

Gerard de Lairesse in Portuguese: The *Groot schilderboek* in Lisbon and Rio

In the thirteenth book of his *Groot schilderboek* Gerard de Lairesse observed that the graphic art had a remarkable feat. It “[made] itself every where present; flying over the Universe, as well as the sounding trumpet of Fame”.¹ Little did he know that in this exact capacity his musings on art would help modernise the Portuguese graphic arts scene, to ultimately start the printing presses in Brazil in the process of the country’s transformation from a colonial into an imperial state.

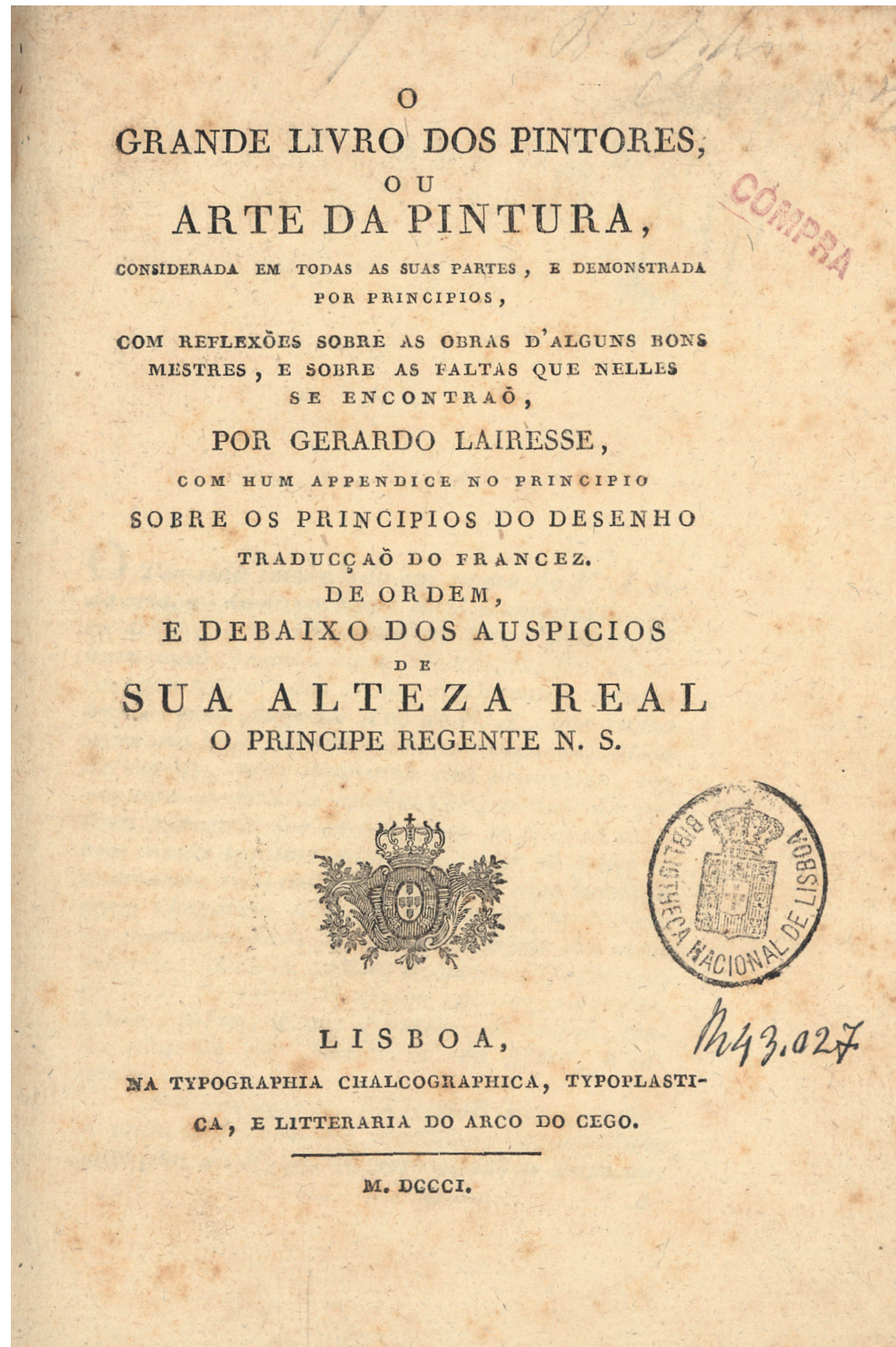
Gerard de Lairesse’s *Groot schilderboek* (1707) was a great international success right from the start. His magnum opus, the first treatise to observe the art of painting in all its branches, was in the following decades translated into German, French, and English, and was mainly used at art academies throughout Europe.² It is little known, though, that in 1801 De Lairesse’s encyclopaedic work was translated into Portuguese too (fig. 1). This task was carried out by the Brazilian friar and botanist José Mariano da Conceição Veloso (1742-1811), who, a year earlier, had established the *Oficina Tipografica, Calcográfica e Literaria do Arco do Cego* (Printing and Literary centre of Arco do Cego) in Lisbon.³

