WAVES, WINDS, WORDS AS «MICRO-SIGNIFIERS» OF THE NON-CANONICAL: DIOGO BERNARDES

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In a book first published in 1976¹, Stephen Reckert introduced the term *micro-signifiers* to categorize all linguistic evidence derived from syllabic stress, consonant and vowel types, and their combination in horizontal succession, attaining «meaning» of a sensuous, non-conceptual nature. He later employed the concept in the study of some Portuguese old and new poetry, including a brilliant chapter on Cesário Verde's *De Tarde*². A few years before this incursion into a great poet of 19th-century lyricism, the Camões Chair Emeritus of King's College London turned the attention of his «micro-signifiers» to the great 16th-century poet himself, in a conference keynote speech (Reckert, 1984, pp. 523-540). I shall attempt here a sort of recreation on the published version of that address, an exercise intended as a tribute to the learning and pleasure I have regularly derived from Professor Reckert's writings.

«Micro-signifiers» were encoded in Renaissance poetic theory. The tedious and opinionated Julius Caesar Scaliger, in his nevertheless great treatise *Poetices libri septem* of 1561, prescribed that poets should look for sequences of words so that the things represented by them would be drawn forth clearly by their very sound. A superb model of this came from Virgil's *Aeneid*. By writing line VII: 528,

fluctus ubi primus coepit quum albescere vento³

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¹ Do Cancioneiro de Amigo, 1976.

² Published in book form as part of Um Ramalhete para Cesário, 1987.

³ «As when a billow begins to whiten under the wind's first breath» (trad. H. Rushton Fairclough).

the poet, according to Scaliger, was describing in sound the movement of a sea wave, from the moment it begins to rise until the white foam emerges (1581, p. 527). Within a certain view of what could have been the Roman articulation of those vowels, the example is persuasive: as the mouth pronounces the line, it almost seems to taste the vision of a wave unfolding and breaking. Sixteenth-century poetics called attention to the importance of the choice of words and sounds, as E. Sánchez Salor summarizes, «no solo para producer placer auditivo, sino también para producer la adecuada sensación estética o para expresar onomatopéycamente la cosa que se quiere expresar» (2002, p. 390).

This principle went as far as bending the rules of metrics and prosody, and even going against recommended grammatical practice. Rhetoricians thought that the power of expression, the beauty of speech together with faithful and vivid representation of objects, states, processes, ideas or actions could justify otherwise regretful choices on the part of the writer. Forced repetition or conflicting neighborhood of sounds, «wrong» syllabic stress, «impossible» distortions of word order or inflection, hiatus and its opposite synaloepha, were permitted and praised if somehow they subliminally supported the meaning, that is, if sound and rhythm adequately reinforced what the poet was saying.

Diogo Bernardes, a master poet who has hitherto suffered from critical neglect and even explicit acrimony,⁴ was a virtuoso of micro-signification. Exclusion from informed comparison with the poet of *Os Lusíadas*, invisibility in the reading canon of Portuguese poets and blame for robbing Camões of many of his poems or of changing them beyond recognition have not dulled the wealth of micro-signifying poetry issued from work that is undoubtedly Bernardes's. To begin by one single and short example — indeed so short as to signify by its shortness — , let's take a tercet from the his fourth eclogue in Italianate, hendecasyllabic verse, printed, no doubt posthumously, in the book of poetry entitled *O Lima*.

Ah falso Coridon, teu fundamento Era enganar-me, a fé dada ma tinhas, Com as palavras a levou o vento.

⁴ Apart from Manuel de Faria e Sousa in the 17th century, modern writers and editors of Camões have shown this on several occasions. A good (bad) example from the late twentieth century is the three-volume edition of Camões prepared for the Lisbon *Imprensa Nacional* by Maria de Lurdes Saraiva, whose commentaries miss no opportunity to denigrate Bernardes as poet.

The last line can be hendecasyllabic only if two hiatuses are forced in: com | as and vou | o. Normal speech will pronounce co'as and vou'o, finishing the line after only nine syllables. Manuel de Faria e Sousa, the notorious 17th-century commentator of Camões, attributed the line (and the poem to which it belongs) to the latter poet, and transcribed it as

E a fé co'as palavras leva o vento.

