

# The discourse on utility: art theory in eighteenth-century Portugal<sup>1</sup>

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The writing of texts relating to art in Portugal before the second half of the eighteenth century was principally characterized by discontinuity.<sup>2</sup> It was only after, roughly, the mid-eighteenth century that this area of cultural production witnessed a burst of activity,<sup>3</sup> although assertions regarding the texts' lack of originality or alignment with developments elsewhere in Europe still persist.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I would like to thank the anonymous reviewer of this text for their input and close reading of its main argument, as well as the journal's editor for the care and commitment in bringing it forth for publication. Unless otherwise indicated, translations are mine. This article results from a postdoctoral fellowship at the Instituto de História Contemporânea (FCSH/NOVA – financed by FEDER Funds through the COMPETE Program and by National Funds through the FCT–Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, in the context of the project UID/HIS/04209/2013).

<sup>2</sup> Francisco de Holanda is the obvious exception here. Although his manuscripts were not published before the end of the nineteenth century, they circulated among Portuguese and Spanish intellectuals. Cyrillo Volkmar Machado had access to them, and Pedro Rodríguez Campomanes knew a Spanish translation of Holanda's 'Da Pintura Antigua', belonging to the sculptor Felipe de Castro, which he refers to in his *Discurso sobre la educación popular de los artesanos, y su fomento*, Madrid, 1775, 99–100. The other notable exception would be Félix da Costa Meessen's *The Antiquity of the Art of Painting* [1696], which was first published in a facsimile edition with an English translation in 1967 (introd. and notes by George Kubler, trans. by G. Kubler et al., New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1967). Meessen's text is also noteworthy for including the lives of select Portuguese artists (*Antiquity*, 460–469).

<sup>3</sup> On eighteenth-century artistic theory in Portugal, see Nuno Saldanha, 'A Literatura artística setecentista', in *Artistas, Imagens e Ideias na Pintura do século XVIII. Estudos de Iconografia, Prática e Teoria Artística*, Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 1995, 203–213; Foteini Vlachou, 'Art in the European Periphery: History Painting in Portugal at the beginning of the Nineteenth Century' [in Greek], doctoral dissertation, University of Crete, 2013, 75–142 (on the circulation of texts and artistic ideas, reception and translation).

<sup>4</sup> See Ana Luísa Barão, 'Teoria e Crítica de Arte entre a Europa e Portugal – Finais do século XVIII e inícios do XIX', *III Congresso Internacional de História da Arte. Portugal na Encruzilhada de Culturas, das Artes e de Sensibilidades*, 4, December 2006, 1–43, who, for example, comments negatively on the chronological distance between Du Fresnoy's 1801 translation in Portuguese and the text's original publication in Latin and in French translation in 1668, concluding that these kinds of misalignments led in Portugal to the survival of ideas that were not up-to-date. This evolutionary-linear model of thinking about history is, unfortunately, not an isolated instance but rather dominant, and its main proponent is José-Augusto França, with whose aphorism regarding the inability of Portuguese aesthetic thought to be structured 'historically', i.e. following a linear development, Barão concludes

Choosing two texts from this period, Joaquim Machado de Castro's 1788 *Discurso sobre as utilidades do desenho*<sup>5</sup> and Cyrillo Volkmar Machado's 1794–1798 *Conversações*,<sup>6</sup> this article proposes to show not only the common theoretical concerns that their authors shared, but how these were shaped by and in their turn expressed contemporary preoccupations regarding the centrality of drawing as an instrument for the instruction of artists and artisans alike (manifest in initiatives such as the foundation of the Porto drawing school, as we shall see), the concept of the utility of the arts and their applicability in various commercial sectors, and their importance in the increase of national wealth and glory, through the enhancement of the nation's industry and manufactures.

Furthermore, the texts themselves are testaments to a series of cultural exchanges and transfers,<sup>7</sup> of artistic ideas being transplanted from various geographic areas, demonstrating the versatility of their Portuguese authors. Although French artistic texts dominated the cultural landscape of Portugal for much of the eighteenth century, especially when it came to publications such as dictionaries and theoretical treatises,<sup>8</sup> the strand that focused on the utility of the

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her article in agreement (José-Augusto França, 'A crítica da arte em Portugal no século XIX', *Ler História*, 34, 1998, 5–16). On the concept of delay in the historiography of Portuguese art, see Mariana Pinto dos Santos, 'Estou atrasado! Estou atrasado! – Sobre o atraso da arte portuguesa diagnosticado pela historiografia', in André Barata, António Santos Pereira and José Ricardo Carvalheiro, eds, *Representações da Portugalidade*, Lisbon: Caminho, 2011, 231–242, and Foteini Vlachou, 'Why Spatial? Time and the Periphery', *Visual Resources*, 32, nos. 1–2, March–June 2016, 9–24 (esp. 13–14).

<sup>5</sup> Joaquim Machado de Castro, *Discurso sobre as utilidades do desenho*, Lisbon: Na Officina de Antonio Rodrigues Galhardo, 1788. On Joaquim Machado de Castro, the leading Portuguese sculptor of the period, responsible among others for the equestrian statue of D. José I in Praça do Comércio in Lisbon, see Miguel Figueira de Faria *Machado de Castro (1731–1822)*. *Estudos*, Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 2008 and Ana Duarte Rodrigues and Anísio Franco, eds, *O Virtuoso Criador. Joaquim Machado de Castro (1731–1822)*, exhibition catalogue, Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda, 2012.

<sup>6</sup> [Cyrillo Volkmar Machado], *Conversações sobre a pintura, escultura, e architectura. Escriptas, e dedicadas aos Professores, e aos Amadores das bellas Artes*, 2 vols, Lisbon: Na Officina de Simão Thaddeo Ferreira, 1794–1798. On the painter Cyrillo Volkmar Machado, who was also the most prolific writer of the period, see Paulo Varela Gomes, 'Cyrillo Volkmar Machado e a História da Arte em Portugal na transição do século XVIII para o século XIX', *A Cultura Arquitectónica e Artística em Portugal no século XVIII*, Lisbon: Caminho, 1988, 149–173 and 'A Confissão de Cyrillo', in *A Confissão de Cyrillo. Estudos de História da Arte e da Architectura*, Lisbon: Hiena Editora, 1992, 15–37; Luísa Arruda, 'As leituras solitárias de Cirilo Wolkmar Machado e o ensino das artes do desenho', in Rafael Moreira and Ana Duarte Rodrigues, eds, *Tratados de Arte em Portugal*, Lisbon: Scribe, 2011, 103–118.

<sup>7</sup> For a useful summary of the methodology of cultural transfers, as well as its limitations, see Béatrice Joyeux-Prunel, 'Les transferts culturels. Un discours de la méthode', *Hypothèses* 1, no. 6 (2003): 149–162.

<sup>8</sup> France as the principal source of texts for Portugal should undoubtedly be related to the fact that the book commerce remained firmly in the hands of Frenchmen throughout the eighteenth century. See Francisco da Gama Caiiro, 'Livros e livreiros franceses em Lisboa,

arts seems to have owed more to ideas and texts originating from a British context, though it certainly extended beyond the appropriation of texts. This was most likely due to the close commercial and political ties between the two countries, a result of geopolitical considerations and constraints resulting in even greater dependence on behalf of Portugal, that would be further aggravated during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars. This link to notions of public utility of the arts developed in Great Britain would prove surprisingly durable in Portugal and it would last well into the nineteenth century, when Ramalho Ortigão would invoke ‘the glorious name of Ruskin’ as a model for the encouragement and renewal of traditional and domestic industries.<sup>9</sup> Let us then examine how one of the first initiatives regarding the practical teaching of drawing was formed in Porto, and how it closely related to ideas of public utility in particular and the British context in general.

### **The utility of drawing and the ‘British connection’**

Of the drawing schools established in Portugal during the second half of the eighteenth century (such as the School of Drawing of History and Civil Architecture, established in Lisbon in 1781<sup>10</sup>), perhaps the most interesting for understanding the discourse developed at the same time in Portuguese artistic treatises, was the founding of the Public School of Sketch and Drawing (Aula pública de Debuxo e Desenho) in Porto, with the royal decree of November 27, 1779.<sup>11</sup> Placed under the care of the Administration Board of the General Company of the Vineyards of Alto Douro (Junta de Administração da Companhia Geral das Vinhas do Alto Douro), its orientation was from the start practical and the school was meant to function in the same way (and apparently with the same objectives of public utility and contribution to the progress of the local manufactures) as the Nautical School (founded in 1762).<sup>12</sup> It later merged (with the *alvará* of July 29, 1803) with the rest of the schools that operated in Porto (navigation, mathematics, commerce, English and French language) and together they created the Royal

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nos fins de setecentos e no primeiro quartel do século XIX’, *Boletim da Biblioteca da Universidade de Coimbra*, 35, 1980, 139–167.

<sup>9</sup> Ramalho Ortigão, *O Culto da Arte em Portugal*, Lisbon: António Maria Pereira, 1896, 118–124.

