

(EX)CHANGES:

# KNOWLEDGE AND CONTROL IN THE LITERARY STORY TELLING

SHORT FICTION IN PORTUGAL, THE UNITED KINGDOM AND IRELAND  
(1980-2010)

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS  
CÁTEDRA GIL VICENTE,  
UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM,  
DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES  
FRIDAY, 30TH NOVEMBER  
2012

(EX)CHANGES:  
SHORT FICTION IN PORTUGAL,  
THE UNITED KINGDOM AND  
IRELAND (1980-2010)

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PROGRAMME  
THE UNIVERSITY OF  
BIRMINGHAM

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FRIDAY, 30TH  
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2012

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SCIENTIFIC CONSULTANT:  
DR PATRICIA ODBER BAUBETA

ORGANISERS:  
ANA RAQUEL FERNANDES, FÁTIMA CANDÉ,  
JENNIFER ARNOLD, SUZAN BOZKURT

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10H00 OPENING SESSION

10H30 – 11H30 KEYNOTE ADDRESS: PROFESSOR SUSAN BASSNETT (UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK)  
MOVING BETWEEN CULTURES: TEXTS AND TRANSMISSION

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11H30 – 11H45 COFFEE-BREAK

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11H45 – 12H45 PANEL A - DELIMITATIONS OF (THE) GENRE: (RE-)DEFINITIONS OF GENDER, NATION AND LITERARY HISTORY THROUGH SHORT FICTION WRITING

SUZAN BOZKURT (UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER, DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH, PORTUGUESE AND  
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES)  
WHO IS AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?: THE PORTUGUESE TRANSLATIONS OF *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN* AND  
THEIR INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY WRITERS AND CRITICS IN PORTUGAL

PAUL MELO E CASTRO (UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS – DEPARTMENT OF SPANISH, PORTUGUESE AND  
LATIN-AMERICAN STUDIES)  
THE LYRIC SHORT STORIES OF MARIA ELSA DA ROCHA

SERAFINA MARTINS (UNIVERSIDADE DE LISBOA – CLEPUL)  
O CONTO PORTUGUÊS E OS CÓDIGOS EPOCAIS - DO FIM-DE-SÉCULO AO NEO-REALISMO

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12H45 – 14H30 LUNCH

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14H30 – 15H30 PANEL B - TRANSCULTURAL EXCHANGES: TRANSLATION AS AN INTRA CULTURAL EXERCISE

SARA PAIVA HENRIQUES (CEAUL/ULICES)  
KAZUO ISHIGURO'S SHORT FICTION AND ITS RECEPTION IN PORTUGAL

MÁRIO SEMIÃO (ULICES/DALARNA UNIVERSITY, SWEDEN)  
"A COLLECTION OF STORIES FROM A FINALIST OF THE BOOKER PRIZE": THE RECEPTION OF JULIAN BARNES'S SHORT FICTION IN PORTUGAL

ZUZANNA SANCHES (CEAUL/ULICES)  
ONE TEXT AS ANOTHER: IRELAND, PORTUGAL AND TRANSLATING BETWEEN LANGUAGES, TEXTS AND CULTURES

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15H30 – 15H45 COFFEE-BREAK

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15H45 – 16H45 PANEL C - THE OTHERNESS OF THE STRANGER: THE CREATION OF LIMINAL SPACES IN CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

CLAIRE WILLIAMS (ST PETER'S COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD)  
A NOVEL IN THIRTEEN STORIES: *CONTAR DE SUBVERSÃO (ROMANCE)*, BY OLGA GONÇALVES

INÊS ALVES MENDES (CECC, UNIVERSIDADE CATÓLICA PORTUGUESA)  
THE BRONTË SISTER'S VAMPIRE: HÉLIA CORREIA'S "UMA NOITE EM LUDDENDEN"

ANA RAQUEL FERNANDES (ULICES/ UNIVERSITY OF BIRMINGHAM)  
WOMEN AUTHORS IN (EX)CHANGE: SHORT FICTION IN PORTUGAL AND THE UNITED KINGDOM (1980-2012)

