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Pedro Serra, "Aesthetics and Ideology in Queirós's *A Cidade e as Serras*"
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Abstract: In his article "Aesthetics and Ideology in Queirós's *A Cidade e as Serras*" Pedro Serra contributes to the study of Eça de Queirós's post-naturalist fiction, offering an in-depth view of traces of utopian socialism -- a major ideological influence in Queirós's intellectual generation -- in the aesthetic fabric of *A Cidade e as Serras* (1901) (The City and the Mountains). According to Serra, who reads this novel in light of Oliveira Martins's socialist *idearium*, Queirós's post-naturalistic writing exposes a complex network of late nineteenth-century cultural predicaments: the collapse of liberalism and realism paves the way to an ideological and aesthetical poetics of the novel that incorporates a paternalist socialism incarnated by Jacinto, the protagonist of the narrative. Serra suggests that Queirós's late poetics of the novel imply the anesthetization of "ethnic" determinations, a process that results from the Portuguese resistance to the nightmarish avatars of Modernity -- emblematically represented by Paris, a dystopian metropolis -- and that is represented in what Serra calls *theatrum anthropologicum*, a set of figures that determine the meaning of being Portuguese.

Pedro SERRA

Aesthetics and Ideology in Queirós's *A Cidade e as Serras*

In 1888 Eça de Queirós describes Paris as the capital of Europe. According to the author, rather than the city of light, Paris was a metropolis "reduced to a Corinth, where there will always be enough foreign money, where courtesans will climb to the altar and where the stomach will be glorified" ("reduzida a uma Corinto, onde sempre haverá dinheiro estrangeiro em abundância, as cortesãs subirão aos altares, o estômago terá a sua glória") (*Notas* 212; unless indicated otherwise, all translations are mine). In Paris, the whole of Europe becomes a public stage, a space where the impulse to be truly European is replaced by a pantomime. In another text from 1892 entitled "A Europa em Resumo" ("Europe Summarized") Eça depicts Europe, the navel of the world, as a stage: "In our globe, Europe is the most enticing of public theaters." ("A Europa é, no nosso globo, o mais delicioso dos teatros públicos" [*Notas* 264]). The author is referring to a liveless theater, enervated by the culture of a capitalist society. The courtesan, bringing together pleasure and money, is the social character that best represents the human type produced by the capitalist division of labor in Modernity.

The Old World's loss of vitality to a point where it can be "summarized" means that the only possible way to behold it is through an estranged gaze that moves from the periphery to the center, a gaze that, being self-critical, remains nevertheless a Eurocentric one. In the Queirosian reflection on Europe, the American continent emerges as one of the spaces where one is able to distance oneself from a decadent Europe: "In fact, in order to enjoy our interesting Europe without disappointment, we need to be far away, in Texas, or somewhere else overseas. As far as I am concerned, it would be ideal to live, for instance, in Brazil, (as soon as they have some order and public reasoning over there) under a sky that, unlike ours, does not have the melancholy and the weight of a cloudy ceiling." ("De facto, para saborear sem desilusão esta tão interessante Europa, é necessário estarmos longe, no Texas -- ou em algum lugar, além mar. O ideal, desde o meu ponto de vista, seria viver, por exemplo, no Brasil (no momento en que haja aí un pouco de ordem e de juízo público), sob um céu que não tenha, como o nosso, o peso e a melancolia de um tecto nublado" [*Notas* 266]). It is under this melancholic mood that Queirós portrays Europe as a theater. The problem resides in the centre and not in the margins of the world and the periphery functions as a natural place to recover one's taste for civilization. Europe remains what is most interesting and instigating but, in order to enjoy it, it is necessary to change one's location. In the peripheries, untouched by the historical becoming of Modernity, one can find a place from which to overcome the negativity inherent in civilization.

