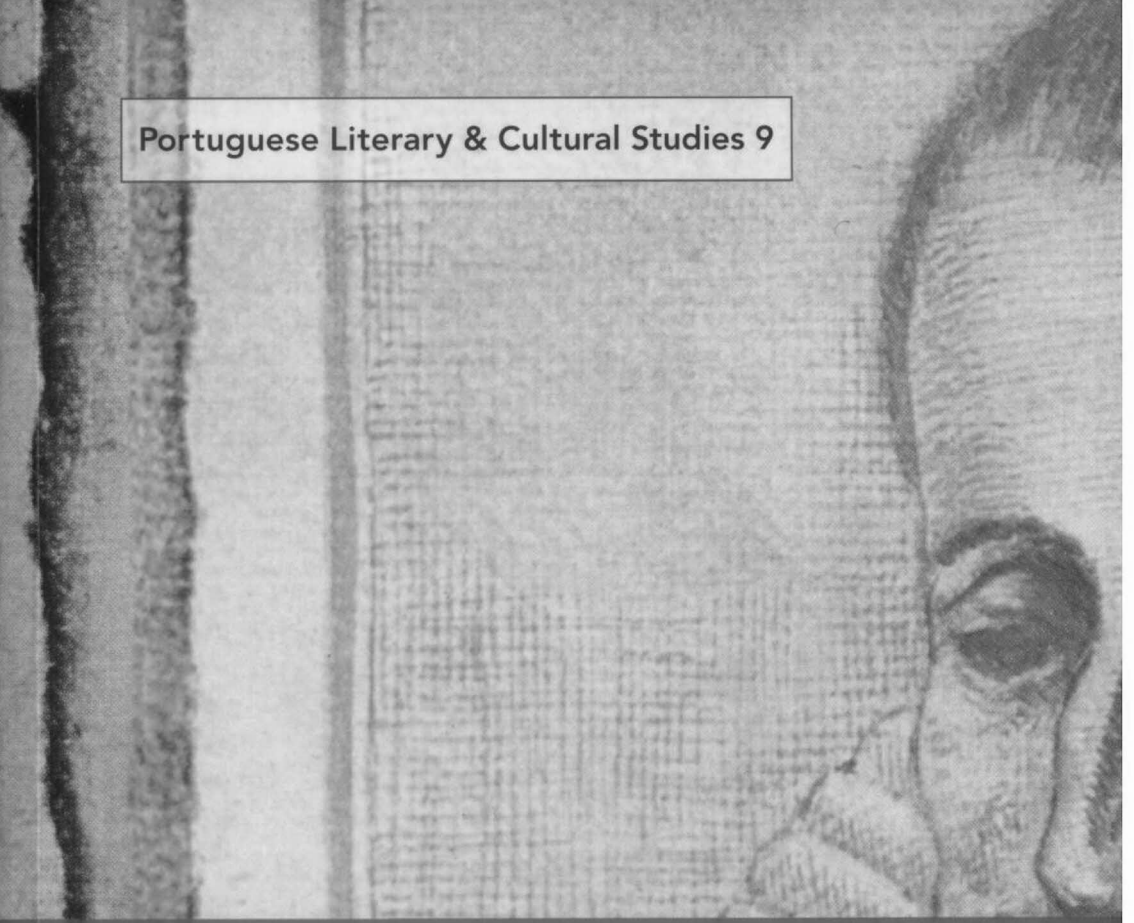

Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies 9

Post-Imperial Camões

Center for Portuguese Studies and Culture
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"Bárbora escrava": Canon, beauty and color: An embarrassing contradiction

Rita Marnoto

Abstract. The Petrarchan literary canon revered white-skinned, fair-haired women, and this model held sway over all European literature. Camões respectfully followed it in most of his poetic works. However, he dedicated a poem, in which love is presented as an extremely gratifying experience, to a black slave, Bárbora, and it is usually considered among his most beautiful poems. The representation of beauty and happiness in Bárbora entails an association of problematic factors that has received a great deal of commentary throughout the centuries. This article focuses on these readings in the light of "mimicry" as conceived by Homi Bhabha.

> It seems impossible that such a *dark* person could have inspired such beautiful poetry. Chateaubriand translated these poems into French.
> [Parece impossível que sujeito tão *escuro* inspirasse tão linda poesia. Chateaubriand traduziu para francês estes versos.]
> —Visconde de Juromenha.

