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Consuming the Coast: mid-century communications of port tourism in the southern african Indian Ocean

Consumo da costa africana: comunicações entre os portos turísticos sul-africanos do Oceano Índico

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Abstract *Throughout the early to mid-20th century, tourist passenger cruise liners moving along the Southern African coast were a popular leisure activity, undertaken by largely elite (white) Europeans (predominately British), Americans, and South Africans, with stopping off points including multiple Indian Ocean port cities such as Cape Town and Durban in South Africa and Lourenço Marques and Beira in Portuguese Mozambique. By considering the above twined port cities in relation to their entangled colonial and tourist pasts, and as operating within a distinct regional "cultural corridor"(NUTALL, 2009) of Southern Africa, this paper explores a series of leisured port spaces as inter-connected via the passenger cruise liner. The basis for my historical navigation is the tourism yearbooks produced by the Union-Castle Line, Round Africa service, those for 1939 and 1949 respectively. That these guidebooks serve as portholes into the cosmopolitan microcosmic world of cruise ships makes them invaluable for understanding the history of leisure (and its concomitant products, consumer goods and advertising) in Southern Africa.*

Keywords: *Cruise liners; Port cities; Southern Africa; Tourism; Consumption*

Resumo *Do início até meados do século XX, os cruzeiros turísticos ao longo da costa sul-africana eram uma atividade de lazer popular, empreendida pelas elites (brancas) europeias (predominantemente os britânicos), americanas e*

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sul-africanas, com paradas que incluíam diversas cidades portuárias do oceano Índico, como Cidade do Cabo e Durban, na África do Sul, e Lourenço Marques e Beira, no Moçambique português. Considerando as cidades portuárias anteriormente mencionadas como cidades-gêmeas em relação aos seus entrelaçados passados coloniais e turísticos e como funcionando dentro de um "corredor cultural" regional distinto (NUTALL, 2009) da África do Sul, este artigo explora uma série de portos de lazer interligados via cruzeiros de passageiros. A base da minha navegação histórica são os anuários de turismo produzidos pelas companhias de cruzeiro marítimo Union-Castle Line e serviço Round África em 1939 e 1949, respectivamente. A justificativa é que esses guias de viagem servem como entrada ao microcosmo cosmopolita de barcos de cruzeiro, o que os torna inestimáveis para entender a história do lazer (concomitantemente aos bens de consumo e publicidade relacionados) na África do Sul.

Palavras-chave: *Cruzeiro marítimo; Cidades portuárias; África do Sul; Turismo; Consumo*

Introduction: Embarkation

Throughout the early to mid-20th century, tourist passenger cruise liners moving along the Southern African coast were a popular leisure activity, undertaken by largely elite (white) Europeans (predominately British), Americans, and South Africans, with stopping off points including multiple Indian Ocean port cities such as Cape Town and Durban in South Africa and Lourenço Marques and Beira in Mozambique. While (colonial) port cities are more generally studied as "hinges" (PEARSON, 2003), as spaces of commercial exchange and trade (imports and exports), migration (points of arrival and departure), and border control (entry and exit) this paper looks to them as important sites (and sights) for tourism in the making, a topic that remains underdeveloped within Indian Ocean and (to a lesser extent) Southern African studies. That these ports of call often acted as anchor points within larger tourist circuits (connecting the littoral dots on a map so to speak) suggests the ways in which they operated as important contact zones of local and global flows that were directly linked to (changing and exchanging) ideas and practices of pleasure, wonder, and difference (Urry, 2000), including certain forms of "elite exoticism" (PIRIE, 2011). By considering the above twined port cities (Cape Town, Durban, Lourenço Marques, and Beira) in relation to their entangled colonial and tourist pasts, and as operating within a distinct regional "cultural corridor"(NUTALL, 2009) of Southern Africa, I explore a series of leisured port spaces as inter-connected via the passenger cruise liner. The basis for my historical navigation into the deeper waters of passenger cruise liners is the tourism yearbooks produced by the *Union-Castle Line*, Round Africa service, those for 1939 and 1949 respectively. That these guidebooks serve as portholes into the cosmopolitan microcosmic world of cruise ships makes them invaluable for understanding the history of leisure (and its concomitant products, consumer goods and advertising) in Southern Africa. That these tourist dreamscapes functioned as the playgrounds for wealthy European, American, and later South African passengers, and included such popular stopping off points (as natural and architectural wonders) as The

Mount Nelson or the fabled Table Mountain in Cape Town, and the luxurious Herbert Baker-designed Polana Hotel in Lourenço Marques, suggests the ways in which the port city served and serviced multiple purposes, publics, and imaginaries. Throughout my discussion, I hope to open up the subject and object of the Indian Ocean port city to a wider (tourist) gaze and analysis, utilising nautical terminology along the way so as to give my itinerant narrative at sea a whiff of what Michael Pearson terms "ozone"—that is, "to leaven my dry descriptive prose with a more immediate maritime experience" (PEARSON, 2003, p. 224).

