

Echoes from Antiquity in D. João de Castro's Maritime Rutters

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Abstract

D. João de Castro was born to an illustrious Portuguese family, and received the same education that was given to other young noblemen of his time and status: in the enlightened environment of the court of King D. Manuel I, they received at the same time a military training and an introduction to a traditional classical learning. Thus it is possible to understand how years later, in his writings, he showed an assiduous conviviality with Pliny, Ptolemy, Pomponius Mela, Vitruvius, and other authors of Antiquity. It is not improbable that the readings of his first years included also romances of chivalry, because he admired the exploits of Alexander the Great. The present paper, in addition to following briefly the military career of D. João de Castro, will be interested in his nautical writings, three rutters that were written in so many maritime journeys between 1538 and 1541: the «Rutter from Lisbon to Goa», the «Rutter from Goa to Diu», and the «Rutter of the Red Sea».. Some attention will also merit the numerous letters he wrote during his years of residence in India. Thus, an attempt will be made to enumerate the literary echoes of Antiquity in the writings of D. João de Castro, bearing in mind that unlike many humanists of the time, whose life was completely passed in Europe, the celebrated Portuguese *fidalgo* and rutter-writer had the opportunity to travel extensively through extra-European spaces, confronting firsthand the geographical lesson of the classical authors with the human and geographical realities of the East.

Keywords: D. João de Castro, Rutters, Sixteenth Century, Antiquity, Intertextuality.

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The well know phrase of the Portuguese poet Luís de Camões, «nũa mão sempre a espada, & noutra a pena» ('one hand allways in the sword, another in the quill'),¹ although used in *Os Lusíadas* in a different context, perfectly summarizes the life and deeds of D. João de Castro. Indeed, it is a figure that, at such a fertile time in relevant nautical, military and literary actions, was able to distinguish himself simultaneously as a man of arms, a navigator and a scholar.

Portugal was then involved in an important movement of maritime and territorial expansion in the Atlantic archipelagos, in Morocco and also in the East, following the discovery of the maritime route to India and the discovery of Brazil.² Thus, the young Castro grew up in an environment of great effervescence, characterized by the regular arrival of protagonists of war feats practiced in distant parts and of news of adventurous expeditions carried out in previously unknown lands and seas. Not much can be gathered about the early years of D. João de Castro.³ Born in Lisbon around the year 1500, he grew up in the court of King D. Manuel I, where his father held a high position, since he was governor of one of the highest courts (*Casa do Cível*), and also ministry of the Treasury (*Vedor da Fazenda*).⁴ It is quite probable that he grew up together with the crown prince, the future D. João III, born in 1502, and also with prince D. Luís, born in 1506, for later he would maintain excellent relations with both of them. The training and education he received would not be very different from that given to other young men of his time and condition: while they were prepared for military duties, through intense training, they began to cultivate the letters and the arts in the enlightened environment of the royal court.⁵ The chronicler Diogo do Couto wrote years later that Castro, in his youth, had been «well educated in the liberal arts» and also that he was «a good Latinist».⁶

¹ Camões 1572, 126 (7-79). All translations from Portuguese to English are my own.

² For a synthesis of the Portuguese expansion, see Newitt 2005.

³ A detailed biography of Castro may be found in Aquarone 1968. See also Albuquerque 1987, II: 106-120; and Garcia 1995.

⁴ On D. Álvaro de Castro, see Aquarone 1968, I: 12-23.

⁵ Contemporary author Francisco de Monzón, in his *Libro primero del espejo del príncipe Christiano* (CF. Monzón 1544), explained that the teaching of several areas of natural philosophy (cosmography, geography, geometry, arithmetic) was part of the educational program

At the age of 18, Castro embarked for Morocco without paternal permission, going to Tangier to serve under the orders of D. Duarte de Meneses, a celebrated captain, whose military deeds against the Moroccans were then cause for astonishment and admiration in Portugal. The Moroccan ports dominated by the Portuguese, that were the scene of regular military confrontations, then served as a school of arms for the young Lusitanian nobles, where they carried out their respective training.⁷ And D. Joao de Castro, following the rule, stayed in North Africa for a long time, perhaps with one or another sporadic voyage to Portugal, where he would only return definitively in 1527. Meanwhile, he had been knighted, for the practice of relevant feats of arms. In a letter written in 1539, he would recall, in regard to his Moroccan experience, that «it was there that I grew my beard».⁸

The next ten years remain relatively obscure. But in 1528, on his return to Portugal, D. João de Castro received as a paternal inheritance the *Quinta da Penha Verde*, in Sintra, where he seems to have resided thereafter. This country estate was to become famous a few years later thanks to the original attempts by its owner to acclimatize exotic plants of oriental origin.⁹ Some extant documentation suggests that Castro, around this period, began to perform military functions in various naval missions, connected with the defense of the Portuguese coast and with the logistical support of the Lusitanian fortresses in Morocco.

