

South: Where Travel Meets Literary Journalism

by Isabel Soares

Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas,
Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, Portugal

The work of Portuguese journalist Miguel Sousa Tavares offers an opportunity to explore the rarely examined relationship between literary journalism and travel writing.

One thing that cannot be denied of Portuguese journalist Miguel Sousa Tavares is that he is a man of many talents. Contributing to such periodicals as *O Expresso*, Portugal's leading weekly paper, and *A Bola*, a sports daily, he also acts as a news pundit in one of the newscasts on national television, being often accused by his detractors of partiality and bias and of not being able to separate his personal opinions from his comments. He is known for the corrosive nature of many of his statements and for not shying away from controversy. Apart from this, he is a successful novelist and an author of children's stories. His first novel *Equator* (2003) sold an astonishing (for Portugal) 300,000 copies in four years, won a distinguished Grinzane Cavour Award, and has been translated and published in the Netherlands, Spain, France, Italy, Germany, Greece, the Czech Republic, Serbia, and Brazil. It is awaiting publication by Bloomsbury in Britain.¹ Put simply, Sousa Tavares is a tempestuous journalist, feared opinion maker, and respected novelist.

He is also one of Portugal's leading literary journalists and this finds expression in his many travel accounts.² But his is a style that also reflects the broader European characteristics of what is known on this side of the Atlantic as "literary reportage" or "reportage literature."³

In this examination we will focus on those travel accounts, published firstly in the press and then later collected as a book, in order to explore how

they intersect with literary journalism. This is because when analyzing both literary journalism and travel writing from a theoretical standpoint, we are confronted with hybrid genres, hybrid because they borrow both from each other as well as from other nonfictional and fictional forms. To support the claim that travel accounts can be interpreted as literary journalism, we need to ground our inference in the notion that, as Mary Louise Pratt discusses, travel writing is defined by “its heterogeneity and its interactions with other kinds of expression.”⁴ Yet similar observations have been made of literary journalism, that it is a kind of “epistemological moving object.”⁵ Thus both share in common a critical fluidity.

Our examination will focus on Sousa Tavares’s 1998 volume *Sul. Viagens*, or, in a literal English translation, *South. Travels*. From reading *Sul*, what emerges is that Sousa Tavares is not one of those larger than life (and thus not reflecting of true life) swashbuckling travellers like Errol Flynn or Lowell Thomas. Instead, he is the observer of different realities not usually accessible to the reader. Most of all, he is always the literary reporter, the translator of the “feel” of places to his public, or as Thomas B. Connery has characterized it, the “feel” of facts.⁶ At the same time, Sousa Tavares is the travel writer, the *other* kind of translator of *Other* places, the mediator between his own “point of origin in a culture and the context he is describing.”⁷

For those not familiar with what is generally common knowledge in Portugal, Miguel Sousa Tavares, born in 1952, is the son of one of the most cherished and renowned twentieth century Portuguese poets, Sophia de Mello Breyner Andresen, and of former lawyer and journalist Francisco Sousa Tavares, the latter a confessed opponent of the mid-twentieth century Portuguese dictator António de Oliveira Salazar. Like his father, the son, Miguel, also left a career in law to devote himself to journalism. Having worked for the major periodicals, magazines and television channels in the country, he was already very well known to the public before he attained success as a novelist. Mainly he has gained his journalistic reputation as an assertive interviewer, feature story author, and reporter. Reportage, taken here as a literal translation from the Portuguese word *reportagem*, meaning in-depth reporting,⁸ is a field in which Sousa Tavares has in particular made a name for himself as a journalist. *Sahara. The Sand Republic*, published in 1983, is an example of this and the result of an assignment to follow the Polisario Front guerrillas in their fight for the independence of Western Sahara. It would prove a cornerstone for future feature stories, news articles, and travel accounts that he would write.⁹

Travelling to southern latitudes, namely to the vast expanses of the Sahara, is indisputably one of the greatest passions of Sousa Tavares and the

inspiration for many of his travel accounts published throughout the years and first compiled in *Sul*. To mark the tenth edition of *Sul* and commemorate the selling of over 75,000 copies, which for Portugal confers best-selling status to the work in question, the editors at *Oficina do Livro*, the publisher, put forward a new 2007 edition to which texts published since the earlier editions have been added. The newest edition encompasses geographical localities from Egypt to the Amazon forest, revisits the Portuguese colonial past—one of Sousa Tavares's favourite themes—in trips to such places as Goa in India and the Cape Verde Islands, and, of course, includes his landscapes of the Sahara. Finally, and not least important, he explores his own country as a traveller on a journey—not as a detached tourist on a recreational trip.