Porthole 1: Docks and Piers, Gazes and Glances, Ludic forms

Port functions, more than anything else, make a city cosmopolitan…A port city is open to the world, or at least to a varied section of it. In it races, cultures and ideas as well as goods from a variety of places jostle, mix and enrich each other and the life of the city. The smell of the sea and the harbour, [is] still to be found…in all of them, like the sound of boat whistles or the moving tides, is a symbol of their multiple links with a wider world (MURPHEY in PEARSON, 2003, p. 32).

In this first section of the paper, I want to reorient our view of port cities less as spaces for the regulation or control of bodies and objects — even as this is one of most crucial aspects of the enduring functionality of ports —, but rather as places that are "open to the world" following Murphey above. They are, I argue, potential locations for exploring new material, spatial and visual imaginaries. In order to do so, I would like to first think about the port as *emporia*, a term employed by Michael Pearson in his study on the Indian Ocean in which the port city historically functioned as a commercial centre, entrepot and market for would be travellers en-route to another destination (2003, p.30). This then, helps us to envision them as temporary stopovers, as landing or jumping off points (consisting of docks and piers) for a visitor on his or her way elsewhere. They become places of passenger traffic, where people (or tourists in the case of the cruise liners explored here) sleep, drink and

eat for short amounts of time, that is they function as sites for various forms of consumption (and as much these passengers consume the port itself). Advertising (for products, places to stay, things to do), as we will come to see in the following analysis, also works hard to contribute to the commercial aspects of the port as emporia.

Second, and not unrelated to a port's commercial aspects, I would like to imagine ports as sites of (and for) pleasure-making, as sites for tourism (and sensorium) in the making, and that direct gazes and glances (URRY, 2000). Here the port plays a central role as a holiday destination. Sociologist John Urry writes: "[Certain] places are chosen to be gazed upon because there is an anticipation, especially through daydreaming and fantasy, of intense pleasures, either on a different scale or involving different senses from those customarily encountered. The tourist gaze is directed to features of landscape and townscape which separate them off from everyday experience" (URRY, 2000, p. 3). For example, Anthony Trollope, 19th century British writer and visitor to South Africa via the steamship once described "the entrance into Cape Town [as] one of the most picturesque things to be seen on the face of the earth" (TROLLOPE in BICKFORD-SMITH, 2009, p. 1768). Historian Vivian Bick-ford Smith describes how Urry's tourism complex "construct[s] using available visual communication technologies, gazes (static, associated with photography), and glances (mobile as if through a vehicle window, [or in this case a porthole]) that potential and actual tourists will wish to experience. These gazes and glances will have been at least partly previewed in advance by tourists through, for instance, their earlier (perhaps historically much earlier) representation in paintings, photographs, postcards, guidebooks, travel books, brochures, films…Tourists will then re-view such gazes and glances, often be guided by them, when the destination is actually visited." (2009, p. 1765). In other words, descriptions like Trollope's for Cape Town, will imprint this port city, condition future readings and experiences of this space by tourists, and contribute to its lettered quality through its reproduction and circulation(in the form of literary and artistic renderings and representations, commercial travel

writing, and printed guidebooks) which in turn will attract even more visitors. Moreover, subsequent generations of tourists going on holiday— the idea of a "holiday" as something required, as necessary to one's sense of being a relatively modern phenomena (URRY, 2000, p. 5) — will wish to experience these sites as 'different' (from the gazes and glances that are associated with their own familiar places), as 'out of the ordinary', and ideally as 'unique' (URRY in BICKFORD-SMITH, 2009, p. 1781).

Third, I would like to think about port cities as sites for ludic forms and practices, as places where status-making (and playing) take place, as potential arenas for reinforcing and reinventing class divisions between travellers. Here notions of taste, quality, and discernment are tested in and out of the coastal waters (and very often signified through access to consumer goods), qualities also associated with envisioning the port as emporia and tourist destination. It must be remembered that it is the very act of travel that allows or rather affords a port city's visitors this opportunity to experiment with and reify certain social hierarchies (URRY, 2000, p. 5). In other words, these ports function as sites where individuals (such as those passengers coming off a Union-Castle liner in the mid twentieth century, after having been at sea for a week on end) view both objects and people through distinct means and for distinct ends. Particularly in the (formerly British) South African colonial context presented here, an example of what Gordon Pirie terms "elite exoticism" (2011) is being indulged in and catered to at these port stopovers. However, the tourist gaze is not always one directional, it also operates in reverse, thus allowing space for those residents (rich or poor) of a port city to gaze and glance at the elite world of pleasure cruises (as objects of difference and sameness, of curiosity, including the passengers themselves) and play with their own ideas of refinement, taste, and class.

