

# MONKEY-SPOUSE SEES CHILDREN MURDERED, ESCAPES TO FREEDOM! A WORLDWIDE GATHERING AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF CAMARENA-CHEVALIER TYPE 714, II-IV TALES

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## I. INTRODUCTION

“Monkey-spouse sees children murdered, escapes to freedom!” sounds like a headline from a current sensationalistic tabloid, but seemingly has its origin in early 16th century Portugal. These tales of women shipwrecked or marooned on an island populated by monkeys or apes, fed and housed by a dominant monkey and forced to cohabit and bear them offspring, before escaping and seeing their hybrid children murdered by the irate simian parent, may have arisen in Portugal, but also exist in similar or variant forms in the Americas, and across Asia. Roberts (1964, p.161) indicates that he was “unable to assign Aarne-Thompson type numbers” to a Kentucky mountain version of the tale. Prof. Guy P. Marchal (of the Universität Luzern; personal communication) states that the story theme does not appear in either the *Lexicon des deutschen Märchen*, or the *Handwörterbuch des deutschen Aberglaubens*. However, Points II, and particularly III and IV of Camarena-Chevalier’s tale type 714 (Ca-Ch 714) circumscribe the tales discussed here. But, the fact that most of the tales collected herein are entirely free of Points I, V, VI, and VII of Ca-Ch 714, suggests that the tales discussed herein may constitute a tale type of their own, which for convenience I will term “monkey-spouse tales.”

European tales of human women copulating with monkeys or apes and bearing offspring go at least as far back 1061, when St. Peter Damian wrote his *De bono religiosi status et variorum animatum tropologia*:<sup>1</sup>

Now what follows is something I heard from the lord Pope Alexander less than a month ago. He told me that recently Count William, who lives in the district of Liguria, had a male monkey, called a *maimo* in the vernacular. He and his wife, a completely lewd and wanton woman, used to play in shameless fashion with him. I myself have met his two sons, whom this vile woman, who

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<sup>1</sup> Caput XXIX, “De simia, et quo pacto simia capi possit,” *Patrologia Latina* 145: 0798B-0790B.

deserves a beating had borne of a certain bishop whose name I will omit, because I do not enjoy defaming anyone. She often used to play with the lecherous animal, taking it in her arms and fondling it, and the monkey in the meantime gave signs of being aroused and tried with obvious effort to come close to her nude body. Her chambermaid said to her, "Why don't you let him have his way so we can see what he is after?" What more should I say? She submitted to the animal, and, what a shameful thing to report, it mated with the woman. This thing became habitual, and she frequently repeated the unheard of crime.

One day when the count was in bed with his wife, aroused by jealousy the *maimo* suddenly jumped on both of them, tore at the man with his arms and sharp claws as if he were his rival, got him by the teeth and wounded him beyond all recovery. And so the count died. Thus as the innocent man was faithful to his wife and fed his animal at his own expense, he suspected no evil from either of them because he showed them only kindness. But what a heinous crime! The wife shamefully violated his marriage right, and the beast sank his teeth in his master's throat. It was reported to the same pope while I was with him that a certain boy, who seemed big for his age, even though, as it was said, he was already twenty years old, was still completely unable to speak. Besides, he had the appearance of a *maimo*, and that was also what they called him. And so the unfortunate suspicion arose that something like a monster, I will not say a wild animal, was being brought up in its father's house. (*Peter Damian. Letters 61-90*, O.J. Blum transl., Letter 86, pp. 296-297).

Coelho, writing in the 19th century, addressed more specifically monkey-spouse tales:

The two last traditions remind me of course of others that are spoken of in Portugal concerning those shipwrecked or marooned on the coasts of Africa or India, and who had lived in marriage with females of the great anthropoids, and had had of them children. To these legends, which are numerous, there lacks the following ending: "The shipwrecked or marooned man is searched for or accidentally found by a ship of his native land, and the abandoned simian, his lover, tears her children into pieces in anger."

Clearly we still have here the realistic transformation of one old myth. (*Tradições relativas a amores de homens com macacas*, p. 478, my translation).

Unfortunately, Coelho does not cite any of these "numerous" legends. Still it does suggest that at least some of these stories might have had their origins in original "non-fictional" accounts of explorers or chroniclers of exploration.

My forays into such tales arose from my involvement in a project to collect and reprint literary precursors of Edgar Rice Burroughs' *Tarzan of the Apes* (1912). Of the many who have postulated what such source materials might have been,<sup>2</sup> only Rudolph Altrocchi was able to correspond with

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<sup>2</sup> Besides Rudolph Altrocchi (1944), these include Richard A. Lupoff (1965), Irwin Porges

Burroughs during the preparation of his essay *Ancestors of Tarzan* (1944).<sup>3</sup> Altrocchi stated:

There was another source for Tarzan. Somewhere, perhaps in some magazine and certainly before 1912, Mr. Burroughs read a story about a sailor who, as the only survivor of a shipwreck, landed on the coast of Africa. There he tried to make the best of a difficult situation, à la Robinson Crusoe. During this forced sojourn in the jungle, a she-ape, which he had tamed, became so enamored of him that when he was finally rescued, she followed him into the surf and hurled her baby after him. This modern story I have been unable to find. (Altrocchi, p. 95)

While Altrocchi traced plot elements of *Tarzan of the Apes* through literature and folk-tales as far back as the 12<sup>th</sup> century C.E., he was unable, after two years of diligent search, to find any version of this story — a pivotal event in Burroughs' novel.<sup>4</sup> However, in his search Altrocchi did discover some monkey-spouse tales bearing limited resemblance to Burroughs' story.<sup>5</sup>

For purposes of enumeration the tales collected here will be presented according to the region from which they originate: Europe, the Americas or Asia together with Asia. In this first part, only those tales originating in Europe will be discussed.

## II. TALES FROM EUROPE

### 1. Early Spanish accounts.

What is apparently the first European telling of the tale occurs in the first discourse (*tractado*) of Antonio de Torquemada's *Jardín de Flores Curiosas* (1570),<sup>6</sup> a 1600 translation of which reads as follows:

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(1975), Sarkis Atamian (1997), John Taliaferro (1999), and John F. Kasson (2001), amongst others.

