

## Images of Portugal Between Prestage's Lines: the Translations of Eça de Queirós's *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto*<sup>1</sup>

Sara Lepori  
Mestranda/FCSH

### Introduction

**A**rt is image. From novels to paintings, everything is constructed by images. Each of them carries a certain meaning and observers need to be able to interpret them. As a form of Art, translations are also built with the same system of images but here interpretation is tricky. We are confronted by two meanings, that of the image itself and the one brought into existence by the translator. Translations are never 'neutral', they have a wide range of implicit meanings that the reader must be able to interpret. One captures the 'source culture' which emanates from every translation. Every time something is translated, an image of the 'source culture' is conveyed.

At the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century Edgar Prestage (1869-1951) decided to translate some of the works of the Portuguese author Eça de Queirós (1845-1900). The two men differed not only as regards nationality but also as individuals, and professed contrasting ideas about life, shared different values and distinct approaches to Art. Nevertheless, Prestage decided to translate the Portuguese writer.

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1. This paper was partially produced during the seminar "Cruzamentos Culturais Luso-Britânicos/Anglo-Portuguese Cultural Crossings" under the supervision of Professor Gabriela Gândara Terenas.

Why did he do this? Why did he choose to translate him? What did he really want to say? What image of Portugal did he try to convey? In this essay I will try to answer these questions by analyzing Prestage's translations of Eça de Queirós' *O Suave Milagre* (1907) and *O Defunto* (1902).

In the first part of the article, I will explore the role of images in literature through the concept of Imagology. Taking this as my point of departure, I will investigate how the images of a 'source culture' are conveyed by a translation and how this process implies the (de) construction or reinforcement of national stereotypes. In the second part of my analysis, I will focus on the relationship between Edgar Prestage and Eça de Queirós, basing my considerations on the following question: "Why did Prestage decide to translate Eça?" In the final part, I will try to show what images of Portugal Prestage is depicting and conveying in his translation of *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto*.

## 1. Stereotyping a Nation Through Translation?

Every day, we are constantly 'bombarded' by images. From newspapers to the radio and the television, we are continuously subjected to their reception. Images have a powerful impact and they are often ambiguous. The majority of the images which are constructed and broadcasted are received by readers/viewers, such as ourselves, without our knowing what is going on, without recognition or the (unconscious) mediation of our minds. For these reasons, the image is a powerful tool, more powerful than one might expect.

As Manfred Beller and Joseph Theodoor Leerssen remind us in *Imagology: the Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters* (2007) the power of the image and the relation between image and perception has been a field of study since the beginning of philosophical thinking. From Plato and Aristotle, the question "What is an image?" has always been present in Western philosophy and a fully satisfying answer to this question has not yet been found. The idea of the image also raises further questions: "Are

we sure that we see what we think we see? Are our opinions about other people true? And what do we know about the way we see ourselves?" (Beller and Leerssen: 4)

All these questions are related to the concept of the Self and the Other, both of which are constructed through images with the aim of defining the unknown Other. What is unknown is dangerous, it frightens one because it is different from ourselves (or 'oneself'). The image is an efficient way to dominate the Other. In fact, once the image has been constructed and the Other has been characterized, we can control and dominate it.

Contact with different cultures has always been ethnocentric, and based on the idea that our own culture is better than others. Anything that deviates from familiar patterns or values is 'othered' as anomalous, mistaken or bizarre. Such ethnocentric categorization of different cultures influences the way the nations are perceived, by representing their specific peculiarities and characters. This process contributes towards the creation of national stereotypes.

An example of how the Other is defined through stereotypes is the Orientalization of the East by the Western world, as defined by the critic Edward Said in his book *Orientalism*. During the process of defining the unknown Orient (the Other, in this case), the Western world, the 'I', has contrived to construct a faulty, stereotypical image of the East, through the work of its artists (painters, writers, travelers, etc). This representation of the Orient is a powerful distorting force, "a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between the Orient and (most of the time) the Occident". (Said: 55) What is even more serious is that this stereotyped representation of the Orient is accepted and interiorized by the West and turned into reality. An entire territory and population have become an amalgam of pre-constructed images.