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16H45 – 17H15 CLOSING SESSION

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KEYNOTE ADDRESS:

PROFESSOR  
**SUSAN BASSNETT**

MOVING BETWEEN CULTURES:  
TEXTS AND TRANSMISSION



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# WOMEN AUTHORS IN (EX)CHANGE: SHORT FICTION IN PORTUGAL AND THE UNITED KINGDOM (1980-2012)

The purpose of the present paper is twofold. Firstly, it aims at systematizing information concerning the translation and reception of British women short fiction authors in Portugal, approximately from 1980 onwards. Secondly, I would like to consider the question of translation and reception of Portuguese women short fiction authors in the United Kingdom, within the same period. Some of the questions I will seek to answer are:

- a. Who are the women writers and which works are selected for translation?
- b. Which publishing houses have had a key role in promoting British and Portuguese women authors in translation?
- c. How is a chosen writer / title promoted and marketed?
- d. Who are the translators?

My presentation will follow a comparative approach, focused on the exchanges between the two cultural / literary systems under analysis – British and Portuguese.



CLAIRE WILLIAMS

ST PETER'S COLLEGE,  
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

A NOVEL IN THIRTEEN STORIES:  
*CONTAR DE SUBVERSÃO (ROMANCE)*,  
BY OLGA GONÇALVES

The Angolan born Portuguese writer Olga Gonçalves (1929-2004) was best known for her poetry and her experimental prose texts which eschewed description and instead foregrounded dialogue; particularly the voices of those marginalised by society such as the poor, immigrants, prostitutes, drug dealers. This virtual orality creates a sense of authenticity that persuades the reader they are reading confessions or testimonies that vividly evoke the changes taking place in Portugal in the anti-climax following the revolution of 1974. *Contar de Subversão* (1990) was her only published collection of short stories, yet it declares itself to be a novel. Both the preface and the afterword explicitly challenge the reader to find a unifying thread between the thirteen unsettling stories, daring them to read again and again. This paper examines how the jigsaw fits together and tries to solve the mystery of the angel with the umbrella.

Hélia Correia's "Uma noite em Luddenden" was published in 2009 as part of a collection of short stories on vampires. The book, coordinated by Pedro Sena Lino, served to showcase to the reader an unusual genre in Portuguese literature, as one can read from the preface (p. 9).

Hélia's love for British literary tradition is illustrated in her portrayal of Patrick Branwell Brontë, brother to the famous Brontë sisters, being told a tale by a Portuguese man named António Pires of an awe-inspiring encounter with a vampire. According to António, he arrived at a ghostly city and met an uncanny woman with whom he made love. In the climax of their sexual affair, she bit him in the neck leaving him with two marks. Feeling ill ever since, António Pires is yet to grasp what happened to him just a few hours ago. On the contrary, his British pub companions are surprised by his gullibility: "Ouça, não há vampiros na sua terra? (...) Só o aviso porque você estava realmente inocente. Não sabia. Com um de nós isso não ia acontecer" (pp. 54–55). As this passage demonstrates, the cultural construction of the Other is activated in the text. Not only is António perceived as a foreigner by the British men since he is unable to recognize the danger he was led to, his British fellows are similarly perceived as Others in Antonio's narration of his life and eerie meeting. In fact, the story sheds light on the cultural representations of British and Portuguese alike by exploring the differences and encounters between two nations and two cultural frameworks. The background against which the male characters are presented refers to significant cultural perceptions, including economic, political and social aspects such as the port wine and wool trade industries, the Napoleonic Wars and, finally, the tensions between expatriates and nationals. All these elements converge to propel António Pires to his doom (or his "destiny", as he argues). This paper sets out to examine the cultural representation of the foreigner, arguing that, through the use of 19<sup>th</sup>-century female Gothic tropes, the female vampire constitutes the ultimate alien/the ultimate Other.

