

# Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso

## I-III

Pelos artigos já aqui publicados pode considerar-se estabelecida na *Revista Lusit.* uma serie de estudos acêrca do nosso novelista do sec. XVI, Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso. Esses estudos são:

- I — *O Adagiario de Trancoso*, por Sousa Viterbo, no vol. VII, p. 97 ss.;
- II — Uma edição dos «Contos», por Joseph de Perrot, no vol. XVI, p. 159 ss.;
- III — *Um Trancosano illustre*, por J. L. de V., no vol. XXIII, p. 190.

Agora se seguem outros estudos.

J. L. DE V.

## IV

Um dos volumes da *Antologia Portuguesa*, com que o D.<sup>o</sup> Agostinho de Campos está vantajosamente contribuindo para a vulgarização de muitos dos nossos bons autores, é consagrado a Trancoso, e este mesmo titulo tem, Lisboa 1921. Consta de Introdução substanciosa, e dividida em sete capitulos:

1. — Biografia, onde apresenta a conjectura de que Trancoso exerceu qualquer profissão na organização judicial do seu tempo.
2. — Trancoso e a critica.
3. — Trancoso como escritor.
4. — Trancoso na História Literária das Espanhas.
5. — As fontes do livro de Trancoso.
6. — Bibliografia.
7. — A «Antologia».

Como informação bibliografica, devo dizer que os Contos de Trancoso tiveram tanta voga, que passaram para a *literatura de cordel*.

Possuo uma *Relação Curiosa*, Lisboa 1765 (folheto d'essa literatura) com o conto 7.º da pt. III que creio que é desconhecida dos bibliógrafos e dos etnógrafos. É possível que haja separatas analogas.

J. L. DE V.

V

A proposito do mencionado volume da *Antologia Portuguesa* publicou T. F. Crane in *The Romanic Review* XIII (1922), 279-282, um valioso artigo que com a devida vénia se transcreve a seguir:

In the introduction to the second volume of his *Orígenes de la Novela*, Madrid, 1907, Menéndez y Pelayo gives a detailed account of the short story or *novela* in the Iberian peninsula. The earliest tales of this kind go back to the translations of Oriental storybooks or of *exempla* originally intended for the use of preachers. Aside, however, from the very characteristic *El Conde Lucanor*, the Spanish short story was for ever a century a translation or imitation of the Italian *novella*. In my *Italian Social Customs of the Sixteenth Century* I have shown the extraordinary vogue of collections of short stories, the frame of which is an imitation of the introduction to the *Decameron*. This is peculiarly true of the seventeenth century, although the greatest of all Spanish stories at the beginning of this period, Cervantes's *Novelas Ejemplares*, had no frame in which the stories were fitted. This is also the case with another very interesting collection of moral stories published in Portugal some thirty-eight years earlier by Gonçalo Fernandes Trancoso. The absence of a frame in this latter work is all the more remarkable since the author wrote it to assuage the sorrow caused by the death at Lisbon in the plague of 1569 of his wife, daughter, a son, and nephew.

Trancoso's work was frequently reprinted (some fifteen editions between 1575 and 1764 are mentioned by the bibliographers) and he enjoyed great popularity in his own country, but his stories were not reprinted after 1764, and all editions are now scarce. His memory was kept alive only by bibliographers and historians of Portuguese literature until Theophilo Braga published in 1883 nineteen of Trancoso's thirtyeight tales in his *Contos Tradicionais do Povo Portuguez*, Oporto, vol. II, pp. 62-128. The stories published by

Braga were those of interest to students of popular tales. For a similar reason Sousa Viterbo published in the *Revista Lusitana*, vol. VII (1902), 97-103, an article on Trancoso as a source for the study of Portuguese proverbs. The writer gives the few known facts of Trancoso's life, reprints the prologue to the first edition (<sup>1</sup>), gives a list of the editions mentioned by previous bibliographers, and publishes nineteen proverbs from the *Histórias de Proveito e Exemplo*.

