

Garrett, the Art of Prose

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In Portuguese literary prose, modernity was undoubtedly the creation of Almeida Garrett. Nevertheless, *Travels in My Homeland*, the book in which the modern style almost miraculously sprang into being, can also be viewed as the finish line both in the evolution of Portuguese Romanticism and in Garrett's literary trajectory. Examining the premises of *Travels* one by one makes it easier to understand the genesis of that nervous, enticing, infinitely ductile language, which awakened in young Ramalho Ortigão an interest in the art of writing. The peerless talent revealed early on by the author of *Camões* remains the decisive factor in this process, but it was his intense life and obsessive study that enabled him to achieve artistic plenitude.

"Who could know Portuguese without meditating deeply over the treasures of Camões, Vieira, Sousa, and Lucena?" asks Garrett in the First Letter of his *Treatise on Education*. Indeed, at the age of fifteen, he had already filled the margins of *Arte de Furtar* as well as of the works of Frei Luís de Sousa, Padre António Vieira, and Freire de Andrade with linguistic notes. In addition, the lessons from his uncle the Bishop continued to bear fruit throughout his life. Garrett's fragments for a comprehensive dictionary of the Portuguese language and another one of idioms and phraseology date from 1826, according to Gomes de Amorim's assessment of the handwriting in the manuscripts. While doggedly studying the proper national models, Garrett did not disregard Greek and Latin authors, particularly Horace, his "faithful old friend Horace," as he

would call him in Chapter XXVI of *Travels*. He would remain devoted to the discipline of the classics. Contrary to natural order (since Classicism is juvenile exuberance dominated and channeled), Garrett began as a Classicist, ventured timidly into Romanticism, and ended up as a Romantic; this allowed him to practice Romanticism in an elegant and moderate way, to be apparently spontaneous while avoiding posturing and delirium, sometimes reaching that kind of supreme art which consists of suppressing all vestiges of artfulness.

Garrett's task of rejuvenating Portuguese prose was also affected by his study of the main languages of modern culture: French, Spanish, Italian, English, and, later, German. The use of words of foreign origin—some of which escaped from his pen at times of diminished attention, while others allowed him to say what could not be said in any other way (thus increasing the potentiality of language)—was compensated for by the refinement of idiomatic richness, by freshness and agility resulting from the masterful manipulation of language, in which modulations of a new sensibility were already manifest.

Nevertheless, Garrett's experience of foreign lands, which opened up new perspectives for his spirit, did not weaken—but rather fortified—the love he felt for things Portuguese and, implicitly, his love for the Portuguese language. Condillac taught him the intimate connection between words and ideas, between words and things. Garrett knew that “he who is not well acquainted with words, will never be acquainted with things” (40), as he expressed it in his *Treatise on Education*, and that speaking Portuguese is thinking in Portuguese; he was therefore aware that a mastery of his mother tongue, with all its varieties and nuances, was an indispensable requirement for a deeper understanding of the rich reality of Portugal's physical and spiritual characteristics. He felt especially drawn toward the speech of the common people, as he was fully convinced that it is among them that the national spirit lives on unsullied and that only they know “the real Portuguese tone and spirit” (Garrett, *Introdução* n. pag.).

Already in 1825, in the *Memórias de João Coradinho*, a work whose burlesque intention led him to privilege ordinary language, Garrett adorned the dialogues among peasants with vulgarisms and mundane expressions.¹ From 1828, when *Adozinda* was published, he became increasingly interested in the Portuguese *Romanceiro*, which indicates that he was dealing more and more frequently with expressive values of popular language. In 1843, in the prologue to the second edition of *Adozinda*, he stated: “Since 1834, when the miraculously saved *Romanceiro* returned to me in Lisbon, there has not been a summer in which I have not dedicated to it some of the relaxed hours that

in this season should be spent on just such a kind of light occupation, or on nothing at all." In effect, he never forgot what he used to feel, when, as a little boy, he listened to the old housemaids telling naïvely enchanting romances filled with sober pathos. The visual, direct, abrupt style of *Travels* seems to betray the vigorous influence of oral literature.

Garrett's incursion into the theater, beginning in 1838, (i.e., after *Um auto de Gil Vicente*), also represented an important factor in his education as a prose writer. The dialogue of comedy gave him a taste for the naturalness and liveliness of colloquial language; in fact, conversation with the imaginary reader is the stylistic mode almost always adopted in *Travels*, allowing for the presence of conjectural answers and counter-answers. Garrett's style proves itself conventional in its substitution of the oral for a more or less spontaneous or carelessly written register, such as that of personal letters, for instance.

In final analysis, the subtle and diverse prose of *Travels* would not be possible (the author himself stresses this in the prologue to the second edition, following his tendency towards self-explanation and self-praise) without Garrett's multifaceted human experience as a politician, soldier, diplomat, and worldly connoisseur; it would be impossible unless he were, "above all" (and I quote his own words), "a real man of the world, who has lived with princes in the courts, with warriors in the fields, with diplomats and politicians in the office, in the parliament, in the courts of justice, in academies, with all sorts of notables from many countries—as well as in the salons with women and the frivolous people of the world, with all that is fashionable and fatuous in this century."

Garrett's intimate personal history is of equal importance for the understanding of his style. During the years that preceded *Travels*, misfortune assailed the author on more than one occasion. In 1841, Adelaide died, leaving him a daughter born out of wedlock. Garrett, however, had an unsuspected capacity for rebounding. Born under the sign of eagerness, he avidly sought all of life's pleasures and glories. In 1843, when age started to betray his body, Garrett cultivated, as never before, the youthful spirit that was bursting in his heart. In *Travels* he happily displays his easily inflamed heart, the heart he had "too much" of and that was always in thrall of female beauty. "The sole Privilege of poets is this: that they can be in love until they die [. . .]. A man who does not love, does not passionately love [. . .]. God protect me from him. Above all, let him not be a writer, for he would be a terrible bore."

There is an aesthetics of coquetry in these sentences from Chapter XI of *Travels* that identifies the art of writing with flirtation or, at least, with

sentimental vibration and erotic conquest. Prose, as Garrett intended it, was also a means of capturing attention and gaining friendship, interest, and admiration of his “fair, gentle [female] readers.”