<sup>3</sup> Altrocchi first presented this work at the annual meeting of the Philological Association of the Pacific Coast in Los Angeles, November 24, 1939 (not seen).

<sup>4</sup> So avid was the pursuit of such an account that at least one was manufactured: "The Man Who Really Was... Tarzan," by Thomas Llewellyn Jones, first published in the March 1959 issue of *Man's Adventure* magazine (<http://www.erbzine.com/mag14/1449.html>) and reprinted in 1974.

<sup>5</sup> The theme of a beast-protector and/or beast-lover also exists in Nordic traditions, but with a bear substituted for the ape. However, such tales as are described by Edsman (1956) and Fabre (1968-69) do not feature the infanticidal portions of the ape stories. Similarly, in Arne-Thompson tale type 301B, "Jean de l'Ours" or "Strong John" while a woman is abducted by a bear, bears him children, the onus of the story is on the child and his heroic adventures (Fabre, 1968-69; F. Vaz da Silva, personal communication).

<sup>6</sup> The Spanish text can be found in *Obras Completas, I* (Madrid, Turner Libros, 1995), pp. 590-593; and in *Jardín de Flores Curiosas* (Madrid, Editorial Castalia, 1982), pp. 182-185.

A woman in Portugale for a hainous offence by her committed, was condemned, and banished into an vninhabited Iland, one of those which they commonly call the Isles of Lagartes,<sup>7</sup> whether shee was transported by a shippe that went for India, and by the way set a shoare in a Cockbote, neere a great mountaine couered with trees and wilde bushes, like a Desert. The poore vvoman finding her selfe alone forsaken and abandoned, vvithout any hope of life, beganne to make pittifull cryes and lamentations, in commending her selfe vnto God, him to succour her in this her lamentable & solitary estate. Whiles shee was making these mournfull complaints, there discended from the mountaine a great number of Apes, which to her exceeding terror and astonishment, compassed her round about, amongst the which, there was one far greater then the rest, who standing vpon his hind legs upright, seemed in height nothing inferiour to the common sort of men: he seeing the vvoman weepe so bitterly, as one that assuredlie held her self for dead, came vnto her, shewing a cheerefull semblaunce, and flatteringly as it vvere inuiting her to followe him to the mountaines, to the which she willingly condescending, he led her into his Caue, whether all the other Apes resorted, prouiding her such victuals as they vsed, where-with & with the water of a Spring neere therevnto, she maintained her life a certaine time, during the which, not being able to make resistance, vnlesse she would haue presently been slaine, she suffered the Ape to have vse of her body, in such sort that she grew great, and at two seuerall times was deliuered of two Sonnes, the which as she her selfe saide, and as it was by those that saw them afterwards affirmed, spake, and had the vse of reason. These little boyes, being the one of two & the other of three yeeres aged, it happened that a ship returning out of India, passing thereby, and being vnfurnished of fresh water, the Marriners hauing notice of the Fountaine which was in that Iland, and determining thereof to make their prouision, set them selues a shore in a Cockbote, which the apes perceauing, fled into the thickest of the mountaine, hiding themselues, wherewith the woman emboldened and determining to forsake that abominable life, in the which she had so long time against her will continued, ranne forth, crying as loud as shee could vnto the Marriners, who perceauing her to be a woman, attended her, and carried her with them to their ship, which the Apes discouering, gathered presently to the shore, in so great a multitude, that they seemed to be a whole Army, the greater of which through the brutish loue and affection which he beare, waded so farre into the Sea after her, that hee was almost drowned, manifesting by his shrikes and howling how greuously he took this injury done him: but seeing that it booted not, because the Marriners beganne to hoist their sailes and to depart, he returned, fetching the lesser of the two Boyes in his armes, the which, entring againe into the water, and at last, threw into the Sea, where it was presently drowned: which done he returned backe fetching the other, and bringing it to the same place, the which in like sort he held a great while aloft, as it were threatning to drowne that as hee had done the other, The Mariners moued with the Mothers compassion, and taking pittie of the seely Boy, which in cleare and perfect words cryed after her, returned back to take him, but the Ape daring not attend them, letting the Boy fall into

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<sup>7</sup> Now known as the Cayman Islands.

the water, returned, and fled towards the mountaines with the rest. The Boy was drowned before the Marriners could succour him, though they vsed their greatest diligence: At their returne to the ship, the vvoman made relation vnto them of all that happened to her in manner aboue rehearsed, which hearing, with great amazement they departed thence, and at their arriuall in Portugall made report of all that they had seene or vnderstoode in this matter. The woman was taken and examined, who in each poynt confessing this fore-saide history to be truw, was condemned to be burnt aliue, as well for breaking the commaundement of her banishment, as also for the committing of a sinne so enorme, lothsome, and detestable. But *Hieronimo capo de ferro*, who was afterwards made Cardinall, beeing at that instant the Popes *Nuncio* in Portugall,<sup>8</sup> considering that the one of her faults was to save her life, and the other to deliuer her selfe out of the captiuity of these brute beastes, and flom a sinne so repugnant to her nature & conscience, humbly beseeched the King to pardon her, which was graunted him on condition, that shee should spende the rest of her life in a Cloyster, seruing God and repenting her former offences. (Ferdinando Walker, transl. *The Spanish Mandeuile of Miracles; or, The Garden of Curious Flowers*, 1600; folio 32, line 9 to folio 33, line 16).

Lope de Vega's in his 1610 play *Los torneos de Aragón*, gives a passing and much condensed version of the story, which Camarena-Chevalier cite as belonging to the same story type, but which excludes the episode of infanticide. It is included here for the sake of completeness, but will not be further discussed.