<sup>10</sup> See Miguel Figueira de Faria, ‘Joaquim Carneiro da Silva e o Plano da Aula Pública de Desenho de Lisboa: contributo para a história do ensino das Belas Artes em Portugal’, in Natália Marinho Ferreira-Alves, ed., *Artistas e Artífices no Mundo de Expressão Portuguesa*, Porto: CEPES – Centro de Estudos da População, Economia e Sociedade, 2008, 193–207.

<sup>11</sup> The text of the decree can be consulted in José Coelho dos Santos, ed., *Origens de uma escola. Subsídios documentais para a história do ensino de belas-artes na cidade do Porto*, Porto: ESBAP, 1980, 17–18.

<sup>12</sup> Coelho dos Santos, ed., *Origens*, 19–20.

Academy of Navy and Commerce of the City of Porto (Academia Real da Marinha e Comércio da Cidade do Porto).<sup>13</sup>

Not a lot is known about the activities of the school's students, or their works. The books that belonged to the school, however, covered a wide range, from traditional treatises (Leonardo, Vitruvius, Serlio) to various volumes on furniture, carpentry etc. The latter bear witness to a keen interest towards British texts, especially when it came to the so-called decorative or applied arts, including volumes such as Francis Price's *The British Carpenter* (published in 1735, the book underwent several editions during the eighteenth century), *The cabinet-maker and upholsterer's guide; or, Repository of designs for every article of household furniture* (1788; 1789; 1794), and books of architectural drawings with a decidedly practical slant, such as John Soane's *Sketches in architecture. Containing plans and elevations of cottages, villas, and other useful buildings with characteristic scenery* (1793) or John Plaw's *Sketches for country houses, villas, and rural dwellings, also some designs for cottages which may be constructed of the simplest materials* (1800).<sup>14</sup> These texts should hardly come as a surprise in a city such as Porto, where the wine commerce had attracted a strong British community, that furthermore left its indelible mark on several public buildings of the city.<sup>15</sup> Such were the British Factory (1785–1790), designed by the British consul in Porto John Whitehead (1726–1802), and the Royal Hospital of Santo António (1770–1824), commissioned to the British architect John Carr (1723–1807), but only partially executed after his drawings.<sup>16</sup> The difference between Porto and

<sup>13</sup> On the Academy, see Américo Pires de Lima, 'Origens da Academia Real da Marinha e Comércio da Cidade do Porto. Factos e documentos novos', *Douro-Litoral. Boletim da Comissão Provincial de Etnografia e História*, 4, 1946, 17–59 (here 18). Cf. Coelho dos Santos, ed., *Origens*, 16 and 32–36. In 1837 the Royal Academy of Navy was transformed into the Polytechnic Academy (Academia Politécnica), where drawing continued to be taught along mathematics, chemistry, natural history, economics, agronomy etc. For the transformation, see Rafael Ávila de Azevedo, 'Da Academia Real da Marinha e Comércio do Porto à Academia Politécnica do Porto', *Revista de História*, 4, 1981, 133–150 (here 147).

<sup>14</sup> See the 'Descrição dos objectos que existião na aula de desenho em 1805, estando então a aula no Hospício da Cordoaria onde também estava a Roda dos engeitados, e de ali foi mudada para a Camera Ecclesiastica nas escadas dos Grillos em 1806', published in Pedro Vitorino, *José Teixeira Barreto. Artista Portuense (1763–1810)*, Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1925, 70–83. Unfortunately, the information available in the 'Descrição', usually two or three words from each title, does not suffice to determine exactly which edition belonged to the school.

<sup>15</sup> Yves Bottineau, 'Quelques nuances du goût dans le Portugal des Lumières', *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*, December 1974, 305–318, here 317, mused, rather poetically (imagining a traveler in the fashion of Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*): 'J'ai vu Porto aussi et bu de ce vin dont les Anglais ne se désaltèrent pas depuis des siècles. Te souviens-tu de ma lettre sur la mode à Paris, jadis ? Ici, c'est bien différent. Le roi et la Cour suivent le goût d'hier, la capitale celui de demain, Porto celui de la capitale et des Anglais, car ces derniers emportent le vin et débarquent un peu de leur architecture'.

<sup>16</sup> Helena da Silva, 'O Porto e a construção da cidade moderna: o caso do Hospital Geral de Santo António, nos séculos XVIII e XIX', *História, Ciências, Saúde-Manguinhos*, 21, no. 2, 2014, 709–725. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1590/S0104-59702014000200013>.

Lisbon was obvious to foreign observers as well, who commented favourably on what they perceived as the salutary influence of British presence in the city. The German naturalist and botanist Heinrich Friedrich Link (1767–1851), who travelled in Portugal between 1797 and 1799, wrote characteristically:

We seemed almost to have quitted Portugal, and to be suddenly transported to England; so regular, so light, and neat are all the buildings. Generally speaking, Oporto is without doubt the cleanest town in Portugal (...) At Oporto the manners of society are taken from the english [*sic*], who are here more numerous and considerable, in proportion to the other rich inhabitants, than at Lisbon. They have a kind of casino in a handsome building, which is extremely well regulated, and very much contributes to bring foreigners together.<sup>17</sup>

To fully comprehend the extent of the practical applications of the teaching of drawing as foreseen in the regulation of the school (where the drawing course integrated the course of mathematics), one has to carefully examine the obligations of the Professor of Drawing. While the ability to draw from nature was valued, this referred literally to nature and her various products, and should not be confused with drawing after the live model. Drawing was understood as a branch of applied geometry and the things that one should be taught were conducive to a career primarily in engineering and architecture (naval, military and civil). The tracing of topographical maps was mentioned, for example, as well as a series of objects that pertain more to the illustration of natural history than painting proper (animals, birds, plants, trees etc.). It is also important to note that the Professor of Drawing was responsible for the menial task of teaching the students how to prepare colours, how to mix and grind them, as well as how to prepare *agoadas*, an ink wash technique probably well-suited for natural history drawings and illustrations.<sup>18</sup> As Miguel Faria has astutely observed, late eighteenth-century schools in Portugal were oriented towards the teaching of a propaedeutic drawing, rather than artistic education according to the French academic model.<sup>19</sup>

Significantly, this professorship at the Porto drawing school was the post that the painter Francisco Vieira Portuense (1765–1805) was appointed to, after

<sup>17</sup> Heinrich Friedrich Link, *Travels in Portugal, and through France and Spain. With a Dissertation on the Literature of Portugal, and the Spanish and Portuguese Languages*, trans. by John Hinckley, London: Longman and Rees, 1801, 322–323.

<sup>18</sup> For the text of the regulation see José Silvestre Ribeiro, *História dos estabelecimentos científicos litterários e artísticos de Portugal nos successivos reinados da monarchia*, Lisbon: Typographia da Academia Real das Sciencias, 1872, vol. 2, 391. Cf. Pires de Lima, 'Origens da Academia Real', 40, for the initial proposal of the regulation, dating 1799, which is more detailed than the version later approved, although it insisted fundamentally on the same points.

<sup>19</sup> Miguel Figueira de Faria, *A imagem útil. José Joaquim Freire (1760–1847) desenhador topográfico e de história natural: arte, ciência e razão de estado no final do antigo regime*, Lisbon: Universidade Autónoma, 2001, 56.

returning to Portugal from years of studying in Italy, traveling in Europe and working in London.<sup>20</sup> It was on the occasion of his appointment furthermore that, in June 1802, he delivered an inaugural speech, that was published the following year.<sup>21</sup> The speech can be effectively seen as an attempt of compromise between the school's pragmatic orientation and Vieira's prolonged contact with value systems privileging the fine arts (as opposed to the strong tradition of decorative arts and the still prevailing artisanal view of artistic creation in Portugal). In the 1802 speech, Vieira Portuense talked about drawing and painting as being 'the most solid, and nutritive foundations of many beautiful ideas. From them, the refinement of good taste depends, [and] the perfection of Industries and Manufactures results...'.<sup>22</sup> The necessity of the 'succor of painting' to these industries and manufactures was 'patent to all', according to the painter, attesting to the wide currency of these opinions in turn-of-the-century Portugal.<sup>23</sup> It is not known to what extent Vieira Portuense's stay in London (1797-1801) would have acquainted him with the latest debates on design instruction, but his intense involvement in the commercialization of his own drawings through their publication as prints<sup>24</sup> and his close collaboration with the engraver Francesco Bartolozzi (which further intensified the painter's involvement with illustrated editions) reveal a sensibility fine-tuned towards the various articulations between art and commerce.<sup>25</sup>

Nevertheless, the points of contact between Portugal and Great Britain should not be construed as a direct influence. Their antagonistic relationship often

<sup>20</sup> For Vieira Portuense, see Elisa Soares and José Alberto Seabra Carvalho, eds, *Francisco Vieira, o Portuense, 1765–1805*, exhibition catalogue, Porto: Museu Nacional Soares dos Reis, 2001.