This was surely a poor correction (it created a new hiatus: e | a), but a correction nonetheless. The two «missing» syllables were added and the stress was altered. By adding three words, erasing the personal pronoun and changing the tense of the verb, Faria e Sousa imposed a regular stress on the 6th syllable that was missing in the original, transforming Bernardes' line into a regular heroic pentameter. He obviously failed to see the point of the «mistake». The poet created his own mimetic version of words (*palavras*) fading away (*levar*) in thin air (*vento*). Before Bernardes' line should be over, it is already over. One can actually «hear» the words disappearing, in a way that Faria e Sousa's regularization can never achieve. Reading poetry like this means tuning into a mode of expression where sound and rhythm are motivated by the referent the text not only wishes to name but also to bring meaningfully to life.

If we were to choose a brief poem of the European tradition where waves, winds and words vanishing into air are encapsulated to the highest perfection, this could well be the sonnet «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado», discussed in detail by Stephen Reckert, who calls it «one of the most extraordinary and formally 'modern' sonnets in the canon [of Camões]»⁵. Yet, those fourteen lines have now become far less canonical than they were in 1984 when Reckert's paper was printed, because of Leodegário de Azevedo Filho's heavily pruned edition of Camões' lyric output. I am referring to one of both senses of the word *canonical* that will be used in this essay, in this case, a text whose authorial authenticity is undisputed. The other sense of the word I am employing here is less philological and more generally cultural: a text belonging to a prescribed list of major authors and works of literature. By *non-canonical poetry* I therefore understand any poem that is either of doubtful authorship or is excluded (always, or at some points in time) from the recognized list of literary masterpieces.

Up until Professor Azevedo Filho's edition, the authorship of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» does not seem to have raised doubts in printers

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⁵ «[...] um dos mais extraordinários e formalmente 'modernos' do cânone» (p. 530).

and commentators, who have referred to the sonnet without qualms as a piece by Camões. Nevertheless, the evidence is poor, to say the least. Not a single early manuscript has been found to include the sonnet. Only an 18th-century list of contents belonging to a lost handwritten poetry collection compiled up to 1577 mentions the sonnet's first line. In this list — the so-called Index of Pedro Ribeiro's songbook — the poem, or rather a variant of its first line — «A terra o Ceo, e o vento assocegado» — is attributed to Diogo Bernardes. Scholars have argued for the unreliability of that Index, especially concerning many of the poems ascribed to Bernardes, and one of its unreliable areas no doubt includes this sonnet's nearest neighbours in the list. But this does not improve the critics' chances to claim authorship for Camões, as the trustworthiness of the 1616 edition, where the sonnet first appears in print, is equally as doubtful. The sonnet is, therefore, a good example of the non-canonical in at least one of the senses of the expression.

The sonnet is a masterpiece. More than that, it would still be one of the supreme poems in the genre even if it were compared to the best poetry Camões ever wrote. It is remarkable, then, that it seems to have been little known at the time. It was not published in any of the sixteenth-century printed or manuscript collections of either Camões or Bernardes. Its protagonist, the fisherman Aónio, is unknown to both⁶. Another contemporary master, António Ferreira, has a fisherman Aónio in some of his amorous writing (in an eclogue and a sonnet), and so «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» could belong to him. But the lack of any attribution in manuscripts, and the consistency and reliability of Ferreira's long-prepared lyric collection *Poemas Lusitanos*, published posthumously in 1598, makes it very hard to suspect him as author, even though Ferreira did employ micro-signifiers of sea waves and winds in those Aónio poems⁷.

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⁶ Faria e Sousa's reminder, in the commentary to this sonnet, that the name «Aónio» appears as a representation of Prince João in one of Camões's eclogues is here, in my opinion, devoid of value.

⁷ The following lines by Ferreira, included in poems with the fisherman in question, have much to do with the sonnet: «ondas naquela parte assossegavam» (sonnet II.28, line 8); «ouve sua voz que os ventos vão levando/ torna à saudosa praia, que pisaste» (eclogue *Jânio*, lines 39-40).