This was Juromenha's brief commentary on the "trovas" that Camões wrote "to a slave called Bárbora with whom he was much enamored in India" (464), in the compact six-volume edition Juromenha published between 1860 and 1869.[1] It is as succinctly put as it is subtle and disquieting.

During the long period between the Renaissance and the outset of Romanticism in European literature, the Petrarchan example was a model establishing the same code for recognized aesthetic and human values. In

relation to the representation of the feminine form, a woman is exalted when her physical beauty seems at one with the perfection of her soul. She is described according to a standard set of rhetorical devices: her blond hair seems like gold, the sparkle in her eyes is comparable to sunrays, her cheeks roses, her lips coral and her teeth pearls.

Camões reverently followed this example as well. However, if Laura was already a presence marked by eternal absence in Petrarch as a symbol of the impossibility of a truly gratifying experience, the fissures that make a torment of love are further deepened in Camões's lyrical poetry. In this context, the poem to "Bárbora escrava" holds a very special place both in European literature and in Camões's work itself.[2] It has raised delicate interpretative questions since very early on. In fact, Camões not only subverts a literary canon that had survived for centuries, but also very deep-rooted cultural structures. Petrarchan woman's superiority is openly challenged in his poetry:

Pretos os cabelos,
onde o povo vão
perde opinião
que os louros são belos.
Pretidão de Amor,
tão doce a figura,
que a neve lhe jura
que trocara a cor.

The fact that the poet recognizes the canon accentuates even more the significance of his aloofness from it. But this attitude cannot be separated from the derogation of a hierarchy of historical, social and anthropological values that takes on a structural function. Petrarchan sixteenth-century discourse towards discourse is overlaid with discourse and discourse with the otherness. Camões derogates the presumption according to which the slave's color, gender and class confine her to a marginalized and subaltern position. Bárbora's beauty is unmatched by that of any Laura. Besides, the idealized notion of a link between physical perfection and spiritual perfection, a neo-Platonism, bestows on the poet the love and harmony that Petrarch always aspired to but never achieved. By the same token, the split between slave and master disappears:

Presença serena
que a tormenta amansa;
nela enfim descansa
toda a minha pena.
Esta é a cativa
que me tem cativo,
e, pois nela vivo,
é força que viva.

As Juromenha's commentary reveals, Camões's readers found it extremely embarrassing to have to accept the presentation of this idea of beauty and happiness through the subversion of a scholarly literary canon thus opening the way to difference and diversity that surmounts the boundaries of color, gender and class. So embarrassing was it that for centuries the great interpretative questions raised by this poem have led to various efforts to reinvent Bárbora. It is the meaning behind these readings that I now intend to explore.

The first critic to attach special importance to Camões's slave was Manuel de Faria e Sousa in his comments in *Rimas várias*, published between 1685 and 1689. He wrote with reference to the tenth song's line, "A piedade humana me faltava," that Camões was so poverty-stricken that he was reduced to begging. He was helped not by the rich but by the poor. Four small coins here, two there or even just one when it wasn't "a plate of disgusting food that was sold at the doors of the miserable in Lisbon."[3] Then suddenly Bárbora appears, a mulatto woman who gives the poet a plateful of the food she sells, as well as a few coins. The symbolic properties he attributes to her are also used as a reproof when he makes a pun on her name: "Oh civil Barbarian, who taught those very barbarous Portuguese Deities to be civil!"[4]

In comments on the tenth ode, "Aquele moço fero," Bárbora again becomes the theme. In Faria e Sousa's opinion, it was written when Camões was in India and much enamored of a slave of his. She was "not only a slave but black: my poet was, after all, made of flesh and blood."[5] He identifies her as the woman to whom the poem was written and says she never came to Lisbon. He enthusiastically defends two causes: her blackness and the admirable tradition of praising the beauty of women who are not blond. To justify that in fact she "was black as the night," he remarks that Camões "carefully forgot to mention color, and by her demeanor and form tacitly makes it understood that the fact that his slave was black did not rule out that she

was beautiful."[6] He compiles a list of texts and writers on similar subjects and transforms Andromeda and the queen of Sheba into renowned black women. In his efforts to understand, for the sake of his poet, he even makes the concept of beauty a relative matter, writing that if "among blacks the most appreciated for their beauty are the darkest, [...] among whites it is the whitest of women."[7] Camões escapes his moral condemnation for these reasons. But only up to a point: "and hence he cannot be blamed for this love for longer than when she was his slave."[8]

