**Introduction**

**Eleanor K. Jones, Ana Margarida Martins and Mark Sabine**

The news, early in 2016, that Hilary Owen was retiring as Professor of Portuguese and Luso-African Studies at the University of Manchester surprised many in the global Lusophone Studies community. Her decision acted as a pause in an outstanding career, and one still evidently fizzing with bold, innovative research ideas. Many colleagues – particularly those working in Great Britain and Ireland – experienced difficulty in picturing the next chapter of their discipline’s history in the absence of a scholar, teacher, and mentor whose personal contribution to shaping, inspiring, and defending Lusophone Studies over three often turbulent decades had been second to none.

Over two decades at Manchester, Professor Owen had led the UK’s joint-largest undergraduate programme in Portuguese, and had supervised well over a dozen successful postgraduate and post-doctoral research projects. Her department’s pole position in successive national Research Assessment Exercises in 2000 and 2008 owed much to the stream of paradigm-changing studies of women’s history, literature and cinema from Portugal and Mozambique that issued from her own desk. At the same time, she had championed her discipline indefatigably on the committees of the UK’s Higher Education policy forums and major funding bodies, and most of the major national and international Lusophone and Hispanic academic associations. It is indicative of the unanimous respect, admiration and trust that Professor Owen and her work have inspired in her colleagues worldwide that almost every UK journal and academic press publishing on Lusophone cultural studies has appointed her to their editorial board; a circumstance that ultimately thwarted this volume’s editors’ hopes of surprising her with the presentation of a festschrift.

Offering a qualitative account of Professor Owen’s contribution to the discipline of Portuguese studies is no mean feat. We could describe her openness to currents of thought unfamiliar to the field, and her capacity to synthesise these into groundbreaking analytical frameworks still expertly attuned to the sociopolitical specificities of Portuguese-speaking communities. We could discuss, at length, the meticulous sense of rigour, insight and imagination that characterized her scholarship, the fierceness of her intellectual acumen. But perhaps what sets Professor Owen apart, for her students and colleagues alike, is her unfailing commitment to the political – which, as she has always shown, is also profoundly personal. Her tireless struggle against seemingly ubiquitous sexism, androcentrism and eurocentrism produced a sea change, not only in the discourse of Portuguese studies but also in the everyday of those of us working within it. Her candid denunciations of inequality, her advocacy of sometimes radical change, and her unwavering principles of collegiality, empathy and kindness in all aspects of academic life are qualities we should all endeavor to embrace.

Hilary commenced her career in Romance languages as an undergraduate studying Joint Honours French and Spanish at the University of Nottingham in 1980, but soon came into contact with Portuguese courtesy of Bernard McGuirk, who pioneered study of the language at Nottingham in the early 1980s. Her exploration of the literatures of these three Romance languages and year of study abroad culminated in a brilliant First Class degree award, with Distinctions in Spoken Language for both Portuguese and Spanish, and the conferral of the University’s Marsden Prize, awarded to only six students across the whole university on the basis of ‘high academic distinction in […] examinations, […] exemplary conduct and […] outstanding character and personality’ (University of Nottingham, 2009). This early triumph, and Owen’s particular fascination with the culture and recent history of Portugal, led to her D.E.S.-funded doctoral research on the literary bombshell of the dying days of Salazarism, the *Novas cartas portuguesas* co-authored by Maria Teresa Horta, Maria Velho da Costa, and the late Maria Isabel Barreno (1972). Though an international *succès de scandale* following its authors’ arrest following publication in 1972, *Novas cartas* had, by the late 1980s, become overlooked. Owen’s study contributed significantly to a resurgence of fortunes. It challenged the critics’ disregard by noting the literary and rhetorical precedents – notably, Woolf’s now firmly canonical *Room of One’s Own* (1929) – for *Novas cartas*’s polyphonic exploration of three centuries of women’s experience and structural oppression, and by identifying the book’s anticipation of a post-modern insistence on historical multi-perspectivism and on intersectional strategies for combatting exploitation and discrimination. Perhaps more significantly, Owen’s study, published in 2000 as *Portuguese Women's Writing 1972 to 1986: Reincarnations of a Revolution*, demonstrated *Novas cartas*’s pivotal role in the reconception of women’s authorship in Portugal. A series of meticulous close textual readings explored how a boom in women’s writing in the newly-democratizing nation had its roots in *Novas cartas*’s subversive reinvention of ‘feminine’ genres like the confessional diary and the epistolary novel, as well as in the same book’s erotic candour and evocation of a sometimes tortuous lineage of women’s literary expression.

