

**A Pedophile in the Palace:  
or  
The Sexual Abuse  
of  
King Sebastian of Portugal (1554-1578)  
and its  
Consequences**

*Llorò el pueblo Lusitano para tenerle,  
y llorò porque le tuvo---*  
Manuel Faria y Sousa,  
Epitome de las Historias Portuguesas

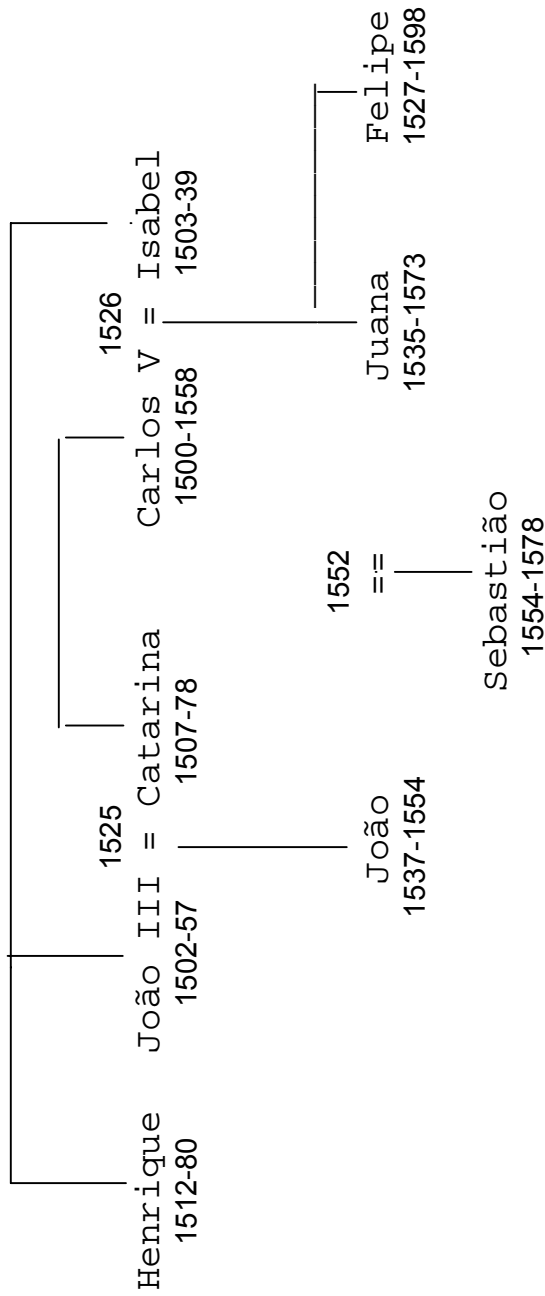
Portuguese independence hung in the balance during the first weeks of January of 1554. The reigning King, João III (r. 1521-1557), had sired no fewer than nine children---six of them male---but by 1554 all but one of them, the prince also named João, were dead.<sup>1</sup> This only surviving heir to the gravely ill king had been betrothed two years earlier, in 1552, at age 15, to the sister of Philip II of Spain, Doña Juana of Austria, aged 17. The two youngsters soon discovered an intense sexual attraction for each other and Juana became pregnant around the end of April of 1553.<sup>2</sup> But by the close of that same year prince João himself fell gravely ill with juvenile diabetes from which he died shortly afterward on 2 January, 1554. Thus the only remaining heir to the terminally ill João III, king of Portugal, was still in the womb of his recently widowed daughter-in-law, Doña Juana. Only her successful delivery of a healthy child stood between

Portuguese independence and almost certain deliverance of the nation into the control of its detested Castilian neighbor.<sup>3</sup> Thus it is understandable that the course of her pregnancy was followed with intense concern:

“ . . . God having willed the death of so many children, the prince and only heir to the kingdom. . . married at age sixteen [sic] with the princess Dona Juana daughter of the glorious emperor Charles V. . . . But His Divine Majesty ordained that a mortal illness [juvenile diabetes] would carry off this prince, thus leaving the hope of a succession to the kingdom hanging by a thin thread, (so) great care was taken that the princess would not hear of the death of her husband whom. . . she loved with an intense (strange) affection.” Then there came “ . . . the fateful hour when the desired birth pangs of the princess arrived a little after midnight of the 20<sup>th</sup> of January of the year 1554. . . the festive day of the glorious Saint Sebastian. . .” and as word of this spread about the city it was “ordered that there take place a devout procession by the religious orders and the clergy from the city cathedral to the monastery of São Domingos carrying with it the arm of the glorious saint [Sebastian] that had been brought to this kingdom at the time of the sack of Rome.” Meanwhile “ . . . with unrestrained feeling people left their houses irrespective of estate, age or quality of person and at the sacred altars [of the city] cried to God with constant tears on behalf of the only hope for this Crown. The palace square was filled with citizens their eyes glued to the Palace verandas toward which they stared in silence with their spirits on hold when just before daybreak there appeared at the windows and verandas Nobles and Ladies who stumbling over their words from excessive joy announced the happy news that the Princess had given birth to a prince for Portugal. . . .”<sup>4</sup>

In gratitude for his safe delivery the young prince was named Sebastian after the saint on whose day he came into the world.<sup>5</sup>

### Genealogical Table



Not long after his birth a Castilian physician in attendance on this mother, Dr. Fernão (Fernando or Fernán) Abarca Maldonado, cast the infant's horoscope. Relying closely, almost slavishly, upon Ptolemy's Tetrabiblos,<sup>6</sup> and using the time, date, and location of his birth as coordinates he cast the infant prince's horoscope to inform the royal court of what lay in store for him.<sup>7</sup> Some of Maldonado's predictions came true, while others (such as that Sebastian would have a dark complexion and hair and black eyes) did not. In fact tossing a coin or pure chance would likely have done as well. And salient among the physician's less felicitous predictions were those regarding Sebastian's sex life, that is to say, his relationships with women and his expected marriage. Here is what Maldonado said he found in casting Sebastian's horoscope:

"I say that this newborn will be very much given to his pleasures with women. . . . The moon in the eastern quarter says that he will marry in his youth and his wife will be a good and honest woman as is indicated by Jupiter being in the Seventh House. Although Venus in Capricorn gives him a great inclination toward sexual activity, this will be in the context of a lawful marriage. The time for this will be found by the directions of Venus and Venus in the Eleventh House gives promise of sons which is confirmed by the Head of the Dragon of Jupiter and Mars in the Fifth House says these sons will be handsome, noble, and lucky."<sup>8</sup>

In short, the young king would have a strong interest in the opposite sex and be married early in life to a "good" woman by whom he would have many children. This welcome prediction seemed certain to guarantee the future of Portugal as an independent kingdom. Unfortunately all of these predictions of Maldonado's horoscope turned out to be completely wrong. In reality, Sebastian was a vast disappointment to a people hoping for a king whose marriage would reestablish the royal lineage and thus protect the independence of the country. Not only was he unmistakably misogynic but he

managed to wiggle skillfully and determinedly out of every potential marriage alliance that could be arranged for him. The result was, of course, a king without offspring who went on to bring the Portuguese royal house to an end with his death twenty-four years later in the ill-fated battle of Alcázar Kebir.

Portuguese historians consequently have been unsympathetic, even harsh, in their judgments of Sebastian, though few have been quite so intemperate as the usually serene polymath, António Sérgio. Here is Sérgio's vitriolic assessment of Sebastian and his reign:

"It is not exactly his imprudence that we deplore in King Sebastian but the stupidity, the silliness, the explosive morbidity, the pointless ferocity, the constant idiocy of this impulsive degenerate who was completely devoid of the qualities of command indispensable for the execution of what he aspired to do. If, for example, chance had given him victory at Alcázar Kebir, soon other asinine actions would have finished him off, since the gift of perpetually spouting forth asinities was a congenital defect in this young man."<sup>9</sup>

Thus was young Sebastian excoriated as stupid, "nutty", silly and impulsive, in sum a "degenerate" out of whom "asinine behavior spouted in a perpetual jet". Elsewhere Sérgio was even more blunt, calling Sebastian "that unsurpassed piece of an ass" ("esse inexcedível pedaço de asno").<sup>10</sup> While not going to quite the same lengths as Sérgio, few other Portuguese historians have come to Sebastian's defense. By and large he is viewed unsympathetically by most of those who recount his reign.