We search in vain for the logic of Faria e Sousa's reflections. One slave or two of the same name? In India or else in Lisbon? Black or mulatto? Lover or compassionate cook? If the quantity of possibilities fascinated Faria e Sousa, a man who lived in the Baroque era, that exuberance is heightened in this case by his genuine devotion to "his poet," "mi poeta," as he used to write. However, his comments on the "trovas" dedicated to the slave Bárbora were never published.[9] Despite this fact, Faria e Sousa undoubtedly influenced the way the theme was viewed in the following centuries.

Besides, I believe that the discourse that post-Enlightenment civility dedicated to Camões's "trovas" is profoundly marked by the process of the representation of the other, which Homi Bhabha called mimicry, as "the sign of a double articulation: a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which 'appropriates' the Other as it visualizes power."[10] This is thus a forked, ambiguous discourse that accepts the difference and causes a slippage. On the one hand, Bárbora is "appropriated" through her integration into a system that disciplines power and knowledge. Yet, on the other hand, she is differentiated by her color, gender and social status, signs of the "inappropriate," of a difference that is almost the same but not quite. Consequently, she emerges visible at the side of interdiction and becomes at once incomplete and virtual, resemblance and menace. The counterpoint between the factual and fictional is clear in any case in the ambivalent and ironic compromise reached between resorting to historical facts and the repetition of some legendary stories about Camões. This discourse points to two main interpretations.

The first current "normalizes" Bárbora as part of his work-related world, and avoids explicit allusions to a sensual relationship that might have existed between her and the poet in line with Faria e Sousa's comments on the tenth song. The beautiful black woman who inspired Camões to write a poem about the raptures of passion remains "inappropriate" in order to confound the contradictions involving her beauty and the happiness she offered her

lover. As a woman, she is assigned to where 19th-century society relegated women, that is to say, domestic service. And so, Bárbora is a cook. Wilhelm Storck, who says she was a mulatto woman baptized "Luísa Bárbara,"[11] writes that she was a housekeeper in India and an excellent cook. According to his biography, when Camões invited his friends to dinner and offered them his famous poem *Convite* as a meal, it was Bárbora who prepared a real dinner for them. The guests' banter stopped when she came into the room "to serve the first course of the joyful dinner and fill their glasses with good Portuguese wine."[12] This scene stirred such strong feelings in the eminent translator, Carolina Michaëlis, that she added a footnote in which, complicit with the reader, she remarks on the actual excess that characterizes mimicry:[13]

> The reader will say if I exceed myself by adding just another detail to the picture Storck painted. At the end of the meal, the happy friends celebrate the culinary skills of Luísa Bárbara, who modestly evades the compliments lavished on her [...]. But the Poet and Host, raising his glass, gets up and toasts Luísa Bárbara, whose calm gaze and presence had so captivated his heart, and introducing her to his friends, he sings in an excess of youthful impetuosity:
>
> Esta é a cativa,
> que me tem cativo,
> e pois nela vivo,
> é força que viva!

The cosmic importance attributed to love as vital élan slips with the exclamation and the text's appearance concurrently change to "*Viva!*" Bárbora is integrated metonymically. She does her work with great skill and is summoned to the dining room, although Carolina suggests that Camões is not indifferent to her. A crisis thus develops for the cultural priority given to the metaphoric that demands re-articulation of the axis of metonymy. The difference is not repressed but negotiated with relation to metonymy so as to create what Homi Bhabha designates as fantastic and elusive "identity effects."[14]

The desire for a reformed, recognizable Bárbora also involves the representation of her relationship with Camões within a lower hierarchical context in which her otherness is avowed in the framework of an ideal of charity. In the first biography of Camões, which was published in the first pages of the 1613 edition of *The Lusiads*, Pedro Mariz says that when the poet returned

from India, he was so impoverished that he didn't even have enough money to give his Javanese slave to buy charcoal.[15] And thus was born the legend of the slave who begged in the streets of Lisbon in order to provide for his master. The Bárbora who alleviates Camões in his destitute state towards the end of his life could well be interpreted as the feminine counterpart of the Javanese slave. António Feliciano de Castilho wrote of her "generous ways" and extreme delicacy in his play called *Camões*:[16]