Nowadays, two of the central figures in Imagology Studies are Manfred Beller and Joseph Theodoor Leerssen, whose field of research examines the relationship between nationalism and national stereotyping. In *Imagology: the Cultural Construction and Literary Representation of National Characters*, their aim is to develop a critical

analysis of national-stereotype literature, particularly in Europe. As Manfred Beller writes, the word “imagology” is a neologism to explain the study of our mental images of the ‘Other’ and the ‘I’. It is a process that leads us, as readers, to the deconstruction and to the critical analysis of the rhetoric of national images in a literary work. Quoting Beller, imagology is “the critical analysis of [the] national stereotype in literature”. (17)

The use of stereotypes to represent a foreign country is not something new. If one analyzes the history of literature one can see that stereotyped images have always been present. For example, the earliest classical poems used *topoi*, which were nothing more than *clichés*, to depict the characteristics of a country or people. In writing, national characterization is linked to the subjectivity of the writer and not to his empirical approach to reality. In the reception and the analysis of a work, we cannot ‘filter’ or ignore such subjectivity. The imagologist is interested in images which characterize the ‘Other’, a foreign nation in this case, and the ‘Self’, here our cultural identity. One is constructed by contrast with the Other and the process is dialogic: at the same time as the foreign identity is defined by images, the local one is also suggested.

From 1970’s, imagologists focussed their attention on the representation of national characters in literary works. But what does “literary works” actually mean? Travel books, novels, poems? And what about translations? Do they work like the former in the creation of stereotyped images? At the same time, a new approach to translation was developed, known as *Translation Studies*, which, as André Lefevere<sup>2</sup> writes, deals with “the problems raised by the production and description of translations”. (*apud* Bassnett, *Translation Studies*: 19) In the introduction to her book, *Translation Studies*, Susan Bassnett argues that people tend to simplify translations. Translations are

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2. André Lefevere’s theory on Translation Studies is based on the idea of “rewriting”. Any text produced on the base of another has the aim of adapting that other text to a certain ideology. He was among the critics who did most to help Translation Studies become an independent discipline and field of research.

understood as a transposition of a source language text (SL) into a target language text (TL), so that both remain as similar as possible. As Bassnett said during an interview:

For people, translation appears to be something technical. I have always held to the view posed by Edward Sapir that different languages represent different world views, that is not simply a question of rephrasing when one moves into another language but reformulating that is rethinking. (...) when we come to translation of literary texts this is not a skill. Here translation is effectively rewriting." (Bahrawi, 2010)<sup>3</sup>

In Translation Studies, translations are no longer perceived as a mechanical process based on the principle of similarity between SL texts and TL texts. Nowadays, they are studied as creative and "original" literary works in which translators are re-writing a source text and they are – explicitly or not – changing it into something different.

In *Interconnecting Translation Studies and Imagology*, Luc van Doorslaer, Peter Flynn and Joep Leerssen explain that translations play an important role in Image Studies. Choosing to translate one work rather than another, or *this* author rather than *that* one, is the first step towards the creation of a national character. This "choice of translation" is a "choice of images" and it can lead to a distortion of an image of a country and its culture. Moreover, a translator may change the basic text, by rewriting and filtering it to make it correspond to the expectations of the target culture.

Translations tend to conform to the mental images that a target culture already has with regard to a source culture. For example, the

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3. Susan Bassnett, as her interviewer Nazry Bahrawi explains, is the "Queen" of Translation Studies. Her masterpiece is called *Translation Studies* (2002) and it has become the "Bible" for translation courses. During the interview, he asks her about the "future" of Translation Studies:

You ask me now to gaze into a crystal ball. There is no question that translation is now hugely important as a global enterprise (...). This is due to the movement of peoples in greater numbers than ever before around the globe (...). The vital role of translation in the propagation of world literature will continue to be high lightened. What I would hope not will happen is that translation as an applied science will be completely cut off from the aesthetic. (Bahrawi, 2010)

decision to translate into English *A Thousand and One Nights*, with its stories of magic, eroticism and abandon, obviously reinforced the “Orientalization of the East” for eighteenth-century English readers. Another example, as Emer O’ Sullivan explains in *Englishness in German Translation of Alice in Wonderland*, is the translation of *Alice in Wonderland* into German. She shows how translators have dealt with the same image of English eccentricity and English humor in different ways over time, reinforcing or weakening it.

