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**The English in the Algarve in the XVII
and XVIII centuries**

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«In the little kingdom of the Algarve there are vast quantities of wine, oil, corn, almonds, figs and other fruits». This was the information any Englishman interested in the Algarve could easily obtain in 1762. All he had to do was open Adam Anderson's book «An Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce»¹.

A more inquisitive Englishman might ask what went from England to the Algarve. And the answer would be cereals, dried peas, cheese and butter, potatoes, yards and yards of wool fabric, stuffing, socks and hats, ammunition, ink, pitch, boxes of tobacco, wooden combs, glass, clocks, ploughs and other iron tools for various uses. He might learn that sometimes cod was freighted and that his countrymen transported products from America and the Baltic². But, no doubt, only very few would tell him that the English were pointed out as the cause of the economic misfortunes which occurred in the extreme south of the Portuguese territory.

In 1759, a royal magistrate reported to the King as follows: «There is (in Faro) a trading-house of the British Nation, and in it her Consul, who absorbs almost all trade in this kingdom (of the Algarve) and, what is more, against all treaties signed with England and against Your Very New Laws, they have in this town a shop, in which they sell small quantities of all goods, including groceries, directly to the consumer. And they also have other such retail shops

in other parts of this kingdom». And he added: «This is a very opulent house which trades enormously in all grains, wines, and aqua-vitae. Their abundance causes dependence and they are the despotic masters of this land because, although dependence is common practice all over the country, here in the Algarve this means that the local people become their unconditional servants, deeply submissive and vilely humiliated, in total disrespect of any Laws³».

Dependence is a serious word that expresses what has happened then. As a result of the course of the European world economy since XVI century⁴, England occupied the dominant position in the complex match of forces of international economy; Portugal was the dominated part⁵. The Portuguese position is explained by a conjunction of internal and external factors which led Portugal prematurely to engage in external trade before her internal production was ready for it⁶. Consequently economic difficulties and misadjustments followed which entailed social and ideological disturbances. This is the only explanation for the fact that the king, the estates or the dominant orders (nobilities and clergy) were so eager to accept the profits from trading and, at the same time, allowed and supported the Holy Office of the Inquisition. This institution, beyond the control of its creator, controlled the culture, the society and the economy of the country. It acted as appeasor of the mercantile class, which it simultaneously, ferociously persecuted⁷. This persecution deprived Portugal of merchants both in number and in wealth. But as the economic structure remained unchanged, its strong commercial content left a large field of activity open to foreigners. These foreigners, segregated from society did not question the essential values of the establishment, nor did they endanger the social order. That is why it was so easy to include the clause of religious freedom for foreign merchants in the treaties which Portugal signed with England in 1642 and 1654⁸.

«Truely it is extremely difficult to understand the Portuguese reason of State in this matter: because, Portugal being a kingdom entirely based on commerce, sends her Portuguese merchants to foreign kingdoms and allows foreign merchants to settle in and take all interest and profit from the negotiations instead of us: what the Portuguese gain in the foreign kingdoms remains there and what the foreign merchants gain in our kingdom returns to their foreign kingdoms⁹. The case of Algarve is a good illustration of what Padre António Vieira wrote.

Algarve was, until about 1619, a prosperous part of Portugal. Economically linked to maritime South Andalusia, Portugal participated

legally, and illegally in the rich trade of the Castilian Indies. A strong mercantile middle class lived and traded in the main ports of Lagos, Portimão, Faro and Tavira¹⁰. The crisis of 1619-1622, the structural turning point of the mediterranean economy, was deeply felt here and caused profound alterations which led a great number of merchants to seek for better business elsewhere¹¹. The effects of this exodus are amplified and multiplied by the brutal persecutions that fell upon New Christians in 1633. The Inquisition managed to «break through Judaism¹²». Both the number of merchants and the mercantile movement drops drastically. But the products from the land, the figs, the wine, the fruit, the olive oil are still in demand in Northern Europe. The non-existence of local traders brings in the foreign merchants. This time only to Faro, which becomes the busiest regional port, centralising most of the trade with the North¹³. Other foreign merchants had lived and traded here before. We find Flemish, French, Italians, Sicilians and many Castilians and Catalans here in XVI and early XVII Century¹⁴; as from 1650 Dutch, Germans and above all English settle here. Now, contrary to what happened before, these are the men who control almost all commercial movement.