Owen expanded her delineation of specifically female lines of literary influence and innovation in her 2011 collaboration with Cláudia Pazos Alonso, *Antigone’s Daughters?: Gender, Genealogy and the Politics of Authorship in 20th Century Portuguese Women’s Writing*. Here, the authors looked back before the political and cultural revolution of the mid-1970s, to the singular figures of Florbela Espanca (1894-1930), Irene Lisboa (1892-1958), Agustina Bessa Luís (1922-2019) and Natália Correia (1923-1993). Using strikingly diverse strategies to destabilize gendered notions of creativity and literary ‘genius,’ and through simultaneous intertextual gestures of homage and allusion, disavowal and parody, these writers created conditions for the emergence of a ‘tradition’ of female literary expression. As Owen and Pazos Alonso stress, however, both these four pioneering figures and the post-1974 generation of women writers who have paid them tribute – both in their works and in interviews – have advanced a healthy scepticism regarding the virtues of a ‘matrilineal’ literary canon, given that any affirmation of such a canon could serve only to consolidate the prevailing symbolic construction of ‘woman’ as secondary, ancillary, and self-sacrificing.

*Antigone’s Daughters* proved to be a further milestone in the critical evaluation of Portuguese women’s literature, and spurred long-overdue reassessments of its subjects’ distinctive oeuvres. It is crucial to understand, however, that Owen’s purpose, here and throughout her academic career, was not simply to champion women authors or female perspectives on history – even if her exploration of *Novas cartas*’slineage and legacy was notably prescient for its focus on younger writers who, though still often dismissed as ‘marginal’ in the 1990s, enjoy undisputed canonic status today: Lídia Jorge (b. 1946), Teolinda Gersão (b. 1940), and *Prémio Camões* laureate Hélia Correia (b. 1949), who has repaid Owen’s tribute with two sonnets written especially for the current volume. Rather, Owen aimed at a more profound examination of literature, film, and both political and historiographical discourses as terrains of the textual construction of gender categories. As she would continue to argue in later studies – and with particular urgency as her attention turned to women’s writing in Brazil, Goa, and especially Mozambique – subaltern subjects’ cultural production has always been constrained by a presumption of their allotted role not as autonomously creative agents, but rather as the passive objects of a creative gaze aligned with the aims, values and experience of a socially hegemonic (generally, white, straight, Western, cis-male) subjectivity. The revindication of subaltern cultural production has limited chance of success if it is not underpinned by a critical interrogation of dominant aesthetic rules and artistic canons. To achieve this, it is essential to acknowledge and appreciate not only culturally-distinct aesthetics and symbolic systems, but also the specific social and economic circumstances, needs, and aspirations that determined these.

Owen advocated powerfully for just such a re-evaluative and politically-situated critical practice as her attention turned, from the late 1990s, to the literary culture of Mozambique over its decades of anticolonial struggle and post-independence conflict. The studies collected in the major monograph *Mother Africa, Father Marx: Women’s Writing of Mozambique, 1948-2002* (2007) once again addressed a remarkable diversity of literary formats, from the often personal and confessional 1940-50s free verse of Noémia de Sousa, to Lina Magaia’s unflinching testimony to 1980s war-time atrocities, Lília Momplé’s focus on armed conflict’s devastation of domestic and familial relations, and Paulina Chiziane’s ebullient satire on contemporary political corruption and sexist double-standards. Reading with the insight and sensitivity born of exhaustive field work and research of modern Mozambique’s sociocultural mosaic, Owen illuminated the remarkable impact of these women’s texts in interrogating and freeing up the exalted, but predictably restrictive, role allotted to women in the grand narrative of the postcolonial socialist nation that the independence movement turned ruling party Frelimo had propagated. Once again, Owen’s work was ahead of the curve in granting sustained critical attention to little-studied authors. Across the English-speaking world, *Mother Africa, Father Marx* stimulated such interest in these authors that their works now feature on undergraduate syllabi wherever Lusophone literatures are taught. Meanwhile, a steady stream of younger scholars - including two of the editors of the present volume - beat a path to Manchester to research Portuguese-speaking African literatures under Hilary’s supervision.

An especially valuable and influential contribution of *Mother Africa, Father Marx* was its fashioning of theoretical concepts and critical techniques that addressed the specificities of Portuguese colonial ideology and governance. This was particularly true of her approach to the legacy of Lusotropicalism, a revisionist ideology that cast the Portuguese colonial presence in Africa, Asia and South America as exceptional, non-racist and uncoercive. In laying out the gendered implications of this concept – such as the concomitant characterisation of indigenous women as intrinsically sexually available and thus immune to rape – the book revealed, in stark terms, the brutality foundational to the Lusotropicalist idealization of ‘miscegenation’ and, by extension, the Portuguese late colonial project per se.