Although the *Grande livro dos pintores* was originally meant to help the graphic artists gathered around this newly founded artistic institution, shortly afterwards De Lairesse’s volume crossed the Atlantic Ocean and landed in Brazil. It is not entirely inappropriate to say that it ended up there by sheer coincidence, for this journey was caused by the political unrest in Portugal and the flight of the Portuguese court to the New World at the onset of the Napoleonic wars (1808). Once in Brazil, De Lairesse’s instruction inspired and contributed to the development of the hitherto forbidden practice of printing and printmaking, and marked the commencement of book production and commercial press.⁴

This article will trace the fascinating journey of the *Groot schilderboek* from Portugal to Brazil and assess its place in the modernisation of printing business in these two countries. In order to demonstrate the significance of De Lairesse’s musings in this process, I will briefly scrutinise the Portuguese printing scene of the long eighteenth century (1683-1808), discuss the printing enthusiasts who stood behind the translation and various Portuguese editions of the *Groot schilderboek*, as well as the role of De Lairesse’s treatise in the training programme of aspiring print makers associated with the Arco do Cego. I will ultimately follow its crossing to Brazil, all in hope of shedding additional light on the purely practical side of the *Groot schilderboek* that has oftentimes gone unnoticed.

The Portuguese printing scene in the long eighteenth century

In the second half of the eighteenth century Portugal was a backwater of European art, and very much reflected the sorry image the country enjoyed in the rest of Europe.⁵ In the wake of a devastating earthquake, which was followed by a tsunami and fire that destroyed Lisbon in 1755, architecture, sculpture, and decorative arts flourished at the expense of other artistic media.⁶ Even before the natural disaster struck, however, not much attention



had been paid to artistic training of home-grown printmakers. During the era of João V (1706-1750), which saw an enormous influx of gold from Brazil and was marked by unprecedented wealth and splendour, artists were imported from abroad.⁷ The printing scene was dominated by the French. The most notable engravers were Guilherme F. L. Debrie (d. 1755) and Pierre Massar de Rochefort, also known as Pedro de Rochefort (1643-1740). Both artists came to Lisbon to work on engravings for publications of the Royal History Academy, which was founded by João V on 8 December 1720. Their prints were eclectic in nature, and included portraits of royalty and aristocracy. Neither Debrie, nor Rochefort seem to have settled in Portugal for good.⁸

The situation was going to change with the establishment of the *Impressão Régia* (Royal Printing Office), and the concomitant foundation of the very first Portuguese school of engraving that opened on 24 December 1768. According to the eleventh article of the royal constitutional act issued by João's V successor, D. José (1750-1777), the principal aim of the school was to train aspiring print makers under the supervision of an expert print maker.⁹ This highly-skilled expert, who was as of 29 December 1768 in charge of the program, was Joaquim Carneiro da Silva (1727-1818) (fig. 2). For this post Carneiro da Silva was awarded an enviable annual salary of 400000 real, and an additional bonus of 40000 real, if a trainee of his program would be recognised as an accomplished artist upon graduation. This bonus was awarded only once during Carneiro da Silva's nineteen-year long appointment.¹⁰ Even though his artistic ingenuity was fairly limited, Carneiro da Silva's relatively small oeuvre reveals several very competently executed engravings. The *Equestrian statue*, *The calvary*, *The travelers* (after Nicolaes Berchem), as well as portraits of Bartolomeu do Quental, Infant d. Henrique (fig. 3), and the *Immaculate virgin Mary* made for the princess D. Maria Benedeta betray a steady, yet light hand of a true master.¹¹

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Gregorio Francisco de Queiros,
Joaquim Carneiro da Silva,
 ca. 1790, print, 17 x 14 cm,
 Lisbon, Biblioteca Nacional de
 Portugal, inv. BN, 1977.





Despite being described as an honest man of integrity and great competence by his colleagues from the school's administration, Carneiro da Silva turned out to be an inadequate teacher.¹² He stubbornly held on to the old-fashioned techniques of engraving that could not satisfy the needs of ever-growing print runs. Heavily influenced by Italians, Carneiro da Silva swore by the burin with a very sporadic use of etching techniques. His trainees thus authored engravings that were available in very few copies, not infrequently showing a lack of technical knowledge. This often resulted in a coarse finish, which was a perfect match to their sloppy and unoriginal designs. The steady decline that marked the last

decade of Carneiro da Silva's professorship had its climax in his act of leaving the Impressão Régia in 1786. This led to the demise of the school of engraving as well.¹³

In this light the foundation of the Arco do Cego seems even more significant, for it was a breath of fresh air in the musty corridors of Portuguese printing business. Established with a generous moral and financial support of D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho (1755-1812), who was at the time the Secretary of the state, the Arco do Cego was the very first school to have recognised the significance of importing the know-how, instead of artists from abroad. Its founder, Mariano Veloso, was keen on introducing methods explained in various treatises to strengthen the curriculum, and De Lairesse's writings were of indispensable help in this process.¹⁴ The flair, intelligence and authority of Mariano Veloso, however, did not ensure the longevity of the institution – the Arco do Cego was incorporated into the Impressão Régia only a short year after its set up, more precisely on 7 December 1801. Nor did Veloso spark the versatility of its editions. Despite Veloso's extraordinary initiative, it is safe to say that he failed miserably as the director of the Arco do Cego. The core business of the Press was the mass production of books, book illustrations and maps. Even though there is no documented evidence to support this, it seems likely that Veloso not only lacked the commercial talent, but he also was wanting in broader erudition that would help him recognise the significance of potentially profitable literary and scientific publications that were brought to his attention. Most of them were declined, for they were beyond Veloso's area of expertise. Towards the end of its ephemeral existence, the Arco do Cego was almost exclusively working to an end of publishing botanical treatises written by the director himself.¹⁵ This undoubtedly ensued its untimely, and yet inevitable downfall.