Porthole 2: Cruising along the Southern African Indian Ocean Corridor

What modes of movement might shape lives, ideas and images that intersect, encounter, and interrupt each other? We could think in terms

of cultural corridors. A corridor can be imagined as made from a series of layers, interpenetrating, taking on different scales; complex pluri-territorial formations fed by networks stretching between cities, but also passing through water, in ways we haven't yet deciphered. The notion of a corridor could help us to track a series of coastal-island-inland dynamics at work, across the Indian Ocean or within a territory we could think of as the African South Indian Ocean. In such a territory, certain cities become nodal points, points of irradiation and crystallization with a multiplicity of economic and cultural networks linking them and creating regional spaces of circulation…a notion of corridors can help us to work across two or more places, or in two places at once, not so much in a comparative frame, but for example in tracking the flow of a single object across space. Corridors are chains forming between cities, islands, and water regions (NUTTALL, 2009, p. 59).

I take up Sarah Nuttall's concept of corridors as a productive analytic and metaphor for exploring the history of cruise liner ships (with their many layered and multi-level corridors) during the mid-twentieth century, and operating in what she terms the "African South Indian Ocean" or what I synonymously call the Southern African Indian Ocean corridor, that is the maritime zone skirting the coastline between (formerly) British South Africa and Portuguese Mozambique.

Very briefly, we must return to the history of seafaring and long-distance shipping in order to contextualize the advent and popularity of leisure cruising in the late 19th early 20th century and in relation to Southern Africa. As historian Michael Pearson points out, it was the invention of the steamship in the 1850s which democratized travel, by offering "predictability, and faster and cheaper passages" (PEARSON, 2003, p. 200). A second invention was refrigeration in the 1880s which allowed for the cold storage of food items (PEARSON, 2003, p. 200) over a longer period, which enabled and initiated the era of the luxury cruise liner. Not coincidentally, the age of steam also coincided with the high point of British imperialism, a detail not lost on those Union-Castle liners explored in the next section. Pearson writes: "The stately liners,

marvels of technology in the second half of the nineteenth century were a visible symbol of British dominance. As they eased their way through British dredged channels to British built berths in British colonial ports they visibly and metaphorically pushed aside the host of smaller indigenous craft in their way."(2003: 230). An English baron by the name of Thomas Brassey, recorded his experience, one of the first to do so, of travelling by steamship on the *Sunbeam* during its maiden voyage of 1876-77. Pearson writes:

> [his] account gives a marvelous impression of cruising by an elite at the height of imperial certainty. Lavish meals and fine wines were served every night…It was a most leisurely progression, with long stops at any port of interest to them…Standards were rigorously maintained…The maritime experience here is very much in the background. The Brasseys took their landed society, and opinions, and rank with them, and could as well be doing a tour of Europe by land as be on board a ship (PEARSON, 2003, p. 234).

A Mr. Harding, British Secretary of the Dominions Royal Commission on board the *Medina* in 1913, en-route to Aden, said the stopover was worthwhile, "if only to realize the extraordinary Britishness of this particular route. One sails on comfortably for three or four days and then, when things are perhaps becoming a trifle monotonous, one finds a relaxation in the shape of a port very British looking (in all but the houses and population) and with all the necessary appliances for buying Kodak films, Whisky, Picture Postcards and other British delights. I think it really ought to be called 'the Imperial Picadilly'" (HARDING in PEARSON, 2003, p. 232). The accounts of both Brassey and Harding very much echo Pearson's reminder that "landed society [very often] transferred to the ocean" (PEARSON, 2003, p. 233) on these cruise liners. However, I would argue there was still plenty of room on board for ludic forms and practices. Class was no doubt fashionably on display (through its associated accoutrements, many of which were available for purchase on board or at the next port of call) on the daily promenades that took place on board these miniature (and miniaturized) worlds of

colonial indulgence. This was "elite exoticism" (PIRIE, 2011) at its (imperial) best.