In addition to dismantling some of the most pernicious and entrenched shibboleths of Portuguese colonial nostalgia, all-too-often reproduced in academic analysis, *Mother Africa, Father Marx* demonstrated how some of the most influential contributions to postcolonial cultural critique – such as Bhabha’s concept of the subversive ‘mimicry’ of the coloniser’s discourse – had fatal blindspots with regard to Portugal and Africa. Owen drew as much on the non-Lusophone models of Gloria Anzaldúa and Anne McClintock as on Boaventura de Sousa Santos and Miguel Vale de Almeida, and was always alert to how imbricated hierarchies of gender, race and class called for a consciously intersectional practice of resistance and critique. The intellectual praxes showcased in this study were reflected, too, in her foray into nineteenth-century Brazilian intellectual history in the 2006 volume *South American Independence: Gender, Politics, Text*, co-authored with Catherine Davies and Claire Brewster, and in the series of themed volumes that she co-edited. Among these were 2004’s *Sexual/Textual Empires: Gender and Marginality in Lusophone African Literature* (with Phillip Rothwell), the monumental exploration of literary imaginings of the nation in Portuguese-speaking Africa, *Nação e narrativa pós-colonial* (2012, with Ana Mafalda Leite, Rita Chaves, and Livia Apa) and the interlinked studies of literature, cinema, and visual culture in *Gender, Empire and Postcolony: Luso-Afro-Brazilian Intersections* (2014, with Anna M. Klobucka).

Though Professor Owen has, by now, technically been retired for several years, her contribution to the advancement of Portuguese studies remains as vigorous and paradigm-changing as ever. Having shifted her focus somewhat from page to screen, Owen has spent the last few years exploring cinematic representations of post-revolutionary Portugal and the disquieting legacies of empire therein, and has been reassessing the country’s purported intermediacy between Brazil, Africa and Europe. Her ingenious and wonderfully fresh readings of landmark films directed by figures ranging from Manoel de Oliveira to Miguel Gomes have, as ever, been invaluable, reflecting the boldly transnational and interdisciplinary outlook that has long characterized her work. She has been unafraid to dig deep into the engagement of purportedly ‘auteurist’ ‘national’ directors with Hollywood and other behemoths of the populist mass market, as is evident, for example, when she exposes Pedro Costa’s debt to zombie schlock-horror in *Casa de lava* (1995), or identifies, in mid-century advertising, pulp fiction and newsreels, the prototypes of the hokey nostalgic fantasy of Africa that Gomes attributes to the denizens of 2010s Portugal in *Tabu*.

Owen’s feminist commitment to foregrounding the cultural production of women, meanwhile, has only grown stronger. Since 2016, she has collaborated with Mariana Liz in leading the Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian-funded project *Portuguese Women Directors*. Tackling head-on the overwhelming dominance of male directors in the Portuguese cinematic canon and its international reception, the project has foregrounded and made visible the vital contributions of Portuguese women directors, through workshops and screenings. At the time of writing, the book arising from this vital project was in its final stages. It promises to be another highlight of a truly inspiring scholarly record. Not to be outdone, however, this book is only one of two yet to come: *Transnational Portuguese Studies*, part of the landmark Liverpool University Press series ‘Transnational Modern Languages’, is also in the pipeline, co-edited with Claire Williams. We can think of no better person to bring together such a collection than Professor Owen, whose career defined what it meant for Portuguese studies to be truly transnational.

Just as this brief introduction cannot possibly do justice to Hilary Owen’s career, the limitations on space in a single journal issue necessarily capped the number of essays making up this tribute. As is evident from the *tabula gratulatoria* that follows, an attempt to include contributions from all of those colleagues who have benefitted from Hilary’s brilliant critical insight, wise counsel, and unwavering loyalty, generosity and kindness would have been a lengthy undertaking, running over several volumes. We are confident, however, that while this single volume contains only a modest proportion of the scholarship that Hilary has inspired, fostered and encouraged, it nevertheless offers a good reflection of the breadth of her research expertise, of the scale of her contribution, and of the role she has played in redefining and influencing discussions about the future of our discipline.

Claire Williams’s article describes mid-twentieth-century women’s literature in Portuguese from Goa. It focuses on three writers who published in pre- and post-Liberation from Portuguese colonial rule (December 1961): Berta Menezes Bragança, Maria Elsa da Rocha and Teresa da Piedade de Baptista Almeida. Williams’s analysis of their work demonstrates that, while these writers had distinct agendas and wrote for diverse audiences, they nevertheless all focused, with distinct voices, on the injustices faced by women living in a highly multicultural, multi-layered and stratified society in need of change.