As Lawrence Venuti explains in the chapter entitled “The Formation of Cultural Identities” in his book *The Scandals of Translation. Towards an Ethics of Difference*, translations exercise an enormous influence in the formation of cultural identities and in the representation of foreign cultures. The choice of a text and the way it is translated work together in the construction of an image of a foreign culture – the Other. Translations help to reinforce or to destroy the existing culture and its social representations, becoming an instrument for creating or re-creating national stereotypes. (67-88) During an interview entitled “The PEN Ten with Lawrence Venuti”, by Lauren Cerard, the critic defines the role of the translator in the following words: “What is the responsibility of the translator? Constantly to make the receiving culture mindful of what it lacks”. Translations are the result of a comparison between two different cultures.<sup>4</sup> Through translated literature, new realities and values are introduced into a foreign literary system and consequently into its culture.

In *Translation as Blockage, Propagation and Recreation of Ethnic Images?* the author, Roca Dimitriu, underlines the importance of translations in national images. The translator selects what to export or not in the receiving culture and, through his/her translation, images and ethnic stereotypes import one culture to another. Often the translations are not just linked with stereotypes but also with the propaganda of an ideology. Dimitriu gives the example of Communist propaganda.

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4. Lawrence Venuti interview was made in 2014 by Lauren Cerard for the series Pen ten. She asked ten questions to ten different authors about their own ideas on literature.

Russian translators, wanting to support Communist ideology in their own country, chose to translate foreign texts which spoke positively about it. Seen from this perspective, translation is not an isolated activity. It is not something neutral, but must be viewed as an instrument of cultural enrichment. Translation is not merely a bridge between two or more different cultures, it has a specific purpose.

Through the choice of the work to be translated and the goals/guidelines of the translation activity, the translator gives a certain image of a foreign culture and he/she shapes the way in which a culture is perceived. As André Lefevere explains in the preface of the book *Translation, Rewriting and the Manipulation of Literary Fame*, the original text is not chosen by chance but for a certain purpose and the guidelines for its translation are defined to serve this purpose. In Lefevere's opinion the translation is "the adaptation of a work of literature to a different audience, with the intention of influencing the way in which that audience reads the work". (1-12) Lefevere develops the idea of translation as a form of "re-writing". It means that any text produced on the basis of another, has the aim to adapt a text to a certain ideology or intention. Translations become instruments for manipulating the perception of a foreign culture.

For example, it was not a coincidence that *Os Maias* was translated into English only in 1965. The author of the book, Eça de Queirós, was a member of the *Geração de 70*. The book underlines the social decay of Portugal during the fall of the monarchy, the underdevelopment of Portuguese culture and the necessity of a political change. It was not by chance that the English translation was carried out during the *Estado Novo*, by a translator who was part of the anti-dictatorship movement, Patricia McGowan Pinheiro. It is obvious that such a translation is done to show the need for political change, and to display in England and in Europe the image of a Portugal on the edge of the abyss. The translator is also using the book of Eça de Queirós to demonstrate the disillusionment of a young generation towards a political system. The image of Portugal's decay in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century is used by the translator to stress the need for change in contemporary Portugal.

As shown above, translation is a form of rewriting with the specific aim of giving a certain image of a foreign culture and reinforcing national stereotypes. The translation of a literary work goes well beyond the literary aim of the original text. The choices made depend on ideological leanings, on the political situation of the country and also on the stereotypes preserved by the two cultures – at the source and the receiving end. In such a context, literally translators are not just delivering or passing on messages from one culture to another. In a more or less explicit way, they take part in the creation and reinforcement of national stereotypes and, above all, they play an important role in the definition of the relationship between two cultures.

