Imitation in Sixteenth-century Portuguese Eclogues: Diogo Bernardes, Camões, António Ferreira

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Abstract: The concept of imitation, as a creative process, allows for different ways of referring to a model text, as the author may prefer the resemblance to be more or less apparent. While it might be expected that Diogo Bernardes would follow his "mestre" António Ferreira, and stick very closely to the imitated text, in fact, like Luís de Camões, he favours imitation as Petrarch defined it, relying on similitudo. Both Bernardes and Camões aim clearly at emulation and producing an original poem, one that resembles Virgil and Sannazaro, and at the same time is entirely new.

Keywords: imitatio, aemulatio, eclogues, Diogo Bernardes, Camões, António Ferreira.

Imitation is a crucial feature of sixteenth-century poetry and lies at the basis of the creative process of such authors as Diogo Bernardes, Luís de Camões and António Ferreira. Beyond establishing a connection to a model text – a Virgilian eclogue, for

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1 I would like to thank Prof. Isabel Almeida for her observations upon reading this paper and Prof. Barry Taylor for kindly revising the text. I would also like to thank the peer review consultant for their suggestions.
instance –, it is necessary to understand the choices made by each poet in their imitative process. *Imitatio* is not a simple term, nor does it have a single and unequivocal meaning: it is rather a term that comprises different usages and possibilities and has given rise to numerous debates and attempts at definition.

Prior to the controversy that stirred such writers as Erasmus (*Ciceronianus*), Poliziano and Cortesi (in their correspondence), Pietro Bembo and Gianfrancesco Pico della Mirandola (also in their letters), amongst others, Petrarch discusses the matter of imitation in his *Familiares*\(^2\). In a letter to Tommaso da Messina (Book I, 8), Petrarch recalls Seneca’s apian metaphor (*Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, 84) and sustains the importance of transforming what is taken from other writers and conveying it in one’s own words and style. He recommends imitation as a creative process not only because it involves reading, studying and meditation, but also because it suits best those who, like himself, do not possess the ability like that of the silkworm to create *ex nihilo*.

In two letters to Giovanni Boccaccio (XXII, 2; XXIII, 19), Petrarch restates these principles – imitation should be transformative, valuing *similitudo* over *identitas*, and the writer must retain his own style. Furthermore, the resemblance must not be too obvious, but concealed\(^3\).

Regarding sixteenth-century and even early seventeenth-century poetic treatises, especially those produced in Iberia\(^4\), imitation is declared to be the best creative process, but its definition is seldom discussed. I have come upon one exception, Alonso López

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\(^2\) On this subject, *vide* George Pigman’s papers.


“We must provide that although something is similar, much is dissimilar, and that the similarity itself lie hidden [lateat], so that it cannot be perceived except by the silent searching of the mind, that it can be understood to be similar rather than said to be so.” Pigman, “Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance”, Renaissance Quarterly, vol. 33, no. 1 (Spring, 1980), New York, The Renaissance Society of America, Inc., 1980, p. 11.

\(^4\) Pigman does not include Iberian treatises.
Pinciano’s *Philosofia antigua poética*. First of all, the ambiguity of the word should be taken into account: in its most frequent usage, throughout the treatise, it is the equivalent of Aristotelian *mimesis*: poetry imitates nature through language; a poem is as much an imitation as a child imitates its mother; in this sense, everything is imitation. Its other usage, as a technical term, is only briefly discussed.

“El Pinciano dijo entonces: yo por imitacion entendiera (antes de agora) quando vn autor toma de otro alguna cosa, y la pone en obra que el haze, y Vgo, essa es tambien imitacion, porque es remedar y contrahazer a otra, y de la imitacion esta dicho que tiene su essencia en el remedar y contrahazer. Assi que essa y las demas dichas estan debaxo del genero de imitacion. Diferencianse en algunas diferencias, porque el autor que remeda a la naturaleza es como retratador, y el que remeda al que remedo a la naturaleza es simple pintor. Assi que el poema que inmediatamente remeda a la naturaleza, y arte es como retrato, y el que remedo al retrato, es como simple pintor. Y de aquí vereys de quanto mas primor es la inuencion del poeta y primera imitacion que no la segunda. Fadrique dijo entonces, pero aduertir conuiene, que alguna vez la pintura que simple dezís venze al retrato: lo qual segun el pintor, y el pincel acontecese. Dize muy bien Fadrique, dijo Vgo, que Virgilio tiene pinturas que sobrepujan al retrato y imitaciones que vencieron al inuentor, porque dexo en cosas a la pintura y siguio a la naturaleza misma. Y si los que imitan, de tal manera imitassen, no seria mucho vituperio, antes grande hazaña y digna de loor: mas no se yo para que fin imitare yo mal lo que otro escriuio y inuento bien, no lo puedo sufrir, ni aun Horacio sufrirlo pudo, el qual dize destos tales imitadores que son rebaño siervo que no tienen ingenio libre para
inuentar, y sieruo que estraga lo que otro hizo bien. Y de esta manera se ha de entender Horacio, el qual también fue imitador de otros, mas no sieruo, porque imito muy bien.”