This can be seen from a review of the various assessments of Sebastian to be found in some major recent general histories of Portugal.<sup>11</sup> We will choose four as representative: those of Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão (1978); of Francisco de Sales

Loureiro (1983); of Joaquim Romero Magalhães (1993), and of João Alves Dias, written in collaboration with Isabel and Paulo Drumond Braga (1998).

J. V. Serrão notes that Sebastian and his reign, in spite of all that has been written on the topic, are still matters of debate, especially due to his importance as the symbol of the loss of Portuguese independence. He goes on to opine that in order to produce a definitive study there are still lacking the "indispensable mental tools" that ought to include an understanding of the young king's personal impulses and motivations. Serrão concludes: "We believe that the history of Sebastian that will be erected some day will have to be more psychological than documentary." He further points out that Sebastian's correspondence reveals him to be "confused, almost never responding to questions put [to him]" and speaks as well of his "affective frigidity that explains his reluctance to get married",---if his "strange illness" does not already explain that. In sum Serrão is of the view that Sebastian never married due to his "precarious health, psychological perturbations and lack of motivation". He also thinks Sebastian's illness contributed to his "unbalanced personality, lack of good sense, impulsiveness inability to reflect as well as his capricious demand for obedience". One should note that while Serrão clearly believes that Sebastian's illness is the cause of most of the "oddities" of his personality and problems of his reign he never ventures to say what it might be, limiting himself to calling it "strange", and offers no clue where it may have come from.<sup>12</sup>

Some five years later, in 1983, Francisco de Sales de Mascarenhas Loureiro, already known for his earlier work on Sebastian, attempted a general survey of the reign for the multi-volume history edited by José Hermano Saraiva.<sup>13</sup> He explains that many of Sebastian's actions resulted from what he terms his "psychological alterations" that came from having been born after his father had died and to a mother who left him in the care of a grandmother and a granduncle when he was only three months old . With

regard to Sebastian's failure to marry, he recognizes that a "certain historiographical current" blames Luís Gonçalves da Câmara (Sebastian's tutor/confessor) as the "moral [sic] author" of Sebastian's misogyny or misogamy. But this idea, he claims, is refuted by the account of his life by Padre Amador Rebelo. For Loureiro it was not the brothers Câmara or the Jesuits who prevented Sebastian from marrying, but rather his uncle Philip II. In fact Loureiro never comes to grips at all with the question of Sebastian's illness nor how he contracted it, nor much of anything else about his personality that was certainly not the model of normality suggested by Loureiro's account.<sup>14</sup>

Ten years later, in 1993, another sixteenth century specialist, Joaquim Romero Magalhães, turned his attention to Sebastian in the section he wrote for the eight volume history edited by José Mattoso. Sebastian's defects of character are attributed here to his having been inundated from childhood with references to his long hoped for and miraculous birth. These, Magalhães thinks, left him feeling immune to the accidents of fortune and unwilling to settle for the role of a bureaucratic administrative king. In addition, opines Magalhães, his "almost incestuous lineage" probably produced some "genetic defects". With no father or mother present, and brought up without much control by complacent grandparents, his Jesuits teachers turned him into a religious zealot and anti-Muslim crusader long after the crusades. Magalhães never discusses Sebastian's odd absence of any known sex life or his physical malady beyond a casual mention that he avoided marrying due "possibly to illness or misogyny". That is all that he says about that---in short, precious little. But since the king's failure to marry or beget children was absolutely crucial for his reign as well as for Portugal's future, the author's facile dismissal of these questions is odd indeed and shows how very loath Portuguese historiography has been to "peek under the carpet" to get a better grasp on the truth.<sup>15</sup>

Five years after Magalhães, another account of Sebastian and his reign appeared in the Nova História de Portugal series (edited by Joel Serrão and A. H. de

Oliveira Marques) that was written by three historians conjointly.<sup>16</sup> This summary of Sebastian and his reign attributes his "difficult behavior" to a "certain psychological imbalance" and "deficiencies in his education" as well as to the genetic results of repeated intermarriages, but clears him of being an epileptic or diabetic. Still, with regard to his penile discharges, these are minimized by claiming they were merely "wet dreams" (*espermatorreia*) and nothing more.<sup>17</sup>

It is obvious that all these accounts, written over a twenty year period from 1978 to 1998, clearly "beat about the bush", never coming to grips with the fundamental issues, in spite of the fact that these were made perfectly clear by Queirós Veloso in the chapter he wrote over seventy years ago, in 1933, for the Barcelos history of Portugal.<sup>18</sup> Indeed one might well say that most of the work on Sebastian in the seventy years since 1933 has simply backpedaled on what Veloso had achieved in understanding the child and his reign; backpedaling done in an apparent attempt to somehow varnish the facts to make them look "nicer" and cover up the truth rather than pursuing it to its proper conclusion. The Veloso chapter, although it makes no attempt to determine the exact cause of Sebastian's illness, is more than explicit enough about what it was for any person (even slightly knowledgeable) to perceive that it was a sexually transmitted disease, almost certainly gonorrhea or chlamydia, possibly both. Drawing on Danvila y Burguero's richly informative biography of Cristobal de Moura<sup>19</sup> and the copious correspondence from Castilian agents at the Portuguese court on which the book is based, Veloso spells out the course of Sebastian's malady in considerable detail. First appearing at age ten, it never left him for the rest of his life.<sup>20</sup> This would immediately undermine any idea that it was merely wet dreams or a urethritis caused by some aggressive medical treatments. Furthermore the constant reports on the vicissitudes of the disease, its exacerbations as well as its remittances, that Philip II's agents sent to Madrid make it clear that it was chronic and uncured. But instead of picking up on



Veloso's information and pursuing it, Portuguese historians went to work to deny it and to explain it away. Two milestones in this effort are a book by Mário Saraiva and a long article by Joaquim de Moura Relvas.

Moura Relvas' study, described by Sales Loureiro as "very well structured" ("muito bem estruturado") and "furnishing information that fits perfectly with the results of the most recent historical investigation" ("fornecendo dados que se adequam perfeitamente com os resultados da mais actualizada investigação histórica") is in fact highly comical to a minimally informed reader of today. The naiveté of his arguments make it unnecessary to detail them here. Let us simply say that, apparently an advocate of the somatic and phrenological diagnosis of illnesses, he spends many pages analyzing paintings of Sebastian in which he finds, not quirks of the painters, but rather clear evidences of Sebastian's health and virility or lack thereof. He concludes that Sebastian's penile discharges were nothing more than a banal urethritis that became chronic since it "installed itself" in a "diabetic terrain."<sup>21</sup>

Another investigator, Mário Saraiva, armed with some medical credentials, also goes to great lengths to refute any idea that Sebastian had a sexually transmitted disease. Drawing upon his expertise, such as it may have been, as a graduate in medicine from the University of Coimbra in 1936, he undertakes to tell us what we need to know about Sebastian's health. To his mind, Sebastian's urethritis (which he acknowledges) was merely the result of mistreatments by his physicians. And what were these erroneous treatments? Taking as his point of departure some medical treatises on the malady written over a century or more later (one from 1688; the other from 1843)<sup>22</sup> he anachronistically argues that Sebastian was treated by "invasive" methods (syringes, etc.). These "turned" what was only "wet dreams" ("espermatorreia") into urethritis. In fact the sources tell us what treatments Sebastian received. He was bled often (and this would explain his repeated attacks of vertigo) and had plasters (emplastos) applied, plus

being given "syrup of endive" to drink to cool his liver.<sup>23</sup> There is nothing whatsoever to indicate that the syringes or rectal lavages ("lavatórios deffecativos") imagined by Saraiva were ever employed and, even if they were, how they could turn "wet dreams" into urethritis is far from clear. Apparently for Relvas and Saraiva it was simply impossible, a priori, to believe that Sebastian might suffer from something so socially embarrassing as a sexually transmitted disease, and therefore he did not.

In short, since 1933, or for the last seventy years, Portuguese historiography has been engaged in an effort to muddy the waters about Sebastian and his illness, all in an attempt to run away from some unpleasant facts that do not "look good." The idea that a young king could be the victim of sexual abuse in the palace is apparently just too outlandish for Portuguese historians to accept.