As critical readers, one has to approach translation in a critical way. We have to ask a whole series of questions, as Luis Jolicoeur writes in an article entitled “Literary Translation and Cultural Dissemination: Between Aesthetics and Politics”:

Among the authors of a given culture, which ones are translated? Who translates and publishes these authors? Who are the readers for whom these translations are made? How are these authors translated? (2008)<sup>5</sup>

Every translation depicts an image of a foreign country and it is up to us, as readers, to understand what that image really means.

## 2. Edgar Prestage and His “Special Relationship” With Eça de Queirós

O inglês cai sobre as ideias e as maneiras dos outros como uma massa de granito na água: e ali fica pesando, com a sua Bíblia, os seus clubes, os seus sports, os seus prejuízos, a sua etiqueta, o seu egoísmo – fazendo na circulação da vida alheia um incomodativo tropeço. É por isso que nos

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5. <http://attlc-ltac.org/literary-translation-and-cultural-dissemination-between-aesthetics-and-politics>.



países onde vive há séculos é ele ainda o estrangeiro.  
(Eça de Queirós, "Os Ingleses no Egipto": 160)

In the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Edgar Prestage was one of the leading figures of English lusophilia. Demonstrating a fascination for Portugal from childhood, he used to draw maps of Portugal at primary school, and Vasco da Gama was his personal hero. As John Laidlar writes in 1980 in his article "Edgar Prestage: Manchester's Portuguese Pioneer," during his first visit to Portugal Prestage shocked the head teacher of the English Seminary in Lisbon, Reverend James Warwick, with his deep knowledge of Portuguese literature. The Reverend said that before meeting Prestage "he had not come across a single non-Portuguese who took the slightest interest in any but Camoes". (74)

Together with Aubrey Bell, Edgar Prestage was one of the pioneers in the dissemination and promotion of Portuguese literature, culture and history in England. More specifically, it was due to Prestage that Portuguese studies were institutionalized as a discipline in English universities. He was a monarchist who saw in the Portuguese Republican Party and – later on – in the Portuguese Republic an enemy that needed to be defeated. His interest in the translations of Portuguese authors can be understood from his own words in a letter addressed to Teófilo Braga: "My ambition in life has been and is, to make the greater writers of Portugal known to Englishmen". (*apud* Vilhena, 1988: 252)<sup>6</sup>

In addition to the genuine enthusiasm and fascination which from the beginning characterized Prestage's relationship with the world of Portuguese literature, three other main factors need to be taken into consideration when approaching Prestage's translations. First of all, his strong Catholic faith which influenced both

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6. Part of the correspondence between Eça de Queiros and Teófilo Braga is recollected in *Relações de Edgar Prestage com Escritores Açorianos* written by Maria Conceição Vilhena. This is a letter of 12 September 1893, but the friendship between the two Portuguese authors started early. They met each other as students in the University of Coimbra and both of them were part of the "Geração de 70".

his perspective and choice in his literary translations; secondly, his network of friendships and working relationships, such as his friendship with the exiled King D. Manuel II; and finally, Prestage's British perspective in his studies of Portuguese history and culture which meant that he always preserved a hierarchical relationship between the two cultures.

Edgar Prestage's attraction for Portugal was probably as strong as Eça de Queirós's "repulsion" for England. A journalist, short-story and travel writer, José Maria Eça de Queirós was, first and foremost a novelist, becoming one of the principal figures of Portuguese literature, and pioneer of Portuguese Realism. As a diplomat he spent half his life away from Portugal, first in England then in France. As Américo Guerreiro de Sousa explains in his essay, "Eça de Queirós e a Inglaterra – uma Relação Ambivalente", Eça's relationship with the United Kingdom and its people was rather ambiguous. On the one hand in his literary works, he idealized England as a model of civilization, on the other, in his private correspondence, he considered the British people ignorant and xenophobic, who spoke no foreign language and rejected everything that could not be considered 'English'. As he wrote in *Os Ingleses no Egipto*,

Estranha gente, para quem é fora de dúvida que ninguém pode ser moral sem ler a Bíblia, ser forte sem jogar o críquete e ser gentleman sem ser inglês! E é isto que os torna detestados. Nunca se fundem, nunca se des-inglesam. (159-160)

Eça de Queirós reveals here his ambivalent feeling towards England. As Guerreiro de Sousa explains, the Portuguese author appreciates the strength and power of Britain as a nation but he disapproves of the way the British treat their colonies and what he sees as their "ridiculous" behavior.

