

Views from the Edge: the Short Story Revisited

9th International Conference on the Short Story in English

June 21-25, 2006

University of Lisbon, Portugal

Pre- and Post-Conference Tours

Pre-Conference Half-Day Excursion to Old Lisbon
(June 21 2006, morning)



Monument to the Discoveries



Jerónimos Monastery

On the right bank of the broad Tagus river estuary, the capital of Portugal stands elegantly on rolling hills. This is a spectacular location and does much to explain the cosmopolitan history of the city. Its exceptional natural light, which has long inspired writers, photographers and filmmakers, the brightly coloured buildings straddling the slopes, the striking ochre of the roofs, the tiling on so many façades and the narrow twisting alleys of the medieval districts bestow Lisbon with the peculiar atmosphere of a city somewhere between the European north and the Mediterranean south. Over thousands of years, the superb natural harbour of the Tagus was used by traders and seafarers. Lisbon's long history began under the Phoenicians as Alis-Ubbo, before becoming the Roman settlement of Felicitia Julia Olisipo in the second century. With the arrival of the Moors from the 8th century onwards, it was renamed Aschbouna. The city fell to the Portuguese in 1147, when conquered by the first king of Portugal, Afonso Henriques. It became the national capital in 1255. Much was rebuilt after the 1755 earthquake. A regular, symmetrical plan was established for the "Baixa (city centre)", opening it up both to the light and to the river. There is also the seductive appeal of Chiado, a neighbourhood that evokes the bourgeois tastes of 19th-century Lisbon.

The tour will take the group through the city to Belém, one of Lisbon's historical areas, where the group will take a tour of the Coach Museum. This boasts the largest and most important collection of carriages in the world, dating from the 17th to the 19th century. Next, the group will visit the Monastery of Jerónimos (1502), the finest example of the Gothic-Naturalist ("Manueline") style.

Then the tour will proceed on to the Belém Tower, a 16th-century fortress, and to the Monument to the Discoveries.

Price: € 21

Post-Conference Half-Day Excursion Sintra, Roca Cape and Cascais
(June 25 2006, afternoon)



Sintra Palace



Roca Cape

The tour will begin with a visit to the delightful town of Sintra, located at the foot of the mountain range of the same name, and whose unique characteristics have led UNESCO to classify it as a World Heritage Site. In fact, a special category - that of "cultural landscape" - had to be created for the purpose, taking into account the area's natural riches as well as the historic buildings in the town and mountains. Endowed with luxuriant vegetation, the mountains are part of the Sintra-Cascais Natural Park. In the 12th century, Dom Afonso Henriques, the first King of Portugal, captured the Moorish Castle, and his successors later built their summer residence on the ruins of an Arab palace, which is now the centrepiece of the town - the Palácio da Vila. Many reminders of the Moorish presence can still be found in the palace, but the most striking features are the two enormous conical chimneys built in the Middle Ages. Much appreciated by kings and nobles as a country resort, and praised by writers and poets like Lord Byron, who called it "glorious Eden", Sintra has a wealth of cottages and manor houses. The palaces are also outstanding. They include the Pena Palace, built in the Romantic period on one of the mountain peaks, the 18th-century Seteais Palace, now converted into an elegant hotel, and the Monserrate Palace, famous for its beautiful gardens, with exotic species that are unique in the country.

The tour will then descend from the ever-green mountains of Sintra to **Cabo da Roca**, the westernmost point of Continental Europe, where a stop will be made by the cliffs overlooking the Atlantic Ocean.

We will then follow the coastline via Guincho beach and Boca do Inferno ("Hell's Mouth") - a recess of the coast surrounded by craggy rocks and caves, which offers a fantastic spectacle of the sea dashing itself against the rocks on stormy days - on to **Cascais**. Traditionally a seaside fishing village, Cascais underwent significant development in the 14th century, when it became a busy port of call for ships on their way to Lisbon. But it was in the late 19th century, when bathing in the sea became popular, that Cascais was transformed into a very fashionable seaside resort. The chief architect of this transformation was King Luís I, who converted the fort into the summer residence of the Portuguese monarchy. His example was soon followed by the nobility, who built mansions and fine villas, where they would spend the hottest part of the year, completely changing the face of the former fishing village. Cascais then became a cosmopolitan town, attracting visitors who gained greater access when the railway between Pedrouços and Cascais was opened in 1889. Cascais nowadays is a lively, cosmopolitan place which retains a certain aristocratic atmosphere.

The tour will include leisure time in Cascais before returning to Lisbon via the marginal, a coastal road.

Price: € 24

Pre-Conference Full-Day Tour to Óbidos, Nazaré and Batalha

(June 20 2006, including lunch)



Óbidos Castle

Óbidos Village



Nazaré

Nazaré



Batalha

Batalha

The tour will begin with a visit to Óbidos, one of the most charming Portuguese villages, completely enclosed within the ramparts of the Medieval Castle.

This walking visit will enter the ramparts by the 18th-century arched entrance covered in glazed tiles (“azulejo”s), and will follow along cobblestone narrow streets lined with bright white small houses, with flower pots on window-sills. Gothic and Renaissance churches especially the beautiful Church of Santa Maria remind visitors of the importance of Óbidos in the past.

Local artisans and craftsmen still using old techniques show their wares in several small shops along the streets.