Therefore, to date, there has been no advance in the study of Sebastian himself in contrast to some excellent work on the events of his reign.<sup>24</sup> As a result, the life of King Sebastian of Portugal is in need of a thorough-going make-over. The present biographical picture of him rests upon far too many misconceptions and confusions with regard to his early years, and especially with regard to his sexual development. As Freud reminded us, and with reason, an individual's sexuality is the key, indeed the paradigm, for his character and personality and this was certainly as true of Sebastian as of anyone else. In Sebastian's case his abnormal sexual development led to his remaining unmarried and without issue until his death without issue at age twenty four, and it was these two factors that led directly to the Castilian "captivity" of the Portuguese Crown and state during the sixty years from 1580 until 1640.<sup>25</sup>

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Better to understand what happened to Sebastian one needs to examine with attention the circumstances of his childhood. His father, a victim of juvenile diabetes, died shortly (18 days) before his birth. Juana de Austria, his widowed mother,

was a young foreigner without much if any support at the Portuguese court. In addition her marriage contract had specified that she would be free, if necessary, to return to Castile after doing her duty in producing an heir to the Portuguese throne. And return she did, some three months after his birth, not out of choice, or abandonment of her son, as some seem to think, but because she was ordered by her brother, Philip II, to replace him by acting as regent of Castile while he was away in England to wed Mary Tudor.<sup>26</sup> Thus, doubtless with regret, but forced by circumstances, his mother left both Portugal and her baby boy and returned to Castile, never to lay eyes on him again. She did, however, write to him from time to time, as well as send emissaries to give her an account of him. In addition she commissioned paintings of him so that she might see what he looked like.<sup>27</sup> As a result Sebastian grew up deprived both of a father who could act as his protector and a mother in whom he might confide. In their stead responsibility for his upbringing fell to his grandmother, Catarina, wife of King João III, and his grand uncle Henrique, João III's brother. They in turn selected a set of caretakers for him, the most important being an aió or guardian, D. Aleixo de Meneses, as well as a tutor and a confessor. The choice of the best persons to fill these latter posts was a matter of some conflict between his grandmother, Catarina, leader of the Castilianophile group in the court, and his granduncle, Cardinal Henrique, who headed the Portuguese "nationalist" party. Catarina, who insisted upon Sebastian's sleeping in her rooms at night until he was seven, and who made him take his meals with her until late September of the year 1563 when he was nine years old<sup>28</sup> wanted either Frey Luís de Granada, a Dominican, or Frey Luís de Montoya, an Augustinian for his tutor, while his granduncle Henrique insisted upon a Portuguese and a Jesuit. Cardinal Henrique's wishes prevailed and unfortunately, as it turned out, the role of tutor (and also that of confessor) was taken by Padre Luís Gonçalves da Câmara.

Câmara was one of the first generation of Portuguese Jesuits and came to court with a highly "variegated" past. He had been the amanuensis to whom Ignatius de Loyola dictated his Autobiography in 1553 and 1555.<sup>29</sup> He also had spent a considerable period of time in Muslim North Africa where he was part of a group of Jesuits who undertook to give spiritual succor to Christian prison laborers in Tétuan. In order to "comfort" them as much as possible, his biographer says, Câmara and his colleagues took to sleeping alongside the prisoners in the dark semi-dungeons (*enxovas*) where they were kept imprisoned when not working. It was during this period of service that Câmara reportedly became "ill" from an unspecified malady and went off to Ceuta to recover.<sup>30</sup> But more about the significance of all that later.

Thus, aside from his grandmother Catarina, the adult most constantly in contact with Sebastian was his tutor and confessor, Câmara. Aided by his assistant, Padre Amador Rebelo, who was entrusted with teaching Sebastian to read and write, Câmara undertook to instill in the child prince the rudiments of culture. Sebastian would sit in a chair indicative of his importance, while Câmara, seated in front of him on a stool, would read the Latin and Portuguese texts the boy was expected to copy and absorb. The lesson period was carefully timed with an hour glass. In spite of those such as Sebastian's grandmother, Catarina, who mistrusted him for reasons the sources never completely explain, Câmara was generally held in high repute due to the extent of his learning if not for the grace of his appearance. He was described as afflicted with a stammer ("gago") and looking ugly and "brutish" with one blind eye. His verbal discourse however was sweet and soothing and his manner suave and ingratiating.

And so matters went until Sebastian's tenth year (1564) when the boy first gave outward signs of a disturbing malady that was described as "seminal fluxes" or more specifically, a creamy discharge from his penis.<sup>31</sup> Doctors were called, plasters applied, bleedings done at night, etc., but good health never returned to Sebastian. Though

physically strong and athletic, he thereafter suffered from numerous chronic physical complaints.

Given his importance as the guarantor, indeed the only assurance, of continued Portuguese independence and his significance on the European royal marriage market, there was considerable foreign interest in his medical problems. Phillip II of Spain, his uncle, went so far as to send special agents to the Portuguese court to keep him informed about Sebastian's health.<sup>32</sup> Even Catherine de Medici, given the potential of Sebastian as marriage material for a French princess, took note. And it was her agent at the Portuguese court, the baron of Fourquevaulx, who finally put his finger on the embarrassing truth about Sebastian's mysterious malady. Without mincing words he identified it in a letter to her as "gonorrhoea".<sup>33</sup>

How did Sebastian become infected? First we need to pay attention to his age when the malady first appeared. Today, and assuredly also in the sixteenth century, the appearance of a sexually transmitted disease in a ten year old boy is almost certain evidence of sexual abuse by an adult. And there is no reason to think that in the sixteenth century the likely source would be far different from today---that is to say, almost always the culprit is found to be someone close to the child in whom he trusts and who exercises strong influence over him.<sup>34</sup> In Sebastian's case this would clearly be his tutor, Padre Luís Gonçalves da Câmara, who first became his confessor in 1560, a post that he held until 1566, the year after Sebastian's symptoms became known to the court, when he was dismissed by Sebastian's grandmother, Queen Catarina.<sup>35</sup>

It seems quite possible that she had made some connection between Câmara and Sebastian's illness. An undated document published by Luciano Ribeiro tells of Catarina's dismay and frustration at her inability to alter Sebastian's "vicious" life style.<sup>36</sup> Sebastian's guardian (aió), D. Aleixo de Meneses, also warned her that Câmara already knew the physical "nature" of the boy king and would soon take control of his mind.<sup>37</sup>

The Portuguese word *Meneses* used for "nature" was "natureza". Since the term "natura" was used by the Portuguese Inquisition at the time as a synonym for a male's genitalia, this choice of word carried a strong suggestion that Câmara had had sexual "knowledge" of the king.<sup>38</sup> In addition, Montoya's eagerness to leave the position of confessor and relief when he did so would take on added meaning if he had been called in to replace a confessor with whom Sebastian had been having sexual relations.<sup>39</sup>

The possibility of sexual abuse in the confessional was great. The confessor-penitent relationship was ripe with temptations for unscrupulous and predatory confessors. In his study of sexuality in the confessional during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Haliczzer points out that :

"As Freud was the first to acknowledge, power imbalance in a relationship can make for a potent aphrodisiac, and this was true of the confessional relationship. Kneeling before them during confession and revealing their deepest secrets, it became all too easy for penitents to idealize their confessors and for confessors to take advantage of their penitents' need for affection and approval."<sup>40</sup>

Even Jesuits were not immune from such temptation, as a letter that Ignatius de Loyola sent to members of the Society implied. He advised them to make sure when they heard confessions from women *or young men* (italics ours) that they should have the penitent kneel beside their chair, not in front of it.<sup>41</sup>