> [Camões:] How long would we have gone without eating had it not been for her charity, António! And what's more, the poor thing is among Christ's meekest. It has always been thus: generous, generous and kind to help without shaming the poor. At night, she sells seafood in the streets, and flowers in the morning, now at the S. Domingos church door, then and more often where we first found her: in Terreiro do Paço next to Casa dos Contos. That's because from there—so she tells me—she can see the sea and the caravels that come and go and everything gives her a feeling of great yearning. Poor Bárbara!

The "poor" mulatto woman is so sensitive that she chooses her working place according to her feelings. It is not only food she gives Camões. She also gives him a small bunch of flowers that he will take to his grave. However, Bárbora is disavowed as a character. She hands him her gifts, finds out how the poet is and leaves without ever satisfying his desire to see her. She is a dramatic metonymy, an object of discourse that never materializes on the stage. This interdictory desire is the strategic objective that Bhabha calls the metonymy of presence.[17]

To finalize the imagery linked with food, Costa e Silva should be recalled. With this distinguished critic, following Faria e Sousa's plateful of food and Castilho's street cry of the shellfish vendor, there is also the matter of selling "mussels,"[18] common enough in eighteenth-century Lisbon. Rather complacently, Costa e Silva unhesitatingly states that "beauty comes in all colors"[19] but does not believe that Camões was ever "madly enamored of that nice little black girl" and argues[20]:

> [I remember] what Dr. Swift's housekeeper once said to a lady who congratulated her on being loved by a man of such genius, who praised her in much of his verse. "Ah, my lady, you say that because you do not know that the Dean is quite capable of saying even sweeter things and writing even finer verse to the broom I sweep the house with!"

The second form of representation is based on the relationship between Camões and Bárbora in line with Faria e Sousa's commentary on the tenth ode. It is closely linked with the legendary stories about Camões's life that portray him as a great lover, a "tough guy" getting into street fights and living with people not of his class. The "life" written by Visconde de Juromenha is a good indication as to how well this portrayal of Camões was received in the nineteenth century.[21] The harmony between sensual love and spiritual love, as it appears in the text of the poem, is subject to a split. Consequently, the metonymic importance of the former leads to the representation of an explicitly erotic experience. The emergence of this aspect was not easily accepted within the framework of nineteenth-century morals. Hence the vindicating anguish, between guilt, pardon and complicity, which appears in the extravagance of the various attempts to discipline Bárbara, black, slave and lover, by means of the ruse of desire.

Xavier da Cunha clearly expresses the menace within that resemblance:[22]

> Love [...] love [...] I don't think and nobody thinks that what civilized peoples understand as "love" is a feeling that can be attributed to people born into the uncouth savage state in which they remain; and it is in these animal-like circumstances that the African black invariably lives.

We thus owe to his erudition one of the most determined attempts to create an authorized version of Bárbora's otherness. It is an 851-page book, beautifully printed and bound.[23] If Juromenha had already dealt with the beauty of the poem, which Chateaubriand recognized when he translated it into French, Xavier da Cunha collected over 100 translations of his text. In order to counter such an embarrassing contradiction, Cunha argued that Bárbara was not black, but dark, swarthy perhaps and tanned by the sun, or then mulatto at the very most:[24]

> "Black is her hair!"—please note. Nobody has ever said that about the woolly mop on an African's head! And would it then be reasonable to accept that an admirer of blond hair, as Camões prided himself on being at every moment, would favor the horrible hair of some horrible Ethiopian over the "golden tresses" of his true love?

Besides, Bárbora could not have been Camões's slave because he couldn't afford one. She was the slave of the governor, Francisco Barreto, which made her subject to ill-treatment.[25] Xavier da Cunha thus manages to avoid questions

of color and class, and makes Camões a victim of punishment. But then why had he fallen in love with her? Almost white but not quite: "And what can be proved [...] What can be proved is that [...] *Variatio delectat*," he decides.[26] Camões's true love was for women of his own class. Even Teófilo Braga, for whom Camões "never rowed with just one oar in amorous matters,"[27] says he had three great loves, all of whom belonged to the nobility: Isabel Tavares, Francisca de Aragão and Catarina de Ataíde.[28] Bárbora is the other.

