

fears and apply their efforts in bringing back normality to their lives.

One of the most relevant accounts, concerning its political role, was *Commentario latino e portuguez sobre o terremoto e incendio de Lisboa de que foy testemunha ocular seu autor*,²¹ probably printed in June 1756,²² by António Pereira de Figueiredo (1725-1797). The author would later become the main theoretician in affirming the temporal rights of the monarchy over those of the church, the political theory known in Portugal as Regalism. This text was also printed in London, providing to the whole European Courts, in Latin and in English, authorised news from Lisbon, offering reassurance regarding the safety of the royal family while confirming the magnitude of the damages and losses, and willing to bring news and comments to a rational ground.

Pereira de Figueiredo was in Lisbon on 1 November, alongside Trovão e Sousa, whom he refers to several times as the «author from Coimbra» while exposing the inaccurate data provided in the *Carta de hum amigo para outro...*, as others did, before and after him.²³ Unlike Trovão e Sousa, however, he puts

²¹ A. Pereira de Figueiredo, *Commentario latino e portuguez sobre o terremoto e incendio de Lisboa. De que foy testemunha ocular seu autor Antonio Pereira padre da Congregaçõ do Oratorio, que tambem o illustrou com notas = Antonii Pereriae Congregationis Oratorii De terraemotu et incendio Olisiponensi, cujus ipse oculatus testis fuit, commentarius latino-lusitanus, adjectis ab eodem notis illustratus*, Officina de Miguel Rodrigues, Impressor do Emin. S. Card. Patr., Lisboa 1756.

²² «They all got out safe, just as the palace began to shake, and retired to another royal seat not far from thence, where they erected magnificent tents, such as princes use in their camps, and in which they have now lived these six months»: A. Pereira de Figueiredo, *A Narrative of the Earthquake and Fire of Lisbon by Antony Pereira, of the Congregation of Oratory, an Eye-witness thereof. Illustrated with Notes, Translated from Latin*, G. Hawkins, London 1756, p. 14. The *Gazeta de Lisboa*, on the n. 26 of 1 July, 1756, announces the publication of Pereira de Figueiredo's Portuguese-Latin version of *A Narrative of the Earthquake and Fire of Lisbon...*

²³ See J.A. de Tavares (pseud. of B. Morganti), *Verdade vindicada ou resposta a huma carta escrita de Coimbra, em que se dá noticia do lamentavel successo de Lisboa no dia 1 de Novembro de 1755*, Off. de Miguel Manescal da Costa, Lisboa 1756; and A. dos Remédios, *Resposta à carta de Jozé de Oliveira Trovam e Sousa em que se dà noticia do lamentavel successo de Lisboa*, Off. de Domingos Rodrigues, Lisboa 1756. Criticizing an account means to retell, correct and update the information, all being added to the

himself in the fictitious perspective of an external observer of the earthquake; such a narrative strategy enlarged the distance and underestimated awe and fear. He showed his concern for being accurate, albeit not neglecting the main factual information, including individual dramatic episodes, but correcting numbers given in previous accounts, explaining that he collected his own data. He also emphasised the role of the king who took immediate control of the emergency, and in addition, he praised the actions undertaken by the high range nobles who were involved in the rescue of victims. His authority as a reliable source was stressed when he writes:

Such are the particulars I had to relate concerning the late earthquake and fire of Lisbon, the greatest part of which I either saw myself, having been in all parts of the town for that purpose or had from those who were eyewitnesses of the melancholy scene.²⁴

An important aspect of this account must be understood when he claims: «that one would think the Deity was resolved to punish the iniquities of many ages in a single day».²⁵ Jonathan Israel reads these lines as evidence of the absence of an enlightened speech in Portugal, as in most Catholic countries, at the time.²⁶ While the focus of this discussion is not the Enlightenment (radical or otherwise), it is for us clear that there is a fracture between those who gave themselves a providential explanation of the events, and those who, while acknowledging the emotional atmosphere of those days, including religious manifestations, discussed only natural and factual arguments, instrumental to a mainly political discourse, with both internal and external political purposes. Malagrida, who accused authors of this kind of being atheists, clearly grasped the political goal

information already circulating. See J.L. Lisboa, *Réplicas de papel (informação e comentário)*, in Rollo, Buescu, Cardim, *História e ciência da catástrofe*, pp. 67-82, p. 76.

