eternal return to a history and to an unfulfilled hope.

In line with Pessoa's image of empire, Manuel Alegre and the generation he depicts recast the future in terms of an empire of the Portuguese language where, like Camões's vision, only love is permissible. The deep love between Bárbara and Sebastião reveals the humanity that all brought away from the way, and that begs for reconciliation and peace, instead of hatred and war.

At the point of return to the limits of the old frontiers in European Portugal, the testimony of this combatant on his journey to Africa leaves the certainty of a new start. It opens up a time full of death and paralysis to the hope and the imagination of a new centre. It lies between the desire for a Garretian return, exemplified by 'chegar aqui', and the adventure of a Camonian departure longed for in the poem 'Ainda há mar'.¹⁸² For Alegre, Atlanticism reincarnates the quest and the dream of exchange and dialogue,

¹⁸¹ Clara Rocha, 'Jornada de África: Determinação e Autodeterminação do Herói', *Mathesis*, 6 (1997), 265.

¹⁸² Alegre, *Obra Poética*, p. 551.

at the heart of the Discoveries. He rejects the notion of conquest and rigidity, the consequences of political empires. In the post-imperial age, the dream remains to locate bonds of unity and to fill the place left vacant by D. Sebastião, while accepting the different cultural experiences of a history in common.

A COSTA DOS MURMÚRIOS, BY LÍDIA JORGE

Interviewed by Inês Pedrosa, Lídia Jorge commented, in reference to *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, that she had once come across an army officer in Beira who told her: 'only the Carthaginians used to take their women to war — and now the Portuguese do'.¹⁸³ Though a thorough survey of the figures and living conditions of the women who accompanied their husbands to the colonial war is beyond the scope of this study, it is worth underlining the oddness of this practice. It is also peculiar that no reference has been made to it in conference proceedings and other academic publications before or after 25 April. Only in literary fiction are these women represented. Published in 1988, Lídia Jorge's *A Costa dos Murmúrios* is one of the novels that critics have associated with this theme.

The novel is composed of two texts which dialogue with each other. The first text, called 'Os Gafanhotos', is short and has a male voice. It narrates the wedding banquet of Evita and Lieutenant Luís Alex at the Stella Maris hotel, and his subsequent suicide in Beira, during the colonial war period. The second text is longer. It is controlled by Eva Lopo who comments on the facts narrated in the first text and adds her experiences of that time. It forms an ironic, magnified, glimmering mirror of the first text.

The eroticism implicit in the narrative construction of *A Costa dos Murmúrios* is connected to a trait that defines Evita/Eva Lopo and finally unites these two personalities that are twenty years apart. That trait is a desire for the forbidden. The book's eroticism is manipulated through an irony, manifested in a semantic and morphological duplicity, that imprints the names, characterizations and relationships in the novel, Evita's actions and her shrewd observations. These colour the book's tone. Georges Bataille, in *O Erotismo*, links eroticism and the desire for the forbidden: 'O desejo do erotismo é o desejo de triunfo do interdito'.¹⁸⁴ Evita's desire for the forbidden, which disturbs the *status quo*, is apparent in her questions, in her marginality in relation to other women, and in her intense need to look for what has not been said. It is also present in her acts of sexual transgression. These include her voyeurism in respect of Helena's body and her sexual liberation patent in the affairs she has in the city. In turn, Eva Lopo displays a desire for the forbidden through her wish to voice the

¹⁸³ Lídia Jorge interviewed by Inês Pedrosa, 'Este é um livro sobre a violência', *Ler*, 1 (1988), 10.

