

Under the Aegis of Antigone: The Tragic Dimension of Lyrical Poetry in *O Arquipélago da Paixão* by Vera Duarte

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Abstract. Drawing inspiration from the strength of *Antigone*, an allegory for the incommensurable tragic dimension in which a female is also capable of partaking, Vera Duarte's *poiesis*, in giving a voice throughout to a female lyrical subject, proceeds to draw up a critical inventory of the passions, the dramas, the whips and scorns of fate experienced not only by women, but also by the poets and by the people of Cape Verde.

Não nasci para o ódio, apenas para o amor.

[I was not born for hatred, merely for love.]

—Sophocles, *Antigone*

1. The Teeming of Passions...

Fechemos as cloacas fétidas da cidade e deixemos inebriarem-se os ares de recendidos perfumes estivais. É o preço da liberdade. Palmeiras ao sol e longas praias de areia molhada a manterem desperto o fervilhar anímico das paixões. A voz da libido. Em toda a sua violência incontrolável.

[Let us close the rank sewers of the city and let us become inebriated with the air of perfumes exhaled by the summer. It is the price of freedom. Palm trees in the sun and long beaches with moist sand will keep alive the psychic teeming of passions. The voice of the libido. In all its uncontrollable violence.]

—Vera Duarte, *Amanhã Amadrugada*

In her fine preface to Vera Duarte's *O Arquipélago da Paixão*, Simone Caputo Gomes, the Brazilian scholar and specialist on Cape Verdean literature, writes that the work fulfills a "*projeto que contempla os níveis existencial, nacional e universal, sob o signo da Paixão. Paixão que domina e liberta, paixão do eu, paixão do outro, paixão-mulher; Paixão do Arquipélago, Arquipélago de Paixão*"¹ ["an endeavor that works at various levels, existential, national and universal, all under the sign of Passion. Passion that can dominate and liberate, passion of the 'I,' passion for the other, woman-passion; Passion for the Archipelago, Archipelago of Passion"].

Our reading will also look at the multiple facets and senses of passion in Vera Duarte's poetic discourse, but it will concentrate on an analysis of the tragic dimension in this poetry, that is to say, insofar as this poetry "*coloca o ser humano em questão*" ["puts into question the human being"].

Ever since her first book, *Amanhã Amadrigada* [*Dawned Tomorrow*] (1993), Vera Duarte has tried to delve into the inner depths of the female universe, and has tried to liberate those passions that have been repressed in the unconscious of most Cape Verdean women. The author's poetry needs to be read in the context of the kind of literature produced in Cape Verde between 1990 and 2000, a literature marked by a certain disenchantment. Her poetry is included in *Mirabilis: de Veias ao Sol* [*Mirabilis: With its Veins in the Sun*], an anthology edited by José Luís Hopffer Almada and dealing with "*poética caboverdiana*" ["Cape Verdean poetry"] produced after the 25th of April [Revolution]. The failure to carry out the promises of social justice in the period after independence generated a certain amount of discouragement among Cape Verdeans, and this discouragement crept into the literary world. However, these literati took inspiration from the *mirabilis* [*mirabilis* = wondrous or marvellous], a plant that can withstand drought in a desert; a new generation appearing in the 1990s took to calling itself "*mirabílica*." The poetic intention of these people was to resist "*aos maus ventos literários*" ["the bad literary winds"], and, with this in mind, they produced a number of critical reflections about the present state of the archipelago:

Fustigada pelos ventos (da incompreensão!), pelo sol (da hipocrisia!), pelos tempos vários do mau tempo literário, desse tempo querendo-se vegetação literária. No deserto, cresce a geração mirabílica, feita signo na margem desértica do mar. De veias ao sol. As veias da indagação. As veias alagadas da terra das estradas, da poeira do dia-a-dia, do massapé dos campos, do lixo dos caminhos suburbanos, do

desespero recoberto de moscas, baratas e outros vermes. As veias loucas do mar, do marítimo lirismo dos dias afogados nos ciúmes dos montes. As veias, veias de vida, de morte, de desespero, das quatro estações místicas do que se medita no refúgio do silêncio. Veias do camponês e da enxada neste coito de séculos com a terra. Ao sol, hipócrita por entre a bruma e os cerros. Sol, signo de luz. Sol que ilumina. Sol que queima e ofusca o caminhar. Sol dependurado da perseverança secular. *Mirabilis*—de veias ao sol. Geração mirabilica indagando o sol. “No Deserto cresce a *Mirabilis*.”²