Closing down business at the Arco do Cego also coincided, and was inextricably linked with D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho's temporary leaving of the Portuguese political arena. Holding the post of secretary of state for naval and colonial affairs from 1796 until 1801, De Sousa Coutinho instituted considerably more progressive policies than his predecessors, especially in regard to Brazil. A fervent promotor of the Physiocrats, Adam Smith (1723-1790) and Abbé Raynal (1713-1796), De Sousa Coutinho advocated an entire array of radical infrastructural reforms. These entailed the establishment of banks, the abolition of tax-farming, the introduction of paper money, and the provision of packet-boat services across the Atlantic.¹⁶ Given De Sousa Coutinho's uncompromising reforming spirit, it comes as no surprise that he was also responsible for the opening of the first modern printing center. The press would have helped spread information on new techniques in the arts, industry and agriculture in Portugal and in Brazil, and, even more importantly, would also have served as a vehicle of promotion of De Sousa Coutinho's own political agenda.¹⁷

The *Groot schilderboek* in Lisbon

That Veloso was up to date with literature that would help the Arco do Cego artists to master the craft is evident from the books he chose to have translated into the Portuguese. Those were Abraham Bosse's celebrated *De la manière de graver à l'eau forte et au burin* (1645), Evelyn's *Sculptura* (1660), Du Fresnoy's *De arte graphica* (1695), De Lairesse's *Groot schilderboek* (1707), Dupain's *La science des ombres* and *Pratique de la géométrie* (1750), and the *Le moyen de devenir peintre en trois heures* (1756), which was compiled by an anonymous author.¹⁸

The title of the first Portuguese edition of De Lairesse's treatise, which reads the *Grande livro dos pintores*, may be misleading though, and make one think that the entire colossal 900-page volume was translated in less than a year.¹⁹ An endeavor that undoubtedly would beat any hitherto known world record. The *Groot schilderboek* made available to the trainees of the Arco do Cego contained only one book, which originally was not even included into the treatise. It was the *Grondlegginge ter teekenkonst*, initially published as a separate volume in 1701. Later in 1801, in the second edition of De Lairesse's writings in Portuguese, the title was changed into a more appropriate *Principios do desenho*.²⁰ In the

same year De Lairese's treatise on drawing was accompanied by the translation of the thirteenth book of the *Groot schilderboek*, dedicated to the graphic arts.²¹ According to the frontispiece of the *Principios da arte da gravura*, the thirteenth book of the *Groot schilderboek* ought to be used in addition to the *Principios do desenho* by the same author, to the benefit of the engravers of the Arco do Cego.²² This was a brilliant idea, because the paternal tone of the *Principles of drawing* was, step by step, introducing an ambitious draughtsman to the secrets of design – from drawing lines and rendering squares, triangles and circles, through working after life, to improving upon nature, and, finally, inventing a history piece. Veloso did not fail to recognise this and observed that De Lairese's method provided an easy instruction how to draw well in a short amount of time.²³ Once the aspiring artist has mastered this, he was ready to delve into De Lairese's musings on printmaking that very clearly described different techniques, and emphasised principal differences between artistic prints and those meant for books.²⁴

Whereas the *Principios do desenho* was translated by Veloso himself, the *Principios da arte da gravura* was translated into the Portuguese by Veloso's compatriot from Minas Gerais, Padre José Joaquim Viegas de Meneses (1778-1841), who was also responsible for the translation of Bosse's famous manual.²⁵ Viegas de Meneses came to Portugal in 1797 in order to pursue a doctorate in theology at the University of Coimbra. He stayed in Lisbon instead, where he met Veloso and joined the Oficina Tipografica, Calcográfica e Literaria do Arco do Cego. Under Veloso's watchful eye, Viegas de Meneses mastered how to handle the burin on the copper plate, as well as the principles behind the printing techniques of chalcography and typography. Viegas de Meneses's intimate acquaintance with De Lairese's and Bosse's writings was undoubtedly of great help in this process.²⁶

In 1806, four years after he returned to Brazil, Viegas de Meneses authored the *Canto*, a tiny publication dedicated to Ataíde e Mello, the then governor of Minas Gerais. The booklet contained fifteen pages of different Roman letter-type, and a verse encomium in praise of the governor written by Diogo Pereira Ribeiro de Vasconcellos. This volume has always been considered a true gem: surely not for the sloppily executed double portrait of Ataíde e Mello and his spouse (fig. 4), but because it was produced in Vila Rica, in Brazil, during the ban on print making.²⁷ The ban had been imposed by Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, Marquês de Pombal (1699-1782) – the actual mover and shaker of the Portuguese political arena in the mid-eighteenth century, who introduced a series of measures in order to repress Brazilian cultural and intellectual autonomy. With a keen eye on suppressing pro-independence movements, these measures included the prohibition of printing presses in 1747, and the expulsion of the educationally active Jesuit order in 1759.²⁸

