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Eugénio de Castro: a symbolic
narrative of passion and pessimism
(1889-1896)

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Summary

This thesis offers a detailed study of all the works of Eugénio de Castro written between 1889 and 1896. I have concentrated on the development of the themes of passion and pessimism during the period in question, and on the debt of these works to the Symbolist poetry and drama of France.

Chapter One deals with Oaristos (1890), the first book which clearly reveals the mark of contemporary French literature on the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. In this chapter I examine in detail the influence on Eugénio de Castro of Cesário Verde, Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier, J.K. Huysmans and Jean Moréas. I also point out the basically Romantic nature of this book, and discuss to what extent it can properly be termed - as it often has been - a Symbolist or Decadent work.

In Chapter Two I examine Horas (1891) in terms of a sudden upsurge of interest in religious symbolism among certain writers in France at the time. I study the continuing influence of Jean Moréas, as well as the new influences of Maurice Maeterlinck and Artur Schopenhauer. I also discuss the nature of the Symbolism this book claimed to introduce into Portugal, and point again to the basically Romantic nature of its poetry.

Chapter Three is divided into two parts. The first of these deals with an event in Eugénio de Castro's life which would provide the starting-point for all the remaining poetry of the period under examination: the breaking, in 1892, of his engagement with Helena Bordalo Pinheiro. It also examines the work in which the initial shock of this personal tragedy is first expressed: Safira, published over several numbers of the Jornal do Comércio in March 1892. In the second part I discuss those poems from Silva (1894) written in 1891 and 1892. In these Eugénio de Castro expresses first the hopes surrounding the engagement of late 1891, and subsequently the grief.

caused by the broken engagement of 1892. The poems of this period reveal the first signs of the influence on Eugénio de Castro of Jean Moréas's "École Romane", and also employ poetic techniques reminiscent of those to be found in the works of the French Symbolist poets.

Chapter Four is likewise divided into two parts. The first of these looks at a series of poems written in all probability in 1893, though not published until their inclusion in Silva and Interlúdio (1894). It is here that, for the first time, Eugénio de Castro attempts to express his personal tragedy in terms of philosophical or pseudo-philosophical structures borrowed from other writers. Here I examine the increasing influence of Schopenhauer, connected with certain themes borrowed from Classical literature following the precepts of the "École Romane". I also study the appearance of certain ideas borrowed from Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, Stéphane Mallarmé and Maurice Barrès. In the second part of this chapter I examine the means whereby Eugénio de Castro widens the implications of his personal tragedy to assume the proportions of the universal tragedy proposed by Schopenhauer.

Chapter Five deals with a group of horror-poems to be found in Silva and above all in Interlúdio. I discuss the influence on this group of poems of the poetic theory of Edgar Allan Poe, and study some of them as exaggerations of certain tenets of Schopenhauer's philosophy. I also examine the connections between these poems and others written by Maurice Rollinat, Guerra Junqueiro and Guilherme de Azevedo.

Chapter Six deals with the first of Eugénio de Castro's major dramatic poems, Belkiss (1894). I attempt to date the composition of this poem, and study its connections as a Symbolist drama with the theatre of Maeterlinck and certain ideas on drama then current in France. I also examine the Biblical and other sources of background material, as well as the debt of the poem to Gustave Flaubert and Pliny for its exotic detail. As regards its plot, I discuss the poem as a symbolic exposition of

Schopenhauer's philosophy, and point to the digressory nature of episodes dealing with the themes of sadism and fatality. I also examine the philosophical structure of the poem as a means of elevating the author's personal experience to what he saw as a more grandiose scale. This chapter also looks at Schopenhauer's philosophy as expressed by "Pan" from Salomé e outros poemas (1896), a poem which reveals the continuing influence of the "École Romane".

In Chapter Seven, I examine the three poems Tirésias (1895), "A Monja e o Rouxinol" (from Salomé e outros poemas) and A Nereide de Harlém (1896). I trace the legend employed in the first poem back to its original version in the works of the Greek poet Callimachus, and that employed in the second back to Cantigas de Santa Maria of Alfonso X el Sabio. I discuss the common theme of all three poems, that of inverting the idea of punishment into the continued enjoyment of the crime of sensuality. I also study Tirésias as an expression of the cult of "a arte pela arte".

Chapter Eight examines the second major dramatic poem, Sagramor (1895). I view its hero in the context of a tradition of quest-heroes in nineteenth-century European literature. I discuss the structure of the poem, identifying those elements written earlier, and later incorporated into a poem for which they were not initially intended. I also show how the different stated themes of the successive Cantos are in fact variations on a basic theme of sensuality. I examine the pessimistic conclusion to which Eugénio de Castro brings the poem, and contrast it with the message of hope implied by certain other elements of the poem. This chapter also examines the themes of Sagramor as they appear in the three shorter poems, "O Amor e a Saudade", "Hermafrodita" and "O Peregrino" from Salomé e outros poemas.

In Chapter Nine I deal with O Rei Galaor (1897), examining the influence of Maeterlinck's ideas on fatality

as expressed in his article "L'Étoile", and certain similarities between the initial situation of the drama and the legend of Saint Barbara. I point out the disparity between the apparent tragedy of the ending of the poem, and its real message of hope. I examine the theme of fatality present in the poem as a literary structure employed to create an appearance of tragedy where none actually exists. I study the failure of tragedy in O Rei Galaor in connection with a new series of events in Eugénio de Castro's life, culminating in his marriage in 1898.

In the conclusion I examine the philosophical structures employed in Eugénio de Castro's poetry in connection with the emotional situations on which they are based, and which they attempt to magnify. I also view his ideas on literature in the context of certain ideas current above all in France at the time.

Introduction

Eugénio de Castro was one of the best-known literary figures of his day. In 1896, delivering a lecture on the young poet then at the height of his early career, Rubén Darío acknowledged Eugénio de Castro's growing reputation by saying of him: "hoy representa una de las más brillantes fases del renacimiento latino".¹ And yet, he has fast become a forgotten man in the annals of Portuguese literature. The centenary of his birth, in 1969, aroused a passing interest, accompanied by a flurry of dutifully written articles; but it did little to relieve the wide-spread indifference which has surrounded him for years. He has been allowed to slip quietly back into his former obscurity. The commemorative edition of his works, begun in 1969, was left to peter out two years later at volume V, no doubt through lack of interest.

This lack of interest has gone long unmended, but not unnoticed. Already in 1956 Jorge de Sena spoke of "os do passado, que ninguém lê, os quase contemporâneos (um Gomes Leal, um Eugénio de Castro, um Junqueiro, mesmo um Junqueiro), que toda a gente finge que leu".² In the year of his centenary, 1969, Fernando de Araújo Lima referred to Eugénio de Castro as "pouco citado, quase nada lembrado e nunca endeusado".³ And in the same year António da Silva Gonçalves added: "Ontem dele não gostaram; hoje dele não gostam e muitos há que lhe diminuam o arcaboço de poeta sem o terem lido".⁴

It is perhaps in more concrete terms that this lack of interest can be most clearly seen. Only one book has

¹ RUBÉN DARÍO, "Eugénio de Castro", in Los Raros (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe Argentina, 1952), p. 204.

² JORGE DE SENA, Da Poesia Portuguesa (Lisbon: Edições Ática, 1959), p. 96. The essay from which the quotation is taken is dated 1956.

³ FERNANDO DE ARAÚJO LIMA, "Eugénio de Castro e o poema Salomé", in Boletim da Sociedade de Estudos de Moçambique, Vol. 37 (1968-9), p. 4.

⁴ ANTÓNIO DA SILVA GONÇALVES, "O espírito revolucionário do poeta Eugénio de Castro", *ibid.*, pp. 28-9.

ever been written on Eugénio de Castro,⁵ but it is marked throughout by a certain superficiality of approach. Post-graduate research is represented by five "dissertações de licenciatura" from the Universities of Lisbon and Coimbra, though these tend to concentrate on specific aspects of Eugénio de Castro's poetic technique, rather than on the inner conflicts of his poetry.⁶ And the reader wishing further information concerning Eugénio de Castro is almost inevitably referred to a series of articles which, if at times excellent, at others have no real contribution to make to the study of his work. It is perhaps indicative of the slight esteem in which Eugénio de Castro is held in his own country that the most detailed studies of his work in recent years have been made abroad.⁷

---ooOoo---

The indifference surrounding Eugénio de Castro derives largely from a misconception of his early poetry, a misconception which I hope, in this thesis, to put right. The nature of the correction required is already apparent in my title, particularly in the terms "passion" and "pessimism". This misconception has grown up over the years, and it is one for the initial propagation of which Eugénio de Castro himself must be held at least partly responsible.

After the turn of the century, the nature of Eugénio de Castro's poetry changed radically. He entered into what is now generally known as his Classical or neo-Classical period. In the poetry of this later period, he consciously cultivated the tranquillity and serenity he saw as essential features of Classicism. As against

⁵ See Bibliography under RAMOS.

⁶ See Bibliography under GONÇALVES, GUERRA, MATOS, PINHEIRO, SOUSA.

⁷ See Bibliography, three entries under POUPART.

the expansiveness of earlier days, he now chose as his literary idols authors whom he saw as incarnating this serenity - in particular Goethe, several of whose poems he translated and published in 1909. As João de Barros points out: "Goethe foi sempre uma grande simpatia intelectual de Eugénio de Castro - seduzia-o a serenidade vitoriosa do autor do Faust, o seu domínio sobre os impulsos instintivos e as desharmonias inevitáveis da vida".⁸

Having entered upon this phase, Eugénio de Castro's view of his earlier poetry also changed. The author of the article on Eugénio de Castro in the Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira suggests that:

Na realidade, o exotismo de Eugénio de Castro era meramente artificial, era, como ele confessa, 'uma forte dose de exagero', filha da necessidade de 'sublinhar a traço vermelho a estagnada vulgaridade das formas poéticas de então'. Conseguido este objectivo, revendo-se consolado nos lindos frutos da árvore que 'não criou mas plantou', o poeta regressou serenamente ao neoclassicismo".⁹

(The quotations included in this article are from the Preface to the second edition of Oaristos, written by Eugénio de Castro himself.) The use of the term "regressou" is important. It is the same term as that used by René Poupert in the title of his article "Le retour d'Eugénio de Castro au classicisme". And as these terms suggest, it has become accepted that Eugénio de Castro was, in one way or another, always a Classical poet, and that the poems written between 1889

⁸ JOÃO DE BARROS, Eugénio de Castro (Lisbon: Seara Nova, 1945), pp. 13-4.

⁹ Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira (Lisbon: Editorial Enciclopedia Lda., s/d), VI, 236. The article is unsigned. In his article on "Eugénio de Castro, jornalista de treze anos", in Panorama, iv série, No. 1 (1962), Américo da Costa Ramalho suggests that Eugénio de Castro himself was the author of the article. (The pages of Panorama are unnumbered.)

and 1896 merely present Classical values under a rather unusual guise. Thus João Gaspar Simões suggests that:

O simbolismo de Eugénio de Castro é como um baile de máscara. Debaixo do seu dominó de revolucionário palpitava um coração conservador. A mascarilha nefelitava [sic] que lhe escondia os olhos deixava brilhar as suas pupilas académicas. 10

Likewise, René Poupard is of the opinion that "son tempérament était foncièrement classique. Ce classicisme se devine déjà dans les poèmes les plus volontairement ésotériques des premiers recueils." 11

The suggestion that Eugénio de Castro had always been a Classical poet is due largely to the efforts of his close friend and colleague Manuel da Silva Gaio. In his prefaces to two of Eugénio de Castro's books - Poesias Escolhidas (1902), Horas (2nd. ed. 1912) - and no doubt with the author's blessing, Manuel da Silva Gaio attempts to deceive the mind with a shrewdly managed act of critical hocus-pocus. Amidst labyrinthine syntax and resounding terminology, he passes a verbal wand over Eugénio de Castro's early works, and seems to change them into Classical poetry before our very eyes. The trick lies, of course, in the nature of the definitions employed.

Referring, implicitly, to figures such as Belkiss and Sagramor, whom he sees as personifying generalized conceptions, Manuel da Silva Gaio states of Eugénio de Castro:

Com semelhante aptidão e tendência de composição genérica [...] teria sido, noutro tempo, um clássico - tomando a palavra na acepção e sob o ponto de vista em que deve aqui tomar-se; como

¹⁰ JOÃO GASPAR SIMÕES, "A Posição de Eugénio de Castro, in Estrada Larga (Oporto: Porto Editora, s/d), I, 113.

¹¹ RENÉ POUPARD, "Le retour d'Eugénio de Castro au classicisme", in Bulletin Scientifique de l'Institut Supérieur de Commerce de la Province du Hainaut, Mons, 1964, I, 13.

correspondendo à tendência de redução ao universal. 12

In the preface to Horas, pursuing the same point, he abandons caution to the wind and this time states quite bluntly: "É clássico, com efeito, por essa faculdade de redução ao universal".¹³ But his conclusions are inadmissible. In the first instance it is debatable whether or not the process of "redução ao universal" is a necessary, let alone a sufficient condition for Classicism. But, in fact, whether or not it is is quite beside the point. Belkiss, and above all Sagramor can not be interpreted simply as "composições genéricas". To accept that they are is merely to scratch the surface of his work. And to approach his work with such a preconception in mind would constitute a serious hindrance to a real understanding of his poetry.

Manuel da Silva Gaio pushes these arguments even further. For him, these "composições genéricas" also represent the creation of "a Beleza":

ele é, manifestamente, acima de tudo criador de Beleza - admitido o termo no sentido de qualquer coisa comparável à normal, englobante feição de feições dum busto típico da Espécie, visto como oposto ao modelado flagrante de determinada criatura viva. 14

But again, what is the necessary connection between these "totais de invenção, unificadores de dispersos aspectos físicos e humanos pela eliminação das diferenças e resultante integração das semelhanças"¹⁵ and "a Beleza"? Silva Gaio is attempting to baffle us

¹² MANUEL DA SILVA GAIO, in: Eugénio de Castro, Poesias Escolhidas (Lisbon: Livraria Aillaud et Cie., 1902), p. ix.

¹³ The preface to Horas is reproduced in its entirety in: Eugénio de Castro, Obras Poéticas (Coimbra: Lúmen, 1927), Vol. I. The quotation is from page 78.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 76.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 75.

here with mere words. He qualifies his terms to suit his needs: "tomando a palavra na acepção e sob o ponto de vista em que deve aqui tomar-se"; "admitido o termo no sentido de ... " The point at which the move from the personal to the universal is most clearly annotated in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro is in the poems of Interlúdio. Here, under the increasing influence of Schopenhauer, we have a genuine instance of the move "de casos em conceitos".¹⁶ Yet these poems are an exercise in the horrific and the grotesque. Are we to term them "Beleza" simply because they represent "a transposição da realidade - íntima ou exterior - em valores de gama ideal, para a visão do particular em ampliativas projecções de generalidade"?¹⁷

Though his definitions are inadmissible, the ideas of Manuel da Silva Gaio - particularly on the subject of "a Beleza" - have been widely influential. Thus João de Barros writes of Eugénio de Castro: "Mas para aquele extraordinário poeta da Beleza, só a Beleza, só o sentimento e a emoção da Beleza eram objectivo confessável".¹⁸ Cruz Malpique assures us that "Eugénio de Castro fez beleza pela beleza".¹⁹ And Aníbal Pinto de Castro adds that "Toda a actividade literária de Eugénio de Castro foi, com efeito, uma busca incessante e persistente de beleza".²⁰

However, this whole question of Classicism and "Beleza" has led Manuel da Silva Gaio on to even thinner ice. For him, both Classicism and "a Beleza" imply the

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 78.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 73-4.

¹⁸ BARROS, p. 15.

¹⁹ CRUZ MALPIQUE, "Eugénio de Castro, poeta pagão", in Boletim da Biblioteca Pública Municipal de Matosinhos, No. 16 (August 1969), p. 23.

²⁰ ANÍBAL PINTO DE CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação na Poesia de Eugénio de Castro (Biblioteca Municipal de Coimbra, 1969), p. 9.

absence of "o excessivo, mórbido interesse do eu", of "as intemperanças dum egotismo infantil".²¹ He therefore finds himself obliged to rule out the possibility of interpreting Eugénio de Castro's poetry as any kind of "auto-explicação". His path is somewhat smoothed in this direction by the fact that he can rightly say of Eugénio de Castro, with reference, no doubt, to the pseudo-philosophical pessimism of Interlúdio, that "O seu pessimismo é cerebral e não visceral".²² The metaphysical pessimism which appears in Eugénio de Castro's works does indeed smack of cerebration. But from this Manuel da Silva Gaio draws the unacceptable conclusion that "A dor e o sofrimento humano são para ele, como poeta, apenas temas de Arte".²³ Pessimism and grief are not the same thing. It is wishful thinking to imagine that the grief which appears in Eugénio de Castro's poetry is merely a "tema de Arte". Nonetheless, this, too, has been widely accepted. Even people who have worked close to Eugénio de Castro's poetry take it for granted that grief and anguish are elements they will not find. Alfredo Pimenta describes his works as "inocentes das paixões que agitam o mundo, fechados às inquietações dos espíritos, alheios a tudo o que não seja a Beleza pura".²⁴ M. Teresa Monteiro de Andrade e Sousa affirms that "Eugénio de Castro afasta-se de toda a tragédia ou angústia humana".²⁵ And Maria Fernanda de Campos Pires de Matos points to the "quase desinteresse que [...] mereceram os problemas e

²¹ GAIO, Horas, p. 77.

²² GAIO, Poesias Escolhidas, p. xvi.

²³ Ibid., p. xv.

²⁴ ALFREDO PIMENTA, "Eugénio de Castro na Poesia Portuguesa: esboço crítico seguido de vinte cartas inéditas", in Gil Vicente, Vol. 20 (1944), p. 189.

²⁵ M. TERESA MONTEIRO DE ANDRADE E SOUSA, Eugénio de Castro e a Imagem, Dissertação de licenciatura em Filologia Românica apresentada à Faculdade de Lisboa, p. 37.

angústias do homem".²⁶ The result of this widely-held belief is that Eugénio de Castro has gained a reputation for what Miguel de Unamuno calls "turrieburnismo"²⁷ on the one hand, and for coldness on the other. Thus Celso Pedro Luft describes him in the following terms:

"Cultivando uma poesia aristocrática, barroca, mas fria, faltou-lhe inquietação interior, 'inspiração' e arrebatamento lírico".²⁸ While these opinions could perhaps be applied with justice to his later output, they are simply not compatible with a detailed study of Eugénio de Castro's early work. Yet, for the modern reader, their wide-spread acceptance constitutes a serious disincentive to the reading of Eugénio de Castro, and they must be held largely responsible for the indifference surrounding him now. They do his early poetry considerable injustice, as I hope to be able to show.

Consciously or unconsciously, Manuel da Silva Gaio has completely misrepresented Eugénio de Castro's poetry, and his prestige as a writer and critic has caused this misrepresentation to become perpetuated. Eugénio de Castro's poetry is not simply the creation of generic figures, representing "ideias das coisas".²⁹ It is the expression, often highly allegorical, often greatly confused, of his own emotional experience, particularly of the experiences of his love-life, with which it is intimately connected. It is, in a sense,

²⁶ MARIA FERNANDA DE CAMPOS PIRES DE MATOS, O Classicismo em Eugénio de Castro, Dissertação de licenciatura em Filologia Românica apresentada à Faculdade de Lisboa, p. 117.

²⁷ MIGUEL DE UNAMUNO, in: Eugénio de Castro: Constanza, Versión castellana de F. Maldonado (Madrid: Tip. de la 'Revista de los Archivos', 1913), p. 7.

²⁸ CELSO PEDRO LUFT, "Eugénio de Castro", in Dicionário de Literatura Portuguesa e Brasileira (Porto Alegre: Editora Globo, 1967), p. 72

²⁹ GAIO, Obras, p. 78.

almost a blow-by-blow account of the struggle taking place within him between physical desire and affection: between sexual and emotional thrill on the one hand, and the need for spiritual fulfilment on the other. This chronicling of his inner life - whose varying forms of expression are determined by the successive phases of Eugénio de Castro's intellectual experience - is the "força motriz" of all his poetry written between 1889 and 1896. For reasons which we shall see, the conflicts he was experiencing are often magnified into grandiose philosophical pronouncements, or left to disappear almost from view amidst large-scale scenes of universal pessimism and illusion. But passion and pessimism are never merely "temas de Arte" for their own sake. They are magnified symbols of the author's own story of love and grief. In one form or another, whether as love and grief on a human level, or as passion and pessimism on a philosophical plane, these conflicts lie behind all the works on which this thesis will be concentrating. In the serenity of his later years, Eugénio de Castro may have felt a little unhappy with the turbulence of his earlier poems. And it may have suited him to connive at the misinterpretations of Manuel da Silva Gaio, in that they were in line with his new image of himself. But the fact remains that these poems are neither "reduções ao universal" nor "criações de Beleza". They are a narrative of personal experience, the expression of a keenly-felt personal dilemma. And it is from this angle that I intend to approach them.

---ooOoo---

From the point of view of poetic technique, a common concern of all the poetry of Eugénio de Castro written between 1890 and 1896 is the use of the symbol. Oaristos, written mostly in 1889 though published in 1890, lies, in terms of the nature of its poetry, essentially outside this group. Nonetheless, it too must be

considered under this rubric in that it is commonly (if mistakenly) referred to as a "simbolista" work. The form taken by this use of symbol varies widely from work to work. In Horas, for example, it is largely synonymous with allegory, though certain elements of Mallarmé's metaphysical symbolism also filter through. In Silva many poems attempt to reproduce the techniques of the French Symbolist poets, particularly the technique generally known as the "paysage animé". In Tirésias and the three dramatic poems Belkiss, Sagramor and O Rei Galaor, the principal figures appear as would-be symbols of philosophical truths.

Eugénio de Castro was never a genuine symbolist in the senses in which this term is understood in France, the country from which he took his inspiration. Nonetheless, his adherence to the use of symbol of one kind or another is consistent throughout the period in question. Furthermore, at a more profound level, certain of the themes he employs are themselves symbols of other themes, of which they become a magnification. Feelings of insufficiency concerning the limitations of his own experience frequently led Eugénio de Castro to express that experience in terms of passion and pessimism on a universal scale. But this is never simply philosophical speculation. It is a magnification of his own story of grief and love. From all points of view - content, poetic technique, the poet's view of his own experience - the poems I shall study can be seen to constitute a symbolic narrative of passion and pessimism.

---ooOoo---

From the researcher's point of view, one of the most interesting aspects of Eugénio de Castro's poetry is the very considerable number of writers by whom he was influenced, either directly or indirectly, at the various stages of his poetic career. As a writer,

Eugénio de Castro was incapable of expressing himself without the aid of material borrowed from others. René Poupart is undoubtedly right when he states that "Les influences littéraires déterminent à ce point sa production qu'on est en droit de se demander s'il aurait jamais pu être un poète aussi fécond sans l'apport de sa culture".³⁰ At his worst, Eugénio de Castro is a kind of literary sponge. He absorbs ideas from all sides; but if (in a critical sense) one squeezes his work over hard, the absorbed material is ejected, leaving a dry and unsubstantial structure behind. At his best, however, he assimilates his influences successfully into his own poems, where they become an integral part of a new, homogeneous structure created and dominated by him.

The question of the influences working on Eugénio de Castro, particularly in the case of French writers contemporary with him, has proved in the past to be something of a free-for-all. Denyse Chast, for example, suggests that "En ce qui concerne l'influence exercée par les poètes français sur l'évolution d'Eugénio de Castro, il est assez difficile de déterminer avec précision le rôle qu'ils ont joué".³¹ The standard procedure has been to name everyone who might have influenced Eugénio de Castro, in the certain knowledge that some of these will be correct. But such an approach is obviously inadequate. Among critics contemporary with Eugénio de Castro, by far the most perceptive in this respect was the Italian Vittorio Pica. Denyse Chast

³⁰ RENÉ POUPART, "L'Influence de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam et de Maurice Maeterlinck sur Eugénio de Castro", in Mémoires et Publications de la Société des Sciences, des Arts et des Lettres du Hainaut, Vol. 80 (1966), p. 107. In future references I shall refer to this article as: POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck".

³¹ DENYSE CHAST, "Eugénio de Castro et les Symbolistes Français", in Mélanges d'Études Portugaises offerts à M. Georges Le Gentil (Instituto para a Alta Cultura, 1949), p. 160.

herself has made many interesting suggestions, and much valuable work has recently been done in this field by René Poupert. But there is still much to do. Contrary to the suggestions of Denyse Chast, it is possible to identify with a considerable degree of accuracy the writers who influenced Eugénio de Castro at the different stages of his career, as well as the various forms the influence of these writers took.

The confusion which surrounds the French writers also surrounds, in a slightly different sense, the question of the influence of Schopenhauer. It is widely agreed that Schopenhauer was highly influential in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. But nothing (to my knowledge) has been done to isolate the specific areas of Schopenhauer's influence, or to show how Eugénio de Castro adopted (or adapted) the views of the German philosopher to suit his particular needs.

I have made the study of these influences one of the main points of my thesis, whether they derive from other Portuguese writers, contemporary European writers, Schopenhauer, the authors of Antiquity - to whom Eugénio de Castro turned frequently for inspiration between 1893 and 1895 - or for that matter from the Bible. I have traced all these forms of inspiration back to their source, and examined what use Eugénio de Castro made of them, and how they in turn affected the ultimate message of his poems. In so doing, I hope to have brought some light into what was formerly an area of considerable darkness.

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As it is my aim to study the inner conflicts represented by the poetry written by Eugénio de Castro between 1889 and 1896, I am committed to a study of the first editions of the works concerned. Of these, Belkiss and O Rei Galaor passed unchanged into subsequent

editions. But others, in particular Oaristos and Sagramor, and, to a lesser extent, Silva and Interlúdio, underwent serious revision between the first and second editions. In most cases, the nature of the original is substantially altered as a result. As René Poupard points out, the revisions were made in conformity with the new values of the neo-Classical period: "Le poète, dans ses œuvres nouvelles, renonce aux afféteries du décadentisme et, dans les rééditions des premières œuvres, il en élimine certaines".³² The result is a definite change in the emotional climate of the poems. Again in the words of René Poupard, "Castro efface délibérément certains vocables qui contribuaient à créer le climat morbide et languide si caractéristique du décadentisme".³³ Another point is made by Luís da Câmara Reis, with particular reference to Horas, though it could equally well be applied to other works: "a preocupação de ver arregalados os olhos dos burgueses tocava às vezes às raias - digamos o termo - da imbecilidade".³⁴ Imbecilities or not, these characteristics are essential to the texture and message of the original works, and it is those that my choice of subject obliges me to study.

Any references to the Obras Poéticas of Eugénio de Castro are to the Lúmen edition begun in 1927. Again through lack of interest, no doubt, the recent edition by the Parceria A.M. Pereira has been undertaken without the supervision of a specialized editor (one might compare in this respect this edition of Eugénio de Castro with that of Teixeira de Pascoais under the supervision of Jacinto do Prado Coelho). As a result, it is marred by countless unfortunate and many unforgivable errors.

³² RENÉ POUPART, "L'évolution d'Eugénio de Castro d'après certaines variantes", in Colóquio, Vol. 61 (December 1970), p. 56. In future references, I shall refer to this article as: POUPART, "L'évolution".

³³ Ibid., pp. 57-8.

³⁴ LUÍS DA CÂMARA REIS, Cartas de Portugal (Lisbon: Livraria Ferreira, 1907), p. 134.

Perhaps the most amusing of these is the line in Sagramor (V, 76) which should read:

Fiz no mar do Mistério ingénuas, vãs sondagens.

but which reads in error:

Fiz no mar do Ministério ingénuas, vãs sondagens.

But not all the errors have this amusing side.

In numbering the lines of the poems, I have counted as line 46 the line which a study of the rhyme shows to be missing in poem VII of Oaristos, and as line 66 the line which, for similar reasons, can be seen to be missing from the fourth scene of the first canto of Sagramor. Both these omissions occur in the first and all subsequent editions.

In quoting Portuguese texts from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including the first editions of the poetry of Eugénio de Castro, I have modernized the spelling in conformity with the conventions now in force.³⁵ I have likewise modernized the spelling of any German text quoted where this had not already been done by the edition I used.

³⁵ i.e. the "Acordo Ortográfico" of 1945. I have also followed the ruling of the "decreto-lei" No. 32/73 of 6 February 1973: "São eliminados da ortografia oficial portuguesa os acentos circunflexos e os acentos graves com que se assinalam as sílabas subtónicas dos vocábulos derivados com o sufixo 'mente' e com os sufixos iniciados por 'z'". See MAGNUS BERGSTRÖM and NEVES REIS, Prontuário Ortográfico e Guia da Língua Portuguesa (Lisbon: Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, 1975), p. 23.

Part One

The Romantic in spite of himself

Chapter One

An Exercise in Decadence

The publication of Oaristos in 1890 caused something of a sensation on the Portuguese literary scene. It is not always easy to keep the extent of this sensation in its proper perspective. For example, news of the controversy surrounding the book soon seemed to make its way beyond the frontiers of Portugal into France. The Parisian magazine Le Mercure de France, reviewing the work of Eugénio de Castro in June 1891, spoke of this "jeune poète portugais, sur lequel son Oaristos avait déjà attiré l'attention et les foudres de la critique officielle de son pays" (p. 374). But this review (which is unsigned) reflects less the true extent of his impact in Portugal than it does the web of exaggeration woven around Eugénio de Castro by a small group of supporters in France. The argument surrounding Oaristos was neither as heated nor as prolonged as that which, for example, had surrounded the Questão Coimbrã some twenty-five years before. Nonetheless, it did provide the most lively controversy for some time. Parodies soon appeared. In the Lisbon newspaper As Novidades, Alberto Bramão produced a series of skits under the pseudonym Alberto Cantagalo. The poet Guerra Junqueiro penned another, entitled Hevarista, signing himself Júlio de Macedo. Oaristos caused considerable confusion among literary critics of its day. This confusion, though partly dispelled over the years, is with us yet, some eighty-five years after the event.

Eugénio de Castro made many claims for his book in his noisy and challenging, if somewhat juvenile preface. The greatest of these was his assertion of its "ORIGINALIDADE" (his capitals), a claim which I intend to examine in depth in this chapter. There were no lack of supporters to agree with him on this point. In the first volume of his Obras Completas, Eugénio de Castro himself quotes the congratulatory remarks of many friends and colleagues. Other critics have since lent their support to this claim. In 1907 Luís da Câmara Reis wrote of Oaristos: "Assuntos, métrica, imagens, ritmos,

tudo era novo".¹ More recently, Feliciano Ramos referred to the work as "uma renovação completa e integral".² Such opinions, however, are only tenable if the reader confines himself to the exterior aspects of the poetry. The originality of Oaristos is, as we shall see, more apparent than real.