Other fingers also point directly to Câmara as the source of infection. One piece of evidence indicates the high likelihood that Câmara himself was infected with chronic gonorrhea. Blindness in one (not both) eyes is a very common result of untreated gonorrhea and as was noted earlier Câmara was described as exactly that--blind in one eye.<sup>42</sup> Câmara also was ill through much of his adulthood, suffering from "many and great pains" that would certainly be consonant with chronic gonorrhea.<sup>43</sup> Additionally,

there is Camara's own statement in a letter to Rome in which he admits to knowing about the king's illness a year before it became general knowledge in court circles.<sup>44</sup> And finally, there is the testimony of Sebastian's aió indicating concern about the relationship between Câmara and Sebastian. In short, Meneses was implying that the confessor was already in control of Sebastian's body and was intent upon gaining control over his mind too. In fact he did just that, to such a degree that he became the object of a scathing denunciation along with his brother, Martin, to whom Sebastian in effect turned over the government of Portugal upon reaching his majority in 1568. The attack came from the eminent humanist, Jerónimo Osório (1506-1580) in a series of letters, his Cartas Portuguesas, that claimed Sebastian was being held "captive" by the two brothers Câmara and implied that their relationship with him was highly "unsavory."<sup>45</sup> The idea that he was having sexual relations with one or both of them also became common rumor as evidenced by anonymous fliers posted in public places in Coimbra accusing Sebastian of being "abarregado" (in a state of concubinage) with the brothers.<sup>46</sup>

The physical effects of Sebastian's chronic and incurable infection are clear from the sources. For example, he had pains in his groin or scrotum that shifted from his left side to his right and that made it at times painful for him to ride horseback. He had characteristic eye inflammations. He slept fitfully, often getting up again after having gone to bed. And he suffered from fevers and chills ("calafrios") that he attempted to counter by wearing thick warm leggings. All of these are typical symptoms of untreated gonorrhea.<sup>47</sup>

There were also psychological effects resulting from this trauma. First and most apparent was Sebastian's avoidance of women, to such a degree that he seemed almost allergic to them. As Faria y Sousa's História del Reyno de Portugal described the situation:

"He had no desire for that which men desire most. The power of [feminine] beauty was banished from his eyes. There never was a woman whom he courted. . . . A young and handsome sovereign Prince detested his own nature and the marriage bed." <sup>48</sup>

Did Sebastian then simply abjure sex and sexual expression? Some pious historians apparently would like us to believe so. However, less naive people know perfectly well that young men seldom if ever renounce sex during the years when their libido is strongest, and while not every male victim of homosexual abuse becomes a homosexual himself, that is certainly one possible outcome. Whether the person in question does or does not most likely depends upon environmental influences as well as a possible genetic disposition. In Sebastian's case, however, the evidence is clear that he did develop a homosexual orientation and apparently became a practicing one.

Although his homosexuality is, of course, never explicitly stated as such in the sources, as far as I know, nonetheless, it is clearly revealed in various stories (heretofore ignored as irrelevant or merely indicative of his odd behavior) about him and his activities during his youth and early manhood. For these we need to turn again to Manuel de Faria y Sousa's História del Reyno de Portugal and examine the accounts given there about Sebastian's unusual behavior. They present clear evidence that he often spent several hours at night searching about for homosexual opportunities or in what would be called "cruising" in present day gay parlance.<sup>49</sup> A couple of passages from the História will make this clear:

"Next to the Palace in Sintra there is a wood so thick that even during the day it is frightening to anyone who goes into it alone; but Sebastian often got up at night to go walking in it for a couple of hours by himself."<sup>50</sup>



The fact that this has either not been noticed or understood and certainly not discussed by Portuguese historians is probably due either to their ignorance about, or to their unconscious abhorrence and avoidance of, what it suggests. Clearly Sebastian was not wandering in the woods lost in philosophical thought or contemplating the starry heavens. He was not the "philosophical" type and it would have been difficult, indeed impossible, to see the stars well, if at all, from under the trees in a thick woods. Rather it is likely---in fact I would say it is "certain"---that he was doing what young men who have no interest in women do when they ramble about in parks and woods at night---seeking homosexual partners for quick sex.<sup>51</sup>

But Sebastian's gay nighttime adventures did not always take place in the woods or forest near the palace in Sintra. At other times he met, apparently by some prearrangement, mystery men on the beach across the river Tagus or in the dunes behind the beach. Here is the passage describing such activities.

"After having gone to bed he got up again at around eleven at night with his pageboy<sup>52</sup> Don Álvaro de Meneses, and going out to the beach he went on ahead and after one or two hours came back. Often with Sancho de Tovar, at the same hour, he crossed the Tagus in a boat, jumped out onto the beach where he met another boat that had come from Belém from which another man emerged and after walking on the beach for one or two hours they went their separate ways without anyone knowing what he had been talking about or with whom."<sup>53</sup>

We cannot know how often he "scored" during his nighttime cruising expeditions since "normal" people who might witness what was happening were not out wandering in the woods or on the beach in the middle of the night. But his cruising for sex was apparently not limited to nighttime strolls in the woods around Sintra or on the banks of the Tagus River. There is also an account of an episode with a black boy in the woods

near Almeirim that took place during the day and for which we do have witnesses. Here is the way the História tells the story:

"Another time in Almeirim he was waiting in a tree for a wild boar to pass by; when he sensed a rustling noise in the leaves he took a look and espied a bulky form; so he descended in a hurry and tackled it; the noise of the struggle brought some hunters to the place, thinking that the king was fighting with some monster, but they found him in the embrace of a savage black who days ago had run away from his master and was living with the wild beasts of that woods.<sup>54</sup>

The story needs to be recast, however, the better to reveal the actual sequence of events. It should be noted that the explanation for why he was found to be "embracing" a black in the woods had to have come from Sebastian alone, since the puzzled hunter- witnesses only arrived *after* all this had supposedly taken place to find him already "in the black's embrace". Thus we can reconstruct the events as follows:

1. Some hunters in the woods near Almeirim heard noises that sounded like a struggle (*lucha*) and went to investigate.<sup>55</sup>
2. When they arrived they found young king Sebastian in the embrace of a fugitive black.
3. Sebastian, surprised by their arrival, explained to them that he had been waiting in a tree for a wild boar to pass by. When he heard a rustling noise in the leaves he descended and attacked the figure, thinking it to be a wild boar, only to discover after struggling with it that it was a black fugitive slave.

His explanation must have puzzled his listeners however for several reasons. It was not customary to go hunting for wild boar by oneself, not was it common to wait for them in treetops and then jump down and attempt to wrestle them to the ground with one's bare hands, there being no mention of any weapon in the story. Rather they were

hunted in an elaborately systemic manner by men on foot, assisted by monteiros and moços along with a pack of attack dogs, and when the boar was cornered it was killed with short daggers (“azcumas”) or with spears.<sup>56</sup> Indeed, since the explanation given by Sebastian doesn’t make much sense at all, it is quite clear that what we have here, covered up, was a sexual liaison in the woods (that can, depending upon intensity, sound like a struggle or *lucha*) noisy enough to attract the attention of some nearby hunters who, when they arrived, found the young king in the arms of a black. To explain the very odd circumstances in which he was found, Sebastian made up his implausible hunting story---a story strange enough to be remembered long after the event.

The only reasonable interpretation of all these strange stories is that Sebastian was engaged in nocturnal and sometimes daytime "cruising" expeditions, typical of homosexuals seeking anonymous sex. Given all the rest that we know about him---his allergic reaction to women, his pre-teenage gonorrhea---there can be really no other plausible explanation for a young king to be meeting strange men on the beach at midnight or be surprised in the woods in the embrace of a black. More discreet sources merely refer to his spending his nights carousing with young men of low morals,<sup>57</sup> but Faria y Sousa is much more explicit about what he or they were doing and make clear, I think, the homosexual nature of his nighttime forays.<sup>58</sup>

In addition what affection he did feel and demonstrate was directed only to male friends as far as we know. Another passage in the História makes this clear: “Don Álvaro de Castro, his favorite, died and some nights Sebastian went out with some noblemen and leaving them some way behind went on the grave of Don Álvaro where they could hear him talking and then saw him come back with tears in his eyes.”<sup>59</sup>

Furthermore, lest one think that homosexual activity would not have been tolerated at the court of King Sebastian, there is good evidence that, in spite of his own

attempts to project a personal image of hyper-masculinity through incessant jousting and hunting, the young noblemen of his court were not at all adverse to demonstrations of openly gay behavior, if we can credit a passage of Francisco Manuel de Melo in his Carta de Guia de Casados:

". . . and how can one believe that in the reign of King Sebastian, when men pretended to be made of iron in imitation of the excesses of the king, it was the custom for young noblemen to go around with their bodies pressed up against those of their pages, the way women do today. And this bad habit came to such a pass that when they played ball and went from one side of the court to the other they would not do so without calling their pages to come support them with their bodies. They would say "Haaaaa" stretching out the word and the rest of them spoke in an effeminate manner that was the custom of the time."<sup>60</sup>

If this was their behavior in public, what might not they be doing with their pages in private?