Both the *Principios do desenho* and the *Principios da arte da gravura* were translated from the French, and it is safe to assume that Veloso, as well as Viegas Meneses, used the 1785 French edition of the *Grand livre des peintres*, which included the 1701 treatise on drawing. Jansen, the translator of the 1785 French version of the *Groot schilderboek* deemed it an excellent idea to precede De Lairese's musings on painting with those pertaining to the secrets of drawing, and explained his reasoning in the foreword.²⁹ Jansen's introduction was included into the Portuguese edition too.³⁰

There was no malice, or false pretence behind the publication of this marvelously depleted version of Gerard de Lairese's encyclopaedic work. The reasons were purely practical. Not only was the translator facing the time constraints, but also, it is likely that the treatise on the art of drawing, which was slightly later accompanied by the detailed instruction on printmaking, were seen as crucial to the training program of aspiring printmakers, and thus given due attention.

In the preface to the *Principios do desenho* Veloso emphasised the rising popularity of the Arco do Cego, which in a brief period of time attracted many young artists. According to Veloso, in 1801 there were 24 of them, five of whom deserved to be mentioned by name. Those artists were Inácio José Freitas, Constantino Costa e Oliviera, Silva, then the Brazilian born Romão Elói de Almeida, and Vianna, who, according to Veloso, were the masters of

José Joaquim Viegas de Meneses, *Ataide e Mello and his wife*, 1807, print, 18 x 14 cm, in Diogo da Vasconcellos, *Canto*, frontispiece, Belo Horizonte, Arquivo Público Mineiro, inv. C.E.G.B. n. 12.778.



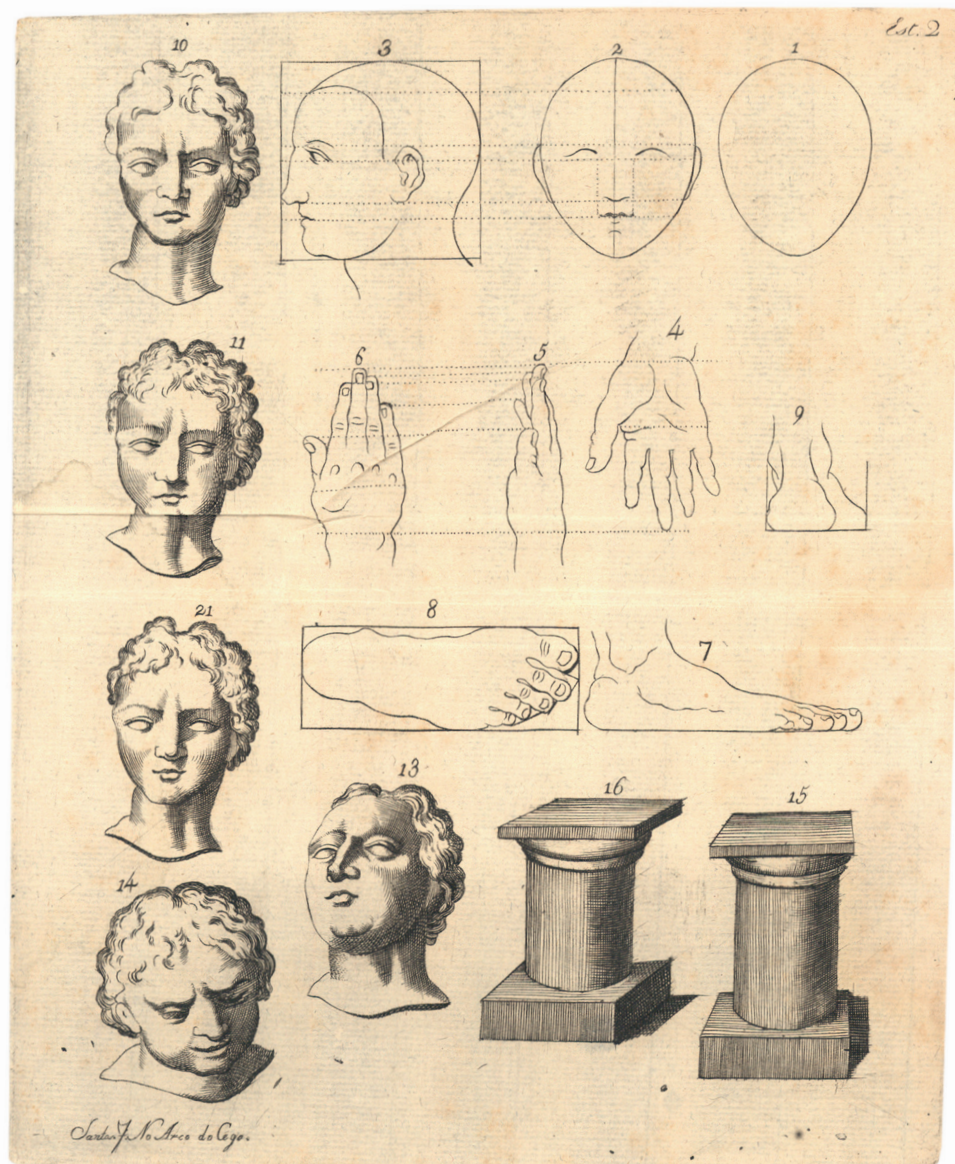
particular genius and talent.³¹ The volume was illustrated by an artist named Santos: in all likelihood Paulo dos Santos Ferreira Souto (fig. 5).³²