In the last stage of his career, Queirós identified Portugal as one of the privileged peripheral *loci* from where he could launch his critical reflections on Europe. This understanding of the country lies at the core of the plot of *A Cidade e as Serras*, a "nouvelle phantaisiste" published posthumously in 1901. The protagonist of the text is a Portuguese man named Jacinto and his story is narrated by his friend Zé Fernandes. The residence where Jacinto lives in France in the beginning of the narrative -- 202 Champ Elysée -- represents what Michel Foucault has described as a "heterotopic space," in that it stands metonymically for the whole of human history. It functions both as a museum and as a library, which are the two heterotopies of Western culture at the end of the nineteenth century, and it supposedly contains the entirety of human knowledge. Beyond its perpetually growing library, Jacinto's house also features all kinds of mechanical objects, symbols of a relentless technological progress. The function of these gadgets is to increase the well-being of European individuals, who are determined to extend the realm of enlightened reason to all corners of the world. These mechanical implements -- the telegraph, the telephone, the phonograph, the radiometer, the phonograph, the microphone, the writing machine, the counting machine, the "conferencephone" -- become emblems of hypercivilization and epitomize the hyperurbanization of Paris. In time, these implements turn into complete obsolete or simply useless garbage. The listlessness that takes over Jacinto progressively, a member of the Parisian social elite, is in itself a product of a world drowning in commodities that has lost track of its origins under the *aegis* of capital's overproduction.

The singularity of the protagonist in this Queirosian novella resides in the fact that he faces the illusion of a unified reality in a world that is solely made of copies. Jacinto is a place holder for a morphology of the human that is still based on the wish to produce a unified worldview. This desire for unity clashes with the reality of a multiplicity of images and commodities produced autonomously through technical means. When the world is drowning in numbers, it easily becomes innumerable. This technologically mediated Other divests the autonomous European individual of his privileges and challenges his position as source of a worldview imbued in morality.

The eudemonism that characterizes *A Cidade e as Serras*, represented by Jacinto's search for a unified universe different from Paris, needs to be interpreted in light of the notion that human beings are unable to reach happiness. Iris M. Zavala argues that Modernity is divorced from the quest for happiness: "If for Aristotle and the Greeks happiness -- also in language -- is not only a desired possession but also that which the construction and structure of the world strives to enlarge, Freud offers us a different lesson. Lacan reminds us that in *Civilizations and Its Discontents* a world is conjured up where nothing in either the micro- or the macrocosmic level is geared toward the search for happiness." ("Si para Aristóteles y los griegos -- también en el lenguaje -- la felicidad no es sólo un bien deseado sino aquello que la total constitución y estructura del mundo intentan ampliar, Freud ofrece una lección distinta. Lacan nos recuerda que en *El Malestar en la Cultura* nos pinta un cuadro de un mundo en que nada en el microcosmos o en el macrocosmos está preparado para la búsqueda de la felicidad" [102]). The unavoidable separation between man and the world, leading to an irretrievable loss and a truncated existence is portrayed in Queirós's work in various ways. In *A Cidade e as Serras*, the Paris of Jacinto stands for this broken world. The city becomes a stage, a copied world without an original and without an origin. For Jacinto, the only solution will be to leave Paris in order to reach the balanced way of life he strives for.

Jacinto eventually abandons Paris for Tormes, a village in the Portuguese countryside, thus exchanging the *énnui* of the city for a revitalization of his existence that springs forth from an inexhaustible, matriarchal Lusitanian source. In a sense, his trajectory undoes the historical becoming of the nineteenth century, which Simmel, Wirth, or Tönnies have described as a move toward urbanization. The denouement of the plot -- progressively more unwilling to leave Tormes and return to Paris, Jacinto sets roots in the countryside, gets married and starts a family -- presupposes a renewed belief in a metaphysical community. Concomitantly, the pastoral landscape of Tormes stands for the reinforcement of a pre-modern, aristocratic and patriarchal ideal that is prevalent is the last stage of Queirós's writings (see Diogo and Silvestre 137). When Jacinto trades the "conferencephone" and the Parisian *cocotte* for agricultural implements and for a rural woman he is resisting the new (and negative) sociological and technological aspects of Modernity.

In *El Rapto de América* (The Abduction of America) Zavala emphasizes the tragic elements that define the intellectual experience of late nineteenth century culture, which are based on the failure of the both Liberalism and Realism. Her dense theoretical discourse draws on Marx, Freud, Lacan, Bakhtin (one of her elective affinities), and Benjamin, among others, as she tries to interpret the legacy of the nineteenth century -- the legacy of Modernity -- as a "symptom": "My reading of modernism [i.e., late nineteenth-century Hispanic literary culture] is similar to the reading of a symptom: faced with reality, the modernist man tries to subvert it by tracing the marks of its hidden truth in the details of the official truth, which is belied by the margins." ("En mi lectura, el modernismo equivale a la lectura de un síntoma: confrontado con la realidad, el modernista intenta subvertirla detectando las huellas de su verdad oculta en los detalles que la verdad oficial desprende, y se desmiente en los márgenes" [11]). The search for symptoms in the literary language of the end of the nineteenth century means a quest for the places where the circulation of representations is obstructed since the irruption of the Real leaves hieroglyphic traces that need to be interpreted.