Here is the extraordinary sonnet again, in the only full redaction of it that is known as yet⁸:

	O ceo, a terra, o vento sossegado,
2	As ondas, que se estendem pela area,
	Os peixes, que no mar o somno enfrea,
4	O nocturno silêncio repousado.
	O pescador Aónio, que deitado,
6	Onde c'o vento a ágoa se menea,
	Chorando, o nome amado em vão nomea,
8	Que não pode ser mais que nomeado.
	"Ondas", dizia, "antes que amor me mate
10	Tornae-me a minha Ninfa, que tão cedo,
	Me fizestes à morte estar sojeita".
12	Ninguém lhe fala, o mar de longe bate,
	Move-se brandamente o arvoredo,
14	Leva-lhe o vento a voz, que ao vento deita.
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In his analysis, Reckert brings convincing indications that Camões could well be the author of this poem. Phrases with identical presence in Os Lusíadas support the traditional ascription. They are, for line 1: «o céu, a terra e o mar irado» (I, 21); «o ceo, a terra e as ondas» (II, 90) «os ventos sossegados» (IV, 85) and «com vento sossegado» (VI, 38); for lines 3 and 4: «um súbito silencio enfrea os ventos» (X, 6); for line 12: «as ondas que batiam» (VI, 79) «o negro mar de longe brada» (V, 38) and «muito longe o mar soou» (V, 60); for lines 13 and 14: «tão brandamente os ventos os levavam» (I, 43), «com as vellas leva o vento» (IV, 91) and «não foram ao vento em vão deitadas» (V, 33). A similar study has been missing for the canonical lyric poetry, as the twin of A. Geraldo da Cunha's vocabulary of Os Lusíadas has not yet been produced, but occasional further indications of Camonian diction can be found with relevance for the subject at hand. Faria e Sousa pointed out, for line 8, «que não pode ser mais que imaginado» (Octaves to António de Noronha) and, for line 10 (although the commentator only refers indirectly to this), the twice repeated expression «tão cedo» in the authentic sonnet Alma minha gentil. I myself can add, for line 2, «e estenderem-se as ondas pela areia» (sixth eclogue, «A rústica contenda desusada», l. 131). Parts of the sonnet, therefore, provide strong evidence in favor of the author of the sea epic that so impressed the sea novelist Herman Melville.

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⁸ *Rimas de Luís de Camões Segunda Parte,* Lisboa: Pedro Crasbeeck, 1616 (seventh sonnet). I have slightly modernized the text.

Such coincidences, however, may not be as meaningful as they seem. Their relevance depends, firstly, on the Renaissance tendency to compose by imitation and, secondly, on the available evidence of contemporary practice by other poets. Formulae are rarely individual in the sixteenth century; they rely both on previous poetic, or rhetorical, authority and on the requirements of genre.

Let's take some examples from the sonnet quoted above in full. The two opening lines express the entire Universe in three or four terms — sky, earth, air, sea — in a way which derives directly from Classical poetry (*e. g.* Homer, Lucretius, Virgil); the asyndetic tricolon (as in «céu-terra-vento») was actually considered a manner of speaking specific to poets⁹. The closing line, with its beautiful alliteration and the pairing *vento* + *deitar*, has a misleading similarity with *Os Lusíadas*, V, 33, since «deitar ao vento» in the epic does not apply to words but to arrows and stones, and the phrase, in whatever form, seems to be extremely rare in Camões's canonical work — I could not locate another example, and it is nonetheless clear that he uses the pairing *vento* + *espalhar* far more often. Even the phrase about the waves hitting far off, in line 12, in spite of its Adamastorian resonances, supplies a Virgilian touch (as in the famous *longe sale saxa sonabant*) which would be accessible to other contemporary sea poets.

Contrary, perhaps, to common belief, Diogo Bernardes was also a poet of the sea. His eleventh eclogue (*Galatea*) and his thirteenth (*Lilia*) concern loves unyielding or lost at sea. Sonnets of his explore semantic and harmonic connections with waves and winds: «Délio sobr'huns penedos, que banhados» (*Rimas Várias Flores do Lima* 43), «Las peñas retumbaran al gemido» (*RVFL* 64, also claimed for Camões), «Leandro em noyte escura indo rompendo» (*RVFL* 87) and «Como manhã de muitos desejada» (*RVFL* 120) are excellent instances.