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Let us now sum up the arguments that we have presented regarding Sebastian's sexual abuse and the consequences of this for him and his reign.

1. There can be no reasonable doubt, given all the evidence, but that Sebastian contracted gonorrhoea and/or chlamydia at age ten, and very possibly both since the two are often transmitted together. His "seminal fluxes" cannot be brushed away as nothing more than adolescent "wet dreams" since his "morbo" continued to recur, off and on, throughout the remainder of his life until his death at age 24. Furthermore, since natural ejaculation normally begins in adolescent males around age twelve and a half, to have "discharges" as early as age ten is a certain indication of a sexually transmitted disease.

Nor can it be argued that it was contracted "indirectly", as some pious historians have claimed, since this is virtually impossible in the case of sexually transmitted diseases.

2. Since the symptoms first appeared at age ten, it is virtually certain that he was infected as a result of some sexual initiation [today we would say sexual abuse] by an adult. In virtually all cases---and this would be as true in the sixteenth century as in the twentieth---such abuse comes either from a family member or someone closely associated with the family who occupies a position of trust and has intimate contact with the youngster. In Sebastian's case, this would almost certainly be his tutor and confessor. His aió Meneses could hardly be the guilty party for he was highly critical of the unhealthy relationship and dominant role that his confessor had over Sebastian. Furthermore, we do have two pieces of evidence that provide a means to identify the abuser.

(a) The statement of Meneses that Câmara had already gotten to "know the nature of the king" and was next attempting to gain control of his mind. In the context, Meneses's use of the word "naturaleza" needs to be read in a physical sense, referring to the dichotomy of body vs. soul. In short he implied that Câmara had already gained carnal knowledge of the king and was next attempting to gain control of his mind.

(b) Sebastian's confessor, Luís Gonçalves da Câmara was blind in one eye, a common and visible symptom of untreated gonorrhea. Although one cannot know for certain where or how he became infected, it seems quite likely that this could have been while sleeping with the Christian captives in Tétuan.<sup>61</sup> Thus our conclusion that of the various people around Sebastian at the time it was most probably Câmara who had gonorrhea and therefore the most likely person to have transmitted the disease to Sebastian, almost certainly during a private session of confession. It is also interesting to note that Sebastian, in contrast to even the most pious members of the court, appeared

strangely attached to confessing very often, going every week instead of only once a year as was customary for most members of the court.<sup>62</sup>

3. Sebastian's various ailments as they are related by contemporary sources all are consonant with the diagnosis that he suffered from untreated gonorrhea. He had the penile discharges that are the primary symptom of gonorrhea. He had pains in his scrotum, that shifted from his left side to his right and back again, also typical of untreated gonorrhea, and severe enough that he found it painful at times to mount to ride horseback. In fact, taking all his symptoms together one can speculate that his untreated gonorrhea may have produced Reiter's syndrome (reactive arthritis) in Sebastian. The only treatments that he is known to have received from his doctors were the application of "emplastos" and bleedings at night; the latter in turn were most likely the cause of the "tonturas" and fainting spells from which he suffered since these would be logical result of the excessive blood loss from repeated bleedings; plus later "syrup of endive" intended to "cool" his liver was given him by mouth.

4. Sebastian's personality also displayed a number of the psychological symptoms that often result from sexual abuse. He was disassociative, as his written letters demonstrate; he took refuge in an obsessive pursuit of hyper-masculine activities such as jousting and hunting; and he demonstrated an affective coldness that made him shun all feminine contact and company as well as skillfully and persistently avoid marriage. In addition his vivid imagination focused upon the idea of leading a ill-conceived crusade against Islam gradually got out of control and took total possession of his mind, with the result that he finally met his death on the battlefield of Alcácer Kebir.

Indeed, I would go further to suggest that the abuse he suffered may well have created in Sebastian unconscious wishes for suicide.<sup>63</sup> I would not see his determination to go into battle against the sultan of Morocco from which he could not be deterred as nothing but an inexplicably stupid obsession. From what we now know about the

psychological consequences of child abuse, it would seem perfectly reasonable to detect a death wish in such a desire. In short Sebastian knew, unconsciously, that his crusade in Africa would lead to his death (or if by some miracle it did not, then to a greater glory than he could otherwise ever have dreamed of acquiring) and it is precisely for that reason that he so relentlessly pursued it.

Needless to say, one can never know exactly the deepest recesses of the human heart and mind. This is especially true of an historical figure such as Sebastian. But if he knew, as he must have known, that he could never fulfill his primary duty of producing an heir and that the pressure on him about this matter as well as the humiliation of being unable to satisfy it would only grow more intense as time went on, it is entirely conceivable that his unconscious drove him to seek to end it all in a blaze of military glory. Thus viewed, his quixotic obsession with a "crusade" in Africa would not be the product of an over zealous religiosity or the simple-minded recklessness that it has traditionally been painted to be, but rather a tormented young man's desperate and tragic option for a dramatic way out of the impossible situation in which he found himself; a fateful, albeit unconscious, decision to invite death in battle at the head of a Christian crusade.

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The time is now ripe, therefore, for a new look at the life of King Sebastian. A new biography of the king, celebrated in Western literature and myth for his tragic, and symbolic significance, is in order.<sup>64</sup> But what is needed is not more accumulation of data about Portugal and its government and society at the time,<sup>65</sup> but rather a completely new look at the man himself, at his psyche,<sup>66</sup> and especially his sexuality. All extant biographies suffer from the long-standing confusion surrounding his health and his persona and his "irrational" obsession with the conquest of Morocco. None of them show any sympathetic understanding of him, a sexually abused boy who was left to deal with

the consequences of his experience alone and without help. With the untreated gonorrhoea and its long-term effects, the psychological wounds and the relentless pressures upon him to become involved with women, to marry and produce heirs, as predicted by his horoscope, a crueler fate it would be difficult to imagine.

Indeed, with the insight of a great novelist, Evelyn Waugh probably came closer to the truth about Sebastian than have any of his numerous historians. In infusing the Sebastianist myth, like a kind of ambient perfume, into his great novel, Brideshead Revisited, Waugh made *his* Sebastian, Sebastian Flyte, into a golden youth of no great intellect who never managed to emerge from adolescent homosexuality, and who was ultimately fated to end his days as a derelict beggar in Africa. Obviously the Sebastian of Brideshead Revisited differs in many respects from Sebastian, the Portuguese king. But in the essential perception that homosexuality precluded him from living the "normal" life of marriage and children that was expected of him, as well as his final "solution" of flight to and exile in Africa, Waugh recapitulates the problem of King Sebastian perfectly. Tragically infected with gonorrhoea and introduced to homosexuality, almost certainly by his tutor-confessor, Sebastian the king, like Sebastian Flyte, led a tormented youth, taking refuge in an obsessive fixation on hyper-masculine sports and finally, in an attempt to eradicate his demons, a hopeless battle in the sands of North Africa that he must have known, if only unconsciously, would bring the final resolution of his problems that he sought.

Consequently, instead of simply repeating facile criticisms of Sebastian's ability to rule, criticisms that are based on a gross misunderstanding of his situation, any new biographer must be capable of a true appreciation of his uniquely tragic situation as well as possessing the empathy needed to understand a young man who can only, I submit, be seen as a tragic victim of sexual abuse with all its physical and psychological consequences.



<sup>1</sup> For the reign of João III, see now the brief but up-to-date overview of Paulo Drumond Braga, D. João III (Lisbon, 2002), unfortunately published without an index or genealogical tables.

<sup>2</sup> João was so persistent in his attentions, it is said, that his doctors finally thought this might be the cause of his illness and that the two should be separated: "...demasiada comunicação, e amor, com que se havia com a Princeza." D. Manuel de Meneses, Chronica do muito alto, e muito esclarecido Principe D. Sebastião (Lisbon, 1730), I, chapter VI. Therefore in November of 1553 the newlyweds were separated and Juana went to live in the apartments of her aunt and mother-in-law, Queen Catarina. (See genealogical table).

<sup>3</sup> See endnote 25.