[Lashed by the winds (of incomprehension!), by the sun (of hypocrisy!), by the several kinds of literary bad weather, they expect literary vegetation from this weather. But the *mirabilica* generation blooms in the desert; it has been made into a sign in the desert that lies on the edge of the sea. With its veins in the sun. The veins of inquiry. The veins swelled-up with soil from the roads, the dust of our day-to-day, the black soil of the fields, the garbage from the pathways in the urban areas, from the despair all covered in flies, cockroaches and worms. The crazy veins of the sea, of the maritime lyricism of days drowned out in jealousies up on the hills. The veins, veins of life, of death, of despair, of the four mystical seasons about which we meditate when we take refuge in silence. The veins of the peasant and the hoe that, for centuries, has performed coitus with the soil. Under the sun, a hypocrite somewhere between the fog and the hills. Sun, sign of light. Sun that gives light. Sun that burns and whose glare makes it difficult to walk. Sun hanging up above with the perseverance of centuries. *Mirabilis*—with its veins in the sun. The generation of the *Mirabilis* questioning the sun. “In the desert grows the *Mirabilis*.”]

Vera Duarte is someone who stands out among the poetic voices of this generation; she has insisted on the right of women to have access to the eroticism of their bodies and of discourse, thus establishing a lyrical universe marked by the “*cumplicidade das fêmeas*” [“complicity of females”],³ one where woman longs to be the mistress of her own desire:

[...] choro da dor de me saber mulher feita não para amar mas para ser amada. Choro porque sou e amo. [...] Sinto-me escravizada, tiranizada, violentada. E meu ser nascido livre se revolta. [...] Por isso quero desvendar os universos proibidos e purificar-me.⁴

[...] I cry in pain at the knowledge that I am woman who is made for loving but not to be loved. I cry because of what I am and because I love (...) I feel enslaved, tyrannized, raped. And what was born within me is outraged (...). That's why I want to unmask the forbidden universes and to purify myself.]

With this *poiesis* that challenges the submission of women, the lyrical "I" breaks up the idea of the "*cais da saudade*" ["the quayside of homesickness or longing"]⁵—or "*cais da sôdade*" in Creole—that has always been used to keep Cape Verdean women in their places, back at home, on the islands. Taking a narrative tone, the poetic subject delves into a kind of poetry that is confessional and autobiographical, one that establishes the writing as "*escrita de mulher*."⁶ It is the kind of writing that rebels against the long wait of the "*mulheres-sós de Cabo Verde*" ["the Cape Verdean women who are all alone"]⁷—this is how it was described by Prof. Maria Aparecida Santilli in her critique of Cape Verdean machismo.

In the poems included in *Amanhã Amadrugada* the lyrical voice—in the feminine—is not found on land, but is floating in the immense sea, symbol of her memory and the collective imagination of her people:

[...] eu penetrava no mar, um mar verde e lodento que se me escorregava debaixo dos pés e me causava náuseas. com [*sic*] a água pela cintura e os braços em arco, passava por entre os barcos de minhas viagens de antanho, marinheiro descobridor do mundo [...].⁸

[...] I wallowed deeper into the sea, a green and muddy sea that was slipped under my feet and I was filled with nausea. With water at my waist and my arms heaved up in an arch, I journeyed among the ship of my bygone days, a seafarer discovering the world.]