In the meantime, his participation in the Portuguese fleet that in 1535, under the command of António de Saldanha, joined Emperor Carlos V's expedition against Tunis is well documented. The Spanish attack against the North African stronghold of the celebrated corsair Kheir-ed-Din, also known as Barbarossa, was a success, and contributed to increase the safety of Christian shipping in the Mediterranean.¹⁰ Years later, in one of his rutters, D. João de Castro would remember the astronomical observations that he performed in the ruins of ancient Carthage.¹¹

So far, the life of D. João de Castro would be indistinguishable from that of many of his noble contemporaries. But it was surely then, after the return from Morocco and coinciding with the numerous sea voyages he undertook in the vicinity of the Portuguese coast and in the Mediterranean, that he began to develop a deep interest in nautical and geographical issues. The awakening of this interest is perhaps connected with the close relationship he established with Prince D. Luís, the brother of King D. João III, and Dr. Pedro Nunes, a distinguished mathematician who in the royal court had been the tutor of the princes since about 1532. For, as Castro later wrote, it was during these years that in the house of Prince D. Luís «the science of cosmography flourished more than in any

implemented at the court of king D. João III. Regarding the education of Portuguese nobility, see Buescu 1996; and specifically about classical education, Tarrío 2015.

⁶ Couto 1614, 6-9-126: «foi bem instruido nas artes liberaes»; «bom Latino».

⁷ About Castro's presence in Morocco, see Jesus 2016.

⁸ Letter to D. João III (Goa, 1539?), in Cortesão & Albuquerque 1968-1981, III: 26.

⁹ Regarding this rural estate, see Moreira 1995, who quotes the most important bibliography.

¹⁰ About Saldanha, see Lobato 1964; about the expedition, see Deswarte-Rosa 1998 and Carvalho & Jesus 2017; about Barbarossa, see Bunes Ibarra 2004.

¹¹ Castro 1968-1981d, 252.

other part of this roundness that we inhabit».¹² And it was under the aegis of Nunes, who was also the royal cosmographer since 1529, that D. João de Castro began an in-depth study of cosmographic questions, especially those related to maritime navigations.¹³

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D. João de Castro is usually credited with the authorship of a «Tratado da Sphaera, por perguntas e respostas a modo de dialogo» ('Treaty on the Sphere by questions and answers in the form of dialogue'), which would have been written around 1536-1537, but that at the time remained in manuscript and was only published in modern times.¹⁴ The writing of this work, based on the famous and homonymous medieval treatise by Johannes de Sacrobosco, coincides with the publication of the *Tratado da Sphaera com a Theorica do Sol e da Lua* ('Treaty of the Sphere with the Theory of the Sun and the Moon') by Pedro Nunes, which was printed in Lisbon in 1537.¹⁵ But it has already been shown that the two texts are significantly different.¹⁶ The manuscript that has been associated with the name of Castro is composed of a very dense technical text, full of scholarly discussions and references to ancient (and also medieval) authorities, in an «immense intertextual game» that takes «Sacrobosco as a partial point of departure».¹⁷ Names such as Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Julius Caesar, Virgil, Ovid, Lucanus, Ptolemy, Lactantius and Macrobius appear repeatedly quoted, and sometimes critically.

This treatise has been used repeatedly to prove the high scientific level achieved by D. João de Castro and also his extensive readings of ancient (and also medieval) authors and writings related to cosmography and geography.¹⁸ But recently the authorship of this manuscript was challenged, with quite convincing arguments, by a geographer who concluded that the celebrated navigator could not have written the «Tratado da Esfera».¹⁹ Which means that the cultural profile of D. João de Castro has to be reframed, assuming that this work is not a part of his bibliography, and someone else was its author.

In 1538, D. Garcia de Noronha was invested as viceroy of the Estado da Índia ('State of India'), and as was customary in those times he took with him to the East many of his close relatives and servants, who would thus have the opportunity to gain 'honor and fame', as the saying went. D. João de Castro was the brother-in-law of the new Viceroy, a circumstance that led him to embark for India, in command of one of the ships of that year's fleet. The journey was uneventful, but would eventually become noted on account

¹² Castro 1968-1981c, 12. Regarding the Prince, see Deswarte-Rosa 1991.

¹³ On Pedro Nunes, see Leitão & Martins 2002.

¹⁴ Castro 1968-1981a.

¹⁵ For a modern edition, see Nunes 2002.

¹⁶ Among other approaches, see Barreto 1986, 29-107.

¹⁷ Barreto 1986, 41: «imenso jogo intertextual»; «Sacrobosco como parcial ponto de partida».

¹⁸ See, for instance, Hooykaas 1968-1981.

¹⁹ The suggestion was put forward by Daveau 1995. Doubts about Castro's authorship are also expressed by Cardoso 2004. Suzanne Daveau suggests Pedro Nunes or João de Barros as plausible authors; but another likely candidate would be, for instance, Fernando Oliveira. About this interesting character, see Domingues 2004.

that Castro prepared a detailed logbook, enriched by innovative nautical observations, which became known as the «Roteiro de Lisboa a Goa» ('Rutter from Lisbon to Goa').²⁰

This would be the first of three important hydrographic treatises prepared by D. João de Castro during his prolonged sea voyages. When, between the end of 1538 and the beginning of the following year, he commanded a galley on an expedition to the Portuguese controlled port of Diu, in Gujerat, which had just undergone a violent siege, he wrote a detailed travel account known as the «Roteiro de Goa a Diu» ('Rutter from Goa to Diu').²¹ This work, filled with essential navigational information, also included many innovative observations and also critical remarks that questioned the basically empirical knowledge of Portuguese pilots. Shortly thereafter, during 1541, when he participated in an expedition to the Red Sea, under the command of the new governor D. Estêvão da Gama, D. João de Castro wrote the third of his known treatises,²² the «Roteiro do Mar Roxo» ('Rutter of the Red Sea'), in which he describes in detail the sea voyage he made to Suez, including many accounts of the regions bordering that sea, as well as abundant critical notes on geographical and hydrographic matters.²³