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The preface of Oaristos concentrates on the formal aspects of its poetry; and certain of its poems, though of slight poetic value, undoubtedly constituted a formal novelty at the time. Thus poem VI, insignificant as to its content, justifies the statement in the preface that "Pela primeira vez, também, aparece a adaptação do delicioso ritmo francês rondel". The source of inspiration for this particular poetic form was in all probability the medieval French poet Charles d'Orléans, whom Eugénio de Castro quotes twice in his early poetry (once each in Silva and Interlúnio). But the initial suggestion for the use of medieval verse forms may well have come from Jean Moréas, whose influence on the early poetry of Eugénio de Castro was of the greatest importance. In the preface to Oaristos Eugénio de Castro quotes part of an article on Moréas by the critic Félix Fénéon, published in the series "Les Hommes d'aujourd'hui" (No. 241, 1886). In this article, Fénéon had gone on to say of Moréas: "L'auteur des Cantilènes rêve d'instaurer - par dessus des siècles de prosaïsme - d'amplifier modernement: le rythme libre de Villon et des poètes du moyen âge".³ Already in my study of the background of

¹ REIS, p. 130.

² FELICIANO RAMOS, Eugénio de Castro e a Poesia Nova (Lisbon: Edição da Revista Ocidente, 1943), p. 25.

³ The entire article is reproduced in: ROBERT A. JOUANNY, Jean Moréas (Paris: Lettres Modernes, Minard, 1969), p. 847.

this short poem it has become obvious that the main sources of influence on Oaristos are French.

On the same theme, it is likewise probable that the influence of the medieval French rhetorical poets lies behind poem XV. In a letter to Eugénio de Castro dated 25 April 1891, thanking the poet for the copies of Oaristos and Horas he had sent him, the Galician writer Curros Enríquez wrote of this poem: "da pena ver a un poeta como usted atormentarse en demostrarnos que la lengua portuguesa tiene, como todas, vocablos que, ortográficamente iguaes, difieren en su significación y sentido".⁴ Indeed, almost the entire interest of poem XV lies in its play on homophones, which culminates in the final two verses:

Que o teu lutuoso olhar, sonhada Aldebarão,
Colírio,
Me afague os olhos! olhar casto como um bran-
co lírio.

Teu frio ar quero, com beijos, sob um álamo
Delir e os
Teus desdêns, e enleiar teu corpo sobre um tálamo
De lírios

Metrical tricks such as these were common among the medieval "rhétoriciens" - witness the following lines by Guillaume Crétin:

Pour vivre en paix et concorde, qu'on corde
Guerre, et le chant qu'accord d'elle cordelle:
Qui pour chanter à sa corde s'accorde,
Mal prend son chant: amour telle est mortelle. ⁵

Yet another poem whose interest is mainly formal is poem XIII, in which Eugénio de Castro claimed to

⁴ The entire letter is reproduced in: Obras Completas de Eugénio de Castro, Versión Castellana de Juan G. Olmedilla (Madrid: Editorial Castilla, 1922). The quotation is from Vol. I, p. xlv.

⁵ Quoted in: MARCEL BRAUNSCHVIG, Notre Littérature Étudiée dans les textes (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 16th. ed., 1948), p. 252.

introduce "O desconhecido processo da aliteração". This poem also points to a French source of influence. It reflects, to some extent, the techniques of René Ghil, on whom Eugénio de Castro would write two newspaper articles in 1892 (Jornal do Comércio, 3 April, Novidades, 21 November). Ghil, self-styled leader of the "École Instrumentiste-Évolutive", preached and practised heavy use of alliteration. This he based on complicated ideas concerning the nature of sounds, following the pseudo-scientific theories of the German Helmholtz. These ideas appear in a much diluted form in Eugénio de Castro's poem:

Na messe, que enlourece, estremece a quermesse,
O sol, o celestial girasol, esmorece ...
E as cantilenas de serenos sons amenos
Fogem fluidas, fluindo à fina flor dos fenos. (1-4)

There can be little doubt that Eugénio de Castro was directly acquainted with René Ghil. Ghil's magazine Les Écrits pour l'art was one of three to review Oaristos and Horas favourably in June 1891. In his review, Ghil described Eugénio de Castro as "le chef d'un mouvement de rénovation de la poésie Lusitanienne (p. 156), and, two months later, in the August issue of his magazine, he quoted the first eight lines of poem I of Oaristos (pp. 215-6). He was also the first French editor to give Eugénio de Castro publishing space, printing three of his poems, written in French, in 1891 and 1892.⁶ Eugénio de Castro would seem to have offered himself as a disciple of Ghil's literary school. In a literary survey organized by Jules Huret in 1891, Ghil spoke of "Eugénio de Castro, poète portugais, qui par cinq ou six livres (dont les deux derniers très remarquables, Oaristos et Horas), est en sa patrie chef d'un mouvement de rénovation. Écrivant parfaitement notre langue, il s'est

⁶ The poems are "Cloches dans la nuit" and "L'auto-da-fé" in August 1891 (pp. 199 and 201), and "Chanson" in May 1892 (p. 71).

rallié à la méthode évolutive, pour laquelle il luttera également au Portugal".⁷ As well as those which dominate poem XIII, other alliterations appear sporadically throughout Oaristos. Some of them come reasonably well:

Seu lenço lança olências de escalónia (XVIII, 7)

But Eugénio de Castro never became a true disciple of the "École Instrumentiste-Évolutive". He never attempted to reproduce René Ghil's complicated ideas on the nature of sounds, or to imitate him in the creation of large-scale epics recording the evolution of mankind. His apparent allegiance to Ghil did not last long. Reviewing one of the latter's main "évolutive" works, L'Ordre Altruiste, for the Coimbran magazine O Instituto in March 1895, he dismissed it as dry and uninteresting (p. 190).

To return to poem XIII, Curros Enríquez rightly saw it as an "ensayo pueril de vocablos homofónicos".⁸ But though it is certain that Eugénio de Castro's fascination with alliteration at this time was more superficial than profound, it is worth noting that this kind of technique was taken up again by later poets, notably by Fernando Pessoa in his "Saudade Dada":

Em horas inda louras, lindas
Clorindas e Belindas, brandas
Brincam no tempo das berlindas,
As vindas vendo das varandas. 9

This is one of several elements which justify Jorge de Sena's remark that "nos poemas mais antigos de Fernando Pessoa [...] há um esteticismo que é actualizado pela renovação de contacto com as correntes simbolistas e post-simbolistas, do que fora essencial, quer em Nobre quer em Eugénio de Castro".¹⁰

⁷ Quoted in: JULES HURET, Enquête sur l'évolution littéraire (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1891), p. 115.

⁸ Quoted in OLMEDILLA, p. xlv.

⁹ FERNANDO PESSOA, Obra Poética (Rio de Janeiro: Companhia Aguilar Editora, 1965), p. 158.

¹⁰ SENA, Da Poesia Portuguesa, p. 158.

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The search for novelty present in the form of the poetry is also visible when we turn our attention to the content of the book. At its most obvious level, Oaristos is a tale of unhappy love. Vittorio Pica, the Italian translator of Belkiss, rightly pointed out that "Il primo libro della nuova maniera, Oaristos, non è che un canzoniere di amore, caldo di una passione ardente ed eccezionale".¹¹ Throughout the book, the poet pursues his cold, disdainful Beloved, but is never loved by her in return. This in itself is not an unusual poetic theme. What made the book so unusual in its day was the nature of the Amada as she is described, and the curious terms employed to describe the relationship as a whole.

In terms of its content, Oaristos is a conscious exercise in innovation. It represents a definite attempt to shock. As Hernâni Cidade suggests, "tudo no Oaristos, e, sobretudo, nas Horas, foi deslumbradora pirotecnia para chamar a atenção distraída do público".¹² To appreciate how this exercise advances, it is necessary to look at the poems of Oaristos not in their numerical order - in which they were arranged to give an appearance of continuity to the narrative plot - but in the order of their composition. This is as follows:

	<u>Number</u>	<u>When written</u>	<u>Where written</u>
1	V	29 January 1889	Coimbra
2	XVI	March 1889	Coimbra
3	XII	30 June 1889	Salamanca

¹¹ Eugenio de Castro: Belkiss, traduzione dal portoghese di Vittorio Pica preceduta da un saggio critico (Milan: Fratelli Treves Editori, 1896), p. iv.

¹² HERNÂNI CIDADE, O Conceito da Poesia como Expressão da Cultura (Coimbra: Arménio Amado Editor, Sucessor, 1957), p. 253.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>When written</u>	<u>Where written</u>
4	XIII	12 July 1889	Arcachon
5	XIV	17 July 1889	Pessac
6	IV	28 July 1889	Royan
7	XI	2 August 1889	Bordeaux
8	VI	5 August 1889	Blanquefort
9	VII	26 August 1889	Paris
10	VIII	30 August 1889	Paris
11	XVIII	1 September 1889	Biarritz (13)
12	IX	6 September 1889	Paris
13	X	29 September 1889	Paris
14	I	5 November 1889	Coimbra
15	II	15 November 1889	Coimbra
16	III	25 November 1889	Coimbra
17	XVII	6 December 1889	Coimbra
18	XIX	2 January 1890	Coimbra
19	XV	3 February 1890	Coimbra

Oaristos is a complex and at times confusing book. Its complexity is not one of great depth of vision or originality of conception. It arises from the juxtaposition of widely differing and at times incompatible elements. The result of this juxtaposition is a serious disparity between the visible surface and the real nature of the book.

An understanding of the real nature of Oaristos can best be achieved by concentrating on two of the most important facets of the book. The first of these is the question of its literary originality, which I shall study with special reference to two key poems, poems V and IV. Poem V was the first poem in the book to be written,

¹³ In view of the unlikelihood of Eugénio de Castro travelling from Paris to Biarritz between 30 August and 1 September and then returning to Paris before September 6, we must ask ourselves whether the date of this poem is not in error for 1 November, when Biarritz would have been a reasonable stopping-place on the journey from Paris to Coimbra.

and a study of the elements which go to make it up will reveal the nature of Eugénio de Castro's poetry when he began the composition of Oaristos. Poem IV, the sixth to be written, is the first poem to reveal the influence of French Decadent literature on Eugénio de Castro, and is likewise the first poem to pose the problem of the real nature of the Amada. The second facet of the book on which I shall concentrate will be the nature of the hero and heroine, and above all of their view of love. It is through a study of this particular element of their make-up that one is best able to judge whether or not Oaristos is, as has often been thought, a truly Decadent work. The respective views of love can be most clearly seen with reference to poems XVI and I for the hero, and with reference to poem XIX for the Beloved.

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The first key-poem, poem V, was originally published in 1889 under the title "Noite de fogo". It appeared in the first number of the Coimbran literary magazine Os Insubmissos, of which Eugénio de Castro was the editor. The unusual vocabulary of this poem caused immediate amusement in the press. The literary critic of Nem cá nem lá wrote:

A Noite de fogo é um trabalho pretencioso de chinês - no que diz respeito à paciência, e de pedante no que se refere à acumulação de termos retumbantes. Por ex. cyclamen, gerifalte, falvalás, escabiosa, cerusa, andrina, estelar, irídeo ... 14

This unusual vocabulary is the most obvious facet of the would-be "ORIGINALIDADE" of Oaristos. It derives, no doubt, from the author's stated admiration for "le style décadent" as defined by Théophile Gautier in his Notice aux Fleurs du Mal. Eugénio de Castro quotes a passage

¹⁴ Quoted in: ÁLVARO J. DA COSTA PIMPÃO, "Eugénio de Castro em Coimbra", in Gente Grada (Coimbra: Atlântida, 1952), p. 195, note 3.

from this Notice in his preface to Oaristos:

... style ingénieux, compliqué, savant, plein de nuances et de recherches, reculant toujours les bornes de la langue, empruntant à tous les vocabulaires techniques, prenant des couleurs à toutes les palettes, des notes à tous les claviers. 15

But this unusual vocabulary, which persists throughout Oaristos, is less original than it might at first appear.

Many of the lexical oddities of poem V - "gerifalte", "andrino", "ciclamen" - are in fact thorough-bred Portuguese terms grown slightly unusual through lack of use. Eugénio de Castro makes this point in his preface: "talvez dois terços das palavras, que formam a língua portuguesa, jazem absconsas, desconhecidas, inertes, ao longo dos dicionários, como tarecos sem valor em lojas de arrumação". Others, though less in number, derive from a different but equally encyclopedic source whose influence on Oaristos would steadily increase. For elucidation we need look no further than the title of the book. "Oaristys" was a favourite term of Paul Verlaine; and the epigraph of Oaristos, "Ardent oaristys dont le dénouement chaste est plus brûlant que tout autre imaginable", derives originally from an article Verlaine had written on La Passante, a one-act play by François Coppée.¹⁵ But it was not from this source that Eugénio de Castro took the phrase. It came to him indirectly through the Petit Glossaire pour servir à l'intelligence des auteurs décadents et symbolistes, published in October 1888 by Paul Adam, under the pseudonym of Jacques Flowert.

As the Petit Glossaire would be one of the most

¹⁵ The Notice is reproduced in its entirety in: THÉOPHILE GAUTIER, Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires (Paris: G. Charpentier et Cie., Editeurs, 1885). The quotation given can be found on page 171.

¹⁶ This article was published in the series "Hommes d'aujourd'hui". See: PAUL VERLAINE, Ouvres Complètes (Paris: Albert Messein, Editeur, 1911), IV, 295.

important influences at work in the early poetry of Eugénio de Castro as far as vocabulary is concerned, it is worth while looking at it in some detail. Gustave Kahn, a contemporary poet whose Palais Nomades are quoted several times in the Glossaire, had this to say of the pseudonym under which it was written: "Plowert est le nom d'un manchot qui évolue non sans grace dans un roman de Moréas et Paul Adam, de leur plus vieille manière".¹⁷ This remark is less trivial, or rather its triviality is more significant than might at first appear. The naming of the author of the glossary after a one-armed, fictitious character was part of a rather tongue-in-cheek approach to the work by its compiler -- a lack of seriousness which completely escaped the young poets of Os Insubmissos, who welcomed its arrival in Portugal with rapture.¹⁸

Ironically, the work does not seem to have been a success in France. Gustave Kahn was in no doubt as to its "interprétations hasardées et éloignées de la plus exacte précision".¹⁹ And in his book on Jean Moréas, Robert A. Jouanny states:

Le succès de l'entreprise semble avoir été minime: peu d'allusions dans la presse ... vente tellement réduite qu'il nous a été possible ... en 1962! d'acheter un des derniers exemplaires 20 chez le "bibliopole Vanier"-Messein.

But its lack of success in France was compensated by its considerable impact abroad. It influenced not only Eugénio de Castro, but also Fialho de Almeida in Portugal.²¹ And in Italy, its influence is obvious in the

¹⁷ GUSTAVE KAHN, Les Origines du Symbolisme (Paris: Albert Messein, Éditeur, 1936). p. 39.

¹⁸ See: PIMPÃO, p. 188.

¹⁹ KAHN, p. 39.

²⁰ JOUANNY, p. 283, note 80.

²¹ See the introduction by ÁLVARO J. DA COSTA PIMPÃO to Vol. VI of: Fialho de Almeida, Os Gatos (Lisbon: Livraria Clássica Editora, 1958), pp. 21-3.

early writings of Gabriele d'Annunzio. ²²

The debt of Oaristos to the Petit Glossaire is considerable. If we include his preface, more than twenty of the unusual terms employed by Eugénio de Castro can be traced back to this little work. They include the epigraph to poem III:

"Ô la pure, ô la soëve, ô l'alme". ²³

The influence is slight in the earlier poems. Poem V shows only two borrowings: l. 10. "flavo" ("flave", p. 40), -- which is an acceptable Portuguese term in any case -- and l. 56. "hialino" ("hyalin", p. 50), which is not. It gathers momentum in poem XIII, where we find: l. 3. "cantilenas" ("cantilène", p. 18) -- though this again is a not unusual Portuguese term -- l. 5. "Halos" ("halo", p. 48), l. 7. "crotalos" ("crotale", p. 26) and l. 8. "cítolas" ("citoles", p. 21). The influence remains steady from there.

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To return to poem V: if we overlook its rather unusual vocabulary, does anything remain which could be described as truly original in the context of Portuguese literature of the time? Curiously enough, in view of Eugénio de Castro's claims for his book, the answer is no. The "Noite de fogo" clearly reveals Eugénio de Castro's dependence on others for his ideas. Immediately discernible is the influence of Cesário Verde, a poet whose work Eugénio de Castro would later describe as "versos de oiro" (Jornal do Comércio, 7 February 1892).

²² See: MARIO PRAZ, La Carne, la morte e il diavolo nella letteratura romantica, 4th. ed., 2nd. impression (Florence: Biblioteca Sansoni, 1973), p. 432.

²³ JACQUES PLOWERT, Petit Glossaire pour servir à l'intelligence des auteurs decadents et symbolistes (Paris: Vanier, Bibliopole, 1888), p. 86. Subsequent page references will be given in the text.

Cesário's work was not widely known at the time. The first edition of his poetry, published in April 1887 after his death, and consisting of only two hundred copies, had been distributed among the "parentes, pelos amigos e pelos admiradores provados do ilustre poeta".²⁴ Since no new edition of Cesário's work was published until 1901, it was only through this limited edition "fora do mercado" that Eugénio de Castro could have made contact with his poetry. But a study of "Noite de fogo" reveals clearly that such a contact was undoubtedly made.

A formal influence of Cesário can be seen in the accumulation by Eugénio de Castro of two or even three adjectives at the end of a line. Lines such as "Um sicofanta roto, esquelido, pelintra" (V, 84) inevitably recall lines such as those which open Cesário's "A Débil":

Eu que sou feio, sólido, leal,
A ti que es bela, frágil, assustada. 25

This accumulation of adjectives appears in many of Cesário's poems, and can be found in other poems of Oaristos as well, for example: "Seu corpo virginal, etereal, minúsculo" (VI, 40).

A further influence of Cesário is the expression of a certain "jacobinismo" in poem V which we find nowhere else in Eugénio de Castro's poetry, and which could not be further from representing his real political feelings. His "O povo tem fome, e o rei deita foguetes" (V, 90) is very much in the same vein as Cesário's:

A guarda
Espanca o povo. Irei-me; e eu, que detesto a farda 26
cresci com raiva contra o militar.

²⁴ From the preface to the first edition. Quoted by Joel Serrão in his introduction to: CESÁRIO VERDE, Obra Completa, 2nd. ed. (Lisbon: Portugália Editora, 1970), p. xv.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 30.

²⁶ Ibid., "Humilhações", p. 34.

The most importance influence of Cesário, however, is in the structure of the poem. If we look beneath the rather exotic surface of poem V, we find a poetic structure reminiscent in many of its elements of the "citadino" period of the great "pintor de Lisboa". In "Noite de fogo" the poet, disdained by his Beloved, resorts to a kind of "deambulismo" through the streets of Lisbon, describing the scenes he witnesses on the way. As in Cesário's poetry, specific spots in Lisbon are named:

O povo, numa onda imensa e curiosa,
Vai ao Aterro ver o fogo de artifício. (28-9)

This is the situation we find in "Humilhações", "Cristalizações", "Flores Velhas", and above all in the four parts of "O sentimento dum ocidental". In this last poem Cesário relates how he "embrenh[a-se] a cismar, por boqueirões, por becos", ²⁷ and how, as he walks through Lisbon, he thinks:

Triste cidade! Eu temo que me avives 28
Uma paixão defunta!

The influence of Cesário is not confined to poem V, however. The "deambulismo", coupled with Parnassian description, persists in Oaristos even after other influences have come to dominate the choice of theme. We find it again in the early stages of poem VII, where the poet is wandering through the crowded streets of Paris. It achieves its most successful expression in poem VIII. And it dominates the opening lines of poem XVII, situated this time in the Spanish town of Burgos. Here the description reaches an unparalleled peak of sheer Parnassianism as Eugénio de Castro dedicates eight lines to a detailed examination of the façade of the cathedral:

Detalhe por detalhe: o precioso lavor
Das mísulas e dos esbeltos baldaquins,

²⁷ Ibid., p. 64.

²⁸ Ibid., p. 66.

Arrendados como os gangéticos marfins,
 As estátuas às mil, e os altos corochéus,
 A laçaria em filigrana, das cimalthas,
 Os finos bestiões, enfim: todas as malhas
 Dessa renda subtil, granítica, radiante. (16-23)

The technical terminology of these lines suggests a cult of precision such as that recommended by Théophile Gautier in his "L'Art" (looked upon by many as the credo of the Parnassian poets), and practised by writers such as Leconte de Lisle and José María de Heredia. Indeed, in Gautier's own work, in a poem describing the Escorial, we find a similar use of technical vocabulary, though not to the same extent as in Eugénio de Castro's poem:

Et tout semblerait mort, si du bord des corniches,
 Des mains des rois sculptés, des frontons et des niches,

 Il ne s'envolait pas des essaims d'hirondelles. 29

There is no real comparison between the skill with which Cesário Verde and Eugénio de Castro handle this particular kind of poetry. The constant preoccupation of Eugénio de Castro, throughout his entire poetic career, is with himself, not with the objects or people which surround him. He expresses himself constantly through literary or philosophical conventions, or through the standard literary associations of certain objects. As a result, his Parnassian-like descriptions are characterized by the constant evasion of things and people in any individual sense. More often than not, he directs his attention to crowd-scenes. These are seldom more than incidental in the poetry of Cesário Verde:

Uma turba ruidosa, negra, espessa, 30
 Voltava das exéquias dum monarca.

Cesário tends to concentrate either on one person, for example the young girl in "Num Bairro Moderno", or on a

²⁹ THÉOPHILE GAUTIER, Poésies Complètes (Paris: Firmin-Didot et Cie., s/d), II, 276.

³⁰ CESÁRIO VERDE, p. 31.

particular group of individuals - the pavers of "Cristalizações" or the "varinas" of "Ave Maria" When Eugénio de Castro does mention what seem to be individuals, they tend to be little more than an enumeration of types, highlighted by the use of capitals:

O Incompreendido, o Padre e a Costureira honesta.
(V, 37)

This predilection for types is particularly obvious in the wording of poem VII, where Paris is described as a:

Bizarro e original museu de etnografia,
Ambulante, exibindo, à luz escassa e fria,
Uma variedade excepcional de tipos. (3-5)

But the greatest difference between Cesário and Eugénio de Castro as far as this particular style of poetry is concerned is the use which each of them makes of the descriptive scenes. "Eu no entretanto vou analisando os grupos", says the "eu" of "Noite de fogo" (78); but his analyses are merely pictorial. Cesário's descriptions, on the other hand, breathe new life into the things described, and open up new perspectives to the reader. For Cesário, as Jacinto do Prado Coelho points out, "artista [...] não é o que se limita a copiar o real, é o homem de imaginação privilegiada que dá um sentido às coisas e cria, a partir do concreto, uma super-realidade".³¹

The only real success scored by Eugénio de Castro in this direction is poem VIII,³² whose "deambulismo" is

³¹ JACINTO DO PRADO COELHO, "Cesário e Baudelaire", in Problemática da História Literária (Lisbon: Edições Ática, 1961), p. 229.

³² This poem is partly spoiled by Eugénio de Castro's tendency to labour points which need not be expressed, e.g: "Meu espírito, assim como um indomável potro, / Galopa na planície infinita do sonho" (21-2). We find a similar lack of subtlety in XVII, where the poet need not have stated explicitly: "Tudo isso produziu-me uma sensação de medo" (30). Keeping in mind the supposed "simbolismo" of Oaristos, we might note that this kind of verbal insistence is diametrically opposed to any idea of symbolic expression

situated in Paris, in the cemetery of Père Lachaise on the outskirts of the city. The poet is again alone, again disdained by his beloved. As he wanders through the graves, he sees her, in his mind's eye, marrying someone else:

Diademada com botões de laranjeira,
Vejo-te em sonhos, virginal, pelo braço doutro.
(20-21)

The reason why this poem succeeds where others fail is that here we do not have the unrelieved "en bloc" kind of description which beleaguers other poems where the Parnassian element predominates. The elements of description are constantly intermingled with the expression of the poet's thoughts and feelings. His feeling of rejection is re-echoed in the loneliness he feels as he walks through the cemetery:

Escuta-se Paris ao longe, respirar. (33)

This reaches out to become the exile and home-sickness felt by someone alone in a foreign land and in a foreign climate:

Como são outonais aqui estes Agostos!
Ah! o sol português. (14-15)

He dreams of embarking on the vicarious escape found in poetry, again suggested by his surroundings:

O jazigo onde está Balzac. Húmida e fria
A cambraia brumal cerra-se ... Hei-de ir um dia
Visitar a Montmartre o amado Baudelaire ...
Teu sugestivo olhar, o teu olhar sugere
Belas viagens por inexploradas terras. (25-9)

As a constant counterpoint to these reflections are the descriptions which accompany the "deambulismo". They are not characterized here by simple exoticism or minute detail. They reflect the poet's state of mind - his aimlessness and loneliness:

Como no espírito as ideias, vai um bando
De folhas mortas, amarelas, pela rua. (2-3)

his feeling of hopelessness:

Passa um enterro: é uma criança. (8)

his sadness, reflected in the weather:

Como são outonais aqui estes Agostos! (14)

Vamos ter chuva. (34)

and the gloomy surroundings:

Treme um cipreste, desfolhado, quase nu. (31)

Given the rather lifeless nature of Parnassianism as it appears elsewhere in Oaristos, poem VIII is a fairly remarkable achievement in synthesizing exterior description and inner feeling. It is by no means a magnificent, but certainly a noteworthy exception within the book as a whole. And the presence of these Parnassian elements has obvious implications for the supposed "ORIGINALIDADE" of Oaristos. If we are to judge this properly, Eugénio de Castro's debt to Cesário Verde must be kept clearly in mind. The Parnassian elements of Oaristos, if not handled by Eugénio de Castro in such a way as to produce great depth of feeling, are nonetheless very much present throughout.

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Parnassian description alone does not account for all of poem V. There are two lyrical interludes, each dealing with a different subject. These interludes exemplify one of the most fundamental characteristics of Eugénio de Castro's early poetry: the persistence of typically Romantic themes, coupled with a tendency towards ultra-Romanticism in sentiment and expression. Despite being overlaid with new themes and new vocabulary, this will remain a consistent characteristic of his poetry for years to come.

The first of these interludes offers a description of a young working-class couple, whose natural, kind and unassuming ways are designed to highlight the Amada's icy disdain. But the portrayal of the young man and woman is surrounded with such a halo of Romantic idealization that it is reduced almost to caricature:

O aspecto
 Deste grupo burguês e alegre mostra logo
 Que não-de passar, viver, livres, com desafoço,
 Uma vida feliz, sem lutas, sem escolhos,
 O peito sempre em flor, cheios de luz os olhos,
 Amando-se num amor doce e confortativo ...
 (106-111)

Already in this short description we find the kind of Romantic cliché - "O peito sempre em flor, cheios de luz os olhos" (110) - which will be the main characteristic of the interlude immediately following. This deals with the poet's dreams of life with his Beloved. Here again ultra-Romantic effusion results in near-caricature, which verges at times on unintentional parody:

Começo a construir quiméricos castelos,
 Cheios de luz e cor, absurdamente belos!
 Sonho uma casa branca à beira de água, um palmo
 De terreno onde eu, campestremente calmo,
 Cultivasse rosais e compusesse idílios.
 (115-9)

These two interludes have caused some confusion among critics in the past. Aníbal Pinto de Castro, defending his idea of "um sentido muito pronunciado das proporções" in the work of Eugénio de Castro, interprets the first as an example of "o ideal de simplicidade familiar e de profundidade humana".³³ "Nada mais clássico, em nossa opinião", suggests Maria Fernanda de Campos Pires de Matos of the second in her thesis on "O Classicismo em Eugénio de Castro".³⁴ But is the cult of Nature expressed in the lines just quoted so essentially Classical?

The cult of Nature has an important role to play in both Classical and Romantic literature. And while the subject is too vast to go into with great detail here, the difference between the Classical and the Romantic attitude to Nature is perhaps most succinctly expressed in the following terms. The Romantic view tends to be

³³ CASTRO, p. 11 (both quotes).

³⁴ MATOS, p. 10.

one of active, dynamic communion with Nature, where Nature is frequently seen as a means of communing with the Infinite. In Nature a man is charged with energies which society cannot offer. The typically Classical view, however, is a more passive view of Nature seen simply as a means of rest and escape - the typical stance of the "Beatus Ille" tradition. The Romantic communion is marked by energy and invigoration, the Classical by serenity and calm.

When Romanticism began to flourish in Portugal, however, the nineteenth century was already a third of the way through. And the Romantic cult of Nature was unable to free itself completely from the very powerful influence of the Classical view which had predominated among the Arcadian poets of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. In the works of several of the Portuguese Romantics, the cult of Nature appears as a mere caricature of the Classical ideal: the white house by the brook, surrounded by flowers and trees, far from the madding crowds. Camilo Castelo Branco ridicules this idealization in his satirical novel A Corja:

Dizia-lhe Macário, adivinhando-lhe as hesitações, que iriam viver modestamente, embebidos na natureza, numa casinha branca entre arvoredos à beira dum rio. A sua paixão pusera-lhe no espírito esta tolice - o ideal mais ridículo que ele tinha encontrado nas novelas chinfrins. ³⁵

But this does not stop him from using it himself in all seriousness in his Amor de Perdição: "Estou vendo a casinha que tu descrevias defronte de Coimbra, cercada de arvoredos, flores e aves". ³⁶ In fact, this bucolic idyll was one of the greatest clichés of Portuguese Romanticism. We find it again in Camilo's A Queda dum

³⁵ CAMILO CASTELO BRANCO, A Corja (Oporto: Lello e Irmão, s/d), pp. 94-5.

³⁶ CAMILO CASTELO BRANCO, Amor de Perdição (Oporto: Porto Editora, s/d), p. 239.

Anjo: " - E como seria V. Ex.^a feliz? - interrompeu Calisto. - Numa casinha entre duas árvores".³⁷ And it crops up again in Os Fidalgos da Casa Mourisca by the other great figure of the second generation Romantics, Júlio Dinis:

Dai-me uma casa na aldeia,
Casa rústica, isolada,
Que mostre por entre verdes 38
A sua frente caiada.

What this second interlude of "Noite de fogo" presents us with, then, is not an example of the Classical cult of Nature, but one of the most thread-bare commonplaces of what in Portugal is generally termed "romantismo classicizante". This realization also has clear implications for the would-be originality of Oaristos. It calls into serious question opinions such as those of Urbano Tavares Rodrigues, who suggests that in Oaristos Eugénio de Castro "quebrou todas as amarras com o romantismo classicizante e arvorou, no terreiro das musas o estandarte da rebeldia".³⁹

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Despite the claims of Eugénio de Castro, a close study of Oaristos reveals clearly that its debt to the themes and rhetoric of the ultra-Romantics is considerable. As far as the themes of the book are concerned, the influence of ultra-Romanticism can be detected in such items as the appearance of ghosts, or an interest in graveyards. Ghosts appear in poem II:

Percorre longos, funerários corredores,

³⁷ CAMILO CASTELO BRANCO, A Queda dum Anjo (Lisbon: Parceria A.M. Pereira, s/d), p. 135.