On the other hand, *Travels* is situated at the highest point of Garrett’s intellectual evolution. As he asserts in *Autobiografia* (1843)—and I see no reason to disbelieve him—between 1833 and 1836, in Belgium, he enthusiastically studied German language and literature, and Herder, Schiller, and especially Goethe influenced him in a decisive way: “their work influenced his literary opinion, his style and everything that determines what we might call an author’s genre and way of writing, to such an extent that all his subsequent compositions, at least in our opinion, have a different form, express more vigorous thoughts, are of a more transcendent and profound nature, and are couched in a more natural, defined and truly original style.” Garrett received from the Germans not only the belief in the idea of a national spirit and an adoration for primitive and popular poetry (the most beautiful and authentic kind in their Romantic understanding), but also, very early on, Goethe’s notion of the fusion between Romanticism and Classicism, more precisely “between the deep spirituality of thought and the classically formed expression.” This fusion would become the most important hallmark of Garrett’s work, according to his *Autobiografia* of 1843. Moreover, the examples of Schiller and Goethe surely intensified and clarified Garrett’s awareness that Romanticism was essentially not a doctrine defined by its rules and commonplaces (in that sense, Garrett always declared himself anti-Romantic), but a cult of the original and an absolute affirmation of individual personality above any school, doctrine, or convention. After 1838, Garrett displays perfect maturity and euphoric confidence in his creative powers. In his 1837 article about Bellini’s *The Puritans*, published in the first issue of *O Entreacto*, we find the most passionate expression of Garrett’s adherence to Romanticism, which he called “the revolution of poetry”—“the real poetry of the soul, poetry that God had put in man’s heart.” In the same periodical, in a review of Mercandante’s *Zaira*, he bewailed the play’s lack of “originality, novelty,” of “strong ideas, energetic phrases, spirit, daring thoughts.” *Travels* tends to impart value to the individual self through its irregular and diverse style, capable of conforming to the fickle movements of the flow of subjective consciousness.² Garrett could have repeated what Rousseau, the master of egocentrism, had said in the beginning of *Confessions*: “Je prends donc mon parti sur le style comme sur les choses. Je ne m’attacherai point à le

rendre uniforme, j'aurai toujours celui qui me viendra, j'en changerai selon mon humeur, sans scrupule; je dirai chaque chose comme je la sens, comme je la vois, sans recherche, sans gêne, sans m'embarrasser de la bigarrure [. . .]. Mon style inégal et naturel, tantôt gai, fera lui-même partie de mon histoire." Lyricism, understood as the expansion or exhibition of the *self*, is the mark of the prose of *Travels*.

In this foregrounding of the individual, the irrational faculties—intuition, imagination, sensibility—are given fundamental importance. Perhaps due to his fondness for posing and for shocking the bourgeoisie, in *Travels* Garrett professes irrationalism: "I hate philosophy and I hate reason, and I sincerely believe that in such a topsy-turvy world as this, a society which is so false, an existence as absurd as this one is made by its laws, customs, institutions and conventions, to affect in words the accuracy, the logic and integrity that does not exist in things themselves, is the worst and most pernicious incoherence there is" (*Travels* 201).³ In fact, he never renounced intelligence, enlightened taste, and the good advice he had received from Horace; but he moved very far away from philosophic and academic orthodoxy. He had become convinced that intuition or "inner sense" (that "inner sense" he admired in common people) was worth more than "our presumptuous theories," which are the result of a "stunted analysis based on imperfect and insignificant material data" (217). This lively anti-rationalism became reflected in the style of *Travels*.

There is something else we should not forget: the hybrid genre of the book—chronicle, novel, marginal annotations, sometimes futile, sometimes profound—and its publication in the form of a feuilleton. As a journalist, from *O Português* and *O Cronista* to *O Entreacto*, Garrett became accustomed to both grasping the ephemeral nature of things, their "transitory, fugitive, contingent" modernity (as Baudelaire would say), and to communicating comfortably with the public.⁴ The prose of *Travels* is clearly indebted to Garrett's journalistic style. The articles published in *O Entreacto* in 1837 show how that style had already acquired an unmistakable dexterity, elegance, and dynamism. The following is a good example—a sequence of intentionally short sentences in a report on Corpus Christi Day in Lisbon, in 1837:

People were taking a nap; it is 2 p.m. The play is going to take place. We are going to the theater. The theater is in the palace. The King has his tribune, the courtiers have their own seats: the others who manage to enter have to make do with any place. There is no entrance fee, but it is very difficult to get in and even more

difficult to stay in. How fortunate is he who finds a seat! It's enough luck to last until the end of the year.

What a buzz, what great murmuring is going on here! But here comes the King and everything grows calm—that was the time when people still behaved respectfully and decently in the presence of the King. Mighty barbarians!—The play begins. Always with a prologue. It is Corpus Christi Day, therefore the play is sacramental: there must be an angel doing the prologue. (*Entreacto* no. 5)

The fragmented structure of the narrative, which today we might call cinematic, is infused with devices of oral literature, such as the nominal clause “El Rey que chega” (Here comes the king), which produces a sensation of immediacy and dramatizes the report.

Faithful to the Romantic aesthetics of spontaneity, Garrett pretends to write without premeditation, “carelessly,” “as it flows,” as he says in the prologue to the second edition of *Travels*. His intention is, obviously, to stimulate the readers’ (both male and female) admiration for the *natural* elegance and richness of his spirit. That this carelessness is actively sought and naturalness cleverly managed becomes clear in the comparison between an article from *O Entreacto* (no. 6) and part of Chapter IX of *Travels*, where the author reproduces very closely (yet another sign of the journalistic descendancy of *Travels*) what he had written earlier in his article about the theatrical work of Manuel de Figueiredo. In *O Entreacto*, for instance, Garrett talks about “an original character that lived here forty or fifty years ago”; in *Travels*, reinforcing the imprecision, he gives his style a familiar and relaxed tenor: “some fifty or sixty years ago” (58). In *O Entreacto*, after listing titles of various plays by Figueiredo, he concludes: “There are more than these, here hurriedly and impulsively indicated; there are many compositions by this prolific author, which sifted through the filter of good taste and, especially, of vivacity of style, would amount to a reasonable repertoire to make up for the dearth of material in our theatres.” In *Travels*, on the other hand, he omits the first sentence and introduces “not just these” in the second one, making the syntax more immediate, *ex abundantia cordis*, and, from the point of view of formal correctness, leaving it as irregular as it had been: “There are many more, not just these, of this prolific author’s compositions.” Further, realizing the fact that “vivacity of style” is not really a “filter,” he amends: “sifted through the filter of good taste and livened up particularly in their style” (59). That was, in effect, the process he usually followed: to “animate” and vitalize the style,

which in the first written draft or mental representation might have come out too stiff, too grammatical and insipid. Very rightly, Rebelo da Silva stated that the nimbleness of *Travels*' prose is the product of the author's mastery: "one can only deal this well with language and manage the imagination with freedom as unencumbered and serene, when one has lived in the era of artistic perfection and critical reflexiveness and good taste" (*A Época* 424).