<sup>21</sup> Francisco Vieira Junior, *Discurso feito na abertura da Academia de Desenho, e Pintura na cidade do Porto*, Lisbon: Regia Officina Typografica, 1803.

<sup>22</sup> Vieira, *Discurso*, 4: 'das mais solidas, e nutritivas bases de muitas bellas idéas. Dellas depende a apuração do bom gosto, resulta a perfeição das Fabricas, e Manufacturas...'.  
<sup>23</sup> Vieira, *Discurso*, 9.

<sup>24</sup> Vieira Portuense became aware of these possibilities while still in Italy, where he came into contact, and subsequently entered into close collaboration, with the engraver Francesco Rosaspina and the famed typographer Giambattista Bodoni. From this collaboration, two important editions resulted, the publication of Correggio's Camera di San Paolo frescoes and the posthumous publication of Parma's artistic masterpieces (*Pitture di Antonio Allegri detto il Correggio esistenti in Parma nel monastero di San Paolo*, Parma: nel Regal Palazzo, 1800; *Le più insigni pitture parmensi indicate agli amatori delle Belle Arti*, Parma: Tipografia Bodoniana, 1809). On this collaboration, see Giuseppina Raggi, 'Vieira, Rosaspina, Bodoni: Uma relação ininterrupta entre a Emília Italiana e Portugal', in Soares and Seabra, eds, *Francisco Vieira*, 36–70.

<sup>25</sup> The efforts undertaken by Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho and António de Araújo de Azevedo to invite Bartolozzi in Lisbon (where he arrived in 1802) with the express purpose of reviving the school of engraving, previously headed by Joaquim Carneiro da Silva, attest to the awareness of the highest government officials and statesmen of the period of the educational potential, as well as the propagandistic power of the printed image. See Vlachou, 'History Painting in Portugal', 109–114 (including previous bibliography on the subject).

placed Portuguese statesmen and diplomats in the position to try and emulate Great Britain's economic policies, in an effort to minimize its influence on their own commerce. It was thus that Marquis de Pombal (Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, 1699–1782), the all-powerful minister of D. José I, who had also served as ambassador in London, introduced a series of aggressive protective measures in order to strengthen local manufactures, industry and commerce and diminish the dependence of Portugal upon Great Britain. These included the founding of monopolies such as the Companhia do Alto Douro (1756), with the express purpose of curbing British domination in the wine export trade,<sup>26</sup> but also initiatives for the development of local manufactures (such as fabric design<sup>27</sup>) that aimed to render Portuguese products competitive against imported ones (a concern common in France as well). In a text written in 1775, on the occasion of the inauguration of the equestrian statue of D. José I, but published only posthumously in 1816, and entitled 'Highly secret observations...', Pombal considered an indication of the state's power and wealth the fact that local manufactures could provide the country with all the necessary products without resorting to imports (a somewhat excessive assessment, but one that demonstrates clearly the priorities of his government).<sup>28</sup>

Given the ongoing political, commercial and cultural exchanges between the two countries,<sup>29</sup> it is not surprising that similarities in the discourse on utility are

<sup>26</sup> See Kenneth R. Maxwell, 'Pombal and the Nationalization of the Luso-Brazilian Economy', *The Hispanic American Historical Review*, 48, November 1968, 608–631 and *Pombal. Paradox of the Enlightenment*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

<sup>27</sup> In 1764 the Aula de Desenho da Real Fábrica das Sedas was founded, for which teachers from Lyon and Torino were invited (João Maria Policarpo May and João Grossi respectively). See Celso Francisco dos Santos, 'João Maria Policarpo May. Debuxador e Lente da Aula de Desenho da Real Fábrica das Sedas', *Revista da Faculdade de Letras. Ciências e Técnicas do Património*, 1, 2002, 203–209.

<sup>28</sup> Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, 'Observações secretíssimas do Marquez de Pombal sobre a collocação da Estatua Equestre de Sua Magestade o Senhor D. José Primeiro', *Jornal de Bellas Artes, ou Mnemosine Lusitana*, 1, no. 9, 1816, 139–144 (here 140) and no. 10, 1816, 153–160.

<sup>29</sup> Cultural exchanges intensify in the second half of the eighteenth century, when Portuguese engravers are sent to London for their studies, and Portuguese medical students to Edinburgh and London (also, Copenhagen). On the latter, see Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa, *A abertura de Portugal à cultura europeia: os bolseiros de Pina Manique*, Lisbon: Inst. Port. de Ensino à Distância, 1983. British interest in Portuguese art also increased during the second half of the eighteenth century, most notably with the publication of Julius Mickle's translation of Luís de Camões's epic poem *Os Lusíadas* (1572) and James Murphy's expedition and documenting of the plans of the Monastery of Batalha. See *The Lusiad; or, the Discovery of India. An Epic Poem. Translated from the Original Portuguese of Luis de Camoëns. By William Julius Mickle*, Oxford, 1776 and James Murphy, *Plans, Elevations, Sections and Views of the Church of Batalha, in the Province of Estremadura in Portugal, with the History and Description by Fr. Luís de Sousa, with remarks. To which is prefixed an Introductory Discourse on the Principles of Gothic Architecture by James Murphy Archt*, London, 1795. Portuguese gothic architecture had attracted British interest much earlier in the century. See John Frew and Carey Wallace, 'Thomas Pitt, Portugal and the gothic cult of Batalha', *The Burlington Magazine*, 128, August 1986, 582–585.

observed in the British and Portuguese contexts, even when a straightforward link cannot necessarily be established between the two. For example, initiatives such as the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, founded in 1754 and aiming to encourage fine arts and the development of commerce, in order to increase the competitiveness of English products against French ones,<sup>30</sup> would have undoubtedly appealed to the Portuguese. In a letter published in the *Gentleman's Magazine* (February 1756) one reads the following statement regarding the Society's mission: 'Drawing is necessary in so many Trades that the general Knowledge of it must conduce greatly to the Improvement of our Manufactures, and give them an Elegance of Air and Figure which a Rival Nation (whose Drawing is much encouraged [i.e. France]), has found, to its Advantage, capable of setting off indifferent Workmanship and mean Materials'.<sup>31</sup>

These concerns were, notwithstanding, not exclusive to Great Britain. They were being voiced in a number of newly founded academies, especially in Northern Europe (Germany, Denmark, Russia), and in a number of drawing schools in Spain. The 1790 regulation of the Prussian Academy of Fine Arts in Berlin, for example, stated as its central task 'to contribute to the well-being of the arts in general as well as to instigate and foster home industries, and by influencing manufacture and commerce to improve them to such an extent that the taste of Prussian artists will no longer be inferior to that of foreigners'.<sup>32</sup> Jean-Jacques Bachelier, the founder of the *École royale gratuite de dessin* in 1766-7 (precursor of the *École nationale supérieure des arts décoratifs*), would similarly comment in 1774 on the benefits that could be derived from the study of drawing for the 'infinitely precious to the state' mechanical arts, and how drawing had the ability to multiply by a hundred 'the value of raw materials and often help [the nation's industry] rise from obscurity'.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup> See D. G. C. Allan, 'The Society of Arts and Government, 1754-1800: Public Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce in Eighteenth-Century England', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, 7, Summer 1974, 434-452.

<sup>31</sup> Cited in Anne Puetz, 'Design Instruction for Artisans in Eighteenth-Century Britain', *Journal of Design History*, 12, 1999, 217-239 (here 219).

<sup>32</sup> Cited in Nikolaus Pevsner, *Academies of Art. Past and Present*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1940, 154. This does not mean that the co-existence between schools of fine arts and schools with more practical concerns had been pacific. See for a telling example Sarah Richards, ' "A True Siberia": Art in Service to Commerce in the Dresden Academy and the Meissen Drawing School, 1764-1836', *Journal of Design History*, 11, 1998, 109-126, where she examines the vexed and conflictual relationship between the Dresden Academy of Art and the Meissen Drawing School of the Meissen Porcelain Manufactory, which she attributes to the ' "unbridgeable gap" between a commercial and academic perception of Taste in relation to art practice and teaching', which inevitably led to the failure of their alliance.