The emergence of a (British) South Africa tourist market of leisure cruises was made possible as in elsewhere in the world, by the global transport revolution associated with the development of railways and steamships. A "faster, larger and more luxurious sea transport" system was required in order to facilitate travel to and around South Africa, and to both internal and overseas tourists (BICKFORD-SMITH, 2009, p. 1767). However, "putting South Africa on the ocean cruise map was difficult" according to historian Gordon Pirie (2011, p. 2). Specifically, Southern Africa was never the first choice destination for clients of the American, British and European winter sea cruise industry, for whom very little was known about this region. A key agent of change was South Africa's Railway and Harbours operator (SAR&H) which was the central promoter of overseas tourism to South Africa for thirty years after the Union in 1910. Interestingly, it was South African interests, not overseas tourism agencies that initiated first generation cruise tourism to the Union for the country was not an obvious itinerary choice on luxury cruises sold to wealthy leisured American and European tourists. Its remoteness was a problem; its geographical size was another according to Pirie (2011, p. 29). However, its "exoticness" (people and animals) was one of its most attractive features. That it was a former British colony (while still maintaining strong economic and cultural ties) provided a sense of security, development, and progress. Sharing the advertising, logistical and risk burden with foreign cruise operators, the SAR&H then took it upon itself the task of publicizing the country and then bridging the considerable distances between the ports and attractions that might captivate these well-travelled visitors (2011, p. 29) who were always in search of something more adventurous for their next holiday. The SAR&H also took one step further to promote South Africa on the tourist map by partnering with overseas cruise ship operators to offer exclusive port- to-port rail trips across South Africa. Another agent of change was fostering the notion of nation in the minds of some of

the Union's more "mobile citizens" which finally did take place with a boom in the winter season industry starting in the 1920's (PIRIE, 2011, p. 2-3). Pirie writes that:

> between 1926 and 1939 approximately 50 long distance luxury trains met 31 cruise liners and took some 5000 wealthy tourists from a gateway port to a departure port via inland scenic, cultural and wildlife attractions. The high profile tours showed off modern industrial cities and the contrast with wilderness and the native [populations]. Port calls by visiting cruise liners created their own spectacle and stir. The anticipated impact of sea-rail tourism diluted gradually as more cruise passengers elected to stay on board ship at the end of long ocean voyages, interestingly as more outbound South African tourists took up space on passing cruise ships (2011, p. 1).

The Great Depression had greatly affected pleasure cruising to South Africa with no ships arriving in Cape Town or Durban's ports for the years 1930-32. By the time of the first post-depression cruise of 1933, England had gone "cruise crazy" (PIRIE, 2011, p. 19) even though a large portion of the remaining passengers were wealthy Americans. According to Pirie, it was only after 1935 that South Africa became a real source of cruise passengers (2011, p. 24), with an estimate of 20,000 South Africans outbound on cruised destined for Europe for the year 1934, a twenty five percent increase from previous years—1928-29 (2011, p. 21). By 1939, at least 16 cruise vessels had berthed in South Africa's ports carrying some of the world's wealthiest tourists on lengthy ocean cruises. Pirie writes: "for a moment reverse gaze met reverse exoticism as the inhabitants of [South Africa's port cities].... stared at the ships, toured them and read in the society pages of newspapers about the rich and famous, and the extravagant conditions in which they travelled" (2011, p. 28).

The British based Union-Castle shipping line played a significant role in this history of pleasure cruises that operated in the Southern African Indian Ocean. It was formed from the merger of the Union Line and the Castle Shipping Lines. The Union Line had been founded in

1853 as the Southampton Steam Shipping Company to transport coal from South Wales to Southampton (and renamed the Union Line in 1858), and had won a British contract to carry mail to South Africa, mainly to the Cape Colony. During this same time, Donald Currie had built up the Castle Packet Company that traded to Calcutta round the Cape of Good Hope. With the opening of the Suez Canal, however, its trade was severely curtailed by 1869, and it started to run to South Africa instead, later becoming the Castle Mail Packet Company. On March 8, 1900 the Union Line and Castle Shipping Lines merged, creating the Union-Castle Mail Steamship Company, Ltd. (even as it was bought by Royal Mail Line in 1911, it retained its same name and carried on until its closure in 1977). Part of the new contracts negotiated at the turn of the century between the Cape and British governments stipulated that the weekly passage between Britain (either starting from London or Southampton) and Cape Town could be completed in a maximum of 20 days, with an extension up the coast as far as Durban which was a reasonably allotted amount of time since by the 1890s liners capable of carrying 500 passengers could complete the voyage in only 15 days (BICKFORD-SMITH, 2009, p. 1767). According to historian Gordon Pirie, many of its British steamer passengers were "fleeing everlasting wet weather at home" (2011, p. 11), while others were attracted to Southern Africa by its "sun, vast spaces, and clear atmosphere" (2011, p. 12). Moreover, that the Union-Castle Liner, starting in 1928, regularly paid the annual 200 British pound subscription fee to the one and same SAR&H Overseas Advertising Fund as a form of publicity, suggests their growing investment (and the increasing popularity) of their Cape sea route (2011, p. 11). For example, the *Arundel Castle* mail ship docked in Cape Town in 1928, carrying some 500 holiday visitors on its regular run between England and Southern Africa (2011:11). That this form of travel (by way of steamship) between Europe and Southern Africa was still quicker until the 1950s (when air transport started to take over), and was considerably more comfortable (BICKFORD-SMITH, 2009, p. 1767), suggests the cruise liner's relative success as a mode of transport

for heightened leisure activity and elite consumption in the Southern African Indian Ocean.

