Gabriel's oddly worded complaint that Satan breaks the bound prescribed to his transgression. What purpose is served by the limits prescribed for Satan and cited as justification for police action by Gabriel (whom Satan designates a "limitarie Cherube" [4.971])? Gabriel does not keep Satan in custody, after all, nor is Satan punished for his transgression into paradise. Presumably, if God had wanted to erect a barrier that Satan could not cross, he might have done so, instead of entrusting Sin with the keys to hell, for example. Certainly Satan's determined progress past every obstacle expresses the extent of his ill will. On the other hand, boundary crossings by good creatures measure the intensity of their benevolence. Eventually the son of God as represented by Milton will cross profound metaphysical boundaries to compete against Satan for fallen humanity.

As a longtime reader of *Paradise Lost*, I do not feel compelled to "acknowledge the dire consequences of failing to observe boundaries." Such unwarranted acknowledgments, often urged in recent decades by many of Milton's professionally responsive readers, strike me as, well, "limitarie."

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Camões's *Os Lusíadas*

To the Editor:

I was delighted to see Lawrence Lipking's article dealing in part with a Portuguese subject and accompanied by handsomely reproduced maps, for the field of Luso-Brazilian studies has been too rarely represented in *PMLA* ("The Genius of the Shore: Lycidas, Adamastor, and the Poetics of Nationalism," 111 [1996]: 205–21). But after reading the article, I wonder if *PMLA* is ready for Lusitanian literature. The essay has disconcerting flaws, despite the broad scope and wide learning it displays.

First, an unsightly misspelling: "nunco" for "nunca" in the sixth line of an octave quoted from Camões's *Os Lusíadas* (215).

Second, "Tormentoto" (220n16), which appears in the first edition of *Moby-Dick; or, The Whale* as a name for the Cape of Storms, is used without indication of the correct "Tormentoso," found in modern, standard editions like that of Harrison Hayford, Hershel Parker, and G. Thomas Tanselle ([Evanston: Northwestern UP; Chicago: Newberry Lib., 1988] 234, 801, 914).

Third and more serious is the mistranslation of "Chamei-me Adamastor" as an imperative, "Call me Adamastor" (217), apparently to hint at a Melville-Camões connection, since Melville wrote, "Call me Ishmael." Lipking states that the translations are his own and expresses dissatisfaction with previous translators, unnamed by him, who render "Adamastor is my name," (e.g., William Atkinson) or "I am Adamastor" (e.g., Leonard Bacon). William Julius Mickle's "Great Adamastor then my dreaded name" or Sir Richard Fanshawe's "I was call'd Adamastor" are better guides to the verb tense. "Chamei-me Adamastor" contains the preterit first-person singular of the reflexive verb *chamar-se*, often used idiomatically like French *s'appeler*, Spanish *llamar-se*, or Italian *chiamarsi* where English uses the noun *name* with a possessive and the copula. Therefore, *chamei-me* corresponds to the literal "I called myself" (equivalent to a passive, "I was called by myself") or the idiomatic "My name was." One can object to translations in the present tense, since the preterit past tense is emphasized by the verb's being second in a series of three preterits: "fui" 'I was' or 'I am no longer,' "chamei," and again "fui," which contrast with the two imperfect past forms following—"andava" 'was going' and "buscava" 'was seeking.' Adamastor, then, was not his "real" or "former" name; it had been his name in a remote past. By the time of the encounter, at the end of the fifteenth century, he no longer existed but had changed into the Cabo Tormentório 'Cape of Storms' and was soon to be the Cape of Good Hope. But there is no basis whatever for the translation "Call me Adamastor."

Fourth, there is provided no reference to support the claim that hubris is present in Camões's insistence that the difference between *Os Lusíadas* and all the other epics is that his alone tells the truth (215). One can only guess what the evidence might be. I suspect that Lipking had in mind the dedication to the king (1.6–18) and that he meant Camões was guilty of hubris in claiming to be superior to other epic poets. Here Camões suggests that his heroes are real, and Portuguese, whereas the heroes of Boiardo's and Ariosto's epics are fabulous or, like Orlando (i.e., Roland), performers of imaginary deeds. I see no reason to object to this claim, any more than to the common assertion that the *Cantar de mio Çid* is superior in historicity to the *Chanson de Roland*. To admit this fact does not necessarily make the Spanish epic greater than the French one or *Os Lusíadas* superior as an epic poem to the *Orlando innamorato* and the *Orlando furioso*. It is also possible that Lipking had in mind the comments by Vasco da Gama at the end of his narrative in the fifth canto (verses 86–89). But here the words are those of the poem's hero, and they refer to the events he has narrated: "A verdade que eu conto, nua e pura / Vence toda grandilocua escritura!" 'The truth that I tell, naked