<sup>33</sup> Louis Courajod, *Les Écoles Royales des élèves protégés*, Paris, 1874, cited in Adrian Rifkin, 'The Words 'Art', the Artist's Status: Technique and Affectivity in France, 1789-98', *Oxford Art Journal*, 14, no. 2, 1991, 73-82 (here 76: 'Le dessin ne doit être considéré comme un art de simple agrément, les avantages qu'on peut en retirer par une étude suivie pour les arts mécaniques sont infiniment précieux à l'état...Il [drawing] est l'âme de plusieurs branches des arts, c'est lui qui fait donner la préférence à l'industrie d'une nation; il centuple la valeur des matières premières et souvent il en fait sortir du néant'). For the *École royale gratuite de*

Miguel Figueira de Faria, in fact, associates the emphasis on the importance of drawing observed in Portugal during the second half of the eighteenth century, with the re-evaluation of the mechanical arts performed in the context of the Encyclopedia in France.<sup>34</sup> Despite the importance of the engraved illustrations of the Encyclopedia for the editorial activities of the Arco do Cego publishing house,<sup>35</sup> it is highly unlikely that the Encyclopedia would constitute, directly or indirectly, a significant influence for the formation of the aesthetic theories and practices of Portuguese artists,<sup>36</sup> a conservative group as a whole, dependent on court and church. Furthermore, contacts with post-revolutionary France would have been near impossible, due to censorship towards all things relating to France after 1789, for fear of spreading revolutionary principles in the country and its colonies.<sup>37</sup>

Though an awareness of similar tendencies outside Portugal and Great Britain is important for the contextualization of the phenomenon, it is also imperative to keep in mind the material aspects of cultural transfers in order to understand their specificity. Although the Portuguese bought French books (at least until 1789) and held French decorative arts in the highest esteem,<sup>38</sup> circumstances facilitating exchanges between Great Britain and Portugal only increased during this period, although the relationships between the two countries remained antagonistic throughout. Portuguese society continued to undergo substantial transformations during the last decade of the eighteenth century, under the leadership of men like Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho (1755–1812),<sup>39</sup> heir to Pombal's policies, and champion

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dessin see Ulrich Leben, *Object Design in the Age of Enlightenment. The History of the Royal Free Drawing School in Paris*, Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2004.

<sup>34</sup> Faria, *A imagem útil*, 53–55.

<sup>35</sup> See Miguel Figueira de Faria, 'L'influence de *L'Encyclopédie* sur l'édition illustrée au Portugal: la Maison littéraire de l'Arco do Cego (1799–1801)', *Histoire de l'art*, 50, June 2002, 37–46 and 'Da Facilitação e da Ornamentação: A Imagem nas Edições do Arco do Cego', in *Casa Literária do Arco do Cego (1799–1801)*, exhibition catalogue, Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional-Casa da Moeda – Biblioteca Nacional, 1999, 107–137.

<sup>36</sup> That does not mean that Portuguese artists ignored the Encyclopedia and its practical usefulness. Machado de Castro, for example, cites the article on sculpture from the fourteenth volume in his text on the execution of D. José's equestrian statue. Although published in 1810, it was probably written in the 1790s. See Joaquim Machado de Castro, *Descrição analytica da execução da Estatua equestre erigida em Lisboa á Gloria do Senhor Rei Fidelíssimo D. José I*, Lisbon: Na Imprensa Regia, 1810, 149 and 165–166. The citation, however, is purely technical in nature.

<sup>37</sup> For a contemporary account on the strictness of censorship during this period, see Robert Southey, *Letters Written during a Short Residence in Spain and Portugal*, 2nd ed., Bristol, 1799, 401.

<sup>38</sup> One of the most important royal commissions during the second half of the eighteenth century was the silver service designed by François-Thomas Germain (1726–1791). See Isabel da Silveira Godinho, ed., *A Baixela de Sua Majestade Fidelíssima. Uma Obra de François-Thomas Germain*, Lisbon: IPPAR-Palácio Nacional da Ajuda, 2002.

<sup>39</sup> Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho served as ambassador in the court of Torino (1779–1796), minister of navy and overseas dominions (1796–1801), president of the Royal Treasury (1801–1803) and minister of war and foreign affairs (1808–1812). Along with António Araújo de Azevedo (see below), he was the most prominent political figure of the period. See more

of the rationalization and reform of imperial administration, who frequently looked towards Great Britain as a model of economic practice,<sup>40</sup> although he remained clear-headed regarding its less than beneficial influence on Portuguese commerce.<sup>41</sup>

### British texts in Portugal

Although Cyrillo's most known work – and most used as a source – is undoubtedly his biographies of Portuguese artists, and foreign artists in Portugal (published posthumously in 1823),<sup>42</sup> his *Conversações* (in need of a thorough critical edition) may perhaps be his most interesting text. Eclectic in its multitude of references and sources, the text is unique in the Portuguese context of the period for its effort to create from the most varied sources and material a coherent canon of rules and precepts concerning the practice and theory of art.

The text takes the form of six dialogues (published individually, the first four in 1794 and the last two in 1797 and 1798) between the Venetian painter Honorato and the Portuguese Lizio, and other personages that intervene throughout (Lizio's niece Angelica who paints flowers, the young apprentice Prudencio etc.). The literary genre of the dialogue had a long tradition, and in the Portuguese case it should perhaps be considered an echo of Francisco de Holanda's then unpublished *Dialogos de pintura* (whose manuscripts Cyrillo consulted).<sup>43</sup> Cyrillo employed a wide range of texts (French, English, German,

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specifically Andréa Mansuy Diniz Silva, *Portrait d'un homme d'État: D. Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho, Comte de Linhares 1755-1812*, vol. 1: *Les années de formation 1755-1796*, Lisbon and Paris: Commission nationale pour les commémorations des découvertes portugaises-Centre culturel Calouste Gulbenkian, 2002 and vol. 2: *L'homme d'État 1796-1812*, Paris: Centre culturel Calouste Gulbenkian, 2006.

<sup>40</sup> See José Luís Cardoso, 'Nas Malhas do império: A Economia Política e a Política Colonial de D. Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho', in José Luís Cardoso, ed., *A Economia Política e os Dilemas do Império Luso-Brasileiro (1790-1822)*, Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimientos Portugueses, 2001, 63-109, who analyzes, among other things, the impact of Adam Smith's theories on Sousa Coutinho's colonial policies.

<sup>41</sup> Sousa Coutinho is often considered as the representative of the British faction of the Portuguese court (while his 'rival', António Araújo de Azevedo, is considered as representative of the French faction). These affinities should not be construed as loyalties, but should rather be seen as resulting from a pragmatic consideration of the lesser of two evils. For an analysis of their ideological positions and political beliefs, see Graça and J. S. da Silva Dias, *Os primórdios da maçonaria em Portugal*, Lisbon: Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, 1986, vol. 1, part 2, 422-450.

<sup>42</sup> Cyrillo Volkmar Machado, *Colecção de memorias relativas ás vidas dos pintores, e escultores, architetos, e gravadores portuguezes, e dos estrangeiros que estiverão em Portugal*, Lisbon: Na Imp. de Victorino Rodrigues da Silva, 1823. On the genre of artistic biography in Portugal, especially as compared with Vasari's *Vite*, and the popular misconception that Cyrillo was an heir to the Vasarian tradition, see Foteini Vlachou, 'The Absence of Vasari: The Reception of the *Vite* in Portugal c. 1568-1823,' in Alessandro Nova and Fabian Jonietz, eds, *The Paradigm of Vasari. Reception, Criticism, Perspectives*, Venice: Marsilio Editori, 2016, 275-284.

<sup>43</sup> Cyrillo, *Colecção*, 8.

Italian and Spanish), and covered an equally wide range of subjects, from the definition of grace and beauty to the correct method of studying in order to become a painter. He mostly avoided citations and naming authors, in an effort to unburden the text from unnecessary information, while reassuring his reader that he was selecting his material from the best sources, thus presenting his eclectic approach as a valid method.<sup>44</sup>

Cyrillo was an avid reader and had an extensive personal library<sup>45</sup> as well as access to the library in Mafra,<sup>46</sup> that contained a great number of standard texts on art.<sup>47</sup> The *Conversações* demonstrates both the extent of his erudition and his familiarization with British texts. Cyrillo mentions Frances Hutcheson (1694–1746) and Daniel Webb (1719?–1798), criticizing both of them, the latter ostensibly because his book, *An Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting* (the title of which is not mentioned in Cyrillo's text),<sup>48</sup> resembles too closely the 'Riflessioni su la Bellezza, e sul Gusto della Pittura' by Anton Rafael Mengs.<sup>49</sup> Although Cyrillo owned both Webb's treatise (which also consists of dialogues) and Mengs's text, it is more likely that he drew the observation concerning the similarities between the two from Azara's 'Memorie concernenti la vita di Antonio Raffaello Mengs', published as an introduction to the edition of Mengs's works. There, Azara cites a letter by Winckelmann, according to whom the best elements in Webb's text came from a manuscript by Mengs, lent by Mengs himself to Webb.<sup>50</sup> It is also likely that Cyrillo's short and rather dismissive reference to Webb may be due to the fact that the latter argued in his text about the negative influence of Christian religion on painting. Webb wrote, for example, that 'the genius of painting [was] wasting its powers on crucifixions, holy families, last suppers, and the like', an opinion that could only have shocked

<sup>44</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 2, 95 (1798, 6th dialogue). Since the dialogues are published in two volumes, but each is separately paginated, the reference to the dialogues' numbers is indispensable.

<sup>45</sup> See his personal inventory 'Manuscritos que tenho e livros da arte', published in Luísa Arruda, 'Cyrillo Wolkmar Machado. Cultura artística. A Academia. A obra gráfica. Projecto de investigação', Prova complementar para obtenção do grau de Doutora em Desenho, Universidade de Lisboa, 1999, 50–114.