There is, to be sure, an ongoing debate regarding the differences and similarities between tourists, who travel to places for recreation, and travellers for whom the journey is a quest in search of self-discovery and interpretation of the Other, if in fact their journey is not an attempt to merge with the Other.¹⁰ Tourists are the beneficiaries of the advent of mass tourism promoted by such agents as Thomas Cook, whereas travellers on a quest are the heirs of the learned traveller doing the Grand Tour for educational purposes to the ancient sites of European civilization. This dichotomy has created the notion that tourists are not real travellers but instead consumers of the pleasurable experiences afforded by travel. It is true that this assumption has recently been challenged by such authors as sociologist John Urry, who claims that “acting as a tourist is one of the defining characteristics of being ‘modern.’”¹¹ In other words, the tourist *is* the modern traveller in this particular interpretation. In such a light, even anthropologists can be regarded as “a variant of tourists” since “both are seeking to create symbolic capital from travel and both work by translating foreign experience into domestic categories.”¹²

Despite such efforts to merge the defining concepts of what is the tourist with those that characterize the traveller, we should still acknowledge “the ‘ideal’ traveller as one who in the first place has set out in search of something, definite or indefinite. He may have a concrete aim, or just a vague longing, but his journey is a quest.”¹³ It may or may not include tourists in the conventional sense. But there can still be “tourists” who are nevertheless travellers on a quest. Such a traveller is the channel through which the foreign Other is apprehended. Consequently, “writing” the travel story is a complex, if bidirectional process, involving “the familiarization or domestication of the unfamiliar at the same time as the defamiliarization of the familiar or domestic.”¹⁴ The traveller and the travel writer are, hence, the mediators between the world of the familiar Us and the foreign Other in the attempt to somehow either domesticate or translate the strangeness of the latter. The

position that all travellers are, in effect, only tourists, fails to acknowledge the two-way direction of the enterprise, that not only can tourists domesticate the strange, but that travellers can be changed and even be absorbed by the strange, much as traveller and explorer Richard F. Burton often “went native” and even appears to have converted to Sufism in the nineteenth century.¹⁵ In the case of Sousa Tavares, as we will see, there is also a clear connection here between those who have a need to “domesticate” and colonialism—to make “others” be like us. He, on the other hand, seeks to defamiliarize the familiar or domestic that is so much taken for granted.

Relevant to our discussion about how travel accounts and literary journalism intersect is the observation that literary journalism is fundamentally about cultural revelation of the Other.¹⁶ Much of what can be said of the questing traveller above can also be applied to the literary journalist, as will become evident.

Sousa Tavares approaches his travels initially with the eye of the reporter. But he is not just any reporter because his reporting quickly succumbs to the influence of the storyteller as he confesses in the preface to *Sul*: “I am a storyteller. They pay me for it, they pay me to go around the world and tell what I saw.”¹⁷ Thus in the opening to the first pages of *Sul*, the reader is confronted with the explanation he gives that tries to overcome the difficulties in characterizing what he is about to write: stories, reportage, travel accounts? Furthermore, the epigraph of the book is a poem by his mother, entitled “Deriva” or “Drift,” and its inclusion is revealing of the son’s intent. The poem is about the delights of travelling to exotic places, of which only the Kingdom of Prester John remains undiscovered. The end of the poem, which reflects on the nature of Sousa Tavares’s own personal travels, reads: “The orders I took I did not follow/And thus telling everything I saw/I do not know whether I misinterpreted everything or everything I discovered.”¹⁸ In this light, we can assume that, even though Sousa Tavares is a journalist, he does not comply with the conventional requirements of the journalistic assignment. He does not follow the orders of his news organization. He acknowledges he may have misinterpreted. At the same time he may have discovered what was not known before. One detects here in “discovery” a metaphor that goes beyond the mere reporting—as a form of cataloguing—of the obvious. Ultimately, his texts are not the accounts of the conventional journalist and the tourist, both of whom share one trait in common: they both embark on seeing the world not to engage in it at a personal level, but to see it from a safe, objectifying distance, the first posing with the notepad in hand as if its authority provides some kind of protective shield, the other posing *behind* the Nikon with the safety of a return ticket in his back pocket.¹⁹