In 1651 the reduced international trade of the Faro port is already in the hands of Henry Janson, an Englishman, who will maintain an important commercial house until 1675. As he himself tells us, he was born in Losthouse (?) in Yorkshire, came to the Algarve about 1645 and headed «important business»¹⁵. With him worked, either as cashiers or associates, we know not for sure, William Milwart from 1651 to 1658 and William Croquer a young lad of eighteen arrived in 1654 «to stay ashore in the house of Henry Janson¹⁶». He was probably born in Exon (?) and got involved in complicated problems with the Inquisition in 1669. It is not known what became of him¹⁷.

Another merchant arrives in 1669, a fully grown man, with two servants. His name is Filipe Melhor — according to the documents we have — and in 1672 he is Consul of the English in Faro, a post he holds until 1684¹⁸ when Samuel Small — frequently referred to as Esmal in documents — takes over, gaining notoriety until 1692. Samuel Small establishes himself as a merchant in 1672 and controls, almost exclusively, the trade with England, Holland and a considerable part of the trade with Lisbon and Andalusia¹⁹. He does not hesitate to engage in dirty work to get the better of his competitors.

In 1687 the magistrate of the Holy Office in Faro writes to the Tribunal in Évora: «Today I am denouncing a man who came here in an English ship to deliver Fabrics and load olive oil and he dealt with Lopo Roiz, a merchant of this

town, and a new Cristian, born in Beira, who is housing the denounced. I sent for the witnesses, indicated by the denouncer and got what I am sending you and hope all goes well, as you command». However, the priest representing the Holy Office here and the Bishop he went to for advice, took a step of elementary caution: to find out if the denunciation was benefiting someone. And it was. The priest goes on: «You know how Samuel Small is an English merchant and dealer of ships and it is said that he feels it deeply when so many cargos arrive for other merchants than himself. He always wants the best dealings, both buying and selling, for himself as we know by experience. The denouncer of this case is his guarantor before the Royal Treasury and the witnesses are also from his house where they are fed. Supposing all this is as common knowledge has it, I dare advise you so that you know better²⁰». Samuel Small is a Protestant and uses the Holy Office to shelter from possible competitors. I shall come back to this matter.

Other Englishmen come and go. In 1651 «Jan Parcher, merchant, settles in Tavira where he dwells», having arrived in Faro from London²¹. It is possible that the Parcar (Parker) are his descendents. The first illustrious member of this family D. João Parcar, was born in Faro, where he married D. Maria Camacho da Silva, and was the Consul of the English from 1715 to 1718. He ran an important commercial house from 1712 to 1736. Christopher Parcar and William Parcar (1738) canons of the See are his children and Canon Samuel Pitts Parcar (1759) and Father John Pitts Parcar are his grandchildren. The commercial house carries on with his son in law D. Samuel Pitt (he signed Pitt, the others Pitts) and his daughter D. Maria Parcar Pitts. This lady appears alone as a widow (1746) and afterwards in association with her sons Pedro and Guilherme. As from 1762, she appears in association with her son in law D. João Keating. The latter was born in Lisbon, the son of Diogo Caetano Keating and D. Maria Paula Keating «both born in Brittany»²². Samuel Pitt, as he himself says, was born in Triquet (?), in Somerset, from where he left for Cadiz and the Algarve. He became a Roman Catholic in order to get married in 1727²³. A Portuguese family, the Parcar, constantly renewed their links with the English: Englishmen were consuls and owners of important houses: amongst others, Diogo Holden (1695-1713) and Diogo João Amon (1735-1749). Most notable of all these is the presence of the Lamprière. The first ones of this name are Tomás (1714-1735) and André (1719-1725); another Tomás (or maybe the same) and a João establish themselves in 1749 and found the biggest commercial house in Faro in the second half of XVIII Century (or maybe continued the house of Diogo João Amon?) — and thus bring upon themselves

the wrath of the Portuguese patriots who, rightly or wrongly, blame them for all the misfortunes suffered by the economy of this small territory.

These houses centralise in Faro the buying and selling of the produce of the land as well as the foreign products and have their own agents spread all over the Algarve. Due to the volume of their business they dictate the prices both to those who sell and to those who buy and are loathed for it. The real truth is that they are able to do it because no one else can command the necessary capital, no one else has a mastery of the international trade net so as to confront them. Their strength comes from the weakness of the Portuguese and from the British commercial organisation, namely the credit they benefited from²⁴.