Moreover, it will examine a recurrent subject in Correia's work: the "in-between" space as a site of transgression. The female vampire is an in-between creature, neither dead nor alive, as is António Pires, the vampire-to-be in less than 24 hours. The same can be said of Branwell Brontë, himself on the brink of becoming an outcast and an alcoholic. As shall be demonstrated, the liminal (in-between) space enables the questioning of national and literary identities. Using Homi Bhabha's conceptualization (Bhabha, 1994), it will be shown that the in-between and the in-betweeners create an alternative space for forging hybrid identities.

Following the award of the Booker Prize to Julian Barnes last year, the interest in his work has significantly increased in Portugal, as the recent number of news, reviews and posts in literary blogs provide evidence. However, Barnes was not altogether neglected in the Portuguese literary scene, receiving attention from time to time, as news that linked him to major literary prizes would surface, and in connection to the publication of some of his works.

Barnes's *oeuvre* has then slowly, but steadily, been made available in Portugal, by the hand of two publishers: Quetzal and Asa. As expected, the majority of the translations refer to novels, but in reality only the latest collection of short stories, *Pulse* (2011), is yet to be translated and published. As a matter of fact, Portuguese readers had merely to wait a few years for the translation of *Cross Channel* (1996) and *Lemon Table* (2004). More importantly, if one takes a bird's eye view of Barnes's fictional work, we see that each translation only appeared following Barnes's inclusion in the shortlist for the Booker Prize, a fact reinforced by the recurrent general presentation of the books as "a collection of stories from a finalist of the Booker prize".

With this in mind, the aim of the present paper is to provide an overview of the reception of Julian Barnes's short fiction in Portugal, devoting particular emphasis to three aspects: 1) to consider the publisher's peritext in relation to the substance of the reception of the two collections of short stories; 2) to compare – in qualitative and quantitative terms – the reception to his short fiction and to his novels; and 3) to reflect on the role of literary prizes in the publication process and the overall reception of Barnes's work.



Though Charles May and Suzanne Ferguson disagreed as to whether the short story was a mode or a genre, it was obvious, nonetheless, even if neither critic used the term, that their bone of contention was the lyric short story. Initially identified by Eileen Baldeshwiller in contradistinction to the epic tale, the lyric short story has been often referenced but more seldom delineated. Indeed, it is frequently used as merely as a further synonym for what is also called the post-Chekhovian short story, the literary short story, or even just the modern short story, which are equally vague terms. The first section of my paper attempts therefore to map the horizon of expectation that stretches before us if we consider a short story as lyric. The reference here to the experience of reading over category definition is deliberate. I am more interested in how thinking of how considerations of form can help form the basis for an interpretation. In order to ground my considerations I look here at four short stories by a Lusophone Goan writer I am currently researching, Maria Elsa da Rocha (1932 – 2006), who began publishing stories in the 1960s after the ouster of the Portuguese coloniser. These stories are “Cansaço no Nadir”, “Um Desejo Silencioso”, “Telheiros Baixos” and “A Seiva Amarga”. Postcolonial criticism has often fought shy of genre criticism, and especially the sort of essentialist thinking that characterised May and Ferguson’s debate, but there has been a turn of late in the field towards a greater attention to aesthetics, as a way of obviating the reduction of postcolonial literatures to an exotic archive for information retrieval. I consider here the various features of Rocha’s tales that become apparent if we analyse them in the context of the lyric short story. Rather than a closed category or an oppositional definition, to consider a short story thus becomes a heuristic, a cue to attend to certain features of Rocha’s story in certain ways. I argue, inter alia, that the lack of conventional beginnings and endings, the focus on the subjective and the sensuous experience of snippets of Goan life, is part of Rocha’s postcolonial literary project: to write Goa anew, to refocus her reader’s attention away from the cultural image of the territory promoted by the Portuguese towards aspects of Goan life that were sidelined under colonial rule and which her Lusophone readership, relatively privileged if dissatisfied under the previous dispensation, would have to come to terms in order to join in the formation of a more progressive society.

