

Portuguese Humanism and the Republic of Letters

Edited by

Maria Berbara and Karl A.E. Enenkel

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This volume focuses on the interdisciplinary investigation of early modern Portuguese humanism, especially as a noteworthy player in the international network of scholars, writers and intellectuals. From ca. 1500 on, Portugal became both a centre for the spreading of information concerning the new geographical discoveries opened up by successful navigations and, by the foundation of Coimbra university, a meeting place for humanist scholars and, intellectuals coming from all over Europe. Papers in this volume deal with the role Portuguese scholarship played in the international humanistic networks and of its relation to other aspects of contemporary cultural production.

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Introduction

Transoceanic Crossroads – Portuguese Humanism and the Republic of Letters

Maria Berbara and Karl Enenkel

Transoceanic Crossroads: Images of the Lusitanian Empire: Italy, Portugal and the New World

Historians and art historians have recently reminded us that globalisation is not a phenomenon that originated in the late 20th century.¹ For example, the expansion of the Lusitanian Empire in the 15th and 16th centuries – combined with inventions in the fields of transportation, communication and printing – was a cornerstone of a new age of globalisation. During the reign of King Manuel I, when Portugal experienced a period of unprecedented wealth, Lisbon became one of the most important sites of international exchange. In only two years – between 1498, when Vasco da Gama, after circumnavigating Africa, arrived in Calcutta, and 1500, when Pedro Álvares Cabral landed on the Brazilian coast – Portugal succeeded in establishing a global commercial maritime network; in the first decade of the 16th century, it strengthened its commercial bases on the western coast of Africa and in Brazil, Persia, Goa, Malacca, Timor. In this context, colonial conquests were understood as the fulfilment of biblical prophecies. The reign of King Manuel I was interpreted by humanists and artists in a providential sense: the King, whose very name goes back to the messianic tradition, was seen as the Messiah of a re-born Empire.

These concepts were often related to the classical past, which offered a language that could be applied in diverse ways to different historical contexts. Carolingians, Ottonians, French 18th century revolutionaries and Latin American 20th-century dictators, among many others, have used rhetorical and visual elements of the classical past in order to legitimise contemporary forms of government. The usage of the classical tradition reflects a dynamic process in which literary and artistic models are freely re-defined and applied in new contexts. A special quality of this process is its “universality”, i.e. the fact that it is extremely fit for international intellectual exchange. In his treatise *Da Pintura Antigua (On Ancient Painting)*, written in the 1540's, Portuguese humanist and painter Francisco de Holanda tries to demonstrate the universality of what he calls ‘ancient painting’ by pointing out that its principles were present throughout the world: from Morocco to India, from Brazil to Peru, and even in China one notices the precepts of ‘ancient painting’.²

In the early modern period, Humanism stimulated an intellectual internationalisation analogous, *mutatis mutandis*, to the process described in 1924 by Spanish philosopher Ortega y Gasset in his *Revista del Occidente*: ‘Without a common programme, without any act or intention of propaganda, without any apparatus or instrument, it happened that the best

¹ For the correction of the English, we want to express our gratitude to Walter Melion.

² Cf. Francisco de Holanda's *Da Pintura Antigua* ed. A. González García (Lisbon: 1983) 87-88.

members of European and American international organisations joined, without really knowing how, in a close contact'.³ Ortega felt that in different countries, dozens of thinkers not only began to take notice of other countries and cultures, but also started to feel more akin to thinkers living in different regions than to their own countrymen.

In the course of the 16th century, Portuguese intellectuals inserted themselves into the international humanistic *Republic of Letters* and its networks. An important stimulus was provided by the transfer of the University back to Coimbra, in 1537, and the efforts to transform it into an international academic centre. The gathering there of scholars from different parts of Europe culminated in the creation of the Real Colégio das Artes e Humanidades in 1542. Humanists such as Elie Vinet, George Buchanan, Nicolas de Grouchy, Fabio Arca, Sebastian Stockhamer, or Nicolaus Clenardus were brought together in what then became an intellectual centre of the highest order.⁴ Conversely, Portuguese scholars such as João de Barros or Damião de Góis built up their careers abroad. King João III generously granted thirty scholarships for Portuguese scholars to study abroad (mainly in Paris and Bordeaux).