<sup>46</sup> Cyrillo, *Colecção*, 309 (pages 302 to 321 include the author's autobiography).

<sup>47</sup> See the manuscript 'Catalogo da Real Livraria de Mafra, disposto por ordem alfabética, e escrito por Fr. João de Santa Anna, Primeiro Bibliothecario da mesma Livraria, Ex-Leitor, Padre da Provincia d'Arrabida, e Pregador Régio. Anno de 1819', 8 vols, Biblioteca, Palácio Nacional de Mafra.

<sup>48</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 1, 12 (1794, 4th dialogue). The full title is: Daniel Webb, *An Inquiry into the Beauties of Painting; and into the Merits of the most Celebrated Painters, Ancient and Modern*, London: R. & J. Dodsley, 1761 [1760].

<sup>49</sup> *Opere di Antonio Raffaello Mengs Primo Pittore della Maesta del Re Cattolico Carlo III. Pubblicate dal Cav. D. Giuseppe Niccola d'Azara, e dallo stesso rivedute ed aumentate in questa edizione*, Bassano, 1783 [1st ed. Parma 1780], vol. 1, 1–84.

<sup>50</sup> *Opere*, vol. 1, XXXIX: '(...) il n'y a point de Peintre qui soit en état de faire par lui même les observations qu'il donne, tandis que c'est de Mengs qu'il [Webb] a emprunté ces observations'.

the Portuguese writer.<sup>51</sup> Cyrillo does not seem to have read Hutcheson, but he does cite the negative opinion of an unnamed author regarding the theory expressed in his treatise, the *Inquiry into the Original of Our Ideas of Beauty and Virtue* (London, 1725), regarding ‘an internal feeling, with which he discovers Beauty, as we discover the colors with the eyes’.<sup>52</sup> This passage (pp. 7-11), the origin of which I have not yet been able to trace, apart from Hutcheson cites Plato, St. Augustine, Cicero, Christian Wolff and Leibniz’s followers, Yves-Marie (Père) André and Diderot, discussing about their definition of beauty.

Another British text used (and cited) by Cyrillo in the *Conversações* is Richard Cumberland’s *Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain*,<sup>53</sup> a text that the author may have known (although it does not appear in the catalogue of his personal library) in the original language. This is a surprising fact since it suggests that Cyrillo might have read English. He translates short passages from Cumberland’s book (both from the first and second volume),<sup>54</sup> concerning the life of Mengs and the honours he received from the Spanish court, a subject of perennial interest to Cyrillo. It not an accident that the writer uses Cumberland as a source exclusively for Mengs, since the rest of Cumberland’s material concerning Spanish painters is drawn from Palomino (as the author freely admits),<sup>55</sup> a book owned and repeatedly used by Cyrillo. In a characteristic example of how Cyrillo uses his texts while maintaining his distance from their authority, he remarks that the British writer criticizes Mengs’s works ‘quite acrimoniously’.<sup>56</sup>

The relationship between Portugal and Great Britain seems to provide sufficient explanation for the circulation of British texts in the country, although it is rather unusual that Portuguese artists and intellectuals (as opposed to what one would have expected from merchants and businessmen) would have read English at the time. In any case, Cyrillo was not the exception in his knowledge of

<sup>51</sup> Webb, *An Inquiry*, 145–147. Cf. Charles Harrison, Paul Wood and Jason Gaiger, eds, *Art in Theory 1648–1815. An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2003, 457.

<sup>52</sup> *Conversações*, vol. 1, 8–9 (1794, 4th dialogue): ‘O systema de Hutcheson, e dos seus sequazes que imaginarão hum sentimento interno, para com elle descobrir a Belleza, como descobrimos as côres com os olhos, parece ainda ao mesmo Escritor, o mais mesquinho, e o menos engenhoso de todos’.

<sup>53</sup> Richard Cumberland, *Anecdotes of Eminent Painters in Spain, During the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries; with Cursory Remarks upon the Present State of Arts in that Kingdom*, 2 vols, London: J. Walter, 1782. The British dramatist and secretary of the Board of Trade and Plantations (for the period 1775–1782) had travelled to Spain in 1780 to negotiate a confidential peace treaty between Spain and Great Britain, a secret mission that was a failure. It is possible that his reputation in Portugal was due primarily to this aborted diplomatic mission.

<sup>54</sup> *Conversações*, vol. 1 (1794, 2nd dialogue). Cyrillo (38–39) translates a passage from Cumberland’s second volume (*Anecdotes*, vol. 2, 147–148) and in pp. 39–40 a passage from the first volume (*Anecdotes*, vol. 1, 186–187), both referring to Mengs.

<sup>55</sup> Cumberland, *Anecdotes*, 1–10.

<sup>56</sup> *Conversações*, vol. 1, 39 (1794, 2nd dialogue).

British artistic treatises. The manuscript 'Catalogo de Livros Escolhidos das Artes Mechanicas e Liberaes' by António Ribeiro dos Santos (1745–1818), chief librarian (bibliotecário-mor) of the Real Bibliotheca Pública da Corte,<sup>57</sup> among other standard texts (such as the French de Piles, Félibien, Du Fresnoy and the Italians Lomazzo, Baglione, Bellori and Ridolfi), cites George Turnbull's *A Treatise on Ancient Painting* (London, 1740),<sup>58</sup> a text characterized by its didactic intentions, as it addressed young gentlemen preparing for the Grand Tour.<sup>59</sup>

Curiously, this interest did not translate to an interest in the artistic production of Great Britain and the references to British art and artists in Portuguese texts of the period are scant. José da Cunha Taborda (1766–1836), the painter whose 1815 translation of Michelangelo Prunetti's *Saggio Pittorico* (Rome, 1786),<sup>60</sup> contained the first detailed biographies of Portuguese painters, mentions Jonathan Richardson and Joshua Reynolds in his introduction, but as writers, and only as sources used by Prunetti.<sup>61</sup> Perhaps the most interesting and curious reference to British painting belongs to Diogo Barbosa Machado (1682–1772). In one of the permits (*licenças*) issued for José Gomes da Cruz's *Carta apologetica* (1752) on behalf of the Desembargo do Paço (the supreme court of justice in Portugal), the abbot, academician and distinguished writer presents a catalogue of the painters that have honoured their respective countries, mentioning for England William Dobson (1610–1646), Peter Lely (1618–1680) and James Thornhill (1675/6–1734).<sup>62</sup> Dobson, Lely and Thornhill were relatively unknown outside England, although the latter is also mentioned by Cyrillo in another, little expected, reference. In the undated handwritten inventory of his personal library, he mentions the Painted Hall in Greenwich Hospital and the extensive decorative cycle that Thornhill had completed there in 1727. Cyrillo mentions the date, how much the work cost and the fact that Thornhill included his self-portrait, but it has been impossible so far to determine the source of his information.<sup>63</sup>

<sup>57</sup> The manuscript was published by Nuno Saldanha, *Poéticas da Imagem. A Pintura nas Ideias Estéticas da Idade Moderna*, Lisbon: Caminho, 1995, 335–342.

<sup>58</sup> Saldanha, *Poéticas da Imagem*, 337. The note appears, however, written in French ('George Turnbull – Traité de la Peinture Ancienne... escrito em Inglez, Lond. 1740'), further indication of the fact that the English language was not popular among intellectuals, as opposed to other professional circles (English language was one of the courses taught in the Porto Royal Academy of Navy and Commerce).

<sup>59</sup> For Turnbull, see Harrison, Wood and Gaiger, eds, *Art in Theory*, 427–432.

<sup>60</sup> José da Cunha Taborda, *Regras da Arte da Pintura, com breves Reflexões Criticas sobre os caracteres distinctivos de suas Escolas, Vidas, e Quadros de seus mais célebres Professores. Escritas na Lingoa Italiana por Michael Angelo Prunetti (...) Accresce Memoria dos mais famosos Pintores Portuguezes, e dos melhores Quadros seus que escrevia o Traductor*, Lisbon: Impressão Regia, 1815.

<sup>61</sup> Taborda, *Regras*, XIII.

<sup>62</sup> Cruz, *Carta apologetica*, n. pag.

<sup>63</sup> Arruda, 'Cirillo Wolkmar Machado', 114. Richard Johns (Department of History of Art, University of York), a specialist on Thornhill's painting, also found this mention rather curious, since Thornhill quickly fell into oblivion for much of the eighteenth and most of the nineteenth century (oral communication to the author).