As the other poet to whom «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» is attributed, albeit in a highly insecure section of the Ribeiro Index, Bernardes is ideally suited to a repetition of the search for similarities of vocabulary and diction. The poet wrote no epic (just *epyllia*) and so research is restricted, in his case, to the lyric production in hendecasyllables. Still, one could argue for relevant similarities between the sonnet and some of his comparatively early poems. I wish to consider the following first: the sonnet «Musas que tendes feito nesta praia», published in *Rimas Várias Flores do Lima* as n.º 35 and represented in the Ribeiro Index in 69th place under Bernardes's name; the eclogue *Sylvia*, printed in *O Lima* and well-known as its author's most

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⁹ See Cicero, *De Finibus*, V, IV, 9.

celebrated, also appearing in the Ribeiro Index and most probably composed before 1568¹⁰; and the eclogue *Adónis*, a piece certainly written in 1554 (the death of Prince João, the subject mourned in *Adónis*, occurred in January of that year) or shortly afterwards, and also published in *O Lima*.

These poems include words or expressions which rival similarities found with some of the verse by Camões: for lines 3 and 4 of «O céu, a terra», the sonnet *Musas que tendes feito nesta praia* has «a meu mudo silêncio», and in *Adónis* we find «enfreia os ventos» just like in the later *Lusíadas*; for lines 13 and 14, one can suggest, in both vocabulary, alliteration and intransitivity, «o Lyma brandamente vai correndo/o vento está movendo a folha leve», also from *Adónis*. Incidentally, the tricolon of line 1 («O céu, a terra, o vento») matches closely two instances of *Adónis* as well («o céu vê, a terra cria/as que o mar cobre» and «o céu, a terra, o mar s'inclina»).

But it is where the lesser connections are found, or none at all, between the Camões canon and our sonnet, that verse by Bernardes achieves its greatest intertextual relevance. «Musas que tendes feito» begins by uttering the words *silêncio* and *nome* in meaningful association:

> Musas que tendes feito nesta praya A meu mudo silêncio companhia, Deixando só meu nome que subia Porque donde sobio sem asas caya...

Nome means both «name» and «renown»; its articulation with emptiness, and of both with poetry itself, bear a relationship with the unfortunate Aónio of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado», whose name recalls, precisely, the soaring Aonian mount faced, among others, by Milton in *Paradise Lost*. The sound of a «name» and its questioning define immediately, as we shall see, Bernardes's own lyrical practice. The play of micro-signifiers in the stanza, involving silence and utterance around onomatopoeic *mm, nn* and sibilants, suggest the almost inaudible voice of a solitary poet, and the sense of absence, enacted by the waterside, that the sonnet «O céu, a terra» also conveys.

¹⁰ Arthur Lee-Francis Askins considers that in the second part of the Cristóváo Borges collection, where *Sylvia* is included, «we can at present find no works which surely and unquestionably are of later composition than... 1568» (1979, p. 28). António Ferreira, who died in 1569, seems to allude to this eclogue directly in a sonnet from *Poemas Lusitanos* beginning «Limiano, tu *ao som do* claro *Lima,/inda* por ti mais claro...» (also known in the variant, «Bernardez, tu ao som do claro Lima...»). Bernardes's eclogue begins «Cantava Alcido hum *dia ao som* das agoas/*do Lima* [...]».

The famous eclogue *Sylvia* provides an entire chain of connections to our poem. Its lines 94 to 103 read as follows:

Quando chamo por ti, que me responde A mesma voz no valle ond'em vão grito, Cuido que outrem te chama e que se esconde. Ali com nova força, novo 'sprito Com ira vou buscando quem nomea Teu doce nome no meu peito 'scrito. Se com suave som brando menea Hum leve e brando vento a folha leve Se fere a onda crespa a branca area Ouvir-te me parece, ah gosto breve¹¹