In the visual arts, however, during the reign of King Manuel I international classicising tendencies were counter-balanced by efforts to create a specifically national visual language connected with maritime control (symbols such as anchors, caravels, cordage) and the discovery of new lands and peoples. The iconographical language belonging to the so-called Manueline style did not necessarily enter into dialogue with forms and motives derived from classical tradition. "Novelties" of Renaissance Italian provenance were often openly criticised, and such critical opposition continued well into the 16th century. Paulo Pereira, for example, in his essay on Manueline architecture, recalls a Portuguese popular play from ca. 1550 in which the Devil is represented as a classicist architect who competes with an old traditional Portuguese mason working in the Manueline style⁵. A significant example of official resistance to the contemporary Italianising avant-garde is the set of illustrations in the *Ordenações d'El Rei D. Manuel* (Pietro da Cremona: 1514), which seems anchored in conservative visual idioms. The king is not depicted as a new Caesar or Augustus, but as a medieval monarch with his armour and crown, surrounded by Gothic architecture. This was combined with symbols attaching to the new empire: the armillary sphere, the strongest symbol of Manueline power, occurs throughout the illustrations.

Another means of propagating a new image of Portugal in Europe was the distribution of exotic animals. Most spectacular was the well known case of the elephant Hanno, which the King sent to Rome as a present on the occasion of Pope Leo X's accession. The elephant's name, of course, was a witty allusion to one of the most celebrated episodes of Roman history, namely Hannibal's invasion of Italy. Pope Leo X was charmed by the present. He publicly celebrated the Portuguese overseas victories, and, in an Apostolic *breve* of 18 January, conveyed his best wishes to the Portuguese king: he hoped that he would see all of Africa converted to the Catholic Faith. The exotic gifts chosen by King Manuel I were aimed at emphasising Portuguese conquests overseas. In 1507, the Italian humanist Egidio da Viterbo celebrated the Portuguese maritime voyages with reference to classical Antiquity: they had allowed Christianity to reach regions that were unknown even to Rome's greatest conqueror, Julius Caesar. In contemporary Portuguese culture, references to Classical Antiquity appeared

³ Cf. *História como sistema y otros ensayos de filosofía* (Madrid: 1981) 105 ff.

⁴ King João III invited the humanist André de Gouveia, then rector of the university of Paris, to become director of the *Colégio*.

⁵ In "'Armes divines'. La propagande royale, l'architecture manuéline et l'iconologie du pouvoir", *Revue de l'Art* 133 (2001-2003) 47.

less frequently. Portugal's conservative tendencies have been well examined by the historian of science Reyer Hooykaas (1904-1994), whose *Humanism and the Voyages of Discovery in 16th Century Portuguese Science and Letters*, argues that Portugal experienced a conflict of loyalties.⁶ According to Hooykaas, these tensions were to a great extent due to a contradiction between the humanists' proclamation of the superiority of the Ancients and the maritime discoveries of the Moderns: the discoveries had demonstrated that the ancients were not infallible, and at the same time, they also highlighted the great achievements of modern Portuguese seamen and scientists.⁷

On the other hand, it seems clear that many humanists drew on classical models in order to highlight the existence of a new era heralded by the overseas discoveries. The words "new" and "era" abounded in the writings of humanists and poets such as Poliziano, Pedro Nunes or Luís de Camões.⁸ The concept of the *similitudo temporum* was used by humanists in order to create strong ties with classical antiquity. King Manuel was represented as a new Julius Caesar (like the historical Caesar, he conquered barbarous regions) and concurrently as the new Messiah who was the head of a newly evangelised world. In this sense, visual and rhetorical devices drawn from classical antiquity certainly did serve as means for the construction of an imperial ideology based on a cyclical conception of time, according to which Portugal gloriously appears as a revitalised *caput* of a new Christianised empire.