In 1829, Garrett's stylistic ideal, as he expressed it in the *Treatise on Education*, was the prudent conciliation of modern with vernacular, traditional speech: "I didn't hesitate to adopt a neologism every time it seemed to be the only way I had to express my idea well, provided the word would adjust itself to the character and innate leanings of the language, since otherwise there is no point giving such a word the right of citizenship, as it can never become naturalized. I ran away, as I said, from outmoded words, but I didn't despise those that were simply old, nor did I hesitate, *caeteris paribus*, to prefer them to the ultramodern ones" (*Obras* 2: 281). In 1843, Garrett still aims for balance in variety; but whether because his attachment to Romanticism is now stronger, making his desire for free expression more urgent, or even because (and this reason derives from the former) he chose the genre of the feuilleton, which allows and promotes a relaxed writing style, the truth is that in *Travels* Garrett became more lexically audacious than ever. The neologisms he adopted help create an atmosphere that is cosmopolitan, or, as he says jokingly, "throbbing with modernity." His classical roots can still be noted every now and then: he uses, for instance, *encontrado* in the sense of 'conflicting,' 'divergent' or 'divergence'; *prestígio* in the sense of 'magic,' 'sortilege'; *influir* with the meaning of 'introduce,' 'inspire'; *repugnância* with the meaning of 'opposition,' 'contradiction'; *correr com* in the sense of 'manage,' 'administrate'; *apenas* as a synonym of 'as soon as,' 'scarcely'; *anátema* with the meaning of 'accursed person'; *descair* with the meaning of 'weaken'; *proceder* in the sense of 'continue,' 'carry on'; *concertar* with the meaning of 'agree on'; *devoção* as a synonym of 'affection,' 'dedication'; the verb *falar* [to speak] with a direct object ("their silence spoke volumes" [139]); clauses such as *de puro cansados* ("until they wearied of" [136]);⁵ and, with reference to phonetic aspects of syntax, the contraction of the preposition *por* with a personal pronoun: "lidavam *pelo* restaurar" ("worked to bring him to his senses" [183]), "acabei *pela* adorar" ("I came to adore her" [241]). But the modern, cosmopolitan tone is attained through a large number of neologisms; words that were quite unusual in 1845 and that appear often in italics in *Travels*. It is the case of *consciencioso*

(the word was registered for the first time in the fourth edition of *Morais Dictionary* as 'conciencioso' in 1831); *esquissa* 'outline' (entered in the eighth edition of *Morais Dictionary*, in 1890); *indiferentismo* (registered for the first time in 1831 in the fourth edition of *Morais Dictionary*); *regata* and *macadame* (in 1844 neither word had yet been entered in the dictionaries); *britante*, *incisivo*, *palpitante* (in their figurative sense); *detalhar* (which in 1827 had already been considered a Gallicism), etc. Some of these lexical novelties are Garrett's creation, such as *leigarraz* (unlettered), *anacronizar*, and others. The list of Anglicisms and Gallicisms is potentially a very long one; I will only mention *desapontar*, *fashionável*, *prejuízo* as synonymous with *preconceito*, *abandono* (which Garrett apologizes for: "excuse the Gallicism"), *alarma*, *avance*, *chaperão* ("an indulgent *chaperone* who did not watch us and feigned not to hear us" [233]), *infantino* ("Julia was small, very dainty, really *like a child* in her face" [230]), *tapessado* ("hills [. . .] *carpeted* with soft grass"), *élancée*, *boudoir*, *étagère*, *demi-jour*.⁶ More seriously, even Garrett's syntax (albeit fortunately on rare occasions) reveals exotic influence: *em três meses* (in three months) instead of *dentro de três meses* (three months from now), *ao grande trote* ("at a brisk pace" [236]). As a general rule, Garrett's foreign-inflected words are either occasional, aiming at a better characterization of the English or French atmosphere,⁷ or they correspond to objects imported by the Portuguese, which lack a vernacular designation,⁸ or, finally, they are the product of an ironic intention, as may be the case of *chefe-de-obra*: "am I to lose my *master-works*?" (39). With regard to foreign cultures, the aesthetics of the author of *Travels* is an "open" one, to employ the adjective used by Philippe Van Tieghem in reference to Mme de Staël: the precept of the neo-Garrettian Afonso Lopes Vieira, "to relusify Portugal making it European," is implied in Garrett's work. This was the way in which he refashioned the Portuguese language "for every social occasion of modern European life," as Ramalho Ortigão wrote (121).

One of the main innovations of *Travels in My Homeland* is the combination of styles. In the prologue to the second edition, Garrett vainly emphasizes "his amazing stylistic flexibility." But he does not simply alternate between serious and futile, between jocose and dramatic, elegiac and pathetic motifs, as well as between describing the landscape and conveying a state of mind; he also mixes the written with the oral—the latter in its various gradations, all the way to slang. All this is symptomatic of an embryonic Realism within Romanticism: the literary language comes close to that of daily life, allowing itself to be penetrated by it, absorbing the dynamic, concrete, and picturesque aspects of everyday speech.

Chapter VI is the richest in examples of this intentional mixture of refined and common expressions: "I have forestalled any remarks with the above text: I am fully aware who Camoens was and who I am, but it is a case of a tight corner, which is the same despite the difference between those who happen to be cornered in it" (45; translation modified). "Where are Ixion and Tantalus, where dwells Sisyphus and other rogues of that sort?" (47). Garrett has been faulted for "not clearly differentiating literary language from common or popular expression" (Boléo 32), which offends our contemporary linguistic sensibility.⁹ Nowadays we accept in effect, as if justified by the natural rules of the human mind, certain stylistic norms that Romanticism, in its youthful impulse to shake itself free of all restraints, had rejected.

