

Maria Paula Diogo e Isabel Maria Amaral, *A Outra Face do Império: Ciência, Tecnologia e Medicina. (sécs. XIX-XX)*. Lisboa: Edições Colibri, Coleção CIUHCT, 2012. 198 pp.  
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By Cláudia Castelo\*

The intersection between imperial history and the history of science, technology and medicine (STM) is a well-established research area in the international literature since, at least, the 1990s. However, the role of STM as a structural element of Portuguese colonial history during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries remains largely unacknowledged. The editors of the present volume argue that the importance of the imperial entanglements of STM, allow for new perspectives on the geography of knowledge circulation, and on the study of scientific, technical and medical travels. They also state that such an approach is fundamental to assess contemporary power relations at a national, European and global levels (p. 16).

Based on the results of two groundbreaking research projects, one on national engineering and the African Empire and the other on tropical medicine and the Portuguese colonies, *A Outra Face do Império*, edited by Maria Paula Diogo and Isabel Amaral, addresses these specific issues. To my knowledge, this volume is the first book about science, technology and medicine on the late Portuguese Empire. It collects the contributions of various authors at different stages of their careers and with heterogeneous backgrounds, from Physics to Anthropology. Despite this diversity, the majority has already produced relevant academic work in the field of the history of science and technology.

Organized in ten chapters divided in three parts, each discussing a particular theme — science, technology and medicine — the book covers a wide variety of topics, and makes use of different theoretical and methodological tools, ranging from the well-established academic field of history of science to historical anthropology.

In the first part, dealing with science, the most remarkable contribution focuses on the history of colonial observatories in the Portuguese Empire. Pedro Raposo argues that local conditions, initiatives and networks were central in the making of imperial astronomical science. The second part, about technology, includes an important study, by Maria Paula

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Diogo, on the discourse of Portuguese engineers and their political influence in colonizing Africa; an article by Bruno Navarro focuses on the preservation of colonial heritage and postcolonial identity through the case-study of Maputo's central railway station; finally Ana Paula Silva presents a critical appraisal of the global links of the Portuguese telegraphic network. In the third part, Isabel Amaral addresses the emergence of tropical medicine in Portugal; Pedro Lau Ribeiro studies the missions carried out by the *Portuguese School of Tropical Medicine (Escola de Medicina Tropical)*; Cristiana Bastos deals with the distinct models of medicalization, from Goa to Africa, through two opposite architectural styles; finally Rita Lobo focuses on research on malaria and eradication programs in mainland Portugal. The book's introduction pieces together these different case-studies and offers a general overview of the state of the art on these topics.

The volume's main shortcomings cannot be understood without recognizing not only the incipient stage of Portuguese scholarship in this field, but also the different developmental stages of the various investigations, especially in the first part. Maria das Dores Areias' contribution on the role of scientific expeditions to the development of African geological knowledge during the nineteenth century emphasises the minor role paid by the metropolis in such expeditions. This is not a convincing argument, both because the expeditions were organized by the state or scientific groups and because travellers themselves embodied those institutions' specific agendas. In addition, the chapter by João Rui Pita and Ana Leonor Pereira, focusing on the journal *Pharmaceutical News (Notícias Farmacêuticas)*, has a marked descriptive character in addressing the journal's content regarding African natural resources associated with medical and pharmaceutical uses. Rita Lobo's article, exclusively centred on the anti-malaria programmes in the metropolis, despite its merits, does not contribute to the book's overall coherence.

Regardless of such shortcomings, the book paves the way for new studies on science, technology and medicine in the Portuguese empire. Due to the gap between the elaboration of the chapters and their publication, this volume could not take into account recent important contributions to this dynamic field in Portugal. Nevertheless, it is a fundamental reading for researchers, students and the general public interested in this field of studies.