³⁸ JÚLIO DINIS, Os Fidalgos da Casa Mourisca (Oporto: Porto Editora, s/d), p. 129.

³⁹ U[rbano] T[avares] R[odrigues], "Eugénio de Castro", in Dicionário das Literaturas Portuguesa, Galega e Brasileira (Oporto: Livraria Figueirinhas, s/d), p. 142.

Onde pairam, chorando as suas fundas dores,
Fantasmas glaciais, errantes e protervos! (53-55)

and again in poem XVII:

Ela me faz recear os lívidos fantasmas,
Que andam de noite, em bandos lúgubres, proscritos.
(78-9)

In poem XVII we also find a reference to graveyards:

Ela me faz amar os longos cemitérios,
As matas cheias de sussuros, de mistérios,
E os sombrios paúis cobertos de miasmas. (75-77)

These are all standard parts of the "romantismo cemiterial" which was popularized in Portugal above all by Soares dos Passos in his "Noivado do Sepulcro", where we find scenes such as the following:

Que paz tranquila! ... mas eis longe, ao longe
Funérea campã com frangor rangeu;
Branco fantasma semelhante a um monge
De entre os sepulcros a cabeça ergueu. 40

The insistence on fear in the same poem XVII of Oaristos - "Tudo isso produziu-me uma sensação de medo" (30) - likewise represents a hangover from what in Portugal is generally known as "romantismo terrífico". Even the theme of exile in poem VIII can be traced back to one of the most famous "poemetos" of Portuguese ultra-Romanticism - "A Lua de Londres" by João de Lemos.

The greatest concentration of this ultra-Romantic material is to be found in the funeral-scene of poem XVII. Here we are presented with the improbable coincidence of the poet happening upon a funeral where the chief mourner is his "fiel retrato" (53) and the young girl in the coffin is the "imagem perfeita" (43) of his Beloved. Not surprisingly, the poet imagines that these two people are a vision of himself and his Amada. And the reader is asked to view this melodramatic spectacle as if, given the extraordinary coincidence

⁴⁰ A.A. SOARES DOS PASSOS, Poesias (Oporto: Lello e Irmão, 1967), p. 12

attendant, it was something truly horrifying:

E então sonhei um sonho fúnebre, insensato!
Incarnei-me no noivo, incarnei-te na morta. (54-55)

This is Romantic ghoulishness at its least subtle.

In terms of style, the oratory and over-emphasis of so many of the ultra-Romantic poets are nothing of a rarity in Oaristos. Already in the "Noite de fogo" we find a rather stilted use of anaphora, where the word "Sonho" is repeated at the beginning of three different lines (117, 123, 125). In poem III, "Fechai" is also repeated at the beginning of three different lines (18, 19, 20). In poem XI, "tédio" is repeated four times between lines 11 and 16; "amor" is likewise repeated four times between lines 33 and 36. But perhaps the most striking example of Romantic rhetoric is to be found in poem IV. Here the poet, describing the effect of different coloured lights on the Amada's face, exclaims:

Ó cores do sol posto,
Ó cores que brilhais num policromo lampejo,
O que sois vós ao pé disto que agora vejo?
Ao pé disto o que sois, belos caleidoscopos? (46-9)

Here we have anaphora, apostrophe and chiasmus all within the space of a few lines.

There has been a reluctance to recognize the presence of this rhetoric in Oaristos. Eugénio de Castro himself was either unaware of it, or preferred to pass it over in silence. In an interview given in French to J. Chaix-Ruy in 1937 he stressed what he saw as the musicality of his early poetry, pointing out: "je dois à Verlaine le goût de la suggestion musicale".⁴¹ Rubén Darío seems likewise to have been of the opinion that in the early poetry of Eugénio de Castro "en veces su voz era tan

⁴¹ J. CHAIX-RUY, Au Portugal: deux poètes disparus, Cesário Verde et António Nobre, un poète d'aujourd'hui, Eugénio de Castro (Coimbra: Biblioteca da Universidade, 1937), p. 12.

semejante a la voz verleniana".⁴² But it would be difficult to sustain such an opinion. Eugénio de Castro may well have been acquainted with Verlaine's "Art Poétique", but the indications just given show that he had certainly not heeded its most famous precept:

Prends l'éloquence et tords-lui son cou! ⁴³

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My study of the vocabulary, structure and rhetoric of poem V, and their continuing presence throughout the book, shows quite clearly, then, that the originality of Oaristos is not as all-pervading as Eugénio de Castro suggested it to be. The neologisms of Oaristos, which account for a large part of its apparent exoticism, derive in their vast majority from an encyclopedic source. They furnish an exoticism of the most superficial kind, and, given their origin, they can hardly be said to correspond to an original vision. At the level of structure and poetic technique, many of the poems of Oaristos are heavily indebted to the work of Cesário Verde, whom they imitate freely, but never equal. And the entire book is suffused with the themes and rhetoric of the ultra-Romantics, whose influence on Portuguese literature was still strong at the time. As a result of this study, certain standard judgements of Oaristos must now be seen to have been wide of the mark. In serious need of revision are opinions such as those of Vieira de Almeida, who held that Eugénio de Castro's early works were "em revolta aberta contra parnasianismos secos e romantismos sem nervo e sem alma".⁴⁴ On the contrary. In his enumeration of those elements it was supposed to oppose, he offers a succinct description

⁴² DARÍO, Los Raros, p. 214.

⁴³ VERLAINE, Ouvres Complètes, I, 314.

⁴⁴ VIEIRA DE ALMEIDA, "Descendo a Encosta, de Eugénio de Castro", in Lusitânia, September 1924, p. 106.

of Oaristos on which it would be difficult to improve...

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The second key-poem in my study of Oaristos is poem IV. This poem represents something of a turning-point in the composition of the book, principally through the vision it offers of the Amada. It is the first poem (in order of composition) to introduce her to us in person, it is the first interior scene - as will be all those dealing with the Amada who "não costuma sair" (II, 62) - and it is the first poem to offer themes taken visibly from the writers of the French Decadence.

For the average Portuguese reader of the time, there can be no doubt that the effects employed in this poem must have been startling. The opening description is one of a room filled with a heavy, hot-house like atmosphere: "Toda a câmara tem um ar lento de estufa" (1). Everything in the room is green. The furniture is green; the fanciful ornaments which fill the room are green; the sunlight filters in through an intensely green blind.⁴⁵ And within this morbid atmosphere sits the Amada, her eyes black with surmah. Wilting flowers droop in their vases. She whiles away her time thumbing through an ancient book

⁴⁵ It is curious to note that Eça de Queiroz, in his Os Maias (1888): "Ergueu, com um gesto rasgado, um reposteiro de repes verde, de um verde feio e triste, e introduziu o 'príncipe' na sala onde tudo era verde também: o repes que recobria uma mobília de nogueira, o tecto de tabuado, as listras verticais do papel da parede, o pano franjado da mesa e o reflexo de um espelho redondo, inclinado sobre o sofá" (Lisbon: Edição "Livros do Brasil", s/d), p. 146. But the difference between the atmospheres of the two rooms could not be more pronounced. In Eça, these eccentricities are merely part of Eça's self-conscious dandyism. In Eugénio de Castro, the "requintada e esquisita atmosfera" (23) of the room becomes an agent of exoticism. It is an outward sign of the Amada's cult of morbid pleasure sought in unusual sensations. As such it contributes to Eugénio de Castro's attempt to present her to us as a Decadent heroine.

of Hours. But this is not all. In order to appreciate more fully the book she is reading, she lights a purple lamp at her right hand side, and a blue lamp to her left; and she sits reading with each side of her face bathed in a different colour of light - "Túlipa bicolor do mais bizarro aspecto!" (56).

Having once introduced this Decadent material into the book, Eugénio de Castro dedicates a large proportion of the remaining poems to elaborating upon it. In poem XI, the next in order of composition, we find the Amada wearing strange perfumes and unusual clothes. She displays an uncharacteristic happiness which leads the poet to believe that at last his love has been returned. As he presses her for an explanation as to why she has abandoned her usual "tédio" - a theme first introduced into Oaristos in this poem - he learns it is merely a caprice: "Mas eu costume rir como choro ... sem causa" (72).

This process continues until a picture is built up of an Amada who, in what appears to be true Decadent style, lives:

assim anestesiada,
Inconsciente, quieta, indiferente a tudo,
Olhar parado sempre, o lábio sempre mudo,
Circundada de sons, perfumes e visões. (XIX, 38-41)

Furthermore, in order to fix the Amada in these Decadent associations which she did not at first possess, Eugénio de Castro composed poems I and II on his return to Coimbra in the autumn of 1889, some nine months after he had actually started the writing of Oaristos. The purpose of these two poems is to present the reader immediately with an Amada already decked out in all the Decadent fripperies the author could muster.

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That Eugénio de Castro should have waited so long in the composition of Oaristos to introduce the Amada is in itself significant. He was obviously unwilling to

present her until he had found a form in which she would seem as unusual as possible. He already had some ideas in mind when he composed the "Noite de fogo" in January 1889. But the catalyst in the process of creating the Amada was undoubtedly his trip to France undertaken in the summer of that year, and his resulting contact with contemporary French literature. When, as a result of the combination of his original ideas with those he acquired in France, Eugénio de Castro did hit on a form in which to present the Beloved, it proved to be a complex and composite one.

The Amada bears traces of the influence of many writers. But one suggested source of influence with which I am unable to agree is that put forward by René Poupard. It concerns the kind of atmosphere in which we find the Amada living. Referring to line 1 of poem IV, he suggests that "Le thème de la serre [qui] apparaît dans Oaristys" points to the influence of Maurice Maeterlinck's Serres Chaudes.⁴⁶ I think not. When the influence of Maeterlinck does appear unmistakably in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro in Horas (1891), it is coupled with those verbal reminiscences which invariably accompany the borrowing of themes in his poetry. Yet there are no such reminiscences in Oaristos. The heavy air of the boudoir is an essential part of the Decadent décor. It dominates Huysman's À Rebours, and dates back at least to such Decadent prototypes as Gautier's Fortunio, and probably as far back as the Marquis de Sade's Philosophie dans le Boudoir at the end of the eighteenth century. Eugénio de Castro need not have looked to Maeterlinck for this detail. He could have found it just as easily in Baudelaire. In the latter's "Une Martyre" we find the same heavy, hot-house like atmosphere as that mentioned in connection with Eugénio de Castro's poem:

Dans une chambre tiède où, comme en une serre,

⁴⁶ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 96.

L'air est dangereux et fatal. 47

This detail can be found in the works of other European writers influenced by the French Decadence. One of these is the Italian Gabriele d'Annunzio, whom Mario Praz describes as "la figura più monumentale del decadentismo, quella in cui confluirono le varie correnti europee della seconda metà dell'Ottocento".⁴⁸ In d'Annunzio's novel Il Piacere we read how in the room of the hero, Andrea Sperelli, "l'aria doveva essere ardente e grave come in una serra".⁴⁹ Yet Il Piacere was completed in 1888, before the publication of Maeterlinck's Serres Chaudes (1889).

As regards the origin of the Decadent elements in Oaristos, A.J. da Costa Pimpão seems nearer the mark when he suggests that:

Baudelaire coloca-se no vértice desta tendência, e é evidente que Eugénio de Castro, em Oaristos, se inspira, em primeiro lugar, dele (à luz do prefácio de Gautier) e, depois, do seu discípulo, Huysmans. 50

But while his enumeration of sources is correct (though not exhaustive), his order of importance is wrong. Baudelaire is no doubt one of the oldest sources of influences in Oaristos, and one with whom Eugénio de Castro was already familiar before going to France. But the Decadent themes in Oaristos derive principally from a more recent source - from Huysmans' À Rebours, whose place in Decadent literature Mario Praz describes in the following terms:

À Rebours (il titolo stesso implica un programma

⁴⁷ CHARLES BAUDELAIRE, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Louis Connard, Libraire-Éditeur, 1930) Les Fleurs du Mal, p. 142.

⁴⁸ PRAZ, p. 377.

⁴⁹ GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO, Il Piacere (Milan: Fratelli Treves, Editori, 1918), p. 34.

⁵⁰ ALVARO J. DA COSTA PIMPÃO, "Eugénio de Castro", in Gente Grada, p. 167.

di forzamento sadico della natura) è il libro cardinale del decadentismo, nel quale tutta la fenomenologia di codesto stato d'animo è illustrata fin nei minimi particolari in un personaggio esemplare, des Esseintes. 51

The influence of À Rebours is obvious on various planes in Oaristos. On a simply lexical level, Oaristos abounds with unusual terms suggested by or reminiscent of Huysmans. In des Esseintes' discussion of colours we find "cinabre" (Oaristos, XIII, 65).⁵² Among the colours of his artificial plants (p. 119) we find "minium et céruse" (VII, 68; V, 32). Among his collection of religious objects (p. 109) are "custodes" (I, 17). Of the perfumes he uses (p. 148), he becomes obsessed with the smell of "frangipane" (XI, 1). Among these perfumes (p. 157) are "opoponax" (XIX, 8) and "chypre" (VII, 46).

However, the influence of Huysmans is most obvious in the apparent character of the Amada. The Italian critic Vittorio Pica (much used, though little acknowledged by later critics) seems, as will frequently be the case, to have been the first to point out the influence of Huysmans in this sphere. In his preface to his translation of Belkiss he said of poem IV of Oaristos:

Ed ecco ora la descrizione di una delle sue estetiche fantasie, che fa ripensare [...] alle stravaganze morbose di des Esseintes, l'ultra-raffinato protagonista dell'À Rebours di Huysmans. 53

Many of the more unusual features of the Amada can be traced back to des Esseintes. As she pores over her book of Hours (IV, 34), so he is an avid reader of the Latin Ecclesiastical authors of the Dark Ages. Colours, too, play an important part in his life. He goes to great pains to have his rooms decorated with those

⁵¹ PRAZ, p. 286

⁵² JORIS-KARL HUYSMANS, À Rebours (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1925), p. 18. Subsequent page references will be given in the text.

⁵³ PICA, pp. vii-viii.

colours which will appear most pleasing under candle-light, believing that "une harmonie existe entre la nature sensuelle d'un individu vraiment artiste et la couleur que ses yeux voient d'une façon plus spéciale et plus vive" (p. 19). As we are also meant to think of the Amada, no doubt, he sees the ability to perceive fine distinctions in colour as yet another means of asserting his superiority over the unthinking masses of humanity, "dont les grossières rétines ne perçoivent ni la cadence propre à chacune des couleurs, ni le charme mystérieux de leurs dégradations et de leurs nuances" (p. 19). Other similarities can be found in other poems. In À Rebours we learn that des Esseintes "souffrait réellement à entendre déchirer une étoffe, à frotter un doigt sur un bout de craie, à tâter avec la main un morceau de moire" (p. 113). Something of the same idea reappears in poem II:

Nervosa, com o fim de subjugar seus nervos,
Corta as unhas em bico, à guisa de punhais,
Para as roçar depois em sedas e metais:
Chega mesmo a morder pedaços de veludo! (56-9)

But, as mentioned earlier, the Amada is a composite figure, and does not derive simply from des Esseintes. Elements in her make-up can be found which go back to Cesário Verde, Baudelaire, Théophile Gautier and Jean Moréas.

---ooOoo---

The similarities between the Beloveds of the poetry of Cesário and that of Eugénio de Castro are many and obvious. It is not difficult to see striking similarities between Cesário's "Gélida mulher bizarramente estranha" ⁵⁴ and Eugénio de Castro's "glacial e trigueira inimiga" (VII, 27) whose "raros gestos são cheios de bizzarria"

⁵⁴ CESÁRIO VERDE, Obra Completa, p. 28. Subsequent page-references will be given in the text.

(II, 63). Both are "desdenhosa, ativa, imperturbável" (p. 12), both are characterized by a "glacial impassibilidade" (p. 29).

The borrowings from Cesário are occasionally reduced to mere repetition. If Eugénio de Castro's Amada "Tem música no andar" (II, 34), Cesário's Beloved walks with "firmeza e música no andar" (p. 25). Cesário describes himself before his Beloved as "um pagem / Que a cauda solevasse dos teus vestidos" (p. 6). Likewise, Eugénio de Castro tells how:

... os olhos meus seguiam como pagens
O seu rítmico andar sonâmbulo e moroso. (I, 70-1)

Again, Cesário's affirmation that "sua glacial impassibilidade / Exalta o meu desejo" (p. 29) reappears in Oaristos:

Tua frieza aumenta o meu desejo. (X, 1)

as does, slightly modified, but unchanged in substance, the antithesis which opens "A Débil" (p. 30):

Eu que sou feio, sólido, leal,
A ti que es bela, frágil, assustada.

It reappears in poem XIX when the Amada exclaims:

Não me despertes, não, tu que es ágil e forte,
Não me despertes, não, a mim débil, cansada. (36-7)

The modifications which Eugénio de Castro introduces into this antithesis concern the characterization of both poet and Beloved. Cesário's "feio" appears nowhere in his poem, and his "ágil" is the opposite of Cesário's "sólido". For Eugénio de Castro, the hero of his poems is too closely modelled on himself for him to use terms such as "feio" or "sólido". Connotations of ugliness or stolidness do not correspond to his vision of himself. In the characterization of the Amada, Eugénio de Castro's "débil, cansada" are designed to suggest neurasthenia rather than the connotations of feminine frailty in Cesário's lines. Cesário's Beloved appeals to his manliness and protective instincts (p. 30):

Ao avistar-te, há pouco, fraca e loura,
Nesta Babel tão velha e corruptora,
Tive tenções de oferecer-te o braço.

Eugénio de Castro's Amada, on the other hand, is the would-be Decadent who has experienced everything, and for whom only ennui remains.

---ooOoo---

As Jacinto do Prado Coelho points out, "a mulher sobranceira e fria, exótica 'flor de luxo' [...] liga Cesário às Flores do Mal".⁵⁵ But if Cesário's Beloved owes much to Baudelaire, so also does Eugénio de Castro's. He is particularly indebted to that part of Les Fleurs du Mal which has come to be known as the Jeanne Duval cycle of poems, the series of poems in which Baudelaire describes his "Vénus Noire" (poems XXII - XXXIX). It is with this "Vénus Noire" that the Amada of Oaristos shares not only spiritual but also physical characteristics. Indeed, all the borrowings in Oaristos which can be traced back with any certainty to Les Fleurs du Mal come from this cycle of poems.

As was the case with Cesário, reminiscence is sometimes reduced to mere repetition. The following image of Baudelaire:

Un soleil sans chaleur plane au-dessus six mois,
Et les six autres mois la nuit couvre la terre. 56

reappears in Oaristos I:

... depois de ter suportado os reveses
Duma noite cruel e fria de seis meses,
Vê surgir, entre a neve, o sol com brilhos ruivos.
(59-61)

The following (p. 55):

⁵⁵ COELHO, "Cesário e Baudelaire", p. 228.

⁵⁶ BAUDELAIRE, Les Fleurs du Mal, p. 62. Subsequent page-references will be given in the text.

Quand vers toi mes désirs partent en caravane,
Tes yeux sont la citerne ou boivent mes ennuis. 57

also reappears thinly disguised in Oaristos I:

... [seu] corpo é o 'aprilino oásis,
O caravancará que, por noites insanas,
Vão demandando em balde as longas caravanas,
As caravanas dos meus nómadas desejos. (76-9)

The most important area of influence, however, is in the description of the respective Beloveds. Like the "Vénus Noire", Eugénio de Castro's Amada is "taciturne" (p. 53), above all "bizarre" (p. 55). She has "froides prunelles" (p. 67) - "olhos niveais" (XI, 26) - and reminds the poet of the "sphinx antique" (p. 56) - "criatura esfingeal" (I, 74). The points of contact are many. Any of the following details can be found in the description of the Amada:

"L'ennui rend ton âme cruelle" (p. 54).
"Frígido coração onde o tédio governa" (XIX, 33)
"À te voir marcher en cadence,
Belle d'abandon,
On dirait un serpent qui danse
Au bout d'un bâton." (p. 57)
"Tinha no calmo andar a elegância das cobras" (I, 32)
"Seu núbil corpo tem, num dualismo confuso,
A finura do lírio e o garbo das serpentes." (II, 8-9)
"Son regard [...]
Profond et froid, coupe et fend." (p. 69)
"O seu olhar fazia doer, olhar profundo" (I, 35)

--ooOoo--

Between 1868 and 1917, there was only one popular edition of Les Fleurs du Mal, and it carried as its introduction the famous Notice by Théophile Gautier. This entire introduction had, moreover, been republished in 1885 in Gautier's Portraits et Souvenirs Littéraires.

57 Reminiscences of this particular image also appear in O Mandarim by Eça de Queiroz (1880): "E pelo monótono deserto da vida, lá foi seguindo, lá foi marchando a lenta caravana das minhas melancolias ... " (Oporto: Lello e Irmão, s/d), p. 42.

Eugénio de Castro's acquaintance with this Notice cannot be doubted: as we saw, he quoted fairly extensively from it in his preface to Oaristos (supra p. 30). And, in his search for Decadent detail, it is hardly surprising that Eugénio de Castro should look to this Notice. It was a constant source of inspiration for the writers of the Decadence. A.E. Carter goes so far as to say that:

It is not too much to say, indeed, that the Notice was the matrix of all subsequent decadent writing [...] Had Gautier not written this essay, the nineteenth century would certainly have spent much time in morose contemplation of its own decadence, but the decadence would never have been so clearly defined, and it is very probable that never would have been a decadent school. 58

As was the case with Cesário and Baudelaire, there are instances of straightforward borrowing from the Notice. Details from the following statement of Gautier concerning Baudelaire's fascination with perfumes:

Le parfum profond de cette peau macérée dans les aromates comme celle d'Esther, que l'on trempa six mois dans l'huile de palme et six mois dans le cinname avant de la présenter au roi Assuérus, avait sur lui une puissance extraordinaire. 59

reappear in Oaristos XIX

Perfumarei meu corpo virgem, como Ester,
Filha de Mardoqueu, judia singular,
Que teve o corpo seu meio ano a macerar,
Antes de expor-se nua aos beijos de Assuero. (62-5)

But the main influence is again in the description of the Amada. In this respect, A.J. da Costa Pimpão rightly points out ⁶⁰ the debt of the Amada as she appears in the later poems of Oaristos to Gautier's view of the women of Baudelaire's poetry, as expressed in the following passage:

⁵⁸ A.E. CARTER, The Idea of Decadence in French Literature (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1958), p. 131.

⁵⁹ GAUTIER, Portraits et Souvenirs, p. 193.
Subsequent page-references will be given in the text.

⁶⁰ PIMPÃO, pp. 168-9.

Elles sont hautaines, glaciales, amères, ne trouvant le plaisir que dans la méchanceté satisfaite, insatiables comme la stérilité, mornes comme l'ennui, n'ayant que des fantaisies hystériques et folles, et privées, ainsi que le démon, de la puissance d'aimer. Douées d'une beauté spectrale, que n'anime pas la pourpre rouge de la vie, elles marchent à leur but pâles, superbement dégoûtées, sur les cœurs qu'elles écrasent de leurs talons pointus (p. 216).

Other than those details - haughtiness, coldness, ennui, -- which we have already found in Baudelaire, and, through Baudelaire, in Cesário Verde, here we can find suggestions for several other characteristics of the Amada. She too is given to "fantaisies":

Mas eu costume rir como choro ... sem causa ...
(XI, 72)

She too is surrounded by a spectral pallor:

Faces que sois cor da manhã que acorda,
Quando o luar começa a dissolver-se. (III, 5-6)

We find this particular characteristic described in another passage of the Notice (p. 251): "ces figures de femmes, si vaporeuses, si transparentes, si romanesquement pâles et d'une beauté presque spectrale". And more of the Amada's most striking features can be found in the following passage (p. 261):

une de ces beautés qui oppriment le souvenir,
unissant à son charme profond et original
l'éloquence de la toilette, maîtresse de sa démarche,
consciente et reine d'elle-même, une voix parlant
comme un instrument bien accordé, et des regards
chargés de pensée et n'en laissant couler que ce
qu'elles veulent.

Here we can find suggestions for the Amada's originality (II, 46), her manner of dressing (I, 30-1; XI, 4-7), her voice - "lenta voz de acentos longos, lentos" (V, 127) - her eyes - "olhos de lince, / Gelados como o olhar dum sábio que destrince / um problema cruel" (IV, 31-33) - as well as an echo of the following lines:

Cousa que muito poucos têm, sabe domar-se. (II, 50)
Faz aquilo que quer, impõe sua vontade. (II, 48)

--ooOoo--

Of all the poets writing in France at the time of the composition of Oaristos, the only one whose influence is registered directly in Eugénio de Castro's book is Jean Moréas.⁶¹ Juan González Olmedilla, the Spanish translator of Oaristos and Horas, recounts details of Eugénio de Castro's stay in France in 1889, as given to him by the poet himself: "Moréas - el heleno pariseño - dandy mosqueteril, esplendía en el Café Varchette, rodeado de hombres y mujeres de letras; allí pasábase la vida; escribiendo sobre la mesa de mármol, libros, cartas poemas".⁶² The admiration implicit in this description is further reflected in the very powerful influence exercised by Moréas on the early poetry of Eugénio de Castro.

The most obvious aspect of the influence of Moréas is in Eugénio de Castro's cult of neologisms. Moréas was notorious in France as a pedlar of obscure terms. Albert Marie Schmidt says of him:

Il emploie des mots tellement rares (rappelons que ni Mallarmé, ni Rimbaud, ni même Laforgue, ne s'abaissent jamais à cette mascarade verbale) qu'il faut, pour les comprendre, compulsier sans cesse des lexiques spéciaux. 63

⁶¹ There are reminiscences of other poets. The following image from poem I, for example, "Flor, que olho sem cessar, como um estilista antigo, / Olhando o flavo sol, de pé, numa coluna" (88-89), recalls a similar image which occurs twice in the poetry of Jules Laforgue. But this image does not come directly from Laforgue. Eugénio de Castro took it in all probability from the Petit Glossaire, where the word "stylite" is explained by reference to the two quotations in question. The direct influence of Laforgue does not appear in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro until several years later.

⁶² OLMEDILLA, p. xxii.

⁶³ ALBERT-MARIE SCHMIDT, La Littérature Symboliste (Paris: Presses Universitaires de la France, 1947), p. 71.

The reference is, of course, to the Petit Glossaire, where the majority of the neologisms from Moréas employed by Eugénio de Castro are also to be found. Eugénio de Castro followed Moréas's example in this field with such enthusiasm that one is tempted to conclude that his motives for using these neologisms are identical to those of the French poet. Robert A. Jouanny has rightly described the latter as the "victime de ses illusions de néophyte qui l'incitent à affubler ses vers d'un vêtement à la mode".⁶⁴

For the many details of his Amada which he borrowed from Moréas, however, Eugénio de Castro went directly to the latter's work. Thus the line in poem XIX in which the Amada says, "Chamas à minha boca irmã das beladonas" (20) recalls a similar line in Moréas's "Conte d'amour":

Ma bouche a le venin des fauves belladones.⁶⁵

Again, the following description of the Amada in Oaristos IV:

Recurvadas, em til, as suas sobancelhas
Cintilam de surmeh. (30-1)

re-echoes that of the woman in "Le Ruffian" (p. 83):

Et ses cils recourbés semblent peints de curma.

Further similarities can be found. The description of the Amada's hands in Oaristos -- "Suas unhas, em bico, esplendem como espelhos" (VII, 44), "Corta as unhas em bico, à guisa de punhais" (II, 57) is reminiscent of a similar detail in "Tes Mains" (p. 21):

Tes mains à l'ongle rose et tranchant comme un bec.

The image used in poem XI: "Vai pousar sobre mim seus

⁶⁴ JOUANNY, p. 393.

⁶⁵ JEAN MOREÁS, Œuvres Poétiques (Paris: Mercure de France, 1923), I, 27. Subsequent page references will be given in the text. They all refer to Volume I of the Œuvres Poétiques.

olhos -- céus de outono" (55) recalls a similar image in "Conte d'amour" (p. 26): "triste ainsi qu'un ciel d'automne". Finally, the Amada's statement in poem II -- "Desejava viver / No pólo norte, numa estufa de cristal!" -- may have been suggested by the following line from "Le Pur Concept" (p. 127):

Es-tu prise à jamais dans les glaces du pôle?

Despite the predominant influence of Moréas in the sphere of neologism, he is, as can be seen, the least important of those enumerated in connection with the description and characterization of the Amada. Details borrowed from him apply only to incidental features of her physical description. This points at the same time to the lack of depth of his own poetry, and the tendency of Eugénio de Castro to be attracted by exotic detail, whether its value is incidental or profound.