Eça reveals a similar attitude both to his own country and its religion. In fact during his life, he embraced Catholic values, but in several of his writings he criticizes the behavior of the Church. His

attitude is also ambivalent with regard to Portugal. He loves his own country but at the same time he can be really critical about it. He denounces the decay of Portuguese society at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, satirizing it and pointing out the need for political change: "Portugal doesn't need reform Cohen! What Portugal needs is a Spanish invasion!" (Queirós, *Os Maias*: 120)

Edgar Prestage and Eça de Queirós are very different characters; the former is a devoted Catholic, the latter criticizes the Church; one is passionate about Portugal, the other hates England; one is a monarchist, the other is democratic. So the question is: why does Prestage decide to translate the Portuguese author's works? What is this "special relationship" which links the two writers?

We have already seen that Edgar Prestage's declared aim was to reveal the best of Portuguese literature to England. Why Eça de Queirós? Prestage's words, in the preface to *The Sweet Miracle*, show how important the Portuguese author is for him:

Eça de Queirós is undoubtedly Portugal greatest prose-writer of the last half of the nineteenth century. He is known to us mainly by that splendid romance *Cousin Basil*, but the correspondence of Fradique Mendes reveals a versatility of talent in this humorist and critique of life which even the greatest novelists have lacked. (3)

According to Prestage, the problem is that the British translate very little of the best of foreign literature:

I would say that only a lack of acquaintance with the literature – excusable enough, seeing that it is written in a little known language, that translations are lacking, and that no modern account of it exists in English – can explain why men like Gil Vicente (...) and Eça de Queirós (*inter alios*) have failed to receive the honor they deserve and actually enjoy outside England. (*Portuguese Literature*: 9)

The disregard for Portuguese literature among the British was instrumental in Prestage's decision to promote its dissemination in

England and to pursue the career of translator. From the outset Prestage had a high opinion of Eça de Queirós, considering him the most original and powerful of all Portuguese authors. Prestage was fascinated by the stylistic features of Eça, as Abdoull Vakil argues in an essay entitled "Edgar Prestage and Eça de Queirós". In fact, Prestage's correspondence reveals that he thought that the Portuguese novelist was unrivalled in European literature, especially in the creation of characters. Indeed, with his profound, first-hand knowledge of the Portuguese society of the day, Eça was able to portray all social types from the aristocrat to the beggar. Yet another of Eça de Queirós's characteristics which "enchanted" Prestage was his Celticism and the mystical *allure* of his works.

From 1904 to 1908, Prestage published four translations of Queirós's work – the most numerous selection of any author he translated. These were two stories, *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto*, a version of the "Carta VIII" from *Correspondência de Fradique Mendes* and "As Festas da Criança" from the eleventh letter of *Cartas de Inglaterra*. The last two were published as articles in a newspaper.

The relationship between the two writers was, however, somewhat ambiguous. Although Prestage was fascinated by the Portuguese author and considered him as one of Portugal's most important writers, as worthy of translation, he did not have the same "attitude" towards all of his works. It was Prestage's Catholic faith which influenced his approach to the works of Eça de Queirós. As Teresa Pinto Coelho explains in her essay "Eça de Queirós and Edgar Prestage", in 1886 Prestage and his mother converted to Catholicism. This was a turning point in his life and, subsequently, for his career. From that moment on, his religious feeling became stronger, and influenced his future choices in the literary field.