Nevertheless, introduced in opportune and discrete ways, popular expressions do enrich the prose of *Travels* and give it an extraordinarily lively tone. Expressions like "for hours on end" (112) instead of "for a long time," referring to an optical camera as "that whole creaking contraption" (145), or stating that Joanhina's eyes were "wide with amazement" (117) are obvious gains from the expressive point of view. The same can be said of Garrett's use of possessive pronouns with emphatic value, as in "Há *sua* notável diferença nestes dois modos de acudir ao pensamento" ("There is a marked difference in these two ways in which things come into our minds" [127]), as well as of other resources drawn from colloquial language. It is also there that the author sought the suffixes he uses in words like *igrejório* ("nondescript" [152]), *mistifório* ("hodgepodge"), *sopetarra* ("sop" [47]), *leigarraz* ("unlettered" [35]). He did not resist using the intentional, double superlative in *grandessíssima*: "A ciência deste século é uma grandessíssima tola" ("The science of our century is an awful idiot" [31]).¹⁰

The popular imprint is also noticeable in the syntax. The author not only uses particular verb-preposition combinations such as *acertar a* ("able to" [161]) and *evitar de* ("can't help" [233]), but also certain more elaborate constructions such as "que me lembra de ter visto" ("That I can recall having seen" [166]) and *diz que* ("they say" [51]) instead of *diz-se que* (it is said). Furthermore, Garrett often uses *que* (that) to introduce a consecutive clause without any antecedent elements ("their anxious hearts throbbed, beat so strongly, that they could hear them" [143, translation modified]). He usually puts the object pronoun before the subject pronoun: "É assim. Mas um rochedo em que *me* eu sente ao pôr-do-sol" ("That is how it is. Yet I have but to sit, at sunset, on a rock" [56]); "O que *lhe* ela fora, assaz to tenho explicado" ("What she had been to him, I have explained adequately" [125]). Garrett also likes to repeat the exclamatory

que: “E dizem *que* saudades *que* matam!” (“And they say one can die of nostalgia!” [201]); “Santo Deus, *que* bruxa *que* está à porta!” (“Heavens! What witch is this at the door?” [30]). Another popular feature is the conversion of the adjective into a noun, while the genuine noun, assuming secondary importance, becomes a post-modifier: “The earliest risers among my traveling companions” (22); “O pobre de Santo Antônio” (“Poor St. Anthony” [34]); “o intrometido de Mr. de Talleyrand” (“That noisy Monsieur Talleyrand” [47]). The use of the so-called absolute infinitive—a descriptive, emotionally charged device that is characteristic of the style of the Portuguese Romanceiro and traditional tales—also occurs in *Travels*: “O sol declinava já. . . e Frei Dinis *sem aparecer*!” (“The sun was already down. . . and no sign of Friar Dinis!” [101]). Sometimes this process stresses the concomitance of the actions: “Seis horas da manhã a dar em S. Paulo, e eu a caminhar para o Terreiro-do-Paço” (“St Paul’s is striking 6 a.m. and here am I walking to Terreiro do Paço” [22]).¹¹

Some paragraphs above, I spoke about embryonic Realism within Romanticism. These two distinct phenomena converge here in a new attitude towards life and a new conception of literature. Political aspirations and changes in the social structure in the tumultuous first half of the nineteenth century gave more and more importance to the bourgeoisie and the common people, which led the languages used by the various classes of society to find their way into literary language. On the other hand, Romanticism had the tendency to view literature as direct communication and as the total revelation of the human being, especially of the most obscure and least explored regions of the subconscious mind, which Romantics tried to release from rational submission. That is to say: Romantics supposedly (there is a big gap between theory and practice) wanted a kind of literature without literature, an anti-oratory language, exempt from the restraints of logic and grammar. They fought against formalism and for intimacy, sincerity, and spontaneity in literature.¹² As Vossler stated: “the more one ignores the forms, the flexional morphemes, linking grammar tools and, in general, everything that the comprehension of prosaic language invented with respect to rational sentence technique, the most the affective significance, the lyrical gloss, and the immediate character of the language will profit from it” (331). Both the infiltration of oral language and the aim to directly record emotions, intuitions, and the most fleeting impressions generate a loose, disarticulated, vibrant style that distinguishes *Travels in My Homeland*. Instead of presenting a previously elaborated thought, this style evolves along with the development of the thought;

it depicts the author's moving, struggling mind. An uncertain, labile, cumulative, reticent prose corresponds to the wandering mind. In effect, Garrett was the first to announce his direct, effusive style: "This is what I was thinking, this is what I write down: this is what I had in my mind and this is what goes down on paper, because I cannot write otherwise" (157).

After a period of ample, classic, "rounded" writing that implies a pre-existing global vision and mental architecture comes the linear period, in which images and ideas arrange themselves in relation to one another in the same order as they appear in the mind. Buffon wrote—"Style is but the order and movement that we put into our thoughts." Jean Mouton corrects him to apply the definition to Proust: "that arise from our thoughts" (36). Transformed in this way, the sentence also applies to Garrett. Spontaneity in *Travels* can be either provoked or feigned, but the truth is that sentences like the following: "And they like it, they like life just as it is, they are attached to it!" (106), suggest, in a very persuasive way, the presence of great emotion in thought, which emerges shapeless at first and gradually becomes explicit and, at the same time, stronger through repetition and synonymy. One could say that the author, completely stricken with amazement, talks to himself and only the slight perception that there is a reader makes him rebuild the sentence belatedly: that is how the object appears in the form of the pronoun ("like it") and then, eventually, in the form of the noun ("like life").

In Garrett's sentences, anticipation of the pronoun is often symptomatic of lack of structure, regularity, or arrangement: "But it was just as if I were writing it, the poem, as if I were actually composing it" (56; translation modified); "to place them there, all Schiller's friendly *Highwaymen*" (39); "the soldier who called him *crazy*, the thinker of such bizarre thoughts" (132; translation modified); "Let her be, the Virgin of the Victory" (189); "and so I adored them, those three angels" (225; translation modified); "I still have it, that precious belt, Joana" (237).