Fact is Estela, that you are not  
the only brave one in the world,  
luckily others have existed,  
for whom love's promises have been cleansed  
by the waters of forgetfulness.  
What is it not to love?  
It is told that a woman  
Was affectionate with a monkey  
Treating him on occasion in a manner  
That she could have done no more for him.  
Who from a wrecked ship  
by clinging to a board,  
reached an uninhabited island,  
where she was given to eat  
And where in the end he fell in love with her.  
I hold you in my power,  
and I am neither a fierce animal,  
nor less capable of loving,

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<sup>8</sup> Girolamo Recanati Capodiferro (born Rome 1502) was appointed papal nuncio in Portugal by Pope Paul III on 24 December 1536 and held the post till 22 December 1539. He was papal nuncio in France from 1541 till 1544 when he was created cardinal and appointed Legate in Romagna (a part of the Papal States in central Italy). He died in Rome in 1559 (*Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani*, 18: 626-629).

as you Estela are not a rock,  
but a mutable woman.  
If to your husband you gave yourself,  
until such time as your marriage was sealed  
he was not your husband;  
and as much as I have stolen you away,  
so have your eyes been stealing too.  
In the case that your brother the count,  
not consider me an equal  
to your tyrant spouse,  
it is because they make false comparison,  
of a noble to a villain.  
I am a duke of this land,  
that while it is not everywhere  
inhabited by rich vassals,  
is the home of those for whom the plow is the sword  
And the fertile field their battlefield.  
There are no cities, there are mountains,  
there are not palaces, there are huts  
The golden century has not passed,  
Everything is virtue, there is no punishment.

(*Los torneos de Aragón*, Act I, line 75-122; my translation)

## 2. Early Italian accounts.

In the earliest Italian account, Strozzi Cigogna<sup>9</sup> gives the following account in his 1605 *Del Palagio de gl'Incanti*:<sup>10</sup>

Castanheda in his *Annals of Portugal* presents as believable a strange case. He says that a woman taken on a ship was put to shore on a certain island and there abandoned. A number of evil spirits in the form of monkeys appeared before her, and she wept miserably. One of these greater in size than the others took the young woman by the hand and led her to a certain cave beneath a tall mountain and dragged her into a hut supplied with a great quantity of apples, walnuts, chestnuts, and other fruit, instructing her by signs that she must eat, and after she was fed, the spirit in the form of a monkey attacked her and had sex with her. She became pregnant and in the course of three years had two sons by him.

It was God's will that one day an English ship came to this island. Soldiers came to get water from the spring which was close by, and approached the cave. At this time the spirit was away. The young woman came towards them,

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<sup>9</sup> The cover page of *Del Palagio de gl'Incanti* (1605) gives 'Strozzi Cigogna,' Gabriel Naudé names him 'Stroze Cicogne' in his *Apologie pour tous les grands hommes qui ont esté accusez de magie* (p. 306), while Zorattini in his article on the *Palagio* names him 'Strozzi Cicogna.'

<sup>10</sup> *Op. cit.*, page 211, line 23 to page 212, line 27. Cigogna's work was reprinted in a Latin edition in 1607 as *Magiae omnifariae, vel potius, Universae naturae theatrum* [...].

begging them to take her away from this terrible servitude to the monkey. She told them everything. The soldiers moved to compassion conducted her to the ship where, just after she embarked. The spirit returned to the cave, and not finding the young woman, he ran to the beach and seeing that he could not reach the ship, getting terribly angry and vicious, he cried out and showed with painful gestures that he wished the woman to return. Then something came to his mind, he raced to the cave, and with incredible speed he took one of his sons, returned to the beach, showed him from a distance to the young woman, and asked her to return for the love of the children, but when this did not work, he took the child by the arms and threw it into the sea and drowned it, and with great speed he returned to the hovel to get the other child, and which he showed to the mother, and threatened again to kill it, but the ship did not move, and he took the second child, threw it in the water, and it suffered the first's fate. Then he threw himself into the sea and disappeared from the view of the sailors, nevermore to be seen.

Word of this very unusual case spread throughout Portugal. In the city of Lisbon, the King condemned the young woman to death for this misdeed, but she was freed after some barons interceded on her behalf, and she ended her days devoutly in a cloister of religious nuns (my translation).

Besides minor differences this is essentially the same tale as appeared in de Torquemada's version. Another, somewhat shorter version of the tale occurs in Brother Francesco Maria Guazzo's *Compendium Maleficarum*<sup>11</sup> an early 17th century witch hunting manual:

A woman was deported for some crime to a desert island and there left, and was at once surrounded by a chattering crowd of apes, of which there were many in that place. Then one of them, larger than the rest, for whom they all made way, came and took her gently by the hand and led her into a big cave, where he and some other apes brought her a plentiful variety of fruit and nuts and roots, and signed to her to eat. Finally she was forced into foul sin with the ape, and so continued for many days until she gave birth to two children by the animal. The wretched woman lived in this way for some years, until God took pity upon her and sent a ship there from Portugal, from which some sailors came ashore to fetch some water from a spring which was near her cave. It happened that the ape was not at hand; so the woman ran up to the men, whose like she had not seen for so long, and throwing herself at their feet implored them to set her free from her criminal and disastrous servitude. They consented, having pity on her misfortune, and she embarked upon the ship with them. But behold, the ape then appeared calling with extravagant gestures and groans to his wife, who was not his wife; and when he saw the sails set for departure, he quickly ran and held out one of her children to the mother, threatening to drown it, if she did not come back. And he was not slow to carry out his threat. Then he ran back to the cave and as quickly came again to the shore with the other child, which he likewise threatened and drowned. After this, in his fury, he swam after the ship until he was overcome

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<sup>11</sup> *Compendium Maleficarum*, Book I, Chap. 10, pp. 60-61. I had access to the 1626 edition, the 1608 edition was not seen.



by the waves. This story became the talk of all Portugal; and the woman was condemned by the King of Lisbon to be burned; but certain men petitioned for her, and her sentence was commuted to imprisonment for life. (*Compendium Maleficarum*, Book I, Chap. 10, E. A. Ashwin, transl., pp. 110-111).

Guazzo had plagiarized this text word for word from the earlier *Disquisitionum magicarum libri sex: quibus continetur accurata curiosarum artium, et vanarum superstitionum confutatio: utilis theologis, jurisconsultis, medicis, philologis*<sup>12</sup> by the Antwerp-born Jesuit theologian Martin Anton Delrio (1551-1608).<sup>13</sup> Delrio mentions, in the context of those who are doubtful of such matings bearing offspring, the first *tractado* of A. de Torquemada's *Jardín de Flores Curiosas*, but still cites Castanheda as the source.