She is thus able to accomplish a journey to her own source of origin. The sea is the place where Cape Verdeans seek to discover their identity, but it is also a space for existential freedom where feminine poetry may be discovered. It is a kind of poetry in dialogue, in search of a lover and a reader, and where the lines of poetry, as if in a continual coitus, allow the libido to overspill and sprout from the very act of producing a reading that opens itself to metalinguistic considerations: "*Para que servem as palavras? Para flutuar, perdida à mercê delas?*" ["What's the use of words? To float, lost, at their beck and

call?”].⁹ The woman poet wants to be the mistress not only of her body, but also the mistress of language—and this is because she has taken cognizance of the fact that she can think about the world and herself only if she has control over words.

In this first book of Vera's, the woman poet still finds herself reeling under the effects of the uncontrollable discovery of her own desires; she is driven by the drives of that “*fervilhar anímico das paixões*” [“psychic teeming of passions”] that await a tomorrow pregnant with the freedom of the dreamed dawns....

In *O Arquipélago da Paixão*, even though the lyrical subject—in the feminine—continues her song about the liberation of woman, she looks at her own passions and those of the archipelago with a greater maturity; she seeks not the “*fervilhar anímico das paixões*,” but the plenitude of Eros. Like Antigone, she seeks Love, and not hate.

2. In the web of Páthos [παθος, sickness]

Castração é perda, é falta, é limite imposto à onipotência do desejo.¹⁰

[Castration is a loss, it is a lack, it is a limit imposed on the omnipotence of desire.]

—Maria Rita Kehl

The figure of Antigone becomes an alter-ego of the feminine poetic voice in *O Arquipélago da Paixão* from the very beginning; in the dedication chosen for the book, she takes on as her own the emblematic rebelliousness of this Greek heroine of Sophocles; passions are an integral dimension of her own *poiesis*. Drinking deep from *páthos*, the essence of the tragic attitude in the face of existence, the lyrical “I” questions not only the desires and the suffering of the woman poet, but also the anguish of Cape Verdean women in general and the social pains of the people in the archipelago.

We shall begin our analysis by reminding ourselves that passions are intimately related to the tragic. Etymologically, the word “passion” comes from the [Late] Latin *passio*, *passionis*, meaning both *supplicio* [torture, death], as in the Passion of Christ, and *affectus*¹¹ [*adfectus*, feeling]. The word belongs in same semantic field as the Greek *páthos*, and it refers as much to the moral dilemmas that summon up tragedies as to the pains of love¹² that make lovers prisoners of their own feelings.

In the days of classical antiquity the two philosophies of the passion were very much opposed to each other:¹³ for Aristotle, seemingly the more condescending of the two, passion was an impulse, an element basic to humans and their *praxis*; Platonic Stoicism, on the other hand, conceived passion in terms of ascetics, something men could purify themselves of. There is an obvious split in this second conception between reason and passion; in this sense passion would be regarded as a “*desvario*” [“folly”], as “*cegueira*” [“blindness”] and as “*loucura*” [“madness”]. Insofar as “passions” drive human beings towards irreconcilable conflicts of a social or existential nature, they are the basis of all tragedies. It was not for nothing that Plato regarded these “passions” as too dangerous, and banished them from his ideal Republic.¹⁴ For a long time the *passionnel* was associated with what is pathological, with addiction and sin. Tragedy, conditioned as it was by the Stoic vision, was converted into a moral example for the atonement of human guilt when it had infringed on the laws of the gods.

A new conception of the tragic emerges, however, with the tragedies of Sophocles. Tragedy now begins to deal with man’s own solitude. The heroes in the work of Sophocles are no longer subject to divine dictates. Their actions and behavior can longer be explained by the determinism of a destiny engineered by the gods. *Agon* [ΑΓΩΝ, a contest], *Páthos* [sickness]—the essence of this new kind of tragedy—expresses the conflict between characters whose vices and virtues are fully human. Although the gods are still present, they do not intervene in forming the opinions and feelings of humans. Men are alone with their passions and need to demonstrate skill and courage in order to face their own existence. Sophocles’s *Antigone* is an example of one of these strong characters. Even as a woman, which Greek society at the time regarded as an inferior being, she fights with great nobility to preserve the sacred values of her dynasty; because she was not permitted to provide a tomb worthy for her brother’s body she preferred, instead, to be buried alive. In this act of transgressing the laws of the State, Antigone rises up as the symbol of a rebellious, feminine oratory, this in a Greece where the *Logos* was preeminently masculine.