This is most probably the reason why he chose to translate only some of Eça's works, those which in his view represented both Christian values and morality and could become a manifesto for Catholicism. In fact Prestage was critical of the dubious Christian morality displayed by Eça de Queirós in certain novels and did not consider

them as suitable for translation, as he explained in a letter to his friend Batalha Reis:<sup>7</sup>

Of course 'O Primo Basilio' is greatly superior as a work of art, but it could not be translated in its entirety, and I should not care to act as a censor, and cut out passages here and there. At any rate, I am convinced that no English publisher would dare to issue a full version of it. The same may be said for 'A Relíquia' (...). (*Apud* Coelho: 241)

What is interesting is that, in some cases, although Prestage considered that certain of Eça de Queirós's novels raised moral and religious problems and they could not be translated into English, he did not fail to express his admiration for them, as he said in another letter addressed to Batalha Reis (24 April 1895), referring to *A Relíquia*:

I enjoy it immensely, as a work of art, but how could I as a conscientious Catholic affix my name to an English version. Fancy the scandal (...) There is a great deal of silliness and hypocrisy about the English frame of mind (...). If a Protestant or Agnostic, I would translate the works of Queirós word for word. (*Apud* Coelho: 243)

From these words it can be seen that Prestage's inhibitions regarding the translation of certain of Eça de Queirós's writing, was not only due to his strong Catholic morality but also to his particular notion of England (his country). In fact, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Great Britain was going through a period in which the illusion of being an unrivalled European power was slowly crumbling whilst at the same time the prosperity and 'well-being' linked to the industrial revolution was waning. In this environment, the most conservative faction of the Catholic Church gained strength and predominance until the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. Against this social

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7. Teresa Pinto Coelho comments on the correspondence between Edgar Prestage and Batalha Reis in her article "Eça de Queirós e Edgar Prestage".

background, literary works of dubious morality were unwelcome and might have led to opposition and protest.

As Vakil suggests in his essay, to gain a better understanding of the ambiguity of the love-hate relationship between Prestage and Eça de Queirós, one must refer to an article published in 1918, entitled in *In Memoriam* of Eça de Queirós.<sup>8</sup> From the very beginning of the article, Prestage reveals his fundamentalist religious nature, criticizing the 'philia' that Portugal and, more specifically, Eça de Queirós, feel for France: "the influence of France over Portugal has been anti-moral and anti-national whether in the sphere of politics or in that of letters (...) Portugal has lived in almost unrest, and has of late been on the verge of anarchy". (109)

Obviously, one must also take into account the year in which the article was written, 1918. In this period, Anglo-Portuguese relations were tense due to both the birth of the Portuguese Republic and the law of separation between the Portuguese State and Church. This situation severely tested the monarchist and conservative Prestage. The English translator tells of an immoral and anarchistic Portugal in which "the generation to which Eça de Queirós belonged (...) prided itself on its Liberalism in politics and not strict in morals". (110) Prestage describes Eça de Queirós as a precursor of free thought and moral freedom. In his view, the Portuguese writer's early works reflect such intolerable licentiousness and likens them to "poison" for the English mind:

Works that have to be considered as 'for men only' stand self-condemned, for there are not two standards of morality one for each sex. After all we are strangely illogical; the law in most countries forbids the sale of certain poisons without a doctor's certificate, yet it allows a wide margin to publishers of noxious books and prints, though the mind is superior to and more deserving of protection than the body. (112)

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8. All references to the article written about Eça de Queirós by Edgar Prestage (1918) are from the book *In Memoriam*, edited by Eloi do Amaral and Marta Cardoso.

Towards the end of the article, Prestage goes from a critical and detached approach to the works of Queirós, to a more positive one. He makes a list of 'legitimate' works, those written at a more mature stage of Eça's career. According to Prestage, the author's more 'moral' works are the only ones which are worth translating and would be successful in England.

From this analysis, one can see that the relationship between Edgar Prestage and Eça de Queirós is both special and ambiguous at the same time. It is special because Prestage never misses the opportunity to emphasize Eça's greatness and the importance of his works for Portuguese and British literature. But it is also ambiguous because his esteem for the Portuguese author is balanced by his critical attitude towards the absence of Christian morality in Eça's works or, in certain cases, Eça's satirical attitude towards it.