In the visual arts of Portugal, however, one fails to detect any consistent tendency firmly to define modern Portugal as the heir of classical Antiquity. The painter and writer Francisco de Holanda was exceptional in having explicitly formulated such a claim. Deeply rooted traditional aesthetic solutions impeded the formation of closer ties to Italy and the identification of Portugal with the classical past. This tendency toward cultural separatism may be discerned in the writings of such celebrated 16th-century Portuguese writers as Garcia Resende, who deprecates the Portuguese voyages and the arrival of immigrants.⁹ In 1541, moreover, the reintroduction of the inquisition placed considerable restraints on academic freedom.¹⁰ Especially conspicuous in the visual arts, the Portuguese reluctance to refer to classical Antiquity or the Italian Renaissance may puzzle us, since Portugal was in other respects - politically, commercially and to some extent intellectually - quite close to Italy.

It would seem that only many decades after King Manuel's death - when the Lusitanian Empire was nothing but a faraway dream - did this connection become obvious and dominant. In 2008 the Lusophone world commemorated the bicentenary of the arrival of

⁶ *Mededelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen*, afd. Letterkunde, Nieuwe Reeks, vol. XL, no. 4, 15-16. According to Hooykaas, this feeling of triumph was particularly common amongst **writers of "natural history"** such as Duarte Pacheco Pereira and Garcia d'Orta, **whereas "typical humanists"** – i.e. **Italianised** intellectuals such as the aforementioned Francisco de Holanda, but also Buchanan or António Ferreira – emphasised the indispensability of ancient knowledge and minimised the contribution of the moderns.

⁷ Hooykaas quotes, among others, Garcia d'Orta's celebrated statement (1563) that 'nowadays more is known by the Portuguese in a single day than was known by the Romans in a hundred years' ('Digo que se sabe mais em hum dia aguora pellos Portugueses, do que sesabia em cem años pollos Romanos'), and João de Barros passage in his *Rópica Pnema* (1532, 11-12): were Ptolemy, Strabo, Mela, Pliny the Elder and Galen to come back to life, the discoveries of the Portuguese would put them to shame and confusion.

⁸ The concept of a new world was for promulgated in Europe through Amerigo Vespucci's celebrated letter to Lorenzo di Pier Francesco de' Medici (the nephew of Lorenzo the Magnificent), written and published in 1502.

⁹ 'Vimos muito espalhar / portugueses no viver, brasil, ilhas povoar,/ e às Índias yr morar/ natureza lhes esquecer/ [...] veemos no reyno metter / tantos captivos crescer,/ e yremse hos naturaes,/ que se assi for, seram mais /elles que nós, a meu ver', in *Miscellanea e variedade de historias, costumes, casos e cousas que em seu tempo aconteceram* (1554) (Coimbra: 1917) 67.

¹⁰ Cfr. Ramalho A. da Costa, *Para a história do humanismo em Portugal* (Coimbra: 1988), esp. chapter 5, 49-74. In the second half of his reign, many humanists working in Coimbra were persecuted and accused of Protestant heresy.

the Portuguese court in Brazil. On that occasion, Rio became the capital of the Portuguese empire – which then encompassed Portugal, Brazil and the African colonies.¹¹ The idea of transferring the court to Brazil dated back to 1580, when Spanish annexation buried any hope that the Lusitanian Empire might be reborn. When Portugal regained independence in 1640, many voices, among them that of the great Jesuit writer António Vieira, suggested that the court be transferred to the Americas not provisionally but permanently. With this end in view, Vieira utilised the image of imperial renovation – an idea that goes back to the old political concept of the *renovatio Romae*. At the same time, Vieira invoked the tradition of Portugal's Messianic future – mediaeval in design – according to which the Lusitanian Empire would correspond to the Fifth Empire of the Book of Daniel, where Daniel interprets a dream of Nebuchadnezzar.¹² Similarly, an engraving by Domingos António de Sequeira in the second edition of José António Sá's *Defeza dos direitos nacionaes e reaes da monarchia portuguesa*,¹³ represents Dom João, then the Lusitanian emperor, about to leave Portugal for Brazil; the inscription below – 'Exegit monumentum aere perennius' ('I have made a monument more lasting than bronze') – derives from the final poem in the third book of Horace's *Odes* and clearly legitimises by reference to classical antiquity the idea of grounding an imperial renovation on American soil.