Let us return to *A Cidade e as Serras* and try to recognize such "hieroglyphic traces" of the ideology and aesthetics prevalent at the time. In the second half of the nineteenth century, the cultural tenacity of the idea of ontological priority of the countryside over the city competes with Commerce itself, which refers to the city as the place that manufactures the sustenance of the countryside (see Smith 651). This tension is the corollary of a rationalization of life and of a progressive division of labor. In the cultural imaginary there is an inversion of the traditional idea of

"soil," which becomes associated with the "city" (Deleuze and Guattari 448), in an example of the persistence of the concept of Nature. In this sense, the trope of "Nature" in *A Cidade e as Serras* reverberates a "margin of indetermination," which it already possessed in the philosophical *lexicon* that emerged in the Enlightenment: "The prestige of the term ['Nature'] lies on a precarious agreement around the basic meaning it already possessed in Aristotelian and Aquinian texts, but now integrated in diverse philosophical contexts, while still referring to origin, foundation, essence, principle, universality, order, necessity, and end." ("O prestígio do termo respousa sobre um acordo precário, que podemos situar em torno das acepções fundamentais, emergentes do texto aristotélico e tomista, integradas, agora, em contextos filosóficos extremamente compósitos, salvaguardando aquelas referências à origem, fundamento, essência, princípio, universalidade, ordem, necessidade e finalidade" [Calafate 15]). Used consensually as a *trope*, the concept of "Nature" is a good example of how philosophemes circulate in *A Cidade e as Serras*. The same happens, as we shall see, with the theorization of "socialism" (Sérgio xxiii), a reverberation of Proudhon's "socialism" that lies at the core of Queirós's ideological archive and of the writings by many Portuguese intellectuals from his generation (see Torres). Proudhon permeates important theoretical essays by members of the well-known *Geração de 70* (Generation of the 1870s) to which Queirós belonged, namely those written by Oliveira Martins.

A Cidade e as Serras invokes a civilized pastoral mode of existence: Jacinto grows to be a man from the countryside, thereby reminding us of the work *Feliz Independente do Mundo e da Fortuna* (Happy Man, Independent from the World and from Fate) by Teodoro de Almeida, dating from the period of the Enlightenment: "The 'happy independent man' is not man in a 'state of pure nature,' a passive being whose faculties are mostly dormant and indifferent to the spectacle of nature, vegetating in a happy inertia. Teodoro de Almeida describes a man that goes back to nature but takes with him a very intensive immersion in the realm of culture, from which he does not simply wish to separate. The man Almeida describes wishes to be the personification of Wisdom or, as he would rather put it, of 'true philosophy,' in that he conflates reason and poetry." ("O 'feliz independente' não é o homem no 'estado de pura natureza,' um ser passivo, com a maior parte das suas faculdades adormecidas, indiferente ao espectáculo da natureza, vegentando numa feliz inércia. Teodoro de Almeida fala-nos de um homem que regressa à natureza, mas que leva na bagagem um percurso muito intenso no reino da cultura e que dele não se quer pura e simplesmente separar. Esse homem, de que fala, pretende ser a personificação da Sabedoria, ou como prefere dizer, da 'filosofia verdadeira,' nele confluindo a razão e a poesia" [Calafate 63]). Within the *theatrum anthropologicum* put together by Eça in *A Cidade e as Serras*, Jacinto incarnates this "happy independent man," in contrast with other human types that include the "primitive" (*e.g.* Ana Vaqueira), i.e. the pre-modern Other of the Modern man, and the "barbarian" (e.g., Mme. Colombe), a counterfeit of the "primitive" and a corollary of modern instrumental rationality. In fact, the "primitive" and the "barbarian" are close to one another, insofar as they are neither moral nor aesthetic autonomous individuals. Jacinto as a "man from the countryside," an epithet frequently repeated in *A Cidade e as Serras*, stands precisely for the emancipation of the individual through aesthetics and morals. The autonomy of such an individual rests on his responsibility to control the paroxysms of instrumental reason. Neither a "primitive" nor a "barbarian," Jacinto is, in my reading of the novel, an avatar of the "happy independent man," who has gone back to Nature after contemplating the spectacle of civilization.