An edited French translation of Del Rio was published in 1611, but this omits the tale itself, except to mention:

But marvellous above all is that which Castanheda tells: that a woman gave birth to two offspring engendered by a monkey, of which you can see the complete tale in the Annals of Portugal. (my translation; *Les Controverses et Recherches Magiques de Martin Del Rio...* p. 213).

In the versions of the tale mentioned, the depiction of the human-simian relationship ranges from one of great sin (Peter Damian, Fr. Guazzo), one inappropriate but necessary under the circumstances (Torquemada, Cigogna), to one that may even be acceptable under the enlightenment of the *Siglo de Oro* (Lope de Vega).

In a modern summary of the tale, Richard Francis Burton mentions the same monkey-spouse story in a footnote to his *Supplemental Tales*:

A correspondent favours me with the following note upon the subject: — Castanheda (*Annals of Portugal*) relates that a woman was transported to an island inhabited by monkeys and took up her abode in a cavern where she was visited by a huge baboon. He brought her apples and fruit and at last had connection with her, the result being two children in two to three years; but when she was being carried off by a ship the parent monkey kissed [*sic*] his progeny. The woman was taken to Lisbon and imprisoned for life by the King. [...] (*Supplemental Tales*, footnote no. 1, p. 331, 1886 ed.)<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> First edition 1599-1600 (3 vols. Louvain, Gerardus Rivius), frequently reprinted thereafter. The text compared to Guazzo's was that of a 1617 edition published in Mainz, where the story appears on pages 156-157.

<sup>13</sup> Louÿs (1914) mentions Del Rio's tale and his attribution of it to Castanheda, in the context of his overview of an early 17th century (Anon, c. 1605) tale of a chambermaid who mates with a monkey, bears a monkey-like child, and is, after her confession to religious authorities, executed.

<sup>14</sup> Also appears p. 331, footnote no. 1, in Vol. 5 of *Supplemental Tales* of the 17 vol. Burton Club ed. (n. d., c. 1905-1920), and p. 261, footnote no. 1, in Vol. 4 of *Supplemental Tales* of the 16 vol. Burton Club ed. (n. d., c. 1903).



While it is clear that “kissed” should be “killed”, it is not clear if this is a typographical error (as it is present in all authorized editions), Burton’s misinterpretation of his correspondent’s message, or some form of euphemism used by either. Given Burton’s general habit of not significantly bowdlerizing texts, one may assume the former two possibilities as the most likely.

### 3. The mysteriously absent “original” Portuguese account

Cigogna’s *Del Palagio de gl’Incanti* states “Il Castagneda ne gl’annali de Lusitani fà indubitata fede d’un caso molto notabile.” (p. 211, line 23); Guazzo’s *Compendium Maleficarum* states “Illud superat admirationem reliquorum, quod Castanneada retulit in Annalib. Lusitaniæ.” (p. 60, 1626 ed.), and Burton’s *Supplemental Tales*, cited above, states “...Castanheda (*Annals of Portugal*) relates [...].” Matthew Gregory Lewis in introducing his narrative poem *The Isle of Devils*, discussed at greater length below, in his *Journal of a West India Proprietor* states:

This strange story was found by me in an old Italian book called “Il Palagio degli Incanti” in which it was related as a fact, and stated to be taken from the “Annals of Portugal” an historical work (*Journal of a West India Proprietor...* [London, John Murray, 1834], p. 260).

All these sources seemingly concur on the tale having come from what one would presume is Fernão Lopes de Castanheda’s 1551-1561 *História do descobrimento e conquista da Índia pelos Portugueses*, a very influential and widely distributed historical work of the time. However, the evidence is that the story *does not* appear in Castanheda:

- The late 16<sup>th</sup> century English translation (Nicholas Lichfield, 1582) of the first of Castanheda’s volumes, which I have read, does not contain the story.
- Altrocchi (p. 99) states that he checked a number of 16th century Portuguese exploration accounts and did not find the story, though he doesn't mention Castanheda specifically.
- Altrocchi (p. 254-255) states that the foremost Portuguese folklorist of his time, José Leite de Vasconcellos, did not know of the story (though Vasconcellos later published a version, see below).
- Archer Taylor (1957) stated that Altrocchi had never discovered a modern version of the tale.
- Dr. Isabel Cardigos (personal communication) states that a perusal of chapter titles from Castanheda's full work found nothing. A similar scan of chapter titles from Gaspar Correia's contemporaneous *Lendas da Índia* (Lisbon, 1858, but written in the mid-1500s) also yielded nothing.

- Professor Luís Filipe F. R. Thomaz, a reputed expert on Castanheda, states (I. Cardigos, personal communication) that he did not recall ever coming across the story in Castanheda's *História*, and that Castanheda did not publish any other works, particular nothing titled *Annals of Portugal*.
- José António Camões, a specialist on Portuguese 16th century literature has recently read Castanheda's complete *História* and not found the story anywhere (I. Cardigos, personal communication).
- Dr. Gary Taylor, George Matthew Edgar Professor of English, Florida State University also states (personal communication) that he could not find the episode in Castanheda.

Several foreign language editions of Castanheda's work exist. The only English version (1582) comprises Castanheda's first book only. It runs 163 folios, but in small type. The Spanish edition of 1554 has 220 folios, so one would assume it only covers the first book of the *História*. There are two French translators: Nicolas de Grouchy (1553) and Simon Goulart (1581). The latter seems to have only translated a portion of Castanheda, and included it in a larger collection. De Grouchy's translation, of which I could find 3 different editions, has a maximum of about 220 folios, along the lines of the British and Spanish editions, and the title page states it to be a translation of the first book.

Cigogna and Guazzo would have likely drawn their material from the Italian language edition of Castanheda's first seven books, as translated by Alfonso de Ulloa<sup>15</sup> (Venice, 1577 and 1578). Strozzi Cigogna lived and wrote and was published in Venice, while Guazzo was published in nearby Milan. I have not been able to obtain a copy of Ulloa's translation to ascertain whether the story exists there.