¹⁸⁴ Georges Bataille, *O Erotismo* (Lisbon: Antígona, 1988), p. 238.

unsaid, either because it is inconvenient or prohibited. She challenges both her supposed interlocutor and the reader who becomes involved in the game. For both Eva Lopo and Evita, the desire for the forbidden is clearly the key to liberation. For Evita, it is a liberation from the restraints imprisoning her. For Eva Lopo, it is a liberation for her memory. Her testimony defies the effort made to silence it, and runs counter to 'o esforço enorme [que se tem feito] ao longo destes anos para que todos nós o tenhamos esquecido'.¹⁸⁵

In *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, the crisis of Portuguese space, pervasive in the works hitherto discussed, is presented in 'Os Gafanhotos' through the eyes of a man. This privileges male perspectives on events and leaves women out of the picture. In the second text, both gaze and voice belong to a woman who conveys the perspectives of other women. There is a shift from the small structure of the family-woman/household to the wider Portuguese nation: Portugal and its empire. These women are confined to the closed spaces of 'their homes'. The homes are transferred to the Stella Maris hotel rooms or to seaside houses. Their perspective moves from the inside outwards. It pays meticulous attention to 'small differences' since it is in small detail that, according to the female narrator, the inner counterparts, 'correspondências', which explain what happens outside, can be found. The question of perspective becomes central. A confrontation of views on events, discourses, and time conditions the polyglottic structure of the text.

'Os Gafanhotos' is the pillar on which the image is constructed. Stella Maris and its majestic terrace are a metaphor for the Portuguese household in Africa during the colonial war. Its men, women and children are drawn together to defend the empire. They mime peace and make war. They dissimulate in the political, historical and moral spheres. Their lives are fraudulent. The end of the empire is nigh, and becomes apparent in the fiancé's death as the story draws to a close. The premature widowhood of the bride results, and metaphorically foreshadows a nation devoid of men.

By opening her text with a male voice, Lídia Jorge renders men complicit in the world of women. They, like the women in the second part of the book, denounce a male world of war, which undermines the women, and leaves everyone alone and unhappy. In the second part, Eva Lopo does not just deconstruct 'Os Gafanhotos'. She undoes the whole edifice of Portuguese identity. Her interrogation goes beyond questioning a male position that excludes women and propagates a disguise. She also questions those women who, though in the shadows, enact and embody in different ways that same disguise. It becomes clear that the women, in their own way, participate in the general atmosphere of veiled violence of the time.

¹⁸⁵ Jorge, p. 136.

The representation of living in a time of disguise links 'Os Gafanhotos' to the second text. Truth is concealed and verisimilitude pervades. Disguise invades the spaces and the characters. They undergo an identity crisis. The two texts differ through a series of structural alterations that provide autonomy to one text apparently conceived as the sequel to the other. In the second text, skilfully placed fragments from 'Os Gafanhotos', which apparently formed a cohesive and 'official' whole in the first text, now point to a different 'world order'. Evita's innocence is replaced by Eva Lopo's irony. The fiancé is a man 'que degola gente e a espeta num pau'.¹⁸⁶ The beautiful, enigmatic Helena is replaced by the excessive, calculating Helena. The families brought together on the terrace of the Stella Maris for Evita and Luís Alex's marriage turn into the fragmentation of families on which the text focuses: that of the bride and groom and that of Forza Leal and Helena. The certainties of men, voiced in 'Os Gafanhotos', give way to the questions of women. Finally, subjects deemed too raw to mention in 'Os Gafanhotos' — the war, the savages and the empire — are openly aired, discussed and assessed in the second part of the text. This leads to the realization that, to paraphrase the fiancé, it was all a lie.

Through Eva Lopo's eyes we see and analyse the two couples at the centre of the narrative. They are Lieutenant Luís Alex and Evita, and Captain Forza Leal and Helena de Tróia. The intensity of each inter-character relationship shapes the others. Luís Alex is a duplication of the captain. Helena de Tróia appears to be his female counterpart. The captain's movement towards the pseudo-triumphs of war is under the direction of his two impersonators. Evita's development is determined by the revelations of Helena and the journalist's explanations of the land. These gradually distance her from her fiancé. The atmosphere is rendered more complex by all the other couples in the Stella Maris with their own private stories.

Critics have tended to focus on Evita, the central female character in the text, and read her as the embodiment of transgression. An important aspect of that transgression has been neglected as Ronald W. Sousa and Paula Jordão had pointed out in some way.¹⁸⁷ Evita is a metropolitan that, due to

¹⁸⁶ Jorge, p. 167.