²⁴ A. Pereira de Figueiredo, *A Narrative of the Earthquake and Fire of Lisbon*, p. 20.

²⁵ Ivi, p. 4.

²⁶ Cfr. chapter 2, *Nature and Providence. Earthquakes and the Human Condition*, in J. Israel, *Democratic Enlightenment. Philosophy, Revolution, and Human Rights 1750-1790*, Oxford University Press, Oxford 2011, pp. 39-55.

behind a rational and tranquillizing discourse and settled his own intervention in a plain contrast with this kind of positions.

As we have tried to show, among the huge amount of leaflets, books, brochures and accounts concerning a dramatic event such as the 1755 earthquake, the differences do not lie only on chosen facts, the accuracy of descriptions or the contradiction between points of view regarding nature and science. These examples also represent the connection between ideas and rhetoric, including the kind of bond that the writer is willing to establish with his reader. News circulated all over Europe, as a polyphonic network, where emotions were as important as reason, in shaping people's opinions and in establishing power relationships.²⁷

²⁷ Further references: F. Amador, *O terramoto de Lisboa de 1755: colecções de textos do século XVIII*, «História, Ciências, Saúde – Manguinhos», n° 1, 14 (2007), pp. 285-323; T.E.D. Braun, J. B. Radner (eds.), *The Lisbon Earthquake of 1755. Representations and Reactions*, Voltaire Foundation-University of Oxford, Oxford 2005; H.C. Buescu, *Sobreviver à catástrofe: sem tecto, entre ruínas*, in H. C. Buescu e G. Cordeiro (eds.), *O grande terramoto de Lisboa. Ficar diferente*, Gradiva, Lisboa 2005, pp. 19-72; J.L. Cardoso, *El terremoto de Lisboa de 1755 y la política de regulación económica del Marqués de Pombal*, «Historia y Política. Ideas, procesos y movimientos sociales», 16 (2006), pp. 209-236; H. Ettinghausen, *Relaciones internacionales: las relaciones de sucesos, un fenómeno paneuropeo*, in J. García López, S. Boadas (eds.), *Las relaciones de sucesos en los cambios políticos y sociales de la Europa Moderna*, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Bellaterra 2015, pp. 13-27; J.D. Fonseca, *1755 O terramoto de Lisboa. The Lisbon Earthquake*, Argumentum, Lisboa 2005; J.-A. França, *Lisboa. História física e moral*, Livros Horizonte, Lisboa 2009², pp. 339-436; V. García de la Fuente, *Relaciones de Sucesos en forma de carta: estructura, temática y lenguaje*, in M.C. García de Enterría, H. Ettinghausen, V. Infantes, A. Redondo (eds.), *Las Relaciones de Sucesos en España (1500-1750)*, Publications de la Sorbonne/Servicios de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alcalá, Paris 1996, pp. 177-184; T.D. Kendrick, *The Lisbon Earthquake*, Methuen, London 1956; K. Maxwell, *Pombal. Paradox of Enlightenment*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1995; M.J. Rodríguez Sánchez de León, *El terremoto lisboeta de 1755 en las relaciones de sucesos*, in M.C. García de Enterría, H. Ettinghausen, V. Infantes, A. Redondo (eds.), *Las Relaciones de sucesos en España (1500-1750)*, Publications de la Sorbonne/Servicio de Publicaciones de la Universidad de Alcalá, Paris 1996, pp. 305-313; M.J.F. Tavares, F. Amador, M.S. Pinto, *O terramoto de Lisboa de 1755: tremores e temores*, «Cuadernos dieciochistas», 6 (2005), pp. 43-77.