Sousa Tavares is the first to declare that his intentions as a conventional journalist were not carried out because, in the contact with the subject he was supposed to observe, he always found a special, undefined something that led him to a different journalism, a distinct way of reporting. It is as if he is on a pilgrimage and he finds he can never be the detached, objectifying journalist. The result is that the journalist is engaged in an immersion, one of the hallmarks of literary journalism method as Norman Sims has noted.²⁰ The experience is not unlike a baptism that leads him to the ultimate apprehension of the object of his reporting: the subjective and intuitive knowledge of something at the heart of literary journalism.

The collection of texts in *Sul* can be said to be the heir of a long tradition of travel writing, but these are also texts written by a reporter and published in the press as journalism before having been compiled between book covers symbolic of having arrived as a literature, in this case a travel literature. In other words, these are texts that can both fall within the realm of travel writing and literary journalism, those two hybrid forms that come together and whose boundaries fail to be clear and well defined.

Regarding the intersection of travel accounts and literary journalism, it has been observed:

Literary journalism differs from and is similar to such forms as travel . . . narratives An effort has already been made to separate travelogue from narrative literary journalism as two different forms or genres No such effort is entirely successful, however. Ultimately . . . both . . . belong to different kinds of forms or genres that are not mutually exclusive. Travel narratives, on their face, belong to a topical genre Literary journalism . . . , on the other hand, is fundamentally a modal genre, that of narrative. But travelogue clearly can be in the form of narrative as well; thus boundaries can disappear between travelogue and narrative literary journalism.²¹

In the case of the texts in *Sul*, the topic acting as common denominator is the journey south, but it is as a narrative reporter that Sousa Tavares records it. Each text takes the reader somewhere different and in each one the reporter narrates the steps of the journey and his personal impressions and opinions. Consequently, *Sul* can be regarded as representative of the interrelation between travel writing and literary journalism. As Sousa Tavares also explains in the preface to the book:

I have not always travelled south, but I have not seen anything as extraordinary as the south. South is an airplane door that opens and an intense smell of green that drains you, the heat, the dampness sticking to your skin, the laughter of people, the noise . . . , an excess

of everything that swallows you and drags you as an immense wave.
You feel like closing your eyes . . . and letting go.²²

Thus, Sousa Tavares makes it clear that *he* and not some rhetorically constructed pose of journalistic omniscience will be the narrator to the public of his own travels. As he states: “This is a travel book.”²³ But again we must bear in mind that in Portugal this is viewed as the account of a professional journalist reporting from the foreign place. For example, the text “Amazon, the Last Frontier,” published in 1998, was prompted by the fact that twelve years before Sousa Tavares had been sent to Brazil “to shoot a 52-minute film about the history of Portuguese colonization in the Amazon, from the Marquis of Pombal to the splendour of the rubber era.”²⁴ His main intention for going was, more than anything else, *not* to see the tourist’s version, one where hired “Indians” would wait to have their photos taken by hordes of tourists in three different variations and prices: “with snake, with crocodile, or just Indian.”²⁵ Instead, he wanted to immerse himself in the wild and vast jungle, or as he confesses: “My Amazon was the one in *The Jungle*, by Ferreira de Castro, the one in the travels of Alexander von Humboldt, and the one of the tribes that had never seen white men until they were revealed on the pages of *National Geographic Magazine*. If such a thing still existed, that was what I had to see—before it disappeared.”²⁶ “Amazon, the Last Frontier” is, thus, the intertwining of the reporter’s account commissioned by RTP, the Portuguese national television network, and the traveller mesmerized by his experience. As if to impress the power of that experience, he lets his readers know that of all the documentary tapes his son has seen he always asks the father to show “the Amazon tape” in which he can see his father in a canoe on the river or walking in a Kayapo village. It is as a literary journalist that he concludes his reportage in a somewhat nostalgic tone for what will be lost: “I hope he [his son] will never have to ask me: what happened to the world you saw and that your generation inherited?”²⁷ The fear of loss, then, is what motivates Sousa Tavares: the loss of a time when things were pristine and safe from the ravages of modernization and development, just as we will discuss below when he travels in his own country. And the nostalgia of loss is what helps to elevate the reportage to what is literary because nostalgia is haunting, and the emotional and psychic ghosts that haunt are memorable, always calling to us from beyond some utilitarian boundary.

