

Introduction

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Ess qu'è nha terra, ê Cabo Verde
Terra di morna, di lua chêa
Terra di Eugénio e serenata,
Qui mar tá cantá junto d'arêa.
—Gabriel Mariano

The present volume of *Portuguese Literary & Cultural Studies* is entitled “Cape Verde: Language, Literature & Music,” and the choice of title is accounted for by the very special relationship that exists between these three elements in this island-country.

In a book published in 1996 by the Instituto Caboverdiano do Livro e do Disco, *A Morna na Literatura Tradicional*, Moacyr Rodrigues and Isabel Lobo argue that the history of Cape Verdean literature can be classified by two literary currents. The first can be called “traditional literature” and precedes the appearance of a second kind of literature, the literary production in printed form that appeared towards the end of the nineteenth century. Far from being completely separate categories, the two are interconnected, and, according to Rodrigues and Lobo, at times the distinction between traditional literature and so-called high art is abolished, as is evident in a significant part of the poetic output of Eugénio Tavares, Pedro Monteiro Cardoso, some authors of *Claridade*, B. Lèza, Lela de Maninha and many others.

The relationship between music and poetry is typical of early Cape Verdean poetry; one thinks, for example, of the *mornas*/poems by Eugénio Tavares. This sort of poetry existed side-by-side with the emphatically classi-

cist poetry that imitated the rhetorical models of the mother-country's canon, an example being the poetry of José Lopes, to whom Arminda Brito dedicates an article in the first section of this edition.

The present volume has brought together the contributions of scholars of different nationalities who have dedicated themselves to a study of the literatures in the Portuguese language, as well as those who work in other areas such as Linguistics or Comparative Literature but who have in recent years researched and published works on Cape Verdean literature. These include not only Cape Verdeans but also scholars writing from Brazil, Portugal, the United States, the United Kingdom and Galicia in Spain.

These academics bring with them different perspectives on the linguistic and literary heritage of the archipelago; this material, most of it in the form of monographs, has been organized in four sections into which similar themes have been grouped, and, whenever possible, where a chronological sequence has been observed.

This collection does not purport to be a comprehensive view of Cape Verdean literature, like that excellent bilingual publication, *Cabo Verde Insularidade e Literatura* (*Cape Verde: Insularity and Literature*), edited by Manuel Veiga in 1998; nor does it aim to have the last word on questions relating to Cape Verdean culture. If, on the one hand, this volume follows a chronological thread, another central intention was to make readers aware of certain vexing questions related to literary history, to travel themes, to the textual relationships between the former mother-country and the archipelago, to the post-colonial re-reading of Portuguese novelistic texts, to re-inventions in the form of parody and to thematic-formal qualities of Cape Verdean writing after *Claridade* and after independence.

Over and above the four central topics, there is a further section on bibliographies, which has been appended at the end of the volume. "A Literatura Caboverdiana: hipóteses de periodização e apêndices bibliográficos" ("Cape-Verdean Literature: The Possibility of Periodization and Bibliographic Appendices"), by M. Brito-Semedo, suggests alternative possibilities for the periodization of Cape Verdean literature for the period that goes from the time of the first publications in the nineteenth century to the post-independence generation. It presents as appendices bibliographical details of Cape Verdean authors and the publication of works and periodicals in the period since independence in 1975. In the final part of the journal, on "Writing and Music," is a contribution by an ethno-musicologist, the composer and writer

Vasco Martins; this section also includes texts by the writer Germano Almeida and by the poet Corsino Fortes, as well as a short section of book reviews from and about Cape Verde. The reviewers include David Brookshaw, Simone Caputo Gomes and Naomi James Sutcliffe de Moraes.

The first topic, “Language and the Founding Literature,” brings together five articles. The first, written by the Cape Verdean geographer José Maria Semedo, is a foray into the topographical and mythical origins of the archipelago; the author suggests that among the literary archetypes that have been created is the mythical-historical identity that inserts the archipelago in the sphere of the legendary Hesperides. The second article, “*O Escravo*: Literatura de Fundação” (“*The Slave*: Foundational Literature”), written by Francisco Salinas Portugal, provides a comparative analysis of a text by José Evaristo de Almeida and the Cuban anti-slavery novel *Sab*, by Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, published in 1841. He suggests the possibility of reading *O Escravo* in the light of the “Confederação Brasileira” (lit., “Brazilian Confederation”) in the Portuguese colonies (in the 1830s) and the appearance of a proto-nationalism connected to the abolition of slavery. According to the author, even though it cannot be considered a literary masterpiece, *O Escravo*, in a manner that is possibly ambiguous, presupposes the discourse of difference insofar as it foregrounds marginality “and allows the Other to cease to be an Object in order to transform itself into a Subject.”