Born in Japan in 1954, the British novelist Kazuo Ishiguro moved to England with his family in 1960. Although he is best known for his novels, which have already granted him several awards – including the 1989 Booker Prize for *The Remains of the Day* – Ishiguro has also published several short stories, including one collection of short fiction titled *Nocturnes: Five Stories of Music and Nightfall* (2009).

In my paper I propose to explore the impact that both the book awards and the film adaptations of Ishiguro's novels (namely, "The Remains of the Day", dir. James Ivory, 1993; "Never Let Me Go", dir. Mark Romanek, 2010) have had not only on his career, but particularly on the British literary canon. As Malcolm Bradbury suggested: "Ishiguro helped the British novel on to the international stage and out of the provincial rut of the 1950s and 1960s [...]. Winning the Booker Prize, Britain's most prestigious literary award, was a tremendous boost for Ishiguro's writing career."<sup>1</sup>

Considering the scope of the conference, I shall draw particular attention to *Nocturnes*, which, together with four of his novels, has been translated to Portuguese by Gradiva: *Nunca me deixes* (2011); *Os despojos do dia* (1995); *Os inconsolados* (1995) e *Quando éramos orfãos* (2000). Thus, my paper will focus on two central topics:

1) The difference between Ishiguro's romances and his short stories. Here I shall, on the one hand, pay close attention to the likeness of the themes explored by Ishiguro and, on the other hand, to the way the author is able to develop those same themes in a short fiction, particularly the ones I have chosen. Such study is quite relevant if one considers the fact that Ishiguro's short stories have been largely dismissed by literary criticism, as Barry Lewis notes:

Ishiguro's short stories fall into two categories: exercises in style, arising from the University of East Anglia Creative Writing course he took, and satellite studies for his novels. [...] Much more accomplished are the short stories which fall into the other category, the sketches containing themes, characters or situations explored in greater depth by the novels. Again, these have been largely overlooked by the critics, despite being included in several prominent anthologies.<sup>2</sup>

2) The reception of Ishiguro's writing in Portugal, focusing on the 2009's translation of *Nocturnes* by Rui Pires Cabral (*Nocturnos: cinco histórias sobre música e o cair da noite*). Here I shall also bring forth the discussion of translation studies, bearing in mind the importance of the selected short stories to the amplitude of the conference as well as its premise.

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis, Barry. *Kazuo Ishiguro*. Manchester University Press: Manchester, 2000. pp. 130–131.

<sup>2</sup> Lewis (2000). pp. 130–131.

Para uma boa compreensão do que passou durante aproximadamente cinquenta anos na literatura portuguesa convém ter presente o intuito, inicial, de ultrapassar as premissas da estética realista, que praticamente dominara o século anterior – vontade especialmente nítida nos autores finisseculares e do primeiro modernismo – e o intuito, a partir da década de 30, de integrar a produção literária numa batalha ideológica, exigida pelas condições em que então se encontrava o país. A literatura portuguesa da primeira metade do século XX acolhe-se entre estes dois extremos, da máxima exposição do fazer artístico – da “arte em si” – à máxima transposição do facto social, com intenções políticas, uma circunstância directamente relacionada com o regime salazarista; fim-de-século, modernismo, presencismo e neo-realismo constituem as grandes secções histórico-literárias que podemos identificar nesses cinquenta anos.