Clearly, these texts can also be of an autobiographical nature, the journey south being a journey of the narrator to discover something about himself. Hence, again, the similarity to a personal pilgrimage. Tom Wolfe noted that that there was a thin line separating autobiography from travel writing, and another thin line separating both from what he called the New Journalism.

As he suggested: “The sort of reporting that one now finds in the New Journalism probably begins with the travel literature of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Many of the travel writers seem to have been inspired by the success of autobiographies. Their idea was to create some autobiography for themselves by heading off to foreign places in search of color and adventure.”²⁸ In other words, they have, in “creating” some kind of “autobiography for themselves,” embarked on a story about a journey that is in part about self-revelation, and of course in part about cultural revelation.

Sousa Tavares is the traveller who lets us see himself immersed in his journey and in his reporting, as he does in the text “Alentejo: On a Landscape of Ruins,” originally published in October 1997 and in which he writes about the Alentejo, a southern province of Portugal. It deserves closer examination because it helps us to understand Sousa Tavares’s method and intentions as a literary journalist. After his many journeys to other lands, he has returned to his own, now armed with a keenly attuned sensitivity to what is alien in his own country. In other words, he will now defamiliarize the familiar or the domestic that is so taken for granted in Portugal.

Travelling from Lisboa, the Portuguese capital, Sousa Tavares goes by car to rural Alentejo where time seems to stand still in contrast with the urban center he has left. When he gets there he says he is “a journalist in a state of grace, a Lisbon in an intensive process of liberation.”²⁹ What is clear from this sentence is that it is difficult for the reader to identify the factual, objective journalist, notwithstanding Sousa Tavares’s self-reflexive observation that he is a “journalist.” After all, he is *liberated* from being a conventional journalist. Suggestively, liberation is the goal of any pilgrimage, usually conceptualized as liberation from, or forgiveness for, one’s sins and being in the grace of God.

The traveller and the journalist together take turns stepping back and forth into the foreground of the narrative scene, of which the author is very much conscious. This is reflected in the following:

I hit the road, in my moving “office”. A car covered in dust, with books, magazines, and brochures of Mértola and Pomação scattered throughout the seats, camera films lying “provisionally” on the floor, notebooks . . . , pens, tape recorder and camera close at hand, on the passenger seat, bottles of water that rolled to my feet, some empty, others full, packs of chewing-gum and cigarettes, a phone to connect me to the newsroom and the world and, lastly, a road map It looked like a Camel ad: I even shaved in the rear-view mirror.³⁰

As we can see, Sousa Tavares here is surrounded by the trappings of the professional journalist. He needs to stay in touch with the newsroom and

has brought with him the necessary tape recorder, all the notebooks, and the camera so that he can carry out the gathering and recording of information. Simultaneously, much of what he describes about his car could characterize the lone traveller, such as the water bottle, packs of chewing gum and cigarettes, and shaving in the rear-view mirror.