--ooOoo--

I now move on to my second major area of study in Oaristos: that of the nature of the heroine and of the hero, and of their respective views of love. My study of the elements which first appear in poem IV, and which dominate the later poems of Oaristos, has shown the Amada to be a largely derivative figure. Unusual though she must have seemed to the average Portuguese reader of the time, there is scarcely one of her more striking characteristics which cannot be traced back to Huysmans, Cesário Verde, Baudelaire, Gautier or Moréas. Nonetheless, these borrowings all tend towards a common end. Three of these writers -- Baudelaire, Gautier and Huysmans -- were fundamental figures of the French Decadence, and the others -- Cesário and Moréas -- were influenced by Decadent writing to some extent. And, under the influence of these five authors, Eugénio de Castro introduces several major Decadent themes into Oaristos, in specific connection with his Amada. Thus, in poem IV, for example,

when the poet describes the Amada's "corpo insexual de efebo e bacante" (28), she appears briefly as an androgyne, one of the most important Decadent themes. Similarly, over and above her usual indifference and disdain, the Amada occasionally seems to assume the attributes of the Decadent vampire, the "femme fatale". In poem I we read:

Assim me apareceu o Lírio tenebroso,
 Cujo ar desprezador me fere e vampiriza,
 Criatura esfingial, triste como Artemiza,
 Vingativa, feroz e linda como Fásis. (72-5)

In poem XVIII:

Na estufa, lendo um livro de botânica:
 Uma das mãos afaga uma begónia,
 Com a outra lacera uma tacsónia,
 Nervosamente, frígida, tirânica ... (1-4)

With terms such as "Vingativa", "feroz", "vampiriza", "tirânica", we might be excused for believing that we are face to face with the archetypal Decadent woman, the vampire. But are we? Decadent themes, both major and minor, abound throughout Oaristos. But is it, in fact, legitimate to consider it a Decadent work, and Eugénio de Castro a Decadent writer? In making judgements of this kind, it is worth while keeping in mind Mario Praz's words concerning the similar problem of deciding whether a work is Romantic or not: "Non è il contenuto a decidere se un'opera debba ritenersi romantica o no, ma lo spirito".⁶⁶

Seen from the point of view of "spirito", there can be no doubt that though Oaristos borrows many of its themes from the Decadents, it is not truly Decadent in spirit. To take the theme of the androgyne, for example: the various themes of the Decadence are all variations on a basic theme of crossing nature, of a cult of artificiality. The seeds of this cult had already been sown by Gautier in his Notice, where he said of Baudelaire: "Tout

⁶⁶ PRAZ, p. 12.

ce qui éloignait l'homme et surtout la femme de l'état de nature lui paraissait une invention heureuse".⁶⁷ His use of the term "invention" is not fortuitous. The Decadents were obsessed with the man-made, the work of the intellect, the studied cult of the anti-natural. As Gautier again points out: "La dépravation, c'est-à-dire l'écart du type normal, est impossible à la bête, fatalement conduite par l'instinct immuable".⁶⁸ Within this cult of artificiality, it is hardly surprising that the androgyne should have been an obsessive theme of the Decadents. Being neither man nor woman, it represented the anti-natural "par excellence". Talking of Péladan, an author in whose Décadence Latine countless cases of androgynism occur, Mario Praz rightly points out: "L'ideale androgynico non era soltanto l'ossessione del Péladan, ma di tutto il decadentismo".⁶⁹ Like all major Decadent themes, androgynism makes several appearances in À Rebours. Indeed, Eugénio de Castro's line might have been suggested by des Esseintes's description of the heroines of Edgar Allan Poe: "toutes avaient des poitrines garçonnières et inertes d'ange, toutes étaient, pour ainsi dire, insexuelles".⁷⁰

When we turn to the theme of androgynism in Oaristos, however; it soon becomes obvious that, like the other Decadent themes which appear in the book, this is simply another exotic detail. A study of the poems reveals countless disparities between apparently Decadent details such as this, and the manner in which the Amada is described in other parts of the book. Thus the references to her insexuality sound distinctly odd alongside lines such as:

Tinha no calmo andar a elegância das cobras

⁶⁷ GAUTIER, Portraits et Souvenirs, p. 194.

⁶⁸ Ibid., p. 196.

⁶⁹ PRAZ, p. 315.

⁷⁰ Huysmans, À Rebours, p. 254.

A leveza dum espectro e a graça duma ânfora.
(I, 32-33)

(notably the last detail) or:

Seu núbil corpo tem, num dualismo confuso,
A finura do lírio e o garbo das serpentes.
(II, 8-9)

(notably the first). And it is frankly out of place when compared with:

... seu corpo que é a quinta-essência, o cúmulo
Da esbeltez, do frescor, da graça feminina.
(I, 84-5)

Similarly, it is difficult to reconcile the references to her cruelty with lines such as the following:

Flor mansa e alva, que em minha alma vives,
Amo os teus Olhos, como adoro, ó mansa
Flor! os astros da montra dum ourives.
(XVIII, 9-11)

(these lines are taken from the same poem in which she is referred to as "tirânica"!) or:

A`minha Flor canta e sorri: e toda a câmara
Se alegra ao som dessa voz fina de calhandra.
(IX, 18-19)

And what happens to these major Decadent themes also happens to the minor Decadent themes which appear in Oaristos. To take an obvious example, Eugénio de Castro was fascinated with the Decadents' obsession with cosmetics. But what for them was an integral part of a cult of artificiality appears with only a pictorial value in his poems: "lábios de mínio" (VII, 68), "lábios de cinábrio" (XIII, 65).

Eugénio de Castro's early poems are not, therefore, as René Poupart suggests, "l'expression de la sensibilité décadente telle que les œuvres françaises de l'époque la traduisent", ⁷¹ and the Amada is not the Decadent heroine she might at times appear to be. Oaristos derives partly from authors who, though influenced

⁷¹ POUPART, "L'évolution", p. 58.

by Decadent writing, are not truly representative of Decadent thought. Several of the characteristics of the Amada come, as we have seen, from the poetry of Cesário Verde. But Cesário was no Decadent, and his Beloved, like that of Eugénio de Castro, is not a genuine "femme fatale". On the contrary, she is not beyond charitable feelings towards the less privileged:

E quando socorreste um miserável,
Eu que bebia cálices de absinto,
Mandei ir a garrafa, porque sinto
Que me tornas prestante, bom, saudável. 72

Many more details come from Moréas, of whose poetry Guy Michaud rightly points out: "La poésie de Moréas, malgré toute sa bonne volonté, est encore une attitude littéraire, qui ne montre de la poésie décadente qu'une surface, presque sans rides".⁷³ And even when Eugénio de Castro does borrow details from authors whose contribution to Decadent writing is of the greatest importance -- Baudelaire, Gautier, Huysmans -- he tends to borrow what is most colourful, without making any real effort to grasp the deeper connotations of the themes.

---o00oo---

The superficial nature of the Decadence of Oaristos, and, with it, the real nature of both the heroine and the hero, can be most clearly seen in a study of their respective views of love. Oaristos is, after all, a tale of love; but the particular relationship it describes can in no way be reconciled with love as it was understood by the Decadents. This is obvious throughout.

The hero's view of love is established in the book some time before the appearance of the Decadent material in poem IV, and it is not substantially changed by this

⁷² CESÁRIO VERDE, p. 30.

⁷³ GUY MICHAUD, Message Poétique du Symbolisme (Paris: Librairie Nizet, 1947), II, 276.

material when it does appear. An interesting indication of this view of love is afforded by poem XVI (the second in order of composition), which, being self-consciously blasphemous, may strike the reader as having a distinctly Decadent flavour. It takes the form of a prayer, or, if I might use the term, an anti-prayer. It is modelled around phrases taken from the Ave Maria, which it then subverts.⁷⁴ A mock-religious atmosphere is built up around the Amada by the use of Biblical similes in verse two - e.g. "Como uma t lupa entre malmequeres"⁷⁵ - by the use of Biblical terms such as "ungir" (15), and by direct quotation from the Bible:

Bendito seja o berço em que dormiste, 76
E os peitos que te deram de mamar!

Within this religious atmosphere, the poet equates the Amada to the Blessed Virgin of the Ave Maria, around which the poem is built; then, in verse three, he deliberately perverts the content of the prayer by declaring that one day he will carry off and seduce the Amada/Blessed Virgin to whom it has been addressed:

Corpo virgem, tu que  s o meu orgulho,
Tu que eu hei-de violar um dia entre
Beijos t o claros como o sol de Julho,
Bendito seja o fruto do teu ventre! (9-12)

⁷⁴ This kind of subversion, undoubtedly new in Portugal, was not unknown in France, the country from which Eug nio de Castro in all probability took the idea. Jules Laforgue had used a fairly similar technique in his "Complainte propitiatoire   l'Inconscient", which is modelled round his own version of phrases taken from the Lord's Prayer: "Que votre inconsciente volont  / Soit faite dans l' ternit ". See: JULES LAFORGUE, Po sies Compl tes (Paris:  ditions Gallimard et Librairie G n rale Fran aise, 1970), p. 35.

⁷⁵ These similes are reminiscent of those to be found in the Canticum Canticorum - e.g. "Sicut lilium inter spinas, sic amica mea inter filias", ii, 2.

⁷⁶ The second of these lines is a direct translation of a passage from Luke, xi, 27: "Beatus venter qui te portavit, et ubera, quae suxisti".

In an article of otherwise inadmissible speculation, Felisberto Martins rightly points to "a intenção pagã, sensualista, que se desprende destes versos".⁷⁷ And indeed, the sexual dynamism present in this poem appears frequently throughout the book:

Faces que sois cor da manhã que acorda,
Quando o luar começa a dissolver-se,
Deixai que vos macule, que vos morda,
Como quem morda um veludoso alperce!
(III, 5-8)

Teu frio ar quero, com beijos, sob um álamo,
Delir e os
Teus desdêns, e enleiar teu corpo sobre um tálamo
De lírios.
(XV, 13-16)

Dá-me que eu beije os teus morenos e amenos
Peitos! Rolemos, Flor! à flor dos flóreos fenos.
(XIII, 67-8)

Rolemos, ó morena, em contactos amenos!
(XIII, 75)

Yet, despite the apparently Decadent flavour of poem XVI, the sexual dynamism it and other poems express is quite out of keeping with Decadent thought. One of the most striking features of Decadent literature (amply annotated by Praz in his chapter on "La Belle Dame sans Merci") is that the dynamism which had been connected with man in the literature of the earlier part of the nineteenth century became the principal characteristic of the woman in the later part of the century. As George Ross Ridge points out, "She incarnates activity, he passivity, in an extraordinary reversal of roles".⁷⁸ What poem XVI and later poems present us with, then, is a dynamic man much more typical of Romantic literature.

⁷⁷ FELISBERTO MARTINS, "O Classicismo do Oaristos de Eugénio de Castro", in Humanitas, Vol. 2 (1948-9), p. 232. Martins argues that the entire book is "Uma transposição simbolista de um tema da poesia bucólica grega" (p. 236). Oaristos, needless to say, has nothing whatsoever to do with Greek Bucolic poetry.

⁷⁸ GEORGE ROSS RIDGE, The Hero in French Decadent Literature (University of Georgia Press, 1961), p. viii.

It may seem otiose to draw a distinction between the Romantic and the Decadent hero. The course of literary change is undoubtedly one of evolution, not revolution. But, as Mario Praz points out, "Approssimazioni come barocco, romantico, decadente, ecc. han tratto origine da determinate rivoluzioni della sensibilit ", ⁷⁹ and Oaristos is full of such details characteristic of the Romantic hero and heroine, but unthinkable for their Decadent counterparts.

Other than his sexual dynamism, another typically Romantic facet of the hero is his quest for ideal love, pursued throughout the book. It is immediately apparent in poem I, where we find a poet sickened by "a s rdida peleja, / Esta infrene peleja, a que chamamos vida" (43-44). He has retired into melancholy and indifference:

Meus dias eram maus, longu ssimos, tristonhos;
A minha mocidade era uma ruinaria. (50-1)

There is some temptation to see this as "fin-de-si cle" world-weariness. Many of the characteristics of the Decadent hero emerge: cynicism (37), egoism (40), indifference (48). But, as George Ross Ridge points out of the Decadent hero:

Superficially he resembles the Romantic hero, but there is a basic difference. Decadent world-weariness is much deeper than romantic ennui. The decadent hero is a man who has lived too much and who no longer has either the energy or desire to act. ⁸⁰

The remainder of poem I shows beyond any doubt that the "eu" here belongs rather to that class of Romantic heroes whom Jacinto do Prado Coelho describes thus: "Jovens poetas dizem-se ro dos de cepticismo, afundam-se em desalento, apelam para a morte como  nico rem dio". ⁸¹

⁷⁹ PRAZ, p. 7.

⁸⁰ RIDGE, p. 48.

⁸¹ JACINTO DO PRADO COELHO, Poetas do Romantismo (Lisbon: Livraria Cl ssica Editora, 1965), p. 14.

In true Romantic fashion, the poet's melancholy gives way to joy at the sight of his Beloved:

Mas, ao vê-la surgir triunfalmente fria,
Grácil como uma flor, triste como um gemido,
Meu peito recobrou o seu vigor perdido,
Todo eu era contente e alegre como um rei! (52-55)

Other typically Romantic situations are not difficult to find in Oaristos in relation with the hero. In poem XII we come across the archetypal Romantic hero, the star-crossed man:

Não venço nunca a tua Indiferença ...
Da minha sorte a exícial sentença
Traçou-a Deus no alto azul com astros! (12-14)

In poem X we find the man whose quest for ideal love has led him to love without hope:

Meu coração no entanto não se cansa:
Amam metade os que amam com esperança,
Amar sem esperança é o verdadeiro amor.

He reappears in poem XIV:

Com o Azar vivemos em conúbio,
E apesar disso, a ALMA continua
A sonhar a Ventura! -- Sonho vão!
Tal um menino, com a rósea mão,
Quer agarrar a levantina LUA!

---ooOoo---

The Romantic nature of the "eu" is never in any real doubt. He is presented to us mainly in the shorter poems of the book, which lack sufficient room to accomodate the rather cumbersome Decadent scenarios of the longer poems. But the nature of the Amada is not clearly revealed until the end of the Book. In poem II the poet says of the Amada: "Psicólogo, direi depois como Ela pensa" (5). But emotional or psychological motivation is precisely what is lacking in the description of the Beloved until poem XIX, the final poem (in numerical order) of the book. When this motivation is finally given, it shows beyond doubt that, despite Eugénio de Castro's attempts to make her appear a

Decadent heroine, she is something quite different. Here she cries out to the poet:

Ah! deixa-me viver assim anestesiada,
Inconsciente, quieta, indiferente a tudo,
Olhar parado sempre, o lábio sempre mudo,
Circundada de sons, perfumes e visões ... (38-41)

Maria Elsa de Jesus Gonçalves considers this to be an "exclamação de índole absolutamente decadentista".⁸² On the contrary, it has nothing whatsoever to do with Decadence. The motivation we are given here - and which, we are given to understand, explains all her preceding conduct throughout the book - is based entirely on affective grounds:

Ah! eu receio o amor, como receio a morte! (35)

But for the Decadents, emotion was seen as a natural impulse, and, in their cult of the anti-natural, they looked upon it with scorn. In the words of Barbey d'Aurévilly, they "méprisent toute émotion, comme inférieure".⁸³ In Decadent literature, emotion is replaced by a cult of sensation, as artificial. The point is made wily by Villiers de l'Isle-Adam in his *Isis*: "Au lieu du soleil, nous avons des lustres; au lieu de visages, des masques; au lieu de sentiments, des sensations",⁸⁴ and by Catulle Mendès in his *Méphistophélia*: "selon la mode, elle est tombée du sentiment à la sensation".⁸⁵ The withdrawal of the Amada into her world of "sons, perfumes e visões" is an emotional retreat, not a studied, intellectual cult of the artificial. It is simply an

⁸² MARIA ELSA DE JESUS GONÇALVES, *O Simbolismo de Eugénio de Castro*, Dissertação de licenciatura em Filologia Românica apresentada à Faculdade de Coimbra, 1954, p. 154.

⁸³ JULES AMÉDÉE BARBEY D'AURÉVILLY, *Oeuvres Romanesques Complètes* (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1964) Vol. II, *Les Diaboliques*, p. 22.

⁸⁴ VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM, *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1923), IX, 21.

⁸⁵ Quoted in RIDGE, p. 35.

escape from an affective reality, not the deliberate desire to create a new, artificial reality superior to nature, as preached by Gautier (*supra* p. 60), and of which A.E. Carter points out: "This calculated, intellectual side of the cult of artificiality is an essential part of decadent sensibility".⁸⁶ What we are presented with in poem XIX is, in fact, a highly ornate example of what Teófilo Braga sees as one of the main themes of ultra-Romanticism, the retreat into monastic life:

pelo lado religioso [...] apaixonados amantes
cobrindo o seu fogo com as cinzas da penitência
claustural [...] A esta ininteligência de uma
concepção fundamental, que caiu no exagero do
processo, chamou-se o Ultra-Romantismo. 87

Eugénio de Castro's variation on the theme is that the Amada does not retreat from love, but from a fear of love, but the basic situation remains the same. It is reflected to some extent in her words to the poet:

"Ama-me simplesmente e religiosamente" (50) (the second italics are mine). Examples of lovers becoming monks, nuns or hermits in order to avoid an emotional reality abound throughout Romantic literature. In Portugal, we need only think of Garrett's Frei Luis de Sousa or

Herculano's Eurico o Presbítero; in Spain, Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino by the Duque de Rivas; elsewhere, Laclos' Liaisons Dangereuses, Byron's Giaour. Despite her Decadent appearance, the Amada of Oaristos is as much a Romantic heroine as the "eu" a Romantic hero.

---ooOoo---

It may, again, seem unnecessarily restrictive to

⁸⁶ CARTER, p. 12.

⁸⁷ TEÓFILO BRAGA, Introdução e Teoria da História da Literatura Portuguesa (Oporto: Livraria Chardon, 1896), p. 429.

classify the "eu" and the Amada as Romantic hero and heroine, but this is in fact very much the case. As a poet, Eugénio de Castro lacked the ability to create a personal idiom in which to express his own feelings and experience. He required a pre-existing rhetoric. His poetry is, therefore, characterized by large-scale borrowing from other writers, or a rehashing of standard types and themes.

Curros Enríquez saw Oaristos as a book "cuyo único defecto para mí consiste en velar, tímidamente, bajo formas hieráticas, improprias de nuestra época, su ideal artístico, que esto y no otra cosa viene a ser, en mi concepto, el Diamante Negro de sus cantos".⁸⁸ But here he rather misses the mark. Oaristos is a highly ornate stylization of an actual relationship experienced by the poet. The girl in question (see chapter three), if at times indifferent, was neither a vampire nor a "femme fatale". What Eugénio de Castro borrows from the writers of the Decadence are those themes which can be used to heighten this actual situation. Many of the characteristics of the girl which we can find in other writings of Eugénio de Castro where there is no Decadent interest present become, in Oaristos, the starting-point for ostensibly Decadent themes. In an article entitled "Notas e Sensações (fragmentos do meu jornal)" published in the Jornal do Comércio of 10 January 1892 Eugénio de Castro said of the girl (here named Safira, see chapter three): "Tão pálida me apareceu hoje Safira, que, a despeito de ser dia e de fazer sol, julguei que a estava vendo ao luar". In Oaristos, this becomes the pallor of the vampire. Her slimness of build is mentioned in the poem "Semper Eadem" of Silva, where the poet describes her "femenilidade de efebo, desprovida de seios" (38). In Oaristos, this becomes the insexuality of the Decadent androgyne. And so on. Her lack of response becomes sometimes the cruelty of

⁸⁸ Quoted in OLMEDILLA, p. xliii.

the "femme fatale", sometimes inertia, another fundamental Decadent theme, insisted upon throughout the book:

Detesta o movimento, as expansões e tudo
 O que possa alterar o seu viver inerte. (II, 60-1)
 Seu corpo sensual foi feito para a inércia. (II, 80)
 Quebrantado, tolhido em seu torpor constante. (IV, 27)
 Encontro--A inerte sobre uma poltrona antiga. (VII, 28)

But how little this theme of inertia is integrated into the Decadent sensibility can be seen from the fact that inertia is the hall-mark, not of the Decadent heroine, but of the Decadent hero. As George Ross Ridge points out: "the more 'decadent' the heroine, the more active she generally is and the greater energy potential she certainly possesses".⁸⁹

Oaristos is an exercise in Decadence, and only an exercise, because the relationship it describes is not conceivable in truly Decadent terms. The Decadent elements present in the book are included for their glamour-value, their ability to raise the relationship to the realm of the unusual. The relationship is, however, eminently acceptable in terms of a Romantic aesthetic, and Oaristos becomes, in a sense, also an exercise in Romanticism, presenting us, beneath a Decadent guise, with a standard Romantic hero and heroine. Beneath its Decadent exterior, Oaristos is a highly ornate example of what the Spanish critic Angel Valbuena Prat describes as "romanticismo de lamentación": "cantos de desaliento, de dolor, alusiones al mal de la vida y de la sociedad, a las figuras víctimas del hombre y de la naturaleza".⁹⁰

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⁸⁹ RIDGE, p. 145.

⁹⁰ ANGEL VALBUENA PRAT, Historia de la Literatura Española (Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gil, 1968), III, 1/4.

Before leaving Oaristos, it should be pointed out that the realization that its principal innovations are Decadent in origin causes something of a technical problem concerning the terminology of Portuguese literary history. Feliciano Ramos, for example, writing in 1943, considered Oaristos to be "O livro que verdadeiramente inicia em Portugal a poesia simbolista".⁹¹ Likewise, Jacinto do Prado Coelho says of Eugénio de Castro: "não só dava a lume a primeira colectânea de poemas ostensivamente simbolistas, Oaristos, mas ainda a fazia preceder dum prefácio que é o único texto programático do nosso Simbolismo".⁹² Celso Pedro Luft is of the same opinion: "E. de C. é o introdutor do Simbolismo como escola em Portugal através do livro Oaristos, cujo prefácio [...] foi um manifesto simbolista".⁹³

There has been obvious confusion in the past as to the exact meaning of the terms "Simbolismo" and "simbolista". Álvaro Maia, for example, defending his view that Portuguese Symbolism was "o surrexit [sic] triunfal das qualidades latinas",⁹⁴ points to "aquela 'Noites [sic] de fogo' que, a meu ver, é tudo quanto há de mais antagónico com o simbolismo".⁹⁵ Maria Fernanda de Campos Flores de Matos, on the other hand, considers exactly the same poem to be "o mais nitidamente simbolista do Poeta".⁹⁶ This particular piece of confusion arises from the fact that Álvaro Maia sees the Portuguese term "simbolismo" as roughly equivalent to the French "symbolisme" (in which case his opinions are correct), whereas Matos uses the

⁹¹ RAMOS, p. 30

⁹² J[ACINTO DO] P[RADO] C[OEELHO], "Simbolismo", in Dicionário das Literaturas Portuguesa, Galega e Brasileira, p. 769.

⁹³ LUFT, p. 71.

⁹⁴ ÁLVARO MAIA, Vento sobre a charneca (Lisbon: Edições Gama, 1944), p. 257.

⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 291.

⁹⁶ MATOS, p. 107.

term in the broader meaning it has gradually acquired (even so her conclusions are doubtful). Indeed, the term "simbolismo" as applied to Oaristos has only proved untenable in Portuguese literary history by widening it to include (as the Spanish term "modernismo" does) not only the techniques of the Symbolists, but the themes of the Decadence as well.

The Decadent origin of the novelty of Oaristos has not gone without notice. Of the poem mentioned in the last paragraph, João Gaspar Simões says: "Efectivamente é com a publicação da poesia 'Noite de Fogo', inserta no primeiro número de 'Os Insubmissos', que Eugénio de Castro, recentemente chegado de Paris [this detail is incorrect, see pages 27-28], inaugura a rota do simbolismo nacional. Do simbolismo ou do decadentismo?" He answers his own question: "Embora se lhe confira o primado do movimento simbolista português [...] Eugénio de Castro foi muito mais decadentista que simbolista genuíno".⁹⁷ He has made the same point in other works, maintaining, correctly, that Eugénio de Castro is "um decadentista, não um simbolista",⁹⁸ that his symbolism is "um simbolismo mais decadentista que simbolista propriamente dito".⁹⁹ The same point is made at considerable length by Maria Elsa de Jesus Gonçalves in her thesis on O Simbolismo de Eugénio de Castro, though her exposition lacks real documentation, and is based heavily on the theoretical distinction between Symbolism and Decadence drawn by Guy Michaud in his Message Poétique du Symbolisme.

---ooOoo---

It is easy to see weaknesses in Oaristos. In fact,

⁹⁷ JOÃO GASPAR SIMÕES, Itinerário Histórico da Poesia Portuguesa (Lisbon: Editora Arcádia lda., 1964), p. 259.

⁹⁸ SIMÕES, Novos Temas (Lisbon: Editorial Inquérito, 1938), p. 71.

⁹⁹ SIMÕES, História da Poesia Portuguesa do Século XX (Lisbon: Empresa Nacional de Publicidade, s/d), p. 190.

it is difficult not to see them. But perhaps it would be unfair to pass too harsh a judgement on a book which, begun when its author was still nineteen, might well be classed as part of his juvenilia. Moreover, Oaristos is part of a European irradiation of rather superficial Decadent themes emanating from Paris. These can be found in the works of several young poets in different countries. At the beginning of the 1890's, there was a particular fascination for the "femme fatale". In Gabriele d'Annunzio's Poema Paradisiaco (1892), for example, we find a description which could fit, even in its smallest detail, Eugénio de Castro's Amada:

Quella sua chioma, volgente
 su da la fronte regale
 cui cingeva l'immortale
 Tristezza divinamente,
 mi ricordava il tesoro
 de le foreste profonde
 ove l'Autunno profonde
 tra porpore cupo l'oro.
 E gli occhi, remoti in cavi
 cerchi d'ombra e di mistero,
 cui tanto il sogno e il pensiero
 facean le palpebre gravi,
 non avean un'infinita
 calma di tarde acque stigie?
 Entro io vi scorgea l'effigie
 de la morte, ne la vita.
 E le labbra mai concesse
 (la vita dà tali frutti!)
 ov'erano insieme tutti
 i rifiuti e le promesse,
 da l'invincibile orgoglio
 con suggel rigido chiuse
 tacevano, ma ben use
 a l'alta parola VOGLIO. 100

Likewise, in the Pilgerfahrten of the young German poet Stefan George we find an "ebony madonna" whose awe-inspiring aloofness is akin to that of the Amada:

100 GABRIELE D'ANNUNZIO, Poema Paradisiaco: Odi Navali (Milan: Fratelli Reves, Editori, 1918), pp. 35-6.

Lauschest du des feurs gesange:
 Lagert sich neben dein knie meine wange°
 Mit zagen geniesst sie dein zartes warm°

Ihre kühne flammende röte
 Fürderhin mir deine nähe verböte°
 Ich bin in dem himmel ein sklav dem harm.

Legst in mitleid du mir die haare:
 Einzige lohnung! und oft noch in fahre
 Verharr ich vor deinem erhabenen stolz?

Frommen gleich die trotz ihrem grauen
 Wieder und wieder beim angelus schauen 101
 Zu einer madonna von ebenholz.

[Should you be listening to the singing of the
 fire, I rest my cheek by your knee; fearfully
 it enjoys your delicate warmth. Should your
 nearness forbid my boldly glowing cheek draw
 nearer, I am, though in heaven, a slave to
 grief. Should you, in compassion, touch my
 hair - my only reward! And often still, in
 trembling, will I persist before your lofty
 pride? - like pious women who, despite their
 fear, again and again at angelus look up to 102
 an ebony madonna.]

Indeed, the powerful appeal of this vogue can be seen
 from the fact that, before the 1890's were out, it had
 penetrated as far as Russia, often more resistant to
 literary themes from the West. We find it in the early
 poetry of the young Aleksandr Blok, notably in his poem
 "Servus - Reginae":

Не призывай. И без призыва
 Приду во храм.
 Склонюсь главою молчаливо
 К твоим ногам.

И буду слушать приказанья
 И робко ждать.
 Ловить мгновенные свиданья
 И вновь желать.

Твоих страстей повержен

101 STEFAN GEORGE, Werke (Munich: Helmut Küpper
 vormalis George Bondi, 1958), I, 29. The Pilgerfahrten were
 published in 1892. The unusual spelling and punctuation is
 a constant characteristic of George's work.

102 This and all subsequent translations are my own.
 I have aimed at literal translation throughout.

Под игром. слаб.
 Порой - слуга; порою - милый;
 И вечно - раб.

[Do not summon me. Even without a summons I shall go to the temple. I shall bend my head in silence to your feet. I shall listen to your commands and timidly wait. I shall seize the moments of our meeting and desire again. Overwhelmed by the might of your passions, weak beneath the yoke. At times your servant; at times your darling; and always your slave.]

In describing the Amada as he did, Eugénio de Castro was reacting to a new thematic vogue sweeping through Europe, and carrying with it great prestige as the new superior experience. It is through the desire to share in this prestige that Eugénio de Castro (like Gabriele d'Annunzio and Stefan George, with whom he shared a certain cultural elitism) adopts these themes. But they do not correspond to reality, and cannot become the "força motriz" of his book. They remain on the surface. Yet Eugénio de Castro required a rhetoric, and to express the real drama of Oaristos he had to look to another convention, the Romantic. Oaristos is an essentially Romantic work.

103 ALEKSANDR BLOK, Собрание Сочинений (Moscow: Государственное Издательство Художественной Литературы, 1960), I, 30. The poem is dated 14 October 1899.

Chapter Two

The Pyrotechnics of Symbolism

The publication of Horas in 1891 was to continue and augment the controversy surrounding Eugénio de Castro after the appearance of Oaristos. Like its predecessor, it was a long-standing target for parody. As late as 20 November 1893, the book was topical enough for a poem entitled "Quando a Dissolução vier" to appear in As Novidades, parodying the form of Eugénio de Castro's "Quando a Morte vier". Horas also drew severe criticism from the press, particularly, as I shall show, from the pen of Fialho de Almeida.

The most striking novelty of Horas was its use of what Eugénio de Castro terms "o símbolo". This is made immediately clear in the little introduction which opens the book:

terraço ladrilhado de cipolino e ágata, por onde o
SÍMBOLO passeia, arquiépiscopal, arrastando flamante
simarra bordada de Sugestões, que se alastra, oleosa
e policroma, nas lisonjas.

The nature of the symbols employed is also of the greatest importance. In an article entitled "Dandismo Católico", published in the Novidades of 13 July 1892,¹ Eugénio de Castro wrote: "É à liturgia romana e à Bíblia que os poetas decadentes e simbolistas vão, de preferência, buscar sugestivos temas para os seus versos singulares". Indeed, by far the major source of imagery in Horas is the Catholic liturgy, as well as a few occasional details taken from the Bible. This is immediately apparent in the title of the book. It refers to the Hours, prayers said at different times of the day. In keeping with this title, many of the poems take the form of prayers. "Nas landes, à noite" is addressed to God. Parts of "A Epifania dos

¹ In the Novidades of 4 April 1893, Eugénio de Castro, writing under the pseudonym "Israfel" (see chapter five), published a very similar article entitled "Dandismo Religioso". The purpose of these articles is to suggest that while other poets may use religious symbols out of "dandismo", he does it out of genuine faith. My study of Horas will show that is not quite the case.

Licornes" and "A Pomba da Arca" are addressed to the Blessed Virgin. "Vaso de Eleição" is addressed to a figure who is at the same time both the Blessed Virgin and the Beloved. This last poem can also be seen as a variation on the "De Profundis":

Lá do fundo do meu desterro,
Do meu miasmático paúl,
Baile branco depois de um enterro,
Ouvi a tua voz azul. (5-8)

It reverses the situation of the original prayer. In the euphoria of his new-found conversion - the central theme of Horas - the poet has seen his prayers answered. The depths from which he once cried are no longer "here" but "there". Part of "A Epifania dos Licornes" is specifically entitled "Angelus". "A Pomba da Arca" refers to the Biblical legend of the Flood,² and contains further references to the parable of the prodigal son,³ and of the lost sheep.⁴

On a more incidental level, Horas is full of religious terminology and references to religious objects of all kinds. Thus "A Epifania dos Licornes" opens with a phrase taken from the Ordinary of the Catholic mass -- the transliteration of the Greek "Κυριε, ελεησον, Χριστε, ελεησον" : "Lord, have mercy, Christ, have mercy". Also from the ordinary of the mass are the "Glória a Deus nas Alturas" ("Gloria in excelsis Deo") of the same poem (154-155) and the "per omnia saecula saeculorum" of "Vaso de Eleição" (46-7). The peacocks in the castellan's palace in "A Epifania dos Licornes" are "soberbos como Núncios" (70). The lover's soul in "Dona Briolanja" is a "Primeira linda Comungante" (50), a "Lausperene fulgido de lumes" (52). In "Vaso de Eleição" the Beloved's look is "Lucescente como as Relíquias" (24), her eyes are a "branca

² Genesis, vii, 10-11.