Nothing more was printed about Trancoso until last year (1921) when twenty-four of the thirty-eight *histórias* were reprinted in *The Antologia Portuguesa* edited by Agostinho de Campos and attractively printed at Lisbon by Aillaud and Bertrand. Of the fourteen omitted stories five are given by Braga in the work mentioned above, leaving nine still inaccessible to the student. Most of these are of little interest; only two, in fact, are of any importance; the second story of the second part (a version of the theme of «The Thankful Dead»), and the eighth of the third part, a story taken from Cintio's *Gli Eccatomiti*, II, 1.

Nothing is known of Trancoso's life except what he him-

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(<sup>1</sup>) Sousa Viterbo does not say where he found the *Prologo* which he reprints. Menéndez y Pelayo, *op. cit.*, p. LXXXVIII, says that the «carta» directed to the Queen Doña Catalina, widow of Don Juan III and «regentess» of the Kingdom, is found only in the first and very rare edition of the *Contos* of 1575 and was unfortunately omitted in the subsequent editions. This is a mistake. Professor J. de Perott in 1913 published in the *Revista Lusitana*, vol. XVI, pp. 159-163, an account of a rare edition printed at Lisbon in 1594 by Antonio Alvarez. This edition contains the *Prologo* to the Queen and is reprinted in full by Professor de Perott, showing that the *Prologo* had probably been printed in the previous editions of 1575 (?), 1585, and 1589. It was apparently not printed in the subsequent editions. It is reproduced with some omissions in the modern edition which forms the subject of this review. I may add that the edition of 1594 seems to be unknown to all previous bibliographers. By the courtesy of the owner I had an opportunity to examine this edition, which contains the first two parts only. The third part probably appeared for the first time in the next edition of 1596.

self tells us in the *Prologo* mentioned above: that he was living in the city of Lisbon in 1569 when it was depopulated by the plague which robbed him of a daughter twenty-four years of age, a son who was a student, a nephew, choir-boy in the cathedral, and a wife beloved for her virtues; that these losses caused him to fall into so deep a melancholy that he feared it would injure his body and soul; and to distract his mind he determined to write tales of adventure, profitable and exemplary stories, together with some sayings of wise and serious men. He tells us in his stories that he lived in the parish of S. Pedro de Alfama, and Sousa Viterbo, *op. cit.*, p. 100, prints a document of 1575 in which Trancoso was surety for a certain Francisco Lainez, but which contains no details of his life. He was author of one other work, an ecclesiastical calendar to determine the moveable feasts of the church, published in 1570. All other particulars of Trancoso's life are pure conjecture, as to the place and date of his birth (Trancoso, 1515 or 1520) and death (before 1596).

The value of Trancoso's work for the study of diffusion of popular tales is slight. The author was familiar, of course, with the Italian novelists and borrowed some nine of his stories from Boccaccio, Bandello, Cintio, Sercambi and Straparola. Some eight stories are derived from sources more or less popular which reached Trancoso probably by way of oral tradition. Among these are the story (I, 9) of «The Envious Neighbors», one of whom is to receive double what is granted to the other. Menéndez y Pelayo, *op. cit.*, p. xcvi, thinks Trancoso took his story from the fables of Avianus (20), but the story was widely known in many other forms (see Crane's *Jacques de Vitry*, No. 196; Klapper, *Erzählungen*, No. 156; and Braga, *op. cit.*, II, 69-230); «The Secret Revealed» (I, II), which has Italian variants as old as the *Cento Novelle Antiche* (see Oesterley's *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. 124, and Alessandro d'Ancona, *Studj di Critica e Storia Letteraria*, Bologna, 1880, p. 348; «The Emperor and the Abbot» (I, 17) (see Child's *English and Scottish Ballads*, pt. II, p. 403); here again Italian versions abound (see Crane's *Italian Popular Tales*, pp. 275, 276, 378); «The Three Counsels» (I, 18) (see *Gesta Romanorum*, cap. 103, and Crane, *op. cit.*, pp. 157, 357); a Spanish version is in *El Conde Lucanor*, ed. Knust, p. 37; «The Thankful Dead» (II, 1) has already been mentioned (the most copious references to this widely spread tale may be found in