Inspired as it is by the strength of this Greek heroine, an allegory for the incommensurable tragic dimension in which a female is also capable of par-taking, Vera Duarte’s *poiesis*, in granting voice throughout to a female lyrical subject, proceeds to draw up a critical inventory of the passions, the dramas, the whips and scorns of fate experienced not only by women, but also by the

poets and by the people of Cape Verde.

The poetic journey of *O Arquipélago da Paixão* begins with a taking cognizance of a *páthos* that renders woman passive in the face of a passion that makes her despair, blinds her and makes her dependent on the lover. The “para-text” of the inscription—which sheds light on this journey by the lyrical subject—makes an intertextual connection between Vera’s poetry and the inheritance from the *Claridade* movement, especially the insularity of which Jorge Barbosa had sung: “*Eu trago dentro de mim um pássaro fechado [...]. Bate asas—quer voar!—em ânsias desmedidas [...]*” [“I carry within me a bird with its wings tightly shut (...). It beats its wings—it wants to fly!—in its anguish that has no end (...).”].¹⁵ The desire to escape comes up against the fact that she will never be free to emigrate to Love, as it were. Feeling a sense of disquiet, the woman poet does not allow herself to take flight, but remains imprisoned in her waiting, imprisoned by the bitter taste of the betrayal: “*ai pobre de mim traída / ai pobre de mim deixada*” [“Aye, poor me, betrayed / Aye, poor me, abandoned”]. Made to feel inferior, she takes pity on herself, the sort of thing that is performed by the chorus in a Greek tragedy. But when she faces up to the abandonment of her own solitude, she accepts the tragic sense of the human condition—when it is female—and questions the foolishness of this kind of passion that drains her of all her strength and robs her of her happiness:

Mas cansei-me de meus gemidos
E de meus olhos consumidos pela mágoa
Deuses, ouvi a minha súplica
Arrebatai a minha alma
Para que despedaçada ela se liberte.¹⁶

[But soon I tired of my wailings
And of my eyes consumed by sorrow
Gods, hear my cry
Take my soul from me
So, once broken, it will be freed.]

When she begins questioning the *sôdade* [*saudade*] that has been forced on Cape Verdean women for centuries, tying them down to the quay, where they would wait for their companions forever travelling to distant countries, the lyrical voice in the “Primeiro Caderno” [“First Notebook”] comes to the lucid understanding that the absence of the lover ended up tearing her soul. Her

clarity of thought regarding this split in herself—which occurs as a result of the distance separating her from her lover—makes her feel a strange sensation, one that makes her question the passivity of her own waiting. Subverting, as she does, the theme of the “flight from the land,” so frequent in the poetry produced earlier, the woman poet longs for one thing:

[...] que este longe sem regresso
 possa varrer a dor
 e trazer de novo a vida
 no sorriso de outro amor.¹⁷

[...] may this distance that has no return
 sweep away the pain
 and bring life back
 in the smile of another beloved.]

Despite these new objectives, the lyrical “I” still finds herself besieged by the labyrinthine intricacies of a passion that is castrating of her own female identity. It is then that she invokes “*um coração guerreiro*” [“a heart that fights”]; she clamors after the example of other strong women—Sappho, Queen Ginga [Jinga], Mother Teresa¹⁸—who, like Antigone, would not allow themselves to be humiliated. Thus it is that the woman poet acknowledges the losses and frustrations that “*a paixão insensata*” [“foolish passion”] had submitted her to. However, passions that are “*desvairadas*” [“deranged”] can become the source of her liberation, because the anguish, the hurt, and the feeling of disquiet she had been subject to, can all become profound agents of change, a change towards questioning her own existence. This is in fact what occurs with the lyrical subject—written in the feminine—whose passions, at the same time that they tear her apart, push her towards self-knowledge and in search of a love that will liberate her.