The debate is brief, yet prolific. Here the term derives from Horace and relates to what Petrarch discussed as *imitatio*. Pinciano will not continue or attempt a thorough analysis, but what he says is paramount: those who imitate should not merely duplicate what others said, but must bring about something new and, what is more, something better. They must surpass their models – even though El Pinciano does not use the term *aemulatio*, this is his meaning.

If we consider the Horatian principles that António Ferreira enumerates in several of his poems, especially the epistle he dedicates to Diogo Bernardes, it becomes apparent the importance of *imitatio*.

Na boa imitação, e uso, que o fero
ingenho abranda, ao inculto dá arte,
no conselho do amigo douto espero.  

Então darás com glória tua o seu
grâ prémio às Musas, que te tal criaram,
vida a teu nome, qual a fama deu
a muitos que da morte triunfaram.

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Thomas Earle, whilst not using the term *aemulatio*, interprets the final verses of Carta 12, to Diogo Bernardes, as an argument for imitation as a creative process which, based on study, reflection and *labor limae*, will produce poems that contend with their models. Ferreira is not explicitly saying that one should exceed one’s models: he points out that through “good imitation” Bernardes will stand equal with the Muses, becoming one of them and achieving everlasting fame – from which we gather that the poet will have surpassed other brilliant writers.

This epistle was included in Bernardes’s *O Lima* (Carta XIII), seemingly as an answer to a letter (Carta XII) in which Bernardes asked for Ferreira’s advice and praised him as a gifted, successful and well-known poet. Diogo Bernardes presents himself as a disciple to the much-admired Ferreira:

> Confesso deuer tudo áquella rara
> Doutrina tua, que me quis ser guia
> Do celebrado monte, á fonte clara.¹

It is interesting to see whether the way an author writes corresponds to what he declares to be his *ars poetica*, as we shall see on examining the following texts: Diogo Bernardes’s Écloga XI (“Galateia”), Écloga XIII (“Lília”) e Écloga XIV (“Sílvia”); Luís de Camões’s Écloga VIII (“Arde por Galateia branca e loura”); and António Ferreira’s Écloga IV (“Lília”). The selected poems show several similarities and have in common the influence of Virgil’s second *Eclogue*.

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² Carta XII, a António Ferreira ll. 34-36, fl. 95v. All quotations from the *editio princeps* preserve its orthography and punctuation; all modifications are mentioned.

³ When referring to a poem’s title or characters I have modernized the names.
The occurrence of various elements taken from Virgil’s poem makes his influence immediately recognizable; as well as reproducing some topoi and phrases, these poems duplicate the second Eclogue’s structure. Following the poet’s brief and descriptive introduction, outlining the main character and his state of mind, the lonely shepherd delivers a monologue in an effort to attract his beloved’s attention.

Formosum pastor Corydon ardebat Alexin,

delicias domini, nec quid speraret habebat.

Tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, fagos

adsidue ueniebat. Ibi haec incondita solus

montibus et siluis studio iactabat inani:

Virgil, Eclogue II, ll. 1-5

Por Lília em vivo fogo Aónio ardia,

Lília prazer do amor; e nada tinha

o triste que esperar, e o amor crescia.

Entr’uns bastos ulmeiros só se vinha

de tristes sombras; a alma ali forçada

com só chorar, com suspirar detinha.

Ora em som triste, em voz desconcertada,

11 Virgilio, Bucólicas, edición bilingüe de Vicente Cristóbal, traducción de Vicente Cristóbal, Madrid, Catedra, 1996 (1ª edición), 2007 (3ª edición), pp. 96-100.