The same applies when he enters some forsaken café to have breakfast, notices the few people there and transcribes what a customer and the lady behind the bar are discussing, the subject this unexpected apparition of a renowned city slicker, this famous polemicist/journalist, meandering like any traveller, in the quiet of their remote backwater:

“Isn’t this Miguel Sousa Tavares? What is he doing here in the village?” And she answers . . . as if Miguel Sousa Tavares, two steps away, was not listening to anything: “I don’t know! Probably he came here to do a reportage . . .”

And the lady has just given me an excellent idea: a reportage. The first idea had been that, in fact, but for the last couple of days I had been walking around . . . , pestering people with silly questions, wasting film, but . . . , I must confess I had not quite figured out what I was doing there, apart from the joy of having a car all to myself and a few blank days But now I knew: I was there on a reportage. I paid the bill, greeted the lady and the gentleman . . . and went out, dragging Miguel Sousa Tavares to work.³¹

The traveller is now dragging the journalist to his job. In both examples, it is as if his two personae are engaged in a narrative dance with each other, and the synergy that arises between the two helps contribute to the narrative tension as the two attempt to understand the other. So for a few days, Sousa Tavares, the journalist, had been the prey of Sousa Tavares, the traveller.

When the reporter awakes from his traveller’s slumbers by the allusion to the professional reason he had gone to the Alentejo in the first place, Sousa Tavares starts reporting on the manifold problems afflicting that southern province: a decaying land of abandoned farms, mines and villages, the ruins of a part of the country neglected by the central administration. However, as literary journalist, he enjoys the greater freedom of describing the landscape as he perceives it and making his own comments regarding what he sees and understands are the problems of the Alentejo, which derive mainly from the rural exodus of the past few decades resulting in the neglect of farming which was once the basis of the economy of the province: “Just ruins and more ruins, ruins of houses, of barns, of stables, of abandoned farms.”³²

He then takes the car and drives to the copper mines of São Domingos. On arrival he is confronted with a desolate landscape: The mines have long been deserted. Steel-structure skeletons, old corroding cranes, and red dust

everywhere are all that is left. Sousa Tavares recalls the names of Spielberg and Lucas: “They would find this the perfect setting for one of their movies. It is a surreal landscape, breathtakingly beautiful, but with a silence of tragedy that tells the whole story of the drama that occurred here.”³³ The journalist, true to his calling, takes his time to unravel the reasons for the tragedy that occurred in the mines. But his eyes have already impregnated the landscape with his subjectivity, the subjectivity of the literary journalist. Thus the image of uncompromising factual objectivity is further repudiated.

Struggling to briefly characterize literary journalism, Kevin Kerrane notes that: “The eye of the writer is an omnipresent lens, no more and no less intrusive than the mind behind it. The literary journalist enjoys greater freedom in researching a story and greater flexibility in telling it.”³⁴ Similarly, when it comes to theorizing on travel literature, Alison Blunt argues that, “Both travel and travel writing are hermeneutic processes whereby the ‘eye/I’ of the traveller/travel writer constructs spatial and textual difference.”³⁵ In other words, travel writing is just as much conditioned by the author’s self or subjectivity as is the literary journalist’s. Again, the boundaries between literary journalism and travel writing are not discrete categories exclusive of one another although we should bear in mind that not all travel writing can be regarded as literary journalism. At their face value, itineraries, guidebooks and other forms of travel writing are pragmatic instances for tourist guidance and consumption with the aim of domesticating—harshly one might add—the unfamiliar, the Other, eviscerating what about it makes it strange and thus threatening or dangerous. The problem with such domestication is that too often the danger is objectified to a safe, sublimated distance. In other words, the “Other” ends up being reinscribed as Other except that the danger has been declawed. It’s the equivalent of theme-park pirates dressed up in costume and bearing cutlasses at Disney World.