Sometimes (also revealing the affective, non-elaborated style) it is as if the subject were forgotten, appearing only long after the verb, in the middle or at the end of the sentence—an inversion common in spoken language and that is, by nature, more amorphous: "It is one of the prettiest in Portugal, the village of Cartaxo, clean and bright" (52; translation modified); "porque era de génio alegre e naturalmente amigo de folgar, *o mancebo*" ("he was of cheerful disposition and pleasure-loving by nature, the *young man*" [97]); "A outra mão estava nas mãos dela, mas era insensível a tudo, *essa*" ("His other

hand was in her hands, but it was totally insensitive, *that one*" [171]); "They were the Templars of modern times, the Jesuits" (203).¹³

Anacoluthia helps lend this natural tone or at least the impression of an elegant negligence to the prose: "pugnacious poltroons who save their homeland with fustian and who are unbearable, once they have a protector" (146); "So the ordinary people [. . .] their favorite outings are to the Madre de Deus" (23); "the image of the girl you are today observing simply with an artist's eye, taking note, as you would in a charming painting, of the delicate outline" (126); "É sabido que a mais santa lhe não pêsá de que estejam a morrer por ela" ("It is a known fact that even the saintliest woman is not distressed by having men die for love of her" [161]); "e que a ela ou lho tinham antes ensinado os anjos, ou o aprendeu depois da serpente" ("their original mother, who had been taught it before by the angels or learned it later from the serpent" [182]). Agreement *ad sensum* or through attraction contributes to the same purpose: "They just do not travel, do not go out, see nothing of the world, these Lisbon people!" (50); "Progress and Freedom lost, they did not win" (81; translation modified).

Orality and anti-rationalism explain the form of the sentences—short, light, incisive, nervous, or rash—as well as the omission of markers of logical articulation, evasion of grammar rules, and the paratactic style, reflecting the author's inner tumult or his analytical, fragmentary view of reality. The instantaneous, particular character of empirical data are conveyed through a presentation that is as autonomous as possible, without the intrusion of mediating factors that by way of relating or organizing might diminish their vitality. In oral language, intonation, pauses, as well as the relations implicit in the context indicate implied psychological values; in written language, punctuation symbolizes those values, which is why it is important, from a stylistic point of view, to study Garrett's punctuation. Paratactic style comports not only the logical relations, but also the connection between tenses: for instance, in "quebraram todas as ferramentas, era impossível" ("they broke all their tools, it was impossible" [163]), the second clause (in the imperfect) has an adversative meaning; but in "Carlos found orders to present himself at headquarters; he left immediately" (169), juxtaposition indicates in a concise way the sequence in time that could also be represented by the temporal conjunction, although in the first sentence we can detect a secondary meaning of causality. Romanticism (here synonymous with modernity) privileges the value of psychology over the value of grammar; Garrett writes: "I was well

liked: and I did not deserve it" (225; translation modified), giving the copulative, as often happens in oral language, adversative value. This value results from a brief reflection, a break or pause, symbolized by the colon.¹⁴

It would be incorrect to affirm that typical sentences in *Travels in My Homeland* are always invertebrate or very short. Diversity, as the constant quality of the book, is also present in the various formats of the sentences. One principle informs a number of Garrett's sentences: antithesis. His antithetic sentence is regular, symmetric, modeled by reason: "Born king of all creation, he has lost his majesty; he is a disinherited, outlawed prince who today wanders, a fugitive among his former estates; haughty still and conceited with his past memories; low, base, and wretched in his present adversity" (133). Opposition here is rooted in the conflict between natural man and society, viewed by the author in accordance with Rousseau's lesson. In another example, antithetic symmetry combines with chiasmus (scheme A B - A¹ B¹ - a b - b¹ a¹): "Innocence (A) can be lost through a single mistake (B); one can only be deprived of modesty (A¹) through serious lapses, serious crimes (B¹). An accident, a chance (a) happening, can destroy the former (b); the latter (b¹), only an opportune, deliberate and intentional action (a¹)" (35; translation modified).

The third type of sentence, common in Garrett's prose, is a long sentence with a series of non-progressive syntagmata, in Dámaso Alonso's sense of the phrase, meaning sequences of units (words or groups of words) that have the same syntactic function (23–26). The sentence does not have a logical structure that serves a central idea. It gradually becomes longer, it separates itself into new components through appositions that result from unexpected mental associations and also from the author's dissatisfaction with the linguistic tools at his disposal, both when he tries to express feelings and when he tries to faithfully describe reality or his impressions of it. Therefore, through the accumulation of synonyms or quasi-synonyms, the sentence becomes more intensified and precise. The abundance that generates the long sentence is, in a certain way, disciplined (within each series) by the principle of symmetry. For instance: "Carlos did not think like this, he did not believe it to be so: loyal and sincere, he had given his heart to the woman who loved him, who had given him so much proof of her love and devotion, who believed in his faithfulness, who existed for him alone—a beautiful woman, extremely gifted and charming, a woman of superior intelligence and breeding, who had despised crowds of noble, wealthy, powerful suitors to stoop to him, to

surrender herself to a poor, despised foreign fugitive" (125; translation modified). The central idea appears in the beginning of the sentence ("Carlos did not think like this [. . .] he had given his heart to the woman who loved him"); the rest of it consists of primary and secondary ramifications. What the sentence loses in balance, it gains in exuberance and strength. That expansive force sometimes makes the author go back and retrieve, by insisting on a crucial word, the by now forgotten syntactic thread: "those precious words, those sweet words which a less artful woman finds so difficult to say: which suspected, discovered, and heard long before by the heart, spoken a thousand times by the eyes, no man can rest or consider himself happy, secure in his happiness, until he hears them pronounced by the lips; those heavenly words which explain the past and answer for the future, which are the last, irrevocable sentence in a lengthy suit made up of anxious moments, of uncertainties and alarms—those last, fatal words, *I love you* [it is only now that we arrive at the rhythmic climax of the sentence] Joaninha had pronounced them as naturally, as sincerely, as easily and unhesitatingly as if they were—and they assuredly were—as if they had always been the one thought, the constant fixed idea of her life" (141; translation modified).

The return to an idea already expressed, in order to emphasize or develop it, can also happen in a new sentence—a compromise between fragmentariness and a degree of coherence in spontaneous thinking (spontaneous in appearance, at least): "Love is not defined and never will be. True love, because the other things are not love" (225). The tendency to slip even leads to the creation of connections with a new paragraph—a mental break before the reiteration: "history must be exact and truthful. . . . / Yes, it must. And the great important facts that mark an age and are landmarks in a nation's history, I too shall reject them ruthlessly" (189). Or: "This is—or rather was—a treasure. Was, because the soldiers' brutality has disfigured it to an incredible degree" (215).¹⁵ The return of the core word sometimes takes the form of what classical rhetoric calls anadiplosis: "I have seen many more beautiful women, some more adorable, but none so fascinating. Fascinating is the word for her" (228; translation modified).