Porthole 3: Floating Palaces

The contemporary incarnation of ocean cruising contains elements of mass entertainment, carnivalesque and contrived exoticism. The historical roots of cruising, however are in exclusivity, if not discernment. The key enabling ingredient was wealth. Sailing languidly and luxuriously to and from places of antiquity and fabled natural beauty was the stereotypical variant. Fantasy, escape, conspicuous extravagance, and pampering were of the essence. Tropical islands, and wilderness areas and historic sites close to the shore and reachable in fair weather were favoured cruise destinations (PIRIE, 2011, p. 1).

In this third section, or rather porthole onto the world of Union-Castle leisure cruises operating in the Southern African Indian Ocean, I want to look at the elite world(s) envisioned on these "floating palaces" (PIRIE, 2011, p. 28). My analysis is based on two guidebooks commissioned by the Union-Castle Line, those for 1939 and 1949, respectively for their Round Africa service, and which includes stopovers in the port cities of Cape Town, Durban, Lourenço Marques and Beira amongst others located in this regional cultural corridor. If we think of these guidebooks as "devotional texts" (URRY, 2000, p. 129), where the fame of the tourist object (such as the fabled Table Mountain in Cape Town or the historic Polana Hotel in Lourenço Marques) becomes its meaning, and that create a "ceremonial agenda in which it is established what should be seen and sometime even in the order in which they should be seen" (URRY, 2000, p. 129), then these manuals of sorts become an entry point into representing these twined port cities as sites (and sights) worthy of a stopover visit (in other words, not only *what* but also *how* they should be gazed upon), at two distinct historical moments. For each annual guidebook, I first look at its general layout, before looking at the world of leisured consumption and desire that is created onboard and is represented through words and images, including a host of available

goods and services that the ship is (exclusively) stocked with. Next, I turn to the ways in which each of the above port cities is described in the language of tourism as explicitly on offer, including its particular attractions (natural and architectural), as samplings of "elite exoticism" to discerning visitors on board these cruise ships.

For the manual of 1939, a world on the brink (and for some the throes) of war, the Union- Castle Line epitomizes a world of luxurious and languid travel, one where a miniature world of elite pleasures and exaggerated British imperialism is indulged in, precisely perhaps because of South Africa's former colonial status. The guidebook's layout is generally formulaic: it begins with a detailed listing of all the Offices of the Union-Castle Line, including those located in Britain itself, alongside those of various cities in South Africa (Cape Town, Port Elizabeth, East London, Durban, Johannesburg) and in Portuguese Mozambique (Lourenço Marques, and Beira), as well as those offices located further up the coast like in Mombasa, Kenya (ii). The yearbook then goes on to provide an exhaustive (and impressive) list of the numerous agents of the Union-Castle Line located in South and East Africa and the rest of the world (p. iii-iv), before opening up to a contents page with travel sections, itineraries, and land routes to specific destinations (v-x). The manual then offers two major sections: the first is entitled "South Africa section" and includes subheadings such as "South African customs", "table of distances by sea," "sights and scenery of South Africa," "language", "climate and topography," "native problems of the Union"(vii-viii), all useful categories no doubt for the discerning visitor to South Africa's (formerly British) port cities. The next section is entitled "East African Section" and offers up similar generalized categories of "table of distances, east coast route", "sights and scenery of East Africa," "Hotels, Tariffs, Clothing," "Languages," and "Climate," as well as distinct ones tied to its particular Portuguese colonial history and geography such as "Empire Preference and Mandate," and "Sleeping sickness and the Tsetse Fly" (viii-ix). An exhaustive index is on offer (xiii-lxi) alongside an index exclusively dedicated to the advertisements featured inside