Furthermore, Portuguese artists and intellectuals seem to have shared the widespread prejudice regarding British creativity. Cyrillo would write in the preface to his *Colecção de memórias* that the English School 'is so small, principally in Painters of the great genre [i.e. history painting], that the greater part of Biographers forgot to mention it: its strong point are portraits; and Reynolds, and Owest [sic] are its most reputable painters'.<sup>64</sup> The painter James Barry had written his *Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England*, precisely in order to counter this prejudice, repeated by the likes of Abbé du Bos, Montesquieu and Winckelmann himself: namely that the British were incapable of creating great art mainly due to climatological reasons.<sup>65</sup> Paradoxically, this was an accusation that the Portuguese themselves were too familiar with, as becomes evident from the fact that Machado de Castro argued vehemently against it:

And from what comes forth this perfection in all kinds of artifacts of the other Nations? Are the Italians, the French, more manly than the Portuguese? Are their bodies [made] from a different mass, their Souls some kind of different Spirit? No, Sirs; certainly not (...) everyday experience has demonstrated that the Portuguese are capable of everything; and that their aptitude does not exist in small numbers; it can be found in many: what's missing is to instruct them; what's missing is to encourage them.<sup>66</sup>

There is an evident concern about climate and the constitution of physical bodies here, but the weight is clearly given to education (or lack thereof). Similarly, Vieira Portuense argued in his 1802 speech that it was to the lack of a good school that one

<sup>64</sup> Cyrillo, *Colecção*, 6: 'he tão pequena, principalmente em Pintores do grande genero, que á maior parte dos Biografos esqueceo de a nomear: o seu forte são os retratos; e Reynolds, e Owest [sic] são os seus Pintores mais acreditados'. On the same page, the fleeting mention of 'S. Palmer, Malone' among the number of authors who wrote 'the lives of Painters of the North' could very well refer to Edmond Malone's 1797 *Some account of the life and writings of Sir Joshua Reynolds* (or to the corrected, three-volume edition of 1801 *The works of Sir Joshua Reynolds ... To which is prefixed An account of the life and writings of the author*) and to Samuel Palmer's 1732 *The General History of Printing, from its first invention in the City of Mentz, to its first progress and propagation through the most celebrated cities in Europe ... Particularly its introduction, rise and progress here in England*.

<sup>65</sup> James Barry, *Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England*, London 1775, 4–6 (from Chapter 1, 'Opinions touching the Capacity of the English for the Polite Arts').

<sup>66</sup> Machado de Castro, *Discurso*, 9: 'E de que procede esta perfeição em todo o género de artefactos das outras Nações? Serão os Italianos, os Francezes, mais homens que os Portuguezes? Serão seus corpos de outra massa, suas Almas alguns Espíritos diferentes? Não Senhores; certamente não (...) a quotidiana experiencia tem mostrado serem os Portuguezes habeis para tudo; e que a sua aptidão não existe em poucos; acha-se em grande numero: falta instruíllos; falta anima-los'. It is difficult to ascertain whether 'mais homens' means literally 'more manly', or should be more broadly translated as 'more human' instead.

could attribute the corresponding paucity in some nations of distinguished painters, and not 'in any way to an inequality of talents, that are in all men, equal: men are capable of everything, if they feel the need to so be'.<sup>67</sup>

To a broader interest in British thought and aesthetics one should also attribute the Portuguese translation of Adam Smith's 'Of the Nature of that Imitation which takes place in what are called The Imitative Arts / Of the Affinity between Music, Dancing, and Poetry', published posthumously in *Essays on Philosophical Subjects* (London, 1795).<sup>68</sup> The Portuguese translation was published in eight instalments in 1813, in the journal *Semanário de instrução e recreio*.<sup>69</sup> Smith's main work was also known in Portugal, at least amidst the circles of intellectuals and politicians, such as Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, who had requested a copy of *The Wealth of Nations* (London, 1776) from a friend in London by 1778.<sup>70</sup> The French translation of the text appeared two decades later in the catalogue of prohibited books in Portugal (covering the period 1768–1814), with the indication 'LL. 19 de Agosto de 1796'. It is interesting that the abbreviation 'LL.' referred to works that were permitted to privileged individuals, although there is no way to know for whom an exception was made in this particular case.<sup>71</sup> The book was also owned by António de Araújo de Azevedo (1754–1817), one of the most cosmopolitan Portuguese politicians of the period, who, after spending years abroad, as ambassador to The Hague, Paris and St. Petersburg, returned to Portugal, where he served in some of the most important positions (as minister of foreign affairs and war from 1804 to 1808 and later, in Brazil where he accompanied the royal family after they fled the country in 1807, as minister of navy in 1814). Araújo de Azevedo's personal library included, among others, several texts by British authors, such as

<sup>67</sup> Vieira, *Discurso*, 6–7: 'A falta de huma boa Escola abastecida de copiosos exemplares, se deve imputar a raridade de insignes Pintores em algumas Nações, e de nenhuma sorte á desigualdade dos talentos, que em todos os homens são com pouca differença iguaes: os homens são capazes de tudo, se sentem necessidade de o ser'. It is probable that 'homens' was used as a global noun, to indicate human beings in general, but I feel that the translation as 'men' is here closer to the mentality of the period. Cyrillo also attributed the difference between the present state of Greece (and Rome), which he perceived as decadent, and the past glory of ancient art to education. See Francisco Augusto Garcez Teixeira, *A Irmandade de S. Lucas, corporação de artistas. Estudo do seu arquivo*, Lisbon 1931, 16 (from Cyrillo's manuscript on a proposed academy).

<sup>68</sup> Adam Smith, *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*, W. P. D. Wightman and J. C. Bryce, eds, Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1982 [reprint from the 1980 Oxford University Press edition], vol. 3, 176–213.

<sup>69</sup> See Saldanha, *Poéticas da Imagem*, 393. The text was translated by Joaquim José Pedro Lopes.

<sup>70</sup> José Luís Cardoso, 'Nas Malhas do império: A Economia Política e a Política Colonial de D. Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho', in José Luís Cardoso, ed., *A Economia Política e os Dilemas do Império Luso-Brasileiro (1790–1822)*, Lisbon: Comissão Nacional para as Comemorações dos Descobrimientos Portugueses, 2001, 63–109 (here 65). Cardoso analyzes, among other things, the impact of Adam Smith's theories on Coutinho's colonial policies.

<sup>71</sup> Maria Adelaide Salvador Marques, *A Real Mesa Censória e a cultura nacional. Aspectos da geografia cultural portuguesa no século XVIII*, Coimbra, 1963, 192, 207.

Francis Bacon and Lord Bolingbroke, Mickle's 1776 translation of Camões, David Hume's essays and his *History of England*, as well as the *Transactions of the Society of Arts at London from the year 1783 to the year 1801*.<sup>72</sup>

### The discourse on utility

The conviction that fine arts and drawing were intimately related to commerce, science and manufactures, and that it was their obligation to contribute to the increase of national wealth informed both Cyrillo's and Machado de Castro's writings, and was a central concern in their texts, that attempted to set forth the rudiments of a theory for younger and aspiring artists to follow. In a significant passage from the *Conversações*, one reads the following:

[Painting] knows as well how to offer a specialized aid to many useful sciences; because it draws the plans for architecture, displays to Medicine and Surgery the texture, and structure of all the parts of the human body, and all the phenomena of Nature; it is useful, and necessary to all the Mechanical [arts]: but why do I tire? The instructive Prints, of which many books are full, and without which they would not be intelligible, prove sufficiently how much this Art is useful to Humankind.

and:

I still have something left to say, regarding this Art [that is] so useful, [as it is] agreeable, and noble; it is that, as the riches of a Nation consist simply in that which is offered by Nature, and the Arts, there is neither Artisan, nor Artist, whatever merit he might possess, that knows how to produce from materials of such little consequence things as precious, as the ones produced by the Painter[.]<sup>73</sup>

<sup>72</sup> 'Bibliotheca Araujiana ou Catalogue des Livres de la Bibliothèque de Son Excellence, Monsieur le Commandeur d'Araujo de Azevedo. Envoyé Extra-Ordinaire et Ministre Plénipotentiaire de Son Altesse Roiale le Prince Régent de Portugal près de la Cour de Russie – &c. &c. Placée à la maison du bois près de la Haye en Septembre 1802. – confiée à son très humble Serviteur J. D. Nierdt', Cod. 1201, Reservados, Biblioteca Nacional, Lisbon.

<sup>73</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 2, 71 and 76 (1797, 5th dialogue): 'Ella [a pintura] sabe dar tambem hum especial socorro a muitas ciencias uteis; porque desenha os planos á architectura, expõe á Medicina, e á Cirurgia a textura, e a conformação de todas as partes do corpo humano, e de todos os fenomenos da Natureza; he util, e necessaria a todas as Mecanicas: mas para que me canço? As Estampas instructivas, de que muitos livros estão cheios, e sem as quaes não serão intelligiveis, provão assás o quanto esta Arte he util ao Genero Humano', and 'Ainda me resta huma cousa que dizer, a respeito desta Arte tão util, como agradavel, e nobre; he que, como as riquezas de huma Nação consistem simplesmente no que lhe fornece a Natureza, e as Artes, não ha Artifice, nem Artista, de qualquer qualidade que seja, que saiba produzir com materiaes tão pouco consideraveis cousas tão preciosas, como as que produz o Pintor'.