O grande livro dos pintores in Rio

As we have already seen, the apparent popularity of the Arco do Cego did not ensure its longevity. However, and regardless of its temporary disappearance from the printing scene, its importance was again on the rise after a hiatus of seven years. As of 1808 the artists once gathered around the Arco do Cego became the pioneers of printing business in Brazil.

When Napoleon's armed forces invaded Portugal in 1807, part of his strategy was to close the Continent off to British trade. The British responded by providing the logistical support to transfer the Portuguese Court to Brazil.³³ The Court always had an option of moving to the New World if its position in Portugal became untenable. The Prince Regent João VI (1816-1826) must have endorsed this idea not only because Brazil by virtue of its vast territory and resources had a lot more to offer to the Braganças, but also because this move would solidify his position as the first monarch in the New World.³⁴

These events had tremendous consequences for graphic artists as well. Both the reading material and the cutting-edge equipment Veloso had acquired for the Arco do Cego were 'boarded' on one of the ships. In all likelihood they were part of the cargo carried by the *Medusa* – one of the vessels that formed a massive squadron composed of eight ships, three frigates, two brigs, one schooner, and more than twenty merchant ships of the Portuguese Navy. The squadron reached Rio de Janeiro on 7 March 1808.³⁵



The arrival of D. João VI in Rio de Janeiro in 1808 was followed by unprecedented pomp and splendour. He landed in the capital of his principal colony surrounded by a retinue of fifteen thousand people. Rio de Janeiro, at the time a city of approximately 50.000 inhabitants, was soon to be transformed and promoted into the seat of the Portuguese empire. The marquises, counts, and barons moved into fancy mansions lining freshly swept streets that never before had heard the steps of people of title. This sudden change in the political and social landscape required as swift a reorganisation of the cultural and artistic activities. Even more urgently, however, the government institutions and public administration had to be redefined and adapted to these novel circumstances.³⁶ The printing press played the central role in this process. It therefore comes as no surprise that the Royal Print Office of Rio de Janeiro opened on 13 May 1808, only two months after the transfer of the court to Brazil.³⁷ In reaction to this, Hipólito da Costa (1774-1823), who was a noted journalist and De Sousa Coutinho's friend and confidant wrote: "Late, terribly late: but in the end the printing press did reach Brazil. And I send my heartfelt congratulations to my fellow countrymen."³⁸ And indeed, only South Africa – in which the printing business started in 1814, and Greece, where the Ottoman rule postponed the use of this by then already well-established invention, were beaten by Brazil.³⁹

The document issued on 24 June of the same year instituted the director and announced that the Office will work with “economy and reason to the advancement of the Press, (...) and attract engravers capable of publishing valuable works for the Press that are advantageous to the government offices, especially the military.”⁴⁰ Given the mission statement, it is little wonder that the person in charge of the *Impressão Régia* was D. Rodrigo de Sousa Coutinho, who then resumed his post in the Portuguese government.

The first report about the activities of the *Impressão Régia* appeared on 30 January 1809. Addressed to the director of the Press it stated that “Romao Eloi and Paulo Ferreira dos Santos, who went to Lisbon with Father Veloso, have now arrived to Rio de Janeiro and will start working on the map of the city of Rio de Janeiro, which has been taken from the Military Archives, as well as on the plates for the treatise on Geometry written by Legendre.”⁴¹ This means that the first official print makers of Brazil were both trained in the tradition of the Arco do Cego. One of them was Paulo dos Santos Ferreira Souto, who had illustrated the Portuguese edition of the *Princípios do desenho*. Their initial tasks were to make a city map of the new capital and to illustrate a scientific treatise. The map was designed by First Lieutenant Ignacio Antonio dos Reis and later engraved by Paulo dos Santos Ferreira Souto. Its publication was announced in the Gazette of Rio de Janeiro of 13-5-1812, which also included a news snippet that the map got sold and fetched 6400 reais (fig. 6).⁴² The illustrations for Legendre’s treatise on Geometrical elements are likely to have been finished three years earlier, and Rubens Borba de Moraes believes that these were indeed the first engravings published by the *Impressão*. The book, translated by Manoel Ferreira, was published in 1809, and it featured 13 prints with drawings of geometrical figures.⁴³

Printing presses, formerly forbidden, were now granted fiscal incentives and encouraged to open. They were central to Dom Rodrigo de Souza Coutinho’s enlightened government program that was meant to modernise the Empire through dissemination of technical and practical knowledge. Books and private libraries that used to be sneered at, suddenly became a sign of sophistication, and De Lairesse’s musings on drawing and engraving were not insignificant in this process. Traditionally regarded as a substandard rehash of French academic art theory, in their Portuguese and Brazilian adventures De Lairesse’s writings showed their practical side, too.