<sup>4</sup> Luciano Ribeiro, "Colectânea de documents acerca de D. Sebastião," Stúdia, V (1960), pp. 168-169. The time of his birth was later however; see endnote 5.

<sup>5</sup> Manuel J. Gandra, Joaquim de Fiore, Joaquimismo e Esperança Sebástica (Lisbon: Fundação Lusíada, 1999), p. 86, commenting upon a rudimentary nativity for Sebastian found in João Baptista Lavanha's Relação das coisas que sucederam no tempo de el-Rei D. Sebastião (1602?) says he was born at 7:18 AM. This is clearly wrong; not only does it contradict the testimony of Francisco de Andrada, Crónica de D. João III, ed. M. Lopes de Almeida (Porto, 1976), p. 1192, but also the clear information in Maldonado's horoscope, probably cast very shortly after his birth.

<sup>6</sup> This was the astrological manual written by Claudius Ptolemy, the Alexandrine astronomer-geographer of the second century A.D. that Maldonado used as a guide for his commentary on Sebastian's horoscope. See Ptolemy, Tetrabiblos, ed. and trans. by F. E. Robbins (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), passim. It is likely that Maldonado used a Latin translation of Ptolemy and not the Greek original.

<sup>7</sup> Predicting one's future by means of a horoscope was technically a violation of church law, since it infringed upon free will and usurped God's exclusive power to know and see the future but nonetheless it took place with great regularity. See the bull "Terrae et Coeli Creator" (1586) of Pope Sixtus V that outlaws the practice in Bullarium Privilegiorum ac Diplomatum romanorum Pontificum Amplissima Collectio, IV:4, ab anno X GREGORII XIII usque ad annum III. SIXTI V, scilicet ab anno 1581 ad 1588 (Rome, 1747), pp. 176-179. There is a Portuguese translation of the bull in Harold Johnson, Camponeses e Colonizadores (Lisbon, 2002), pp. 163-166.

<sup>8</sup> "...digo que este nacido sera muito dado a seus prazeres....A llua em aquarta parte oriental diz que elle sera casado em sua mocidade i sera sua molher boa e honesta que he significada por jupiter em a septima casa...Aimda que venus no signo de capricornio lha daa inclinacão grande nas cousas ueneas. Aimda que esto sera com legitimo matrimonio. o tempo do qual se achara pelas dirreicões i as emcerra uenus e na omezena casa promete filhos o questa firmado pola cabeça do dragão de jupiter e de mars em a quinta casa i serao este filhos nobres fermosos e bem fortunados. See Johnson, Camponeses, pp. 156-157.

<sup>9</sup> António Sérgio, Breve Interpretação da História de Portugal, 13<sup>th</sup> ed. (Lisbon, 1989), p.104: "Não é pròpriamente a imprudência o que deploramos em D. Sebastião, mas a estupidez, o desvairamento, a tontaria, a explosividade mórbida, a ferocidade inútil, a pataratices constante desse impulsivo degenerado, que era de todo destituído das qualidades de comando absolutamente indispensáveis para a execução do que ambicionava. Se um acaso, por exemplo. lhe desse a vitória em Alcácer Quibir, logo outras asneiras o haveriam perdido, porque o dom da asneira em jacto contínuo era nesse jovem uma propriedade congénita."

<sup>10</sup> António Sérgio, Ensaio (Lisbon, 1971), I, p. 241.

<sup>11</sup> On the other hand the recent biography by a Spanish historian, António Villacorta Baños-García, Don Sebastián, rey de Portugal (Barcelona, 2001), is considerably better, although still unable to give a clear indication of what his 'rara [sic] enfermedad' (p. 88) was or how he got it.

<sup>12</sup> Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, História de Portugal (Lisbon, 1978), III, p.68-70.

<sup>13</sup> Francisco de Sales Loureiro, "D. Sebastião e Alcácer Quibir," in História de Portugal, dir., José Hermano Saraiva (Lisbon: Alfa, 1983), IV, pp. 134-138.

<sup>14</sup> Rebelo was a close ally of the brothers Câmara at the court and strove to portray them in a very favorable light. See Francisco Sales Loureiro, O Padre Luís Gonçalves da Câmara e D. Sebastião (Coimbra, 1973), p. 22, where the author expresses astonishment that "there are even some who do not hesitate to claim the Monarch suffered from a sexual disease, provoked by a precocious experience!" He then goes on to brush this aside with the remark "however that may be" and later refers to the "very continent spirit" of "our sovereign", implying that Sebastian was not infected with anything, merely a-sexual. But elsewhere he refers to Philip II's anxiety to find a husband for Isabel Clara Eugénia "without the illness of a sexual nature that our King revealed". Thus Loureiro leaves the whole matter in confusion and doubt.

<sup>15</sup> Joaquim Romero Magalhães, "D. Sebastião," in História de Portugal, dir, José Mattoso (Lisbon: Círculo de Leitores, 1993), III, pp. 540-546.

<sup>16</sup> J. J. Alves Dias, Portugal do Renascimento à Crise Dinástica (Lisbon, 1998), pp. 741-752.

<sup>17</sup> This casual dismissal of his symptoms (based on the faulty ideas of Mário Saraiva) has been refuted already by Johnson in his study of Sebastian's horoscope: Johnson, Camponeses, p. 161. In addition to the arguments adduced there it should be noted that in the 1630's Portuguese adolescents thought that one was too young at twelve years of age to produce semen (David Higgs, "Lisbon" in David Higgs, Queer Sites: Gay urban histories since 1600 (London, 1999), p. 117). If one could not produce semen at age twelve in the seventeenth century it is virtually certain that the same was true in the sixteenth. Thus the "fluxes" that Sebastian experienced at age 10 were without any doubt due to a sexually transmitted disease and not to a normal nighttime discharge of semen ("wet dreams" or, in Portuguese, *espermatoreia*). Even today when health is generally better and sexual development takes place sooner, semen normally begins to be produced between the ages of twelve and a half and fourteen: Merck Manual of Medical Information (Whitehouse Station, NJ, 1997), p. 1255.

<sup>18</sup> J. M. de Queiroz Veloso, "História Política," in História de Portugal, dir. Damião Peres, (Barcelos, 1933), V, pp. 53-59. The Veloso chapter gets to the heart of matters very well. He even refutes the idea that Sebastian's "seminal fluxes" were merely "wet dreams" with the comment that if they were, he would have been marvelously "precocious" to have them at age 10. He in fact accepts that Sebastian probably had a sexually transmitted disease, but claims that it must have been "indirectly" acquired since "everything we know of his life argues against direct contagion." He then drops the matter saying that the "classification and study" of the illness "doesn't belong here." As argued earlier, almost everything written on the matter since Veloso has been "backtracking" in an attempt to whitewash or "pretty up" the unpleasant truth. Whether the Veloso chapter benefited from the fact that in 1932-1933 the Salazar regime had not become firmly established and the repressive intellectual atmosphere of the next forty years not yet been consolidated is not immediately clear. Certainly after 1933 it was probably unthinkable in Portugal to argue that Sebastian suffered from a sexually transmitted disease or, yet more unthinkable, was the victim of sexual abuse by a Jesuit father. Today (2003), however, and especially since the revelations that there have been decades of ongoing paedophilic abuse of boys at the Casa Pia orphanage in Lisbon, there may be more willingness to entertain such "unthinkable" thoughts in Portugal.

<sup>19</sup> Alfonso Davila Y Burguero, Don Cristobal de Moura, Primer Marqués de Castelo Rodrigo, 1538-1613 (Madrid, 1900).

<sup>20</sup> Although most historians say that Sebastian's infection began shortly after his eleventh birthday, there is good reason to think it appeared earlier when he was ten. Câmara wrote in February of 1566 that the "mal" had begun more than two years before, but that it had been more generally known for only one year, and that no one was able to determine what it was. See Francisco Rodrigues, S. J., História da Companhia de Jesus na Assistência de Portugal (Porto,

1938), II:2, p.338, f. 1. That Câmara claims to have known about it a full year before others lends weight to the suspicion that he was the agent of its transmission and kept the information to himself. Among previous commentators António Cândido Franco, Vida de Sebastião Rei de Portugal (Lisbon, 1993), p. 73, is the only one to claim, correctly in my view, that the symptoms first appeared when he was ten.