Cláudia Pazos Alonso explores the unorthodox intellectual dissidence of Francisca Wood, a fearless female public intellectual who claimed the right to think and write freely in nineteenth-century Portugal, ahead of both the anti-clerical stance of the *Geração de 70* and the first wave of transnational feminism. Focusing on Wood’s open letters in a weekly periodical titled *A voz feminina*, Alonso argues that the significance of Wood’s interventions in public life, as regards women’s education and rights, and religious, political and ethical issues such as anticlericalism, governance and animal welfare, has yet to receive due acknowledgment in mainstream accounts of the history of ideas in nineteenth-century Portugal.

Hélia Correia’s work is the focus of attention in Maria Manuel Lisboa’s piece, where the central theme is gender conflict, as well as female complicity and solidarity in Correia’s classical trilogy of plays, *Perdição: exercício sobre Antígona*, *O rancor: exercício sobre Helena* and *Desmesura: exercício com Medeia*, as well as in *Montedemo*, ‘Fascinação’ and *Insânia*. Lisboa proposes that female bonds of relatedness and friendship emerge as the catalyst for social revision in these texts. These bonds illustrate the way in which female characters have a way of disrupting the homosocial comfort of worlds that are by default made for their male counterparts.

Also through an analysis of themes of female friendship and intimacy, Anna Klobucka reflects on the ways in which the gender-neutral love sonnets of Virgínia Vitorino, the most acclaimed female poet of the 1920s in Portugal, are directed both at straight and queer readerships. In doing so, Klobucka challenges the heteronormative assumptions that have so far governed the interpretation of Vitorino’s life and poetry. Reading the anti-heteronormative resistance of Vitorino’s writing in the light of Portugal’s pathologising focus on lesbianism as sexual deviance, Klobucka questions the central position attributed to the male love object in readings of early twentieth-century Portuguese poetry by women, emphasising instead the ‘verifiable materiality and pervasiveness of female homosocial transactions occurring in the environment in which this poetry was produced’.

The emphasis on female solidarity and intimacy shifts in Rhian Atkin and David Frier’s co-authored piece to an analysis of the isolation of women in Maria Judite de Carvalho’s *Os armários vazios*. Their study aims to understand the conditions under which a polyphony of voices is created in this short novel, in the context of the Estado Novo’s patriarchal authoritarian regime. Through a reading of the gaps in communication amongst Carvalho’s characters, the authors argue that the patriarchal domination of Ernesto Lage is contested by a variety of conflicting female voices that succeed in depicting a range of roles available to women beyond those of motherhood and domestic management.

Paulo de Medeiros’ chapter explores the significance of poetry for the advancement of literary theory in the context of a study of Ana Luísa Amaral’s distinctive poetic voice. Medeiros approaches this subject through an analysis of the intermingling of beauty, power and desire in Amaral’s poetry, in particular her 2003 collection *A arte de ser tigre*, arguing that part of what makes her poetic vision distinctive is a symbiosis of theory/abstraction and triviality/life.

Maria Tavares’s piece explores the literary response of Paulina Chiziane to *A Minha Maputo é…*, a volume launched in 2012 by the historical Mozambican bookshop Minerva Central, to commemorate its 104th anniversary as well as Maputo’s 125th anniversary. Through an analysis of gender identities and relations in Chiziane’s contribution to the Minerva Central volume, a short-story entitled, ‘João, o hipopótamo’, Tavares denounces the highly policed Mozambican national narrative that Minerva Central’s project celebrates, and its visible association with the identity of the ruling party Frelimo.

Phillip Rothwell offers a study of the memoirs of Bissau-Guinean revolutionary Carmen Pereira, the first woman to act as president of an African country. Exploring *Os meus três amores* as a complex, mediated testimonial narrative, Rothwell homes in on the central tension between ideas about motherhood and female emancipation in the presentation of Pereira’s inspirational contribution to the PAIGC’s anti-colonial revolution. In so doing, he illuminates the evidence for Pereira’s influence on the revolutionary theory of Amílcar Cabral, and on his posthumous reputation as one of the most committed feminists among the leaders of Africa’s Independence Era.

Turning to medieval chronicler Rui de Pina’s accounts of the Lisbon revolt of 1438-39, Thomas Earle explores the literary representation of this Lisbon uprising, which arose because of dissention over the regency of Portugal, to an earlier one depicted by Fernão Lopes (1383-85). Both uprisings were over whether a woman – Leonor of Aragon and Leonor Teles – should rule Portugal. This is done by paying attention to what both accounts share in terms of content and style, and particularly in terms of Pina’s portrayal of Leonor of Aragon as a Queen who, from a literary point of view, must be defined as weak in opposition to Prince (later King) Manuel, depicted as a strong character.

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