O conto, como qualquer outra expressão literária, está e esteve “dependente de códigos epocais dominantes”, usando palavras de Manuel Frias Martins, dando-nos assim a possibilidade de aceder a um conhecimento da literatura (neste caso de uma literatura nacional) enquanto processo histórico e de compreender especificidades periodológicas. Podemos lembrar que, pela sua condição de “forma breve” de teor narrativo, o conto tem a virtude de mais sucintamente do que o romance nos permitir dominar um elenco literário distribuído ao longo de um período temporal vasto, uma vez que se economiza em tempo de leitura. Por outro lado, devemos lembrar ainda que na primeira metade do século XX os escritores hoje em dia considerados canónicos foram todos notáveis contistas, um facto que pode ser visto como desinteressante (por ser previsível), mas que deve ser objecto de reflexão, nomeadamente porque: i) a qualidade e representatividade da produção poética de alguns desses escritores obscureceram as suas narrativas breves (é o caso de Mário de Sá-Carneiro e de Almada Negreiros); ii) o projecto neo-realista de transpor realisticamente a situação de Portugal, bem como os intuitos didácticos dos autores, são à partida mais consentâneos com o romance, com a possibilidade que este tem de integrar imagens do colectivo e de, digamos, exemplificar as suas asserções através dos acontecimentos; iii) a narrativa portuguesa orienta-se, na segunda metade do século XX, para uma expressão fragmentária, aproximando-se assim da natureza do conto e afastando-se do efeito de construção abrangente e concluída que caracteriza o romance convencional aperfeiçoado ao longo do século XIX.

Partindo das ideias anteriores, veremos que no caso da literatura portuguesa o conto deve merecer grande atenção por parte de quem a estuda, não para alterar uma hierarquia de géneros, cuja mudança não compete nem ao discurso crítico nem à teoria, resultando, sim, de dinâmicas da produção e do gostos dos leitores, mas para compreender, do ponto de vista histórico, parte do que é a expressão moderna dessa mesma literatura.

# WHO IS AFRAID OF VIRGINIA WOOLF?: THE PORTUGUESE TRANSLATIONS OF *A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN* AND THEIR INFLUENCE ON CONTEMPORARY WRITERS AND CRITICS IN PORTUGAL

Undoubtedly Virginia Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* has played an important role in the development of a feminist consciousness in Portugal and 'influenciou profundamente as críticas feministas que tentavam delinear a tradição da escrita feminina em língua inglesa' (Klobucka, 2006: 154) since its first translation into the Portuguese language in 1947. The writer Manuela Porto publishes Woolf's text 'num misto interessante de tradução, paráfrase, resumo e impressões de leitura' (Abranches, 1980: 131). This translation triggered a discussion initiated by Maria Gabriela Llansol whether indeed 'há uma arte feminina, arte de mulheres, diferente da dos homens' (Ferreira, 2002: 24); which denounces the practice of many literary critics and historians to treat female authorship as separate and inherently different from male authorship. Virginia Woolf's text, though, greatly influential to critics and writers, did not get translated again for another 30 years, till 1978, when the Editorial Vega issues the text as *Um quarto que seja seu* with an introduction written by Maria Isabel Barreno. This translation, re-edited in 1981 and 1996, hugely influenced critics and women writers in the 1980s and 1990s, from Graça Abranches to Ana Luísa Amaral, confirming its role as a seminal text in establishing a female/feminist writing conscious and the demand for a female literary heritage. But due to the quality and infrequency of the translations *A Room of One's Own* remains a text difficult to access in the Portuguese language; and interpretations of it are still left to those who can read it in its original language.

# ONE TEXT AS ANOTHER: IRELAND, PORTUGAL AND TRANSLATING BETWEEN LANGUAGES, TEXTS AND CULTURES

Rather than debunking the difficult fact that languages are ineluctably diverse, their multiple levels of meaning can serve as propellers of inter cultural dialogue as well as intra cultural introspection. Cultural differences, as proven by the art of translation are not insurmountable. If, as Ricoeur agrees, there is “no consensus on what would characterize a perfect language at the level of the lexicon of original ideas,” translation shows us that reaching an accord is not impossible. Ricoeur calls the translation process of mediating between languages the “linguistic hospitality” or the practice of summoning two languages into communication with one-another without violating the integrity of either one. Convening an exchange between the writer, the reader and the text is a culturally enriching act, testifying to dynamism and want of progression intrinsic to humanity.

This text will analyze the translation processes, the reasons, the drawbacks and the gains in the events of translating between Irish and Portuguese texts, and more broadly, Irish and Portuguese cultures.