Juromenha, who was one of the first to refer explicitly to the eroticism in the relationship, says that "this distraction" was due to the fact that Camões was growing senile, and that "growing lonely and in the world of darkness, he seems to also want to live in *darkness*."[29] In whitening Bárbora, Xavier da Cunha got to distinguish various slaves in Faria e Sousa's commentary. According to him, the beautiful and sensual Bárbora of the poem was not the one who came to Lisbon and helped him in his old age. Juromenha was of a different opinion. By means of ambiguous discourse, he brings together Camoes's lover and financial prop. This could only happen because "the most sincere of souls" dwelt in "a black body." Being so, the relationship is "normalized" within the framework of a hypothetical system of exchange whereby the relief Bárbora afforded his "life torments" was compensated by the "gratitude that goes beyond the confines of friendship."[30] A reciprocal relationship is thereby established outside those differences of color, gender and class that Juromenha does not neglect. This articulation of reality and desire contains in itself such strong contradictions that its development cannot leave a representational authority out of it.

Teófilo Braga understood this. Teófilo wrote a great deal on the life and work of Luís de Camões in a critical approach that developed as it evolved. His writing on Bárbora grows in crescendo as he collects the authoritative opinion of celebrated connoisseurs of the charms of "Indian, Malay, Javanese, Dravidian and Malabar women, ranging from the ivory white to the pitch black, almost metallic": Linschott, François Pyrard, Anquetil du Perron, Chateaubriand, or Alberto Osório de Castro.[31] François Pyrard's knowledge ensures him that "among slaves, there are some very beautiful and lovely girls from all parts of India and most of them know how to play musical instruments, embroider, cook deliciously as well as make all kinds of sweets, preserves and other things."[32] Bárbora becomes a "complete woman," mistress of all talents. A dancing-girl who sang to Camões "passionate popular Hindu and Hindustan love poetry."[33] Trying to solve the big problems connected with deeply rooted cultural canon and structures, Teófilo understands from his research that:[34]

> It can be conjectured that it was Camões who was sought after according to the custom described by Pyrard: "all these women from India, be they Christian or mulatto, prefer to have dealings with a European, an old Christian, rather than with Indians, and what's more, they are given money and feel greatly honored for it, because they love white men very much, and even if there are very white Indians, they don't like them so much."

The slippage of mimicry has a boomerang effect. Western male behavior is transferred to the Eastern female domain. European man himself is subject to a historical religious differentiation that enhances the superiority of old Christians. As such, the incompleteness of female representation is disavowed. The otherness of Bárbora is the same. "It is then," as Homi Bhabha writes, "that the body and the book lose their representational authority".[35]

It could be for this reason that Agostinho de Campos in his comments on Camões's "trovas" maintains himself at a distance from Teófilo and the "example of muddling *ethos* with other more or less blackened or inferior *ethos*".[36] In his opinion, the problem lies in the fact that:[37]

> Portugal still practices today in Africa what it used to do in India, China, Malaysia and America, that is to say a form of colonization that crosses, confuses and mixes local native races, or then races it has transplanted from one conquered area to another. This is how Portugal has always carried out its colonization, not with any political idea in mind, but with some mawkish kindness that prevents men from risking white women's health and lives to the dangers of tropical climes; with a lack of sense that prevents Portugal from handling their environment with method and efficiency so that a European couple may settle far away from home and live under suitable conditions, as the British have always managed; with a lack of pride in race and an overflowing paternal heart that makes our colonizers keep and bring up their mixed-blood children as lovingly as if they were pure-blooded. And thus, when we have, as we should, stopped forgetting all about this, we will easily reach the conclusion that our Camões is definitely one of us when he speaks in his beautiful poetry of the beauty of the Bárboras and his great longing for the Dinamenes.

More embarrassing than the contradiction between canon, color and beauty seems to be the process of mimicry itself.

Notes

[1] Juromenha 464.

[2] Further developed by Marnoto. Cited poem comes from Camões, *Rimas* 89-90. As in this edition, I have maintained the dissimilation of the name "Bárbora." There is a play on words, as "Bárbora" is the old Portuguese spelling for Barbara, and also means "barbarian," as in "Bárbora escrava," "barbarian female slave."