Meanwhile, all the rutters included several watercolor illustrations done by Castro himself, depicting natural phenomena, geographical accidents, hydrographic environments, natural and humanized landscapes, various ships, as well as human figures. The illustrations were specifically referred to in the rutters, showing a clear interaction between textual and graphic components.²⁴ D. Estêvão da Gama, in a letter written to D. João III, emphasized the exceptional skills of D. João de Castro «to probe ports and to draw».²⁵ Although the authorship of the original tables is controversial, it seems that the illustrations would have been prepared by experienced draftsmen, based on sketches provided by the author of the texts, and it has been suggested, but without absolute confirmation, that one of these could have been the Portuguese cartographer Gaspar Viegas.²⁶

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The enormous value of the writings of D. João de Castro, which remained unpublished at the time, circulating only in handwritten copies among specialists in the art of sailing, lies not only in the innovative nature of many of the observations recorded in them – on

²⁰ Although the autograph manuscripts of the rutters are no longer extant, there is a good critical edition of these valuable writings of D. João de Castro, prepared by Armando Cortesão and Luís de Albuquerque on the basis of manuscript copies kept in several Portuguese and foreign libraries. See Castro 1968-1981b.

²¹ See Castro 1968-1981c.

²² Some passages of the «Roteiro de Goa a Diu» suggest that there was another rutter of the coast of India (from Goa to Cochin), but to date no manuscript has been located. Cf. Cortesão & Mota 1988, I: 135.

²³ See Castro 1968-1981d. Regarding the context of this expedition, see Coates 1993.

²⁴ See Albuquerque 1988; and also Loureiro 2013.

²⁵ Letter to D. João III (Goa, 25-10-1541), in Rego 1960-1977, VIII: 543: «pera sondar barras e debuxar».

²⁶ See Cortesão 1935, II: 170-177.

terrestrial magnetism, on atmospheric phenomena, on techniques to determine the latitude –, but also in the openly experiential attitude of its author, who deliberately and systematically tries to find answers to practical and theoretical problems of the nautical science of his times.²⁷ The largest sections of all the rutters, moreover, are dedicated to recording daily observations and procedures related to navigation: directions, currents, winds, weather conditions, navigational signs, latitudes, geographical accidents, natural phenomena, etc.

D. João de Castro wrote at least three other works, of which unfortunately no original manuscript or copy has yet been located:

- A «Roteiro de Goa a Cochim» ('Rutter from Goa to Cochin'), which is mentioned in one of the other three rutters, and which would have been written in 1539.²⁸
- A treatise about the «cosmografia das terras que jasem entre ho eufrates e o gange» ('cosmography of the lands between the Euphrates and the Ganges'), which he himself claims to have started around 1539.²⁹
- A treatise on the fortresses of India, which is attributed to him in the biography composed by his grandson, D. Fernando de Castro, in the late sixteenth century.³⁰

A careful analysis of the three rutters written between 1538 and 1541 reveals D. João de Castro as:

- An attentive observer of the human and natural world that surrounded him, and which he sought to describe accurately, often using illustrative drawings;
- A man concerned with the resolution of practical and theoretical sailing problems, trying with his contributions to advance the art of Portuguese navigation;
- An amateur antiquarian, interested in the material vestiges from the distant past;
- And also a curious, and sometimes critical, reader of the works of Antiquity, which he regularly confronted with the world around him.³¹

It is the latter question that is of interest in the present context, since the rutters do indeed contain multiple explicit and implicit references to classical authors and works.³² These references can be grouped basically in two distinct sets, but of unequal dimensions:

²⁷ Regarding these questions, see Cortesão & Albuquerque 1968-1981, IV: 175-208.

²⁸ Cortesão & Mota 1988, I: 135.

²⁹ Castro 1968-1981c, 91.

³⁰ Castro 1995, 132: «do livro que o visor-rei D. João deixou feito de sua letra, aonde estão as descrições de todas as fortalezas que temos na Índia» ('of the book that the Viceroy D. João de Castro left completed in his own hand, where one may find the descriptions of all the fortresses we [the Portuguese] have in India').

³¹ See the partial approach to the references to Antiquity in Castro's works in Deswarte-Rosa 1985.

³² For the sake of commodity, in the text I use the expressions «first rutter», «second rutter» and «third rutter» to refer to, respectively, the «Roteiro de Lisboa a Goa», the «Roteiro de Goa a Diu», and the «Roteiro do Mar Roxo».

on the one hand, the most restricted group, the writings of the Portuguese navigator contain mentions and implicit references to topics of classical culture; on the other hand, in the broader group of allusions, D. João de Castro quotes explicitly specific names and works, sometimes with precise textual references.