This is followed by an article on the poetry of José Lopes, which was composed during a period that extended from the closing years of the nineteenth century through to the 1930s. This poetry was both Classical and Romantic. A close reading of this poetry reveals the “intellectual relationship” that the poet maintained with the past, which is exemplified by his appropriation of historical and mythical material derived from both Portuguese and classical sources.

The last three articles deal with the Creole language and traditional literature. In “Bilinguismo Funcional: Assunção Descomplexada” (“Functional Bilingualism: An Assumption without Complexes”), the Cape Verdean writer Manuel Veiga shows how the linguistic situation in present-day Cape Verde is one of bilingualism because of the difference in status between the Portuguese language (Lp) and the Cape Verdean language (Lcv), also known as Cape Verdean Creole. For all intents and purposes, Lp is the official language, the language of education, of administration, the media, of social discourse and of literary productions; Lcv is the language of oral traditions, of the informality of day-to-day life, of friendships, of music and is little used in lit-

erature. The article makes evident the linguistic situation that Cape Verde finds itself in at the present moment and suggests a way to a future when the linguistic situation will be better suited to the realities of the country.

In turn, Dulce Pereira in “Escrever em Crioulo: *Un Kaminhu Lonji*” (“Writing in Creole: A Long Way Away”) deals with the question of writing in Creole; she stresses that when dealing with an oral-based language such as that of Cape Verde it is important not to confuse writing with its graphic transcription or even with orthography. She explains that once we have made an inventory of all words, the lexicon is precisely one of those areas that needs to be innovated. The identification of the derivational processes and of the most productive affixes both constitute—alongside other means such as word-loan—fundamental instruments for the enrichment of the Cape Verdean language; she cautions against falling into the easy trap of imitating the models of written language derived from the contact language.

Tânia Macedo’s article makes a comparative analysis of Tilôbe, the greedy and unfortunate Tio Lobo (“Uncle Wolf”), a recurrent figure of traditional Cape Verdean folktales. An attempt is made to establish a parallel between this figure and other figures that occur in the oral traditions of Portuguese-speaking countries, figures such as “Pedro Malasartes,” “João Grilo” (“John the Cricker”) and Cancãosinho.

“History, Memory and Travel” is the title of the second section, and it includes three articles where history and the colonial relation are questioned, revisited and rewritten; the problematic nature of biographies and travel narratives is also brought into account. The first text, by Gregory McNab, is “(Re)claiming the Heritage: The Narratives of Manuel Veiga,” which considers the importance of the works of this author from the point of view of the reappropriation of the Cape Verdean language and orality, as well as the dialogue between the present and the historic past. Manuel Veiga’s *Odju d’Agu* and *Diário das Ilhas* constitute a specifically Cape Verdean attempt to overcome the colonial legacy. *Odju d’Agu* is rooted in the language of Cape Verde and its oral storytelling tradition; *Diário das Ilhas* is a textual itinerary of the discovery of Cape Verde. According to Gregory MacNab, “in both [...] texts, Manuel Veiga seeks to address the issue of a postcolonial identity for Cape Verde, (re)capture an historical initiative for the Cape Verdean community and (re)site Cape Verde as the locus of its own experience.”

The second article, by Isabel A. Ferreira, “Maria Isabel Barreno’s *O Senhor das Ilhas*: Memory and Writing at the Threshold,” attempts to provide an

overview of how Africa has been represented in twentieth-century Portuguese literature that deals with the colonial past. More specifically, *O Senhor das Ilhas* considers the contradictions implicit in the colonist endeavors at the same time that it establishes a dialogue with literary tradition. The colonial experience was multi-faceted and contradictory, and because of that the novel looks at it through the perspective of the colonizer, and, more specifically, through his “life-writings.” In doing so, Barreno offers a “revision” of the culture of the empire.