### 3. Portugal or not?: Images of the Country in Prestage's Translations of Eça de Queirós

Erasmus was wont to affirm that, in his studies, he had not found anything more arduous than translation, nor a thing worthy of greater praise, if well done, nor of greater blame, if ill done.

(Damião de Goes, Translation of Cicero's *De Senectute*, 1538, "Introduction")<sup>9</sup>

Every translation carries images and such images have meanings. As we have already seen in part one, translations are never neutral and have a specific aim and purpose. Edgar Prestage's translations of Eça de Queirós's *The Sweet Miracle* and *Our lady of the Pilar* are no exception to this rule.

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9. The dedication of Goes's version of Cicerone's *De Senectute* was quoted by Edgar Prestage in the preface of *Our Lady of the Pillar*, the translation of Eça de Queiros's *O Defunto*.

Two images of Portugal emerge from these translations: Portugal as a Catholic country and Portugal as a Monarchy. The first translation of *O Suave Milagre* appeared in England in 1904 and was an immediate success. What is remarkable from Prestage's translation is its accuracy to the structure of the original version. This loyalty is apparent, because what characterizes the translation is a certain domestication or "Englishing" of the text and, above all, a Catholicization. Compared to the original work, in the translation religious values are highlighted. While the original version of *Eça de Queirós* expresses the purest and most 'direct' form of religion, in the English translation this simplicity is lost. The enthusiastic response of the British public increased the religious and moral image represented in *The Sweet Miracle*. As Teresa Pinto Coelho argues, in her essay, in subsequent editions the religious image in the translation was strengthened. One edition is of particular importance, a dramatized version of the work which has been transformed in a mystery play, with a foreword by the Bishop of Salford:

it may be questioned whether we make sufficient use of dramatic composition of this kind for the purpose of edification and instruction (...). In any such revival of the medieval religious stage, the following dramatization of *Eça de Queirós's* exquisite legend ought to play an important part. (*Apud* Coelho: 240)

In this edition of *The Sweet Miracle*, the work is compared to a medieval miracle play. During the Middle Ages, the purpose of such plays was to educate and convert people to Catholic values. A comparison with the translation of *O Suave Milagre* reveals how *Eça's* story has been turned into a pedagogical text whose purpose is to educate in Catholicism. The same religious image is conveyed by Edgar Prestage's other translation, *Our Lady of the Pillar* which was published in 1908.

In the prefatory note of *The Sweet Miracle*, Edgar Prestage raises the possibility that its success would lead to the publication of other of *Eça de Queirós's* works: "other short stories of *Eça de Queiroz* will



follow, if the reception of the present one be favorable". (10) The fact is that only *O Defunto* was brought to the attention of the public by Prestage's hand.

The style and genre are completely different from that of *O Suave Milagre*, but the choice of the title, *Our Lady of the Pillar* is, nonetheless, revealing and it denotes the same religious sensitivity that had led to the translation of other Eça's works. In the Portuguese version of the work, the title is *O Defunto*. The change of the title is not a trivial matter. In fact, it has a very important function in the reception of a work, because it is the first thing that the reader encounters in a book and it is what immediately sets his or her horizon of expectations.

From the opening page of Eça de Queirós's original version, the mind of the reader is directed, through its title, towards the dead or the deceased, and consequently his horizon of expectations is that of a horror story, as was the Portuguese author's intention. In the English version, with its title *Our Lady of the Pillar*, the work takes on a completely different perspective. Thanks to new title, the reader's horizons of expectation are no longer linked to the concepts of death and horror, but to that of religion. The title "Our Lady of the Pillar" immediately invokes in the reader's mind the image of the Virgin Mary, directing his/her expectations towards something to do with Catholicism, faith and religion. From this analysis, it is clear that even in this translation, Prestage wanted to imbue his work with a more religious meaning than the original version, linking Portugal once again to an image of a strongly religious and Catholic nation.