Interestingly, in 1562 Ulloa published a translation of João de Barros' *L'Asia; de' fatti de' Portoghesi nello scoprimento, & conquista de' mari & terre di Oriente* [...]. Contemporaneous with Castanheda's work, its title "*de fatti de Portoghesi*" would be a much closer fit to "Annalib. Lusitaniae" and "gl'annali de Lusitania" in Guazzo and Cigogna, respectively, than to "*Historia di descubrimento...*" Did Guazzo and Cigogna miscite Castanheda's work for Barros'? Or did one or both confuse two books by the same translator, published in the same city, at more or less the same time, both about Portuguese conquests in Asia, both by Portuguese contemporaries. Apparently not, for the story does not appear in Barros' *L'Asia*.

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<sup>15</sup> Ulloa translated a number of Spanish or Portuguese works (see Ulloa 1556, 1562, 1571, 1575, 1577, amongst others), including a translation of Fernando Columbus' biography of his father Christopher. Ulloa also wrote some works of his own (1566, 1606). Some discussion of Ulloa's importance in spreading Spanish culture to Italy is presented here: <http://cvc.cervantes.es/obref/fortuna/expo/literatura/lite034.htm> (seen January 28, 2006).

While both Torquemada and Castanheda's works saw Venetian editions, and Guazzo and Cicogna would both have presumably had access to either or both, it seems unlikely they took the story from Torquemada. Torquemada's version of the tale specifically cites Hieronimo Capo di Ferro, nuncio to the pope, as the one who pardoned the woman after she had returned to Portugal and been condemned to death by the king, whereas Guazzo does not say who commuted her sentence, and Strozzi says "per intercessione de suoi baroni liberata" (by intercession of some (the king's or the woman's is unclear) barons).

Alternatively, could Guazzo and Cigogna have meant Fr. Martin de Castañega's witchcraft tract *Tratado de las supersticiones y hechicerias* (1529)? No, for no such story appears in Castañega's chapters on excommunication (I. Cardigos, personal communication).

#### 4. Early French accounts

Besides versions that would have occurred in French translations of Torquemada, the first French occurrence of the story, far more detailed, not to say embellished, occurs in the sieur de Claireville's<sup>16</sup> *L'Amelinte*,<sup>17</sup> a long and convoluted romance-adventure novel, which Altrocchi describes as "probably a dime novel of the time (p. 96)."

Thus was the sea favorable to them for at best two days before the storm arose, altering their designs and route. Rather than leading them to Spain, it carried them to the coasts of the West Indies, but remote from the settlements the Spanish have into those regions. [...] They took pleasure in skirting the coast where they admired a great number of marvelous things. Amongst these, passing near land the sailors termed Monkey Island and thought to be uninhabited, they discovered a person signaling, leading them to realize that the island was not deserted. [...] Polemonce had himself taken there, and found an almost frightful woman. The disheveled hair on her shoulders tumbled halfway down her leg. Her face was sunburned, her body naked from head to waist and shaded in many places with rather long hair. Below the waist she covered herself with a hide, which elsewhere would have been most costly. Otherwise, she was completely naked. Speaking to Polemonce in fractured Portuguese, she had him to understand that she would give herself up to his mercy, if he would but take her from the misery in which he saw

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<sup>16</sup> For biographical information regarding Onésime Sommain, a.k.a. le sieur de Claireville, see Robello's works of 1984 and 1985 regarding the attribution of *Le Gascon extravagant* to the sieur de Claireville.

<sup>17</sup> Translated from the copy held at the Wuerttembergische Landesbibliothek, Stuttgart, p. 149, line 18 to p. 151, line 14. Other copies exist at the United States Library of Congress, Washington, D.C.; Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris; and a facsimile at the university of Genoa Library, Genoa. *L'Amelinte* was reprinted, apparently unchanged in 1642 as *L'heureux naufrage de Méléandre* (Paris, Cardin Besongne). A reissue (2006) is forthcoming from Battered Silicon Dispatch Box Publishing (<http://www.batteredbox.com>).

her. Was it monster, man or woman? Polemonce could not tell, and had it not been for the speech he had heard her utter, he might not have saved her. Those who accompanied him, particularly one Portuguese sailor, assured him it was truly a woman, and that he had heard her say she would tell them of her adventures once she was in safety. They immediately signaled for her to approach, which she did not decline to do, and throwing herself into the boat, bid them take her away quickly, lest she risk being strangled in their very presence. They were no more than ten feet from shore when they saw a great monkey running towards them and crying out in a frightful manner. He followed this woman into the sea, carrying a monster which had the face of a child. When he saw he could not reach her, he threw this token he bore of her into the water. Polemonce astonished by this object, was most impatient to be aboard Orgimon's ship, and have the satisfaction of hearing an account of such a remarkable story directly from the woman's mouth. This did not stop him, however, from trying to save the animal the monkey had thrown in the sea. Being unable to accomplish this, he returned to Orgimon and presented him this woman, who, throwing herself at his feet, recounted her adventures to him.

"Sir, it was some seven years ago," she said to him, "that my husband, a Portuguese gentleman and ship's captain on his way to Peru was taken by thieves, who pillaged his crew, threw a number of his men overboard into the sea, and discarded me on the island from whence you took me. I was landed alone, completely naked, at the mercy of its animals, particularly the monkeys. In tears and lamentations did I spend the day there where they had left me, hoping that some monster would come and devour me, so as to quickly end my sorrow and misery. But neither Heaven nor beast was touched by my sighs. Night coming on I pictured before me a thousand phantoms to frighten me, and gripped by fear, I was forced to search for some place to retire to. So I left the shore, headed inland, finding, close to where you found me a recess dug out of the rock face. I went in resolving to spend the night there. I was not there an hour when the monkey you saw came there, loaded down with the spoils of his hunt. I then thought my torments to be ended and that my prayers to God, to die in a place where my long term survival was impossible, would be granted, besides the fact that the loss of my husband rendered the day most odious to me. But upon smelling me this animal caressed me at length, gave me to eat from what he had brought, and flattered me in a thousand ways, such that he made me to know that I would receive no hurt for the time being. I stayed several nights in the cavern with him, spending the days walking up and down the seacoast, seeing if I could not discover some ship which would come and pick me up. He, however, went a-hunting, always returning at night well supplied with food. A whole month went by before I consented to this animal's lewd caresses. Finally, seeing myself on the brink of setting off his cruelty if I refused to let him pleasure himself, I gave myself up to him and from then on could not refuse him his pleasures. He had sex with me so often that sometimes I was so tired by his pestering that I had not the strength to get up, and it would have been to my greater distress had I dared to let him know I was angry. I suffered under his power far more than I would have had I been a captive of the Turks. It is true that he defended me from all the other animals that wished to injure me, and if I forced myself on