3. The Plenitude of Eros

[...] o amor, por muito tempo e pela vida afora, é solidão, isolamento cada vez mais intenso e profundo. [...] O amor é uma ocasião sublime para o indivíduo amadurecer, tornar-se algo por si mesmo, tornar-se um mundo para si, por causa de um outro ser [...].¹⁹

[...] in loving, we freed ourselves from the loved one, and, quivering, endured: / as the arrow endures the string, to become, in the gathering out-leap, / something more than itself? For staying is nowhere. (trans. J. B. Leishman)]

—Rainer Maria Rilke

In the “Segundo Caderno” [“Second Notebook”], the lyrical subject goes beyond her condition as a submissive woman who has been subjugated by the misfortunes of life. She overcomes her feelings of self-pity and the sensual joy within her that has been repressed is allowed to blossom. Not longer feeling inferior to her lover, she has become her own mistress and she declares:

Mas hoje
Dona dos meus jardins
Livre e insubmissa
Ajoelho-me a teus pés
Em sinal d’amor e liberdade.²⁰

[But today
The mistress of my own gardens
Free and unyielding
I kneel at your feet
As a sign of love and freedom.]

Freed from a passion that is wholly narcissistic, the woman poet steps inside the sphere of Eros, in search of the plenitude of love that, once it has encountered the other, will spawn all the possibilities in poetry. No longer

a poesia produzida pelas frustrações da paixão, mas a poesia da paixão. A transformação dos desejos que não podem se concretizar na paixão amorosa no desejo de

outra coisa que a poesia (no sentido lato, não apenas no sentido da produção de poemas) pode realizar.²¹

[the poetry produced by the frustrations of passion, but the poetry of passion. The transformation of desires that cannot be attained in the passionate love affair—in the desire for something else—and which poetry (in the broad sense of term, not only in the sense of producing poems) can accomplish.]

The lyrical “I” takes stock of the fact that her sorrows and letdowns are greater than those of her people. She looks at what is around her and understands that the social model is in crisis. Clearly seeing that the dawn that had been announced at the time of independence was not a full dawn—after the initial euphoria all that remained “*foi o gosto amargo das desilusões*” [“was the bitter taste of disillusionment”]²²—she introduces her thoughts on politics into her art and poetry. She then makes an inventory of other kinds of passions: the ones to do with social sufferings, not only in Cape Verde, but also in another parts of the world. Aware that the present days are lacking in utopian ideals, the dearth of the old hopes that had stirred the revolutionary movements on behalf of freedom, the lyrical “I” invokes the memory of those times and of the resistance heroes who had fought against several kinds of oppression:

Quero poder ouvir
para sempre
as canções heróicas
que deram som às revoluções
[.....]
quero poder
por meus pés
cruzar ares
cruzar mares
conhecer gentes
cantar independências
e tudo que cheirar liberdade
[.....]
Que me importa se
—no fim—
ela (ainda) não foi possível

o que quero ter nos braços
 é a idéia de a Ter
 e poder cantar abril
 [.....]
 quando tudo o que restou
 foi o gosto amargo das decepções.²³

[I want to be able to hear
 always
 the heroic songs
 that gave sound to revolutions
 [.....]
 I want to be able
 to step on my feet
 to breathe different airs
 to cross the seas
 to meet different people
 to sing of independence
 and all that smells of freedom
 [.....]
 What does it matter if
 —in the long run—
 it is (still) not possible
 what I want to hold in my arms
 is the idea of having it
 and to be able to sing of April
 [.....]
 when all that remains
 was that bitter taste of disillusionment.]

In the clef note of passion, the woman finally admits to enjoying her own pleasure. She becomes, then, mistress not only of her own body, but also of her lover's body; she commandeers all the love games in a type of "*corpoamor*" ["bodylove"] with the language of poetry itself. And it is in this fever of despair that she acquires a better knowledge of herself and the world. The bodies of those who love are thus linked, and the objective distance that positivist history has erected between reason and passion is dissolved. These, merged in one sin-

gle body, are evidence that the subject can also be rational—and this is especially true insofar as human beings can be fully whole only when they feel passion:

O amor sublime não abre mão da paixão, mas sabe transformar o impossível da paixão em possibilidade de troca simbólica. É quando o outro fala comigo, é quando dois universos simbólicos se tocam, se interpenetram, frutificam, se potencializam, é nesse caso que a paixão pode se tornar aliada do amor.²⁴

[Sublime love does not open the hand of passion, but knows how to transform any impossible passion into the possibility of a symbolic exchange. It is when the other talks to me, it is when two symbolic universes encounter each other, interpenetrate, fertilize each other, discover their potential, it is then that passion may become the ally of love.]