(lxii-lxx). Various appealing advertisements for the Union-Castle Liner are also included such as the following: "The Oldest Line with the Newest Ships" (175) or "Try a Sea Trip for a Real Holiday" (z3) or "Union Castle Line Encircles Africa" (192). Detailed maps of the various port cities (docks and harbours included) are also included (for Cape Town, 468-69; for Durban 694-5; for Beira, 949A). Photographs of the "luxurious suite rooms" ("Heaton Tabb & Co carried out the Decoration and Furnishing of the Cape Town Castle," M) and the "first class dining saloon" (47) are interspersed between advertisements for "weekly sailings" (99, 168) on the Union-Castle Line, the distinct font no doubt helping it to stand out for its reading passengers. I notice an interesting advertisement entitled "South and East African Coastwise Excursions", with "reduced rates for return tickets available for two months between South African ports and Lourenço Marques and Beira." (137). It is more than likely that the Union-Castle Liner was intent on promoting Portuguese East Africa as an "exotic" holiday destination, which at the time was a more recent addition to its coastal itinerary, through its offer of a reduced fare. A variety of luxury consumer goods are also on offer, some sold exclusively on Union-Castle liners, others available portside, and include Grant's Morella Cherry Brandy ("supplied on all Union-Castle ships," H), Kodak film ("Reminiscences are doubly interesting when you can illustrate them with photographs taken at the time," T), Gaymer's Cyder ("the Champagne of the apple," X), Vi-Spring Mattresses ("installed throughout the first class on the Capetown Castle," V), Lion Beer (103), Alphen Wines (113) and Bertram's Estate Wine (99) both of these Cape Town vineyards open for tours, Jacko Brand apples, pears, plums and peaches (143), and finally Red Seal tobacco (162).

The port cities themselves are described in gracious and inviting terms in the guidebook. Cape Town is described as "one of the Oldest cities in the Overseas Empire, [and] historically is most interesting and ranks as the mother city of South Africa" (464). One advertisement in particular stands out: "City of Cape Town: you have the right to claim that every day of your vacation shall be one of pleasure and interest. Make certain

that your venue does offer unbounded facilities for all those pastimes and enjoyments in which you hope to indulge" (93). Descriptions and advertisements for various hotels including the Hotel Esplanade ("your comfort is our consideration. Come and enjoy the breath of the sea with your early morning coffee"), and The Grand are on display in between the informational pages of the guidebook. However, it is the enduring Mount Nelson Hotel that is most prominently featured through descriptions as well as photographs ("In the grounds of the Mount Nelson Hotel, Capetown," 142), including a more discreet image of the hotel that is printed on the back cover of the 1939 guidebook. This latter detail makes sense however given that it was the same Mr. Currie, one of the owners of the Union-Castle Liner who had also bought the Mount Nelson hotel in 1890 for the express purpose of maintaining a luxury hotel that would match the superior quality of his cruise ships, a place where his elite passengers could reside (and not be disappointed, thus associating the two, hotel and cruise ship as unrivalled parallels) on their Cape Town port city stopover. Historian Bickford-Smith describes the Mount Nelson prior to the South African war (1899-1902) as maintaining 150 rooms, a 20,000 bottle wine cellar and a grand salon (2009: 1768). Post-war the hotel saw such esteemed political and literary figures as Winston Churchill and Sir Conan Doyle in residence there during their steamship stopovers (Bickford-Smith, 2009: 1768), their travel itineraries and descriptions no doubt contributing to the port city's lettered quality which, in turn would then get reproduced over and over again in future guidebooks to South Africa. On offer for the visitor are such iconic places as Table Mountain, Kirstenbosch Gardens, a tour of the Castle, and a visit to the Groot Constantia Wine Estate, with Cape Town represented during this time period as the "glorious warm hearted Tavern of the Oceans"(BICKFORD-SMITH, 2009, p. 1772).

Durban as a port city is described in more quaint terms, as a seaside resort that has of late been recently developed: "The Ocean beach, which some years ago was a stretch of sand dunes, has been converted into one of the principal attractions of Durban, a promenade with a

bandstand has been constructed, bathing areas are provided…..bathing may be indulged in throughout the year, tents and large umbrellas may be hired for the day." (697). Another advertisement lures its visitors by stating: "All steamship routes, airways, railways and roads of southern Africa lead to Durban the premier port, and alluring all-year-round resort of the Union" (119). Durban's Marine Hotel is prominently featured throughout the guidebook, one advertisement detailing the "new kitchens [that] have been recently constructed which are staffed by excellent European chefs" (xii). Advertisements for other possible stopover places include the Hotel Majestic (37) and Hotel Esplanade (26). Cruising up the Cape coast includes additional stopovers in Portuguese Mozambique. The port of Lourenço Marques is featured prominently: "today Lourenco Marques has become one of the best health and pleasure resorts for Transvaal and other inland visitors. The cool season is from May to September. The beautiful Polana beach, with its picturesque background formed by red cliffs and a mass of luxuriant deep green vegetation, is one of the finest stretches of sand on the South African littoral. A fine drive connects the top of the cliff at Polana with the beach, and further improvements are being carried out. There are a pier, a shark-proof bathing enclosure and a refreshment kiosk" (955). Bourgeoning tourism in Portuguese East Africa during the 1930's was dependent on both coastal and inland passengers, the Union-Castle Liner's promotion of its beaches and coastline inside its guidebook pages no doubt contributing to its tourism revenues. Accordingly, visitors can spend their evenings at Bellos Casino, on Rua Araujo, "The Rendezvous of the best Society of Lourenço Marques it is the most luxurious place of entertainment in the Colony of Mozambique and the one preferred by all visitors to Lourenço Marques" (212), before turning in for the night at the prestigious and highly featured Polana Hotel—"where every moment is packed with fun" (75) and which had been designed by South African architect Herbert Baker and built in 1922, the clientele he had in mind more than likely his own countrymen. Together, this string of littoral spaces became connected through the itineraries of the