³ Luke, xv, 11 ff.

⁴ Luke, xv, 1-10.

Aleluia" (28), her voice an "Angelus" (39), her skin exhibits a "brancura de Hóstia" (42). In the "Epílogo" the poet exclaims:

Rosácea mística o sorrir com que me adoças
Seja! e argênteo Pax-tecum sejam teus olhares. (7-8)

---ooOoo---

Unlike Oaristos, Horas has no narrative plot. But it has a very definite central theme, expanded upon or varied by the successive poems of the book. This theme is the conversion from a past life of indulgence and sin to a new life of purity and asceticism. The majority of the poems of Horas deal with the joy and the hopes surrounding this conversion, though a few describe the pain of doubt, the grief of relapsing once more into sin, and morbid broodings on the subject of death.

The story of the conversion is almost invariably presented in the form of allegory. In the vast majority of the poems, the meaning of the allegory is too apparent to justify detailed comment. Only in the case of "A Epifania dos Licornes" is there any real obscurity. This poem shows signs of being an amalgam of originally independent poems. The section entitled "Angelus", for example, could easily constitute a poem in its own right. Again, lines 158 to 171 prove, on closer inspection, to be a sonnet, also capable of standing on its own. It is perhaps owing to its possibly composite nature that there is some obscurity in this poem, though a certain level of obscurity was, as we shall see, considered desirable among Symbolist poets.

There are several allegorical scenes in this poem, not all of which are equally clear. The most obvious is that of the castellan (27-78). The transient nature of the pleasures of the world are represented by a castellan whose fabulous wealth is looted by a raiding French army, leaving him in desolation and solitude. Less clear, however, is the allegory of the sea-journey, first hinted

at early in the poem - "Lua deitada, marinheiro a pé" (2, 3) - but not taken up again until much later on. In the early stages of the poem, a sailor waits for the moon to rise, in order, presumably, to set sail. Later, when the moon eventually rises, we discover that his journey is to the "Ilha dos Licornes" (151) where he will take refuge in the "Torre do Conceito Puro" (175). The poem ends with a maritime image describing the situation of this Tower:

Lá onde a voz da Vida chega esvaída, quase morta,
Como a canção do mar num búzio ... (194-5)

Despite its composite nature, there is an interesting nexus of images in "A Epifania dos Licornes": the unicorn's horn (never mentioned, but present by implication throughout), the Tower of the Pure Concept, and the whorled shell of the last line. Over and above the fact that they are all white in colour (the importance of this will be shown later on) and are basically the same shape, these are all images of defence. But as well as physical defence, they symbolize mental defence by retreat into a world of legend (unicorn), of concepts (tower) and of echoes (shell), that is, a distancing from the world. This is further emphasized by the theme of the journey, pursued throughout the poem. And what these objects provide defence against is revealed by their common shape. They are all, in fact, fairly standard phallic symbols. These symbols function, therefore, on various levels. They suggest that the defence against the sexual urge is the sublimation of that urge into the realms of mental activity already mentioned.

Variations on the allegorical scenes employed in "A Epifania dos Licornes" occur throughout the book. The futility of the poet's former life of sin is frequently depicted in terms of desolation, particularly in nature:

"Atravessei rios, prados lamacentos"
"Piquei-me nas urzes duras dos caminhos"
("Dona Briolanza", 78, 80)
"Lá do fundo do meu desterro,

Do meu miasmático paúl"
("Vaso de Eleição, 5-6)

"Nas landes grandes, junto as dunas,
Um menino perdido anda"
("Pelas Landes, à Noite") ⁵

in terms of waste:

Assim que as ânforas esguias eram cheias,
Logo as despejavam e enchiam e, entre as ervas,
A água da cisterna ia formando cheias"
(A Cisterna Fiel, 12-14)

or in terms of poverty:

Um hospício de velhas alienadas,
Sem cerca, sem Irmãs, sem enfermeiras
("Balada", 1-2)

And the idea of a sea-journey reappears in "A Pomba da Arca":

Entram no porto claro as esperadas caravelas! (2)

Sets of minor symbols also occur. The most important of these is the colour-scheme first outlined in "A Epifania dos Licornes", and continued throughout the book:

Mordoraram-se (6) as apoteóticas púrpuras da
Luxúria: depois do Escarlata o Branco. Agora sou
casto como um Eclesiástico. (89-93)

This contrast between white (purity) and red (lust) occurs in other images of "A Epifania dos Licornes": "Sou o Lis à janela dum palácio em fogo" (15). It appears as the opposition between the sun and the moon:

Numa rubra hemoptise, o Sol decrepito
Golfeja sangue pelo céu grisalho ...
Turíbulo da Tarde, um lago fuma,

⁵ In both this poem and "A Epifania dos Licornes" we find night-scenes prior to illumination distinctly reminiscent of the "noche del alma" referred to in genuine mystical writings. There are other indications to suggest that Eugénio de Castro may well have been reading mystical poetry around this time.

⁶ A gallicism, formed on the French "mordorer" (to turn reddish brown). By no means a common word among the French Symbolists, though it does appear once in Gustave Kahn's *Palais Nomades* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1897), p. 105: "Du fleuve aux rouges et mordorés et verdâtres flots".

E, na sua assunção, a LUA é uma
Branca Primeira- Comunhão num Talho ... (167-71)

It turns up again in "A Pomba da Arca":

E onde o rubi sangrava branquejou a cimofana. (23)

and it lies behind the title of the poem "Um cacto no pólo". The cactus-flower for Eugénio de Castro is invariably red, as in "A Epifania dos Licornes" - "cactus rubro" (132) - and "Os Tísicos" of Silva - "bocas vermelhas como cactos" (17). It is contrasted with the whiteness of the pole, and thus symbolizes the theme of the poem: the resurgence of lust amidst a state of purity. The same colour-scheme appears in an ironic pun towards the end of the poem:

e com a Dama expulsa passei a noite em branco;
e a noite foi toda escarlate. (22-24)

Another minor symbol is the use of perfumes to signify the bliss of would-be mystical union. It appears in "A Epifania dos Licornes"

Ó minhas mãos! formai um electuário de aromas,
De espicinardo, de assadulcis, de vetiver e de
sarcantos,
E ungi minh'Alma, para que ela surja, clara como os
axiomas,
Redolente de aromáticas gomas,
Toda perfumada ante a Rainha de meus cantos ...
(189-193)

It appears briefly in "Dona Briolanja", where we hear of the lover's "Alma pura, plena de perfumes" (51), and again in "Vaso de Eleição". Here the image is particularly apt, in that the Amada is described as a "vessel" in which these unguents might be kept:

Sê o vetiver e a escalónia,
O sisimbro, o nardo, o ciclamen,
E aromatiza-me per omnia
Saecula saeculorum. Amen. (45-48)

A variation on this is the theme of anointment. It is to be found in "A Epifania dos Licornes": "Que Vossas Bentas Mãos [...] me unjam com os Santos-Óleos do Perdão! (96, 99), see also line 191 quoted above, and in the "Epílogo": "Porém da continência os puros Santos-Óleos/ungiram-me"

(15-16). Given the pseudo-mystical atmosphere of Horas, it is interesting to note that a similar use of perfumes can be found in genuinely mystical poetry, such as that of San Juan de la Cruz:

Detente, cierzo muerto,
ven, austro, que recuerdas los amores,
aspira por el huerto,
y corran tus olores,
y pacerá el Amado entre las flores.

Oh ninfas de Judía,
en tanto que en las flores y rosales
el ámbar perfumea,
morá en los arrabales,
y no queráis tocar nuestros umbrales. 7

---ooOoo---

The most severe critic of Horas in Portugal was Fialho de Almeida. In a comprehensive attack on the book, he left little of its content unscathed. The first object of his scorn was the little introduction which precedes the poems proper. In an article of exaggerated, if not altogether unjustified sarcasm, he wrote of it:

Claro que isto não é prosa, nem programa, nem argumento, nem coisa nenhuma: é uma trapalhada sem nexo, que se acredita concebida longe dos bárbaros, por ter saído com certeza do Hospital de Rilhafoles. 8

(The Hospital de Rilhafoles was a lunatic asylum.) But his criticism is unduly severe. Despite its deliberate obscurity - a characteristic of most Symbolist poetry -- this introduction does constitute a programme for the contents of the book. Its relationship to the text is much clearer than, for example, the various short prose passages with which Gustave Kahn prefaces each of the sections of his Palais Nomades.

The first line of the introduction - "Silva esotérica

⁷ SAN JUAN DE LA CRUZ, Obras (Burgos: Tipografía del Monte Carmelo, 1943), p. 447.

⁸ FIALHO DE ALMEIDA, Os Gatos, VI, 117. The article in question is dated 21 September 1892.

para os raros apenas" - applies to the book in general, and presents us with one of Eugénio de Castro's most dearly-held views on art. Of the following three short passages, the first, with its references to a sea-journey, is probably to be taken as applying to "A Epifania dos Licornes". The second and third refer to the general style of the book as a whole:

abertas as eclusas, corvetas, como catedrais
flutuantes, seguindo inéditos itinerários por
atlânticos virgens;

terraço ladrilhado de cipolino e ágata, por onde o
SÍMBOLO passeia, arqui episcopal, arrastando flamante
simarra bordada de Sugestões, que se alastra, oleosa
e policroma, nas lisonjas;

concerto de adequadas músicas implorativas ou
morosas, raro estridentes;

The fourth paragraph is a clear reference to "Dona Briolanja", where the theme of the conversion is presented in terms of a medieval tale:

complicadas decorações de legenda velha
mantelando o pudor dos episódios simples;

And the fifth is an equally clear résumé of the poems which go to make up the third section of the book, Longe dos Bárbaros:⁹

preces dum hereje arrependido, votos castos dum
antigo libidinoso, pesadelos e irreligiosas
hesitações dum recente convertido.

The severity of Fialho's criticism derives from a basically unsympathetic approach, but his imputations of obscurity did not stop at the introduction. Concerning the attitude of Portuguese Symbolists vis-à-vis their French counterparts, he wrote:

O que esses moçoilos copiam são os trucs, as

⁹ This section is itself preceded by a quotation from Petronius underlining the futility of the pleasures of the flesh: "Foeda est in coitu et brevis voluptas / Et taedet Veneris statim peractae". See: TITUS PETRONIUS (ARBITER), Satyricon (Paris: C.L.F. Pancoucke, Éditeur, 1835), II, 248, Fragment XVIII.

pochadas meio arte, meio intrujice, os tonitroantes vocábulos de significação obscura, torcida, fora do seu lugar, o abuso das letras maiúsculas, e a alteração proposital enfim de todas as regras poéticas que possam pôr a metrificação ao abrigo das maluqueiras de rapazes. Em prosa como em poesia, o simbolismo deles não consiste, como Banville diz (10) "em nunca ir à concepção da ideia em si", mas é uma série d'omissões, inversões, deduções, que tiram a clareza à frase, à ideia o seu declive límpido e sintético, tornando a literatura numa espécie de palimpsesto, meio obsceno, meio religioso, onde o sentido é incompreensível por lhe faltarem palavras pelo meio. 11

We may not care to agree with the severity of Fialho's judgements, but his list of characteristics is fairly to the point. There are, indeed, in Horas, several examples of almost Baroque hyperbaton which take the modern reader by surprise:

nas de pórfiro varandas.

("Epifania dos Licornes, 28)

Em de cobre babilónicas caçoilas.

(ibid., 44)

Sob as cor de mosto vesperais olaias.

("Dona Briolanja", 2)

as de verbena / Chamas.

("Balada", 26-7)

In "A Epifania dos Licornes" the form varies from regular four-line verses to "vers libres" and little blocks of prose. But, above all, Horas is full of the most unusual terms, which have frequently caused problems of comprehension. João Aníbal Coelho Pinheiro refers to the

¹⁰ A case of mistaken attribution by Fialho. The phrase does not belong to Banville; it comes from Moréas's "manifeste littéraire" published in the Figaro of 18 September 1886: "le caractère essentiel de l'art symbolique consiste à ne jamais aller jusqu'à la conception de l'idée en soi". This phrase can be found in MICHAUD's Message Poétique du Symbolisme, II, 341, and in JOUANNY, p. 426. The entire article is reprinted in MICHAUD's Doctrine Symboliste (Paris: Librairie Nizet, 1947), pp. 24-26, but here the phrase in question is misquoted, reading "concentration" instead of "conception".

¹¹ FIALHO, VI, 116.

phrase "lisonjas de diaspe" of "A Epifania dos Licornês" (41) as an example of "concretismos, em que um termo de conteúdo abstracto é determinado por um termo de comparação concreto".¹² He takes the term "lisonja" as having its usual meaning of "praise", whereas here it is surely to be understood in its less common meaning of "losango"¹³ (in this case, lozenge-shaped flagstones), the meaning it also carries in the introduction (see pages 76 and 83). The matter of unusual vocabulary is further complicated by the fact that Eugénio de Castro does not always get his spelling right. In the "Epílogo" he writes "Calepédia" (14) instead of "Calipédia": "conjunto de preceitos ou conselhos para a procriação de filhos formosos".¹⁴ And "nubélia" ("Epifania dos Licornes, 7) seems likely to be a confused mixture of "Nébel" and "nabla", alternative forms signifying a kind of Hebrew harp (in the poem "Salomé" of Salomé e outros poemas we read of "as hebraicas nubélias" [IV, 8]).

Many of the words of Horas are not to be found in dictionaries, and their meaning can only be guessed in its most generic sense. Thus the "burcelins" of "A Epifania dos Licornes" (7) obviously refer to some kind of musical instrument (they appear with the same meaning in "Salomé" IV, 37). Likewise, the "nispas" of "Dona Briolanja" apparently refer to some kind of coin, though again it is not possible to say specifically which. Other words are used in rather unusual senses. The following lines from "A Pomba da Arca"

E as víridas cantáridas
Cessaram de voar sobre a valeriana (21-22)

¹² JOAO ANÍBAL COELHO PINHEIRO, A Expressão da Cor em Eugénio de Castro, Dissertação de licenciatura em Filologia Românica apresentada à Faculdade de Lisboa, p. 187.

¹³ Dicionário de Moraes, 10th. ed. (Lisbon: Editorial Confluência, 1949), VI, 270.

¹⁴ Ibid., II, 771.

offer a problem of interpretation if we take the terms employed in their normal zoological and botanical meanings. But if we understand them in their medicinal connotations (a standard part of popular medicine at the time), their meaning becomes clear: the "cantárida" forms the base for an aphrodisiac, while "valeriana" is used in the preparation of a febrifuge. These images thus fall into line with those of the rest of the poem: eroticism has ceased, and the fever of lust is beginning to subside.

The origins of the exotic terminology of Horas are, as was the case with Oaristos, predominantly French. The Petit Glossaire provides the following neologisms in "A Epifania dos Licornes":

- l. 41: "diaspe".¹⁵
- l. 43: "balsamyrrhé" (p. 14).
- l. 47: "sardoine" (p. 82).
- l. 97: "aprilin" (p. 10).
- l. 157: "néphélibates" (p. 68).
- l. 189: "électuaire" (p. 33).

in "Dona Briolanja":

- l. 30: "adamantin" (p. 4).
- l. 117: "saltères" (p. 82).

in "Vaso de Eleição":

- l. 24: "lucescent" (p. 60).

in "Um cacto no pólo":

- l. 14: "étésiens" (p. 38).

and in "Epílogo":

- l. 6: "muqueuses" (p. 66).
- l. 14: "callipédiques" (p. 18).
- l. 16: "ésotériques" (p. 37).

Similarly, Huysmans provides a great many of the names of precious stones and perfumes in "A Epifania dos Licornes":

¹⁵ PLOWERT, Petit Glossaire, p. 30. Subsequent page references given in the text.

- 1. 49: "turquois". 16
- 1. 51: "péridots" (p. 58).
- 1. 53: "cymophane" (p. 59).
- 1. 54: "hyacinthe" (p. 60).
- 1. 186: "Spika-nard" (p. 155).
- 1. 186: "vetyver" (p. 162).
- 1. 186: "sarcanthus" (p. 137).

He also supplies the "aventurines" (p. 136) of "Dona Briolanja" (9).

The influence of Moréas, too, is unmistakable. He is the source of certain of the unusual terms of "A Epifania dos Licornes" - 1. 52: "sinople",¹⁷ 1. 129: "peluche" (p. 14), and 1. 180-81: "Rubis de Golconde" (p. 24), reappearing as "o Diamante de Golconda". Moreover, whole ideas from Moréas's poetry are transported bodily into the poem. Thus, just as the castellan of "A Epifania dos Licornes" can say:

Tive puníceo manto que era, no chão, puníceo azeite;
Adaga temperada em Nuremberg,
Em cujo punho uma safira, entre ópalas de leite,
Era uma tülipa azul em Spitzberg. (23-26)

so also Tidogolain the dwarf can boast of a fine cloak and a jewelled dagger, even if less exotic (p. 134):

J'ai fin samit. Au doigt j'ai rubacelle.
J'ai daguette à pommeau de diamant.

And while:

Anões em seda alva de jaspe,
Do meu castelo no átrio mudo,
Sobre as lisonjas de diaspe
Erguam rios de veludo (39-42)

so in Moréas's "Mélusine" (p. 138) we hear of the

Traînes que portent des nains
Par les escaliers de sardoine.

---ooOoo---

¹⁶ HUYSMANS, À Rebours, p. 59. Subsequent page references given in the text.

¹⁷ MORÉAS, Œuvres, I, 141. Subsequent page references given in the text. They all refer to Volume I of the Œuvres.

The obscurity of Horas derives only partly from the neologisms it borrows from the sources just mentioned. A further cause is Eugénio de Castro's attempt, as suggested by his introduction, to imitate certain of the techniques of the French Symbolist poets. One of the Symbolist ideals was not to state explicitly, but to suggest. This particular ideal is resumed in the famous formula of Mallarmé: "Nommer un objet , c'est supprimer les trois quarts de la jouissance du poème qui est faite du bonheur de deviner peu à peu: le suggérer, voilà le rêve".¹⁸

As a Symbolist work, however, Horas borrows little from the French Symbolists other than its obscurity. The Symbolist movement in France was to a very large extent a metaphysical movement in poetry. As Túlio Ramires Ferro rightly points out, Symbolism "atribui ao poeta uma missão de ordem metafísica e mística".¹⁹ The Symbolists gave to poetry the mission of penetrating to the Absolute lying behind the veil of phenomenal reality.²⁰ In the words of Guy Michaud, the aim of the Symbolists was to "procéder, non plus à partir de la multiplicité des apparences, mais de l'unité originelle de la création".²¹

This metaphysical basis is made abundantly clear in the many theoretical passages written by the poets themselves concerning the aims of their own poetry. In his Traité du Verbe, René Ghil points out in his highly tortuous style:

L'Idée, qui seule importe, en la vie est éparse.

¹⁸ In HURET, Enquête, p. 60.

¹⁹ TÚLIO RAMIRES FERRO, "O Alvorecer do Simbolismo em Portugal", in Estrada Larga, I, 102.

²⁰ This point is made at great length by Guy Michaud in his Message Poétique du Symbolisme and is further corroborated by much documentation in his companion-piece, La Doctrine Symboliste. In future references, I will refer to these two works respectively as MICHAUD, Message, and MICHAUD, Doctrine.

²¹ MICHAUD, Doctrine, p. 8.

Aux ordinaires et mille visions (pour elles-mêmes à négliger) où l'Immortelle se dissémine, le logique et méditant poète les lignes saintes ravisse, desquelles il composera la Vision seule digne: le réel et suggestif Symbole d'où, palpitante pour le rêve, en son intégrité nue se lèvera l'Idée prime et dernière, ou Verité. 22

The Symbolists recognized the affinity of their aims for poetry with the theories of speculative philosophy, above all the theories of the German idealist philosophers. In an article published in the review Art Moderne in 1887 Émile Verhaeren contrasted the aims of Symbolism and Naturalism thus: "le symbolisme fera le contraire. Au naturalisme, la philosophie française des Comte et des Littré; à lui, la philosophie allemande des Kant et des Fichte".²³ Poetry, for them, was a means of lifting the veil of Maya, of penetrating phenomenal reality and communing with the Absolute. As Mallarmé puts it, the function of poetry became "l'explication orphique de la Terre, qui est le seul devoir du Poète et le jeu littéraire par excellence".²⁴ It was on the basis of this metaphysical search that the Symbolists cultivated a certain level of obscurity in their works. It was seen as a means of by-passing the restrictive lines of reality in an attempt to communicate with the Absolute.

Little or nothing of this metaphysical Symbolism is to be found in Eugénio de Castro's Horas. Hernâni Cidade is undoubtedly right when he remarks that "é preciso reconhecer que a poesia de Eugénio de Castro ficou a certa

²² RENÉ GHIL, Traité du Verbe (Paris: Chez Giraud, 1886), p. 21.

²³ This article is reproduced in its entirety in ÉMILE VERHAEREN, Impressions (Paris: Mercure de France, 1928), "Troisième Série", pp. 115-116.

²⁴ STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1945), p. 663. The quotation is also to be found in MICHAUD, Doctrines, p. 57, but is given wrongly as having appeared in Les Ecrits pour l'Art in 1887. The article from which it is taken had been one of Verlaine's Hommes d'aujourd'hui in 1886. See: VERLAINE, Oeuvres Complètes, IV, 346.

distância, mesmo quando mais se aproximou, já não digo da poesia de Mallarmé, mas da dos simbolistas mais moderados".²⁵ Eugénio de Castro had not understood the metaphysical symbolism of Mallarmé. But neither, for that matter, had many of the young French poets writing around 1890. As Guy Michaud points out concerning the young poets of 1886, around the time of the first stirrings of the Symbolist movement:

Quant à la poésie de Mallarmé, elle est trop loin d'eux et généralement les dépasse [...] Cinq années seront nécessaires, d'abord pour prendre conscience collectivement de ce qu'on apporte, pour l'intégrer à une vision du monde et réaliser l'unité intérieure, ensuite pour parfaire la révolution poétique et pour obtenir la reconnaissance légitime de la critique officielle.²⁶

Eugénio de Castro's lack of understanding as regards the deeper connotations of Symbolist poetry also characterizes his attempts to imitate their poetic techniques. In their theorizing on Symbolist poetry, the French poets found allegory inferior to symbol. Émile Verhaeren explains the difference as they saw it:

Et tout d'abord aucune confusion entre le Symbole et l'allégorie. Non plus avec le Symbolisme païen, car le Symbolisme actuel, contrairement au Symbolisme grec, qui était la concrétion de l'abstrait, sollicite vers l'abstraction du concret. C'est là, croyons-nous, sa haute et moderne raison d'être.
Jadis, Jupiter, incarné en statue, représentait la domination; Vénus, l'amour; Hercule, la force; Minerve, la sagesse.
Aujourd'hui?
On part de la chose vue, ouïe, sentie, tâchée, goûtée, pour en faire naître l'évocation et la somme par l'idée.²⁷

From this point of view, it is clear that what we find in the majority of the poems of Horas is simple allegory, and not symbol as defined here. Thus, the unicorn is a

²⁵ CIDADE, O Conceito da Poesia, p. 267.

²⁶ MICHAUD, Message, II, 344.

²⁷ VERHAEREN, Impressions, III, 113.

concrete representation of purity, the sun a concrete representation of lust, the scenes of desolation a concrete representation of the poet's life of sin etc., etc. However, one must resist the temptation to judge Eugénio de Castro too harshly on this point. For while the French poets considered allegory inferior to symbol, they did not always practise what they preached, and allegory is by no means absent from their works. Indeed, "Le Passeur d'Eau", a poem by the same Verhaeren who penned the notes on symbol and allegory quoted above, and a poem which Guy Michaud considers as "un des poèmes les plus souvent cités" ²⁸ of Symbolist poetry, is, with its central image of the ferryman trying in vain to reach the woman calling him from the other bank, no less an allegory than many of the poems of Horas.

--oOOoo--

Eugénio de Castro's rather superficial understanding of Symbolism is due no doubt largely to the influence of the man from whom he would seem to have taken the majority of his ideas on the theory of Symbolism -- Jean Moréas. The words of Eugénio de Castro's introduction to Horas, "por onde o SÍMBOLO passeia, arquiépiscopal, arrastando flamante simarra bordada de Sugestões" clearly recall a passage from the famous "manifeste littéraire" -- the first Symbolist manifesto of French literature -- published by Moréas in the Figaro of 18 September 1886: "L'Idée, à son tour, ne doit point se laisser voir privée des somptueuses simarres des analogies extérieures". ²⁹ And the few ideas of the French Symbolist movement which filter through into Horas derive more or less directly from Moréas.

²⁸ MICHAUD, Message, III, 113.

²⁹ Quoted in MICHAUD, Doctrines, p. 25.

The only real example of the terminology of metaphysical Symbolism to appear in Horas is the reference in "A Epifania dos Licornes" to the "Torre do Puro Conceito" (179). This term is taken from Moréas's Cantilènes, where, in a section entitled "Le Pur Concept", the Symbolist search for the Absolute appears in a much attenuated form. In the first poem of this section, the unchanging Absolute is represented as a castle standing timelessly amid the hurly-burly of the spatio-temporal world:

Le Burg immémorial, de ses meurtrières
Sembler darder un œil sur les temps mal-nés. 30

This "Burg" reappears in Eugénio de Castro's poem as the "Torre do Puro Conceito". In both poems, however, the Pure Concept is not envisaged as a penetration of the Idea -- in philosophical terms -- lying behind reality. It represents more of an escape from the sins of the world:

C'est ici le beau Palais de la Huée
Où dansent les Couples [sic] en toquet de grelots. 31

The aspiration in Moréas's poem is not to grasp and express the Absolute, but to achieve the kind of timeless and unchanging existence it represents:

- Tel le Burg, gésir d'austère silence clos;
Fleurir en soi, telle la Fleur insexuée.

Similarly, in "A Epifania dos Licornes" the flight into the "Torre do Conceito Puro" is not a flight into metaphysics. It is a flight from the "Cidade do Mal" (170) to a state of extra-terrestrial peace "Longe do Mundo bárbaro e cruel" (165). The main difference between Eugénio de Castro's poem and that of Moréas is that while the world is still here (ici) for Moréas, for Eugénio de

30 MORÉAS, I, 126.

31 As R.A. JOUANNY points out (p. 396, note 32), the correct reading of this line is "Coulpes" (Sins). This is corroborated by the fact that the word "Coulpes" appears in the Petit Glossaire (p. 26) exemplified by this line from Moréas.

Castro, as a result of his conversion, it will soon be "Lá" (196), it is about to fade out of sight. This theme, too, is integrated into the religious atmosphere of the book.

The influence of Moréas may also account to a large extent for Eugénio de Castro's understanding of symbolism as allegory. It is obvious that in the poem on the "Pur Concept" the "Burg" is simply an allegorical representation of the Absolute; it cannot be understood as a symbol as defined by Verhaeren, and as understood by the Symbolists in general. This is typical of Moréas's symbolist output as a whole. In 1891 Remy de Gourmont would write sarcastically of him: "La théorie symboliste est pour M. Moréas sans mystère. Il sait que symbole veut dire métaphore, et s'en contente".³²

However, at the level of particular images, rather than at the level of the overall structure of its poems, Horas sees the first signs in the work of Eugénio de Castro of the influence of a writer to whom he would become more and more indebted for inspiration within the next few years - Maurice Maeterlinck. Maeterlinck's Serres Chaudes had been published in 1889, shortly before Eugénio de Castro began work on Horas, and their influence on Horas is, if not preponderant, nonetheless unmistakable. It is not limited, as René Poupart suggests,³³ to a vague reminiscence of the poem "Chasses lasses" in "Pelas landes à noite", nor are "Les concordances entre Maeterlinck et Castro [...] occasionelles".³⁴

One of the types of image to appear with greatest frequency in Serres Chaudes is that which Maeterlinck himself, in a letter to the critic Octave Mirbeau, defined as describing "choses qui ne sont pas à leur place".³⁵

³² In HURET, Enquête, p. 139.

³³ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 96.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 97

³⁵ Quoted in: MARCEL POSTIC, Maeterlinck et le Symbolisme (Paris: Éditions A-G. Nizet, 1970), p. 31.

There is no metaphysical symbolism in the Serres Chaudes. Yet Maeterlinck has been termed a symbolist poet in that he conveys "états d'âme" not directly, but indirectly, by exploiting the emotive connotations of these "choses qui ne sont pas à leur place". This kind of image is obviously one which Eugénio de Castro found particularly appealing. It will be one of the most constant characteristics of his writing - both prose and poetry - during the years which immediately follow. In Horas, as in all the cases when Eugénio de Castro takes up the ideas of others, there are cases of more or less straightforward borrowing. Maeterlinck's:

Ils ont l'air de célébrer une fête nuptiale
dans une cave. 36

provides the material for Eugénio de Castro's:

Como noite nupcial em leito de enfermaria,
Como um casamento na capela dum jazigo.
("Pomba da Arca", 26-7)

Other instances of close correspondance are:

"[Ils] jettent à pleines mains les lys verts
dans les flammes!" 37

"Sou o Lis à janela dum palácio em fogo."
("A Epifania dos Licornes", 15)

"un paysage semblable à une enfance d'orphelin." 38
"trágica, augural
Como o baptizado dum órfão."
(ibid., 152-53)

This kind of image is limited to "A Epifania dos Licornes", "A Pomba da Arca" and a few examples in "Um cacto no pólo":

Julguei que [...] havia uma novena ao pé do
Jardim de Aclimação. (5-8)

Indeed, the title of this poem may have been suggested by lines such as the following:

³⁶ MAURICE MAETERLINCK, Serres Chaudes (Bruxelles: Paul Lacomblez, Éditeur, 1895), p. 59.

³⁷ Ibid., p. 58.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 59.

"Et de belles plantes sur un glacier!"

"Et une végétation orientale dans une grotte de glace!" 39

Maeterlinck was not a genuine symbolist poet. As I shall show in chapter three of this thesis, where his poetry is discussed in greater depth, the technique he employs is more properly termed "impressionism" than "symbolism". Nonetheless, it is in Maeterlinckian images of the type mentioned above that Eugénio de Castro comes closest to a genuinely indirect means of expression in Horas.