Bachelor of Law José Viegas de Andrade, auditor of the Lagos Regiment, explains how things were in 1774: «The English merchants established in Faro worked on a commission basis of five per cent when exporting products from the Algarve rather than at their own risk. None of the nationals have a commission to load foreign ships. The English are more interested in working on a commission than on their own. João Lamprière has agents all over who buy for him all the products his house trades in. He possesses boats and carts of his own in which he transports the products to his own storehouses, thus leaving no work to the nationals. His house possesses ships in Faro which freight the products from and to the Algarve. He has an interest in the Public Treasury in order to be able to implement better and more freely the ideas of his business. He maintains the reputation for the export of his products in the Algarve and he imports most of the products the Algarve needs. The respect he commands and the power he holds reduce the locals to being his humiliatingly submissive servants. To mention the Lamprière name is enough to command respect and veneration»²⁵. The same José Viegas de Andrade tells us that the detested Englishman outbid a factory of aqua-vitae which immediately stopped distilling figs, thus causing a process of de-industrialisation²⁶.

Another British subject is accused by the same José Viegas de Andrade: «João Crispin an English merchant living in the town of Faro possesses here a retail shop where he sells all his materials by the ell and he also sells in all fairs of the Algarve like any Portuguese of the same profession. His shop has a higher volume of sale of materials than those of the nationals both in town and at the fairs: for the reason that he receives his merchandise on commission and going the same trade as Lamprière he can sell cheaper than any Portuguese merchant who has to acquire the materials from him in cash. In the fairs he sells

more than the Portuguese and he sold enormously in the fair of Sylves in 1773. The English were only allowed by the commercial deed of December 1703 to introduce in our kingdom the woolen Fabric on the same conditions as they had before prohibition; they could not practise retail selling like the Portuguese who had a specific statue confirmed and protected by charter of 16th December 1757. João Lamprière had a similar shop to Crespín's which he passed on to a merchant of Faro called João Francisco in 1771; and it is said that he still has an interest in it²⁷.

Had things come to such a point that they became irreversible? I believe not. The Lamprières reached their peak around 1772²⁸, their presence being hardly noticeable by 1774. In 1796 they probably no longer lived in Faro. They certainly did not in 1808, when, «in the houses that were João Lamprière's» the municipal senate installed the officers of the Spanish invading army²⁹. The Parcar's disappeared, as a commercial house, after 1775³⁰ or maybe their business changed hands. João Keating still is mentioned between 1783-1786 settling problems of the inheritance of his wife's uncle, Canon Cristóvão Parcar³¹ — and in 1796 the dowager D. Maria still lives in her house of Terreiro da Madalena³². In 1803 there are in the office of the See «two big unused books that were purchased in the Parcar's auction ...³³»

Some foreigners, like the Swedish Bar Avent and his associate João Crispín, and Englishman, still remain in Faro³⁴. But Portuguese merchants like João Francisco de Macedo and Manuel José da Costa³⁵ begin to appear and gain a reputation.

Not due to anglophobia but in order to achieve a durable independence, Pombal's policy begins to show some change: state reform, organisation of monopolies for the colonial commerce, diversification of external markets, industrialisation, development of new cultures in Brazil (cotton, cocoa, rice) and, last but not least, the dismantling of the Holy Office as a weapon for obsolete mentalities to use against the commercial and industrial middle class³⁶. The results were not immediate. But the foundations were laid that allowed the Portuguese to take advantage of the favourable international circumstances of the end of the XVIIIth and the beginning of the XIXth Century³⁷. And so the English leave (at least the Algarve) before the Continental Blockade. Later, as an indirect consequence of the British imperialist policy the Jews flock into the Algarve via Gibraltar³⁸.

The revitalization of the Portuguese or the mercantile group settled in Portugal is crucial. Therefore, it is essential to annihilate the Inquisition because the confiscations that followed the arrests were ruinous. D. Luís da Cunha wrote: «Because of the damaging consequences of the confiscations the foreigners do not want to have Portuguese nationals as agents because, if they are arrested and their possessions confiscated, they have to appeal to the public Treasury and engage in never-ending processes to recover them». So the foreigners, instead of associating with the Portuguese firms, preferred to have «their own agents»³⁹. The religious difference was not an obstacle but rather an excellent defense.

We have seen previously how Samuel Small tried to take advantage of the fact that one of his competitors was a New Christian to eliminate him. But here there are other cases. In 1662 Henrique Janson, the first merchant in Faro, admits that his parents were «Roman Catholics as he himself always was one, deep in his heart'. Back home he attended mass secretly, as did everyone else who shared the same belief. But in Faro he pretended to be a Protestant⁴⁰. There is also the case of D. Rodrigo Turner in 1734⁴¹: only «in articulo mortis» did he send for the magistrate of the Holy Office to abjure.