occasion to indulge him, I did so at my pleasure. I controlled him at my fancy and made him to understand what I wished, as if he had some understanding. From his embraces I bore a monster, with human hands and arms, and the remainder of the body that of a monkey. From then on he loved me more than he had never done so before and did not go hunting as frequently as he used to, and only going up into the nearby mountain, from whence he brought fruit and many other things for us to eat. It had been a long while since he had gone out as far as he did today. When the sailors picked me up I knew full well that he would not be long in arriving, and as soon as he found me absent from the cavern, he would not fail to look for me. When he recognized that I was escaping he flew into such a rage that if he had had me in his grasp it would have cost me my life. Then, as he saw that he could avenge himself upon me, he ran to get the monster, which I can but remember with horror, and brought it some ways out into the sea, but seeing that he could not reach us, he threw it after me, and the sea made it its tribute. You have perhaps never heard a stranger tale, and you can see to what an extremity the cruelty of those pirates brought me. I have lost my usual looks and know well that I have no more of my womanhood than my figure, but if it please you to save me and let me off in Lisbon on your way past. [...] There you will find people to thank you for the charity you have afforded me, and you will leave there a miserable wretch who will perpetually be obliged to you for her salvation and her life.”

No one aboard was not touched with compassion regarding this case: some bemoaned her unpleasant adventure, others were revolted by the horror of the sin she had committed, and others still who considered that necessity and the fear of death can shake the foundations of even the most virtuous of souls, dared not accuse her. Cleonide who looked upon her in pity remained inwardly troubled, and was more shaken by this accident, than by any other in her past. [...] (translation mine).

After numerous adventures, the heroes of the novel finally make it to Lisbon, where the woman had asked to be dropped off. She returns to her home accompanied by the warriors Polemonce and Orgimon, hoping to find her long-lost husband. However, he is off on business in Africa, and his new wife puts up a big fuss and accuses the woman and her two companions of being con artists come to dupe her out of her husband's fortune. A street brawl ensues in which the two heroes kill a number of supporters of the new wife. They are arrested and hauled off to prison, while the woman, whom even her father and her younger children can no longer recognize, is put on trial, with a death sentence in the offing. The husband and an older son arrive in the nick of time, the woman is recognized by her eldest son, and then by her husband, but she opts to retire to a convent and live out her days there. Polemonce and Orgimon are eventually exonerated.

The sieur de Claireville's account is considerably fleshed out compared to the other versions of the story, particularly with regard to the events which occur upon the woman's return to Lisbon. It also differs significantly in the reasons for the woman's death sentence and the manner in which she is exonerated.

The next account of this poor woman's travails occurs in the edited 1649 memoirs of the French adventurer Vincent Le Blanc, who purportedly had it from a Spanish captain he met during his over sixty years of traveling the world. Given that de Claireville was a man-at-arms at the French court, and that both he and LeBlanc both seemingly died around 1640, the latter well in his seventies, it is not inconceivable that the two might have met, and that de Claireville might have heard the tale from Le Blanc.

Le Blanc's story places the woman, a Spanish captain's adulterous wife, on the monkey-infested island as a punishment for her sins:<sup>18</sup>

Now truly did I hear of a certain Spanish captain's wife, taken by surprise in an act of adultery with another by her husband. As punishment, he contented himself in marooning them both on a desert island, where the man having soon died, the woman, remaining alone, was accosted by a large long-tailed monkey or marmoset, to which she bore two children. Some three years later, a ship passing by there found this poor wretch, in appearance and form more akin to some phantom than to a human being. Altogether naked, she pleaded tearfully to be taken from this cruel and horrid captivity, which they did. As they were getting aboard, the monkey enraged at such a sight, killed her children before her, then threw them to her. This poor woman was brought to Lisbon, where the Inquisition, warned of this, had her immediately apprehended, and would have punished her, had not Cardinal Cayetan, then Nuncio to the Pope,<sup>19</sup> been there. He took up her case, and having pointed out the affront involved and the need she had had to allow herself to become familiar with this animal, which had fed her with wild fruit for three years, spared her. She entered a monastery, where she lived a most saintly life to the end of her days. There are said to be a few tales, ancient and modern, which are similar to all this, whose disquisition I leave to the naturalists and theologians. (translation mine)

Le Blanc's story is retold with minor modifications in Pons-Augustin Alletz's *Histoire des singes et autres animaux curieux...* one of the earliest "scientific" treatises on monkeys and apes. Alletz's retelling of Le Blanc's story reads:<sup>20</sup>

While at sea, the wife of a Spanish captain, having been taken by surprise in an act of adultery by her husband, the latter, in order to avenge himself in a most singular manner, marooned them both on a desert island, where the man died soon after. Now it happened that this woman, left alone and destitute on an island where there were monkeys, one large monkey or marmoset having met her, sought out her company, helping her in all manner of ways, such that

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<sup>18</sup> *Les voyages fameux du sieur Vincent Le Blanc*, Partie 2, p. 120, l. 7-34.

<sup>19</sup> Thomas De Vio Cardinal Cajetan died in 1534 and was at no time papal nuncio in Portugal (Prof. Michael Tavuzzi O.P., Pontificia Università San Tommaso d'Aquino, Rome, personal communication).