In more than one sense, these lines double up certain major features of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado», namely most of its more important micro-signifiers. Bernardes takes advantage of the word *voz* (meaning significantly *voice*) to produce alliterations with *v* throughout line 95, as in the sonnet's fourteenth. The rhyme-words *area, menea* and *nomea* are identical to the sonnet's rhyme-words (in lines 2, 6 and 7). The direct association of *vento* with *menea* is comparable to line 6 of «O céu, a terra»¹². A triple utterance which Reckert vividly described (for lines 7-8 of the sonnet) as «balbuciante *adnominatio* do nome amado» also occurs in the eclogue («nomea», «nome» and «no meu»). The several nasal sonorities, including *nD*, resound again. And finally, line 101, with its alliteration in *v* and the repetition of one of the words, posits as a reminder of the sonnet's last.

Further evidence of rhythm, expression and sound effects neighboring the sonnet's can be collected elsewhere in Bernardes's work. Take, for instance, line 7: *chorando o nome amado em vão nomea*. There is not a single instance of a line in *Os Lusíadas* beginning with *chorando* (even though this gerund appears many times in the epic), but Bernardes has got at least two cases in *Várias Rimas ao Bom Jesus:* «chorando se saiu amargamente» (*Lágrimas de S. Pedro*, stanza 13) and «!chorando pode ser que abrandareis» (in the elegiac canzone to Lady Ângela), plus two others in *Rimas Várias Flores do Lima:* «chorando acaba a vida» (in the canzone «Desertos, montes,

¹¹ The early manuscripts show slight differences from the printed version in *O Lima* in this tract, differences that have no bearing, however, on the comparison attempted here.

¹² In another eclogue, *Nise*, Bernardes wrote: «Os ventos por ouvir o som divino/ escassamente a folha meneavam».

vales saudosos») and «chorando disse à sua vã figura» (sonnet «Vendo Narciso em hũa fonte clara»). The expression *em vão*, which at first glance looks so Camonian, especially in connection with calling and words (see *Os Lusíadas* II, 24; III, 84 and X, 15; or the eclogue «As doces cantilenas», l. 339), is employed by Bernardes, with greater semantic and lexical closeness to the sonnet, in the tract from *Sylvia* quoted above (l. 95) and in the aforementioned canzone to the death of Lady Ângela, a text which cannot have suffered the influence of Camões's epic: «chamam/em vão teu brando nome»¹³. *Chorando, amado* and *em vão* (as well as *ninfa*) reappear in close proximity, in fact, inside another passage from this same canzone. *Em vão* can be self-referential in Bernardes: take the following lines from his 28th epistle (printed in *O Lima*), where all the characters' names are meant to come from his own waterside poetry: «Pallemo chamará por Gallatea/sospirando em vão; em vão Alcido/por Sylvia escreverá versos n'area».

To sum up, I would argue that lines unequivocally by Bernardes support a kind of *organic* relationship with much of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» that is missing from this sonnet's occasional similarities with lines in canonical works by Camões. On the other hand, lines 13 and 14 look like they could have come from the work of Camões just as much as from Bernardes, while the expression «vento sossegado» in line 1, the whole of lines 2 and 8, the last phrase of line 10¹⁴ and the second half of 12 are more readily and concretely identifiable as Camonian than anything I can find in the poetry of Bernardes.

If we change the tune of our analysis from style to theme and tone, the organic vicinity of the sonnet to the known poetry of Bernardes seems to grow. The dominant effect of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» comes from the striking disavowal of the fisherman's anguished cries by the natural landscape which surrounds him. Nature's utter indifference to human pain

¹³ This canzone is almost certainly referring to an Ângela connected with António de Sá de Meneses (the «António» named therein, who is to receive the poem in his native Oporto). Since we know that this Sá de Meneses died on the 19th of March of 1566, Bernardes's poem was certainly composed before this date (*Os Lusíadas*, of course, was printed in 1572), as were the poems on the same subject included in the *Poemas Lusitanos* by António Ferreira (d. 1569).