Almeida's book, tinged by the values of the Enlightenment, rests upon the assumption that knowledge gathered through experience will lead to "true philosophy," i.e., to "Wisdom." For Jacinto, however, there seems to be a partial suspension of the terms that define that enlightened notion of "experience": "When one day, as he was laughing at Fortune and its Wheel in disbelief, he bought one tenth of a lottery ticket from a Spanish acolyte. Fortune, swift and smiling on its Wheel, rapidly ran in order to bring him four hundred thousand 'pesetas.' And if ever the slow and heavy clouds saw Jacinto without an umbrella, they would reverently keep their water until he passed. Oh, the amber and fennel from Mrs. Angelina had expelled 'bad luck' triumphantly and forever from his fate." ("Quando um dia, rindo com descrido riso da Fortuna e da sua Roda, comprou a um sacristão espanhol um décimo de loteria, logo a Fortuna, ligeira e ridente sobre a sua Roda, correu num fulgor, para lhe trazer quatrocentas mil pesetas. E no céu as nuvens, pejadas e lentas, se avistavam Jacinto sem

guarda-chuva, retinham com reverência as suas águas até que ele passasse... Ah! O âmbar e o funcho da sra. D. Angelina tinham escorraçado do seu destino, bem triunfalmente e para sempre, a 'sorte ruim'" [*Cidade* 15]). Almeida's "happy man" reaches wisdom by means of an experience that is temporally determined. Jacinto's "happiness," on the contrary, is predicated on the exclusion of temporality in Modernity. In this description, Jacinto is represented immersed in a world without events, i.e., in a place where absolute chance is unthinkable.

A Cidade e as Serras is an example of the interchangeability of the artificial and the natural, a *variatio* of a History that has been transcended by Art. As an archive of sorts, the book also includes the semantic serialization of the couples city/countryside, culture/nature, civilization/barbarism. And, once again, precisely because these are archived, they are destined to a repetition predicated on alterity. This interchangeability of the natural and the artificial is legible in the diachrony of a process whose *éskhaton* can be described the following way: "Economic history, whose entire previous development centered around the opposition between city and country, has now progressed to the point of nullifying both. As a result of the current *paralysis* of any historical development beyond the independent movement of the economy, the incipient disappearance of city and country does not represent a *transcendence* of their separation, but their simultaneous collapse" (Debord 97; emphases in the original). If, on the one hand, *A Cidade e as Serras* is an archive of two opposed signifiers -- the "city" and the "mountains" -- on the other hand both terms exclude a third category: chaos, absolute change, and matter or *physis*, a form of "garbage" that is considered to be exterior to the human intellect. In the mountains, the meta-*physis* -- or metaphysics -- lies on the instrumentalization of Nature, a Nature that is shaped by the moral behavior of men. Tormes is thus, like parts of the city itself, a museum of sorts, where artifacts such as "nature" or the antinomy city/countryside are kept. Tormes is therefore not a utopia: it is both a space out of space and a space that has a location. In Foucauldian terms, Tormes is a space and a counter-space, i.e., an "heterotopia." Alternatively, one could read Tormes as "land art": "He [Jacinto] was invested in creating a tree." ("O empenho era criar a árvore" [*Cidade* 171]). The nineteenth century, a period obsessed with history, desecrates time (see Foucault 83, 85). In the case of Tormes, the weight of the sacred lies on space and excludes temporality.

The genealogical metaphysics in *A Cidade e as Serras* is linked to a tribal attachment to the soil (i.e., 247). This mythological connection to the land is in tune with the fascination for myth in the nineteenth century (see Lotman 207). If there is a cultivation of mythology, culture is also mythified. The "man from the countryside" is, in this sense, an aestheticized *super ego*. As a political signifier, he stands for what has been called, in another context, the aesthetization of a political ideal. He represents the ultimate stage of rational domination of technology, which moves beyond the oppression of Jacinto by technological progress in Paris (Habermas 47). Nature is thus present in Tormes as transcendental reason and can be equated, for instance, with the Emersonian conception of the natural. Further, it is also linked to the study of natural sciences undertaken by Fradique Mendes, another important character of Eça's late fictional writings: "I love Life and, therefore, I love everything -- since everything is part of life, even death. A rigid body in its coffin is as alive as an eagle flapping its wings in flight." ("Adoro a Vida e portanto tudo adoro -- porque tudo é viver, mesmo morrer. Um cadáver rígido no seu esquife vive tanto como uma águia batendo voo" [*Correspondência* 72]). In Emerson's essay "Nature" we find a similar image: "Even the corpse has its own beauty" ("Nature" 985). For Jacinto too, Nature is a form of the beautiful. And when Nature is perceived aesthetically, it is often subsumed to the logic of capitalism: Jacinto's estates, we are told at very beginning of the novel, generate a profit of 109 *contos* (*Cidade* 11). Nature not only becomes a source of wealth but its beauty constitutes the supplementary symbolic value that circulates amongst those individuals whose autonomy depends on that income.

