Review: Romanceiro tradicional das Ilhas dos Açores: 1 Corvo e Flores

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not necessarily an overlay of later generations of readers.

In Scottish moral philosophy, we find imag-
inings of human society and government that reject the social contractualism of the Lockean vision of society. Adam Ferguson rejected the atomistic views of Hobbes, Locke, Hume, and Rousseau on the history of society, finding that all available evidence pointed to the idea that living in society is the natural state of man-kind—that there is no presocial state of man in nature. In *Wealth of Nations* (1776), Adam Smith famously found that “the propensity to truck, barter and exchange one thing for another”—that is, to live in social groups—was the universal foundation for a definition of human-kind.

This is not merely asking for a more complete approach to the subject. Rather, the Scottish Enlightenment’s reevaluation of the history of society appears as a driving force behind both the antiquarian and philological movements in Bauman and Briggs’s reading. Hugh Blair, whose work on Ossian is central to the authors’ thesis about the rise of theories of poetics and national literatures, was deeply immersed in this philosophical movement, as well. The eighteenth-century reframing of folklore and poetics witnessed in emergent theories of national poetries surely grew out of the critique of Locke’s theory of society. Even given the authors’ desire to avoid strict historiographic lines of influence, it was surprising to me that Bauman and Briggs did not place Scottish moral philosophy in any direct conversation with Locke. That the Scottish philosophers (Hume, Kames, Hutcheson, Blair, Ferguson) seem to have accepted Locke’s understanding of understanding but rejected his understanding of society seems worthy of discussion in the context the authors have framed. But they leave the reader with a purified “Lockean” position against which to judge the “Herderian” position to come.

Third, the figure of Kant is missing from their discussion. Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason* is largely the work against which the Hamann-Herder-Humboldt accounts of language were launched. Herder was certainly one of Kant’s notable students. It would be akin to placing Wittgenstein in historical context without mentioning his relationship to, and ultimate rejection of the ideas of, his teacher Bertrand Russell. Moreover, Kant was the first European intellectual to teach a course called “anthropology.” To place Herder in opposition to “Lockean” rather than “Kantian” positions here seems not to live up to the authors’ stated desire to “engage with the intricacies and the intimacies of metadiscursive regimes” (p. 318).

Perhaps that is another book—or other books. Clearly, the subject matter is too vast to be contained within any single volume. I mention these questions not to find shortcomings in the work that Bauman and Briggs have done but to point out that readers of *Voices of Modernity* will bring differing potential contextualizations to their engagement with it. It is necessary reading for a deeper sense of that context. What Bauman and Briggs have accomplished is a crucial rereading of European modernity, demonstrating without question how reshaping notions of language, art, tradition, folk, and lore contributed unmistakably to the emergence of ideas of modernity, progress, and inequality over the last three centuries. It has a prominent place in my library, as it should in anyone’s.

**Romanceiro tradicional das Ilhas dos Açores: 1 Corvo e Flores** (*Traditional Ballads of the Azores: Volume 1, Corvo and Flores*). By Joanne B. Purcell. (Lisbon: Angra do Heroísmo, 2002. Pp. 247, preface, 3 photographs, 2 maps, 6 indices, glossary.)

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The late Joanne Purcell spent much of 1969 and 1970 documenting the rich oral traditions of the Azores, and the first volume of her ballad research on the islands of Corvo and Flores has recently been published under the auspices of the Azorean Secretary of Education and Culture. Thirty-three texts are presented, generously cross-referenced with other variants collected from the Luso-Iberian ballad tradition. The volume also includes musical transcrib-
Romanceiro tradicional das Ilhas dos Açores represents just a small sampling of the over one thousand variants of seventy ballads collected by Purcell during her field research in the nine islands of the Azores. This research contributes richly to both Iberian and European ballad studies, as Purcell herself acknowledged: “Como os Açores são uma zona muito conservadora devido ao seu isolamento e localização na periferia da Europa, a minha coleção fornece elementos indispensáveis para um melhor conhecimento do romanceiro português, e de grande utilidade para os estudos comparativos do romanceiro pan-ibérico e pan-europeu” (p. 30). (Because the Azores are a very conservative zone, due to their isolation and location at the periphery of Europe, my collection will provide indispensable elements for a greater understanding of Portuguese balladry and will be greatly useful for comparative study of pan-Iberian and pan-European balladry.) Indeed, one sees in this small selection of Purcell’s fieldwork Carolingian ballads (“Conde Claros ea Princesa,” “Conde Claros Vestido de Frade”), historic ballads (“Morte do Príncipe D. Afonso,” “Batalha de Lepanto”), classic ballads (“Florbela e Brancaflor”), captive ballads (“A Irmã Perdida,” “O Cativo,” “O Conde Arnaldo”), and a wide variety of domestic ballads of love, seduction, and betrayal.

The editors have used Joanne Purcell’s 1970 article, “A Riqueza do Romanceiro e outras Tradições orais nas Ilhas dos Açores” (Atlântida 14: 223–52, 1970), as an introduction to the volume. In it, Purcell cogently writes of her fieldwork experience, the wide range of ballads she collected, and the other oral traditions she collected along with the ballads. These latter samples include some 450–500 traditional stories, told mostly by men, as well as tongue twisters, popular theatre performances, legends, riddles, and proverbs. Of particular interest to Purcell were her interviews with whale hunters, who used a terminology borrowed from nineteenth-century English-speaking whalers from New England.

In discussing her informants, Purcell notes that storytelling was far more popular among men, who had longer periods of time to perform narratives while on night fishing runs or on rainy days when they were not working. Women greatly preferred ballads, which they sang while involved in domestic activities ranging from washing dishes to weaving to kneading bread dough. Despite the conservative environment of the Azores that protected many of these oral traditions, Purcell recognized their fragility; she located one ninety-two-year-old informant the night before the woman was to leave for the United States. Modern culture and emigration were depleting the pool of informants thirty years ago, when Purcell was conducting her fieldwork. Today, we might reasonably assume the oral traditions have further deteriorated, leading us to await eagerly the publication of more of this valuable collection. With Joanne Purcell’s death in 1984, however, we are dependent upon the goodwill and talents of those scholars who have survived her to publish these texts.

Joanne Purcell’s collection of traditional ballads of the Azores represents the best in scholarly folklore works, not only in that it is a comprehensive and well-researched collection, but also in that several folklorists and other professionals collaborated to see the collection into print. Purcell willed her tapes to her esteemed colleague and friend, ballad scholar Samuel G. Armistead, who, along with Cristina Carinhas and Pere Ferreré Manuel da Costa Fontes, edited this volume. Israel J. Katz transcribed the music, Diego Catalán provided copies of Purcell’s notes from the Menéndez Pidal Archives, and a host of others provided the maps, photographs, and various levels of technical and editorial assistance. Purcell, who graciously thanks her informants, the Fulbright Hays Foundation, and the Comissão Cultural Luso-Americana in her introduction, would surely be both gratified and impressed with the care that so many others have taken to make sure her research has not stayed buried in archives but will receive the notice it deserves.