¹⁴ This is admittedly a weak supporter of the argument in favor of Camões, since only one sonnet out of his entire output, «Alma minha gentil que te partiste», has been provided as evidence. The phrase «tão cedo» occurs in *Os Lusíadas* only once (IV, 89). And it may simply be conventional whenever a poem referred to a death, as in Bernardes's *Adónis*, where one of the lines reads «Mas ah, cedo partiste».

is a leitmotif in Bernardes's lyricism, not in Camões's¹⁵. As stated by José Augusto Cardoso Bernardes in a study of pastoral lyric, «a Natureza, que em Camões surge como extensão do desgosto do pastor, aparece em Bernardes, sobretudo, como espaço autónomo, sereno e praticamente imperturbável, em vivo e importante contraste com a dor do Homem» (1988, p. 104). The pathetic fallacy, which someone has somewhat cruelly defined as «the infantile demand that the world should serve as our looking-glass» (Eagleton, 2007, p. 8), is recurrent in the poetry attributed with confidence to Camões. Everything in nature seems to yield to the subject's joy or pain. His concern is the world's concern. By contrast, the subjects in Bernardes' poetry usually reach out in vain for solidarity, sympathy or image reflection. Over and over again, Bernardes expresses the refusal of nature to comply with the ego's wishes¹⁶. The result is a kind of loneliness that differs from the loneliness of Camões, in the same way as the sense of crushing insignificance of one's existence before the world differs from the sense of unrequited immensity of individual life and genius.

To entertain another paraphrase of Stephen Reckert's article and tastes, the Brazilian poet Drummond de Andrade, who serves him well in describing the attractions of Camões's discourse¹⁷, may help us here too. Going from Camões to Bernardes can be said to be like travelling from the Drummond de Andrade who wrote «mundo mundo vasto mundo/mais vasto é meu coração» to the same poet writing later: «meu coração não é maior que o mundo/é muito menor»¹⁸. The dimension of the human subject in the lyric poetry by Bernardes recedes before all-pervading Nature.

In «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado», the fisherman looks like a speck in an immense disregarding universe. Figuratively, the presence of Aónio recalls, in some ways, that of Ozymandias in Shelley's famous sonnet. The

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¹⁵ I am thankful to Thomas F. Earle for this insight. Reckert, however, considered «a irónica oposição entre o sofrimento humano e a impassibilidade do vento nas árvores e do longínquo bater do mar» a theme which implied a «relação do soneto com a poesia camoniana em geral» (1984: 531).

¹⁶ «Em regra, o pastor aparece, na bucólica de Bernardes, isolado no sofrimento e buscando, em vão, a solidariedade dos elementos naturais (através de ilocuções intransitivas) tentando projectar a lógica dos seus sentimentos em essências distintas e angustiando-se com a sua inaplicabilidade» (Bernardes, 1988, p. 108).

¹⁷ See the epigraph on the first page of Reckert's essay, taken from (though he does not say it) Drummond's magnificent homage to Camões «História, Coração, Linguagem» in the book of poems *A Paixão Medida* (1980).

¹⁸ Lines respectively from «Poema de Sete Faces» in *Alguma poesia* (1930) and «Mundo Grande» in *Sentimento do Mundo* (1940).

grand statement faces the shock of reality in its wide and almost timeless expanse:

'My name is Ozymandias, King of Kings, Look on my Works, ye Mighty, and despair!' Nothing beside remains. [...] The lone and level sands stretch far away.

The king's arrogance meets the fisherman's meekness. Both believe in the importance of their utterances and expressions of subjecthood, but the poems which name them do not. The Portuguese ninguém anticipates the English *nothing*, both as a negative of absence and in its formal arrangement inside the poem, initiating the last tercet. Especially here, Shelley's sonnet is much like «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado». The sands of the desert are not the sands of the beach, but the checking, if not the punishment, of passionate effusions, the figural opposition between voice and landscape, and the alliterations of the last line, bear an uncanny resemblance to the Portuguese. Perhaps Romantic fascination with Camões and Anglo-Portuguese contacts during the Napoleonic period had more of an impact on English poetry than has so far been remarked¹⁹. However that may be, the sense of vacuity and even of annihilation constructed by Shelley hangs more on the poetic manner of a Bernardes than on the author of Os Lusíadas. With a fundamental difference: where Shelley creates distance, implicitly deriding his puffed up ruler, the Portuguese poet seems to share the failed condition of his desperate fisherman.