"O pastor Córidon ardia em paixão pelo belo Aléxis, encanto do seu senhor, mas não tinha a menor esperança. Limitava-se a vir, muitas vezes, para o meio das densas faias de copas frondosas. Aí, sozinho, com vão cuidado, lançava aos montes e aos bosques estes versos desordenados." Virgilio, Bucólicas, introdução, tradução do latim e notas de Maria Isabel Rebelo Gonçalves, [Lisboa], Verbo, 1996, p. 33.
Lília, que inda que viva, inda que moura,

o nome ouve, assi dele era chamada:

António Ferreira, Écloga IV, “Lília”, ll. 1-9\textsuperscript{12}

Ferreira follows Virgil very closely, to the point that some lines may be said to be a translation, as there is little change compared to the original. The parallels between these poems have already been mentioned by Maria Helena da Rocha Pereira\textsuperscript{13} and Thomas Earle\textsuperscript{14}, so I will just highlight some key features: the use of the verb "arder", translating the Latin form "ardebat"; the impossibility of requited love; the search for solitude and isolation; and the shepherd’s artless speech. An important aspect of the Virgilian preamble is the hopelessness of Corydon’s words, which Ferreira mirrors in his phrase "em vão" (ll. 21, 42 and 93). This repetition and the emphasis on this feeling become significant when collating a few differences between the editio princeps – which Earle prefers – and the version included in the Cancioneiro Fernandes Tomás. In line 9, the CFT version reads "não" instead of "nome", altering the meaning of the sentence: either Lília does not listen to Aónio or she hears her name being called. Given Ferreira’s stance as a faithful imitator of Virgil and the textual closeness throughout his eclogue, it is much more likely that the accurate reading is the manuscript variant. Not only does it announce Lília’s indifference, but it is also in keeping with the strong similarity the poem bears to its model. Moreover, the later remarks on the unsuccessfulness of Aónio’s song ("em vão") would not make sense if Lília could hear all along.

Another variant echoes the shepherd’s ineptitude and vain effort.

\textsuperscript{12} António Ferreira, Poemas Lusitanos, pp. 182-185.
\textsuperscript{13} “Alguns aspectos do classicismo de António Ferreira”, Temas clássicos na poesia portuguesa, Lisboa, São Paulo, Verbo, 2008 (2ª edição), pp. 27-56 (pp. 50-51).
\textsuperscript{14} See the editor’s comment ad loc., Poemas Lusitanos, pp. 550-551.
Também eu canto, também sou chamado
dos pastores poeta, e eu não os creio,
equanto de ti sou tão desprezado.  
António Ferreira, Écloga IV, “Lília”, ll. 37-39

Ferreira introduces a new element, not found in the second Eclogue: the shepherd identifies his lyrical ineptness with his beloved’s rejection. The variant verbal form (“for”) in the manuscript implies the possibility, at some future point, of Lília hearing Aónio and returning his affection; that would then validate him as a poet. Whereas the printed version (“sou”) negates that option, as the verbal tense does not allow it and actually confirms that Lília does not and will not listen, hence the uselessness of the shepherd’s speech.

This reading results in the poem insisting, repeatedly, on the same topic: Aónio’s anguish and torment, knowing he is not heard but obstinately trying to seduce his beloved – the shepherd is torn between hoping for love, easing his sorrow through his song, and acknowledging the painful rejection. The dilemma is present throughout Ferreira’s poem and only finds solution in a renuntiatio amoris, much as in Virgil.

A, Corydon, Corydon! Quae te dementia cepit?
Semiputata tibi frondosa uitis in ulmo est.
Quin tu aliquid saltem potius, quorum indiget usus,
uiminibus mollique paras detexere iunco?
Inuenies alium, si te hic fastidit, Alexin.
Virgil, Bucólica II, ll. 69-73

15 Poemas Lusitanos, p. 183; variants in the Cancioneiro Fernandes Tomás are quoted from the critical apparatus of Poemas Lusitanos.
16 Bucólicas, ed. Vicente Cristóbal, p. 100.