With his eyes, then, Sousa Tavares sees the mines left to erosion, the abandoned houses of the miners who were forced to leave when there was no more work available, and the trail of a railway that was dismantled long ago and sold as scrap. With his subjective mind’s eye he sees scenes of a movie, something like *Out of Alentejo*³⁶ when he imagines the English that owned the mines four decades before and who, isolated from the rest of civilization, would “wear their white tuxedos for dinner, just as if they were in the All England Cricket Club of Hyderabad, in India.”³⁷ The invocation of an affluent—and colonial—past proves ironic in this, the country that was the first among European colonizers during the fifteenth-century voyages of exploration and discovery: Paradoxically, the colonizers have been colonized. It would be as if Manhattan became the playground of future rich Chinese,

while Americans—of all races—served as servants. We see in the contrast with the allusion to the “All England Cricket Club of Hyderabad” the final results of colonization: The colonizers have exhausted the land, leaving behind the present dusty ruins and desolation. Imagine the Manhattan of the future in such a condition, crumbling stone edifices, rusting iron skeletons, dust devils swirling in the streets.

Nor is there hope for the Alentejo’s future as indicated by the irony which Sousa Tavares uses to allude to the projects of so-called “modern minds.”³⁸ They want to save the region with golf courses, where German tourists would run after balls and the *alentejanos* after them as caddies in one more symbolic projection of colonial ambition. Sousa Tavares, then, is attempting to exorcize the colonial mentality—whether as colonizer or colonized—of the Portuguese experience.

The reportage continues, and the journalist cannot help but confront the most pressing and most newsworthy issue facing the whole of the Alentejo, the building of the mammoth dam of the Alqueva in the Guadiana river, a colossal project that serves as a kind of metaphor for some biblical promise to save the region through the development of a large irrigation system designed to boost agriculture and a modern power plant able to produce electricity of up to 240 megawatts. For the conventional journalist, it is just one more story of “Progress” to be reported dutifully, as was the case with the infinite numbers of articles that inundated the Portuguese press and promoted endless debate throughout the length of the building of the dam. But for the literary journalist, the dam is yet another unfortunate colonial idea for dominating nature. It represents a major environmental hazard, and it will totally destroy the subsistence agriculture characteristic of the Alentejo, an arid place with a fragile ecosystem unable to support golf courses and intensive farming. But, as usual in Portugal, “the Water Institute—irrespective of its name and functions—supports the project, as it always supports all projects that jeopardise the rational management of hydro resources.”³⁹

It is here that Sousa Tavares the polemicist emerges most clearly, unable to contain—or restrain—his dismay. It is also here that he is true to the European origins of “literary reportage” or “reportage literature.” Unlike American literary journalism, the European variation historically has always had more room for polemics. While the polemical journalist chastises the government for conceiving an ill-advised and irresponsible project, the literary journalist and traveller looks with nostalgia at the river running peacefully and slowly, separating the Portuguese village of Alcoutim from the Spanish Sanlúcar and wondering what a future of dams, golf courses and bridges will eventually bring. It is worth noting the author’s tone, which is imbued with that so characteristically Portuguese feeling called *saudade*.

Saudade is a uniquely Portuguese word translated as a melancholic feeling of nostalgia and longing for an irredeemably lost past when everything was good and beautiful and that can no longer be replicated in the present. In this context it can be said that *saudade* is an emotional tone that allows us to understand better how the traveller perceives and paints the landscape and how the literary journalist reveals his concerns, one and the other entangled by language as his subjectivity engages in apprehending the outside world:

At the bottom of a valley between majestic mountains lies the beautiful village of Alcoutim. On the other side of the river, just across . . . , is the Spanish village of Sanlúcar de Guadiana. Two twins separated by a liquid umbilical chord, which look at one another, day after day, century after century. If someone calls from Spain, somebody will answer from Portugal. . . . However, “progress” requires a bridge connecting the two separate sisters. May Providence not let the bridge spoil the beauty of the landscape and the harmony, loaded with symbolism, in which, quietly, Sanlúcar and Alcoutim remain looking at one another.⁴⁰

From the perspective of Sousa Tavares there is nothing wrong with progress as long as it is sustainable and well-planned. However, the old dilemma is always: “how to develop without destroying.” As he also adds:

There is a version that says that anything is better than . . . deserted villages, shut down mines, abandoned agriculture. The problem is no one ever shows up defending the obvious alternative: . . . the creation of jobs related to the rural world, the reopening of mines, the recovery of the river. . . . All around, projects only envisage dams, hunting reservations, complexes for tourism and golf courses. But the ruins, those will remain untouched.⁴¹

So he concludes his article. The allusion to the ruins that will defy time indicates the end of the journey to the Alentejo in which the traveller, who had been lost, has now found himself in a literary reportage that reveals the literary journalist’s disenchantment with Portuguese politics. The traveller’s journey provided him with the *modus* for writing, but literary journalism opened the eyes of the traveller, demystifying the mystery that is at the heart of, and end goal of, any journey.