*Our Lady of the Pillar* did not meet with the same public success as the first translation, *The Sweet Miracle*, but received substantially positive reviews. Prestage, himself, provides information on the reception of his translation. In the already-quoted article *In Memoriam*, the English author relates the opinions of certain critics, for example a review in the *St. James Gazette*. The reviewer considers *Our Lady of the Pillar* as one of the best stories he has ever read, "it is a little masterpiece of mysticism and matter-of-fact religious enthusiasm and passion in harmonious combination". (Prestage, *In Memoriam*: 112)

From this critical review, we can see that Religion is again the key to the interpretation of the work, as in *O Suave Milagre*:

In order to better understand why the religious issue as related to Portugal was so important for Prestage, it is necessary to recall what was going on in the nation around 1890, a few years before the publication of the translations. In addition to the economic crisis into which the country was plunged, there was also a religious crisis. The anti-clerical Republican Party was determined to promote a series of reforms against the Church. Obviously, such attempts were a source of grave concern to Prestage, an inflexible and ultra-conservative Catholic.

In addition to the religious issue, another question emerges from Prestage's translation: that of the Monarchy. The English translator had close connections to both the English and Portuguese aristocracy, and he maintained relations with both Royal families. Prestage was a conservative Monarchist who saw in the Crown the only legitimate form of power.

It was not by chance that, at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, he decided to translate Eça de Queirós's *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto*. The Portuguese monarchy was already entering a period of instability, mainly due to the growing influence of the Republican Party. In *Our Lady of the Pillar*, the image of a Monarchist Portugal is much more explicit for two reasons.

First of all, Prestage's dedication: "Dedicated by Permission, to her Majesty D. Amelia, Queen of Portugal", which was unequivocal and which immediately set the mind-frame of the readers. Secondly, the date when the story is set, 1474. It was the year Joana da Trastámara, "the *Beltraneja*", daughter of the King of Castile and sister to the Portuguese King, tried to gain the throne of Spain with Portugal's support. It is the period of knights and ladies, when the Monarchy, as the only form of government, reigned supreme. These more or less explicit references paint Portugal in a favourable Monarchical light, so that the decision to translate these two stories rather than others also had a propagandistic purpose.

Edgar Prestage's translation of *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto* promotes two images of Portugal, a Monarchical and a Catholic one, with two principal objectives in mind. First and foremost, he wished

to restore the country's image as a Monarchy and a Catholic power, at a time when both institutions – the Monarchy and the Church – were faltering, whilst at the same time, these texts offered him the opportunity to reinforce Christian morality in England.

## Conclusion

I can now offer an answer to the questions I put at the beginning of this essay: why did Prestage choose to translate Eça de Queirós? Why *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto*? What image of Portugal did he want to convey?

The answers to these questions are, in fact, already present in the pages of Prestage's translations, it is merely a question of close scrutiny. In his work, the English translator reinforces the depiction of Portugal as a Monarchy and a religious nation. His choice of the two short stories, *O Suave Milagre* and *O Defunto* was a considered decision; they were texts in which Catholic morality and values could not be misinterpreted.

A translator can rewrite a text, he is like a builder who dismantles a building and reconstructs it. One can do a construction that is completely loyal to the original or just change a few bricks. Prestage carefully chooses the 'bricks' with which he reconstructs Eça de Queirós's texts, moving them 'here and there'. At the end the new building seems identical to the first, but it is not. Something has been cunningly changed to achieve Prestage's purpose.

The translations of Eça de Queirós's work, besides being a religious manifesto, became the means by which Edgar Prestage tried to convey a Monarchist-Catholic image of Portugal, at a time when the nation was heading towards a political and religious revolution. Prestage understood the situation and decided to do something about it. He published two translations which reveal a Monarchist and Catholic country, reinforcing this image of Portugal in the eyes of the target culture, England. This image of the nation was not false but it was a one-sided vision. Prestage deliberately offers an incomplete

picture of the country. He tries to adapt Portugal to himself, to his own values, or possibly to what he saw as English ones.

Such concern with the depiction of this image of Portugal was perhaps due to Prestage's strong relationship with the country, which was in the process of changing into something in which he no longer felt at ease. From this point of view, these translations can be seen as a sort of 'anchor' thrown down to halt the flow of change, which, however, was unstoppable.

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