Union-Castle cruise liners that serviced the South African Indian Ocean in 1939 and operate within a regional corridor, allowing for multiple individual gazes and glances to take place at each of these sets of docks and piers, which in turn shaped them as emporia and as commercial tourist spaces that allowed for a multitude of elite indulgences and possibly ludic forms and practices.

The yearbook and guide produced by the Union-Castle Line for the year 1949 is set in the midst of a very different historical world-wide context (post WWII) as well as South African context (post Union, beginnings of the National Party which had come to power in 1948), conditions that as we will see, were sometimes but not always reflected throughout its tourist pages. As the Second World War had halted all ocean cruising (PIRIE, 2011, p. 29) it was important that the guidebook issued for 1949 carefully set the stage for the full restoration of services in the Southern African Indian Ocean. While the layout and opening sections (including a list of offices and agents of the Union-Castle Line in various locations; a contents, index, and advertisement index) are very much the same as in the 1939 edition, there is much more content space dedicated to "information for passengers" given the post-war context. In a new "preface" section there is a listing of the Union-Castle fleet with the names of the ships alongside their gross tons in weight – Cape Town Castle, 27,002; Pretoria Castle 28,705 (1). The editor also inserts a note of caution expressly for those desiring an extravagant holiday tour:

> Note: the Services described below are those which the Company intends to operate in full when recovery from the effects of the late War is complete. Until all passenger mail vessels return to service after reconditioning, and new vessels building are completed, it is necessary for the Mail Service to be maintained partly by fast cargo vessels and by vessels formerly employed in the intermediate service. During 1949 the number of sailings by passenger vessels will increase, but in view of the changing situation, prospective passengers should obtain up-to-date information as to frequency of sailings and ports of call form the Company's Offices or Agencies (2).

Various advertisements for Union Castle (similar to those found in the 1939 edition) are found dispersed between subject entries: "For Sea Travel at its Best Union-Castle Line to South and East Africa" (971B); "Union Castle Line Royal Mail and Intermediate Services, to South and East Africa" (49). However, this time around, an advertisement for Union-Castle's arch competitor Bullard, King and Co, a shipping line with itineraries that include "South Africa and Portuguese East Africa" (O) is also included, perhaps making this guidebook a more democratic space given the immediacy of the war and its effects, as well as the fact that there were a significantly reduced number and frequency of cruise ship along the Southern African littoral in 1949. Similar to the 1939 edition, photographs of certain spaces on board such as the "first class dining saloon" (52) and "first class two berth cabin" (24A) are featured. For the first time, an aerial view of the Pretoria Castle ("A view from the air," 24A) is also included which suggests the increasing popularity of air travel (and operating as an additional option to sea travel). Interestingly, the photograph of the former dining space is placed directly above the one for the "cabin class lounge" (52) which is less opulent in its accoutrements than the first class option. Perhaps Union-Castle agents were more aware of the various classes of passengers that were now able to travel by steamship, the elite "floating palaces" of 1939 a bygone era. Once again, a host of advertisements for desirable goods are included inside, however this time around there are not as many objects of conspicuous consumption on display: Vi Spring Overlay Mattresses ("installed in every passenger ship built by the Union-Castle line during the last 30 years," iv) Webb's Indian Tonic ("supplied to Principal Steamship Lines" Z3), Virginia Cavalla ("the satisfying smoke" 456), Castle Lager ("On the Voyage or wherever you stay in South Africa," 1165). In these images and advertisements, Union-Castle appears invested in representing itself as an established and well reputed cruise liner, newness perhaps less attractive in this heightened post war context of austere measures. Interestingly, instead of luring passengers with individual advertisements for wine tours located in Cape Town there is a statement

made by the South African Wine Farmer's Association (SAWFA) promoting South African wines more generally (v), a detail that in turn suggests a theme of cooperation in an era of conciliation.