Jacinto's new life at Tormes represents his emancipation as an autonomous individual, becoming the *Geist* of his estate. In Tormes, he gains self-consciousness and acquires a communal, patriarchal sense of justice. His moral "autonomy" -- his self-consciousness -- occurs at the moment when he is able to master his life, when he is able to self-determine his destiny. A nation composed of this kind of individuals would echo the Hegelian post-historical condition where the state becomes obsolete. I would argue that the pastoral environment of Tormes presupposes a landscape that is simultaneously

out of history and post-historical. It is post-historical insofar as it is a synecdoche of a larger social reality -- a *socius* of "rural bourgeoisie" that does not need the regulatory power of the State. Jacinto, we are told, is equally "indifferent to the State and to the Government of Men." ("indiferente ao Estado e ao Governo dos Homens" [*Cidade* 15]), an attitude that is coherent with the criticism of the "socio-economic structure of the masses." ("estrutura económico-social da Grey" [Sérgio xxiii]) put forth by the socialist *idearium* that permeates Eça and the intellectual *milieu* to which he belongs. Yet, I would add that the pastoral ideal that Tormes depicts presupposes the overcoming of socialist politics, whose governmental praxis meant the reinforcement of a protectionist policy -- particularly on a fiscal level (Ramos 177-78) -- thus reinforcing a State designed to become the incarnation of the spirit of the nation. In *A Cidade e as Serras* Portugal is therefore praised as a nation that is outside of the sociological Modernity contaminating Europe at the time (*Notas* 205-20). Late Eça's emphasis on ethnicity is allied with a valorization of aesthetics, the combination of which should keep the detrimental modernization of the country at bay. The novella thus represents the creation of an ethnic/aesthetic hybrid. And I contend that Jacinto, a "man from the countryside," corresponds to Martins's description of a "landowner." The "man from the countryside," on the one hand, and the "landowner," on the other, integrate the meta-narrative of emancipation created by Eça's intellectual generation in order to interpret Portugal's place is history. In his *Portugal e o Socialismo* Martins equates the socialist revolution with a humane possession of the land, i.e., a de-transcendentalization of authority over the land. In pre-modern Portugal, the possession of the land is legitimized by tradition. In modern (i.e., liberal and post-liberal) Portugal, in turn, the land is an abstract concept that needs to be mobilized: "When rural properties are no longer a sign of privilege and, therefore, no longer immobile and linked to the perpetuation of the family nucleus throughout time, they become just another mobile capital. But, since the peculiar characteristics of the land and of legal tradition have prevented, to a certain extent, the mobilization of the land, it was necessary to create an *ad hoc* institution to deal with this situation, which is why the institutions of credit were created." ("Perdendo a propriedade rural o carácter de privilégio que a imobilizava e vinculava à conservação da molécula social da família através do tempo, a terra entrava na categoria comum dos capitais móveis; mas como a sua natureza peculiar e as tradições mantidas no direito impediam até certo ponto a mobilização, força era criar uma instituição *ad hoc* e esta é a razão de ser dos estabelecimentos de crédito predial" [Martins, *Portugal e o Socialismo* 145]). The sense of immorality associated with the activity of lending through credit -- an activity that signified the loss of communal ties to the land -- nurtures a nostalgia for a pre-modern relationship to the countryside, and for the morality inherent in those pre-modern times.