[3] Sousa, *Rimas várias de Luís de Camões*: "Fue tanto assi esto , que llegó a pedir limosna, y a no hallarla, a lo menos en los Portugueses grandes, que estos son los grandes Portugueses. Vióse reduzido un Hombre que solo fue mayor que todos ellos juntos, a acetar de personas comunes los quatro reales, y los dós, y a un el real para no morirse de hambre. Que digo el real de personas comunes? Acetava el plato de asqueroso mantenimiento que se anda a vender por las puertas de los miserables en Lisboa."

[4] Sousa: "O Bárbara politica, que enseñavas a ser politicas aquellas barbarissimas Deidades Portuguesas!"

[5] Sousa, segunda parte, t. 3, 179, vol. 2: "y no solo esclava, mas aun negra: que, alfin, era de carne mi Poeta."

[6] Sousa 183: "era negra como la noche esta esclava; [...] sino que como esta fuesse negra, se olvida cuydadosissimo de hablar en colores, y vase á asir de la forma, y del ayre deste cuerpo y tacitamente dá á entender que el ser negra su esclava no la excluía de hermosa."

[7] Sousa 184: "Entre los negros es más preciado de hermoso el que es más negro, como entre los blancos la muger más blanca."

[8] Sousa: "y assi no puede ser culpado en estos amores màs de en quanto eran con esclava suya." In a commentary on other compositions, such as, for instance, the sonnet, "Em prisões baixas fui um tempo atado" (primeira parte, t. 1, 15, vol. 1), Faria e Sousa addresses the moral problem and refers to the punishments inflicted on the poet's focus for having loved a slave.

[9] The commentary was in eight volumes and completed before 1646. Faria e Sousa died three years later and only the first five were to be published posthumously. Part of the eclogues, redondillas, comedies and prose consequently remain unpublished.

[10] Bhabha 153.

[11] Luísa Bárbara was the name given by Juromenha, who was inspired by satirical poems written in Camões's time which make fun of his love for a black woman and that played with the feminine form of the name (*Obras* 1: 156-7 e 506).

[12] Storck, *Vida e obras de Luís de Camões* 618-9: "a servir o primeiro prato da alegre ceia e a encher de bom vinho português os copos dos comensais." Despite not acknowledging that Camões had allowed himself to be influenced by a dissolute Eastern way of life (500-1), Storck sees the sonnet, "Em prisões baixas fui um tempo atado," in line with Faria e Sousa, as an act of repentance for "the low and unworthy sensual feelings that had ensnared him" (623): "[pela] afeição sensual, sem elevação nem carácter, que o enleara."

[13] Storck 619: "O leitor dirá, se me excedo, acrescentando mais um pormenor, ampliando o quadro traçado por Storck: No fim do jantar, os amigos alegres festejaram a arte culinária de Luísa Bárbara, que se esquivou, modesta, aos louvores dos convidados... Mas o Poeta e Anfitrião, erguendo o cálix, levantou, brindando, vivas à Luísa Bárbara, cujos olhos sossegados e cuja presença tinham cativado o seu coração, e apresentando-a aos amigos, cantou em um acesso de ímpeto juvenil."

[14] Bhabha 157.

[15] Mariz n. pag.

[16] Castilho 1: 184: "[Camões:] Quantos dias, se não fora a sua caridade, não houvéramos passado sem comer, António! E mais, coitada, é uma pobre de Cristo. Sempre assim foi: mãos largas, mãos largas, e delicadeza para acudir, sem envergonhar os pobres. De noite, apregoa marisco por essas ruas; de manhã, vende ramilhetes, uma hora no alpendre de S. Domingos, outra hora e as mais das vezes onde nós a achámos em desembarcando: no Terreiro do Paço, ao pé da Casa dos Contos. É porque de ali—me disse ela—se vê o mar, e as caravelas que vêm e vão, que tudo lhe faz muita saudade. Pobre Bárbara!"

[17] Bhabha 156.

[18] Silva 211.

[19] Silva: "a beleza é de todas as cores."

[20] Silva: "[lembro-me] da resposta dada pela Ama do Doutor Swift a uma Lady, que lhe dava os parabéns de ser amada por homem de tanto engenho, e que tanto a celebrava nos seus versos. 'Ah, Senhora, dizéis isso, porque não sabéis que o Deão é capaz de dizer ainda finezas mais ternas, e cousas mais galantes em verso, à vasoura, com que eu varro a casa!'"