¹⁸⁷ Santos, 'Bondoso Caos: A Costa dos Murmúrios de Lídia Jorge', *Colóquio-Letras*, 107 (1989), 64–67; Ferreira, 'Lídia Jorge's A Costa dos Murmúrios: History and the Postmodern She-Wolf', *Revista Hispanica Moderna*, 45, 2 (1992), 268–78; Isabel Moutinho, 'A Collapsing Empire: cultural decay and personal transformation in the recent work of Portuguese women novelists', *Romance Languages Annual*, 5 (1993), 484–90; Manuel Simões, 'La guerra dietro le quinte: A Costa dos Murmúrios, de Lídia Jorge', in Simões and Vecchi, pp. 71–77; Ronald W. Sousa, 'The Critique of History in Lídia Jorge's A Costa dos Murmúrios or Helen of Beira Meets Luis of Troy', *Cincinnati Romance Review*, 16 (1997), 135–43; Maria Manuela Lacerda Cabral, 'A Costa dos Murmúrios, de Lídia Jorge: Inquietação Pós-Moderna', *Revista da Faculdade de Letras — Línguas e Letras*, 14 (1997), 265–87; Claudia Pazos-Alonso, 'A Voz do Poder e o Poder da Voz em A Costa dos Murmúrios', in *Actas do V Congresso da Associação Internacional de Lusitanistas*, ed. by T. F. Earle (Coimbra: Lidel, 1998), pp. 64–67; Jane Tutikian, 'África Amarela: o Exercício

her marriage to a lieutenant drafted to Mozambique, has to move there. She occupies a mediating position between two systems: the metropolitan, where she was born and raised, and the colonial, whose pedagogical discourse taught her to consider Mozambique as a mirror image of the metropolis. In reality it did not exist outside the abstract for her. The same is true for her fiancé, who was also a university student in Lisbon, and who was subsequently drafted to Mozambique. Both characters react differently to their new environment and to the situations beyond their control in which they find themselves. However, their reactions are underpinned by a deterritorialization that leaves them de-centred. As pointed out by Paulo de Medeiros, Luís Alex forgets his past and seeks the role model he finds in the captain.¹⁸⁸

Evita evolves from the moment she crosses the entrance hall that takes her out of the Stella Maris hotel into the Captain's house, where she meets Helena, and onto the streets of Beira, where she comes across the journalist. In her relentless fascination for the forbidden, her transgression follows two courses. The first is the quest to understand the changes in her fiancé. The second is the opening up of her body and spirit to the land where she is. These two paths are united through a negation of the ideological and physical closures that make her liberation, or indeed her fall from grace, imperative. She is helped by two characters who share strong connections to the land: the journalist and Helena de Tróia.

Helena and the journalist were, together with Evita, the only 'normal' people on the coast. To paraphrase an expression used by Evita in relation to the journalist, they were 'people with fear'. They are bound by a shared consciousness of the disguise that ultimately accounts for their identity crises:

Ouçá, pomba, este é um momento de disfarce — os momentos que precedem o fim são os de disfarce do fim. [...] nas sociedades disfarçadas todo o entendimento é um crime. se possível um crime sexual [...] Nos regimes como este, mesmo caindo aos pedaços, não se escreve, cifra-se. Não se lê, decifra-se.¹⁸⁹

This disguise simultaneously produces the clash between Evita and her fiancé, and the meeting of minds between her and the journalist. They are set apart, as Evita says to Helena, by their identity, both sexual and ideological in the case of the two women, and in terms of life and love

do Poder', in *Inquietos Olhares — a construção do processo de identidade nacional nas obras de Lídia Jorge e Orlanda Amaralís* (São Paulo: Editora Arte e Ciência, 1999), pp. 149–64; Hilary Owen, 'Back to Nietzsche: The Making of an Intellectual/Woman Lídia Jorge's A Costa dos Murmúrios', *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies*, 2 (1999), 79–98; Sousa, "'I Was Evita'", or *Ecce Femina* (unpublished article); Ana Paula Jordão, 'A Costa dos Murmúrios, uma Ambiguidade Inesperada', *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies*, 2 (1999), 49–59.