Phyllis Peres deals with travel metaphors in “Translating Trans-Atlantic Space in Two 1938 Travel Narratives to Cape Verde: Anne Morrow Lindbergh’s *Listen! the Wind* and Archibald Lyall’s *Black and White Make Brown*”; she shows how these two writers write from very different positions in the economy, nation, colony, time, and memory: “The narratives that emerge from their own Cape Verdean journeys straddle discourses of travel and inform the ambivalent trans-Atlantic times and spaces between the two World Wars. It is also this traveling culture that Anne Morrow Lindbergh and Archibald Lyall invoke in their own Atlantic journeys.”

The third section, “The Trajectories of Cape Verdean Literature — Genres, Music and Other Themes,” begins with an article by Ellen W. Sapega, “Notes on the Historical Context of *Claridade*,” which argues that it is very important to recognize the existence of *three* different avatars of the *Claridade* magazine that was so central to the development of Cape Verdean literature. They arose at three different historical moments, and each of these “series” has to be assessed in light of the specific historical context in which they appeared so that the subtle changes in direction that characterized the *Claridade* project in the twenty-four years during which it was published can be better understood. Five other articles follow, and these deal with the representation of space, with questions of genre or, still, with the appearance of certain dominant themes in Cape Verdean literature, such as music, immigration, and recruited laborers.

“Lugares Étnicos e Maravilhosos do Imaginário Cabo-verdiano (em *Chiquinho*, de Baltasar Lopes)” (“Ethnic and Marvelous Places of the Cape Verdean Imagination [in *Chiquinho* by Baltasar Lopes]”), by Alberto de Carvalho, shows how the novel *Chiquinho* by Baltasar Lopes rightly deserves to be regarded as the key text of modern Cape Verdean realist fiction, not only on account of the story it tells but also on account of the literary value of its writing, and especially the re-invention of autobiographical material. In

turn, Glória de Brito's article "A Representação Espacial nos Contos de Gabriel Mariano" ("Spatial Representation in the Short Stories of Gabriel Mariano") shows how the notion of novelistic space incorporates a narrative system that combines topographical, atmospheric, cultural and chrono-biologic elements that are present at the point of historical origin and in geographical, demographic and cultural evolution. Thus, Mariano's short stories register variations of the same urban space (Mindelo), marked simultaneously by the effect of the real and of the dramatic and by the evocative weight of history, culture and ideology.

In "Globalização, Cultura e Identidade em Orlanda Amarílis" ("Globalization, Culture and Identity in Orlanda Amarílis") Benjamin Abdala Junior looks at *Cais-do-Sodré té Salamansa* by Orlanda Amarílis in the context of globalization. He highlights the nature of a kind of literature that is identified with migration, one that makes evident the "strategic senses" of community articulations (cultural communities and genre literature) that appear in the work and which resist the standardization of cultural products in the global market.

The article by José Luis Hopffer Cordeiro Almada provides an overview of Cape Verdean fiction in the period following *Claridade*; thematic changes evident in the works of some of the major writers are considered.

"O Tema do 'Contratado' na Literatura Caboverdiana: Génese e Variações" ("The Theme of the 'Hired Laborer' in Cape Verdean Literature: Genesis and Variations") is an article by Cristina Pacheco that, through a brief overview of the socio-economic and literary context of Cape Verde from the 1930s to the 60s and of the reasons that led to Cape Verdeans being recruited to work on the plantations in São Tomé and Príncipe, attempts to analyze the importance of this theme and the way it is dealt with in Cape Verdean literature.

The last article in this section, by Simone Caputo Gomes, deals with another theme, the close connection between music and literature in Cape Verde. Music is able to bring together all of the forces that are constitutive of the Cape Verdean identity: "bread, sound & phoneme." According to Gomes, "a choir of illustrious voices plays a melody (or a polyphonic composition) whose theme is the thirst for survival of the Cape Verdean people and the permanence of a Creole culture founded upon a symbolic national trilogy—corn, the discourse on music and literary discourse."