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Ignacio Antonio dos Reis and
Paulo dos Santos Ferreira Souto,
Map of Rio de Janeiro, 1812, print,
122 x 183 cm, London, British
Library, inv. 005015481. >>



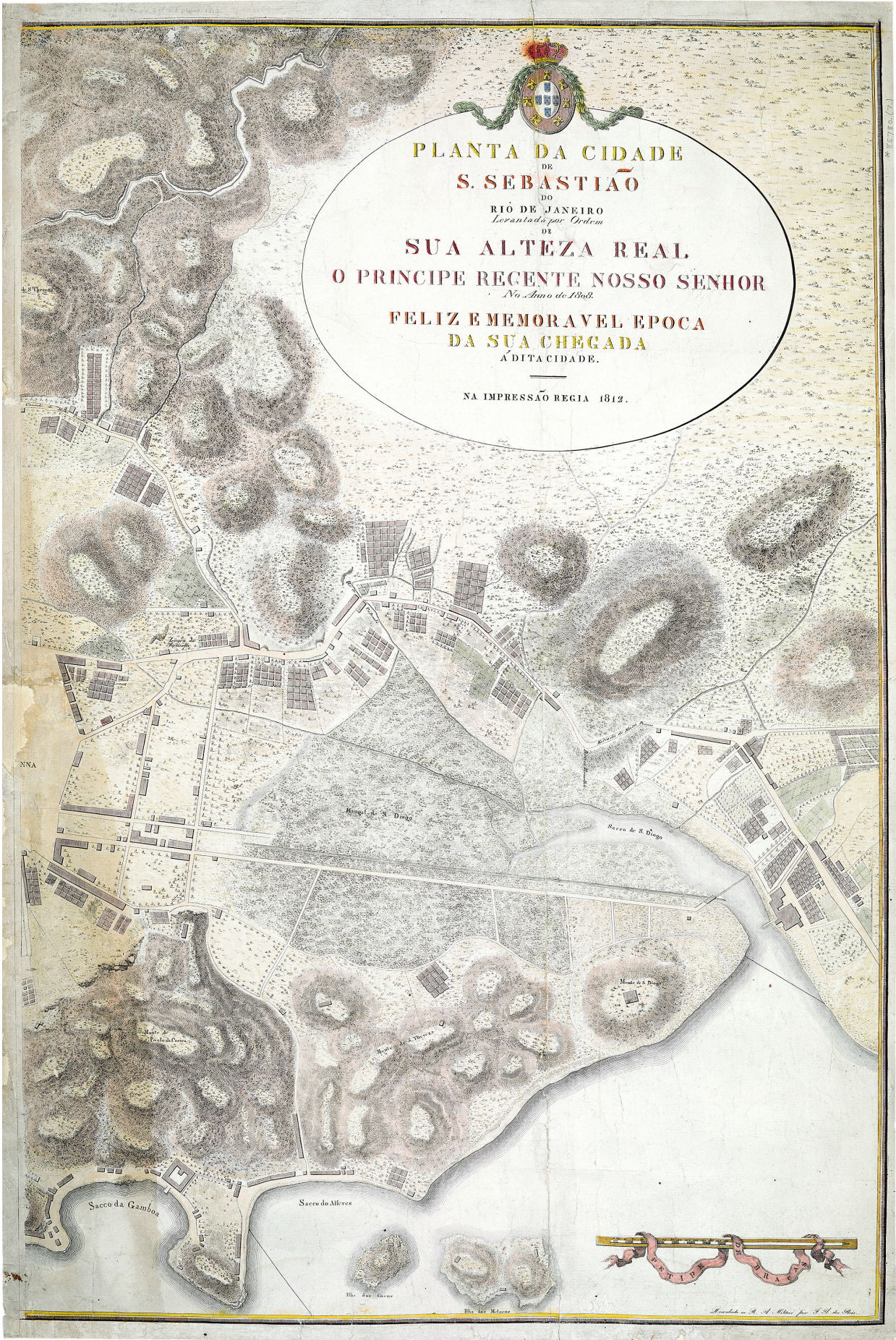
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EXPLICAÇÃO

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| D. Igreja de Ouré | X. S. V. A. S. | Q. Capela de N. S. do Saúde | i. Casolhetas |
| E. Igreja de Lapa dos Manceiros | Y. Igreja de S. Lázaro | R. Capela de N. S. da Conceição | l. Terreiro da Cidade |
| F. Igreja de S. João | Z. S. S. S. S. | S. Capela de S. Sebastião | m. Almoxarifado |
| G. Igreja de N. S. Mãe dos Homens | AA. Convento de N. S. da Ajuda | T. Parte de Conceição | n. Arcação da Mourão |
| H. Igreja de S. Pedro | B. Convento dos Carmelitas | J. Quantal do F. Regimento | o. Praça da Livramento |
| I. Igreja de S. Paulo | C. Convento de S. Lapa | K. Quantal do F. Regimento | p. Largo do Curim |
| L. Igreja de S. Rita | D. Convento de S. Theresa | N. Quantal do Regimento de Caral | q. Largo de S. Domingos |
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| P. Igreja de S. Francisco de Paula | H. Igreja de S. Helena | R. Matadouro | u. Largo da Ajuda |
| Q. Igreja de N. S. do Rosário | I. Igreja de S. Domingos | c. N. S. do Muro | v. Largo de Moura |
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Desenhado por N. C. ... e Gravado por P. ...