An example of the first group of references is found in the expressions «let the clarification of this in Apollo[’s hands]» or «the doubt will remain for Apollo [to solve]», which Castro uses in the first and second rutters when he cannot answer a concrete question, and which seems to refer to some of Virgil’s verses.³³ Another example is found in the phrase «fleeing from Scylla, ended up with Charybdis», applied in the first rutter to an objectionable decision taken by a certain pilot, and that finds its source in a line from Homer.³⁴ Still another example, taken from the second rutter, when referring to Indian sculptures, D. João de Castro considers them to be so polished and perfect «that they seem to stem from the hand of Phidias», a mention to the famous Greek sculptor Phidias, which was certainly taken from Pliny’s writings.³⁵ In the second rutter, there is mention of a certain anecdote involving «the architect Dinocrates», who appeared before the «great Alexander dressed in a lion’s skin»; it is the story of Dinocrates, taken from the work of Vitruvius, an author whom D. João de Castro knew well, as will be mentioned later.³⁶ And in another context, when describing a certain Indian temple in the second rutter, Castro praises its proportions, so perfect that «it would be very hard for a painter to copy, even if it was Apelles»; the source of this mention, once again, is Pliny.³⁷ Finally, in a certain section of the third rutter, there is an allusion to «Lucius Lucullus, noble citizen of Rome», a reference that could have originated in the writings of Plutarch.³⁸

All these references are made, so to speak, in passing, without any specific reference to the respective source, as if D. João de Castro shared with the reserved number of his readers a common cultural substratum. These ancient authors, in fact, would be standard reading in the circles connected to the Lusitanian court, whether directly from the originals or from manuscript collections of extracts, thus not needing any further explanation.

³³ Castro 1968-1981b, 154: «fique a detreminação disto a Apollo»; Castro 1968-1981c, 55: «a duuida fique [a] apollo». For this suggestion, see Castro 1843, p. 261. Regarding the reception of this classical author in Portugal, see Ureña Prieto 1986. As for Virgil’s references to Apollo, see Miller 2009, 95-184.

³⁴ Castro 1968-1981b, 238: «por fugir de Scila foi dar em Caribdes» (cf. Homer, *Od.* 12). The name of Homer is never mentioned by Castro. About the reception of Homer in fifteenth and sixteenth century Europe, see Palmer n.d.

³⁵ Castro 1968-1981c, 88: «que parece serem lauradas por mãos de fidia» (cf. Pliny, *NH* 36-4). Regarding the treatment of Phidias in the works of Pliny, see Isager 1991.

³⁶ Castro 1968-1981c, 13: «Zenocrate arquiteto», «grande alexandre vestido em huma pele leonina» (cf. Vitruvius, 2.pref). About this specific episode, see McEwen 2003, 95-112. On the relations of Castro with this author, see Moreira 1995.

³⁷ Castro 1968-1981c, 61: «seria muito poder guardar hum pintor inda que fosse apeles» (Pliny, *NH* 35-36). Regarding Pliny’s references to the famous Greek painter, see Gutzwiller 2009.

³⁸ Castro 1968-1981d, 183: «Lucio Luculo, nobre cidadaom de Roma» (cf. Plutarch, *Lucullus*). The name of Plutarch is never mentioned by Castro, but he certainly knew the *Parallel Lives*, maybe in a Spanish edition; on these editions, see Tarrío 2015. About Plutarch, see Beck 2014.

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But D. João de Castro's three rutters contain a broad set of explicit references to some of these, as well as to others, authors of Antiquity, that will be worth analyzing in more detail. Let us look and analyze a summary table of all the quotations:³⁹

Authors	R1	R2	R3	Total
Archimedes			1	1
Aristotle	2		1	3
Diodorus Siculus			1	1
Euclid			1	1
Hipparchus			1	1
Marinus of Tyre			1	1
Pliny	10	1	9	20
Pomponius Mela	2		4	6
Ptolemy	18		39	57
Strabo			6	6
Vitruvius		2	1	3
Total	30	3	65	

Several ancient authors deserve a single mention in the three rutters. Three of them are mentioned in the same passage of the third rutter, in which Castro criticizes the lack of theoretical knowledge of the Portuguese sailors, as opposed to the «antiguos» ('ancients'), who in addition to inquiring the secrets of nature also wrote about them. In this passage, he alludes to the «astrology of Hipparchus», to the «extensive mechanics of Archimedes», and to «Euclid's geometry».⁴⁰ These quotations, however generic, would certainly be based on second-hand readings, the authors' knowledge of these classic authors stemming from a close reading of the *Tratado da Sphera* by Pedro Nunes and from the lessons of the Portuguese cosmographer that Castro had had the opportunity to attend.⁴¹ Diodorus Siculus is also mentioned only once in the third rutter, again in a passage that includes references to several authors that in this specific instance would have dealt with the problem of the sources of the Nile River. But the mention of D. João de Castro seems to have been taken from Pliny.⁴² As to the quotation of Marinus of Tyre,

³⁹ R1: Castro 1968-1981b; R2: Castro 1968-1981c; R3: Castro 1968-1981d.

⁴⁰ Castro 1968-1981d, 181-182: «estrológia de Hiparco», «macânica tam abundosa de Archimedes», «geometria de Euclides».

⁴¹ Cf. Nunes 2002, 1-184. Concerning the authors read by Pedro Nunes, see Leitão 2002a.

