

## Antero de Quental in English

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**M**y earlier piece ("Antero de Quental in English," *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies*, 11 (Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture/University of Massachusetts Dartmouth, 2007, 441-64) presents a checklist of translations of Antero's poetry and prose, along with a selection of commentary on Antero and his writings. The list that follows is a supplement to that compilation:

1. "Bitter Against England," *New York Times* (Feb. 8, 1890), 2:

Oporto, Feb. 7 – The students in this city today made a demonstration in favor of the poet, Anthero Quental, President of the Northern Patriotic League. They became riotous and smashed the windows of the leading social club because it had not expelled Englishmen belonging to it and had admitted others. The Progressist and Republican papers in Portugal continue to attack England violently.

(On this same day this item appeared as "Anti-English Riot in Oporto," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 1, "London Gossip," *Omaha Daily World-Herald*, 1, "Portugal Riots Again," [Georgia] *Macon Telegraph*,

1, "Portuguese Students Smash Windows," [Baltimore] *Sun*, 1, and "Students Riotous," *Dallas Morning News*, 6).

2. "The Portuguese Periodicals," (London) *Review of Reviews* (Apr. 1890), 1: 328:

Senhor Anthero de Quental continues his dissertation on the 'General Tendencies of Philosophy, in the Latter Half of the Nineteenth Century,' Hegelianism is the ultimate expression of dogmatism in modern philosophy. Senhor de Quental bids us look to other elements of the same philosophic spirit, at present, latent and developed, to vitalise contemporary thought (...). Senhor Oliveira Marques continues his interesting historical study of the 'Sons of D. John I.,' the children of the fairhaired Lancastrian princess.

3. "The Portuguese Periodicals," (London) *Review of Reviews* (May 1890), 1: 431:

Senhor Eça de Queiroz continues to edit the delightful letters – anecdotic, paradoxical, and semi-philosophical – of Fradique Mendes; Senhor Moniz Barreto writes and enthusiastic review of *Le Disciple*, 'with which no contemporary novel will bear comparison (...). To meet with so masterly an analysis, we should have to go back as far as Flaubert, and even, perhaps, as far as Stendhal.' O! shade of Stendhal, what can you have done to Senhor Moniz Barreto? There are further installments of Senhor de Quental's work on the general tendencies of contemporary philosophy; of Senhor Yagrue Lima's on the philosophy of Tolstoi; of Senhor Martens' [sic] 'Sons of D. John,' and of the Portuguese version of 'King Solomon's Mines.'

4. Emilio Castelar, "Politics in Portugal," (Chicago) *Sunday Inter Ocean* (Jan. 25, 1891), 26:

If [Teóphilus] Braga stands unequalled as expressing the acme of scientific knowledge, Quental represented no less eminently in his day the republican propaganda. He upheld before the world the rights of man, the equality of all, and the principles of self-government, while in the same manner as

Dr. Faust did away with the exact sciences, modern metaphysics and human history. His lyric poetry, which has the gracefulness of an Athenian courtier, and his stories full of the richest eloquence, contain ideas which the people will never let die, and which are calculated to bring to them some later day the full enjoyment of true liberty.

If Braga represented science and Quental the apostolate, Deus personated the poetry of the great scientific and literary republican movement in Portugal. Melodies more sweet than his it is impossible to find. There is something of Bellini's music in the simple beauty of his words.

5. Nathan Haskell Dole, "Boston Letter," (New York) *Critic* (Mar. 21, 1891), 15: 155:

[T]here are many more Portuguese novels that deserve attention; I may mention 'A Reliquia,' by Eça de Queiros, 'O Primo Basilio,' 'O Crima [sic] de Padre Amaro,' and a dozen other stories by Teófilo Braga,

Oliveira Martins, Antero de Quental, Tomás Ribeiro, and others.

6. G. Y. [George Young?], "A Portuguese Poet [review of Edgar Prestage's *Anthero de Quental: Sixty-four Sonnets*]," (London) *Bookman* (Sept. 1894), 6: 179-80:

Anthero de Quental, the Philosopher-Mystic, is one of the three distinguished poets that Portugal has produced in this century (...) and his sonnets are, exception those of Camoens, the finest in the language." So says his English translator, to whom, by-the-bye, we already owe the excellent version of that curiosity of literature and monument of passion, 'The Letters of a Portuguese Nun.' De Quental was not a great poet, nor even a very original writer, and the fairly modest claims which his translator makes for him are perhaps pitched a little too high. But besides the interest of his literary importance to his own country, he had an exceedingly attractive personality, and is well worth study as a curious result of German mysticism working on a Southern mind. Born half a century ago, he died, by his own hand, after years of ill-health, in 1892. A man of peculiarly impressionable mind, and of generous spirit, he took part in, and reflected almost all the principal movements, social and intellectual,

of his time. Socialist organizer and leader, his contributions to journalistic literature were numerous and full of earnest conviction. These he set little store by, however. His sonnets were the book of his heart, and read in their order, tell plainly the story of the growth of his mind, from the time he threw over his early faith, through the various periods of mingled hope and despair, of black pessimism, to his final epoch of rather hazy Buddhist belief and hope in the cessation of being as the best that life has to offer. The influence of poets of other nationalities is very evident in his work, notably of Heine, Leopardi, and Baudelaire. His cast of mind is most like the second, though he borrowed most directly from the third; indeed, Baudelaire, with all the devilry, and, it must also be said, a good part of the genius taken away, presents a fair idea of Anthero de Quental.