The progressive socialism advocated by Eça's generation sanctified property as "possession," i.e. as the result of work, and endeavored to multiply landowners, a move justified through the following argument: "Since the philosophy of right reduces the basis of legitimacy to the laws of nature, and since economy reduces all production to its origin, i.e., work, then, if we consider the issue objectively, property is no more than work, no more than a concrete activity, no more than the transformation of matter." ("Reduzindo a filosofia do direito o fundamento da legitimidade às leis da natureza; e reduzindo a economia toda a produção à origem única do trabalho; a propriedade, objectivamente considerada, não é mais do que trabalho efectuado, do que actividade concreta, do que transformação de matéria" [Martins, *Portugal e o Socialismo* 170). Property is thus legitimized individually and socially through work. The coming together of these two concepts is the corollary of an historic process predicated on progress, where evolution goes hand in hand with revolution: "Thus, objectively, Evolution and Revolution mean, in their mutual relationship that the first is the fatal movement of the laws of nature and the second is the understanding of this movement by conscience" ("Objectivamente, portanto, Evolução e Revolução querem dizer, nas suas relações, a primeira o movimento fatal das leis da natureza, e a segunda a compreensão, a assimilação desse movimento pela consciência") (Martins, *Teoria do Socialismo* 4). The legitimation of property through work is the outcome of an understanding of history as an appropriation of Nature by the Intellect. This is the desired goal of nineteenth-century progress according to Oliveira Martins: "If we are strong enough to achieve the fulfillment of our aspirations, the current century will witness a far-reaching solution for the antinomy Revolution-Reaction in a synthesis that we have already named Reform." ("Se formos

bastante fortes para chegar à realidade das nossas aspirações, o século actual verá ainda o grande facto da resolução da antinomia Revolução-Reacção, na síntese a que já chamámos Reforma" [Martins, *Teoria do Socialismo* 8]). The future is thus here understood as "reform," which is the synthesis of the pair evolution/revolution.

Finally, the future -- i.e., the prognosis of the outcome of socialism -- is conceived in ethical and aesthetic terms: "What would be an easier, more just, more beautiful and more useful occasion to create a nation made of landowners?" ("Que melhor, mais fácil e mais justa, mais bela e mais útil ocasião de criar uma nação de proprietários agrícolas?" [Martins, *Portugal e o Socialismo* 150]). I would argue that these ideas reverberate in *A Cidade e as Serras*, particularly in the transformation undergone by Jacinto throughout the novella, a change that is mediated by consciousness. In the end of the narrative, Jacinto is "just," "beautiful," and "useful" since he has become a landowner legitimated by work. Tormes is thus a site of redemption, a bastion that stands against Capitalism in its stage of global deterritorialization, a bulwark against a world that has in the "society of friends" united by stocks and described in *A Cidade e as Serras* its most eloquent emblem. Further, the "wealth of the nation" represented by Jacinto is linked to a regime of landowning that is articulated in a pastoral mode best described in the philosophy of economy from the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Adam Smith's description of the "landowner" follows a pastoral rhetoric:

> The man who employs his capital in land has it more under his view and command, and his fortune is much less liable to accidents than that of the trader, who is obliged frequently to commit it, not only to the winds and the waves, but to the more uncertain elements of human folly and injustice, by giving great credits in distant countries to men with whose character and situation he can seldom be thoroughly acquainted. The capital of the landlord, on the contrary, which is fixed in the improvement of his land, seems to be as well secured as the nature of human affairs can admit of. The beauty of the country besides, the pleasures of a country life, the tranquility of mind which it promises, and wherever the injustice of human laws does not disturb it, the independency which it really affords, have charms that more or less attract everybody; and as to cultivate the ground was the original destination of man, so in every stage of his existence he seems to retain a predilection for this primitive employment. (387-88)

In fact, Smith's work is displayed in a section or shelf in the library of 202 Champ Elysée: "Right at the entrance I noticed [in the library of Jacinto's house in Paris], the name of Adam Smith written in gold on a green book spine. It was thus the region of the Economists" (*Cidade* 29). In Smith's philosophy of economy that implies anthropometric determinations (bodies, places, territorialities), the risk of the deterritorialization of Capital lies in its unpredictable movement (i.e., its autonomy). Capital needs to be invested safely in one's own land, as Adam Smith asseverates: the farmer is, in this sense, an aestheticized version of the businessman and constitutes the building block of a civilized society, i.e., a society made of autonomous individuals for whom "profit is the moral pleasure of work." ("o lucro é o deleite moral do trabalho" [*Cidade* 173]). As long as Tormes can be envisaged as an Arcadia of sorts, it embodies the contiguity of the *homo oeconomicus* and the *homo aestheticus*. In a sense Jacinto, landowner in Tormes, embodies a pre-modern political program: "Jacinto was now like a king, a founder and great builder of a kingdom. Throughout all of his realm of Tormes there was construction for the renovation of the houses of farmers, some of which were repaired while other older ones were demolished and then rebuilt, but made larger and more comfortable." ("Jacinto agora era como um rei fundador de um reino, e grande edificador. Por todo o seu domínio de Tormes andavam obras, para o renovamento das casas dos rendeiros, umas que se consertavam, outras mais velhas, que se derrubavam para se reconstruírem com uma largueza cómoda" [*Cidade* 199]). The figure of the king, founder of a kingdom, is precisely the aesthetic becoming of the vacillating Portuguese Modernity of the nineteenth century.