It is the discovery of this that leads the lyrical “I” to reflect on the other kinds of passion, among which are those that involve the social suffering of the people of Cape Verde:

Quero sim
que um ódio desmesurado se acumule
e meu coração bata descompassado
a cada genocídio acontecido
pela guerra, pela fome, pela sida

Quero sim
que a solidariedade me chame
imperativa
quando as crianças
mancas
 aleijadas
 famintas
 esfarrapadas
despojos de guerras sem glória
barrarem todos os caminhos.²⁵

[Yes, I want
boundless hatred to accumulate

and my heart to beat out of measure
 at each genocide that has occurred
 as a result of war, hunger, AIDS

Yes, I want
 solidarity to call me
 imperative
 when children
 crippled
 disabled
 famished
 ragged
 the spoils of a war for which there is no glory
 will bar the way to everyone.]

Existing on a par with the disillusionment and the disenchantment is the belief on the part of the subject of the poetry—even though she is aware that society has changed—in justice and bravery, best exemplified by Antigone and Queen Ginga [Jinga, the Angolan warrior-queen]. In a text that makes intertextual references to the well-known poem by the poet Ovídio Martins, a text where he resists the idea of “leaving the country,” she, too, says, that she does not want to emigrate; she thus makes a break with the idea of insularity that has always imprisoned Cape Verdeans:

Desvendando o segredo do amor
 quero permanecer na ilha
 [.....]
 Não quero mais partir!

De malas desfeitas
 quebrarei na ilha
 a prisão das ilhas
 e voarei para lá do horizonte
 com os pés fincados na areia [...].²⁶

[As I begin to understand the secret of the love
 I want to remain on the island

[.....]

I no longer want to leave!

With my suitcases unpacked

It's from this island that I'll break down

The prison of the islands

And I'll fly to the far-ends of the horizon

My feet firmly planted on the sand (...).

The conquest of this love that is full and free allows the lyrical subject to reflect, both politically and poetically, not only on her role as a female, but on the sub-human conditions of the poor in the archipelago.

4. The Critical Inventory of Passions

Pensar a paixão é, pois, uma exigência. [...] Sendo fonte de prazer ou angústia, alegria ou tristeza, desejo ou padecimento, as paixões, em qualquer uma dessas formas, pode ser sempre uma afirmação de liberdade.²⁷

[To think of passion is, therefore, a demand. (...) Being as it is a source of pleasure or anguish, happiness or sadness, desire or suffering, passion, in any one of these forms, can always be an affirmation of freedom.]

—Adauro Novaes

In the “Terceiro Caderno” [“Third Notebook”], where she uses a more relaxed lyrical form that, visually at least, looks more like prose, the enunciator of the poetic discourse proceeds to make an inventory of the kinds of sadness and sorrow suffered by the people of Cape Verde. She begins by focusing on the day-to-day poverty of children, who live wrapped in the acrid smell of the sea and of despair. Her gesture of solidarity with these children is an intertextual reference to the Brazilian poet, Manuel Bandeira; she offers them “*Estrela da Manhã*” [“Star of the Morning”],²⁸ a metaphor for those dreams that are still to come with the dawn. She also enters into dialogue with Cape Verdean authors, among them Manuel Lopes, Jorge Barbosa, Baltazar Lopes, and António Aurélio Gonçalves; she has to rethink the dialectics of “*do partir e do ficar*” [“staying or going”] which have marked the soul of Cape Verdeans; she

questions the burden of women with faces burnt by the sun who sell fish so that they can support all those countless children with unknown fathers; she discusses the importance of the rain for that dry universe that suffers from periodic droughts. Calling on the political conscience of a poet like Manuel Alegre and the sensitivity of someone like Florbela Espanca, she dreams of a “*mundo ao avesso*” [“an inside-out world”]²⁹ that can satisfy her “*sede de infinito*” [“thirst for the infinite”]³⁰ justice and freedom.