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and pure, / Vanquishes every grandiloquent writing!' We cannot assert on the basis of this passage that Camões felt his epic surpassed the poems of Homer and Vergil. Camões merely thought that the exploits of the Portuguese outdid those described in the earlier epics. And Vasco da Gama and Camões had ample reason to believe that what is told in the poem reflects the truth. Sober and reliable Portuguese historians support the account. We should keep separate what the poet says as poet and what he says from the lips of his character. Counter to the notion of Camões's overweening pride are passages of humility, where he admits his lack of talent (10.145.1–2, 10.154.1–2).

Fifth is the accusation that Camões is guilty of self-pity, supported by the lament of misfortunes he voices to the nymphs of the Tagus and Mondego. I take this passage as a plea that they make his poetic powers equal to the noble deeds he celebrates (7.78–87).

Sixth, the criticism that Camões was nationalistic and imperialistic condemns him by the standards of 1996 for being a child of the sixteenth century. Part of the miracle of *Os Lusíadas* is that by 1572 Portugal, the tinier part of the Iberian peninsula, should have achieved so much and found so admirable a spokesman.

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Reply:

Edgar C. Knowlton, Jr., makes two valid points: "nunco" is a typographical error for "nunca," and a proper translation of "Chamei-me Adamastor," in context, would be "I called myself Adamastor." My mistranslation does not, I think, invalidate doubts about whether Adamastor was the titan's "real" name (my main point), though it does undermine the faint implication that the opening of *Moby-Dick* might refer to Camões (my whimsical aside). "Tormentoto" occurs only within quotation marks in a footnote, where I correctly cite Norwood Andrews, who correctly quotes Melville.

The rest of Knowlton's arguments misrepresent my piece. Readers are free to make up their own minds about the truthfulness, self-pity, and nationalism of *Os Lusíadas*. But only an anxious defensiveness toward the poem, protecting it from any eyes but those of loyal Lusitanians, could lead to the view that my remarks are *accusations*.

Is it hubris for an epic poem to begin by claiming that, unlike others, it alone tells the truth? Of course. Aside from its fantastic episodes (like that of Adamastor), the poem presents a highly colored version of da Gama's voyage, a Portuguese "truth" adverse to African or Mohammedan "truths." My point, however, is not to condemn Camões's pride but to suggest that his evocation of Adamastor is unusually "truthful," precisely because the figure cannot be distinguished from the perceptions that conjure it up.

Similarly, my emphasis on the self-pity that suffuses Adamastor's story as well as Camões's is not condemnation but an attempt to characterize *Os Lusíadas* as an epic of longing, in which suffering "serves to palliate or humanize the appropriations of the imperialistic epic" (219). Far from a "criticism," this description balances that of some recent critics (especially Richard Helgerson and David Quint) whose view of the acquisitive and imperialistic thrust of the poem is much more unsparing. Camões finished his work when the promise of Portuguese empire was fading, and the deep sense of grievance that he expresses, along with forlorn hopes for renewal of national glory, makes the poem much richer than triumphant patriotism alone could ever achieve.

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PMLA's Criteria of Publication

To the Editor:

Domna Stanton's March Editor's Column fails to understand what the diminishing number of submissions to *PMLA* from senior faculty members and others signifies (111 [1996]: 199–203). It's a boycott, undertaken without collusion by educated people who have concluded that *PMLA* selects articles according to narrow political criteria (no Marxist, feminist, or multiculturalist premise, however counterintuitive or outrageous, may be questioned) and who see clearly that *PMLA* cares little for intellectual rigor and stylistic competence, which have long since been demoted to subsidiary importance. Many scholars will want to maintain membership in the MLA, for various practical reasons, but will not want to participate in the journal.

Stanton's column offers a case in point. It's essentially nothing more than a denunciation, although it stealthily conceals its dogmatic thesis until the antepenultimate paragraph. Stanton dismisses those who complain about tendentious criteria and lack of respect for traditional scholarship as sufferers from "idées fixes" that, in the grotesque diction of her poststructuralist prose, "inscribe the myth of exclusion that seems to permeate North American society today, the sense that someone different

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