⁴² Castro 1968-1981d, 236 (cf. Pliny, *NH* 5.10). About Diodorus Siculus, see Sacks 1990.

which appears in the first rutter, in a passage concerning Cape Guardafui, it is also second-hand, the evident source being Ptolemy, as the Portuguese navigator himself suggests, when he writes about «the navigation that Diogenes made in 25 days, where Ptolemy harshly reprimands Marinus». ⁴³ It seems certain, therefore, that none of these authors, who are quoted only once, will have been read first hand by D. João de Castro.

Aristotle and Vitruvius are mentioned three times each in the rutters of D. João de Castro. The Greek philosopher is summoned on a marginal note of the first rutter, concerning a night gale, where it is stated that «this strong wind is called by Aristotle, in the book of the heavens and the world, *procela*». The quotation, once again, could be indirect, perhaps originating in Pliny's writings. ⁴⁴ Immediately after, in the same rutter, and also on a marginal note, the Stagirite is again mentioned in a general way, as «Aristotle in the Meteorology», this time in connection with the phenomenon known as St. Elmo's fire, which is carefully described. Again, this is possibly an indirect quotation, or even a pseudo-quotation. ⁴⁵ It should be noted that in both cases these are notes in the margins of the text of the first rutter, which may or may not be the responsibility of Castro. Finally, there is a third generic reference, this time to the «ability of Aristotle», which appears in a passage already mentioned above, where several authors are quoted to criticize Portuguese seamen. ⁴⁶ These indications lead one to suppose that the work of Aristotle dedicated to meteorological phenomena would also not be known in first hand by the celebrated Portuguese navigator.

The case of Vitruvius seems to be distinct, as it has already been demonstrated. ⁴⁷ D. João de Castro was well acquainted with the treatise of the Roman architect, whom he explicitly quotes three times in his rutters. In the opening pages of the second rutter, he explicitly mentions «Vitruvius», in a passage about the importance of the connection between theory and practice. ⁴⁸ Later, in this same rutter, and with regard to a method of catching fish used by Indian fishermen, «Vitruvius» is mentioned. ⁴⁹ Finally, «the architect Vitruvius» is mentioned again in the third rutter, in the aforementioned passage where several authorities are summoned to the discussion about the sources of the river

⁴³ Castro 1968-1981b, 259: «a navegação que Diogenes fez em 25 dias, em que Ptolomeo reprende muito a marino» (cf. Ptolemy, *Geog.* 1.9). It should be noted that the source of this reference could also have been Pedro Nunes, who translated and annotated the «Liuro primeiro da geographia de Ptolomeu» ('First book of the Geography of Ptolemy'), where Marinus is dealt with at length (cf. Nunes 2002, 69-104). On Marinus of Tyre, see Geus 2013. Regarding the search for the sources of the Nile, see Johnston 2011.

⁴⁴ Castro 1968-1981b, 192: «este pé de vento chama Aristóteles, no livro do céu e mundo, *procela*» (cf. Pliny, *NH* 2.42-50, which apparently is based on Aristotle, *Meteor.* 2.4 e 2.6). On Aristotle's theory of winds, see Wilson 2013, 196-207. It should be added that one of the lost texts of Pedro Nunes dealt precisely with the winds, and that the origin of D. João de Castro's reference could be in the contacts he had with the royal cosmographer; see Leitão 2002b.

⁴⁵ Castro 1968-1981b, 228: «aris. nos metauros» (cf. Pliny, *NH* 2.37). Apparently, there is no mention of this phenomenon in Aristotle's *Meteorologica*; cf. Aristotle 1952. On the interpretation of these natural occurrences by early modern observers, see Martin 2011.

⁴⁶ Castro 1968-1981d, 182: «abilidade de Aristhoteles».

⁴⁷ See Moreira 1995. On the contemporary diffusion of Vitruvius' work, see Rowland 2014.

⁴⁸ Castro 1968-1981c, 12 (cf. Vitruvius 1.1). In a Portuguese academic context, see the recent edition, Vitruvius 1998, 2-3.

⁴⁹ Castro 1968-1981c, 136.

Nile.⁵⁰ There are no more explicit references to the Roman architect in Castro's writings. However, the presence of the treaty of Vitruvius lurks in several descriptions included in the rutters, whenever there is question of old and monumental buildings.

This is the case of the detailed information included in the second rutter about the Hindu temple on the island of Elephanta, «which is built with such wonderful craftsmanship, that it does not appear to have been made by human hands»;⁵¹ and also about «a magnificent temple» located in the island of Salsette, composed of buildings «crafted in the Roman style».⁵² D. João de Castro was greatly interested in the antiquities of India, and «he submitted Vitruvius to a local critical reading, observing Indian art in the light of the Vitruvian gaze».⁵³ He would certainly have a copy of the *De architectura libri decem* in one of the several editions that came out of the European presses in the first three decades of the sixteenth century, perhaps the illustrated Latin edition that was published in Venice in 1511 by Friar Giovanni Giocondo.⁵⁴ Or maybe, who knows, he possessed a handwritten copy of the Portuguese translation known to have been made by Pedro Nunes, but which has not yet been located.⁵⁵