<sup>21</sup> Sales Loureiro, Sebastião, p. 137; Joaquim de Moura-Relvas, “El-Rei Dom Sebastião,” O Instituto, CXXXV (1972), pp. 23-151. A few of Moura-Relvas’ diagnoses will serve to reveal his approach: “A fronte olímpica, patente em D. João III....indicia heredo-sífilis (p. 33); Na gravura [of Sebastian] de Jerónimo Cock salta à vista a fronte olímpica dando abaulamento da testa que pode estar relacionado com a hiperostose do osso frontal que se manifesta em casos de raquitismo curado ou heredo-sífilis.”(p. 116); “...a órbita esquerda está num plano superior ao da direita e...o lábio inferior é espesso e pendente, mas a fâcies é mesoprósopa e não leptoprósopa. Também não há indícios de prognatismo inferior. Os botões do gibão formam uma curva de convexidade esqueda, sugerindo a existência de escoliose lombar. Nota-se depois a forte saliência dos órgãos genitais externos excessivamente volumosos para a idade de 11 anos. (p. 116). Later on, “A associação de polifagia com a polidipsia de D. Sebastião sugere diabetes.” (p. 118). The salient codpieces visible in paintings caused Moura-Relvas to pronounce him “bem dotado.” Yet if one compares Sebastian’s size to that of his cousin Don Carlos, the former suffers by comparison. Furthermore, the size of a codpiece need have very little to do with the size of its contents; even Moura Relvas should have known that.

<sup>22</sup> Mário Saraiva, Dom Sebastião, Na história e Na lenda (Lisbon?, 1994?), pp. 61-62: António Gonçalves, Tratado da gonorreia (1688); François Foy, Traité de matière médicale et de thérapeutique appliquée à chaque maladie en particulier (Paris, 1843). Works by Dr. Foy can be found in a number of libraries but it would seem that this particular one is to be found only in the French National Library. It is not in the libraries of Yale, Harvard, the University of California, the University of Chicago, or the Library of Congress. The work of Gonçalves is not in any major library, including the British Library, the Biblioteca Nacional of Lisbon or the Biblioteca Nacional of Madrid, that I can discover.

<sup>23</sup> Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão, Itinerários de El-Rei D. Sebastião (Lisbon, 1963), II, p. 49.

<sup>24</sup> Of course there has been excellent work done on the institutional and political events of his reign, especially by Maria do Rosário de Sampaio Barata Cruz, As regências na menoridade de D. Sebastião. Elementos para uma história estrutural, 2 vols., (Lisbon, 1983).

<sup>25</sup> The possibility of putting a Habsburg on the Portuguese throne if Sebastian had no issue was apparently already an idea of Charles V in 1557 when Sebastian was only three; see Marcel Bataillon, Études sur le Portugal au Temps de l’Humanisme (Coimbra, 1952), p. 267.

<sup>26</sup> Those who accuse her of “abandoning” her son fail to understand the dynamics of royal family relationships in the sixteenth century when female actions were still controlled by the wishes of the males. Women, for example, married whomever their male relatives chose for them; Philip II “gave” his daughters in marriage to the men of his choice. In the case of Juana, Charles V gave explicit instructions to his daughter about what she could and could not do regarding the minority of her son, including preventing letters she sent to Portugal from being delivered and making it clear to her that Spanish interests were paramount and her actions would have to conform to them. Thus she was obviously also obligated to put her brother Philip’s wishes that she return to Castile above any that she herself might have. Isabel D. Braga, Um Espaço, p. 250-251.

<sup>27</sup> Doubtless the painting by Christóvão de Morais of Sebastian at age 11 now kept in the Convent of the Descalzas Reales (Madrid) was one of these requested by his mother. See Annemarie Jordan, Retrato de Corte em Portugal: o legado de António Moro (Lisbon, 1994), pp.116-127.

<sup>28</sup> Relações de Pero de Alcáçova Carneiro, Conde de Idanha, ed. Ernesto de Campos de Andrada, (Lisbon, 1937), p. 456. In 1566 Sebastian moved into his own quarters in the Paço dos Estaus (on the north side of the rossio): Carneiro, p.470. See also Damião de Góis, Descrição da Cidade de

Lisboa, trad. de José da Felicidade Alves, (Horizonte, Lisbon, 1988), p. 53. There is also an English translation by Jeffrey S. Ruth, Lisbon in the Renaissance (New York, 1966).

<sup>29</sup> John W. O'Malley, The First Jesuits (Cambridge, 1993), pp. 8.

<sup>30</sup> António Franco, S. J., Imagem da virtude em o noviciado da Companhia de Jesu na corte de Lisboa (Coimbra, 1717), p. 27: "Cortavalhes o coraçam ver tantos Christaõs carregados de ferros, consumidos com o trabalho. Pera mais os consolarem, *se hiam dormir entre elles nas mesmas enxovias* (italics mine)...Com os muitos trabalhos adoeceo o Padre Luís Gonçalves...."

<sup>31</sup> It was described by Castilian agents at the Portuguese court as a "cierta substancia ó purgacion" that he expelled "por sus organos." See Veloso, "História Política," in D. Peres, História de Portugal, V, p. 54. See also endnote 18.

<sup>32</sup> Philip sent his agent Moura to check up on Sebastian in April of 1566 (Carneiro, p.459); and Sebastian's mother again sent Moura to see her son in August of the same year "por certa má disposição que teve dos rins" ("because of an illness he had in his kidneys"): Carneiro, p. 470. This undoubtedly refers to his penile discharges.

<sup>33</sup> Veloso, Sebastião, p. 107: "...une secrete maladie qu'on appelle gonorrhée, à laquelle il est subject." Mário Saraiva's claim in D. Sebastião: Na História e Na Lenda (Lisbon?, 1994?), p. 58, that "wet dreams" or espermatorrhia was called "gonorreia" at the time is preposterous. Although sixteenth century physicians did not understand the etiology of gonorrhea they definitely knew the difference between it and normal adolescent "wet dreams".

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Sigmund Freud, Three Essays on Sexuality (New York?: Basic Books, 2000), p. 14: "Thus the sexual abuse of children is found with uncanny frequency among school teachers and child attendants, simply because they have the best opportunity for it."

<sup>35</sup> In contrast to most Portuguese historians who are irritatingly vague about who was acting as Sebastian's confessor in 1564-1565 when his disease first appeared, an eminent American specialist on the Portuguese Jesuits, Dauril Alden, is very clear on the matter. Câmara was made his tutor AND confessor in 1560 but was replaced by Frey Luís de Montoya at the insistence of Sebastian's grandmother, Catarina, in 1566, a year after the boy's sexually transmitted disease became court knowledge. (When Sebastian came of age to rule in his own right two years later he reinstated Câmara as his confessor with the support of Cardinal Henrique). See Dauril Alden, The Making of an Enterprise: The Society of Jesus in Portugal, its Empire and Beyond, 1540-1750 (Stanford, 1996), p. 82.

<sup>36</sup> Ribeiro, "Colectânea", pp. 174-175.

<sup>37</sup> Antero de Figueiredo, D. Sebastião, Rei de Portugal (Lisbon, 1924), p. 61. "O padre (Câmara) já conheceu a natureza do rei; não tarda a apoderar-se-lhe do animo."

<sup>38</sup> See António Borges Coelho, Inquisição de Évora, 1533-1668 (Lisbon, 1987), p. 56. Furthermore Cardoso's Latin-Portuguese dictionary of 1570 defines "natura, ae" as "natureza", and "naturalia, ium" as "Ho sexo do homem ou molher": Jerónimo Cardoso, Dictionarium Latino-lusitanicum & vice versa lusitanico latinum: cum adagiorum feré omnium iuxta seriem alphabeticam pertuilit expositione (Coimbra, 1570), under "N".

<sup>39</sup> Montoya is quoted as saying that the year he served as Sebastian's confessor seemed like "many centuries" to him and that he found the "air" of the palace "noxious" to holiness. Diogo Barbosa Machado, Memórias para a História del Rey D. Sebastião (Lisbon, 1737), II, pp. 616-619.

<sup>40</sup> Stephen Haliczzer, Sexuality in the confessional: a sacrament profaned (New York, 1996), pp. 109, 136-137, and passim.