--ooOoo--

Though its connection with the more profound theories and techniques of Symbolism may be slight, Horas participated wholeheartedly in the proliferation of minor characteristics which fizzed and sparkled like fireworks around the central concerns of Symbolism. Many of the most colourful aspects of Horas derive from this source. Horas employs symbols - the Unicorn, the Lily, the Moon (frequently written with capital letters) -- which had become almost the stock-in-trade of the Symbolist poets. One striking example of the use of the Unicorn as the guardian of virginity can be found in Henri de Régnier's "Motifs de Légende et de Mélancolie". Here, in his own version of the tale of Sleeping Beauty, he tells how all but the unicorn have abandoned the sleeping princess:

Et tandis que des toits, des tours et des tourelles
Les Colombes ont pris l'essor, et qu'infidèles
Les Paons mystérieux ont fui vers la forêt,
Couchée auprès de la Dormeuse, la Licorne
Attend l'heure et là-bas guette si reparait
L'annonciateur vol blanchir l'aurore morne. 40

The moon is one of the central images of Laforgue's poetry. We find the lily in, inter alia, the poetry of Mallarmé:

39 Ibid., p. 44.

40 HENRI DE RÉGNIER, Poèmes (Paris: Mercure de France, 1907), p. 56.

Alors m'éveillerai-je à la ferveur première,
Droit et seul, sous un flot antique de lumière, 41
Lys! et l'un de vous tous pour l'ingénuité.

and that of Maeterlinck:

Végétations de symboles,
Nénufars mornes des plaisirs,
Palmes lentes de mes désirs,
Mousses froides, lianes molles.
Seul, un lys érige d'entre eux,
Pâle et rigidement débile,
Son ascension immobile
Sur les feuillages douloureux.
Et dans les lueurs qu'il épanche
Comme une lune, peu à peu,
Élève vers le cristal bleu, 42
Sa mystique prière blanche.

Again, the torrential flow of precious stones to be found in Horas, particularly in "A Epifania dos Licornes" and "Dona Briolanja", represents one of the most striking exterior aspects of Symbolist poetry. For while jewels had been used by the Decadents for their artificiality-value, they were used by the Symbolists to fill their poems with sparkle and light. The incidence of precious stones in, say, Henri de Régnier's Poèmes Anciens et Romanesques is quite staggering; so much so that in his "Epilogue" the author says:

J'ai dédié mon âme et toutes énergies 43
À savoir la vertu diverse des joyaux.

They are part of a general movement towards colour and light characteristic of French Symbolist poetry. As Guy Michaud points out, "À l'instar de la 'quincaillerie wagnerienne, tout n'est que cliquetis, miroitement, splendeur, éblouissement". 44

The form of certain of the poems of Horas can also be

41 MALLARMÉ, p. 51.
42 MAETERLINCK, pp. 23-24.
43 RÉGNIER, p. 115.
44 MICHAUD, Message, II, 405.

traced back to the influence of the Symbolist poets. In "Dona Briolanja", for example, we may again recognize the influence of Jean Moréas, who shared with the Symbolists as a whole a considerable interest in the legends of the Middle Ages. Guy Michaud sees the matter in the following terms:

Par delà l'individuel, ils aspirent à l'universel, et leur retour au décor fabuleux, aux légendes primitives, aux traditions du folk-lore marque un effort vers des profondeurs plus vastes, un sens plus sûr des réalités cachées. Ce n'est plus un recours au subconscient individuel, mais à l'inconscient collectif, à la mémoire de la race, et aux légendes où il s'exprime. 45

However, not being a truly thorough-going Symbolist, Moréas tends to use these legends for a rather different purpose. In the examples of legends which occur in Cantilènes - e.g. "Tidogolain" and "Mélusine" - we find him, in the words of R.A. Jouanny, "associant une inspiration médiévale à l'expression de préoccupations personnelles". 46 This is the purpose to which legend is put in Eugénio de Castro's "Dona Briolanja". Also frequent in the Cantilènes are examples of the kind of rhyming distich we find in "Dona Briolanja", again in connection with medieval legends: "La femme perfide", "La vieille femme de Berkely" and "La chevauchée de la mort".

The highly unusual form of "A Epifania dos Licornes" can also be traced back to French sources. The form employed in this poem is striking not only from a Portuguese, but also from a French point of view. For while a great deal of ink had been spilled on the subject of "vers libre", and on who exactly had been the first to use it, and though prose-poems were by no means infrequent, no-one had as of yet (to my knowledge) alternated verse and prose in the way we find them deployed in "A Epifania dos Licornes". However, in his

45 Ibid., II, 406.

46 JOUANNY, p. 404.

La littérature de tout à l'heure, published in 1890, Charles Morice had made some interesting suggestions on this point. He looked forward to the emergence of a style where "selon les opportunités indiquées par les émotions, le style descendrait du vers à la prose, remonterait de la prose au vers, avec ou sans la transition du poème en prose".⁴⁷ The similarity between the style suggested here and that employed in "A Epifania dos Licornes" is striking. While the possibility of coincidence cannot be ruled out, we may well be in the presence of a literary suggestion made in France, but followed up in Portugal rather than in its country of origin.

---ooOoo---

Horas is, therefore, as Fialho de Almeida rightly points out, something of a hotch-potch of elements borrowed from France. His principal objections, however, were not directed against its wilful obscurity and its botched Symbolism. They were directed against its would-be religiosity. With reference to "A Epifania dos Licornes" he wrote: "Há razões para se contestar a mesma boa fé deste poema".⁴⁸ And indeed, the religiosity of the entire book is very tenuous. This is obvious throughout. Despite the apparently mystical atmosphere of "A Epifania dos Licornes", it soon becomes clear that the conversion and the new-found asceticism hailed throughout the poem are not motivated by any desire for spiritual union with God. Their purpose is to render the poet fit for union with his Beloved, who is seen as a symbol of purity. "A Epifania dos Licornes" is a love-poem, not a religious poem. It is for union with the Beloved that the poet prays to the Blessed Virgin:

[peço]-Vos, de joelhos, que appresseis

⁴⁷ CHARLES MORICE, La littérature de tout à l'heure (Paris: Perrin et Cie., Libraires-Éditeurs, 1889), p. 381.

⁴⁸ FIALHO, VI, 121.

A Epifania dos Olhos-Reis,
 Dos Olhos-Reis dA que é cheirosa como o nardo,
 DA muito amada Esposa, que ora aguardo,
 DAquela, que hei-de beijar somente com os olhos,
 DAquela, que hei-de tocar somente com a vista.
 (108-114)

It is the Beloved's voice which speaks the Angelus (her voice is again referred to as an Angelus in "Vaso de eleição", 40) inviting the poet to join her on the island of unicorns. The movement of the entire poem is towards union with the Beloved. And even on the level of the poet's relationship with the Beloved, the poem reveals clearly that mystical union is not enough. The mystical union of the two souls is achieved some time before the end of the poem:

No azul epitalâmico, entre palmas, ⁴⁹
 Enlaçam-se em ditongo as DUAS ALMAS,
 Longe do Mundo bárbaro e cruel ... (163-65)

But though this union is explicitly stated by words such as "epitalâmico" and "ditongo", the poem is not complete and the poet's goal has not been achieved. The real climax of the poem is expressed not only in these terms of the soul (191) - used throughout Horas to signify mystical love - but in terms of the heart (194), that is, in a non-religious view of love. It is the poet's making excited preparations to be admitted to the presence of his Beloved.

This subordination of the religious theme to the love theme is repeated throughout the book. The poet may promise chastity in "A Pomba da Arca" - "E o nosso amor será todo honesto e sem beijos!" (42) - and above all in "Epílogo" - "Sejamos castos, duma castidade maga" (2) - but the theme of love predominates. Purity is seen primarily as a pre-requisite for admission to the presence of the Beloved. She never appears in the book, and the

⁴⁹ The palm for Eugénio de Castro is the sign of Christian martyrdom. In the poem "Superbia" of Silva we read of "a apeteçida palma [...] dos mártires cristãos", (11-12).

book itself is a preparation for union with her. Thus in the medieval fantasy of "Dona Briolanja" lover and Beloved are married at the end of the poem. In "Pomba da Arca" reference is made to the house in which they will live together (48). And in "Epílogo" the poet talks of his future life with her:

Nossa vida de reclusos brancos alinde-a
O Lis. (21-22)

It is worth noting that, in terms of their supposedly unconsummated marriage, lines in "Epílogo" such as "Peço a Deus poderoso que não nos dê filhos" (20) are truly ambiguous. If complete chastity is to be observed, there is little need to pray to God not to give them children. Fialho de Almeida is right. It would be impossible to sustain a view of Horas such as that expressed by António da Silva Gonçalves: "no Simbolismo encontrou Eugénio de Castro -- entre outros elementos de formação -- doutrina que lhe despertou, muito embora incompletamente, sentidos religiosos tradicionais, e ainda nela a certeza de que o homem se pode salvar por mediação divina".⁵⁰ The poems of Horas are love-poems, and their apparent religiosity has little to do with real religious feeling. Their religious elements are merely sub-themes of the central love-theme, the union of the poet and the Beloved.

What has been said of religion can also be said of certain philosophical ideas which appear vaguely in Horas. In an open letter to the Conselheiro Chagas published in the Novidades of 7 February 1892, Eugénio de Castro stated, referring no doubt to Horas: "a filosofia encerrada nos meus versos é acentuadamente mística e pessimista". In fact, the pessimism of Horas is extremely vague. Nonetheless its presence points to familiarity with yet another writer whose influence, though relatively slight in Horas,

⁵⁰ ANTÓNIO DA SILVA GONÇALVES, "Eugénio de Castro", in Um bocado da vida ao serviço da imprensa (Edição do autor, 1959), II, 129.

will prove to be among the most important in Eugénio de Castro's early career - Artur Schopenhauer.

Eugénio de Castro had no doubt made the acquaintance of Schopenhauer's ideas through his contacts with the French literature of the time. The influence exercised by Schopenhauer on French writers in the 1880's was considerable. The early poems of Laforgue are filled with allusions to his philosophy; des Esseintes had speculated on his ideas in À Rebours; Jean Moréas had written a collection of "Notes sur Schopenhauer" in La Revue Indépendante of March 1885, and the last poem of his Syrtes contains obvious references to Schopenhauer's philosophy:

Sur l'arbre et la bête de somme,
Sur le fauve altier et sur l'homme
Inutilement révolté
Monstre de sang et de pleurs ivre,
DÉSIR formidable DE VIVRE,
Tu fais peser ta volonté. 51

For the purposes of my study of Horas, it is not necessary to look into the philosophy of Schopenhauer in great detail. For the moment, it is sufficient to point out that for Schopenhauer, Man is the tragic victim of universal Illusion, of the Will to Live which fires him constantly with desires which cannot be fulfilled, thus causing unending suffering and pain. The only permanent means of escape from the sufferings of life is the renunciation of the Will to Live. The wise man must deny all desires - that is, he must undertake a very thorough-going asceticism - and he must, above all, undertake the complete denial of the sexual urge, seen as the most powerful manifestation of the Will to Live:

Sein Leib, gesund und stark, spricht durch
Genitalien den Geschlechtstrieb aus; aber er
verneint den Willen und straft den Leib Lüge: er
will **keine** Geschlechtsbefriedigung, unter keiner
Bedingung. Freiwillige, vollkommene Keuschheit ist
der erste Schritt in der Askese oder der Verneinung

51 MOREAS, I, 54.

des Willens zum Leben. 52

[His body, healthy and strong, expresses the sexual urge through its sexual organs; but he denies the Will, and gives the body the lie; he rejects all sexual satisfaction, under any circumstances. Voluntary, complete chastity is the first step in the ascesis or denial of the Will to Live.]

Schopenhauer is mentioned once in Horas, towards the end of "Um cacto no pólo". Here, following his relapsing once more into sin, the poet meditates:

E no dia seguinte, em vez dos sacros livros que de ordinário me deleitam, li Schopenhauer, e achei Artur Schopenhauer setecentas vezes superior a todos os Doutores da Igreja. (25-28)

Clearly, no specific influence of Schopenhauer can be inferred from this contrasting of his ideas with the teachings of the Church. Rather than the influence of Schopenhauer, this poem probably reflects more the influence of À Rebours, where we find very much the same opinion expressed:

Schopenhauer était plus exact; sa doctrine et celle de l'église partaient d'un point de vue commun [...] mais il ne vous prônait aucune panacée, ne vous berçait, pour remédier à d'inévitables maux, par aucun leurre. 53

or again:

Élançée de la même piste que l'Imitation, cette théorie aboutissait, elle aussi, mais sans s'égarer parmi de mystérieux dédales et d'invraisemblables routes, au même endroit, à la résignation, au laisser-faire. 54

This is further suggested by the fact that one of the paragraphs of "Um cacto no pólo":

E o clown entrou, folião, na Igreja; e fez jogos malabares com os cibórios e os turíbulos (12-13)

52 ARTUR SCHOPENHAUER, Sämtliche Werke (Leipzig: F.A. Brockhaus, 1922) II, 449.

53 HUYSMANS, À Rebours, p. 110.

54 Ibid., p. 112.

bears a striking resemblance to a passage in À Rebours in which Huysmans describes the irreligious tone of certain of the works of Barbey d'Aurévilly. In the words of Huysmans, Barbey "cassait les vitres de la chapelle, jonglait avec les saintes ciboires, exécutait des danses de caractère autour du tabernacle".⁵⁵

But other more definite reminiscences of Schopenhauer occur in Horas. Thus, the reference to Illusion in "A Epifania dos Licornes":

Consoladora dos que tombam do andaime
Da Ilusão (11-12)

the idea of liberation from the passions, in the same poem:

Fazei clangorar o olifante das Paixões ruínas. Serei surdo. É vinda a hora, muito esperada, do Livramento. (185-88)

and above all the pessimistic back-drop of "Epílogo":

Porém tu sabes, Casa de Ouro! o que é a vida.
Sejamos castos, não perpetuemos a dor. (27-8)

For Schopenhauer, the importance of chastity is that love is seen primarily as a means of ensuring the constant creation of new victims for the tragedy of life:

Der Endzweck aller Liebeshandel [...] ist wirklich wichtiger als alle anderen Zwecke im Menschenleben [...] Das, nämlich, was dadurch entschieden ist, ist nichts Geringeres als die Zusammensetzung der nächsten Generation. 56

[The ultimate aim of all affairs of love [...] is truly more important than all other aims in human life [...] For what is decided in love is nothing less than the creation of the next generation.]

This is a Schopenhauerian idea which we also find in the Syrtes of Moréas, where the author says of the Will to Live:

Et nous savons bien que tu caches
Sous les velours et les panaches,
Toute la hideur du Péché.

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 209.

⁵⁶ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 611.

Oh! qu'il vienne un autre Messie
 Secouer l'antique inertie,
 Qu'il vienne en ses rédempctions
Détruire l'œuvre de la Femme
 Et te faucher, désir infame
 Des neuves générations.

57

For Schopenhauer, those who, by their love, ensure the continuation of Mankind, become not its saviours but its betrayers:

Weil diese Liebenden die Verräeter sind, welche
 danach heimlich trachten, die ganze Not und
 Plackerei zu perpetuieren.

58

[Because these lovers are the traitors, secretly
 striving to perpetuate all the misery and toil.]

Or, as Théodule Ribot puts it in a book which Jean Moréas had certainly read,⁵⁹ and which Eugénio de Castro may well have known: "L'amour est un grand coupable, puisqu'en perpétuant la vie, il perpétue la douleur". The similarity between the idea expressed here and that voiced in "Epílogo" is obvious.

However, there is no more question of Horas being an expression, even "sensu allegoricu", of Schopenhauer's philosophy than there is of its being an expression of genuine religious feeling. The Schopenhauerian elements present - the cult of chastity, the freedom from the passions, the pessimistic view of life - are all part of a love-theme where purity is seen as essential for union with the Beloved. Despite Eugénio de Castro's remarks concerning the pessimistic attitude of his poetry, the message of Horas is ostensibly an optimistic one. And the joy the poet feels is not due to his practice of chastity and asceticism as a denial of the Will to Live. It is constantly expressed as emanating from the Beloved:

⁵⁷ MORÉAS, I, 56-7.

⁵⁸ SCHOPENHAUER, III, 643.

⁵⁹ See: JOUANNY, p. 162.

⁶⁰ THÉODULE RIBOT, La Philosophie de Schopenhauer
 (Paris: G. Baillière, 1874), p. 138.

Minhas mãos longas, familiares
 Das simbólicas liturgias,
 Exorcismam os maus Pesares
 E as violáceas Melancolias.
 ("A Epifania dos Licornes", 122-25)

E minhas mágoas, purifique-as
 O teu olhar.

Esta minha melancolia,
 Ó Senhora núbil! dilui-a.
 ("Vaso de Eleição", 22-23, 25-26)

Mas TU vieste sororal e amena.
 ("Balada", 80)

In any case, there is no room for joy in Schopenhauer's philosophy, nor is there any place for woman in his asceticism. For Schopenhauer, the ascetic who renounces the Will to Live and retires to a coenobitic life of chastity achieves a state of indifference, not one of joy:

Der Mensch gelangt zum Zustande der freiwilligen
 Entsagung, der Resignation, der wahren Gelassenheit
 und gänzlichen Willenslosigkeit. 61

[The man attains the state of voluntary renunciation.
 of resignation, of true calmness and complete Will-
 lessness.]

---ooOoo---

Fialho de Almeida saw the sham mysticism of Horas as having been suggested by the example of Verlaine. He described the contents of the book as:

catolicismo místico que não é de modo nenhum factor
 d'escola adstrito ao decadismo, mas um caso particular
 de Verlaine que os poetas de cá trasladaram para a
 sua cópia, numa garrotada deplorável d'irrespeito. 62

Something of the same opinion was expressed four years later by Vittorio Pica, who asked concerning Horas:

trattasi piuttosto di un cerebrale esercizio di
 dilettantismo estetico, di un entusiasmo derivante
 non dal cuore, ma direttamente dal cervello,
 suggestionato da qualche originale e potente opera
 d'arte, que potrebbe anche essere Sagesse di Paul

61 SCHOPENHAUER, II, 448.

62 FIALHO, VI, 123.

Verlaine? 63

It seems certain that Eugénio de Castro would have been acquainted with Sagesse. In 1889, the Coimbran literary magazine "Boémia" had described Sagesse as a "livro piedoso, entre todos, que Jules Lemaître tem sempre na sua estante, ao lado da 'Imitação de Cristo'". 64 The book was no doubt known to the young Coimbran poets of the time, of whom Eugénio de Castro was a leading light.

Sagesse, like Horas, tells of a conversion from a past life of sin. Its introduction reads:

L'auteur de ce livre n'a pas toujours pensé comme aujourd'hui. Il a longtemps erré dans la corruption contemporaine, y prenant sa part de faute et d'ignorance. Des chagrins très mérités l'ont depuis averti, et Dieu lui a fait la grâce de comprendre 65 l'avertissement.

And from the point of view of the possible influence of Sagesse on Eugénio de Castro it is interesting to notice the same word printed in block capitals for emphasis in the two books: Verlaine's

Je suis la PRIÈRE, et mon gage
C'est ton vice en déroute au loin; 66

and Eugénio de Castro's

Vem! subamos prestes, depressa,
À Torre de jaspe da Graça,
Onde mora, - branca Professora, -
A PRECE, toda em alva cassa.
("Epifania dos Licornes", 138-141)

Nonetheless, to go back to the quotation from "Boémia" given earlier: though one can find very occasional references to the Imitatio Christi in the writings of

63 PICA, p. xiv.

64 Quoted in: MARIA DE LOURDES BELCHIOR, "Verlaine e o Simbolismo em Portugal", in Brotéria, Vol. 90 (1970), p. 309.

65 VERLAINE, Oeuvres Complètes, I, 195.

66 Ibid., I, 202.

Eugénio de Castro,⁶⁷ and sporadic use of formulae from the Imitatio in his poetry, nowhere is mention made of Sagesse. And if there is any influence of Verlaine present in Horas, then it is confined entirely to the theme of conversion. The theme of chastity, central in Horas, appears only briefly in Sagesse, as a sub-theme of the conversion:

L'ennemi se déguise en la Chair
Et me dit: "Bah, retrousse une jupe!" 68
Moi j'écarte le conseil amer.

Nor there is there in Sagesse anything like the profusion of religious imagery we find in Horas.

An even more improbable suggestion concerning the influences at work in Horas is made by Federico Olivero. He is of the opinion that "in Horas è evidente l'influsso delle Illuminations del Rimbaud".⁶⁹ Since he offers no evidence for this claim, I am not aware of the supposed points of contact on which, presumably, it is based. But I have been unable to find anything in Horas which would suggest any influence of any kind from the poetry of Rimbaud. Indeed, we need look to neither Verlaine or Rimbaud for any of the themes of Horas. As a result of a certain turning away from physical reality by the Symbolist poets, a spiritual view of love had grown up among them in general. As Ernest Raynaud points out, writing of "L'expression de l'amour chez les poètes symbolistes", "La chair ne compte plus. Ce n'est pas une femme, c'est un ange qui veille à ses côtés. Son étreinte est spirituelle."⁷⁰ And there is a much more probable

⁶⁷ As in the "Carta ao Sr. Conselheiro Chagas" in the Jornal do Comércio of 7 February 1892.

⁶⁸ VERLAINE, I, 235.

⁶⁹ FEDERICO OLIVERO, "Sull'opera poetica di Eugénio de Castro", in Università di Torino, Pubblicazioni della Facoltà di Lettere e Filosofia, Vol. 2, 1950, p. 3.

⁷⁰ ERNEST RAYNAUD, La Mêlée Symboliste (Paris: La Renaissance du Livre, 1918), II, 65.

source for the profusion of religious imagery we find in Horas. In 1889 Georges Vanor, appreciating the poetic value of religious symbolism, pointed out the vast wealth of imagery religion had to offer poetry:

Mais aujourd'hui c'est surtout la religion catholique qui offre une magnifique et poétique profusion de symboles [...] Le symbolisme religieux s'impose par ses faits; et la pure magnificence de ses manifestations assure un trésor infini et varié d'inspirations poétiques. 71

This is the key to the religious imagery of Horas. Vittorio Pica sets the matter in its true perspective when he describes Horas as a book in which "il Simbolo cattolico vi regna sovrano". 72 Horas was to be the book in which "o SÍMBOLO passeia", and the religious terminology employed is as much part of the allegorical framework of the book as the other kinds of allegorical scenes described earlier. The central concern of Horas is not so much the authenticity of the religious conversion described, as the love-theme expressed in terms of this conversion. To talk, as Fialho de Almeida does, of the presence or absence of "unção", 73 is to misjudge the point of the book.

As always in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro, the basic situation of Horas is (as we shall see in chapter three) taken from his actual experience. At the time of writing Horas, Eugénio de Castro felt the need to give assurances of his change from a past life of immorality to a new life of purity. And, under the influence of the various sources mentioned in this chapter, he expresses this change in terms of a religious conversion, and in terms of Schopenhauer's asceticism. But the main concern of the book remains, as was the case with Oaristos, his

71 GEORGES VANOR, L'Art Symboliste (Paris: Chez le Bibliopole Vanier, 1889), p. 39.

72 PICA, p. xiii.

73 FIALHO, VI, 122.

relationship with the Beloved, to which all other themes are subordinated. And again, despite the lip-service paid to Symbolism throughout Horas, the expression of this relationship depends as heavily on Romantic patterns of expression as it had done in Oaristos. Horas describes a quest for ideal love as much as Oaristos did, so much so that the Beloved never actually appears, but remains as an ideal throughout. She is consistently presented as a kind of Romantic "mulher anjo", just as, in Oaristos, she was largely seen as that other pole of Romantic womanhood, the "mulher demônio". In connection with this quest for ideal love, we might note that the joy felt by the poet in "A Pomba da Arca":

E esta alma que era, neste mundo sem abrigo,
 Como noite nupcial em leito de enfermaria,
 Como um casamento na capela dum jazigo,
 Esta alma viu surgir por fim a sua Gêmea, a sua Eleita,
 Sob um pátio de luz, a amena Flor perfeita.
 (25-29)

is little different from that experienced by the poet of Oaristos:

Meus dias eram maus, longuíssimos, tristonhos,
 A minha mocidade era uma ruinaría ...
 Mas ao vê-la surgir, triunfalmente fria,
 Grácil como uma flor, triste como um gemido,
 Meu peito recobrou o seu vigor perdido,
 Todo eu era contente e alegre como um rei.
 (I, 50-55)

The Romanticism of Horas extends even to the dramatic grief felt by the "eu" of "A Epifania dos Licornes" for the sins of his past life: "Lembrando isto todo o coração me dói!" (86). This kind of Romantic effusion had already been satirized by Eça de Queiroz in Os Maias in 1888. Concerning José de Alencar, his caricature of the Romantic poet, Eça wrote: "Já em 1836 o Alencar publicava coisas delirantes, e chamava pela morte, no remorso de tantas virgens que seduzira ... " ⁷⁴

⁷⁴ EÇA DE QUEIROZ, Os Maias, pp. 649-50.

Beneath the pyrotechnics of its religious symbolism, Horas can be seen as a highly ornate example of "romanticismo de exaltación", just as Oaristos was a highly ornate example of "romanticismo de lamentación". Ángel Valbuena Prat sees "romanticismo de exaltación" as "himnos de individualismo anárquico, de ímpetu arrollador, salvajes cantares de triunfo".⁷⁵ The religious framework of Horas rules out anything which might be termed "salvaje" in the literal sense, but the entire book is a sweeping assertion of personal greatness, of triumph over lesser mortals. This superiority is seen in terms of the style of the book, as expressed in the introduction:

Tal a obra que o Poeta concebeu longe dos bárbaros,
cujos inscientes apupos, - al não é de esperar, -
não lograrão desviá-lo do seu nobre e ativo
desdém de nefelibata.

It is also seen in terms of its themes, as in "A Epifania dos Licornes": "Não tenteis compreender-me: não me compreendereis" (183-185), and in "Epílogo":

A pureza convém às almas como as nossas,
As mucosas só tentam as almas vulgares. (5-6)

In both Oaristos and Horas Eugénio de Castro looks to innovations of style and theme in an attempt to present himself as a revolutionary artist and a superior being. But this renovation remains at the level of detail and decoration. Eugénio de Castro was neither a genuine Decadent aesthete, nor a Schopenhauerian ascetic. Lacking the originality of vision necessary to create a truly new form of poetic expression, he falls back on those poetic conventions which, despite the efforts of the "Geração de setenta", were still visible in much of the poetry of the time, that is, the conventions of Romanticism. In both Oaristos and Horas he continues to express his view of love and his view of hero and heroine in terms of essentially Romantic categories.

⁷⁵ VALBUENA PRAT, Historia, III, 174.

Nonetheless, it is difficult not to feel a certain admiration for Horas. It is written with an undeniable brio and verve, and a youthful and at times playful irreverence which led Fialho de Almeida to say: "Não se está vendo que nesta mixofarda [...] tudo é feito de cor. para fazer o incauto dar cavaco?" ⁷⁶ If it failed to introduce truly profound innovations into Portuguese literature, it was the first book in Portugal to speak of "o Símbolo", however imperfectly Eugénio de Castro understood this poetic technique. It was also one of the first books to experiment with "vers libre" and the poem in prose. As regards its influence on later Portuguese literature, there is some justification for agreeing with Carlos de Queiroz, who writes of Eugénio de Castro:

E é oportuno lamentar-se que não tenham sido para com o autor dos Oaristos tão justas e gratas como deviam, as gerações literárias do Orfeu, do Portugal Futurista e do Centauro, da Athena e da Presença. ⁷⁷

⁷⁶ FIALHO, VI, 122.

⁷⁷ CARLOS DE QUEIROZ, "Eugénio de Castro", in Perspectiva da Literatura Portuguesa do Século XX (Lisbon: Edições Atica, 1946), II, 494.

Part Two

From Grief to Pessimism

Chapter Three

Personal Tragedy

a). Illusion and Disillusion.

A tiny notice in the Novidades of 10 March 1893 announced that "O nosso colega Eugénio de Castro conta publicar brevemente um novo livro de versos". Whatever the reasons, the promised publication did not appear in 1893, and indeed nothing from Eugénio de Castro would appear until the publication of Silva towards the beginning of May of 1894, slightly more than a year later. Thus a silence of three years followed Horas in 1891 with no new offering (at least in book form) from Eugénio de Castro to the Portuguese reading public. But these were not years of idleness, or in any way lacking in incident. As regards literary output, they were years dedicated to journalism; and a study of Eugénio de Castro's activities as a journalist between 1891 and 1894 will show that this period was, from the points of view of both literary and personal experience, the most important period of his early career. Consideration of his literary experience I shall leave aside for the moment, and turn my attention to a personal event in Eugénio de Castro's life which was to dominate the tone and theme of his work for years to come.

So far, I have carried through my study of Oaristos and Horas without examining in detail the relationship between the Beloved in each case and the author's real life. Yet nothing could be truer than Hernâni Cidade's statement concerning Eugénio de Castro and "a sua vida amorosa, a que anda tão intimamente presa boa parte da obra que nos legou".¹ As already indicated, the Beloved is indeed modelled on a real person. Hernâni Cidade, through a study of the poems found in her "álbum" - many of which reappear in Silva - has shown beyond all doubt that this was Helena Bordalo Pinheiro. Helena came from an illustrious family of artists, including Columbano Bordalo Pinheiro - who would paint Eugénio de Castro's

¹ HERNÂNI CIDADE, "Eugénio de Castro e o Diamante Negro", in O Instituto, Vol. 109 (1947), p. 61

portrait - Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro, painter, sculptor and ceramist, and Maria Augusta Bordalo Pinheiro, the mother of Helena, who attempted to revive the lace-making industry in Peniche. All of these were the subject of newspaper articles by Eugénio de Castro during 1892 and 1893.²

Hernâni Cidade states that, in his relationship with Helena Bordalo Pinheiro, Eugénio de Castro had undergone a "longa fase de suspirante".³ In support of this, he quotes a poem of unrequited love, dated 1890, found in the album of the girl who would later be the poet's fiancée:

Bendita sejas tu que me desprezas
Com teus desdêns soberbos de Rainha,
Ó melindrosa e pálida andorinha,
Fonte das minhas íntimas tristezas.

Vim tarde. E um outro mais feliz do que eu,
Um outro cuja sorte eu tanto invejo,
No teu florido coração colheu
O teu amor - o meu maior desejo.

Vim muito tarde, no entretanto, quero,
Quero que saibas que há no mundo alguém
Que tem por ti um grande amor sincero,
Que te ama como adoras tua mãe.

E se um dia esse amor que hoje te alegra,
Ó minha pomba, se esse amor morrer,
Os meus braços, franzina criatura,
Abrir-se-ão para te receber.