Portuguese Humanism and the Republic of Letters

Given the complex and partly paradoxical character of early modern Portuguese culture, it is debatable how and to what extent, with respect to which fields, topics and discourses, Portuguese intellectuals were connected with the international *Republic of Letters*. There is a huge amount of relevant material as yet unexplored or awaiting closer examination. The lives, works and connections of many intellectuals in Portugal – both Portuguese and foreigners – have not been analysed sufficiently. The story of the intellectual exchange between Portuguese players and the international Republic of Letters resembles a large puzzle, many pieces of which are missing. The present volume represents an effort to address these questions, to add some pointers and supply some answers.

The first section focuses on the exchange of knowledge that took place between Portuguese intellectuals and the Republic of Letters in the early-modern period. The evidence provided by the contributors suggests that Portugal was not a peripheral, remote or even provincial region. Rather, there were strong and clearly discernable ties between Portuguese and foreign intellectuals, with a large stream of information going to and fro. Foreign influences were intensely received and brought forth literary (e.g. Aquiles Estaço, António Ferreira, Diogo de Teive) and scholarly production (e.g. Sebastian Stockhamer, Manuel

¹¹ As pointed out by Kirsten Schultz in her *Tropical Versailles* (New York-London: 2001) 1, this was an unprecedented moment in the history of Western modern imperialism. Never before had a European governor even visited, let alone lived in one of his colonies.

¹² For Vieira – who met the celebrated rabbi Menasseh ben Israel in Amsterdam and discussed millenarian and Messianic traditions with him – the conversion of all Jewish people, including those of the ten lost tribes, would indicate the arrival of the Fifth Empire, which would succeed the Babylonian, Persian, Greek and Roman Empires. Christ would then rule over the world through the mediation of the Pope and of a Catholic king. This king, according to Vieira, could be none other than King João IV, since only Portugal, commanding the universalising forces of the Atlantic, would be in the position of unifying all continents and beliefs. According to Thomas Cohen, Vieira was one of the first thinkers to recognise that the hierarchical distinctions between the metropolitan centre and colonial periphery were impediments to the imperial enterprise rather than its solid foundation. Cf. see Cohen T., *The Fire of Tongues: António Vieira and the Missionary Church in Brazil and Portugal* (Stanford: 1998).

¹³ second edition, Lisbon: 1816 – 1817.

Severim de Faria). At times, Portuguese intellectuals initiated such production. For example, the Coimbra intellectual Sebastian Stockhamer turns out to have been the inventor of the genre of the emblem commentary (contribution by Karl Enenkel). Foreign books quickly found their way to Portugal (e.g. Erasmus, Alciato, Budé) and were discussed by Portuguese intellectuals; foreign intellectuals visited Portugal (e.g. Mariangelo Accursio, Elie Vinet, George Buchanan) and inspired Portuguese scholars. There were strong efforts to bring books to Portugal and to build up individual libraries, even if the erection of a public library in Coimbra met with difficulties (contribution by Ricarda Musser). In the 17th and 18th centuries, the Portuguese took a leading role in the transmission of knowledge to Asia via the networks of the Jesuit Mission in China (contribution by Noel Golvers).

Sylvie Deswarte's researches the intellectual pursuit of the Italian humanist, philologist, antiquarian and Neo-Latin poet Mariangelo Accursio (1489-1546) in relation to his sojourn in Portugal in 1527. Before his visit, Accursio was already well known in Portugal, and had established close relationships with several Portuguese intellectuals. One of his major scholarly achievements was in the field of epigraphy, the edition of the *Epigrammata Antiquae Urbis* (Rome: 1521), by then the largest collection of Roman inscriptions. His visit to Portugal greatly contributed to the understanding of and interest in Roman inscriptions by Portuguese intellectuals.