There remain four more names in the list of ancient authors quoted in the rutters of D. João de Castro: Strabo and Pomponius Mela, each with six mentions, and Pliny and Ptolemy, who collectively gather 77 quotations. The references to «Strabo from Cappadocia» are concentrated in the final part of the third rutter, where Castro tries to identify place-names from classical geography with the places of the Gulf of Suez visited or sighted by the Portuguese expedition that sailed the whole Red Sea.⁵⁶ It seems obvious that he would have had the text in front of him, for he writes at a certain point «the words of Strabo clearly announce it».⁵⁷ Which means that Castro could have had with him either a manuscript copy of the section of the *Geography* dealing with the Red Sea and the surrounding regions, or some Latin edition of Strabo's work, of the many that were published in Europe in the first decades of the sixteenth century.⁵⁸ As for the six mentions to Pomponius Mela, they always respect geographic details, about the location of Atlantic islands,⁵⁹ or about the regions bordering the Red Sea.⁶⁰ It is not entirely clear whether these are first-hand references. However, it is not impossible that D. João de Castro had

⁵⁰ Castro 1968-1981d, 236: «vetruuio arquiteto» (cf. Vitruvius 8.2).

⁵¹ Cf. Castro 1968-1981c, 61: «o qual he laurado de tam marauilhosa obra, que parese emposivel ser feita por mãos de vmanos». About Elephanta Island, which is located in the vicinity of Mombay, see Collins 1988.

⁵² Castro 1968-1981c, 68-69: «hum magnifico templo», «laurados dobra romana». Regarding the first Portuguese perceptions of Indian monumental architecture, see Biedermann 2013.

⁵³ Moreira 1995, 52: «submeteu Vitruvius a uma leitura crítica local, observando a arte indiana à luz do olhar vitruviano».

⁵⁴ Cf. Vitruvius 1511, available at archive.org [accessed 11-02-2107]. Concerning this specific edition, see Rowland 2011.

⁵⁵ About this translation, see Leitão 2002b.

⁵⁶ Castro 1968-1981d, 326-335: «Estrabam capadoçio» (Strabo, *Geo.* 16.4).

⁵⁷ Castro 1968-1981d, 335: «craramente o dizem as palavras de estrabam».

⁵⁸ He could have browsed, for instance, the edition Strabo 1502. Cf. Strabo 1930, 307-373 (16, 4). About Strabo, see Dueck 2000.

⁵⁹ Castro 1968-1981b, 132 and 141.

⁶⁰ Castro 1968-1981d, 236, 302-303, 305 and 309.

handled a copy of Mela's *Cosmographia*,⁶¹ a treatise which at the time was well known in Portugal, and which even had an edition in Spain in the final years of the fifteenth century.⁶²

In addition to these hypothetical readings of ancient texts, two authors and two works are clearly identified in D. João de Castro's writings, and which were surely part of his library. On the one hand the *Natural History* of Pliny, an author that is quoted 20 times in the three rutters. On the other hand, the *Geography* of Ptolemy, an author mentioned no less than 57 times in the three rutters. Throughout his extensive sea voyages, Castro is in permanent dialogue with both of these authors, quoting their works on a regular basis, often with precise mention of textual places, through references to specific books and chapters.

Gaius Plinius Secundus, a Roman military man and writer of the first century, was the author of a famous *Historia Naturalis*, a monumental work of an encyclopedic nature, compiled over many years. Organized in 37 books, Pliny's work sought to gather all the available information about the natural world in the various areas of knowledge. Rediscovered in the fifteenth century by the Italian humanists, the *Historia Naturalis* was first printed in Venice in the 1460s, and later enjoyed a lasting success with numerous editions throughout the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Some of these editions were known and read in Portugal, and a Portuguese humanist, Martinho de Figueiredo, even published a commentary on the work in Lisbon in 1529.⁶³

The references and quotations are spread across the three rutters, reflecting an intimate acquaintance with Pliny's texts: alluding to the archipelago of the Canaries, «as can be seen in Pliny»;⁶⁴ about St. Elmo's fire, «this sign is mentioned by Pliny»;⁶⁵ about the tidal movements, «Pliny was right»;⁶⁶ concerning the river Nile, «as can be read in Pliny»;⁶⁷ and so on. But, it should be noted, Castro's position is not always concordant, for he sometimes calls into question the teachings of the Roman naturalist, as when he writes at a given moment, in reference to the lunar halo, «it seemed clear that Pliny was wrong».⁶⁸ Of course, Pliny's encyclopedia, or a part of it, would be a must-read for any traveler curious about the geography of the extra-European worlds, as was the case with D. João de Castro. And the Portuguese navigator almost certainly possessed a copy of the *Naturalis Historia*, in one of the several Italian editions published in the early decades of the sixteenth century.

⁶¹ See, on this context, Carvalho 1974.

⁶² Cf. Mela 1498, available at <http://www.cervantesvirtual.com/obra-visor/cosmographia-sive-de-situ-orbis--0/html/> [accessed 11-02-2017]. About this edition, see Carrizo Gómez 2013. Concerning Mela, see Romer 1998.

⁶³ Figueiredo 1529. About this booklet, see Tarrío 2007. See also, on the circulation of Pliny's work in Portugal, Leitão 2007; and Barreto 2007.

⁶⁴ Castro 1968-1981c, 132: «como se parece em Plinio».

⁶⁵ Castro 1968-1981b, 228: «Deste sinal falla Plinio».

⁶⁶ Castro 1968-1981c, 160: «teue rasam plinio».