"Ah! Córidon, Córidon! Que loucura a tua! Não acabaste de podar a videira no frondoso ulmeiro... Porque não procuras outra coisa mais útil, como entretecer vimes ou junco flexível? Se este te desdenha, hás-de encontrar outro Aléxis." Bucólicas, trad. Maria Isabel Rebelo Gonçalves, p. 25.
Este seria, ó Lília, o meu tesouro.
Mas, ah, triste, que cuido? Estou sonhando
no que desejo, e em vão desejo, e mouro.

Aónio, Aónio, quem te está enganando?
Lília não te ouve; ao vento te desfazes.
Se se ela não mudar, vai-te mudando:
outra acharás, se a Lília não aprazes.
António Ferreira, Écloga IV, “Lília”, ll. 91-97

Ferreira’s eclogue evokes Virgil’s poem very distinctly, using a form of imitation that could be described as linear or straightforward; the poet mimics the main elements of the poem and also, with some degree of transformation, certain phrases. There is, however, no suggestion of criticism or distancing from the model text, aspects which Pigman considers characteristic of aemulatio, and Ferreira’s modifications do not make for substantial deviations.

Nevertheless, the eclogue may agree with what Ferreira regarded as "boa imitação": with thorough reading and labor limae it is possible to rival with, and perhaps surpass, the finest authors. There are few alterations, but the shepherd’s anguish and predicament are more acutely felt and the poem reveals the erudite and perfectionist poet who penned it – according to Ferreira’s principles, this eclogue might well contend with Virgil’s.

As regards Bernardes and Camões, their creative process seems to be similar. Although Bernardes might be expected to follow Ferreira’s precepts – as he himself

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17 Poemas Lusitanos, pp. 182-185.
18 “Critical reflection on or correction of the model distinguishes emulation or eristic imitation from (transformative) imitation, and this criticism is often grounded in an awareness of the historical distance between present and past [...]” Pigman,“Versions of Imitation in the Renaissance”, p. 32.
declares –, his poems do not show a linear imitation, but instead, much like Camões, he prefers the use of *contaminatio* and *aemulatio*. Sannazaro’s second *Piscatoria*, “Galatea”, becomes the predominant influence on the eclogues we shall mention; Virgil’s second *Eclogue* remains a model text, but it is also mediated by Sannazaro’s poem.

The beginning of these poems revolves around the desolate fisherman, forgetful of his tasks and absorbed in thoughts of his beloved.

Forte Lycon vacuo fessus consederat antro
piscator qua se scopuli de vertice lato
ostentat pelago pulcherrima Mergilline.
Dumque alii notosque sinus piscosaque circum
aequora collustrant flammis aut linea longe
retia captivosque trahunt ad litora pisces,
ipse per obscuram meditatur carmina noctem:
Sannazaro, *Piscatoria* II, “Galatea”, ll. 1-7\(^\text{19}\)

Arde por Galateia branca e loura
Seren, pescador pobre, forçado,
d’üa estrela cruel, que à míngua moura.
Os outros pescadores têm lançado
no Tejo as redes; ele só fazia


“The weary fisherman Lycon had chanced to take his seat in an empty cave where from the crest of the cliff fairest Mergilline is on display to the broad sea. While the others with their lantern fires are illuminating the well-known bays round about and the fish-rich waters, or at a distance are tugging to shore their linen nets and the fish that they have caught, he is rehearsing songs in the gloaming of the night.” (*id.*, *ibid.*, p. 113)
este queixume ao vento descuidado:

Camões, Écloga VIII, ll. 1-6

Despois que o leue barco ao duro remo
Onde menos das ondas se temia
Attou o pescador pobre Pallemo.
Em quanto as negras redes estendia
Seu companheyro Alcam, na branca area,
E Licio as longas cordas enuoluia.
De cima dũa rocha, aqual rodea
O Mar, quebrando nella de contino
Começou de chamar por Gallatea.
Diogo Bernardes, Écloga XI, “Galateia”, ll. 57-65

ENcheo do Mar azul a branca praya
Melliso pescador de mil querellas,
Melliso que por Lilia arde, & desmaya.
Despois que á luz da Lũa, & das estrellas
Sobre dura fateyxa o barco posto,
As redes recolheo, remos, & vellas.
Diogo Bernardes, Écloga XIII, “Lília”, ll. 1-6

CAntaua Alcido hũ dia ao sóm das agoas
Do Lyma que mais brando aly corria,
Dizem que por ouuir suas doces magoas.
Sobr’um curuo penedo que pendia
Por cima da corrente vagarosa,