Ricarda Musser deals with the first century of Portuguese book printing and with book collections gathered by 16th-century scholars. In her contribution, she raises the important questions of which scholars were known, which books available, in what form, language and state (censured or not), and she also examines the scientific and literary debates in which these intellectuals engaged. Musser's overview testifies to how extensively Portuguese intellectuals were integrated into the networks of communication that bound together the 16th-century European Republic of Letters. With respect to this process, she especially stresses the importance of private libraries on Portuguese soil, owned by foreign and local scholars. In the 16th century, they were the main tools for the transmission of knowledge. The public library of the University of Coimbra was initially only of secondary importance, and it greatly profited from these private libraries, as the recipient of donations from former professors and visiting scholars, such as the Italian Professor of Law, Arca de Narnia.

Catarina Barceló Fouto engages in related questions by focusing on the Portuguese reception of the works of Europe's leading humanist Desiderius Erasmus. She analyses the reception of his works in Portugal in the sixteenth century, comparing it to Spanish and Italian patterns of reception. It turns out that in Portugal - despite the religious and ideological *demarche* - the Inquisition did not play a major role. Even if the Portuguese intellectuals disagreed with Erasmus on religious and ideological grounds, they accepted his works as important if not indispensable and as prestigious literary models. Even with regard to political and religious topics, Portuguese humanists used them as examples and as storehouses of knowledge. Fouto illustrates this process through a close analysis of Diogo de Teive's mirror of princes, the *Institutio Sebastiani Primi*, a poem first published in 1558. Although Diogo de Teive disagreed with the main positions defended by Erasmus, he nevertheless took over the structure, main items and even verbatim quotations from Erasmus' *Institutio Principis Christiani*.

Karl Enenkel investigates the role of Sebastian Stockhamer (originally an alumnus of the University of Ingolstadt in Bavaria) who was part of the international group of humanistic intellectuals that came together in the formative years of Coimbra University in the 1540's,

and who stayed in Coimbra until his death (ca. 1570). Enenkel analyses in particular the commentary on Andrea Alciato's influential *Emblematum libellus* (ed. pr. 1532), composed by Stockhamer in 1551/2 (ed. pr. 1556; 14 editions). Enenkel argues that Stockhamer is in fact the inventor of the genre of the *scholarly emblem commentary*, an achievement usually ascribed to Claude Mignault (ed. pr. 1571). Enenkel analyses the nature and scope of the commentator's scholarship: it turns out that Stockhamer was well acquainted with a number of key works of modern humanism: by Lorenzo Valla, Pomponio Leto, Raffaele Maffei, Marcantonio Sabellico, Andrea Domenico Fiocchi, Niccolò Perrotti, Pietro Crinito, Niccolò Leonico Tomeo, Guillaume Budé, Andrea Alciato and Desiderius Erasmus among others; when commenting, he used them frequently as works of reference. By close analysis of Stockhamer's method of commenting, it is shown that he not only invented the scholarly emblem commentary but also the genre of the emblem commentary as encyclopaedic compendium. Indeed, his work constitutes an encyclopaedic collection of knowledge. Moreover, Stockhamer's emblem commentary sheds light on the humanist culture of Coimbra, the intellectual environment in which it was composed. It bears witness to the intense interest in emblematics to be found in Portugal at such an early stage (1540-1560), and additionally, demonstrates that many key works of Italian and international humanism were by then present in Portuguese private libraries, especially those of scholars working in Coimbra.

Jens Baumgarten analyses the role Portuguese theologians played in the post-Tridentine debate on images, focussing on the archbishop of Braga, the Dominican Bartholomew of Braga (Bartholomeus a Martyribus, 1514-1590), and on the Jesuit António Vieira (1608-1697). The use of images not only played a crucial role in the debates with the Protestants, but also in missionary politics, especially of Spain and Portugal. Bartholomew of Braga, who himself participated in the Council of Trent, of course defended, like many of his Italian colleagues, the veneration of images. According to Baumgarten, Portuguese theologians such as Bartholomew of Braga did more than merely assimilate Italian post-Tridentine conceptions of the use of images; they actually deepened them in a remarkable way by amalgamating current doctrine and anti-Protestant polemic with missionary discourses.

Noël Golvers assesses three major "private" book collections of Portuguese bishops who worked in China in the 17th (Diogo Valente in Macau) and 18th centuries (Polycarpo de Souza and Alexander de Gouveia, both in Peking). With regard to the circulation of Western books in China, Portugal holds a particularly important position as the basis of the '*padroado*' and the logistical platform for the Jesuit mission to the Far East. In a broader sense, Golver's paper demonstrates that Portuguese readers in China were open to the international book market, and elucidates some important aspects of the role Portugal played in the cultural and scientific exchanges between Europe and China.