4

However, though Hernâni Cidade's ^{assertion} is undoubtedly true, it would seem that he was not familiar with Eugénio de Castro's journalistic output of 1892. As a result he misjudges the length of the relationship: it began considerably

² An article on Columbano appeared in the Novidades of 24 January 1893, entitled "Columbano". Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro was the subject of a whole series of articles: Jornal do Comércio, 29 May 1892, "Entre os Bárbaros"; Novidades, 5 August 1892, "Rafael Bordalo, o ceramista"; ibid., 10-12 August 1892, "Uma obra de arte"; ibid., 17 January 1893, "Rafael Bordalo Pinheiro". Maria Augusta was the subject of an article in the Novidades of 26 November 1892, entitled "Rendas Portuguesas".

³ CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", p. 62.

⁴ Ibid., p. 64.

earlier, and came to an end considerably sooner than he suggests.

The second article Eugénio de Castro was to submit to the Jornal do Comércio (10 January 1892) was entitled "Notas e Sensações (fragmentos do meu jornal)".⁵ It consists of a series of extracts from a diary, written in Arcachon, Biarritz, Pessac, Paris, Coimbra, Blanquefort, these entries spanning 1889 and 1890, and Granada, Málaga and Coimbra in 1891. The place-names for 1889-1890 thus provide a list running parallel to those in which the various poems of Oaristos were written. And there is, indeed, a basis of fact for the story-line of Oaristos, even if this is the object of the kind of stylization described in connection with those poems. The poet's rendez-vous with the Beloved in Paris, described in poem VII, had its counterpart in reality. They were both in Paris in the August of 1889: she to accompany Rafael, exhibiting sculptures in the World Exhibition of that year; he as part of a grand tour of France. In "Notas e Sensações" we find the following entry, where Eugénio de Castro uses for Helena the name which reappears in a work I shall study shortly - Safira:

Paris, 1889 - Sob o toldo do Café da Paz, no borbórinho da noite, lembramos, eu e Safira, a nossa vida de há um ano. Projectos estrangulados, dias de amor ao sol, a neve dos seus desdêns, a minha tenacidade, a minha fervorosa persistência ... Safira conserva o mesmo doentio encanto de outras eras ... Enquanto memoramos os nossos amores crucificados, os nossos olhares evitam-se, cautelosamente, vergonhosos e arrependidos, - ela de

⁵ The article is signed "Cata-Sol", pseudonym and motif of Eugénio de Castro, who prized his descent from the "morgados de Cata-Sol" (CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", p. 62). Manuel Lopes de Almeida, inventorying the papers of Eugénio de Castro for the special number of Biblos dedicated to him in 1946, found among them the first article of this series, "Sinfonia" (3 January 1892), "publicado com o pseudónimo de 'Cata-Sol'" (Biblos, Vol. 22, 1946, p. 262), thus proving the authorship of the entire series.

não ter cedido, - eu de me ter cansado.

"Longa fase de suspirante" would, then, seem to be indeed the case. But the extract quoted would place the beginning of their relationship not in 1890, but as far back as 1888, with, at the time of writing, little sign of success. But this "longa fase" would also seem to have been chequered. The apparent impasse of 1889 is still in evidence in the poems of Oaristos written at the beginning of 1890. It was further complicated by the feelings of jealousy visible in the poem from the album already quoted, and in poem VIII of Oaristos:

Diademada com botões de laranjeira
Vejo-te en sonhos, virginal pelo braço doutro. (20-1)

Later in 1890, however, Eugénio de Castro would seem to have achieved some measure of success: this was the year in which the optimistic poems of Horas were written.

But fortunes were to change again in this mercurial relationship. Little of Eugénio de Castro's poetic output can be situated with any certainty in 1891. A few poems can, however, be dated with accuracy in that year. They are the middle section of "Semper Eadem" (21-82) - first published in the Jornal do Comércio of 29 May 1892, dated 1891 - "Casas Abandonadas" - first published in the Jornal do Comércio of 15 May 1892, dated 1891 - and the unedited "Auto-da-fé" and "Cloches dans la nuit", published in Les Écrits pour l'art in August 1891, dated 1891 (see page 25, note 6). Each of these poems tells of the poet's sorrow at having been rejected:

Sossega, alma! e não lembres com suspiros vãos
A fereza da pessoa surpreendente
Cujas divinas mãos
Te crucificaram barbaramente.
("Semper Eadem", 53-56)

Ora apetece novos moradores
Em cujos sorridentes
E discretos amores
Possa esquecer os que se foram indiferentes.
("Casas Abandonadas", 33-36)

Nos missives, nous les brulâmes pour nous chauffer
sous les jasmins,

O cet auto-da-fé en la nuit vaste et vague!
 O l'incendie de nos espoirs incarnadins! ...
 Nous sepultâmes les cendres dans l'étui de ma bague.
 ("Auto-da-fé", 17-20)

Elles redisent la nuit jaune et fatidique,
 Des suprêmes adieux sous un ciel menaçant.
 ("Cloches dans la nuit", 29-30)

But this too was to change. For after three or perhaps four years of alternating fortunes, Eugénio de Castro at last achieved something like the happiness anticipated in Horas. This too has been shown by Hernâni Cidade, who, among the books of Helena Bordalo Pinheiro, found a copy of Oaristos dedicated:

Aquela cujas mãos me coroaram um dia de espinhos
 mas que, volvidos anos, me coroou de rosas:
 à inspiradora deste livro;
 à minha noiva;
 a Helena;
 ofereço, humildemente, estes versos.
 Eugénio de Castro.
 Lisboa, 11/ix/91. 6

As the term "noiva" shows, the two had become engaged. A copy of Horas was also found, dedicated to her on the same date, as well as copies of the poem "Mãos", dated 24-ix-1891, the cantiga "Embora, senhora ... ", and "As laranjeiras são cobertas de flores", the original title of the poem which was to appear in Silva, with minor variants, as "Engrinalda-me com teus braços".

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But Eugénio de Castro's joy was short-lived, and he was soon to undergo the pains of rejection -- in this case final -- once more. Hernâni Cidade suggests that the relationship lasted until 1893, in that that is the date of the last poem from Eugénio de Castro to be found in Helena's album. The poem is entitled "Adoração", and it is dated 11-x-93:

⁶ CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", pp. 64-65.

Meu verde limãozinho,
 Ó mais cortante que a acerada foice,
 Sendo tão amarga, como tu és doce!

Altar mais claro do que o sete-estrela,
 Onde, como círios, ardem minhas preces,
 Fria como as pedras, fria como o gelo,
 Sendo tão de gelo, como tu me aqueces!

Urna estilando espirituais perfumes,
 Sol dos meus passos!
 Quando há tal doçura nos teus azedumes,
 Que doçura devem ter os teus abraços!

Fecha, que os não mereço, os teus lábios vermelhos,
 Mas passa, passa na ensombrada alfombra,
 Para que eu beije, doido, de joelhos,
 O chão onde passar a tua sombra.

E pois que eu não mereço os divinos e amenos
 Filtros das tuas labiais cerejas,
 Pisa-me ao menos!
 Que, se me pisas, cuido que me beijas ...

7

However, it is obvious that this poem is a rather awkward reprimand of Helena's disdain rather than a celebration of her affection. The truth of the matter is that hardly had Eugénio de Castro achieved the fruits of his "longa fase de suspirante" when his emotional world collapsed around him.

Contemporary evidence makes it clear that the chastity extolled by Eugénio de Castro in Horas had not always been the case,⁸ and that the references to the

⁷ Ibid., p. 76.

⁸ We have the testimony of his life-long friend Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho that, in 1889, during his travels in France, Eugénio de Castro had been living with a "caixeira" in Bordeaux ("Eugénio de Castro visto por um filistino"; in O Instituto, 1947, p. 34 ff). The disparity between word and deed was also noted by the poet António Feijó. Writing from his diplomatic post in Sweden to thank Eugénio de Castro for the copy of Horas he had sent him, he pointed out: "Ora o meu querido Eugénio de Castro há-de permitir-me que eu lhe diga com toda a franqueza que nem o seu catolicismo é sincero, nem a sua castidade perfeita, nem o seu monarquismo legítimo". (Quoted in: Andréa Crabbé Rocha, A Epistolografia em Portugal, Coimbra, Livraria Almedina, 1965, p. 374.)

vagaries of a past life in "A Epifania dos Licornes" were not without foundation. The publication of Horas was accompanied by a great show of religiosity on his part. Alberto de Oliveira recalls the scene:

Eugénio de Castro parecia um cardeal laico. Toda Coimbra pôde vê-lo, envolto na opa de uma confradia, segurando uma das varas do pátio, creio que na procissão da Rainha Santa. 9

But this seems to have been little more than show. The poem "Um cacto no pólo", for example, obviously refers to some kind of amorous adventure. Hernâni Cidade explains the poet's actions thus: "Ele tinha nas veias sangue ardente de meridional, acirrado por estesia que acrescentava aos excitantes que a Vida lhe oferecia os que a imaginação paganíssima lhe criava".¹⁰ Whatever the case, it was these amorous adventures which were to bring about the breaking of his engagement with Helena Bordalo Pinheiro. Lisbon was then (and still is now) a pocket-size capital,¹¹ and news of the poet's activities inevitably came to the ears of his fiancée. It seems probable that the contrition and the assertions of chastity made in Horas were an attempt to convince Helena in particular of a sincere change of heart. If so, they were of no avail. Helena, moved by the "temor da intranquilidade certíssima",¹² broke with Eugénio de Castro, not in 1893, but some time towards the end of February or the beginning of March of 1892, only three months after the long sought-after engagement.

⁹ ALBERTO DE OLIVEIRA, Pombos Correios (Coimbra: Francisco França Amado Editor, 1913), pp. 257-8.

¹⁰ CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", p. 67.

¹¹ Lisbon had some 253, 000 inhabitants in the 1870's. See ENCYCLOPAEDIA BRITANICA, 9th. ed., 1882, XIV, 692. In Os Maias (1888), Eça gives us some indication of the restricted area of the city. He bases the probability of his plot partly on the fact that Lisbon is a "cidade provinciana e pelintra", and points out the "pequenez da Baixa e do Aterro, onde todos se acotovelam" (p. 622).

¹² CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", p. 67.

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The most immediate effects of this broken engagement on Eugénio de Castro are to be seen in a study of his journalistic writings in the early part of 1892.¹³ Easily the most important in this respect is an "ensaio" entitled Safira, published over several numbers of the Jornal do Comércio in March 1892.¹⁴ This rather curious work is preceded by an "Advertência" whose terminology is almost exclusively literary, though it is not simply a literary experiment which is at stake. This preface contains some of Eugénio de Castro's most explicit statements on his view of the function of literature:

Dizer cousas raras, cousas de sonho, - a música dos sentimentos, a cor dos apetites, o perfume dos espíritos, - dizer cousas raras, cousas de sonho, por meio de fórmulas inéditas, virgens, imprevistas: - tal a suprema ambição dos que fazem do verso e da prosa um supremo culto.

A ideia buscada nos cantos mais inacessíveis da alma; a forma floreada de esmaltes, de filigranas, de gemas, como um peitoral bizantino.

Cada verso como um broche de diamantes, sob um tufo de rendas; cada retalho de prosa como um fruto proibido num prato de vidro veneziano, oiro e verde.

E, no verso e na prosa, a ideia brilhando realçada pelas joalherias verbais.

It emphasizes the synaesthesia of the Symbolists, the need, as proclaimed by Baudelaire and his followers, to descend to the most unexplored regions of the soul, whose secrets, hitherto unknown, can be communicated only by forms of expression as rare as what they are trying to convey. This is an ambitious, if at times nebulous programme (what is

¹³ It is curious to note that all the articles by Eugénio de Castro concerning the Bordalo Pinheiro family appear after the broken engagement. They seem to represent an attempt on his part to convince the family that, though he has fallen from grace, he is not the kind of person to harbour a grudge. Like Safira, they are probably intended to suggest his innocence in the matter.

¹⁴ In view of the importance of this work, I have reproduced it in its entirety in Appendix A.

meant by "a ideia"?), but Eugénio de Castro no doubt believed that his poetry achieved these lofty aims.

The "Advertência" goes on to underline the contribution its author has made to Portuguese literature:

quem estas linhas escreve vangloria-se de, em alguns meses, ter dotado a poética do seu país com inovações que, a despeito do modo como foram recebidas, já hoje começam a ser usadas por aqueles que delas pior disseram.

and states his intention to revolutionize Portuguese prose as he had (he claims) revolutionized its poetry:

E no seu apaixonado desejo de vir a ser alguém, pensa remodelar a prosa, como já remodelou o verso, sonhando uma prosa onde a música das palavras se case com a tendência musical das ideias, uma prosa requintada e singular como certas estufas de Nice onde se violenta a Natureza, onde os lilazes florescem em pleno dezembro.

It finishes with a thought which summarizes Eugénio de Castro's ideas on literary expression, and whose deeper connotations I shall discuss later:

Porque só é bom o que não é vulgar.

Despite these spectacular claims, however, the literary value of Safira is slight. It is no surprise to discover that it was never published, and that it did not change the course of Portuguese prose as it had hoped. Its "fórmulas inéditas, virgens, imprevistas" are a series of images more striking for their shock-tactics than for their power to probe the "recantos mais inacessíveis da alma" -- e.g. "Na boca dos profanos, o nome da minha Amada seria como uma Hóstia na boca dum elefante". Its "prosa requintada e singular" is a mixture of Biblical tone and phrasing -- "Morena é minha Amada, morena mas fermosa, como a Esposa do Cântico dos Cânticos" -- and facile medievalisms, culminating in a fairly lengthy "rimance", and resulting more often than not in mere verbosity. Finally, the "prosa onde a música das palavras se case com a tendência musical das ideias" can be reduced largely to the use of repetition to the point of monotony -- monotony is one of the most

striking characteristics of Safira - and the overuse of forms of prayer similar to litany.

Ultimately, however, the value of Safira as a new departure in prose is its least important aspect. We should not be put off by the literary terminology of its preface. It was not written primarily as an experiment in greater depths of expression. The entire work is structured as a piece of propaganda surrounding the question of the broken engagement. It is a thinly-disguised recreation of this event from the poet's point of view. Its primary intention is to convince the reader of the innocence of the "eu", and to demonstrate the unreasonableness of Safira's conduct. Though the facts of the case, such as they are known, suggest that Eugénio de Castro was not completely innocent in the matter, the "raison d'être" of this piece of prose is to convince the reader (and, we might suspect, one reader in particular - Helena Bordalo Pinheiro) of his innocence and purity. This, and not the probing of the soul is the reason behind the "fórmulas inéditas" etc. such as they are - witness the following grotesque indication:

Há uma flor, arum dracunculus, flor maravilhosa para a vista, feita dos mais sedosos tecidos, corada das mais finas cores, mas repugnante para o olfacto, porque o seu cheiro é como o cheiro dos cadáveres.

As outras mulheres são para mim como essa flor: se a pelúcia dos seus olhos, o veludo dos seus cabelos e a seda das suas carnes me tentam e delas me aproximo, logo fujo espavorido, porque sinto o cheiro cadavérico de suas almas.

It is likewise the reason for the endless litany to the Virgin Mary (invoked for similar reasons in Horas). Safira is structured throughout not to communicate by touching description - as its preface vaguely claims - but to convince by persuasive insistence. In short, it is rhetorical, not poetical.

Safira gains conviction only towards the end when, after his allegorical representation of his rejection by Helena Bordalo Pinheiro, Eugénio de Castro concentrates on expressing his grief. Here the expressive power of his

"fórmulas inéditas" at times outweighs their persuasive function:

A alegria fugiu de mim; meu coração é triste como um jardim onde as flores nascessem murchas, a tristeza me abraçou como um polvo.

It is at this point in the work that Eugénio de Castro makes renewed use of Maeterlinckian images such as those we found already in Horas, and which we shall find again in several of the poems of Silva written around this time:

A minha alma é triste como uma agonia num deserto, como uma epidemia numa creche, como um suicídio num sepulcro, como uma insua depois duma cheia.

Na minha alma, duas mãos, monstruosamente cruéis, estão queimando com um ferro em brasa os seios puros, os seios de veludo e leite, das Virgens que dormiam na minha alma.

Images such as these inevitably recall Maeterlinck's "l'ennui d'un matelot dans le désert",¹⁵ "on assiste à l'exécution d'une vierge dans une salle close".¹⁶ But as so often happens when he borrows from others, Eugénio de Castro fails here to reproduce the compactness of Maeterlinck's imagery. Maeterlinck's images of "choses qui ne sont pas à leur place" tend to form a concept in themselves. They are frequently based on a contradiction, explicit or implicit, rather than on simple incongruity. The failure of Eugénio de Castro to grasp this inner unity can easily be seen by comparing his "agonia num deserto" with Maeterlinck's "l'ennui d'un matelot dans le désert". Eugénio de Castro is constantly drawn towards shock-effects rather than towards real depth of vision, partly, no doubt, because the former are easier to achieve. This tendency towards simple incongruity, at times outrageous,¹⁷

¹⁵ MAETERLINCK, Serres Chaudes, p. 7.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 72.

¹⁷ For example, in an article on António Augusto Gonçalves in the Novidades of 9 February 1893, Eugénio de Castro described his subject thus: "no alto do seu corpanzil seco e fuselado, a sua cabeça é uma noz em cima dum poste telegráfico".

characterizes the majority of these images to be found in his poetry and prose.

Despite its slight literary value, however, Safira is the clearest expression we have from Eugénio de Castro of the actual event of the broken engagement in 1892, and of his reaction to it. I have dealt at such length with this particular incident because the elements which go to make it up, and Eugénio de Castro's various attempts to come to terms with it, form the starting-point for almost all of his literary output during the next five years. The pain of rejection, the death of illusion -- these will be the ingredients of poems of personal grief and universal tragedy in the two collections published in 1894, Silva and Interlúdio.

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b). Songs of love, soulscapes of despair.

Four of the poems of Silva can be recognized as a poetic expression of the hopes and desires surrounding the engagement of 1891. They are "Cantiga", "Rimance", "Engrinalda-me com teus braços" and "Mãos". All of these poems can be dated with reasonable accuracy. Both "Engrinalda" and "Mãos" were found in the album of Helena Bordalo Pinheiro. The first was undated, the second dated 24-ix-1891. "Cantiga", also found in the album, was first published in the Jornal do Comércio of 24 April 1892. Here it was dated 1892, and carried the title "Vilancico". "Rimance" was published in the same number of the same newspaper, entitled "Violante", but undated.

"Cantiga", "Rimance" and "Engrinalda" deal in their various ways with a common theme: that of the physical attractions of the Beloved's body. Physical exhilaration will be one of the most fundamental themes in Eugénio de Castro's poetry. But in "Cantiga" and "Rimance" the question of physical attraction provides the starting-point for mental agility rather than for meditations on the

nature of fulfilment. "Cantiga" takes the form of a "vilancete", a poetic form popular in the Iberian Peninsula in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In accordance with the traditional form, the last line of each "volta" repeats the last line of the "mote". (In its final title this poem is misnamed. A "cantiga" is properly a poem whose "mote" contains four or five lines.) "Cantiga" celebrates the celestial vision of the Beloved's body, which no amount of clothing can conceal from the poet's all-seeing imagination:

Através das ricas vestes,
Que vos vestem, linda Infanta,
Adivinho os dons celestes
Do vosso corpo de santa. (12-15)

Implicit in the poem is the suggestion that since the poet can see her body in any case, there is no need to wear any clothes at all.

In "Rimance", the lover no longer requires his imagination to savour the beauty of the Beloved's body. This poem takes the form of a "rimance" (the Spanish "romance"), again a poetic form common in Spain in the late Middle Ages. Like countless "romances novelescos" it tells of the meeting of a knight and his lady. Here the knight wins through to Dona Ausenda and enjoys the beauty of her body despite the presence of her mother, asleep in the same room:

Segura com tal resposta,
Logo a mãe adormecia;
Vendo-a dormir, Dona Ausenda
Ao seu Amado sorria,
Sorria e nos braços dele,
Nos seus braços se metia,
E aos beijos do seu amado,
Seus lindos seios abria. (81-88)

There is a change of emphasis in "Engrinalda". This poem does not deal with the means whereby the lover achieves the enjoyment of the Beloved's body. It concentrates instead on a detailed description of the attractions of her body, which the lover eventually hopes to enjoy. This is the note on which the poem opens. Lines

1, 3, 7 and 9 all begin with the words "Teu corpo". Her body is seen throughout in terms of exuberant nature:

Os teus olhos são duas cabacinhas
 Cheias dum vinho estonteante,
 Os teus dentes são alvas camarinhas,
 Os teus dedos, suavíssimos espargos,
 E os teus seios, pêssegos verdes mas não amargos.
 (12-16)

So also is the lover's:

E para que as colhas, minha boca sadia
 É um orvalhado cabazinho de groselhas. (31-32)

This is essential to the dialectic of the poem. Its real theme is the passing of time. What awaits both lover and Beloved in old age is the withering and death which attends everything in Nature:

E então, velhinhos combalidos,
 Como dois galhos ressequidos
 Sem folhas e sem pomos. (45-7)

Against this panorama of physical deterioration, the enjoyment of love - in a purely physical sense - during youth is seen as a source of consolation against the grief which old age must inevitable bring:

Novos e alegres somos! Ah! que em breve
 Nossas bocas se colem voluptuosas;
 Vamos sonhar e tocar-nos de rosas,
 Enquanto há sol, enquanto não cai neve! (32-6)

This is the point of the poem, thus bringing it into line with the other two. But though it is concerned with physical desire, the treatment of this theme is kept to a fairly low key. The term "desejo" appears as early as line 4, but the adjectives and adverbs by which it is surrounded - "brando" (4), "serenamente" (5) - cause the attitude towards it to be more relaxed.

"Mãos" differs from the three preceding poems in that the relationship it describes is viewed in exclusively emotional terms. It expresses the soothing power of the Beloved's hands. A series of contrasting images convey, by an effect of chiaroscuro, the darkness which inhabits the poet's soul, and the light the Beloved's hands bring to

that darkness. The contrast of light and darkness sets up, in the images employed, a series of oppositions which intensify the theme of consolation: imprisonment, comfort; infirmity, care; separation, welcome. Some of these images work on only one level: "Caridosas Irmãs do hospício da minh'alma" (7) But the images of line 5 are truly polyvalent:

Rolas à roda da negra torre da minh'alma.

On the one hand we have confinement, dankness, abandon, neglect; on the other, lightness, freedom, beauty, grace. The Beloved's hands are characterized by softness (1), gentleness (2), warmth (15). Like "Engrinalda" this poem ends with a plea for consolation:

Alegrai, como dois netinhos, o viver
Da minh'alma, velha avó entrevadinha. (20-21)

But consolation here does not have the ulterior motive of the enjoyment of the Beloved's body. While the words "teu corpo" were repeated in "Engrinalda", the words which run through this poem are "minh'alma": it deals not with her body, but with the poet's soul.

In its striking imagery and quiet intensity, "Mãos" is one of the best short poems Eugénio de Castro would ever write. Aníbal Pinto de Castro no doubt had it in mind when he saw in Silva an "esforço de interiorização" ¹⁸ lacking in Eugénio de Castro's earlier works. It reveals his power to convey feeling with a considerable degree of success when he finds a technique suited to his ability.

---ooOoo---

The majority of the poems of Silva, however, are poems of grief and pain. Several of these poems, through explicit references to the Amada or to love, can be recognized as poetic expressions of the grief surrounding

¹⁸ CASTRO, "Tradição e Renovação", p. 13.

the broken engagement of 1892. Thus, in "Semper Eadem" the poet informs us: "Desdorou-se a tiara astral da que não veio" (13). The use of the capital when referring to the Beloved follows the tradition of earlier works. In "As Fiandeiras" the poet speaks of himself and explicitly mentions his "noiva":

Donzela que estás fiando os lençóis para o meu
noivado, fia, fia mais depressa, que estou deserto
por dormir com os meus amores. (10-12)

A minha noiva é graciosa como as palmeiras (17-18)

In "Canção" the grief of the shepherd is due to the death of love:

Estou cheio de dores,
Estou entrevadinho,
Já não posso amar. (10-12)

The grief of other poems is not explained in terms of a love-relationship, but there seems little doubt that the experience of the broken engagement lies behind the grief these poems express.

Several of these poems can be dated with reasonable accuracy. The first to be composed was in all probability the opening section of "Semper Eadem" (1-20). This had come originally at the end of Safira in the Jornal do Comércio of 27 March 1892. "A Aleijadinha" and "De Toledo para o mar" had appeared under the general heading of "Prosas" in the Jornal do Comércio of 8 May 1892.¹⁹ These are the only poems whose dates of publication are known, but several others can be joined to this group. Over and above similarities of technique and theme, there are also at times cases of verbal coincidence with passages from Safira:

"E o seu fuso de cristal está no chão, em migalhas:
migalhas que parecem lágrimas ou diamantes caídos
dum diadema ... "
("Fiandeiras", 27-9)

"E são tão húmidos os olhos de minha mãe [...] que
parece que as pedras do seu diadema desceram aos
seus olhos."

"E as fontes chamam umas pelas outras,
Como cegas perdidas num pinhal ... "
("Nocturno", 15-16)

¹⁹ They were accompanied by a third poem entitled "A Lapidação das Açucenas".

"Nos jardins [...] as fontes choram e chamam umas pelas outras como infelizes amantes paralíticos."

Similarly, the date of composition of the poem "Canção" can be conjectured by reference to Eugénio de Castro's journalistic output of 1892. One of the central images of this poem had appeared in an article he had published in the Jornal do Comércio of 26 June 1892 entitled "Amores Fanados". It tells of two people formerly in love listening to an old salt recounting his experiences at sea. It goes on: "ambos se encarnavam naquele mareante paralítico, descrevendo viagens", and again: "Os seus corações eram dois mareantes paralíticos". The similarity between these images and that used in "Canção":

Sou qual piloto entrevadinho
Descrevendo as suas viagens. (17-18)

suggests strongly that these two pieces were roughly contemporary in composition.

Another characteristic of Eugénio de Castro's poetry can give us a lead into the time of composition of other poems of this group. In Oaristos in particular Eugénio de Castro shows a tendency to mention the time of writing in his poems. In poem VIII, written on 30 August, he writes: "Como são outonais aqui estes Agostos!" (14). In poems IX and XVII he goes so far as to include the date of composition in the poem:

Seis de Setembro, sexta feira. (IX, 1)

Hoje, seis de dezembro, às três da madrugada. (XVII, 82)

In view of this, when he opens "Os Tísicos" with the following indication: "Em outubro", there is some justification for believing that the poem was written in October. The following line from "Asilo" may also reflect the season in which the poem was composed: "O sol doente, o sol ardente, o sol de outono!" (20). Even if these conjectures are inaccurate, however, the themes of "Os Tísicos" and "Asilo" identify them as belonging with the other poems written in 1892.

In their expression of grief, these poems look to those themes which were prefigured in "Engrinalda" and "Mãos" and which had dominated the later sections of Safira: withering, paralysis, loneliness, death. In many cases, these themes are presented through the description of a landscape. But with regard to this, we should keep in mind certain remarks made by Eugénio de Castro in the Novidades in March 1893, concerning the "Exposição do Grémio Artístico" of that year.²⁰ Commenting on the work of the landscape artist Silva Porto he wrote: "O meu desejo seria vê-lo abandonar tal vereda, vê-lo procurar nos campos, nos rios, nas charnecas, nas alvoradas e nos poentes, símbolos diversos que dessem a linha e a expressão dos complicados estados de alma modernos" (7 March), adding later "que o meu ponto de vista me não ponha em fervente admiração perante as paisagens e marinhas, (excepção aberta para as paisagens e marinhas simbólicas)." (22 March). And indeed the poems of Silva present us with symbolic landscapes, the poetic technique generally known as the "paysage animé".

In "Semper Eadem", a scene of withering and ruin symbolizes the ravages of the poet's soul. In "Nocturno"²¹ his inner grief is expressed through the description of an avenue of trees shaken by the wind. In "De Toledo para o mar" it is conveyed through a description of the river Tagus. In other poems, rather than committing the

²⁰ This series of articles is signed "E. de C", but as they eventually gave rise to a letter from the Grémio addressed to Eugénio de Castro (published in the Novidades on 4 April) it is clear that he is the author. Eugénio de Castro soon found himself in conflict with the Grémio, writing on 29 March: "fui convidado para entrar, como sócio, no Grémio artístico". This was answered by their letter disclaiming any invitation and making it clear they wanted nothing to do with him. This in turn was answered the following day by an article pouring scorn on the Grémio. Whatever the ins and outs of this particular battle, these articles reveal Eugénio de Castro's interest in art at the time

²¹ "Nocturno" carries as its epigraph the following quotation from Charles d'Orléans: "Je suis celui au cœur vestu de noir". See: CHARLES D'ORLÉANS, Poésies Complètes (Paris: Ernest Flammarion, Éditeur, 1896), I, 34, Ballade XIX.

expression of feeling to the description of a landscape, Eugénio de Castro exploits the emotive connotations of a particular human situation which he sees as reflecting his own. These poems - "Baile de Máscara", "A Aleijadinha", "Asilo" and "Os Tísicos" - are all variations on the theme of the outsider. The "aleijadinha" sits, significantly, "à beira da estrada" (1).

Several images recur consistently throughout these poems. That of the swamp, for example:

"Os lagos do jardim tornaram-se em paúis."
("Semper Eadem", 5)
"A Lua põe-se à cabaceira
Das águas doentes nos paúis sombrios."
("Nocturno", 41-42)

The spider's web:

"(A aranha fez um tear de cada harpa ...)"
("Semper Eadem", 3)
"Teias de aranha nas janelas."
("Asilo", 34)

Ashes:

"Asilo de almas que são urnas de cinza."
("Asilo", 12)
"A sua voz é cor de cinza."
("Aleijadinha", 17)

Blindness:

"E a Donzela que aguardava a vinda flava das estrelas,
Cegou ... " ("Semper Eadem", 17-18)
"Asilo das que tiveram lindos olhos e estão cegas."
("Asilo", 14)
"E as fontes chamam umas pelas outras,
Como cegas perdidas num pinhal."
("Nocturno", 15-16)

Silence:

"Cessaram no ar silente as angústias das harpas."
("Semper Eadem", 19)
"Fancou-se a angústia dos alaúdes."
("Aleijadinha", 29)

Imprisonment:

"Mas a minha alma é triste

Como a filha dum condenado à morte."
 ("Baile de Máscara", 7-8)

"Alguns foram almocreves: do asilo é fechada a porta."
 ("Asilo", 18)

Widowhood:

"Partiram, ao som das violas, as comungantes virgens,
 E voltaram depois, vestidas de viúvas."
 ("Semper Eadem", 13-14)

"Na viuvez da alameda."
 ("Nocturno", 1)

These poems thus convey a closed world of darkness, stagnation and neglect. There is a continuity in the images employed in these poems and those used in the poems written around the time of the engagement. They reveal, in a sense, the interior of the "negra torre da minh'alma" mentioned in "Mãos" (5). The Beloved once was expected to free the poet from this tower, but her rejection has thrust him back into it once more, and he is now unable to free himself.