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NOTES

- 1 G. de Lairesse, *Groot schilderboek*, 2 vols., Amsterdam 1712, vol. 2, p. 373: "De Graveerkunde maakt zich overal tegenwoordig. Zy vliegt zo wel de geheele waereld over, als de klank der galmende trompet des Geruchts. Alles, wat roemwaardig is, word in haar geheugboek aangetekend tot een eeuwige gedachtenis". The English translation is taken from G. de Lairesse, *The art of painting*, transl. J.F. Fritch, London 1738, pp. 630-31.
- 2 See J.J.M Timmers, *Gérard Lairesse*, Amsterdam-Paris 1942, pp. 80-81; A. Roy, *Gérard de Lairesse (1640-1711)*, Paris 1992, pp. 102-104; L. de Vries, *Gerard de Lairesse: An artist between stage and studio*, Amsterdam 2008, pp. 121-122; T. Žakula, 'Understanding the passions at the age of reason: Another look at Messerschmidt's "character heads"', *Simiolus* 37 (2013-2014), pp. 240-248, spec. 245; P. Knolle, "Hoogleraar voor alle akademiën van Europa": De publicaties van Gerard de Lairesse en het kunstonderwijs; in J. Beltman e.a. (ed.), *Eindelijk! De Lairesse*, Zwolle 2016, pp. 134-140, spec. 139.
- 3 E. Soares, *História da gravura artística em Portugal*, 2 vols., Lisbon 1940/41, vol. 1, p. 11.
- 4 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, p. 24. C.F. Moraes dos Santos, e.a., 'A calcografia do Arco do Cego e a disseminação de sabres no Império português no final do século XVIII e início do século XIX', *Confluente* 6 (2014), nr 1, pp. 48-61, spec. 51.
- 5 K.R. Maxwell, 'Eighteenth-century Portugal: Faith and reason, tradition and innovation during a golden age', in J.A. Levenson e.a. (ed.), *The age of the baroque in Portugal*, New Heaven/London, 1993, p. 103.
- 6 Levenson 1993 (note 5), p. 11.
- 7 A.J.R. Russell-Wood, 'Portugal and the world in the age of Dom João V', in Levenson 1993 (note 5), pp. 16-17.
- 8 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, pp. 17-18; Russel-Wood 1993 (note 7), p. 17; L.C. Arruda, 'Francisco Vieira Lusitano: The autobiography', in L. Ferrão and L.M.A.V. Bernardo (eds.), *Views on eighteenth-century culture: Design, books and ideas*, Newcastle upon Tyne 2015, p. 277.
- 9 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, p. 22.
- 10 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, p. 23.
- 11 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol.1, p. 23.
- 12 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, pp. 22-23.
- 13 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, p. 24.
- 14 Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 1, p. 30.
- 15 R. Borba de Moraes, *Bibliografia Brasileira do período colonial*, São Paulo 1969, pp. 399-407; see also Soares 1940/41 (note 3), vol.1, p. 26.
- 16 R. Santos, *A imagem gravada: A gravura no Rio de Janeiro entre 1808 e 1853*, Rio de Janeiro 2008, p. 26; A.R. Disney, *A history of Portugal and the Portuguese empire*, 2 vols., Cambridge 2009, vol. 2, pp. 279-280.
- 17 Veloso played a major role in Souza Coutinho's attempts to solve Portugal's dependency on imported saltpeter. Veloso was in charge of translation and production of relevant books from the English and the French, see M.R. de Mello Pereira, 'D. Rodrigo e frei Mariano: A política portuguesa de produção de salitre na virada do século XVIII para o XIX', *Topoi* (2014), pp. 498-526.
- 18 G. de Lairesse, *Princípios da arte da gravura*, Lisbon 1801, unpag.: 'Catalogo das obras de desenho, impressas na officina chalcographica do Arco do Cego.' See also V. Gauz, 'Early printing in Brazil', *Bulletin du bibliophile* (2013), pp. 23-47, spec. p. 36.
- 19 G. de Lairesse, *O grande livro dos pintores, ou arte de pintura considerada em todas as suas partes, e demonstrada por principios, co reflexo es sobre as obras d'alcuns bons mestres, es sobre faltas que nillis se encontraõ*, Lisbon 1801.
- 20 G. de Lairesse, *Princípios do desenho: Tirados do grande livro dos pintores ou da arte da pintura de Gerardo Lairesse*, Lisbon 1801; Borba de Moraes 1969 (note 15), p. 407.
- 21 De Lairesse 1801 (note 19).
- 22 De Lairesse 1801 (note 19), frontispiece: "para servirem de appendice aos principios do desenho do mesmo author, em beneficio dos gravadores do arco do cego".
- 23 De Lairesse 1801 (note 20), unpag.: "Princípios do Desenho ou Methodo Breve e Facil para Aprender esta Arte em pouco tempo".
- 24 De Lairesse 1712 (note 1), vol. 2., pp. 373-374; De Lairesse (note 19), pp. 5-6.