In 1753 a Jesuit priest of Faro puts to the inquisitors in Évora the case of an «heretic Englishman who resolves to accept the Roman Catholic church. This man says it is very inconvenient for him to abjure publicly for fear of losing his business and conveniences and he says he will only abjure if he can do it privately and that is the reason why he only confides in me and another man⁴²». This young Englishman, 21 or 22 years old, fluent in Portuguese and so concerned with his business and conveniences, was the sales clerk in the house of the very Catholic D. Maria Parcar Pitts⁴³. His name was Guilherme Crispín, born in Havant, England. Would he? He could easily have turned to his employees, and one of the canons would have dealt with his case. All we know is that only in 1794, being then so old he could hardly kneel down, did G. Crispín publicly appear as a Roman Catholic⁴⁴.

Being a Roman Catholic was bad for an English merchant in Portugal. He was not trusted by his countrymen; he was subject to the jurisdiction of the Inquisition and to the confiscations. It was much safer to be a Protestant and take shelter in the Anglo-Portuguese treaties. I know of no better proof of the pernicious influence of the Inquisition: thus the foreign merchants were prevented from settling and becoming naturalised and the Portuguese New

Christians were forced to spread around the world. One could ask: does it matter what nationality a merchant has? Nationality is not the problem. The trouble arises over where the profits of the economic activity are invested and reinvested. It is well known that the English merchants established in Portugal in the XVIIth and XVIIIth century did not stay long. They invested little and re-invested even less in the country. D. Luís da Cunha underlined this fact when he wrote that here they grew rich and then returned to their country «where they lived as they pleased at our expense»⁴⁵. We could say in today's language that Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo also knew how to pinpoint that characteristic of a dominated economy: «They leave their country with no real money, only with credit. And after ten or 15 years they return home full of riches»⁴⁶. Riches that flowed to the centre at the expense of the periphery, which made the rich richer, and the poor poorer, in an almost irreversible process because a structural one.

Notes

1. Vol. III, reimp., Nova Iorque, Augustus M. Kelley, 1967, p. 484.
2. Joaquim Antero Romero Magalhães, *O Algarve económico: 1600-1773*, dissertação de doutoramento, policopiada, vol. II, Coimbra, Faculdade de Economia da Universidade de Coimbra, 1984, pp. 718-719.
3. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo (TT), Ministério do Reino, Maço 295, Cópia da conta que deu o corregedor de Lagos, fls. 12v-13.
4. Sandro Sideri, *Comércio e Poder. Colonialismo informal nas relações anglo-portuguesas*, trad., Lisboa, Cosmos, (1978); H. E. S. Fisher, *De Methuen a Pombal. O comércio anglo-português de 1700 a 1770*, Lisboa, Gradiva, 1984.
5. Fernand Braudel, *Civilisation matérielle, économie et capitalisme, XV^e-XVIII^e siècles*, 3 vols., Paris, Armand Colin, 1979; Immanuel Wallerstein, *The Modern-World System*, 2 vols., Londres - Nova Iorque, Academic Press, 1974-1980.
6. Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, «Finanças públicas e estrutura do Estado», in *Ensaio II. História de Portugal*, 2.^a ed., Lisboa, Sá da Costa, 1978, pp. 51-72.
7. Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *A estrutura da antiga sociedade portuguesa*, 2.^a ed., Lisboa, Arcádia, 1974; J. A. Romero Magalhães, *ob. cit.*, vol. II, pp. 921-1007.
8. Respectively Articles VIII e XIV; José de Almada, *A Aliança Inglesa. Subsídios para o seu estudo*, vol. I, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, 1946, pp. 27 e 34-35.
9. Padre António Vieira, *Obras escolhidas*, vol. IV, Lisboa, Sá da Costa, 1951, p. 59.
10. J. A. Romero Magalhães. *Para o estudo do Algarve económico durante o Séc. XVI*, Lisboa, Cosmos, 1970, pp. 209-232.