José M. Rodrigues, the author-photographer of the images that illustrate the issue, presents us with photographs of a journey he made to the ten

islands of Cape Verde in 1997. Amongst the hundreds of photographs he took, the following are worth highlighting: the tombstone of Eugénio Tavares on the island of Brava, the volcano in Fogo, the black ground of magma. All in all, his photographs constitute a cultural overview of Cape Verdean day-to-day life, its music, its literature and the poetry of people and places.

“Postcolonial Cape Verdean Literature” is the fourth section, and it brings together articles on authors whose work reappropriates, sometimes in the form of parodic invention, the Cape Verdean literary inheritance prior to independence. The first text, “Projetos Literários em Antologias Caboverdianas” (“Literary Projects in Cape Verdean Anthologies”) by Maria Nazareth Soares Fonseca, looks at two anthologies: the selection of *Claridade* issues edited by Manuel Ferreira in 1989, and an anthology of the more recent Cape Verdean poetry, *Mirabilis de Veias ao Sol*, which came out in 1988. The author highlights the different characteristics of the literature produced in Cape Verde in two crucial historical periods.

This is followed by three articles on Germano Almeida, one of Cape Verde’s best known writers. In “‘Chronicling’ from the Center of the Periphery: *Estórias Contadas* (*Tales Told*) by Germano Almeida,” Russell Hamilton considers the author’s chronicles and their cultural implications. He reflects on how the author makes intelligent use of the *crónica*, or chronicle, which has evolved into a unique literary genre in Portuguese-speaking countries. The article focuses on several of the *crônicas* that reveal Almeida’s talent for narrating the uniqueness of Cape Verdean identity and also the archipelago’s paradoxically central and peripheral location in Africa, in the Portuguese-speaking world, and in the wider world.

Both of the other two articles make a comparative analysis with the work of Machado de Assis. Robert H. Moser’s “A Busca de Adélia: Narrativa Pós-tuma em *Testamento do Senhor Napumoceno da Silva Araújo* de Germano Almeida” (“The Search for Adélia: Posthumous Narration in *The Will of Mr. Napumoceno da Silva Araújo* by Germano Almeida”) looks at the short story “Galeria Póstuma” by Brazilian novelist Machado de Assis and shows how it brings to light some of the essential questions posed by a study of Germano Almeida’s novel *Testamento do Senhor Napumoceno da Silva Araújo*. By offering their memoirs to posterity, these “memorialists” are in fact rehearsing their own deaths and, through the act of writing, their subsequent posthumous position. But the reconstruction of Sr. Napumoceno’s life is also a collective endeavor, one that involves his memoirs, the recollections of family

and friends, the manipulation of an omniscient narrator, and the inferences of readers. Paula Gândara, in turn, in her article entitled “The Beginning of the World as We Would Like It to Have Been, or an Analysis Towards a Theory of Gender in Germano Almeida, or ...” shows how Germano Almeida’s *Memórias de um Espírito* does justice to Machado de Assis’s similarly titled work. We read in Machado’s work all the traces of postmodernity—narrative fragmentation, the addressing of the reader and his inclusion in the narrative, the mixture of fiction and reality—as well as of a certain kind of feminine *écriture*.

The last two articles are about the work of two poets, Corsino Fortes and Vera Duarte. Ana Mafalda Leite is the author of “*A Cabeça Calva de Deus* by Corsino Fortes: Litany & Music in Praise of Cape Verde.” The article sums up some of the major features of the three books of poetry by Corsino Fortes that were collected in the single volume *A Cabeça Calva de Deus*. It emphasizes the way the author’s work can be seen as a transformation of the Cape Verdean literary tradition, the innovative nature of his poetic language, and his vocation for a kind of writing that is epic, rhetorical and sacral. It further describes the pictographic transfiguration achieved by Fortes in his poetic rendering of the cultural and historical universe that is Cape Verde. “Under the Aegis of Antigone: The Tragic Dimension of Lyrical Poetry: *O Arquipélago da Paixão* by Vera Duarte” by Carmen Lúcia Tindó Ribeiro Secco considers Vera Duarte’s poetic discourse, the multiple faces and senses of passion, and in particular the tragic dimension of passion, or, in other words, “that which puts our humanness into question.” Drawing inspiration from the strength of Antigone, an allegory for the unique tragic dimension of the female, Vera Duarte’s *poiesis* draws up a critical inventory of the passions experienced not only by women, but also by the poets and by the people of Cape Verde.