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22 O Lima, fols. 41v-44v.
The inaugural scene features the lonely lover singing verses to attract his beloved and ease his pain, as in Virgil and Sannazaro. Both authors incorporate elements from different sources: Camões’s piscatory eclogue and Bernardes’s Écloga XIII are set in nocturnal scenery (as is Sannazaro’s) and both use the verb "arder" to describe the fisherman’s feelings (as in Virgil); Bernardes’s other two eclogues place the lover on a promontory, alluding to Polyphemus in Theocritus (Idyll XI, ll. 17-18) and Ovid (Metamorphoses, XIII, ll. 778-779).

In Écloga XI, the fisherman Palemo tries to convince Galateia to come to him by mentioning several sea-related mythological characters who suffered successful transformations, in some cases allowing them to find love. These allusions bring to mind several poems, notably Ovid’s Metamorphoses, detailing the transformations of Glaucus (XIII, 904-965), Neptune (VI, 115-120), Thetis and Peleus (XI, 221-265); and Melicertes-Palaemon (IV, 416-542), to whom the name of the fisherman alludes. Other poems brought to mind are Sannazaro’s Piscatoria I, "Phyllis" – the fisherman Lycidas asks Glaucus to show him the herbs that would transform him into a sea creature (ll. 45-50) – and Berardino Rota’s Piscatoria XI, "Tritone" – the poem mentions Thetis and Peleus’s love affair (ll. 55-56) and Neptune’s metamorphoses (ll. 92-94). There is also the possibility that Camões’s Écloga VI, "A rústica contenda desusada", was known to Bernardes, or vice-versa, as both poems include references to Glaucus’s and Neptune’s transformations. It is uncertain which poem is earlier and whether either was accessible and could have been known to the other poet; what is more important is that the two poets refer to the same texts and reflect similar concerns.

23 O Lima, fols. 44v-47r; I have modernized <β> as <ss>.
This web of allusions endows "Galateia" with abundance in meaning and erudition, showing the poet to be proficient and well-read. Such intertextual striving marks this eclogue out from Bernardes’s corpus – his eclogues are usually not overtly elaborated and some use rustic language\(^\text{24}\) –, and may be better understood in the light of its dedication. The person addressed is, most likely, D. Cristóvão de Távora, and the poem was probably written \(c.\ 1577\)\(^\text{25}\), when Bernardes was concerned in securing his place with the King’s retinue and army in the Battle of Alcacer Quebir (August 1578). Bernardes addresses the eclogue to Cristóvão de Távora, offering it as a gift, and asks him to protect the poet’s interests and be a patron to his poetry, promising in return to sing his feats and accomplishments in an epic poem.

Bearing this circumstance in mind, Bernardes’s choices become significant: he intends to prove himself as a poet by writing in a newly-formed and demanding genre, the piscatory eclogue and also by likening himself to Camões, whose epic *Os Lusíadas* was published in 1572. His use of *imitatio* displays his lyrical skills, knowledge and wide reading by bringing together through *contaminatio* several major texts.

This is also transparent in Écloga XIII, "Lília". By briefly alluding to Alcyone and Ceyx, Bernardes reminds us again of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (XI, 410-748), where the lovers' tragic story is told; Sannazaro's *Piscatoria* I, "Phyllis" (ll. 106-107), which mentions the halcyon birds; and Rota's *Piscatorias* III (l. 100), which contains a brief mention, and XIII (l. 143 ff), which details the affair.

"Lília" contains another interesting episode, when the fisherman evokes once having lost consciousness while calling Lília, causing him to fall into the sea. Meliso

\(^{24}\) By this I mean there is a clear effort to make the language of the poem rustic, not only in terms of vocabulary, but also phrasing, syntax, tone, etc.