The argument is significant for its two-sided nature: on the one hand, fine arts (in this case, painting, understood as encompassing drawing) as handmaiden to several practical endeavors (medicine, surgery, architecture, the mechanical arts, book illustration), and on the other, fine arts as generator of wealth. Specifically, regarding the advantage of being cost-effective: producing something really valuable from cheap material.

What is even more significant here is the fact that the passage quoted above from the *Conversações* was not actually written by Cyrillo, although it is fully appropriated by him. From what I have been able to ascertain, pages 63–92 of the fifth dialogue of the *Conversações* consist in a faithful translation, with only few significant modifications, of the first thirty-one pages of *An essay on the theory of painting* (1715) by Jonathan Richardson (1665–1745), more specifically its 1728 French translation.<sup>74</sup> Cyrillo mentions neither the writer nor the title of his book in the *Conversações*,<sup>75</sup> but the French translation of Richardson's collective works published in Amsterdam appears in Cyrillo's personal inventory of his library.<sup>76</sup> These pages constitute a sort of theoretical introduction to the rest of Richardson's text, which is rather practical in nature, enumerating a series of advice and rules concerning the respective parts of painting (invention, expression, composition, grace etc.), with many specific examples of paintings and drawings of which the British writer and portrait painter owned an important collection.

<sup>74</sup> *Traité de la peinture et de la sculpture. Par Mr. Richardson, Père & Fils. Tomes I. et II. Traduit de l'Anglois; Revu & Corrigé par l'Auteur*, Amsterdam: Chez Herman Uytwerf, 1728, 1–31. This first volume included also the text *Two Discourses* (1719). The second volume of the Amsterdam edition (tome 3) included *An Account of some of the Statues, Bas-reliefs, Drawings and Pictures in Italy, etc.* (1722), which Richardson co-wrote with his son. For the formation of Richardson's own thought, and especially the influences from John Locke's and Francis Bacon's philosophy, see David Mannings, 'Jonathan Richardson, Thomas Gray, and the Genealogy of Art', *Journal of the History of Ideas*, 55, no. 3, July 1994, 405–420 (esp. 408) and Carol Gibson-Wood, 'Jonathan Richardson, Lord Somers's Collection of Drawings, and Early Art-Historical Writing in England', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, 52, 1989, 182–185. Gibson-Wood considers the practical aspects of British texts on art of the second half of the seventeenth century as resulting from the influence of Bacon's thought. John Evelyn (1620–1706) for example writes *Sculptura; or, The History and Art of Chalcography and Engraving in Copper* (1662), as part of a history of professions for the Royal Society (founded in 1661). It is scarcely an accident that this particular text was included in the upcoming translations by the Arco do Cego publishing house, although the plan never came to fruition.

<sup>75</sup> He does mention Richardson twenty years later in *Nova Academia de Pintura. Dedicada a's Senhoras Portuguezas que amão ou se applicão ao estudo das Bellas Artes*, Lisbon: Na impressão regia, 1817, 4.

<sup>76</sup> Arruda, 'Cirillo Wolkmar Machado', 93–95. Under the heading 'Tratado da Pintura por RICHARDSON pay e filho, em 3 tomos. Amsterdam, 1728' there is a two-page description of the contents of *An Essay on the Theory of Painting*, while Richardson's other texts are only mentioned in passing.

Richardson's texts were widely known and highly regarded,<sup>77</sup> and there are other signs of interest in the Amsterdam edition by Portuguese readers. António Ribeiro dos Santos includes it in his catalogue of books to be purchased by the Royal Public Library<sup>78</sup> and the Benedictine monk and sculptor Frei José de Santo António Ferreira Vilaça (1731–1809) also owned a copy that probably circulated among the community since Vilaça states that he lent the book (specifically the first volume of the edition), as attested by his manuscript notes in 1796, published by Robert C. Smith.<sup>79</sup>

In the *Conversações* Cyrillo employs the device of having the young painter Prudencio, still an apprentice, read a book out loud, and from that point onwards the translation of Richardson's text is, on the surface at least, seamlessly incorporated in Cyrillo's. A close reading, however, can reveal the points where the illusion of seamlessness breaks down and the reader is transported away from the Portuguese context, as, for example, when the author casually includes the part where Van Dyke is mentioned as having 'augmented the funds of *our* Nation, with many millions of sterling *Pounds*' (my stress), a reference that could not possibly belong to Cyrillo.<sup>80</sup> A couple of footnotes, interspersed amidst others, further disrupt the first-person narrative (Prudencio), that the reader tends to associate with Cyrillo himself. One of these footnotes, for example, informs the reader of what 'Grubbstreet' was, and upon comparing the Portuguese text with the French translation and the English original,<sup>81</sup> it is easily confirmed that Cyrillo translated a footnote included in the French translation for the obvious purpose of adding some context for local readership. Cyrillo, however, adds other footnotes as well, not present in the French translation, as when he defines the author of the text as 'a Painter of Portraits',<sup>82</sup> demonstrating that the author and Cyrillo were not one and the same. Interestingly, Cyrillo omits, at this point, Richardson's defense of the art of portraiture and the challenges it presents for the painter, thus straying both from the English text and its French translation.<sup>83</sup> In doing so, he reveals his own priorities and values, placing grand-scale narrative (history) painting at the apex of a genre hierarchy, a

<sup>77</sup> Johann Joachim Winckelmann, *Histoire de l'art de l'antiquité*, Leipzig, 1781, vol. 1, VII, considered the *Account of some of the Statues, Bas-reliefs, Drawings and Pictures in Italy, etc.* (London, 1722), that Richardson co-wrote with his son, 'the best [book] in its kind despite its faults'.

<sup>78</sup> Saldanha, *Poéticas da Imagem*, 336: 'Mrs. Richardien [sic] Pay e Filho – Traité de Peindre, et des Sculpture. 3v. 8<sup>o</sup>'.

<sup>79</sup> Robert C. Smith, *Frei José de Santo António Ferreira Vilaça. Escultor Beneditino do século XVIII*, Lisbon: Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian, 1972, vol. 1, 136: 'emprestei o Primr.<sup>o</sup> Tombo [sic] de Arte de Pintura e Escultura frances de Muñ Snr. Rixadom [sic] Pay e filho ao P. Fr. Domingos de Guimarains Organista hoie 8 – de 8br.<sup>o</sup> de 1796'.

<sup>80</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 2, 77 (1797, 5th dialogue): '(...) Vand-dyck [sic] augmentou os fundos da nossa Nação com muitos milhares de Libras esterlinas'.

<sup>81</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 2, 78 (1797, 5th dialogue); *Traité de la peinture*, 13; Jonathan Richardson, *An essay on the theory of painting*, London, 1725 (2nd edn), 17.

<sup>82</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 2, 85 (1797, 5th dialogue).

<sup>83</sup> Cyrillo skips from the end of page 17 to the beginning of page 19 (*Traité de la peinture*).

hierarchy much less consolidated in a country where the decorative arts enjoyed an enormous amount of prestige and popularity.

There are other places where Cyrillo departs from Richardson, as for example when he omits his arguments regarding painting as a liberal art.<sup>84</sup> Although the status of artists in Portugal was far from securely established (despite what one might call Cyrillo's wishful thinking<sup>85</sup>), Richardson's arguments revolve more narrowly around the question of monetary remuneration. In other words he is trying to defend painters against the accusation that they are for hire, or that it is dishonorable to receive a reward for a service rendered. It is likely that this line of argument held little weight for Cyrillo, as in Portugal it was common for artists (in the service of either court or church) to receive salaries and payments, and therefore he chose to omit it entirely.

Why Cyrillo would have gone to the trouble of translating this text and incorporating it in his own, with only marginal indications that it is not of his authorship (one of the reasons it has so far escaped the attention of scholars), is not difficult to explain. The two writers share many common traits. The two writers-painters were both politically conservative, attributed great importance to social distinction and royal honours, and addressed, for the most part, an audience comprising of aristocrats and noblemen. Richardson characteristically wrote: 'My present business then in short is to endeavour to persuade our Nobility, and Gentry to become Lovers of Painting, and Connoisseurs'.<sup>86</sup> Both men upheld the classical ideal, even though the kind of history painting that Richardson was hoping to implement in England was unsuitable due to the lack of sustained patronage of the kind continental painters enjoyed both from church and state. Additionally, the fact that Richardson argued about the vital importance of painting for various sectors of public activity, appealing at the same time to the practical spirit of his compatriots that seemed unwilling to invest time or money in art (especially when local painters were concerned), must have seemed particularly attractive to Cyrillo who had to face similar difficulties.

Undoubtedly, though, the main reason behind Cyrillo's decision has to be located in Richardson's eloquent arguments about the utility of the art of

<sup>84</sup> Cyrillo, *Conversações*, vol. 2, 88 (1797, 5th dialogue), where he has omitted four pages from *Traité de la peinture* (20–24; see also Richardson, *An Essay*, 26–31).