⁶⁷ Castro 1968-1981d, 236: «como se lee em plinio».

⁶⁸ Castro 1968-1981b, 185: «pareçia claro enganarse Plinio».

Finally, the most frequently quoted and commented author in D. João de Castro's rutters is, undoubtedly, Ptolemy. The Alexandrian geographer of the 1st and 2nd centuries prepared several treatises related to cosmographic, geographical and mathematical themes, but his *Geography*, which systematized the geographical knowledge of the Greco-Latin world, was the most influential of all. Rediscovered in Europe during the fifteenth century, the Ptolemaic *Geography* underwent numerous editions, in diversified formats, both in the second half of this century and in the sixteenth century.⁶⁹ Despite the extraordinary enlargement of Europe's geographical horizons in the early modern period, as a result of the great Iberian voyages of discovery, Ptolemy's work retained its authority as a founding reference, serving as a working tool for many European scholars. From one edition to the next, Ptolemy's work was being complemented by its successive editors with new comments and updated tables.⁷⁰

Pedro Nunes had included as an appendix to his edition of the *Tratado da Sphera* a translation of the «Liuro primeiro da geographia de Ptolomeu» ('First book of the geography of Ptolemy'),⁷¹ which D. João de Castro certainly knew. But his notes are much broader, and Ptolemy is permanently present throughout the first and third rutters. Sometimes the references are mere conventional quotations, in which the name of the Alexandrian is invoked alongside other authors, as when Castro refers to one of the Atlantic archipelagos and adds «as can be seen in Ptolemy, Pliny and Pomponius Mela»,⁷² or when he alludes to the port of Toro and comments «as we can see in the writings of Ptolemy, Strabo, and other authors».⁷³

But the absolute majority of the mentions to Ptolemy refer to the most accurate identification and location of places visited or sighted by Castro in his navigations. The Portuguese navigator is always attentive to the place-names and the coordinates transmitted by the Alexandrian geographer: «Ptolemy clearly shows us» or «as we can see in Ptolemy».⁷⁴ And there is a permanent concern to associate modern place-names with those that are referred in the *Geography*. Meanwhile, Castro does not hesitate to correct the geographer when he deems it necessary: thus, when referring to the Atlantic archipelagos, he proclaims «in this part we should not follow Ptolemy».⁷⁵ An important detail, D. João de Castro repeatedly quotes Ptolemy's maps, showing that he had at hand a copy of the *Geography*: «Ptolemy's map 3 of Africa»;⁷⁶ «in the chart included in Ptolemy's maps»;⁷⁷ «according to Ptolemy's map 6 of Asia».⁷⁸ Ptolemy is the most important literary reference of D. João de Castro, the author that he quotes more

⁶⁹ On the rediscovery of Ptolemy in Europe, see Gautier-Dalché 2007. About Ptolemy, see also Berggren & Jones 2000.

⁷⁰ For an introduction to the Ptolemaic maps, see Berggren 2002.

⁷¹ Nunes 2002, 69-104. On the relations of Nunes with the work of Ptolemy, see Gaspar 2013.

⁷² Castro 1968-1981b, 132: «como parece em Ptolomeu, Plinio, Pomponio mella».

⁷³ Castro 1968-1981d, 326: «como podemos ver na escriptura de tholomeo, estrabam e outros autores».

⁷⁴ Castro 1968-1981d, 335 and 337: «tolomeo manifestamente nos amostra», «como podemos ver em ptolomeo».

⁷⁵ Castro 1968-1981b, 142: «nesta parte não devemos estar por Ptolomeo».

⁷⁶ Castro 1968-1981b, 142: «Ptolomeo tauoa 3 de Africa».

⁷⁷ Castro 1968-1981b, 252: «na carta que tem as tauoas de Ptolomeo».

⁷⁸ Castro 1968-1981d, 199: «segundo parece em tholomeo, tauoa 6ª de asia».

frequently, and also the one he is permanently questioning, always present at his working table, and whom he describes as the «prince of cosmographers».⁷⁹ The library of the celebrated Portuguese navigator certainly included a copy of the *Geography*, an edition that is difficult to identify.⁸⁰

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In the large group of extant manuscript letters written by D. João de Castro there are not many more references to classical writings.⁸¹ There is only an allusion to Flavius Josephus in a letter written to King D. João III at the end of 1541, with an extensive report on the expedition to the «Straits of Mecca».⁸² Castro had written in the prologue to his third rutter, upon embarking in Goa at the end of 1540 on the expedition to Suez, that he was determined to unveil all the secrets of the Red Sea, for he understood that «nothing was more obscured and confused in the minds of men and in the scriptures of the ancients, than the cosmography of this sea and land».⁸³ For this reason, the account of this journey presents a greater density of scholarly quotations, since it was a true project of historical and geographical investigation. And so, apart from the works of ancient geographers and naturalists such as Ptolemy or Pliny, nothing more natural than to be accompanied by a copy of the *Jewish Antiquities*, written by the politician and historiographer of the first century. The work had been repeatedly published in Europe since the final years of the fifteenth century, and probably Castro had with him a copy of one of these editions.⁸⁴

In view of the literary references that can be ascertained in the three rutters, and also in the correspondence of D. João de Castro, the extent of his readings of ancient authors should be reevaluated. In fact, the Portuguese navigator traveled with a small library, composed at best by half a dozen books. His readings during the period of formation, of course, would be broader, but in the rutters of the long sea voyages that he accomplished between 1538 and 1541 one can only detect with certainty the use of two books: the *Geography* of Ptolemy and Pliny's *Natural History*. A third book was probably also in his possession, the treatise on *Architecture* by Vitruvius. And two other treatises could also be part of his portable library, the *Cosmography* of Pomponius Mela and Strabo's *Geography*. Finally, the *Antiquities* of Josephus complemented this restricted group of

⁷⁹ Castro 1968-1981d, 305: «primcipe dos cosmografos».