\(^{25}\) On the identity of the addressee and the date of the poem, vide Ana Filipa Teixeira Leite Gomes [Ferreira], *Diversas Formas de Proteu – A Mitologia n O Lima de Diogo Bernardes*, Dissertação de Mestrado, Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa, 2009, pp. 77-86.
became completely absorbed in his song and his feelings grew more intense, so much so that in an ecstatic fit he lost all control over his surroundings and himself. He was then, like Arion, rescued by a sympathetic dolphin, which had been listening to Meliso's lovesick song. The wondrous incident recalls other poems where Arion is mentioned, particularly Virgil's Eclogue VIII (l. 56) and Berardino Rota's Egloga IV, “Amarilli” (ll. 118-123), whose Egloghe Piscatorie were certainly known to Bernardes, although Rota was not a predominant influence on the writing of this poem. It is possible that Camões's “maviosos delfins” (Écloga VIII, "Arde por Galateia branca e loura", l. 40) inspired Bernardes – or the reverse, but again in order to establish such a connection we would have to know, with some degree of certainty, which poem was written first.

The influence of contemporary Italian poetry in Bernardes is paramount; in these eclogues it becomes clear that Sannazaro is a favourite, as well as Rota, two authors well known among Portuguese poets and avid readers. Bernardes very likely read their works in Italian, as he was almost certainly able to – not only does he display the influence of several Italian writers, he also quotes Petrarch and he wrote a poem in Italian. It is nevertheless possible that Castilian translations were more easily at hand, which was probably the case for Latin texts.

Another important feature of the imitative process in Bernardes and Camões is the clear use of aemulatio, which is best discernible in the ending of their eclogues. In

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26 In the 1595 edition of Camões's Rhythmas, the author of the "Prólogo ao leitor" (probably Fernão Rodrigues Lobo Soropita) names them as the most accomplished poets in the bucolic and piscatory genres, along with Theocritus and Virgil: "A quarta [parte desta obra deu-se] a Eglogas por ser specie de composição em que se requere menos sufficiencia, & nelle deixando Theocrito, & Virgilio, teue particular excellencia Sannazaro, como nas Piscatorias Bernardino Rota." Luís Vaz de Camões, Rhythmas [...]; Em Lisboa, por Manoel de Lyra, a custa de Esteuão Lopez, 1595. For Soropita to name Rota along with Sannazaro, Theocritus and Virgil, it must mean that he was as well known as the others and very familiar to Camões's contemporaries.

27 For instance, the line “intendami chi pò, ch'il m'intend'io” (Canzoniere, 105) is quoted twice in the letters (Carta XXIV, l. 104; Carta XXX, l. 45).

28 “Poi ch'il desio che m'infiami il core” (Diogo Bernardes, VARIAS RIMAS / AO BOM IESVS [...]Com licença da S. Inquisição. / EM LISBOA. / Em casa de Simão Lopez. MDXCIV, fol. 71v
Camões’s "Arde por Galateia branca e loura", the ending is very brief and, for that reason too, less conclusive. Sereno’s final line is ambiguous: "Ditoso se o soubesses in da algum dia" (l. 64, referring to the preceding line "o que eu de tua boca estou cuidando"). On the one hand, there is some hope in having his affections reciprocated, but on the other hand the fisherman almost realizes it is a fantasy, something that could only take place in a distant, idyllic future. There is no further indication from the poet, as there is in the beginning of the poem, that the fisherman ends his song – or that he goes away. The speech hangs suspended, as if interrupted, and it remains uncertain whether Sereno persists or gives up – thus avoiding the need to make a decision.

Bernardes also opts for a suspended ending. In "Galateia", as in Sannazaro, the gloomy outcome was predicted by the idea of the forlorn lover's death becoming an warning to sailors – although unlike Lycon, Palemo does not express the wish to die. That would happen on account of Galateia's rebuff, if one day the fisherman collapsed and fell from the rock whence he calls her. But even when such a situation occurs – remember Meliso falling into the sea – the tragic ending is prevented by a fantastic and literarily recognizable explanation.

For Palemo, however, all hope is gone and the possibility of finding a new love is not even mentioned. His sorrows were sung in vain and led him to neglect his responsibilities – the despondent fisherman becomes an apathetic viewer of his boat’s wreck, having utterly despaired of ever being loved in return. Palemo does not relinquish his love for Galateia but neither does he acknowledge her rejection; he blames her for his sufferings and is defeated by her indifference, the uselessness of his song and the impossibility of a different ending. He abandons himself to complete

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29 In all of Bernardes's poetry, even in the poems of utmost despair and self-abandonment, as those relating to his captivity following the Battle of Alcacer Quebir, the idea of suicide, a voluntary act, is not permitted.
melancholy, feeling miserable and lost, as the boat was lost at sea, for loving and being despised.