Let us now consider the vaguely anthropological set of concepts that underlie the notions of nature and culture in *A Cidade e as Serras*. Eça's *theatrum anthropologicum* can be summarized in the following way: man is autonomous as a moral being, i.e. as a being that transcends zoology and thus situates himself in History. Animals, instincts, and the materiality of Nature are immoral (note: not Nature as inscription of a transcendental reason). According to these premises, for a human being to become a bourgeois, subsumed under the materiality of Capital, is a way to fall prey of the animal within. The irruption of the temptations of matter -- incest, adultery, concupiscence -- in a world

otherwise determined by morality is a very prevalent topic in Eça's fiction. That is to say, the novelist's work displays what we could call a negative anthropology: the materiality of the bourgeois man forms an immanent *continuum* and the materiality of instincts is the essence of the masses. Both the "bourgeois" and the "masses" are a result of the sociological and technological European Modernity. Several other notions such as "liberalism," "democracy" or the "middle class" are also linked in this negative anthropology.

Eça's negative anthropology also encompasses some characteristics of the Portuguese *ethnos.* Eça finds that the pressure of zoological traits over society is responsible for Portugal's excessive fantasy and lack of a critical faculty, which prevents the nation's fulfillment as *Geist*. At the end of the nineteenth century, most Portuguese intellectuals would agree that the country lacked in "nationhood," that is, the country as a community did not possess a metaphysics of its genesis. These intellectuals believe that there was an excessive idealization of a primitive pre-modernity that needed to be enlightened. This process of secular illumination would be achieved through the progress of consciousness that turns nations into moral subjects. Now, the Portuguese ontological predisposition to fall for a sentence, or for its melody, according to Eça, signified an ethnic inclination to succumb to a sense-perception that was considered to be still *infra*-human. The fact that Eça envisaged himself as *homo rhetoricus* can be interpreted literally. To him, "style" was precisely the way to establish a dialectics between spirit and matter, a movement that would lead to emancipation. The *homo rethoricus* is an emancipated individual in that he balances Reason and Aesthetics. His starting point was that "a beautiful sentence will always please us [i.e., the Portuguese] more than a precise concept" (*Notas* 8) and he therefore turns "tropology" in a way to intervene in the collective ethnic psyche, in need of such critic balancing.

Jacinto is the name of a morphology of the human that is based upon the wish to create a unified worldview, a desire that clashes with the reality of a universe dominated by the autonomous production of images through technological means. The privileges of the autonomous subject, traditionally the founder of a moral image of the world, are robbed by its autonomous technical other. The moment when everything is worthwhile -- the artistic moment that, for Eça, encompasses everything (*Notas* 110) -- is the moment when the negativity of the Other is negated. Eça's aesthetics is ideology insofar as style allows the author to intervene in the Portuguese ethnic predisposition to be fascinated by a "beautiful sentence." In the final stage of the ideological, aesthetic, and literary trajectory of Eça, his writings document different aspects of the symptomatology of an intellectual in the end of the nineteenth century. This is the moment when the "transparency" of literary language associated with Realist and Naturalistic aesthetics progressively gives way to ironical opacity, a process that signals the impossibility of conjuring up a meaning that is not tainted by mediation (see Sousa). The following Queirosian injunction, subtitle of *A Relíquia* (1887) (The Relic), provides the synthesis of his overcoming of strict Realist and Naturalistic protocols: "over the strong nakedness of Truth, the diaphanous veil of Fantasy" ("Sobre a nudez forte da verdade, o manto *diáfano* da *fantasia*"). This "veil of fantasy," simultaneously transparent and opaque, stands for the in-between place where the discourse of Truth is grounded. I show how, read under the light of Eça's *theatrum anthropologicum*, such "veil of fantasy" was both a critic and a clinical instrument to intervene effectively in the Portuguese collective body.

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