Suspension and auto-correction also reveal affective strength or richness of imagination that stimulate the exercise of reflexive intelligence: "I know, of course, that it is a fault, then. All right, I suppose it is. . . but what an adorable fault!" (75). "I have loved. . . that is to say, I have loved. . . . All right, then, I have loved, since there is no other word in these stupid languages that men speak" (237).

Accumulation itself does not always derive from a lyrical mood or emotional excess; on the contrary, in certain cases it comes from an analysis of particular realities that discerns even the subtlest shadings. According to this perspective, the stylistics of adjective use can illuminate one of the most innovative aspects of Garrett's prose.¹⁶ Together with the conjoined epithets of the classical tradition, indices of a stable, unitary vision ("That sweet, innocent child" [124]; "that sweet, angelic figure" [112]), there are series of adjectives placed after the noun and not linked by the copulative "and," revealing the autonomy of each element, the author's dissociate vision and efforts to be precise, to define the object on the most accurate level: "The whiteness of red-heads—smooth, hard, marmoreal" (74; translation modified); "The leaves—coarse, dry, whitish—of our olive trees" (234; translation modified).

Above all, Garrett's greatest gift is his very rich verbal imagination. The reader shares in the fine voluptuousness with which the author exploits the potentialities of language, breaking up clichés, rejuvenating words through unusual combinations and daring transpositions.¹⁷ Synaesthesia is one of the aspects of Garrett's impressionism: he tells us about a "dull, defeated sound" (179) and a "dry, harsh wind" (202–3). There are also examples of animated landscape: "the willows lean over the margins of the Tagus River (154; translation modified). But his sense of humor (and in this respect Garrett was definitely a precursor of Eça de Queirós) turns out to be the primary stimulus in the art of playing with the semantic values of words. Hyperbole, rousing an unexpected association, may make us smile: "The wine was atrocious" (34; translation modified), Garrett says, referring to the terrible wine that was served to him at the inn in Azambuja. In the world of shadows, Monsieur Talleyrand brandished his "fearful eyeglass" at him (48). The "barbarous elbows," the "cruel feet," the "antediluvian figures" of ugly and ungainly women, are evocative details of a dull public ball (199; translation modified). Being a skillful caricaturist, Garrett immobilizes a human being in the attitude of a puppet: at one time he describes a decrepit sexagenarian aristocrat, "his neck held stiff by his inflexible cravat, his feet sticking to the doorstep, like Ovid's" (62). The reader, because of the double meaning of "inflexible," guesses that the cravat is endowed with a moral personality, a coercive will, and is reminded of the Councillor Accacio "with his neck squeezed into an upright collar" (Queirós 29). At another time, he describes an English miss in a few concise words: "the stiff, upright elegance of the perpendicular English miss" (74).

Another element of Garrett's comic sense is the interference of seriousness in triviality ("complete and solemn disappointment" [40; translation

modified]) or of triviality in seriousness (“an offended, melancholic, wishy-washy tone” [59; translation modified]). These same kinds of associations appear in Eça de Queirós, for instance, a “melancholically stupid” word (Cal 182). To make someone look ridiculous, one has only to represent him or her as a piece of fruit or some kind of dish: that is what Garrett does when referring to a “legitimate, raw Englishman” (146). In “deep, abstruse philosopher” (27), the adjective “abstruse” suggests a hollow voice as an inseparable feature of the philosopher, which diminishes any respect that the reader might have felt for his deep thinking. He also speaks of an object, a wagon, for instance, as if it were a person: “A substantial, handsome, curtained four-wheeler” (29).

Compression is also a process of humor: “stupid, long faces” (216) presuppose the narrow-mindedness usually attributed to long-faced people. Through a series of diminutives Garrett describes with wit the petulant girls: “Há umas certas boquinhãs, gravezinhas e espremidinhas pela doutorice, que são a mais aborrecidinha coisa e a mais pequinha que Deus permite fazer às suas criaturas fêmeas” (“There are some little rosebud mouths, all prim and pursed with pedantry, that are the most abominable and blighted wee thing that God allows to happen to his female creatures” [75]). The author also uses rhymes to convey derision: “o mais odioso e engulhoso dos governos possíveis” (“the most odious and disgusting of all possible governments” [23]); “romantismo vago, descabelado, vaporoso e nebuloso!” (“vague, extravagant, vaporous, nebulous, romanticism!” [132]).¹⁸

His instinct for linguistics made him guess—out of the reiteration of vocabulary and rhythm—effective means for describing and suggesting. In “with a long, unending kiss . . . long, long and unending like the first kiss of a pair of lovers” (117), the idea of longevity is emphasized not only by the repetition of “long” and “unending,” but also by the nasal *o* of the former and the extension of the latter. The same result is obtained with the repetition of the adverbial suffix *-mente*: “lentamente e silenciosamente se retirou para dentro de casa” (“[Joaninha] went slowly and silently into the house” [86]);¹⁹ likewise with the conjunction *que*, which suggests, in this case only through fatiguing insistency, the slow passage of time: “Até que se meteu frade, e que passaram anos, e que o fizeram guardião do seu convento” (“Until he became a monk, the years went by and he was made superior of his monastery” [96]). On the other hand, the repetition of the copulative emphasizes every new launching of an action: “aquela [imagem] vinha espontânea; era repelida, e tornava, e tornava” (“the former came spontaneously: it was repelled, but it

kept coming back again, and again" [127]). However the reiteration of vocabulary may have merely superlative value: "only her tears spoke to him, flowing very, very gently, like a continuous, natural spring that flows without effort or stimulus" (172); "beautiful, beautiful, in a way that a face can be beautiful when it reflects little of the soul" (171; translation modified). Note also how, in *Travels*, the alliteration and repetition of "dark" vowels reinforces the context: "nua e nula, monótona e singela" ("bare and non-existent, monotonous and simple" [94]); "tudo silencioso, mudo, morto" ("all silent, mute, dead" [150]). There was no area of the Portuguese language that the author of *Travels* did not exploit in order to obtain new expressive effects. Stylistic phonetics is one of the most curious aspects of Garrett's prose.