The port cities of Cape Town and Durban are featured in similar ways as to the 1939 guidebook, as well developed tourist attractions. In Cape Town, the Mount Nelson Hotel is promoted exclusively with a four page photograph layout with captions entitled: "the terrace," "a magnificent view from the corner of the grounds," "a view of the East Wing showing the Dining Room", and "Lion's Rump from Mount Nelson Hotel gardens." (76-77). It is labeled the "Premier Hotel of South Africa" in another advertisement, one which goes into great detail about its features: "Accommodation for about 165 visitors. Hot and cold running water and telephones in all bedrooms. Luxuriously appointed private Suites. Double and Single Bedrooms with private Bathrooms. Electrically equipped Laundry. Hard Tennis Courts. Lock-up Garages…. Intending visitors can engage Rooms at any of the offices of the Union-Castle Line, or Thomas Cook and Son before sailing or on board any of the Union Castle Line Vessels on application to the Purser" (9). Durban's premier hotels in 1949 are the same ones featured in the 1939 yearbook, with the exact same photograph of the Marine Hotel (X) reproduced in both guides. This time around, the Hotel Majestic (30) is featured in a much less ostentatious way. There is a revealing advertisement for Durban that features a Zulu figure next to a statement that lists Durban's features to the Tourist and prospective Resident: "Sunshine and Warm Sea Bathing in every season of the year ... Comfort-de-luxe" in Modern Hotels. Native and Oriental Life and the "Gateway to Zululand"... Durban South Africa, Premier-Port, Premier Resort" (690B). The Durban harbor is also featured in a photograph that discusses South Africa's "ports of progress": "Woven through the story of South Africa's phenomenal progress in recent years is the story of the development of South Africa's ports… from humble shelters for casual sailing ships to thriving harbours which today rank among the busiest and best equipped in the world" (489B). Interestingly the responsibility of these ports had been handed over to

the South African Railways, an organization that as I noted in an earlier historical section, was very much linked to developing sea transport and holiday travel along the Cape coast. As well, the section on Portuguese East Africa is further expanded in this second guidebook, with a more detailed advertisement for the well- established Polana Hotel ("the holiday you've dreamed of—different and exciting!" 60), included. It is no longer the only hotel available for a night (or two) stopover, the nearby Hotel Carlton is also featured ("all rooms mosquito proof" 60). As well, there are tourist agencies based in Lourenço Marques that will organize hotel, air and railway bookings on the passenger's behalf (230). The Union-Castle guidebook for the year 1949 serves as a porthole into a twined set of port cities (Cape Town, Durban, Lourenço Marques, and Beira) operating within a regional corridor that was more restricted at this time of war for cruise ships traversing the Southern African Indian Ocean. Despite this fact, Portuguese Mozambique's development and popularity as a tourist destination is expanded upon this time around, perhaps precisely because of its attractiveness and allure as a remaining Portuguese colony. Themes of history, progress, and development are highlighted throughout its pages, suggesting both that full blown "elite exoticism" (Pirie, 2011), with its associated tourist gazes and glances, along the coast was on the hopeful cusp of being restored in a post-World War II context, and that a new set of visual, spatial and material imaginaries were possible in the near future on these newly restored floating palaces, including at their next ports of call.

Conclusion: Disembarkation

All the Megalines [cruise ships] offer the same basic product—not a service or a set of services but more like a feeling: a blend of relaxation and stimulation, stressless indulgence and frantic tourism, that special mix of servility and condescension that's marketed under configurations of the verb "to pamper" (DAVID FOSTER WALLACE, "Shipping Out", 1996, p. 34).

Traveling onboard the Union-Castle Liners operating in the Southern African Indian Ocean during the mid-twentieth century was in some sense entering a dreamscape, albeit a temporary one that was filled with imperial indulgences, luxury goods, and satiated desires (and that fall under the guise of "pampering" evoked by David Foster Wallace in the above epigraph) and that very much depended, lest we forget, on an expendable bank account in an era of the Great Depression and World War II. I have employed two Union-Castle issued yearbooks and guides (one produced prior to and another post World War II) to reorient our view of the port city, conceptualizing it as emporia, tourist destination, and as a site for status (class) formation and playfulness. These guidebooks for 1939 and 1949 in some sense reflect a (formerly) British imperial and Portuguese colonial context; while the first reflects the height of pleasure cruising (and in the face of impending war, perhaps the over indulgence occurs in spite of these historical conditions?), the second reflects a more stark and somber context where leisure cruising is perhaps less recklessly indulged in (but still appreciated) by its passengers. Yet, in many ways, this second guidebook (for 1949) still holds onto a previous golden era of elite exoticism so shamelessly exposed in the 1939 guidebook, perhaps in the hopes of retaining its traces in the context of the hardship of war, lest it forget, for a future world that is more hopeful and less despairing and where people can go on holiday aboard a luxury cruise on the premier Union-Castle Liner, with a stopover at the stately Mount Nelson in Cape Town before travelling further up the Southern African Indian coast to spend a night or two at the plush Polana Hotel in Lourenço Marques.

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