¹⁸⁸ Medeiros, 'Memória Infinita', *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies*, 2 (1999), 61–77.

¹⁸⁹ Jorge, pp. 145–46 and 147.

experience in the journalist's case. Their solitude, mitigated throughout the narration by means of a network of complicity, secrets and comradeship, though never through love, is intensified and, like the cases of Captain Forza Leal and the fiancé, reflects a deeper loneliness and isolation: that of Portugal as an imperial nation. As Eva Lopo points out: 'Fazíamos o nosso Vietnam sozinhos, com o Mundo contra nós, quando defendíamos a Civilização Ocidental'.¹⁹⁰

After Luís Alex North's return, the couple rediscover themselves in ill-fated adventures. The fiancé cries over his personal failure and the failure of a war and of the ideas that the war was meant to defend. Evita reacts and laments her lost love, since she can no longer take refuge in moments of affection with a man who now 'espreitava a voz':

Agora não é mais ele. Não vale a pena fingir. Como posso apalpar nele a figura que Evita quis? [. . .] Não és mais a pessoa com quem fiz namoro, e muito mais do que namoro, amor até esgotar. [. . .] Não és mais o mesmo. [. . .] Estamos deitados lado a lado na areia, mas a cicatriz do capitão separa-nos, nesse dia de praia, apesar do fascínio que exerce como coisa derradeira.¹⁹¹

Her relationship with the journalist assumes a political dimension, beyond personal liberation: it is a relationship with a mulatto in a land where racism reigns, and a war is fought to preserve the old order. A feeling of impotence, faced by an overpowering reality, unites her with the journalist in a different way to Helena. That reality does not separate men and women, those who fought and those who were left behind to wait despite Lieutenant Góis's claims. On the contrary, everyone was complicit: generals, officials, soldiers, their wives, civilians, even journalists. Evita takes up the challenge of telling this story, thus granting to women the position of subject in both history and the narrative: 'aquilo era a vida, ali, esparramada no hall, e eu não era inocente'.¹⁹²

Some postcolonial theory has promoted a fruitful dialogue between post-colonialism and feminism. In essence it has identified colonial discourses with those of patriarchy. Helena's complex case lends itself to this theoretical combination. The combined theory is particularly relevant for its reading of the relationship that men maintain with women in a colonial context as an extension of the relationship of authoritative possession intrinsic to any colonial relationship. The captain's relationship with his wife Helena falls within this category. Helena's beautiful body may be read as colonially imprisoned by the captain. She also experiences a double marginalization: first, as a woman; and second as a colonized being, devoid of opinion, will and voice. She seemingly mimics her

¹⁹⁰ Jorge, p. 231.

¹⁹¹ Jorge, pp. 67–68.

¹⁹² Jorge, p. 247.

husband, repeating his discourse and allowing her body to be possessed by the violent captain.

Helena appears to suffer all the effects of colonialism. Interestingly, her subversion strategies re-enact forms of colonial resistance. She concentrates on the two elements of her domination: discourse and the land-house hold-body that is possessed/colonized. No suggestion is being made that Helena's discourse identifies with that of the colonized, nor that it rehearses the discourse of the Other. However, Helena voices a discourse of opposition to Forza Leal by resorting to subtle discursive and behavioural strategies, peculiar to those who are unable to say 'no' to the power they reject but that overwhelms them. Helena mimics, repeats and imitates whenever she 'fala, ri e mente'.¹⁹³

Forza Leal's return from war may not have been a victory for him, but for Helena it was the greatest of defeats. She remains numb at home, impassively watching the metamorphosis of her body from space of liberation into a last refuge. She succumbs, unable to end her own life, her only hope of liberation. She thus merits her namesake, Helen of Troy, who, as Hilary Owen comments, historically represents 'the archetypal end of a civilization'.¹⁹⁴ Forza Leal burns the photographs of the massacres that he ordered. Those photographs were to have been his guarantee of a comfortable position within a new violent order, if white independence had been gained. Along with the photographs he burns his fantasies of future power.