11. J. A. Romero Magalhães, *O Algarve económico: 1600-1773*, vol. II, pp. 928-951.
12. J. A. Romero Magalhães, *E assim se abriu judaísmo no Algarve*, sep. da *Revista da Universidade de Coimbra*, Coimbra, 1981.
13. J. A. Romero Magalhães, *O Algarve económico: 1600-1773*, vol. II, pp. 713-808.
14. J. A. Romero Magalhães, *Para o estudo ...*, p. 34.
15. TT, Inquisição de Évora (I.E.), Livro 2.º de reduzidos, fls. 41-49. The way foreign names are written presents problems. For this reason I have not tried to identify place names.
16. TT, I. E., Livro de visitas a navios, Faro, 1618-1657, fl. 101v.
17. TT, I.E., Livro 2.º de reduzidos, fls. 300-306.
18. Data concerning the presence of foreign merchants can be checked from two main sources: TT, I. E., Livros de visitas a navios, Faro, 1618-1657, 1662-1683, 1684-1727 e 1727-1754; Biblioteca da Alfândega de Lisboa, Registo de visitas a embarcações, Faro, 12-1 a 12-4.
19. Biblioteca da Alfândega de Lisboa, Registo de despachos, 17-1.
20. TT, I.E., Caderno do Promotor, n.º 30, fl. 494.
21. TT, I.E., Livro de visitas a navios, Faro, 1618-1657, fl. 85.
22. Information obtained from Arquivo do Cabido da Sé de Faro, Acórdãos do Cabido da Sé de Faro e Inquirições *de genere*, n/n; Arquivo Distrital de Faro, Registos paroquiais, Faro-S. Pedro, Livros de baptizados, casamentos e óbitos; Arquivo Paroquial de S. Pedro-Faro, Róis de confessados de 1740, 1776 e 1796. I am grateful to the Rev. Canon Henrique Ferreira da Silva and to Father António Patrício for enabling me to consult the ecclesiastic records referred to.
23. TT, I.E., Livro 3.º de reduzidos, fls. 314-317.
24. H. E. S. Fisher, *De Methuen a Pombal ...*, cap. 3 a 7, pp. 81-157.
25. Coleção Alberto Iria, Bacharel José Viegas de Andrade, Suplemento ao Memorial económico (1774). I am grateful to Dr. Alberto Iria for giving me access to this manuscript.
26. J. A. Romero Magalhães, *O Algarve económico: 1600-1773*, vol. I, pp. 582-584.
27. Coleção Alberto Iria, Bacharel José Viegas de Andrade, Suplemento ..., fls. 26v-37.
28. Maria Elvira Faustino Crespo, *A economia marítima do Algarve na segunda metade do século XVIII*, dissertação de licenciatura policopiada, Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras da Universidade de Lisboa, 1968, pp. 112, quadros 19 e 20.
29. Arquivo Paroquial de S. Pedro-Faro, Rol dos confessados de 1796; Arquivo do Cabido da Sé, Acórdãos ..., 17 de Fevereiro de 1808.
30. Maria Elvira Faustino Crespo, *ob. cit.*, p. 115, quadros 23, 24 e 25.
31. Arquivo do Cabido da Sé de Faro, Acórdãos ..., 24 de Setembro de 1783, 21 de Fevereiro e 3 de Abril de 1784, 29 de Janeiro de 1785 e 23 de Setembro de 1786.
32. Arquivo paroquial de S. Pedro-Faro, Rol de confessados de 1796.
33. Arquivo do Cabido da Sé de Faro, Acórdãos ..., 3 de Setembro de 1803.
34. Maria Elvira Faustino Crespo, *ob. cit.*, p. 114, quadros 21 e 22.
35. *Ibid.*, p. 119, quadros 29 a 33.
36. Jorge Borges de Macedo, *A situação económica no tempo de Pombal. Alguns aspectos*, 2.ª ed., Lisboa, Moraes, 1982; Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *Prix et monnaies au Portugal. 1750-1850*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1955.
37. Vitorino Magalhães Godinho, *ob. cit.*, pp. 259-276.
38. Francisco Xavier d'Athaide Oliveira, *Biografia de D. Francisco Gomes do Avelar, Arcebispo-bispo do Algarve*, Porto, Typografia Unoversal (a vapor) 1902, pp. 224-226; José Leite de Vasconcelos, *Etnografia portuguesa*, vol. IV, org. Manuel Viegas Guerreiro, Lisboa, Imprensa Nacional, 1958, pp. 235-239.
39. *Instruções inéditas de D. Luís da Cunha a Marco António de Azevedo Coutinho*, Coimbra, Imprensa da Universidade, 1930, p. 88.
40. TT, I.E., Livro 2.º de reduzidos, fls. 41-49.
41. Id., Livro 3.º de reduzidos, fls. 396-400.
42. Id., Livro 4.º de reduzidos, f. 202.
43. *Ibid.*, fl. 203.
44. *Ibid.*, fl. 217.
45. *Instruções inéditas ...*, p. 88.

46. *Apud* José Sebastião da Silva Dias, *Pombalismo e projecto político*, Lisboa, Centro de História da Cultura da Universidade Nova de Lisboa, 1984, p. 62, nota (82).