<sup>20</sup> *Histoire des singes et autres animaux curieux*, p. 58, l. 14 to p. 60, l. 15.



by force or by cunning he made the woman pregnant, and she gave birth to two children. But at the end of three years, a ship passing by there found this poor woman, in appearance more akin to some phantom than to a human being, completely naked, and horribly emaciated. She pleaded tearfully to the crew to take her from this cruel captivity, which they did. As they were getting aboard, the monkey which had not dared approach them, and which saw that she was leaving, became furious, and having thrown itself on its two children, it tore them limb from limb right before her eyes, then threw them to her. This unfortunate wretch was brought to Lisbon, where the Inquisition having learned of the adventure, had her apprehended, and imprisoned. However, Cardinal Cayetan, then Nuncio to the Pope, having found himself in this city, took up her defense, pointed out the affront that had been made upon her and the need she had had to suffer the familiarity of the animal, which had fed her with wild fruit for three years. This Cardinal spared her from death. She entered a monastery, where she lived a saintly life the rest of her days. In such manner does the traveler Vincent Le Blanc assure us, in his *Voyage to the Indies*, that this story was told him (translation mine).

Another early French story, where the hybrid offspring is killed while the woman is still captive of her bear-spouse, shares many common threads with the earlier cited monkey-spouse tales. It was collected in Charles Joisten's *Récits et contes populaires de Savoie*, but comes from an earlier source.<sup>21</sup> Interestingly the writer, published in 1605, places the beginning of the tale in 1602, before either Guazzo or Cigogna's versions of Castanheda's tales:<sup>22</sup>

In the mountains of the Tarentaise region there is a small village named Nave, in the diocese of Moutier. There a peasant named Pierre Culet, rather rich in cattle and land holdings, had a very beautiful daughter named Anthoinette, about sixteen or seventeen years old, whom he sometimes sent to keep an eye on the ewes and other livestock. On Rogation Sunday in the year 1602, a terribly frightful bear suddenly appeared, grabbed the poor girl and took her to his cave, sunken deep into the rock. At the mouth of the said cave, the animal would roll a boulder of marvellous size. Then this wild, brutish and unreasonable beast forced himself upon the poor girl. Was this not, gentlemen, a terrible accident, that a poor girl, washed in the sacred sacrament of Baptism, must be forced and constrained to obey to this savage and utterly vile animal? This bear was so in love with her, as she has stated since she was found, that he went a-hunting in the villages of the adjoining mountains and brought her bread, cheese, fruit and other things which he claimed she needed. From the very day she was taken her father was all diligence in attempting to find out where she had been taken, but for naught. He thought it not unlikely that she had been devoured by wild beasts; and as he heard no news of her, he didn't know what to think. Shortly ago this year, the godfather that had stood for her at her baptism, accompanied by two others from where he lived, had gone to cut pine trees a crossbow's shot from

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<sup>21</sup> *Le Grix* (1605), not seen.

<sup>22</sup> *Récits et contes populaires de Savoie*, pp. 120-125.



this cave. The poor girl who had not seen a soul since her abduction, hearing the axes striking and the sound of human voices, being extremely anxious to escape her brutal imprisonment, cried out as loudly as she could in a raucous and piteous voice. The said woodsmen, stunned to hear such a deep voice and not knowing what it could be, believed among themselves that it was some spirit. But as they heard these cries repeated over and over again, which echoed plaintively from the cave-site, this led one of them, braver than the others, to draw near the mouth of the cave. After having loudly demanded who was there, immediately the poor captive answered: I am the wretched Anthoinette Culet, of Nave. In the name of God, save me, a Bear has held me captive since a long time ago. While he is out hunting, get me out of here, I beg you; he comes home at the fall of night. That one promptly goes and tells his fellows, who immediately asked for help in the next village and drew together a company of twenty-five or so. These came quickly to the cave, and with their strength shifted the boulder, and had the said girl come out. This poor girl, hairy all over, filthy and all atremble, seemingly more beast than human, threw herself upon them, and in a piteous voice begged they take pity on her and take her to her father's home. Being led there, and how she came to be taken being inquired of her, she recounted in detail how the Bear had abducted her and taken her to his cave. She also told how he would bring her bread, cheese, whole baskets of fruit, and even, on occasion, pieces of filleted and hemp clothing. She also told how, against her will, this nasty animal had imposed his company on her, from which resulted, she said, that there in the cave, she delivered a monster bear-like from the navel down and the remainder of human semblance. But as the wicked beast always wanted to have it between its paws, it crushed the life out of it. Seeing it was dead, it cried out in such frightful howls that all the rock was shaken by it. So it was that they had her wash, dress in new clothes and cut her hair. Is it not remarkable, gentlemen, that the very next night after the poor girl had been brought back to her father's home, that this bear, heartbroken at having lost his dear prisoner, by either his sense of smell or by tracking, did not fail to come — that very night — and cause an alarm at the door of the house where she was, with cries and howls so frightful that all those inside thought themselves lost? The next day, the neighbours prepared an ambush, hoping he would return, which he did not fail to do. As dusk was falling they suddenly let out a volley of arquebuses, from which he was wounded in six places. Sensing himself wounded, furious and despairing, he jumped over a hedge, and behind it fortuitously found one of this girl's father's servants brandishing an iron pitchfork, which, as he was no great swordsman, left him to be immediately crushed by the bear. Rampaging about biting trees and bushes with his teeth, he truly went no more than forty paces before he died of his wounds. Many having seen him dead testified to never having seen a bear of such a size. As for the girl, she is so sad and forlorn that one cannot cheer her up or console her. God, in your saintly grace, have pity upon her, and protect others from such a fate. So be it. (my translation)

Some believe the creature described as a bear to be a thinly veiled cryptoanthropoid. The bear returning for his lost spouse has parallels to a modern story from Russia presented below.