<sup>85</sup> Luís da Silva Pereira Oliveira, a member of the Lisbon Royal Academy of Sciences, includes, as late as 1806, in the catalogue of mechanical professions (*Ofícios mecanicos*) that are incompatible with nobility and destroy its privileges, musicians, sculptors, goldsmiths and painters, along barbers, shoemakers, farmers, shepherds, fishermen etc. See his *Privilegios da nobreza, e fidalguia de Portugal*, Lisbon: Na nova officina de João Rodrigues, 1806, 186–187.

<sup>86</sup> *A Discourse on the Dignity, Certainty, Pleasure and Advantage, of the Science of a Connoisseur*, published jointly with *The Connoisseur: An Essay on the Whole Art of Criticism as it relates to Painting*, in Jonathan Richardson, *Two Discourses*, London: W. Churchill, 1719, 8.

painting. The translation and appropriation of Richardson's text have to be interpreted against the social and political context of late eighteenth-century Portugal. Other contemporary authors expressed the same anxiety, with concerns clustering around the subjects of the nation, wealth, and Portugal's dependence on foreigners. Thus, Machado de Castro was writing, only a decade before Cyrillo published his fifth volume of the *Conversações*, the following:

I leave you to ponder the immense sums, that only Painting, Sculpture, and Engraving have brought to Italy, and France; as much for the Paintings, Sculptures and Prints that have left from those Regions for others, as for the innumerable Travelers that visit them, attracted by the marvels of these Arts; leaving in those happy Climes the riches that they pay tribute to Drawing. And isn't that beneficial for those States?

and:

They [the products of drawing] are useful to Commerce (...); and for the perfection of manufactures: from which, even if no other benefit proceeds, other than not being in need of foreign [manufactures], it interests the State considerably not to exchange gold for goods, whose greatest value consists in industry: feeding thus the foreign [manufacture], and leaving its own to wither without nourishment.<sup>87</sup>

These passages are excerpted from the *Discurso sobre as utilidades do desenho*, that was proffered in the presence of the queen and the court, on the occasion of the inauguration of the Academia do Nu (Academy of Nude) in 1787, and published a year later (and a second time in 1818).<sup>88</sup>

Machado de Castro's claim that precious works of art could draw visitors from other countries is a surprisingly modern argument and his concern about not exchanging gold for manufactured goods reflects a deep-rooted concern inherited from the Pombal administration and a well known European criticism

<sup>87</sup> Machado de Castro, *Discurso*, 10, 30: 'Deixo de ponderar as immensas sommas, que só a Pintura, Escultura, e Gravatura [*sic*] tem levado para Italia, e França; tanto pelos Painéis, Estatuas, e Estampas que daquellas Regiões tem sahido para outras, como pelos innumeraveis Viajantes que a ellas vão, attrahidos das maravilhas destas Artes; deixando naquelles felices Climas as riquezas que vão tributar ao Desenho. E não he isto proveitoso áquelles Estados?' and 'São uteis ao Comercio (...); e pela perfeição das manufacturas: das quaes, ainda que se não tire outro proveito mais, que não carecer das alheias, he interesse muito consideravel para o Estado, não dar ouro por géneros, cujo maior valor consiste na industria: nutrindo desta sorte a estranha, e deixando mirrar a propria sem alimento'.

<sup>88</sup> Machado de Castro refers to the authors that had served him as sources in the *Discurso*, even though he rarely mentions titles of specific works. These included Plinius, Vitruvius, Ovid, Carducho's *Diálogos de la pintura* (1633), Antoine Coypel (probably the 1721 *Discours prononcés dans les conférences de l'Academie royale de Peinture*), Du Fresnoy (that Machado de Castro read from the 1755 Italian translation), Mengs and Cochin (*Discurso*, 21).

about the facility with which the Portuguese bestowed their gold on other countries.<sup>89</sup> Although the published inventory of the sculptor's library does not mention Richardson,<sup>90</sup> it is not unlikely that he was familiar with his work. One of Richardson's arguments is, in fact, very similar with the one, previously quoted, by Machado de Castro. Richardson characteristically writes:

We shall share with Italy in the Profits arising from the Concourse of Foreigners for the Pleasure, and Improvement that is to be had from the Seeing, and Considering such Rarities. If our People were Improved in the Arts of Designing, not only our Paintings, Carvings, and Prints, but the Works of all our other Artificers [*sic*] would also be proportionably Improved, and consequently coveted by Other Nations, and their Price advanced, which therefore would be no small Improvement of our Trade, and with that of our Wealth.<sup>91</sup>

In a similar vein, Machado de Castro would argue that the perfection of the artifacts of other nations was a direct result of the propagation of drawing and that this propagation was the result of a more active commerce, that was pursued in that direction. He would then conclude that 'the studies of Drawing are of the greatest utility, and are needed for Commerce and for the entire State'.<sup>92</sup>

Cyrillo's choice of Richardson as an essential reference actively relates to contemporary concerns about the encouragement of the arts and the development of local manufactures and industries, and does not simply constitute a unilateral influence on Portuguese artistic texts, exerted by British ones. This becomes further evident by the interest evident in Portugal in Pedro Rodríguez Campomanes' (1723–1803) *Discurso sobre la educación popular de los artesanos, y su fomento* (Madrid, 1775). The Spanish statesman and writer expressed similar concerns about the development of national commerce and local manufactures, citing drawing as a basic element of artisans' education. He specifically proposed a series of measures for their encouragement, such as the prohibition of exporting raw materials, the prohibition of importing manufactured goods that could antagonize local production, the distinction between the use and production of luxury goods (something that also concerned the Portuguese around the same time), as well as the commercial relationships that should be maintained between colonies and the metropolis (reserving manufacture for the latter, and restricting the colonies to the consumption of

<sup>89</sup> Henry Fielding's comment about the 'coin which Portugal distributes so liberally over Europe' referring to gold bullion was well known. See Henry Fielding, *The Journal of a Voyage to Lisbon*, London, 1755, 164. Cf. Maxwell, *Pombal*, 42.

<sup>90</sup> Miguel Figueira de Faria, *Machado de Castro (1731–1822). Estudos*, Lisbon: Livros Horizonte, 2008, 139-165.

<sup>91</sup> Richardson, *A Discourse*, 48–49.

<sup>92</sup> Machado de Castro, *Discurso*, 9: 'Donde se tira por legitima consequencia serem os estudos do Desenho de grandíssima utilidade, e precisaõ para o Commercio, e para o Estado todo'.

manufactured goods and the cultivation of agriculture).<sup>93</sup> Campomanes' book circulated in Portugal, and Machado de Castro also owned the complete edition of the *Discurso*.<sup>94</sup> Campomanes' text started to be translated anonymously (and with no mention of the author's name) in the journal *Miscelânea curiosa e proveitosa*, a project that remained incomplete.<sup>95</sup> Significantly, the Portuguese translation transformed the word 'artisans' in the title of the Spanish original to 'artists', which was perhaps an attempt to appeal to a more erudite audience, and not a simple mistake.

## Conclusion

The utility of drawing and the arts constituted a hegemonic feature of artistic education and theoretical discourse in Portugal during the second half of the eighteenth century. This emphasis on usefulness, as well as the artisan tradition of artistic education and practice was not evidence of a delay in institutional development. Rather, it is telling of the priorities and necessities of contemporary Portuguese society that in their turn shaped artistic production and the active reception of theories and styles. Late eighteenth-century drawing schools were furthermore the precedents for the 'hybrid' academies of Porto and Lisbon where the uneasy tension between academic instruction and the concern for the applicability of drawing and the fine arts was maintained throughout the nineteenth century.

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<sup>93</sup> Campomanes, *Discurso*, 292–357 (chapter XVI).

<sup>94</sup> The full edition included the *Discurso*, as well as the four volumes of the *Apéndice a La educación popular* (published 1775–1777). Although the number '5' is clearly transcribed in the posthumous inventory of Machado de Castro's library (Faria, *Machado de Castro*, 162), Faria assumes that Machado de Castro only owned the four volumes of the *Apendice*.

<sup>95</sup> Saldanha, 1995, p. 386, cites this as follows: 'C. I. – "Discurso sobre a educação popular dos artistas, e seu fomento" (in *Miscelânea curiosa e proveitosa*, t. 4, e ss. – trad. do espanhol)', without identifying the author of the text. The full citation of the text from the journal is the following: 'Discurso sobre a educação popular dos artistas, e seu fomento. Traduzido do Hespanhol por F. R. I. L. e L. Introdução preliminar', *Miscellanea curiosa, e proveitosa, ou compilação, tirada das melhores obras das nações estrangeiras*, 4, 1782, 132–170 (corresponding to Campomanes, 1–72) and 171–184 (Campomanes, 73–97). The translation continued in *Miscellanea curiosa*, 5, 1783, 79–140 (Campomanes, 97–181) and *Miscellanea curiosa*, 6, 1784, 44–84 (Campomanes, 181–237). The journal's publication was discontinued after 1784, which is why the translation remained unfinished.

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