The author's refined idiomatic awareness demanded continuing attention to the rhythm of the sentences. From this fact stems, presumably, the tendency to put the object pronoun before the verb—an inversion that is characteristic of Garrett's style: "those last, fatal words, *I love you*, Joanhina pronounced as naturally, as sincerely, as easily and unhesitatingly as if" (141; translation modified). "A luz baça do crepúsculo, coada ainda pelos ramos das árvores, iluminava tibiamente as expressivas feições da donzela; e as formas graciosas do seu corpo *se desenhavam* mole e voluptuosamente no fundo vaporoso e vago das exaltações da terra" ("The dim light of dusk, filtering through the branches of the trees, cast a feeble glow on the girl's expressive features, while the graceful lines of her body appeared with voluptuous languor against the vague, misty background of the earth's vapors" [114]). "Ele segurou-a com as suas [mãos] ambas e *lha beijou* mil vezes" ("He seized it [i.e., Georgina's hand] with both of his [hands] and kissed it over and over again" [177]). "Georgina ajoelhou ao pé do frade, tomou as mãos dele nas suas, e *lhas afagou* com piedade" ("Georgina knelt down by the monk, took his hands in hers and stroked them gently" [182]). Of course, only a meticulous study of the position of pronouns in the Portuguese literary prose of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries would determine the originality of sentence order in Garrett's work.

Sometimes the sentence rhythm reaches high poetic quality in *Travels*. If one applies to Garrett the method that Servien used to analyze *Atala*, isolating the rhythmic fragment (regular or irregular "verse lines") and marking the stressed and unstressed syllables with the respective long and short syllable signs, an expressive musicality, which in some passages deserves to be classified as lyrical, stands out. The following is an example:

Lembra-te como numa *noite*
pura, serena e estrelada,
 aqueles *dous* se despediram,
 um do *outro* no meio do *vale*;
 como se despediram
tristes, duvidosos, infelizes,
 e já *outros, tão outros*
 do que dantes *fôram*

Remember how, on a
 clear, serene, starry night,
 those two took leave
 of one another in the middle of the valley;
 how sad, uncertain and unhappy
 was their farewell
 and how very different
 they were from before

The syllable structure of the original version can be represented as follows:

— U U U U U U — (U)	(8)
— U U — (U) U U — (U)	(7)
U U U — U U U — (U)	(8)
U U — U U U U —	(8)
U U U U U — (U)	(6)
— U U U — U U U — (U)	(9)
U U — U U — (U)	(6)
U U U U — (U)	(5)

Note that the second and sixth “verse lines” are almost perfectly symmetrical, both have three adjectives, and that there are two parts (4+4)—each with its own ascending phase or arsis and descending phase or thesis: 8/7/ 18/8 – 6/9/ 16/5. Such regularity helps to create a serene, nostalgic atmosphere. In the letter written by Carlos, especially in Chapter XLVI, there are other passages whose lyrical sonority could serve as the object of new analyses of an instinctive *cantus obscurus*.

It is now time to conclude. Although this short study of Garrett’s prose is not complete, it seems to have documented satisfactorily the statement made at the beginning of this essay: “In Portuguese literary prose modernity was undoubtedly the creation of Almeida Garrett.” Anybody can deduce the veracity of this statement, as it has become commonplace in Portuguese literary history, but there is no essay of significant proportions that has proven it until today. If style is the man himself, as it is said (and this belief was never in Buffon’s mind by the way), *Travels’* prose is the most complete revelation of a very rich personality, with some of its faults (a certain affectation of manners, a certain coquetry of a mundane man who addressed himself to “gentle

readers") and its portentous qualities: penetrating and labile intelligence, vast culture, exceptional experience of life, permanently alert emotivity, imagination, a sense of humor, an accurate sense for the usage of language. However, style is also the epoch; if Garrett sometimes also accepted what was condemned to die (like certain theatrical rhetoric and dense vocabulary, natural to the atmosphere of Friar Dinis, for example)—with his amazing capacity of receptivity and, on the other hand, his mental independence, the intuition with which the author distinguished in Romanticism the ephemeral trend of profound renovation—generally, as a prose writer, he embodied everything that by that time was a pronouncement and preparation for the future. Romanticism was for Garrett the present time: therefore he opened his spirit to the new winds of European culture, and, out of a very stiff and abstract prose (yet Verney had already adapted the injunctions of the illuminist reason to it, and made the *familiar* part of it), he created an agile, plastic, insubordinate, and transient one, capable of recording the most subtle vibration of the mind, sensible to every range of affections and impulses and, at the same time, descriptive, impressionist *avant la lettre*. Romanticism was for Garrett nationality: therefore he took from the masters of vernacular Portuguese and mainly from everyday language and peasants' speech the virtualities that he put into action. Romanticism was for Garrett individuality: therefore he created his own language, while discovering and fulfilling himself in plenitude, leaving us the precious lesson that it is in ourselves that we should search for the last secret of style. If the prose of *Travels* maintains, almost intact, its power of seduction, it is because Garrett belongs to a number of great initiators who, through their written work, continue to live on in the disquietude of those who, faithful to the present time, travel the paths they themselves point out, euphoric with each new discovery.

Notes

¹ For example: *safar-se*, *abichar*, *empalmar*, *pescar* with the meaning of "to understand," *esturro* in the sense of "pounding," *salvo seja*, *pr'amor de*, and even solecisms and regional accents.

² I recall what L. Reynaud, in *Le Romantisme*, says about Sterne, whose *Sentimental Journey* acted as a stimulus for *Travels in My Homeland*: contrary to the ancient authors, "he writes in order to externalize the gracefulness of his spirit"—"he reveals himself an author even in the smallest sentences. He only cares about what he exposes to the extent that it represents an opportunity to shine before his own eyes as well as those of the reader" (115).

³ [Translator's note.] All of the quotations in English throughout this review are from John M. Parker's translation. Due to the character of this review, which focuses on the language used by Garrett in *Travels in My Homeland*, Parker's version sometimes does not fit the concept(s) being discussed or does not show what the example is supposed to demonstrate. In such cases, when no English translation is capable of expressing the concept(s) or idea(s) being discussed, the original Portuguese quotation is given and Parker's version appears in brackets. At other times Parker's translation is slightly or fully changed, so that the example, still in English, reflects what is being discussed; in these cases, the quotation is accompanied by the notation "translation modified"; the number of the page given in both cases still corresponds to Parker's translation, so that the English-speaking reader can follow the narrative.