The tour will continue to Nazaré, the most famous fishing town in Portugal. Among the bright colored rowing-boats moored on the beach bathed by the Atlantic Ocean, one may watch the fishermen bring in the nets. A superb view is enjoyed from the “Sítio”, a belvedere on top of the hill. On the street, one may still see women wearing the traditional 7 skirted traditional costumes.

Lunch will be served at a local restaurant.

The tour will then proceed to Batalha for a visit to the superb Monastery of Santa Maria da Victória, celebrating the 1383 victory against the Castilians in the Battle of Aljubarrota. This monument built in 1388 is the most beautiful example of the Portuguese Gothic architecture. The Unfinished Chapels and Cloisters in "Manueline" were added in 1509 and in 1563 the Renaissance Chapels and Cloisters were also added to this monument.

Return to Lisbon.

Price: € 56

Post-Conference Full-Day Excursion to Évora (June 26 2006, including lunch)



Temple of Diana



Giraldo Square

The tour will take the 25 April Bridge over the Tagus via Montemor on to Évora. Topped by an imposing cathedral, **Évora** sprawls over a gently sloping hill rising from the vast Alentejo plain. Its historic centre is surrounded by a massive outer wall and is a valuable cultural legacy that UNESCO has classified as World Heritage. The city, with its narrow streets of Moorish origin that contrast with sunlit squares, has a two-thousand-year long history. Known to the Celts as "Ebora", it was conquered in 59 BC by the Romans, who named it "Liberalitas Julia". Little remains from the Visigoth period (5th-8th centuries), which was followed by the Moorish period, begun when Tárique conquered the city. The town was reconquered in the 12th century by the Christians. Yeborah, as it became known, had already received an indelible Moorish influence, most clearly seen in the Mouraria neighbourhood. From the Middle Ages on, the city welcomed the court of various Portuguese kings from the first and second dynasties, and it was enriched with various palaces and monuments, particularly during the reigns of João II and Manuel I (15th and 16th centuries). The Roman-Gothic cathedral (1186), the Church of St. Francis, including the Chapel of Bones (1480), and the ruins of the Roman Temple of Diana are well worth a visit.

Lunch will be at a regional restaurant.

The tour will then proceed to Monsaraz, an extremely beautiful mediaeval town which has succeeded in preserving its own distinctive characteristics over the centuries. Walking through the streets of Monsaraz is like going back in time, for it is a truly unique place. The most immediate visual impression in the town is that of the whitewashed houses and buildings.

The tour will continue to Arraiolos, where the group will visit a factory that produces the world-famous hand-made carpets.

Return to Lisbon.

Price: € 53

Pre- or Post-Conference Three-Day Excursion to S. Miguel Island, Azores

(4 days / 3 nights)

With their sapphire-blue and emerald-green lakes, fertile meadows, hydrangeas, azaleas, 16th-century churches, manor houses and a mild climate all-year round (between 14° C and 22° C / 57° F and 71° F), the Azores are a guaranteed paradise for all visitors.

São Miguel, the largest island in the archipelago, is composed of two volcanic massifs separated by a lower altitude central ridge. The highest point, called Pico da Vara, is 1,080m high and is situated in the eastern massif. The large craters of Sete Cidades, Fogo and Furnas contain large lakes of crystal clear water.

São Miguel is renowned for its beautiful and peaceful landscape, its transparent lakes that hold legends of ancient kings and cities, and the unforgettable experience of meals cooked in the very depths of the earth itself. São Miguel also boasts magnificent golf courses in spectacular natural settings.

For more information, please go to: www.drtacores.pt

Price: Single € 480 Double € 430

Prices per person, including breakfast, service charges, taxes and V.A.T.

Pre- or Post-Conference Three-Day Excursion to Madeira

(4 days / 3 nights)

The island of Madeira is filled with trees and flowers, a place where the summers are agreeable and winters are mild - an island of sun and pleasure, of history and beauty. Discovered by Portuguese navigators in 1420, Madeira is an exquisitely beautiful island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean opposite the African Coast. Covered with a thick endemic vegetation, to which the navigators added various unknown species that they brought back with them from the newly-discovered lands, Madeira has always been an exotic destination and one of Europe's natural paradises. Nature-lovers must visit the island's Laurissilva forest, the biggest evergreen forest in the world and entirely set inside in the Madeira Natural Park, which has been classified by UNESCO as World Heritage. Madeira has a surface area of 459 square miles (35 miles long and 13 miles wide). The island is 310 miles off the African coast and 620 miles from the European continent, which is the equivalent of a 1 hour 30 minute flight from Lisbon. The archipelago is made up of the islands of Madeira, Porto Santo and the uninhabited islands of Selvagens and Desertas.

Funchal, the capital of Madeira, is a picturesque town with a tempting choice of restaurants along its sea-front. Nowadays, the island not only exports its fine wine, but also delicate hand-made lace and embroideries, wickerwork, tropical fruit and exotic flowers.

You can enjoy golf, tennis and the chance to scuba dive around underwater caves and wrecks of sunken ships. A thrilling "toboggan ride" will take you down the mountain from Monte to

Funchal. Or you can venture further by going by boat or plane to spend a few days in the island of Porto Santo, known for its 8 km of beaches with white sand.

For more information about the island, please go to: www.madeiratourism.com

Price: Single € 470 Double € 420

Prices per person, including breakfast, service charges, taxes and V.A.T.