The condition which generally pervades Diogo Bernardes's lyricism is a kind of retraction of lyricism, as the self of his poems is brought close to naught. If the phrase «poetic personality» has got any meaning, this author establishes the primary condition for the non-canonical poetic personality: the persona that his lyricism reveals is bound to fail before the untamed immensity of Nature. No wonder criticism has repeated throughout the centuries that delicacy (*brandura*), with its semantic overtones of slenderness and fragility (if not effeminacy), characterize Bernardes's value as poet²⁰.

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¹⁹ The Viscount Strangford's several times reprinted translation of Camões's lyric poetry, however, does not include this sonnet. The coincidence is more probably due to the application of the same figural economy in both poems, a kind of antithesis lacking the explicit term of comparison.

²⁰ As a typical critical statement, I choose to quote from Joaquim Ferreira's forgotten long introduction to an anthology of Diogo Bernardes, where he spoke of the «frágil varonia da sua pena» (*s. d.*, p. 73). More recently, Vasco Graça Moura blamed the poet

If hopes are vain in the more pessimistic verse by Camões, at least — he seems to be saying — there will always be the strength of the poetry and its entitlement to glory. This sort of self-aggrandizement is alien to Bernardes. These are not simply stylistic tendencies on the part of both poets; they are also inherent to each of their projects. The two introductory sonnets of their respective cycles — «Enquanto quis Fortuna que tivesse» and «Eu cantarei de amor tão docemente» for Camões; «Vós que d'amor cruel nunca sentistes» and «Aqui de largos males breve história» for Bernardes — already clear the way for such a distinction, in spite of their similarly masterful fluency in the Petrarchist manner. This is another reason why, in my view, the attribution of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» to Bernardes in the Ribeiro Index deserves serious consideration.

Poetry at the time was far less of a struggle between egos than a collaborative enterprise, involving the circulation of manuscripts, copying with additions and subtractions, working from (aural) memory, verbal imitation, transformation and so forth. Could «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado», in the form we know it, be the result of more than one hand? Analysis shows that Bernardes may have been responsible for the basic form and thematic structure of the sonnet, but some of its lines and half-lines are so close to what we know of Camões and of no other, that there seems no reason to deny the latter poet's involvement too²¹. It is highly likely that the 1616 edition represents an «improved» version of an earlier original (by whom?) we as yet ignore outside of the first line presented by the Ribeiro Index.

As Jorge de Sena noted in passing, Diogo Bernardes is a poet of *raras musicalidades*, where rhythm and meaning are as wavy as the river from which he receives inspiration — Sena speaks of *efeitos de ondulação* (Sena, 1980, pp. 142 and 182). This amounts not only to critical recognition of the particularly meaningful role of «micro-signifiers» in Bernardes's verse, but also to this poet's personal distinction of style, a distinction that has always seemed elusive to a reception history that has confused his work systematically with Camões's. The *undulating* rhythms, the soft blowing winds, the words Bernardes produced in sonnets, eclogues, *canções* and other lyrical

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for his «constante choraminguice» (1987, p. 49). One wonders what new interpretation would come of «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» if it were proven someday that Aónio's tears were authored by Bernardes...

²¹ Roger Bismut states that the sonnet represents *«Camões pleurant Dynamène»* but offers neither a hermeneutical nor a philological basis for this idea. The love lament over a death is a *topos* of Renaissance pastoral and piscatorial poetry, made more frequent than ever after Sannazaro (d. 1530).

forms, seem no less his own than his epic contemporary's²². Of course there is always the possibility of coeval imitation, on either side, not to mention the fact that editors could well have laid their hands on «O céu, a terra, o vento sossegado» before it got printed, therefore blurring the stylistic idiolect. But if a bewilderingly glorious piece like this resulted from successive textual interventions in some kind of communal poetic experience, a conclusion that can be safely reached is that readers have thereby gained all the more.

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²² The above-mentioned Joaquim Ferreira argues not unfoundedly for 1525 as Bernardes's most probable year of birth, as opposed to the *«circa* 1530» that is usually enforced. If true, this would make him and Camões exact contemporaries.