- 25 Soares 1940/41 (note 3), vol.1, p. 30; C.M. Semeraro e.a. (ed.), *Historia da tipografia no Brasil*, São Paulo 1979, p. 19; C.C. Boschi, 'Política e edição: Os naturais do Brasil nas reformistas oficinas do Arco do Cego', in E. de Freitas Dutra and J-Y. Mollier (eds.), *Política, nação e edição: O lugar dos impressos na construção da vida política*, pp. 495-510, spec. pp. 505-506.
- 26 O. da Costa Ferreira, *Imagem e letra: Introdução à bibliologia Brasileira: A imagem gravada*, Sao Paolo 1994, p. 243.
- 27 Santos 2008 (note 16), pp. 23-24; Semeraro 1979 (note 25), p. 19; Gauz 2013 (note 18), pp. 36-38.
- 28 R.C. Denis, 'Academism, imperialism and national identity: The case of Brazil's Academia Imperial de Belas Artes', in R.C. Denis and C. Trodd, *Art and the academy in the nineteenth century*, Manchester 2000, pp. 54-55; Semeraro 1979 (note 25), p. 6.
- 29 G. de Lairese, *Le grand livre des peintres*, (transl. Jensen) Paris 1787, p. xii: "Nous avons place à la tête du Grand Livre des Peintres les Principes du Dessin de même auteur, dont il avoit paru une traduction depuis longtemps, & que nous n'avons fait que revoir sur la seconde édition Hollandoise, ainsi qu'il paroît par l'addition de deux leçons & de quelques passages qui ne trouvent pas dans la première".
- 30 De Lairese 1801 (note 20), pp. i-xiii.
- 31 De Lairese 1801 (note 20), fol. 2r: "O Ter sido incumbido em nome de V. A. R. da criação do novo corpo de Gravadores do Arco do Cego, cujo número no breve período de um ano chegou a vinte e quatro, me fez conhecer que saiam das Aulas de Desenho, estabelecidas pelo Augusto Avô de V. A., que Santa memória haja, unicamente com alguma prática de copiar, mas nenhuma dos princípios, em que esta se deveria estabelecer, menos da notícia histórica dos heróis, que se fizeram célebres nesta sublime profissão, não só para se animarem com calor a imitá-los, mas também para chegarem a ocupar um dia no templo da imortalidade um assento a par dos mais sublimes Mestres. Assim debaixo da proteção de V. A. R. vamos ir no seu encalço a Freitas, Costa, Silva, Eloi, Vianna, e outros, tendo somente por Mestres o seu gênio, e talento."; Soares 1940-41 (note 3), vol. 2, pp. 66-70, 197-98, 297.
- 32 Borba de Moraes 1969 (note 15), p. 407; Gauz 2013 (note 18), p. 39.
- 33 Denis 2000 (note 28), p. 55.
- 34 Disney 2009 (note 16), pp. 328-330.
- 35 Santos 2008 (note 16), pp. 21-22.
- 36 Semeraro 1979 (note 25), p. 7.
- 37 Santos 2008 (note 16), p. 22.
- 38 Semeraro 1979 (note 25), p. 8: "Tarde, desgracadamente tarde: mas, emfim, aparecem tipos no Brasil; e, eu de todo o meu coracao dou os parabens aos meus compatriotas".
- 39 Semeraro 1979 (note 25), p. 6.
- 40 Santos 2008 (note 16), p. 29.
- 41 A-M. Legendre, *Eléments de géométrie*, Paris 1794; Santos 2008 (note 16), p. 31.
- 42 Santos 2008 (note 16), p. 31.
- 43 Santos 2008 (note 16), p. 32.

SUMMARY

Through the adoption and endorsement of the 'antique', that was "followed by the most polite nations", Gerard de Lairese (1641-1711) aspired to reach out beyond the borders of the Northern Netherlands. His success with the grand and important elsewhere would eventually put contemporary Dutch art on the artistic map of Europe – or so he hoped. In that respect, the *Groot schilderboek* (1707) had an important role to play, and it was to do so marvelously well.

It is little known, though, that De Lairese's encyclopedic treatise on art was translated into Portuguese in 1801. This job was entrusted to the Brazilian friar and botanist José Mariano da Conceição Veloso, who was at the time the director of the Arco do Cego – the most important printing center to introduce new techniques to the Portuguese printing scene, that could accommodate ever-growing print runs. De Lairese's writings, however, not only contributed to the modernisation of printing industry in Portugal. In 1808 the *Grande livro dos pintores* crossed the ocean and landed in Brazil, where it played a significant role in (re)starting the printing industry.

This article will trace the fascinating journey of the *Groot schilderboek* from Portugal to Brazil and assess its place in the modernisation of printing business in these two countries. In order to demonstrate the significance of De Lairese's musings in this process, the author will briefly scrutinise the Portuguese printing scene of the long eighteenth century (1683-1808), discuss the printing enthusiasts who stood behind the translation and various Portuguese editions of the *Groot schilderboek*, as well as the role of De Lairese's treatise in the training programme of aspiring print makers associated with the Arco do Cego. I will ultimately follow its crossing to Brazil, all in hope of shedding additional light on the purely practical side of the *Groot schilderboek* that has oftentimes gone unnoticed.