⁴ See the prospectus of *O Portuguez*, October, 1826: "Let us see, the art of writing a newspaper is also difficult: the periodical writings, obviously due to their ephemeral and diverse character, are more free; they neither demand nor convey the same precision and elegance as a continuous treatise or any other form of writing and genre eventually does. However they comport other difficulties that are not of little or less worth."

⁵ This, in a dialogue! Sometimes the dialogues in Garrett's work lack naturalness and are full of aspects of literary language; on the other hand, the narrative prose approaches oral registers.

⁶ [Translator's note.] *Prejuízo* is a Portuguese word that means "damage," "disadvantage." Garrett used it in the sense of the similar English word "prejudice," which corresponds to the Portuguese *preconceito*.

⁷ It is in the epistle written by Carlos that the majority of the shocking foreign words can be found, including the word *montar* in the sense of *subir* ("climb").

⁸ Garrett's very fine sensibility for the use of the language caused him to repudiate certain artificial alternatives that were vigorously maintained by purists: in *O Inglez* the author makes the characters say the word *tapa-luz* ("lamp-shade"—as a translation for "abat-jour"), and then concludes "maybe it is bad" and teaches the following lesson: "This is how a word should be tested: if words were always submitted to this process, maybe Portuguese would be exempt of some sapless and insipid exemplars" (*Obras* 2: 490).

⁹ However, it should be noted that the mixture is intentional: with his fine sensibility, Garrett was well aware of the various cultural and social levels of the language; he ironically puts together synonyms of different nuances: "torment of those waking dreamers who go around, whom the learned university calls *nervous*, the language of novels *sensitive*, and as the popular expression has it, *crazy*" (128). *Namorar* ("to flirt"), the author writes, as was quoted previously, is "an absurd, vulgar word I detest" (226).

¹⁰ [Translator's note.] The regular form for the construction of the superlative in Portuguese is the suffix *-íssimo*. Moreover, in the case of the adjective *grande* ("big"), the superlative irregular form *enorme* is usually preferable to the regular form *grandíssimo*.

¹¹ Consult J. do Prado Coelho's "La mise-en-relief stylistique de quelques possibilités syntaxiques du portugais."

¹² The aesthetics of irregularity or asymmetry appear in *Travels* more than once: with respect to the nightingale's song, Garrett speaks of a "torrent of melodies [. . .] beautifully irregular and inventive" (115); in another passage the author states that "Fora de Vila is a public square, vast, irregular, and rambling like a romantic poem" (150).

¹³ See Ernesto Guerra da Cal (249–52).

¹⁴ In his excellent book about the language and style of Eça de Queirós, previously mentioned, Ernesto Guerra da Cal points out that in the domain of punctuation, the revolution carried out by Eça was as notorious as the one in the domain of syntactic order (252). However, it must be noted that Garrett was a precursor of Eça in this area too, giving punctuation marks psychological and aesthetic value. The author of *Travels* had already used the dash and semicolon, as well as combinations of both, to mark the breaks, more or less long, that suggest an implicit subordinate clause, etc.: "Me, despite the critics, I still believe in our Camoens; I always have" (44); "Yet modesty can be almost entirely a failing in a man if it be excessive and come close to timidity, to what society calls *savoir-fair*" (36); "All power was in God, who delegated it to father over son, thus to the head of a family over the family, and thus from one of these over the State" (91); "He said it himself: a man who had become a monk when he was old and weary of this world" (90). Another aspect of punctuation in Garrett, an aspect that da Cal considers to be typical of impressionism (it appears in Flaubert, Huysmans, etc., as well as in the author of *The Relic*), is the copulative "and" after a period: "We men are not capable of so much. And therefore we are so full of admiration. And are so ready to forgive. And so happy to forget" (184).

¹⁵ In Garrett, the frail connection among sentences that make up different paragraphs (the blank line itself visually suggests a pause in the course of the thought), happens through the use of "and," "thus," "but": "That is how I should go about the description, I know full well. But there is a fatal, insuperable impediment, as with the famous salvo that did not happen. . . . It is that it wasn't anything like that. / And I do not wish to malign the good people of Azambuja" (33).

¹⁶ The corrections made in the autograph of *Travels*, which is at the present time in the *Biblioteca Geral* at the University of Coimbra, illustrate the process Garrett carried out regarding the enrichment of the characterization. The passage: "In effect, in spite of everything, the naïve, innocent dignity of that innocent girl and the old woman's sober, serene appearance made them so respected by the soldiers" was altered, and instead Garrett wrote the following: "In a short time it became clear that her grandmother [instead of old woman, which Garrett crossed out] was right. Joaninha's frank, innocent dignity and the old woman's [instead of grandmother's] sober appearance and serene, kindly melancholy made them so respected by the soldiers" (111).

¹⁷ See, for instance, how Garrett increases the value of the adjective *grande* by putting it after *gorda* (in an unexpected metaphorical use) and putting both qualifiers after the noun, removing the effect of the alliteration: "A lugação era gorda e grande" ("The hoax was a huge one" [196]). On the other hand, the author plays with words: "I have to confess quite frankly to being a somnambulist, a somniloquist, a . . . No, it is better with its Greek look (my Hellenic bump is in an astonishing state of tumescence today!)—let us say, somnilogic, somnigraphic" (37–38). "Returning from the philological digression, let us get back to optrics and catoptrics" (201).

¹⁸ Note that in the manuscript of *Travels* that is now in the *Biblioteca Geral* at the University of Coimbra, Garrett wrote "vague, extravagant, vaporous, phosphorescent, nebulous romanticism," erasing afterwards the word "phosphorescent."

¹⁹ [Translator's note.] There is a rule of Portuguese grammar that states that when two or more adverbs formed with the suffix "-mente" follow one another, only the last one shall carry the suffix (in order to avoid repetition).

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Jacinto do Prado Coelho (1920–1984) was a professor of modern Portuguese literature at the University of Lisbon and the author of several influential books, including *Introdução ao estudo da novela camiliana* (1946), *Diversidade e unidade em Fernando Pessoa* (1949), and *A letra e o leitor* (1969). One of his most significant insights was that modern literary prose in Portuguese was invented by Garrett.