Luís Alex's suicide, Helena de Tróia's spiritual death, the destruction of the photos by the captain, Evita's loneliness as she waits for the lieutenant's body, the journalist's escape, the General's triumphant discourse in the face of a shallow victory are all clear signs of the postponement and evasion of a final confrontation. Behind the appearance of absolution, everything is destroyed and the world is left in a state of 'suspension'.

Constructed on a pre-textual female gaze, which has historically been at the margins but which plays a central role in this narrative, *A Costa dos Murmúrios* gives an account of women's battles and what it was like to be a woman in a Portuguese territory in crisis. The novel shows how those who were, according to Salazar's propaganda and ideology, 'by nature' 'for the family' and 'for the homeland', destined to preserve everything, changed everything in a world compromised by criticism, ignorance and complicity — a world between rupture and continuity. From then on, nothing was the same. Nothing in the nation, the family and society was intact since it is not possible to reconstruct marriage, the family, the household or nation on the ruins of empire.

¹⁹³ Jorge, p. 201.

¹⁹⁴ Owen, p. 82.

As Eva Lopo puts it at the end of the novel: 'Deixe ficar aí, suspenso'.¹⁹⁵ Fragments of Portugal and its empire, and the several versions of a time that inevitably permeates and separates the Portuguese must be left suspended. What kind of Portugal can be imagined hereafter? Undoubtedly one in which identity will have to be experienced, constructed and transformed as a multiple, dynamic concept voiced by the two subjects of history: men and women.

* * *

In this article, a range of contexts, words and ideas have been broached. The same words in different circumstances take on new meanings. Words such as empire, Portugal, Europe, centre and periphery, depend semantically on where they are uttered. Nevertheless, they never cease to bear the historical heritage of the world they helped to create.

Nationalism, imperialism and decadence are the words that best define the Portuguese sphere of influence around the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. They represent the key features of the political and literary imagination. However, the idealized greatness of Portugal, gainsaid by decades of failure inherent in both the European and imperial mirages, has yet to be restored. The revolutionary project of the 1870's generation did not achieve this goal. Nor did the decadent homeland which Junqueiro regarded as a transient state, or the mystical nationalism of Pascoaes's *Saudosismo*, or the neo-Garrettian lamentations. Even Pessoa's cosmopolitanism, and the anachronistic revival of the Estado Novo failed in this aim. The quest for that idealized, scattered and universalist empire-homeland, transferred from Vieira's to Pessoa's Fifth Empire and reconceived by the élites of the Empire in Africa, reflected the trauma of an incomplete mission. From the onset of Portuguese decadence, images of that quest would appear in national mythology as a recurring mirage of renewal. This mirage captures the meaning of all national regenerations, rebirths, resurgences and resuscitations and only in this context can we understand the constant repetition of the image of the empire as a means whereby the nation is able to 'imagine its centre'.

As the works on the colonial war selected in this article have made clear, this literature did not provide the organically inspired descriptions of men who mirror a moribund homeland, present in Oliveira Martins or in Eça's fiction.

These nineteenth-century authors described the Portuguese as infirm, characterized by an 'andar desengonçado' in an emptied nation torn between the loss of Brazil and the uncertainty of the European and African

¹⁹⁵ Jorge, p. 259.

