

Editor's Note

This issue of *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies* is fortunate to rely on the expertise of the internationally acclaimed historian Luiz Felipe de Alencastro for its monographic section, "The South Atlantic, Past and Present."

Indeed, Felipe de Alencastro published a groundbreaking book, *O Trato dos Videntes*, in which he systematized his scholarship on the topic and crafted innovative lenses to understand the formation of Brazilian society.

In his words: "'Formation of Brazil in the South Atlantic': the reader who has looked at the cover of the book might be intrigued by its subtitle. Does it mean that Brazil was formed outside Brazil? That is exactly the point: this is the historical paradox that I am aiming at showing in the following pages."¹

Briefly, Alencastro argues that Brazilian colonial history should not be seen as either an extension of the colonial territory or a linear Hegelian progression toward independence from Portugal. After all, in Brazil, colonial history was mainly determined through its relationship with the zone of reproduction of slaves put forward by the Portuguese in Angola. Thus the colonial period witnessed, more than a "Brazilian" history, the emergence of a "space without territory, a lusophone archipelago composed by the enclaves of Portuguese America and of the trade posts of Angola."²

The present issue of *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies* broadens the scope of Felipe de Alencastro's thought-provoking work through the incorporation of ongoing research of distinguished scholars from several countries. It is therefore our expectation that this issue will become an obligatory reference to anyone interested in the complex, multilayered, and transnational history of the "South Atlantic."

A final word on this issue: given the importance of its monographic section, and notably the remarkable introduction written by Felipe de Alencastro—in its own right, a full essay on the topic of the complex world created by the flux of bodies, commodities, and ideas through the South Atlantic, bringing together at least three continents—we decided to shorten the other sections of the journal so that we could publish the monographic section in its integrity. Therefore,

this time we will not present the section “Fiction and Interviews,” which will resume in the next issue of *Portuguese Literary and Cultural Studies*.

NOTES

1. Luiz Felipe de Alencastro, *O Trato dos Videntes: Formação do Brasil no Atlântico Sul* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2000), 9.
2. Alencastro, *O Trato dos Videntes*.