5. Steering Feelings: Fragments from a Cartography of Love...

Dialogando com a razão, as paixões não se extinguem, mas se tornam por assim dizer menos nebulosas, mais sólidas, mais materiais: chegam à consciência de si enquanto paixões.³¹

[When they enter into dialogue with reason, passions are not extinguished, but they become, as it were, less nebulous, more solid, more material: they take cognizance of the fact that they are passions.]

—Sérgio Paulo Rouanet

In the “Quarto Caderno” [“Fourth Notebook”], the lyrical subject—who writes in the feminine—after having discovered a balance in her own subjective experience, a balance woven by the dialogue between reason and passion, steers through various feelings and estrangements, love and hate, and takes stock of that for which she is to blame and of what can be blamed on society—the collective. What she in effect does is to make a critique of the morality that, in general, the world uses to hem in passions. As she unmasks the prejudices that complicate human emotions, she makes problematic the oppression that has imprisoned men as though they were birds in cages. She focuses on crimes of passion that ruin lives fettered by the ties of submission. As she uncoils the webs of passions she also brings into question the ideas of jealousy, spite, and envy in relation “*à outra*” [“to the other”], the one in the love triangle who is always discriminated against, and socially condemned for being the one who usurped the wife’s place. She also discusses more sublime sentiments such as friendship and love. Finally, in “Juízo Final” [“Final Judgement”], she comes to understand that life and passions are transitory, made up of “*material incandescente e precário*” [“material that is incandescent

and precarious"].³² Through this act of learning of love and through the constant questioning of existence and society, she sees herself, like so many others in the archipelago, as a woman and as a Cape Verdean. The image of the "*pássaro vermelho*" ["red bird"]³³ that flies away from her in the direction of the loved one is a metaphor for the plenitude of a love that, aware of the exhaustion provoked by the intensity of passions, seeks to follow the more gentle routes that her heart has mapped out. Having liberated herself of the anguish, the solitude and the lamentation that breeds jealousy, of emotions and petty resentments, the woman poet is whole again and has attained the liberated stature of someone like Antigone. She comes to understand that she was not born for hatred, but for love. A love that is unencumbered and free, one whose tragic dimension allows her to step inside the domains of Eros and inside the heart of the poetry of passion.

Notes

- ¹ Gomes 2001, 7.
- ² Almada, Apresentação 26-27.
- ³ Gomes 1993, 63.
- ⁴ Duarte 1993, 40.
- ⁵ Duarte 1993, 40.
- ⁶ Duarte 1993, 40.
- ⁷ Santilli 1985, 107.
- ⁸ Duarte 1993, 54.
- ⁹ Duarte 1993, 38.
- ¹⁰ Kehl 477.
- ¹¹ Torrinha 609.
- ¹² Nascentes 544.
- ¹³ Lebrun 28.
- ¹⁴ Lesky 23.
- ¹⁵ Duarte 2001, 33.
- ¹⁶ Duarte 2001, 38.
- ¹⁷ Duarte 2001, 39.
- ¹⁸ Duarte 2001, 42.
- ¹⁹ Rilke, qtd. in Novaes 371.
- ²⁰ Duarte 2001, 58.
- ²¹ Kehl 484.
- ²² Duarte 2001, 61.

- ²³ Duarte 2001, 60-61.
- ²⁴ Kehl 484.
- ²⁵ Duarte 2001, 62-63.
- ²⁶ Duarte 2001, 64-65.
- ²⁷ Novaes 11-12.
- ²⁸ Duarte 2001, 81.
- ²⁹ Duarte 2001, 86.
- ³⁰ Duarte 2001, 87.
- ³¹ Rouanet 448.
- ³² Duarte 2001, 99.
- ³³ Duarte 2001, 98.

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