<sup>41</sup> O'Malley, First Jesuits, p. 148.

<sup>42</sup> Veloso, "Histórica Política," in Peres, História de Portugal, V, p. 53: Câmara was "muito feio, *di brutta presenza*, cego dum olho e gago."

<sup>43</sup> "Mais (Câmara) me disse, que tres cousas tinha pedido a Nosso Senhor, e eraõ huma doença comprida, padecer dores por seu amor, e morte com juizo perfeito, que as duas primeiras lhe tinha

ja concedido porque auia muito estava doente e era afligido com muitas e grandes dores”:

Loureiro, Relação, p.526.

<sup>44</sup> See endnote 20.

<sup>45</sup> Jerónimo Osório, Cartas Portuguesas (Coimbra, 1922). Admittedly some of Osório’s anger could be attributed to the brothers Câmara having managed to replace him as advisors to the king (D. Jerónimo Osório, Tratados da Nobreza Civil e Chistã, trans. by A. Guimarães Pinto (Lisbon, 1996), pp. 49-53. Some believe the author of the letters was not Osório but rather Pero d’Alcáçova Carneiro, but this does not affect the point that I make here.

<sup>46</sup> J. V. Serrão, História, III, p. 65, f.192. “Abarregado” was a synonym for “amancebado” or a relationship of concubinage: see António de Moraes Silva, Diccionario da Língua Portuguesa, (Rio de Janeiro, 1889), I, p. 54.

<sup>47</sup> See Merck Manual of Medical Information (Whitehouse Station, NJ, 1997), p. 123. Taken all together it is quite likely that his untreated gonorrhea resulted in Reiter's Syndrome or "reactive arthritis".

<sup>48</sup> Manuel de Faria y Sousa, História del Reyno de Portugal,....en cinco partes....(Brussels; en casa de Francisco Foppens, 1730), p. 285: “Desapetecia todo lo que mas apeticieron los hombres. Siempre à sus ojos quedò corrida la fuerça de la hermosura. Nunca uvo Dama que le diesse cuydado....Un moço hermoso y Principe soberano aborrecia la propia naturaleza, y el talamo....”

<sup>49</sup> The Portuguese equivalent would be "ir ao engate" or "passear a procura dum engate."

<sup>50</sup> Faria y Sousa, p. 286.

<sup>51</sup> Indeed it is precisely for this reason that many parks in Paris (such as the Jardin de Luxemburg) are fenced and locked at night--to keep homosexuals out. In late eighteenth century Paris cruising took place in the wooded areas that occupy what is now the Champs Elysées: Jeffrey Merrick, "'Nocturnal Birds' in the Champs-Elysées; Police and Pederasty in Prerevolutionary Paris," GLQ: a journal of lesbian and gay studies, 8:3 (2002), pp. 425-432.

<sup>52</sup> On the homosexual relationships of young noblemen with their pages at the court of D. Sebastião, see endnote 60.

<sup>53</sup> Faria y Sousa, Historia, p. 285-286.

<sup>54</sup> Faria y Sousa, Historia, p. 286: “Otra [vez] en Almeirin sobre un árbol esperaba à un javali, sintiò ruido entre las ojas, e aplicando la vista distinguiò un bulto, baxò aprissa, e arremetiò con el: el ruido de la lucha hizo que acudiesen algunos caçadores pensando que el Rey lo avia con algum mostro, y hallaronle abraçado con un negro salvage que de largos dias huido de sus amos habitava con las fieras de aquel monte.”

<sup>55</sup> It hardly needs to be pointed out that sexual intercourse, depending upon intensity, can be noisy and sound like a struggle.

<sup>56</sup> See A. H. de Oliveira Marques, Portugal na Crise dos Séculos XIV e XV (Lisbon, 1987), p. 480: "O Livro da Montaria foi um tratado completo da caça ao javali, *utilizando a lança e matilha de cães*." (italics ours). See the Livro de Montaria in M. Lopes de Almeida, Obras dos Príncipes de Avis (Porto, 1981), pp. 1-232. Indeed João I explicitly warns against trying to spy out wild boar by climbing trees: "e outrosi lhes deue de defender que nenhum nom se suba a nenhua aruor...ca sejam bem certos que qualquer que assi estiuer em aruor...logo o porco passa, senom todauia que sejam em chaão...(p. 115).

<sup>57</sup> Ribeiro, “Colectânea de documentos,” p. 176: “...passeava de noite cõ gente de pouca autoridade e menos mostras de uirtude.”

<sup>58</sup> It might be noted that the aforementioned biography by Villacorta Baños-García finds in these same stories merely a “certain tendency or liking for the mysterious” on the part of Sebastian. His meetings with unknown men on the beach are transformed into the king’s “listening with pleasure to the sound of the water or of the waves breaking at his feet” (p. 86); his forays into the woods around Sintra are interpreted as “waiting for a wild boar to pass by (sic), [or] spending the night beneath the shelter of some tree...while he filled himself with the odors and essences of nature

(p.87).” Needless to say, none of these ingenuous explanations for his nocturnal forays are supported by the sources. Apparently his Spanish biographer is too naive to divine the homosexual nature of the king’s nighttime cruising.

<sup>59</sup> Faria y Sousa, *História*, p. 286.

<sup>60</sup> Francisco Manuel de Melo, *Carta de Guia de Casados* (1651), (Porto, 1963), pp. 103-104: “...como se poderá crer que naquele reinado de el-rei D. Sebastião, em que os homens se fingiam de ferro, por contemplação dos excessos de el-rei, era costume andarem os fidalgos mancebos encostados em seus pajens, como hoje as damas? E chegava a tanto aquele mau costume, que quando os que jogavam a péla, passavam de uma casa para outra, o não faziam sem que se lhes chegassem os pajens, e neles se encostassem. Diziam *haã*, fazendo-o muito comprido, e os mais falavam afeminado, por uso daquele tempo.” The exact nature of the “jogo da péla” is uncertain, as well as the rules by which it was played. It involved a ball (*péla*), and may have resembled today’s pelota or tennis. More investigation is needed. The term “casa” in the phrase “...passavam de uma casa para outra...” is defined in Morais e Silva, *Dicionário*, I, 420, as: “no jogo da pella é a primeira divisão do topo do jogo e da o nome aos dois primeros contendores.”

<sup>61</sup> See endnote 30.

<sup>62</sup> Francisco de Sales de Mascarenhas Loureiro, “‘Relação da vida d’ElRey D. Sebastião’ do Padre Amador Rebelo,” *Revista da Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa*, IV série, 2 (1978), pp.508-509. Rebelo tells an amusing story about Sebastian, then age six and a half, asking an old hermit how often he confessed. The hermit was reluctant to answer but finally, Sebastian insisting, said he did so once every day. Sebastian then asked what he had to confess every day. At this the hermit became enraged and replied that one needs to repent one’s sins every single day saying “tibi soli peccavi” three times in a loud voice. This left Sebastian so astonished that from then on he made sure to confess once each week.

<sup>63</sup> *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 286 (2001), pp. 3039-3040: “Adults who suffered abuse...during their childhood are more likely than their peers to attempt suicide decades later.” It might be noted that Sebastian earlier gave evidence of a possible unconscious death wish by choosing to engage in an act of reckless bravado. Faria y Sousa again supplies the story. Sebastian had ordered that no ship should pass beyond the Belém Tower or São João without being registered. If it did, it should be bombarded by artillery and sunk. In order to determine if his orders were being carried out---“o por que buscava la muerte”---he and some noblemen got into a bergantine and violated the regulation. They were duly fired upon but survived; Sebastian afterward went back to the palace without revealing that he had been among those in the bergantine: Faria y Sousa, *História*, p. 286.

<sup>64</sup> Sebastian’s image in English literature is covered in Maria Leonor Machado de Sousa, coord., *D. Sebastião na literatura inglesa* (Lisbon, 1985) while Ana Maria Pinhão Ramalheira deals with his last battle in German literature: *Alcácer Quibir de D. Sebastião na Alemanha* (Coimbra, 2002).

<sup>65</sup> This is not to minimize the excellent work done on the period by Joaquim Veríssimo Serrão and especially Maria do Rosário Barata Cruz.

<sup>66</sup> Let us recall here J. V. Serrão’s remark that any new biography will need to be more psychological than...documentary (see endnote 12).