[21] Storck 1: 156 e passim.

[22] Cunha 156: "Amor... amor... aquilo que em linguagem de povos civilizados se entende por 'amor,' não creio e não crê ninguém que seja sentimento atribuível a indivíduos que nascem, vivem, e se conservam numa situação de selvagens boçais; e nessas circunstâncias de animalidade está invariavelmente o preto de África."

[23] A large undertaking financially as well. Only 300 copies were printed and numbered on six different qualities of paper, especially and exclusively made as gifts. They may still be examined today for general research into Portuguese and foreign bibliography into this matter.

[24] Cunha 152: "'Pretos os cabelos'!—note-se bem. Nunca ninguém tal disse da emaranhada carapinha de uma africana! E seria então lícito admitir que um admirador do loiro, como Camões se prezava de confessar-se a cada passo, viesse pôr em relevo, ante o 'aureo crino' do seu constante amor, o horrorroso topete de uma horrorosíssima etíope?"

[25] Cunha 243-50.

[26] Cunha 237: "E o que se prova... O que se prova é que... *Variatio delectat*."

[27] Braga, *Camões. Época e vida* 578: "[Camões] em amor nunca andou a um só remo."

[28] In the work specifically addressed to *Os amores de Camões*.

[29] Storck 1: 157-8: "esta distração parece que só teve lugar depois que a morte apagou aquela luz radiante que o vivificava, e que ficando solitário, e em trevas no mundo, parece que também nas *trevas* queria viver."

[30] Storck 1: 158: "Talvez a alma mais cândida habitasse um corpo negro [...] lhe amansasse os tormentos da vida, lhe adoçasse as amarguras, e assim a gratidão ultrapassasse os limites da amizade."

[31] Braga, *Camões. Época e vida* 575-9: "indianas, malaias, javanesas, drávidas e malabares, desde o branco ebúrneo à cor retinta, quase metálica."

[32] Braga, *Camões e o sentimento nacional* 36: "Entre as escravas, encontram-se ali raparigas mui belas e lindas, de todas as partes da Índia, as quais pela maior parte sabem tanger instrumentos, bordar, coser mui delicadamente e fazer toda a sorte de doces, conservas e outras coisas."

[33] Braga, *Camões. Época e vida* 577: "estrofes da apaixonada poesia popular indú e industânica."

[34] Braga, *Camões e o sentimento nacional* 37: "É de supor ter sido Camões o requestado, pelo que se depreende dos costumes descritos por Pyrard: 'todas estas mulheres da Índia, assim as cristãs ou mestiças, desejam mais ter trato com um homem da Europa, cristão velho, do que com os índios, e ainda em cima lhe dariam dinheiro, havendo-se por mui honradas por isso, porque elas amam muito os homens brancos, e ainda que haja índios mui brancos, não gostam tanto deles.'"

[35] Bhabha 158.

[36] Campos 83: "caso de mixorofada do *ethos* com outros *ethos* mais ou menos enfarruscados e inferiores."

[37] Campos 76-7: "Portugal continua a fazer hoje em África, como ontem fez na Índia, na China, na Malásia e na América, uma colonização de cruzamento, da confusão e mistura com as raças locais, autóctones, ou por ele próprio transplantadas de umas Conquistas para outras. Assim colonizou sempre e coloniza ainda Portugal, não por princípio político, mas por bondade piegas, que inibe os homens de arriscarem a saúde e a vida das mulheres brancas na fereza dos climas tropicais; por deficiência de tino organizador, que impede o Português de preparar nas colónias a luta metódica e eficaz contra o ambiente físico, em ordem a estabelecer ao longe em condições vivedoiras, como sempre conseguem os Ingleses, o seu casal europeu; por falta de orgulho de raça e abundância de coração paternal, que leva os nossos colonizadores a guardar e educar o filho mestiço, tão ternamente como se fosse de sangue puro. E assim, quando tenhamos, como nos cumpre, deixado de esquecer tudo isto, facilmente concluieremos que o nosso Camões se revela bem nosso, quando nos conta em belos versos a beleza das Bárbaras ou a saudade das Dinamenes."

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