The conclusion is the more moving today when we reread the article because now, five years after publication, the Alqueva dam, which created the largest artificial lake in Europe with a surface of 250 square kilometres, was finally finished and inaugurated with all pomp and circumstance. But the irrigation system is still a mirage and the Alentejo remains one of the poorest provinces in Portugal.

To conclude, the traveller/travel writer and the literary journalist met not

only in the south of Portugal, but also in the blurred and hybrid interstice that joins travel writing and literary journalism. The polemical note reminds us that these are not just the meandering mutterings of a tourist with the safety of a return ticket in his back pocket, but of someone who has been profoundly moved by what he has discovered.

It is in such revelation, echoing with both personal and cultural interpretations that repudiate the objectifications of conventional journalism, that Sousa Tavares, Portugal's tempestuous journalist, has completed another pilgrimage of the traveller by means of literary journalism. To that, we could add the observation by Jenny Mezciems: "[I]n communicating his experiences the traveller becomes a literary man, or at least a man important in literature."⁴² We see here, then, the intersection of where such travel accounts and literary journalism meet, and indeed become indistinguishable.

Isabel Soares is an assistant professor at the Instituto Superior de Ciências Sociais e Políticas, Universidade Técnica de Lisboa, Portugal.



Endnotes

1. "As Histórias do Miguel e do Zé," *Visão*, 18 October 2007, 121.
2. Indeed, departing from the seminal work of travel writing theorist, Percy G. Adams, Zweder von Martels argues that the genre "seems unlimited in its forms of expression," ranging from "the indisputable examples such as guidebooks, itineraries and routes . . . to the less restricted accounts of journeys," Zweder von Martells, *Travel Fact and Travel Fiction: Studies on Fiction, Literary Tradition, Scholarly Discovery, and Observation in Travel Writing* (Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1994), xi. Recalling his many travels, Sousa Tavares consequently is a writer of travel accounts. Worth mentioning when it comes to singling out the several forms of travel writing, is the fact that there is a difficulty in establishing a clear-cut distinction between what the American academy terms *travelogue* and its European counterpart named *travel account* as their contents overlap. For purposes of text cohesion, and because there is no substantiated body of studies regarding this discrepancy, we will be using the expression *travel account*.
3. The concepts of "literary reportage," "reportage literature," "reportage," and "literary journalism" still lack in studies and consensus that would account for their similarities and distinctions. If, on the one hand, as noted by Norman Sims, "literary journalism and reportage overlapped and tended to refer to the same works," (Norman Sims, *True Stories: A Century of Literary Journalism* [Evanston: Northwestern

University Press, 2007], 9), on the other, it is acknowledged that literary journalism is linked to an American tradition whereas literary reportage mostly reflects a European origin of a much more “elastic” form than literary journalism, one and the other bearing, however, “distinct similarities,” see John C. Hartsock, “Tracing the Historical Outlines of ‘Literary Reportage’: The ‘Other’ Literary Journalism”, in John Bak, ed., *International Literary Journalism: Historical Traditions and Transnational Influences* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, forthcoming).

4. Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992), 11.

5. John C. Hartsock, “‘Literary Journalism’ as an Epistemological Moving Object within a Large ‘Quantum’ Narrative,” *Journal of Communication Inquiry* 23 (October 1999), 432-47.

6. Thomas B. Connery, “A Third Way to Tell the Story: American Literary Journalism at the Turn of the Century,” in Norman Sims, ed., *Literary Journalism in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 6.