Liam Brockey examines the wide, in fact global, network of correspondents maintained by Manuel Severim de Faria (1584-1655), a churchman and polymath who worked in Évora. Brockey investigates the tension between the stasis of the protagonist's life in a landlocked provincial city and the far horizons of his intellectual contacts. Thanks to the presence of a university run by the Society of Jesus, Faria acted as patron to a host of men who would seek careers as missionaries in the lands belonging or adjacent to the Portuguese Empire. Brockey examines the types of information that Faria exchanged with his compatriots around the globe, surveying his range of interests and the exotic character of the objects that he accumulated for his personal collection. Like other European savants whose communications on matters cultural, scientific or intellectual contributed to the Republic of Letters, Severim de Faria had his own republic - albeit one that mirrors the far-flung

commitments of contemporary Portugal – and thus an imperial republic. The contribution concludes with a sustained reflection on how Faria put his network to use in the cause of empire. It asks how patterns of sociability and correspondence contributed to building a recognisable framework for the re-establishment of the Empire after Portugal regained its independence in 1640.

The second section deals with the production of Portuguese literature in the framework of the international Republic of Letters. Thomas Earle focuses on António Ferreira's verse tragedy *Castro*. Written in the 1550's, while the author was a student at the University of Coimbra, it is the only vernacular tragedy to have come down to us from 16th-century Portugal. Earle analyses the many structural and linguistic parallels between *Castro* and the tragedies of Seneca, while also pointing out their differences. The author argues that even though *Castro* can be considered a *unicum* in Portuguese theatre of the 16th-century, both formally and in its content, the text contains a dense web of allusions both to ancient Roman and contemporary literary sources. Diogo de Teive's Latin tragedy *Iohannes Princeps*, for instance, has long been cited as one of Ferreira's sources. Earle also calls attention to differences between the two authors: Teive's tragedy conformed to the new ecclesiastical moralism connected to the Jesuit drama, which became the dominant mode of serious drama in Portugal from the late 1550's onwards, whereas in *Castro* – which also seems to dialogue with contemporary Neo-Latin tragedies such as Buchanan's *Jephtes* – there is room for doubt. Ferreira's choruses deal with the great issues of tragedy in an open-ended, undogmatic way, because the assertions of the first part of the double choruses are always contradicted by the second. No resolution of the contradictions is offered, and the effect of the choruses is to leave doubt in the audience's mind about the issues raised. In this sense, Ferreira's play can be seen as one of the last products of Portuguese humanism.

Tobias Leuker and Alejandra Guzmán investigate the work of the Portuguese humanist Aquiles Estação (1524-1581). Estação lived in Paris and Louvain before he moved to Padua and then to Rome, where he worked under papal protection. In Louvain he was well acquainted with humanistic philologists such as Stephanus Pighius and Martinus Smetius; in Italy, he participated in the scholarly networks of leading humanists such as the antiquarians Pirro Ligorio, Ottavio Pantagato, Fulvio Orsini, Onofrio Panvinio and Antonio Agustín. Estação developed his scholarly works by engaging with the discourses of these leading antiquarians. In his writings he also drew on the rich collections of members of the Roman aristocracy and high members of the Papal Curia – men such as Cardinal Alessandro Farnese, Raffaele Maffei, Cardinal Rudolfo Pio da Carpi, Cardinal Francesco Maria del Monte (Madama) or Cardinal Pier Donato Cesi – as well as on the continuous stream of information from archeological findings and excavations. Guzmán focuses on the antiquarian aspect of Estação's production, in particular his interest in Roman epigraphy. Not only through his published works, but even more by reference to his manuscript annotations, preserved in the Biblioteca Vallicelliana in Rome, it is possible to understand the genesis of Estação's works in the framework of his scholarly exchanges with the leading humanists of his day. Tobias Leuker analyses Estação's Neo-Latin poetry, especially his *Sylvae aliquot* (1549). **He demonstrates that Estação is one of the most remarkable early modern imitators of Statius. Estação's poems testify to his creativity - he re-discovered the *Silvae* as a genre for religious poetry - and to his profound knowledge of Statius' works.**