## 5. Modern Portuguese versions

More recently, in Camarena and Chevalier's (1995) discussion of Cuento Tipo 714, *The Stubborn Queen and her Son on Monkey Island*, besides giving the following oral account entitled "The Orang-outang," (though the ape is identified as a gorilla<sup>23</sup>), they also cite four versions in Portuguese, of which only two mention a sojourn on Monkey Island.<sup>24</sup>

These was a young woman, who went to wash clothes with her mother. Now, I don't know what she had forgotten but she went to the pillar. A gorilla was there, took her and left, and brought her into the forest. The gorilla then put her in a cave and did not allow her to go forth from it. The gorilla brought her green fruits from the shrubbery and forest. The gorilla then took advantage of her, didn't he? And she bore little gorillas. Then, people came by ship, looking for her. She saw the ship and began to signal with a scrap of cloth, with the almost ruined dress she once had, and as she had been there a long time next to nothing of the dress was left, but she signalled... The people from the ship then saw her, and she went running. Then, when the gorilla saw that she was leaving, he took his son and told her that if she left he would kill his son. She saw that her son was a gorilla, looking like the father. She did not love the child, what she wanted was to go with her family. Her family took her and left the place. The gorilla was left with the little one. She went with her family. (tale type 714, Vasconcellos, p. 734, my translation)

In both Portuguese versions a stubborn queen and her young son are condemned to exile over an argument regarding whether a group of animals seen from afar are cows or oxen. In both cases the subsequent episode with the monkeys adds little to the overall story except a period of time for the queen's son to grow up. The relevant portion of Leite de Vasconcellos' version of the tale is as follows:

Once upon a time there was a king and his wife the queen. They were very stubborn. The king already irked, had decided with his counsellors to order the queen exiled. Accompanied by the queen, he was on a terrace overlooking the king's road, where some small cows were passing. The queen said, "What pretty little cows!" The king objected, "Little cows? Do you not see that they are oxens, and so ugly! Why does your Majesty says they are little cows? They are oxen, and your Majesty is so stubborn that I shall order you be sent to a desert place, and we will see if you can find someone to squabble with there."

<sup>23</sup> Oddly enough there exists a similar case of ape misidentification related to the renowned 19<sup>th</sup> century French sculptor Emmanuel Frémiet's life-size statue of a gorilla abducting a woman (*Gorille enlevant une femme*), which was refused entry in the Paris Salon of 1859, which he later redid and resubmitted. It won the medal of honor in 1887, and later appeared at the Paris World's Fair (Masson, 1889). Here both Masson (*La Femme et l'Orang-Outang*) and Charles Baudelaire (*L'orang-outang entraînant une femme au fond du bois*), quoted from his *Curiosités esthétiques*, identify what is clearly a gorilla as an orang-outang.

<sup>24</sup> The tales given by Leite de Vasconcellos (1963), and Oliveira (1900a) mention Monkey Island, whereas those given by Oliveira (1900b) and Romero (1885) do not.

Such did it come to pass. Half-way through the trip the ship stopped, and a boy was born to the queen, to whom she gave the name of Silt. She soon arrived at the desert island, where there was nothing but monkeys, who very happily came to welcome her. One monkey offered his arm to the lady and led her near a cave. It went down into the cave, came back up and by gestures invited her to take refuge within, which she then understood. There she raised the prince, and little by little she educated him until he reached 19 years of age. Walking one day along the beach he saw a ship, and waving to it, they asked him if he wished to embark. On that occasion he answered that he did not wish to, but the next day he embarked with his mother. As soon the monkey saw the lady on board, he started to call her and to cry out. He then approached the other monkeys and bit them all for not having guarded the lady. They then fought together there. The ship proceeded to sail until it arrived at the same location in the sea and stopped. (“Rei e Rainha Teimosos”, my translation).

For Oliveira’s version I have omitted the initial cow *vs.* oxen argument:

[...] The queen was sentenced to death; however, as she had a young son she was sent to the bush with the innocent son. The unhappy queen found herself in a mountainous country full of monkeys. The monkeys were so numerous one could scarcely walk twenty paces without bumping into them. The king of these fell in love with the poor queen, forced himself upon her and had a son, half monkey and half human.

Well, the queen had with her clothing, a great deal of money, and books with which she taught her legitimate son to read. At the age of 16 the youngster pressed the mother into running away from there.

— How, son?

— We are near the beach, I could, by feeding the monkeys some cakes, reach the beach, and when I saw a boat, waive to it and I asked the sailors to take us.

— Try, son.

He tried and after some days he was able to embark on a ship with his mother, and they also took all theirs belongings. The moment the embarked the king of the monkeys arrived in order to hinder the mother and son embarking, but, seeing that he could not prevent their embarking, he grabbed his own son, tore him in two and tossed him into the sea.

The mother and son were well received aboard the ship [...] (“As Trez Encantadas no Mar”, p. 326, my translation).

While the monkey-spouse story seems to remain open to reuse and reinterpretation, it also exists in various forms in Russia, in the Americas and Asia. These further tales will be discussed in the second portion of this article.

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## Resumo

Primeira parte de um artigo sobre um conto-tipo que, não estando registado nos catálogos internacionais, foi classificado no Catálogo de Camarena e Chevalier com o nº [714]. É a história duma mulher abandonada numa ilha desabitada e que é forçada a tornar-se mulher de um grande símio. Quando vem a ser socorrida pela tripulação dum navio que aporta à ilha, o símio mata o filho à vista da mãe. Os relatos mais recuados desta história remetem-na para os "Anais de Castanheda". Embora a narrativa esteja ausente da *História* de Fernão Lopes Castanheda, aparece na tradição oral portuguesa. Nesta primeira parte do artigo dá-se conta da tradição escrita (e oral) desta narrativa também em Espanha, Itália, França e Inglaterra.

## Abstract

This is the first part of an article about a tale classified in Camarena and Chevalier's catalogue of Spanish Folktales with a new number [714], as it does not appear in the international catalogues. It is the story of a woman abandoned in an uninhabited island and who is forced to become the wife of a big ape. When she is rescued by the crew of a passing ship, the ape kills their child before her eyes. The earliest written accounts of this narrative trace its source to "the Annals of Castanheda."



The narrative, however, does not appear in Fernão Lopes de Castanheda's only known History book in nine volumes (1551-1561). The story, however, appears in Portuguese oral tradition. An account is also given of the written (and oral) tradition of this narrative in Spain, Italy, France and England.