He is a true poet, if not a great one, and of that rank and character that have an interest and value far beyond their poetic worth. Minor poets should have their due. If they are not mere versifiers, there are few better books than their scorned ones in which to read the aspirations, the weaknesses, the despairs of the human heart. Their very maladies, which their greater brethren escape, or hide, or transform, are guides to knowledge. And de Quental, if not a strengthening poet, has much subtlety and sensitiveness of mind and feeling to reveal.

One cannot say he has been fortunate save in the enthusiasm of his translator. Mr. Prestage has a detestable habit of concocting hideous words – ‘Near to the sea I sat down tristfully;’ ‘And hovering high above, pure Pensament;’ ‘I’m cradled by your song so mighteous,’ are a few examples. And what sonnet was ever before permitted such an ending as

‘But the Ideal, the Word, the Essence, and  
The Greatest Good reveal themselves alone  
To man beneath the sky of Conscience-land’?

De Quental’s best sonnets are those on Death, in whose near presence he lived for years, and the translator has in them risen nearer to the level of the original. It is the poet’s own experiences that are expressed with sincerity of feeling and spirituality, and by his own images. Yet in these, the most personal of his poems, the influence of Baudelaire is very plainly seen. ‘Death’s Message,’ beginning:

'Oh! let the toilers come to me secure;  
Oh! suffer all the suffering to come near;  
And those who, worn by sorrows long and sure,  
Eye their vain deeds at which they mock and jeer,'

is too good only to disappoint us by comparison; but perhaps it partly earns our sympathies because it suggests echoes of that greater one, which was probably de Quental's model for all he wrote on the consolation of his later days:

'An angel is it, in whose touch magnetic  
Dwell rest and gift of dreams ecstatic,  
Who smoothes the bed where shivering misery lies.  
The glory of the gods, the mystic store,  
The poor man's purse, his fatherland of yore,  
The gateway opened unto unknown skies.'

7. R[ichard] Garnett, "[Zara]", From the Portuguese of Anthero de Quental," (London) *Thrush* (May 1901), 1:44:

Blest, who through life in reverie hath past,  
Unwitting of its pinings and its throes,  
Lightly as shade on flowing waters cast,  
And passively as opes and shuts a rose.  
In likeness of a dream thy life was drest.  
Obscurely limned with vague and tender hue.  
Awakening thou didst smile, and turn to rest,  
Dreaming the interrupted dream anew.

8. *London Quarterly Review* (July 1901), 6:184:

Dr. Garnett's beautiful translation from the Portuguese of Anthero de Quental is one of the gems of the fifth number of *The Thrush*.

9. Anthero de Quental, *Zara*, 2nd ed. "Polyglotta [first ed., 1894] (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional, 1925), 61-63. English translations of "Zara" by F.W. Driver (London), Edgar Prestage (Bowdon), and Helen S. Conant (New York).

10. Belle and Kermit Roosevelt, "Two Book Hunters in South America," (New York) *Bookman* (Oct. 1916), 44:137:

In Brazil "Portuguese poets and playwrights like Almeda [sic] Garrett, Bocage, Quental and Guerra Junqueiro; and historians and novelists such as Herculano, Eça de Queiroz or Castello Branco are widely read.

11. Aubrey F. G. Bell, "Some Aspects of Portuguese Literature" (London)

*Fortnightly Review* (June 1922), 111: 1008-17. Refers to Antero twice: Gil Vicente's "lyrical genius" becomes

accomplished and philosophic in Quental" (1013), and Portuguese writers "have excelled chiefly in works not requiring prolonged effort, in the sonnets of Camões, Diogo Bernardes, Bocage, Quental (...) (1016).

12. Unsigned. Review of Aubrey F. G. Bell's *Studies in Portuguese Literature and Poems from the Portuguese*. *The Athenæum*, no. 4500 (Jan. 2, 1914), 129-30:

Anthero de Quental, Portugal's modern poet of hope and light, for whom João de Deus wrote the splendid epitaph, died by his own hand.

Aqui jaz pó; eu não: eu sou quem fui,  
Rajo animado de uma luz celeste,  
A qual a morte as almas restitue,  
Restituindo á terra o pó que as veste.

*Lagniappe*

I cannot now locate the source of this translation by Richard Garnett of a poem by Antero de Quental that is in one of my folders. I believe that it has not hitherto been published, but it would not displease me to learn otherwise:

Blest, who through life in reverie hath past,  
Unwitting of its pinings and its throes,  
Lightly as shade on flowing waters cast,  
And passively as opes and shuts a rose.

In likeness of a dream thy life was drest.  
Obscurely limned with vague and tender hue.  
Awakening thou didst smile, and turn to rest,  
Dreaming the interrupted dream anew.