7. Susan Bassnett, *Comparative Literature: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford, UK and Cambridge, USA: Blackwell, 1993), 99.

8. The noun *reportagem* in Portuguese can have both a singular and a plural meaning to stand for individual pieces of in-depth reporting printed in newspapers and magazines or shown as news specials on television. Often these pieces, either because of the polemical nature of their contents or because of their newsworthiness, are published in book form after publication in the printed media or after being aired on television. For lack of a more specific terminology, *reportagem* can be interpreted in the sense of “literary reportage” in the European tradition.

9. Patrícia Fonseca and Sílvia Souto Cunha, “O Aventureiro Solitário,” *Visão*, 18 October 2007, 128.

10. Travelling implies a constant mediation between Self and Other and “ironically enough, it is by turning himself into another falsified other (in imitating the Other) that the traveller succeeds in marking himself off from his falsified other (the tourist),” Trinh T. Minh-ha, “Other than Myself/My Other Self,” in George Robertson, Melinda Mash, Lisa Tickner, Jon Bird, Barry Curtis and Tim Putnam, eds., *Traveller’s Tales: Narratives of Home and Displacement* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), 23.

11. John Urry, *The Tourist Gaze* (London: Sage Publications, 2002), 2.

12. Simon Coleman and Mike Crang, “Grounded Tourists, Travelling Theory,” in Simon Coleman and Mike Crang, eds., *Tourism: Between Place and Performance* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2002), 9.

13. M. A. Michael, *Traveller’s Quest* (London: William Hodge, 1950), 5.

14. Alison Blunt, *Travel, Genre, and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (New York and London: The Guilford Press, 1994), 17.

15. In fact, Burton’s travel accounts and his translation of *The Book of the Thousand Nights and a Night* between 1885 and 1888 had the clear intention of criticizing a society he considered morally decadent and corrupt: his own. By merging with the Other he could, then, chastise the world of the Us as a detached observer. See, Dane Kennedy, “‘Captain Burton’s Oriental Muck Heap’: *The Book of the Thousand Nights* and the Uses of Orientalism,” *The Journal of British Studies* (July 2000), 318.

16. John C. Hartsock, “‘Lettre’ from Berlin,” *DoubleTake/Points of Entry* (Spring/Summer 2007), 109.

17. Miguel Sousa Tavares, *Sul. Viagens* (Lisbon: Oficina do Livro, 2007), 9.
18. Ibid.
19. Another indicator that we cannot entirely dissociate Sousa Tavares from being also a tourist is that one of the features that characterize tourism presumes “a clear intention to return ‘home’ within a relatively short period of time,” Urry, 3. That is, the tourist and the traveller are two entangled entities in modern times.
20. Norman Sims, “The Literary Journalists,” in Norman Sims, ed., *The Literary Journalists* (New York: Ballantine, 1984), 8-12.
21. John C. Hartsock, *A History of American Literary Journalism: The Emergence of a Modern Narrative Form* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2000), 13.
22. Tavares, 9.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid., 19.
25. Ibid.
26. Ibid.
27. Ibid., 36.
28. Tom Wolfe, “The New Journalism,” in Tom Wolfe and E. W. Johnson, eds., *The New Journalism: With an Anthology* (New York and London: Harper & Row, 1973), 50.
29. Tavares, 75.
30. Ibid.
31. Ibid., 76.
32. Ibid., 75.
33. Ibid., 76-77.
34. Kevin Kerrane, “Making Facts Dance,” in Kevin Kerrane and Ben Yagoda, eds., *The Art of Fact: A Historical Anthology of Literary Journalism* (New York: Touchstone, 1998), 20.
35. Blunt, 21.
36. Tavares, 77.
37. Ibid.
38. Ibid., 79.
39. Ibid., 81.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., 82.
42. Jenny Mezcicms, “‘Tis Not to Divert the Reader: Moral and Literary Determinants in Some Early Travel Narratives,” in Philip Dodd, ed., *The Art of Travel: Essays on Travel Writing* (London: Frank Cass, 1982), 2.