The contributors to the third and last section, Onésimo Almeida, Cristóvão Marinheiro, Marília dos Santos Lopes, and Guiseppe Marcocci, mainly elaborate on the role the discoveries played in the production of knowledge. Almeida focuses on the expression

“experience is the mother of things”, which is almost emblematic for the rise of the new “scientific” mentality that gained ground as the Portuguese maritime discoveries unfolded. The writings of humanists and scientists such as Duarte Pacheco Pereira (ca.1455-ca.1530), João de Castro (1500-ca.1548), Pedro Nunes (1502-1578), Garcia d’Orta (1490-ca.1570), and Fernando Oliveira (ca.1507-ca.1585) reflect a deep awareness of the crucial importance of experience in the cognitive process. Experience even replaced the authority of Aristotle’s works as the fundamental criterion of truth. Experience was a *leitmotif* in their writings, in which they tried to make sense of the new discoveries.

Marinheiro analyses the last two chapters of book II of the commentary on *De Coelo* by Manuel de Góis S.J. (1545-1597), edited in 1593, working out what knowledge the Jesuits had of geographical discoveries some hundred years after Columbus’ first expedition. Since the modern scientific *imago mundi* had not been promulgated, they were caught between the contradictory conjectures of the church fathers and the new data coming from overseas about the antipodes, the Torrid Zone, the circumference of the earth and the Americas. Their attempts to resolve these contradictions, according to Marinheiro, clearly show the absence of the antagonistic historiographic concepts “modern” and “scholastic”. In order to understand the status of mathematical studies within the University of Coimbra, the author analyses the correspondence of the Jesuits of Coimbra between 1562 and 1606, as well as the relations they maintained with Pedro Nunes (1502-1578) and Christophorus Clavius (1538-1612).

Marília Dos Santos Lopez focuses on three moments of an intensive cultural and intellectual exchange between Germany and Portugal: firstly, she examines personalities travelling from one country to the other (Valentim Fernandes or Hieronymus Münzer on the one hand, Damião de Góis on the other); secondly, she analyses the discursive migration of texts from Lusitania to Germany (by the means of translation); and, finally, she reconstructs the extended intellectual discussion those texts caused in Germany during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Portuguese navigation proved to be the starting point of a new scientific approach in which contemporary experience met ancient authority, as shown by the work of Garcia d’Orta and others. In the last contribution Guiseppe Marcocci focuses on Prester John, a major figure on the Portuguese mythological horizon since the mid-fifteenth century. He points out that in spite of his importance, he is not mentioned in Luis de Camões’ *Lusíadas* (1572), and nor does Camões give any space to Ethiopia, the land believed to host Prester John’s legendary Christian kingdom. This omission, as Marcocci argues, is an outstanding example of the fluctuation of Ethiopia’s image as part of the symbolic code that in Renaissance Portugal expressed aspirations and dreams, anxieties and concerns linked to the project of imperial expansion. Through a comparative analysis of the use of the Ethiopian myth by European humanists, the author reconstructs contrasting views of the Portuguese empire (its administration, wars, efforts at evangelisation, trade and encounters with non-European populations, including Eastern Christians); the image of Ethiopia works in this sense as a prism of tensions in the realm of imperial culture.

The editors are well aware that at the present stage of research it is totally impossible to tell the whole story of the relationship between Portuguese intellectuals and the international Republic of Letters. The material is so vast that it would require the life-long efforts of many scholars to study and interpret. The libraries of Oxford alone contain more than a thousand works written by Portuguese intellectuals, which have hitherto not been sufficiently studied. As a consequence, this volume purports to be indicative rather than conclusive. But this drawback may also have a stimulating effect. The editors wholeheartedly hope that the volume may focus the attention of more scholars on Portuguese Humanism,

inspire them to explore some of the puzzles it poses and to enter bravely into those expanses of Portugal's intellectual landscape that remain unexplored.

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