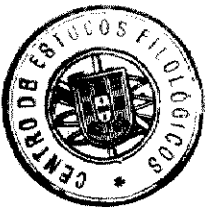
the third volume of Bolte and Polivka's *Anmerkungen* to Grimm, pp. 40 et seq.); «The Virtuous Queen and the Two Envious Sisters» (II, 7), of which innumerable versions are found in Italy and the Iberian peninsula (see Braga, *op. cit.*, II, pp. 192 et seq.; Crane, *op. cit.*, p. 17; and Bolte and Polivka, *op. cit.*, No. 96); «The False and the True Prince», (III, 1), which has echoes in the *Cento Novelle Antiche*, IV, and in the *Libro de los Enxemplos*, No. 247. Finally, in this connection may be mentioned «The Found Purse» (III, 7), a very popular story of Oriental origin (see Chauvin, *Bibliographie des Ouvrages Arabes*, IX, p. 26, *Orient und Occident*, I, p. 656), of which variants are found in Italy (Sercambi, Nov. IV, Cintio, I, 9) and in Spain (Timoneda, No. VI). Menéndez y Pelayo, *op. cit.*, p. XCIV, says that Trancoso's version appears to be independent of these and of popular origin.

Some of Trancoso's stories are mere anecdotes, the sources of which are to be found in such works as Melchior de la Cruz's *Floresta Española*, etc. This is the case with I, 8, where a steward tells the archbishop of Toledo that he has too many in his household. A list is made of those necessary and those unnecessary. The archbishop says: «Let those remain whom I need, and also those others who need me». The same idea is found in the preceding story (I, 7), where a king gives a youth a position as accountant in the customs. An inspector of the treasury remarking to the king on the uselessness of the office, the latter replies: «If we do not need the accountant, the youth needs the office». Some of these anecdotes are taken from Spanish history, e. g. II, 9, where the Marques de Priego, seeing one of his castles razed by the order of the Catholic King, says: «Thank God for having given me walls on which the king's anger may be vented!»

One of the most curious of Trancoso's stories is the one (I, 14) entitled by Braga «A prova das laranjas» and by the *Antologia* «Alma Tabelio» («A Notary's Mind»), which is briefly as follows. A lawyer with three sons asks his lord to take one of them into his service. The Lord tests the three by asking how many oranges are in a bowl of water. There are four whole ones and seven halves, which latter in the water, appear like whole ones. Two of the brothers answer a dozen and a half; the third calls in two witnesses and in their presence takes the oranges out of the bowl and draws up a legal document relating the facts. The lord takes him into his ser-

vice. The *Antologia*, p. XLVI, says that an analogous situation is found in *El Conde Lucanor*, No. 19. This is not a very close parallel; in it a king tests the worth of his three sons by dressing them up and having them ride through the streets of the city and report to him what they had observed.

I have said above that Trancoso took some nine of his stories (occurring mostly in the third part) from the Italian novelists. It may be interesting to know which they are. From the *Decameron* he took the stories of Tito and Gisippo (x, 8) and of Griselda (x, 10); from Bandello (II, 15) the story of Pietro and the miller's daughter whom the duke of Florence compels him to make his wife; from Cintio (I, 5) the story of Pisti the Vinitian, who slays his wife's suitor and flees from justice; he finally surrenders himself to save his family from starvation, and is pardoned by the state<sup>(1)</sup>; from Cintio (I, 9) the story of Filargiro, who loses a purse and offers a reward for its discovery; when it is found the owner pretends that it contained more money and the judge decides that it cannot be the one he lost (this story is also in Sercambi, IV, as has been stated above); from Cintio (II, 1), the story where Diego kills the lover of Caritea, who promises her hand to the one who will bring her the murderer's head. In a subsequent war with Portugal Diego defends Caritea and captures her enemy the king of Portugal. Diego then surrenders himself to Caritea, who marries him.



T. F. CRANE.

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(1) These two stories were very popular and furnished Lope de Vega with the plots of his plays, *La Quinta de Florencia* and *El Piadoso Veneciano*, both now accessible to the student in volume xv of the edition of Lope de Vega's works edited by the Spanish Academy, Madrid, 1913, pp. 359, 536.