projects. However, the authors of the colonial war literature no longer confront us with the real corpses announced in *Poesia 61* and in all poetry dealing with this time of asphyxia and putrefaction. In these works, there is a qualitative shift towards an apocalyptic tone. The deterioration and fragmentation of bodies, including entrails, and the characters' reflections on the disintegration of the nation's body convey this stark tone. In other words, the nineteenth-century organic and apocalyptic visions and fantasies that permeate twentieth-century critical thought as a long epitaph to the Portuguese imperial nation are the spectre of an ending in this literature. This ending is crystallized in the image of physical and spiritual suicide — acts of personal disidentification that are a powerful metaphor for a country that has ceased to be. It leaves the characters in a suspended time, between a longed for future to be built in the absence of a present and the image of a past that one wishes, in vain, to forget. Intransitive relationships and broken marriages (*Os Cus de Judas* and *A Costa dos Murmúrios*), missed loves (*Jornada de África*, *A Costa dos Murmúrios*), emptied houses, returns to nowhere determine these protagonists' lives. The literary works themselves, written after coming home to a different Portugal, are exercises on learning how to live the return. Hence, at the level of the individual, they reveal cathartic and even therapeutic aspects. In a collective sense, this literature epitomizes the last reflection in Portuguese culture on Portugal from the imperial periphery. These narratives of return, by reshaping the last Portuguese wreck, integrate it within an identity discourse open to discussion and reformulation. They encompass the polyphonic and fragmentary expression of the 'verdades por eles passadas' in response to the univocal discourse of the Estado Novo, as well as the gaze directed towards the Other. The Other is not only the enemy fought in this war. It includes, as a result of that battle, the Other within the Self, disclosed in Africa.

Could Portugal have reached the end of a cycle that, like the cycle of Alcácer Quibir, may reopen through imagining a desired nation? Could a bridge be built between the future nations that were once at war, as imagined in Renato's dream? Could the boat seen by Evita as a 'pedaço de pátria que descia' chart a new course? Could the protagonist of *Os Cus de Judas* be right in his assertion that we are entering a future of a 'Tejo sem barcos'? Might Europe bring about that imagined nation? As has been stressed by Manuel Alegre, in a statement that reconciles both the Socialist Party's European sympathies and the nostalgia for a Left sympathetic to the Third World, Portugal's position as a country with no empire and on the periphery of Europe could be sublimated by emphasizing the nation's difference in the continent, a difference based on a unique imperial experience:

a integração de Portugal na Europa foi ditada por razões que são conhecidas, políticas, históricas, económicas, não temos outra saída, hoje, senão essa, o problema está em nós e na nossa maneira de estar na Europa. Nós temos também algo a levar à Europa é a nossa própria experiência histórica e a principal riqueza que temos — que é a nossa cultura e o nosso especialíssimo relacionamento com outros povos e com outros continentes — e vamos levar à Europa uma concepção que não seja eurocentrista, mas uma concepção aberta ao mundo, uma concepção aberta ao respeito pelos outros, à capacidade de compreender a diferença dos outros. É essa, enfim, a singularidade especial da nossa identidade e da nossa cultura, é esse o contributo próprio que devemos levar à construção da Europa.¹⁹⁶

If this sublimation were to be realized, would other dreams remain suspended between the image of that distant empire and Europe or, as Sousa Santos puts it, between the 'transnacionalidade do espaço colonial' and the 'transnacionalidade inter-europeia'?¹⁹⁷

When authors, who inscribed the violent Portuguese imperial twilight of the colonial war, claim their affiliation to a 'Europa da periferia', and dream of other seas and geographies, turning their backs on a 'Europa não mais mestre não mais', a complete transition from an imagination of the centre through empire to its imagination through Europe is called into question. When Lobo Antunes voices a nostalgia for a colonial Angola or Malanje that no longer exists, or when João de Melo rejects Europe as foreign in *O Homem Suspenso*, that transition follows that same fate signalled in Eva Lopo's words in *A Costa dos Murmúrios*, when she recollects the dying days of Portuguese colonialism; it is left suspended.¹⁹⁸

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¹⁹⁶ Alegre interviewed by Brito Vintém, *Notícias do Interior* (1991), 16.

¹⁹⁷ Sousa Santos, *Pela Mão de Alice* . . . , p. 136.

¹⁹⁸ Alegre, *Obras Poéticas*, 1999, p. 665; Melo, *O Homem Suspenso* (Lisbon: Dom Quixote, 1996). Lobo Antunes interviewed by Francisco José Viegas, 'Nunca Li um Livro Meu', *Ler*, 37 (1997), 30-43.

My thanks to Phillip Rothwell and Paulo Pereira for their helpful comments during the preparation of this article.