⁸⁰ For a list of some of the editions of Ptolemy available before 1539, see Leitão & Martins 2004, 367-372.

⁸¹ Documents originating from Hormuz in 1546 mention that Castro had ordered «hum liuro [...] dos feitos d'Alexandre e doutros varoes elustres» ('a book of the deeds of Alexander and other illustrious men'), probably a translation of Persian manuscripts (Letter to Bastião Lopes Lobato [Hormuz, 03-02-1546], in Cortesão & Albuquerque 1968-1981, IV: 25). Castro was extremely interested in the figure of Alexander the Great, who was mentioned twice in his rutters (Castro 1968-1981b, 124; Castro 1968-1981c, 13). On the Portuguese interest in the history of Alexander, see Barletta 2010.

⁸² Letter to D. João III (Goa, ?-10-1541), in Cortesão & Albuquerque 1968-1981, III: 31-45: «ao estreito de Mequa» (quote on 31; reference to «Josefo» on 37).

⁸³ Castro 1968-1981d, 183: «nenhuma outra cousa estar mais escura e embaraçada nos emtendimmentos dos homens e escrituras dos amtigos, que a cosmografia deste mar e terra».

⁸⁴ Concerning the Spanish editions, see Sem 1999. About Josephus, see Chapman & Rodgers 2016.

classic works that D. João de Castro used regularly. However, for a navigator interested in confronting the lesson of the classics with the observable and experienced geographical and natural reality, this small set of works brought together the essential names and works of the classical European tradition.

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The three rutters would suffice to justify the deserved reputation enjoyed by D. João de Castro as a man of letters and science. But the last phase of his life consolidated his prestige as a man of arms. Indeed, returning to Portugal in 1542, for what he supposed was going to be a quiet retirement in the company of his wife and children, D. João III called him again for active service in the defense of the Portuguese coast and the Moroccan fortresses, which were then being gradually abandoned.⁸⁵ And in early 1545, apparently on the recommendation of Prince Luís, the Portuguese King appointed him as governor of the *Estado da Índia*. In September of that same year, Castro arrived in Goa for a period of government that was to be filled with military and diplomatic missions, which Portuguese chronicles and extant archival materials document in detail.⁸⁶

Especially noteworthy was the second siege of Diu, organized in 1546 by a Turkish and Gujerati confederation that was violently defeated at the end of that same year.⁸⁷ Contemporary sources unanimously emphasize the scrupulous honesty with which the new governor served his office, the strict principles of justice that guided his actions, as well as the vast prestige that he was able to obtain for Portuguese arms among many Asian potentates. His celebrated entry into Goa in April 1547, after the victory of Diu, fits this latter context, as a true reconstruction of the triumphal processions of ancient Rome. The chronicler Gaspar Correia, who then resided in the capital of the *Estado da Índia*, left us a truly majestic portrait of the «strong Castro» which will be later hailed by Luís de Camões,⁸⁸ who in good Renaissance manner, permanently associated his name with both letters and arms.⁸⁹ The image would soon be replicated in the so-called *Livro de Lisuarte de Abreu*, a manuscript collection of depictions of the Portuguese fleets annually bound for India, together with portraits of the rulers of the *Estado da Índia*, drawn by an anonymous author, which may have been the same Gaspar Correia.⁹⁰

The following year would be marked by successive military campaigns on the west coast of India, especially against Bijapur and against Cambay. But D. João de Castro's career was drawing to an end. As he bitterly wrote to King D. João III shortly before, «the hardships of India» had «spent his body», «the care and grief over so many wild things» had «crushed his bones», and «men's bad living» had «damaged his soul». The governor was to die in Goa on June 6, 1548, after prolonged illness, curiously enough, a few days

⁸⁵ Regarding this topic, see Fontoura 1998.

⁸⁶ Among other studies, see Albuquerque 1989.

⁸⁷ On this military episode, see Jesus 2012.

⁸⁸ Camões 1572, 3 (1-14).

⁸⁹ Correia 1975, IV: 430-431. About this portrait, see Jordan-Gschwend 1995.

⁹⁰ See Albuquerque & Esteves 1992.

after receiving from Portugal his new appointment as viceroy of India for a period of three years.⁹¹

⁹¹ It will be worth mentioning that there are other possible connections between D. João de Castro and the ancient world: on one hand, his triumphal entry in Goa, following the siege of Diu, with a staging filled with symbolic elements inspired in classical themes; on the other hand, the care with which he undertook the preservation of the memory of his predecessors at the head of the *Estado da Índia*, with the setting of a gallery of portraits of 'illustrious men', with clear classical reminiscences. On these questions, see Quina 1995; and also, more recently, Martins 2013.

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