As for the fisherman in "Lília" – the one who forgot himself while singing to his beloved –, he unnecessarily interrupts his song to tend to his boat, making sure it is well anchored, even though he had already done so ("Sobre dura fateyxa o barco posto"30, l. 5). Somewhat like Camões's Sereno, Meliso does not know what else he can say to seduce Lília – or perhaps he knows nothing more he can say will be effective; despite this, he is compelled by his deep feeling to keep singing. The urgency of taking care of the boat forestalls the need to make a decision, indicating that the fisherman might be unable to yield. Interrupting his song, he also suspends the problem and its resolution.

Alcido does not find an answer either, or at least he does not explain his decision, revealing some ambiguity in his perception of Sílvia’s rebuff. Towards the ending, the fisherman seems to realize Sílvia will not be persuaded by his tears and entreaties, but he wishes she be consumed by love (ll. 121-123), albeit not clarifying if for him or someone else, presumably one who would not reciprocate her affection and hence cause her the same misery Alcido is suffering. Yet he keeps calling her, as all happiness depends on her; she cannot be replaced.

His final words show his ambivalence and the impossibility of a resolution. Echoing Corydon, Alcido realizes his foolishness and Sílvia’s disdain, yet his last words show him unable to give up loving her and calling her.

Não vês que vay a magoa consumindo
A vida em duuidosas esperanças?
Ah doudo Alcido, Syluia esta se rindo,

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30 "Fateixa" is a type of anchor.
E tu de chamar Syluia, inda não cansas.

("Sílvia", ll. 142-145\(^{31}\))

Bernardes’s three eclogues might be considered as different takes on the same core situation or character (the forlorn lover), as the author explores the possibilities of the genre. "Galateia" and "Lília" are piscatory eclogues (set by the sea; both lovers are fishermen), "Sílvia" is a pastoral eclogue – Alcido is a shepherd; the riverside is a frequent setting in Bernardes and also provides another link between these three poems. They reflect different versions of the same response to rejection: self-abandonment and despondency; inability to yield and forestalling decision; and ambivalence and inability to resolve. All three endings show uncertainty and a suspension of resolution, much like Camões. Both authors’ endings are built upon *aemulatio* – they aim to surpass their models and other writers by creating a unique conclusion, distinct from what Virgil and Sannazaro wrote and unarguably their match, thus making it undeniably their own, as Petrarch and Pinciano suggested\(^{32}\).

Far from being confined to the *stilus humilis*, the eclogue is full of possibilities, allows for diversity and is able to innovate. Bernardes's "Galateia" is the perfect example of the importance assigned to the eclogue: the author attempts something new as a means to demonstrate his poetic skill; he likens the poem to he most demanding genre; and he dedicates it to an influential nobleman, a gift to act as a *quid pro quo*. Another reason, although hypothetical, could be Bernardes wanting to compare himself to a renowned literary figure of his time – assuming that he was familiar with Camões's *Écloga* VIII and also that the latter was undoubtedly appreciated as a poet. The silence

\(^{31}\) fol. 47r; I have separated the clitical pronoun from the main verb, without hyphenation.

\(^{32}\) Whether Bernardes and Camões knew the treatises mentioned is less important than that they reflect the same thoughts and views towards imitation.
both poets keep towards each other has made it difficult to determine what kind of relationship they would have kept, especially considering there is less reserve when talking to or about other people. For instance, Bernardes repeatedly declares his respect and friendship towards António Ferreira and Pero de Andrade Caminha, among others. In spite of this, it is possible to establish numerous connections between Camões's and Bernardes's poems, revealing several affinities concerning the works that influence them as well as the way they choose to imitate, preferring the contamination of texts instead of straightforward imitation.

Camões and Bernardes, perhaps against the odds, are very much alike in their creative and imitative process. Their use of contaminatio and aemulatio brings them closer in making their poems more intricate and elaborated, and the suspended resolution of their eclogues shows a similar attitude and concern. Bernardes, unlike his contemporary, works on the same subject in three eclogues, taking as a starting point Virgil’s Bucolic II, adding other sources and reinventing himself. The characters find their own unique response that defines them as individuals; at the same time, they mimic each other and other discouraged lovers. Bernardes proves that imitation, in all its forms, is a way of creating an original poem.

References


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