Two of the poems of this group - "Canção" and "Baile de Máscara" - tell of a dichotomy in the poet's life, the disparity between a gay exterior and inner devastation. In the first poem this is seen in quasi-literary terms: the shepherd sings songs of love, even though love within him has died. But the force of reality outweighs the power of his songs, and he cannot evade his grief: he knows his songs are false:

Todas as flores são murchas,
 E mortas todas as estrelas ...
 Sou como um doido, lindas Donzelas!
 Que se enfeitasse com rosas murchas ... (23-26)

The idea implicit in this poem has implications for another group of poems I shall study in the next chapter.

Connected with this is the suggestion, in certain poems, that in a world where only pain is real beauty can only be illusory. Amidst the scenes of exile and pain in "De Toledo para o mar" and "A Aleijadinha" there are references to jewellery. But implicit in these references is the idea that the jewellery is merely an illusion, a

trick of light:

Os faróis
 Vermelhos, verdes e dourados,
 Os faróis das embarcações
 Destilam pedrarias:
 - Tejo! montra de joalheiro!
 ("De Toledo para o mar", 27-30)
 Chovisca. Baça nuvem
 Veste a aleijada de diamantes ...

 E, toda vestida de diamantes,
 A aleijadinha parece uma princesa ...
 ("A Aleijadinha", 30-31, 39-40)

The situation in "Asilo" is slightly different, but at base the same:

As velhinhas têm todas lenços brancos,
 Que as tornam novas, num espiritual disfarce ... (28-9)

As a variation on this, whenever real jewels are mentioned in the poems, they are invariably faded or broken:

Desdorou-se a tiara astral da que não veio.
 ("Semper Eadem", 13)
 Diamantes caídos dum diadema.
 ("Fiandeiras", 28-29)

---ooOoo---

There is a certain progression in the attitude towards grief expressed in these early poems of Silva. The majority of the descriptive poems do not present us simply with a scene. They tend to concentrate on a particular period of time, which they follow to its end. "Nocturno" takes us from the beginning to the end of a gale, and from nightfall to just before dawn. In "Fiandeiras" the passage of time is again through the night until sunrise. More often, however, the particular period ends with the falling of night:

"A noite desceu das escarpas."
 ("Semper Eadem", 18)
 "A noite desce aveludamente calma."
 ("Asilo", 52)
 "Noite calma"
 ("De Toledo para o mar, 39)

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"É noite."
("A Aleijadinha", 26)

When the end of the particular period is reached, there are frequently indications of calm. This is the case in the lines from "De Toledo para o mar" and "Asilo" just quoted, and also in "Nocturno":

E os arvoredos ao luar,
Não choram já, só dão suspiros. (45-6)

But this is the false calm of exhaustion. This exhaustion radiates out into the countryside in "Fiandeiras" in what is the most striking image of the poem:

O rio que passa na paisagem, passa vagaroso,
exânime, cansado de ter andado toda a noite.

and in "Nocturno":

Morto, cansado dos seus giros,
O vendaval foi-se deitar. (43-44)

Here and in "De Toledo para o mar" it gives rise to the idea of death as a means of escape:

Noite calma ...
Um velho deita-se a afogar:
- Tejo! descanso dos Aflitos! (39-41)

Through the symbolism of their "paysages animés", these poems follow the cycle of the poet's grief to its end in exhaustion. Night hems them in - the darkness of the "negra torre" of the poet's soul. When dawn appears, its light, like that of the jewels already mentioned, is illusory: it merely brings ideas of death - the finished shroud in "Fiandeiras", the coffin in "Nocturno". But "De Toledo para o mar" introduces a new element into this world of grief. Like other poems, this one runs full circle, ending in exhaustion and death. But it does not stop there. Unlike the gale of "Nocturno", the river cannot simply blow itself out and die. It has no choice other than to carry on into the sea. It thus symbolizes the poet who, despite his meditations on death, cannot simply die, and, once his grief has run full course, is obliged to carry on into life. The closing lines of this poem constitute one of the finest examples of indirect expression among many excellent

images to be found in these poems:

E o rio brando,

.

Entra no mar, como uma noiva entrando
No tálamo nupcial, medrosamente. (42-45)

The fear and wonderment of the river as to what future union with the sea will bring symbolize the fear and wonderment of the poet as to what future commitment to life holds in store.²² This poem breathes a breath of salt air into the closed world of the poems we have been studying. The walls of night, the stagnating swamps, the narrow confines of the river suddenly verge on the vast, wind-blown, shifting expanses of the ocean. It brings to an end a period of enforced imprisonment, while the poet was unable to free himself from his grief. But his re-emergence into the world is not unconditionally joyous. Through his experience of grief and pain, it is fearful. In a later poem Eugénio de Castro will say to another river, the Mondego:

Pára, Mondego! Pára, não prossigas,
Prateado rio, não caminhaes para o mar.
("Ao Prateado Mondego", 1-2)

Life can also bring grief. And Eugénio de Castro's attempts to come to terms with this grief will form the basis for all the later poems written in 1893.

If my conjectured dating is correct, "Os Tísicos" was in all probability the last poem of this group to be written. And it illustrates one of the ways in which Eugénio de Castro will react to the problem of grief in later poems. The "tísicos" do not so much reflect the poet's state of mind: they represent a state of spiritual anaesthesia (43) which he sees as a means of escaping from

²² The final image of this poem in fact recalls lines from Jules Laforgue which Eugénio de Castro himself quotes as an epigraph to the poem "Pastor Solitário" of *Interlúdio*: "... j'ai peur de la vie / Comme d'un mariage". See: LAFORGUE, *Poésies Complètes*, p. 177, "Avis, je vous prie".

his own despair. He envies them the power to hope, despite the nearness of death:

- Jesus! meu bom Jesus! dai-me que eu morra tísico,
Para que ainda uma vez torne a ter esperanças!
(57-8)

This poem thus represents a change of direction with regard to the other poems. It is not an expression of grief, it is a reaction to grief. And this reaction is melodramatic and vaguely sensationalistic. After the intensity of feeling of earlier poems, "Os Tísicos" seems little more than an attempt to shock. It is an evasion of real depth for superficial theatricality. It brings to a close a period in Eugénio de Castro's career in which much of his best poetry was written.

---ooOoo---

If we turn from their content to their poetic techniques, the poems we have just studied can be seen to fall into two distinct groups. The first group comprises the four poems "Cantiga", "Rimance", "Engrinalda-me com teus braços" and "Canção". After the ultra-modern poetry of Oaristos and Horas, we might be surprised to discover that these four poems have a distinctly medieval or Renaissance flavour. For an explanation for this apparent change from modernity to medievalisms, we must look again to France, and in particular to the work of Jean Moréas.

In the second half of the 1880's, Moréas had been best known as the self-styled champion of Symbolism. But in 1891, to the general surprise of the Parisian literary milieu, he had reneged his earlier views. In the same year he published his Pèlerin Passionné, preceded by a preface "De l'auteur au lecteur" in which he outlined his new source of inspiration:

Dans ces poèmes-ci, lecteur, tu trouveras (en même temps que d'aucunes miennes nouvelletés) instaurées les coutumes de versification abolies par la réforme, tempestive à son heure, peut-être, mais insolite, de Malherbe, duquel je sais priser les hauts dons.

Conséquentement, j'y poursuis, - selon une évolution logique et indubitable, - dans les idées et les sentiments, comme dans la prosodie et le style, la communion du Moyen-Âge Français et la Renaissance Française, fondus et transfigurés en le principe (lequel ne semble pas où le Naturalisme, déjà caduc, 23 le voulut abaisser) de l'Âme moderne.

The medieval and Renaissance conventions of the four poems already mentioned undoubtedly reveal Eugénio de Castro's adherence to these precepts of Moréas, just as the poems of Horas showed his adherence to Moréas's symbolism. In adopting this stance, Eugénio de Castro did not consider himself to be turning his back on modernity. For him, the precepts of Moréas - and he was, as ever, more readily influenced by precepts than by actual poetry - no doubt represented the most modern concept of poetry of his day.

The pretensions of those poems written following medieval conventions are modest. His "Cantiga" ²⁴ employs all the tricks of the traditional form: internal rhyme - "Embora, senhora" (1) - alliteration - "Através das ricas vestes / Que vos vestem" (12-13) - and a light-hearted roguishness sustained throughout:

Para quê rendas e folhos,
Senhora da minha vida,
Se por estes tristes olhos,
Por meus olhos sois despida? (24-7)

It exhibits what Lopes and Saraiva describe as "Este formalismo do galanteio, aliado ao gosto do paradoxo conceituoso, [que] enche centenas de páginas do Cancioneiro Geral", ²⁵ though it lacks the greater pungency of the best "vilancetes".

The same can be said of the poem "Rimance", a poetic

²³ Quoted in JOUANNY, Jean Moréas, p. 491.

²⁴ Another poem employing the same convention is the unedited "Vilancico", published in the Jornal do Comércio of 1 May 1892, dated 1891.

²⁵ OSCAR LOPES and ANTÓNIO JOSÉ SARAIVA, História da Literatura Portuguesa (Oporto: Porto Editora Lda., s/d), pp. 160-161.

form in which Eugénio de Castro was showing considerable interest at the time.²⁶ As well as employing a medieval form, this poem also makes use of a well-known medieval theme.²⁷ This theme may have been suggested to Eugénio de Castro by a passage from Barbey d'Aurévilly's Diaboliques.²⁸ In "Le Rideau Cramoisi" Barbey tells of:

la jeune fille qui recevait toutes les nuits, dans la chambre de sa grand-mère, endormie derrière ses rideaux, un amant entré par la fenêtre [...] Un soir apparemment poussé par la jeune fille trop heureuse, un soupir plus fort que les autres réveilla la grand-mère, qui cria de dessous ses rideaux un "Qu'as-tu donc, petite?" à la faire évanouir contre le cœur de son amant; mais elle n'en répondit pas moins de sa place: "C'est mon busc qui me gêne, grand-maman, pour chercher mon aiguille tombée sur le tapis, et que je ne puis pas retrouver!"

The entire theme dates back to the medieval "sérénade". Documenting the lyrics of the Middle Ages, Alfred Jeanroy tells of poems describing "ces rendez-vous donnés dans la chambre de l'amante, dans la chambre même où dort la mère".³⁰ But despite his use of medieval theme and form, Eugénio de Castro fails to reproduce the atmosphere of mystery characteristic of many Spanish "romances".

As against "Cantiga" and "Rimance", "Engrinalda-me com teus braços" employs a Renaissance rather than a medieval theme. It is the famous "carpe diem" of Horace

²⁶ Further examples of the use of the "rimance" form can be found in Safira, and in the unedited "Dona Ausenda" published in the Jornal do Comércio of 12 April 1892, dated January 1892.

²⁷ This theme was introduced into English literature in the nineteenth century by the Irish poet John Francis Waller. It appears in his poem "The Spinning Wheel".

²⁸ Barbey, as we shall see, was one of Eugénio de Castro's many literary idols. He was one of the four dedicatees of the first edition of Interlúdio in 1894.

²⁹ BARBEY D'AURÉVILLY, Oeuvres Romanesques, II, 48.

³⁰ ALFRED JEANROY, Les Origines de la Poésie Lyrique en France au Moyen Âge (Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1925: Paris), p. 198.

and others,³¹ as illustrated by these well-known lines, once attributed to Ausonius:

Collige, virgo, rosas, dum flos novus et nova pubes,³²
et memor esto aevum sic properare tuum.

This particular theme was a commonplace among Renaissance writers throughout Europe,³³ and had appeared in Portugal in a poem once attributed to Camões:

Colhei, colhei do tempo fugitivo
E de vossa beleza o doce fruto. 34

The attempts by Eugénio de Castro to introduce Classical material into his poetry are not always successful. In line 26 the poet likens himself to Ancaeus, the legendary king of Samos. The intention is obviously laudatory, but the allusion is a little strange. What Classical allusions we have encountered before now in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro have tended to be stereotyped, and used largely for their decorative value. In Oaristos we find such examples as:

Velha Níobe, chora ao longe uma cascata. (I, 16)
Criatura esfingial, triste como Artemisa,
Vingativa, feroz e linda como Fásis. (I, 74-5)

Ancaeus, however, lacking a specific characteristic he could embody, never achieved the status of literary commonplace like the figures mentioned. According to legend, he was just about to drink the juice of grapes a soothsayer had told him he would never enjoy when it was announced that a wild boar was ravaging his vineyards.

³¹ See HORACE, Odes, I, 11. Other examples are TIBULLUS, Elegies, I, 1, 4, and CATULLUS, Carmina, v.

³² AUSONIUS (DECIMUS MAGNUS) Opera Omnia (London: A.J. Valpy, A.M., 1823), p. 591.

³³ Other examples are PIERRE DE RONSARD, Sonnets pour Hélène, II, xxiv, and GARCILASO DE LA VEGA, sonnet 23.

³⁴ This poem is no longer believed to have been written by Camões. In the old numeration of his sonnets it was No. 259. See: LUÍS DE CAMÕES, Obras (Lisbon: Escritório da Biblioteca Portuguesa, 1852), II, 134.

He left without drinking the wine, only to be killed while in pursuit of the boar.³⁵ The reference to a boar in line 28 of Eugénio de Castro's poem -- "Quando, caçando o javali, ando entre os ramos" -- suggests that it is indeed to this legend that he is referring. But it is difficult to say why he should choose a legend whose protagonist meets an untimely death. We can only assume, as the flattery obviously implied in the poet's comparing himself to Ancaeus suggests, that his knowledge was somewhat blurred. On the whole, "Engrinalda-me com teus braços" is not a particularly successful poem. Like several of the Renaissance-style poems written by Eugénio de Castro, it exhumes a literary commonplace without really reviving it. We shall have to wait some time until Eugénio de Castro's considerable interest in Classical literature produces truly interesting poems.

Only one poem, "Canção", following the precepts of Moréas, deals with the grief felt by Eugénio de Castro after the broken engagement of 1892. "Canção" is a mixture of Renaissance and medieval styles. It employs a Renaissance pastoral convention,³⁶ and a structure reminiscent of the medieval "poema a mote". The song of the shepherd also recalls, in certain of its details, the poetry of the medieval "cancioneiros". The idea that love has died at sea:

O meu amor era marinheiro
E morreu no mar. (7-8)

calls to mind a similar idea in the following "barcarola" by Nuno Fernandez Torneol:

³⁵ The only part of this legend to gain any kind of literary currency was its famous proverb "πολλὰ μετὰ ξὺν πέλλαι κύλικος καὶ χεῖλεος ἄκρου" [there's many a slip twixt cup and lip.]. See APOLLONIUS RHODIUS, *Argonautica* (Lipsiae: Sumptibus et Typis B.G. Teubneri, 1854), p. 315, "Scholia" A, 188.

³⁶ A similar use of the pastoral convention can be found in the "Allégories Pastorales" of Moréas's Pèlerin Passionné.

Foi eu, madre, veer
as barcas en o les,
e moiro-me d'amor.

.

As barcas en o les,
e foi-las atender,
e moiro-me d'amor.

.

E foi-las atender
e non o pud'i ycer,
e moiro-me d'amor.

E non o achei i
o que por meu mal vi,
e moiro-me d'amor.

37

But largely as he failed to grasp the pungency of the "vilancete" and the atmosphere of the "rimance", here Eugénio de Castro's borrows the pathos of the original but fails to capture the drama of the situation. While they avoid the theatricality of earlier collections, these poems cannot be truthfully said to represent a high-water mark in the output of Eugénio de Castro's poetry. They never quite achieve either of the two elements Moréas hoped to fuse together in his new poetry. They borrow themes from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, but their appreciation of them is superficial, and with the exception of "Canção", they avoid any kind of exploration of the soul. The expression of emotion was the characteristic of the other poems of 1892, to which I shall now turn my attention.

---ooOoo---

The second major innovation in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro around this time is a concerted effort on his part to reproduce those techniques of the Symbolist poets he had not fully grasped in Horas, and in particular the technique known loosely as the "paysage animé". In his book Symbolism, Charles Chadwick offers a succinct definition

³⁷ Quoted in The Oxford Book of Portuguese Verse (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, 2nd. ed., 1967), pp. 8-9.

of the particular technique Eugénio de Castro is trying to capture in these poems:

Symbolism can therefore be defined as the art of expressing ideas and emotions not by describing them directly, nor by defining them through overt comparisons with concrete images, but by suggesting what these ideas and emotions are, by re-creating them in the mind of the reader through the use of unexplained symbols. 38

Within this group, the technique employed varies considerably from poem to poem, though it rarely achieves the genuine symbolism after which Eugénio de Castro was obviously striving. "Mãos", as we saw, is constructed around a series of visual images suggested by the whiteness of the Beloved's hands. The first section of "Semper Eadem" employs a fairly similar technique, though it differs in one important respect. If we examine the images of this poem carefully, we can see that they are framed within the description of a garden. But, apart from this, they have no formal connection other than their common function of expressing the poet's state of mind. The technique is, in fact, visibly Maeterlinckian, and, as with most of Maeterlinck's poems, this is not a truly symbolist poem.

The essence of Symbolism is that the elements of the real are employed poetically to express the emotional or metaphysical. We find this fusion of the real and the emotional in the Symbolist poems of Baudelaire, and above all of Verlaine, who wrote some of the finest examples of the Symbolist "paysage [devenu] vraiment état d'âme". 39 We find it again in the poems of the younger writers such as Laforgue, Moréas, Henri de Régnier - likewise an exponent of the "paysage symbolique". 40 But in the works of these poets, even in the more obscure sonnets of Mallarmé, the reader can invariably identify a scene - a landscape,

³⁸ CHARLES CHADWICK, Symbolism (London: Methuen and Co., 1971), p. 4.

³⁹ MICHAUD, Message, II, 115.

⁴⁰ Ibid., II, 280.

a room, etc - which forms the basis of the poem. But despite the general framework of the garden in which "Semper Eadem" is worked out, what Eugénio de Castro has done here is to employ elements not from the real, but from the literary. Their significance derives not from any emotive connotations instilled into them by the author, but from their value as traditional literary symbols:

Cantando, os cisnes afogaram-se nos lagos. (7)

Um lírio de veludo preto, entre as ruínas da estufa,
Nasceu com sete espadas a martirizar-lhe o seio.
(15-16)

The result of this is to diminish the physical reality of the scene described. In "Semper Eadem" we do not find a Symbolist "paysage animé", that is, the description of a landscape exterior to the poet, and out into which his feelings and emotions irradiate without distorting it. What we have here is an interior landscape, not subject to the strictures of external realism: not a "paysage animé", but an "âme paysagée". Guy Michaud rightly talks of Maeterlinck's "fusion de l'âme et du monde",⁴¹ but the technique employed in the majority of the Serres Chaudes is identical to that described here, and it is obvious that Maeterlinck is the inspiration behind this poem. His poems are full of literary symbols - lilies, swans, princesses fallen from state - and the fact that his poems do represent an "âme paysagée" can be seen from lines such as the following:

Toute une vallée de l'âme à jamais immobile! ⁴²

Perhaps rather than "Symbolism" (as it is generally understood) the technique employed here would be more properly termed "impressionism" - that is, a technique purporting to render faithfully what the poet feels, while dispensing with the need for external realism.

With two exceptions, the remaining poems of this group fall short of their Symbolist ideal in that the emotions

⁴¹ Ibid., II, 292.

⁴² MAETERLINCK, Serres Chaudes, p. 17.

they attempt to convey are almost invariably defined "through overt comparisons with concrete images" (Chadwick, see page 141). This comparison can take two forms. The first of these is apparent in the prose-poem "As Fiandeiras".

It was no doubt of "As Fiandeiras" that Luís da Câmara Reis was thinking when he said of the poetry of Eugénio de Castro: "No seu lirismo a vida ainda é vista como através dos contos de fadas".⁴³ In this poem we find ourselves in a fairy-tale atmosphere reminiscent of Hans Andersen or the Brothers Grimm. A young girl dressed in white spins, with a crystal shuttle, the linen for the poet's wedding-day; an old lady dressed in black, using a shuttle made of cypress-wood, spins his shroud. Despite his exhortations, the young girl falls asleep at her work, while by morning the old woman has already spun his shroud.

As an interpretation of the poet's grief at the broken engagement, the expression throughout the poem is indirect. But it is never truly oblique in the osmotic sense connected with Symbolism. In other words, this poem does not offer an interfusion of physical and emotional reality; it presents a second, conspicuously fictive reality which replaces actual reality altogether. That is, it is an allegory.

Other poems, though less obviously allegorical as regards their actual structure, fall short of true Symbolist expression through their reliance on comparison in a more incidental sense. The most striking feature of his failure to grasp the real essence of Symbolism is Eugénio de Castro's heavy use of simile. The poem "Baile de Máscara", for example, is clearly structured around three similes:

Meu semblante é alegre
Como uma ceia de rapazes. (1-2)
Mas a minha alma é triste
Como a filha dum condenado à morte. (7-8)
Sou como uma criada alegre e sadia,

⁴³ REIS, Cartas de Portugal, p. 135

Levando a passear num carrinho de mão,
Uma criança paralítica ... (9-11)

Very much in the same mould is "Nocturno". This poem is an obvious attempt at the creation of a "paysage animé". Indeed, M. Ema Tarracha Ferreira considers it to be "um dos raros poemas de funda sugestão [que] exprimem uma visão simbólica, polivalente, de uma paisagem interior".⁴⁴ But the scene we are presented with here is not, strictly speaking, a real "paysage animé". The poet's feelings do not irradiate from the landscape; they superimpose themselves on that landscape through a long series of similes - seven in all (lines 3, 5, 13, 16, 17, 34, 40) - where the second element of the comparison, and not the landscape itself, carries the emotional content of the poem:

Como esbeltas Imperatrizes
Barbaramente destronadas,
As grandes árvores magoadas
Choram hirtas, despenteadas ... (17-20)

The sustained use of simile is obviously detrimental to the creation of a "paysage animé". It creates a second reality parallel to the one described, instead of fusing two realities together. It is no doubt for reasons such as this that Mallarmé is reputed to have said that he banished the word "comme" from his vocabulary altogether.⁴⁵ The landscape here remains a vehicle for the expression of the poet's feelings, rather than becoming itself the expression of those feelings.

Yet another sign of this failure to grasp the real essence of Symbolism is the frequency with which Eugénio de Castro has recourse to rather facile Romantic rhetoric. In "A Aleijadinha" and "Os Tísicos", for example, the emotive connotations of the poems do not arise from the scene chosen as the theme of the poem. They are carried by

⁴⁴ M. EMA TARRACHA FERREIRA, Textos Literários, Século XIX: Volume II, Poesia (Lisbon: Editorial Aster, s/d), p. 520.

⁴⁵ CHADWICK, p. 2.

a cumbersome system of rhetoric imposed upon that scene. This is done principally by repetition in "A Aleijadinha": the line "A aleijadinha pede esmola" is repeated three times (13, 16, 20); the lines "A aleijadinha está com fome / E não tem que comer" are repeated twice (36-7, 41-2). Cases of anaphora also occur: "Suas mãos, cor de barro cozido, / Suas mãos, ... " (32-33). In "Os Tísicos" the principal technique employed is apostrophe: "Vede" occurs three times (29, 38, 40), and the variant "Olhai" once (33). There is also considerable overuse of exclamation in this poem (it has eleven exclamation marks); and, as so often happens when Eugénio de Castro is striving for effect, he tries to persuade us that the situation is dramatic by simply stating that it is so, rather than by breathing real drama into it: "Alegremente vão, dramáticas figuras" (44). It was no doubt poems such as these that Rémy de Gourmont had in mind when, reviewing Silva and Interlúdio for the Mercure de France in September 1894, he wrote (pp. 85-6):

Si sa langue est assez précieuse, assez sûre, elle ne nous paraît pas toujours assez nouvelle et assez purgée des vieilles métaphores. Elle reste romantique; et le choix des sujets aussi affirme une âme romantique.

---ooOoo---

Two of the poems of this group, however, come close to a genuinely Symbolist form of expression. The first of these is "De Toledo para o mar". In this poem, the description of the river is interpreted throughout, e.g: "Num navio, partem emigrantes: / - Tejo! caminho da Ambição!" (11-12). But the fact that the whole scene symbolizes the poet's state of mind is never explicitly stated. In other words, from the point of view of Symbolist poetry, the author does not intrude in an unacceptable fashion, and the poem achieves a genuinely indirect means of expression.

The best Symbolist poem written by Eugénio de Castro is, however, beyond question, "Asilo". Unlike "Nocturno",

for example, this poem limits itself to a visual treatment of the scene it describes. Such similes as it does employ are, in the main, visual and not emotive in nature, and it steers clear of the heavy rhetoric of its companion-pieces. As in other poems of this group, the emphasis is on old age, paralysis, loneliness:

Asilo das velhinhas sem netos,
Asilo das que foram lindas e hoje são aleijadas,
Asilo dos velhinhos desprezados pelos netos,
E dos que não têm filhas, só enteadas ... (8-11)

In a world of luxury and wealth which they can see from their windows, only the inmates of the "asilo" are condemned to loneliness, grief and frustrated hopes. Then, in a master-stroke, the poet's soul becomes a poorhouse, and all the feelings of its inmates are suddenly identified as his:

Sinto velhinhos à janela da minh'alma ... (53)

Insofar as the comparison of the poet's soul and the poorhouse is stated, "Asilo" falls short of a genuinely Symbolist expression. Nonetheless it is an excellent poem. It pursues the description of its scene single-mindedly, without having recourse to the literary similes or the rhetoric of other poems, thus allowing the emotions to irradiate from that scene, and not from a literary superstructure imposed upon it. The result is a true landscape of the soul. This poem exhibits a poise and an equilibrium Eugénio de Castro would never achieve again.

---ooOoo---

The poems we have just studied represent in many ways one of the most original phases of Eugénio de Castro's earlier career. Nonetheless, as always in his poetry, many of the forms of expression are not his own, and have been borrowed from elsewhere. In "Engrinalda-me com teus braços", for example, we find, in the midst of the physical descriptions of the Beloved, a curiously incongruous anatomical note: "Lira de nervos" (17). This detail is in

fact a rather superficial borrowing from Jules Laforgue, a poet whose influence on Eugénio de Castro is by no means profound, but from whom the Portuguese poet did not hesitate to borrow what he considered to be striking images. The original of the image in question appears in the "Préludes Autobiographiques" of Laforgue's Complaintes: 46

Lyres des nerfs, filles des Harpes d'Idéal
Qui vibriez, aux soirs d'exil, sans songer à mal, 47
Redevenez plasma!

It reflects the influence on Laforgue of Eduard von Hartmann's Philosophie des Unbewußten,⁴⁸ which Guy Michaud summarizes thus: "Tout est commandé par cette Fatalité universelle [l'Inconscient], inexorable, où l'homme, agrégat provisoire, colonie de cellules, polypier fatal, est entraîné".⁴⁹ Thus, in a manner with which we are already familiar, Eugénio de Castro has borrowed an unusual image for its unusualness rather than for its original connotations, but has not succeeded in weaving it smoothly into the texture of his poem.

Other images borrowed from Laforgue appear in these poems. The image of the moon in "De Toledo para o mar" - "A Abadessa do convento dos Astros, a Lua" (36) - recalls a similar image from Laforgue's Imitation de Notre-Dame de Lune, where the moon is addressed as:

Très-Révérende Supérieure
Du cloître où l'on ne sait plus l'heure. 50

And it is in a sense ironic to realize that when Rémy de Gourmont (loc.cit., see page 145), stating that the poem "As Fiandeiras" "affirme une âme romantique", nonetheless

⁴⁶ This image was something of a favourite of Laforgue's. It reappears with minor variants in his "Complainte du Pauvre Corps Humain" and the unedited "Sieste Éternelle".

⁴⁷ LAFORGUE, p. 46.

⁴⁸ For the influence of Hartmann on Laforgue see: FRANÇOIS RUCHON, Jules Laforgue (Genève: Éditions Albert Ciana, 1924) - "Ses plus grands emprunts, il les fait à Hartmann" (p. 44).

⁴⁹ MICHAUD, Message, II, 304.

⁵⁰ LAFORGUE, p. 144.

conceded: "je trouve pourtant cette jolie image: 'Minuit. Les citernes reçoivent l'hostie de la lune'" (É meia noite. Os poços tomam a comunhão do luar [7]), he was in fact referring to an image borrowed from Laforgue. The original comes from his "Complainte à Notre-Dame des Soirs":

Lune aux échos dont communient les puits. 51

On the subject of the moon, another poet who might be mentioned is Émile Verhaeren, whose "lune pieuse et douce, aux mains d'argent" 52 seems to reappear in "Nocturno":

Como uma doce, afável enfermeira,
A Lua põe-se à cabeceira
Das águas doentes nos paúis sombrios ... (40-42)

By contrast with the first group of poems discussed, the influence of Moréas is not notable in the Symbolist poems. Nonetheless, it seems certain that "Baile de Máscara" was at least suggested by the sixth poem in his series "Étrennes de Douce":

Parce que du mal et du pire
Mon âme absout tous les méchants,
Et que sur ma lèvre respire
Orphéus, prince des doux chants,

Qu'au jardin de ma chevelure
S'ébattent les ris et les jeux,
Que se lève le Dioscure
Dans la prunelle de mes yeux,

D'autres ont pu me croire fête
Saoule de drapeaux épanis,
Et clairons sonnant la défaite
De l'indéfectible Erinnys;

Mais toi, sororale, toi, sûre
Amante au grand cœur dévoilé,
Tu sus connaître la blessure
D'où mon sang à flots a coulé. 53

51 Ibid., p. 38. This image seems to have struck Eugénio de Castro forcibly. He uses it again in the "Resposta da Lua" in Interlúcio: "Pura hóstia para a comunhão dos poços" (28).

52 ÉMILE VERHAEREN, Poèmes: Nouvelle Série (Paris: Mercure de France, 1911), p. 21, "Les Soirs".

53 MORÉAS, Oeuvres, I, 177.

The curious wording we find in several poems of Silva (and Interlúdio) points to another poet whose influence, if neither omnipresent nor profound, is nonetheless clearly visible in the poetry written by Eugénio de Castro around this time:

"A Abadessa mais as suas pupilas."
("De Toledo para o mar", 37)

"Mais as figuras de cera."
("Asilo", 40, 46)

"Mais os corvos negros fogem com pavor."
("Interlúdio", 16)

The use of "mais" rather than "e" for "and" is a regionalism found frequently in the poetry of António Nobre. With the exception of one appearance in "Dona Briolanza" in Horas (41-44) it appears nowhere else in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. Nobre may have suggested the theme of emigration in "De Toledo para o mar" (a theme which reappears in "Beijos" of Interlúdio):

Num navio, partem emigrantes:
- Tejo! caminho da Ambição! (11-12)

We find it referred to in similar terms in his "Males de Anto":

Perdi-me no alto mar, quando ia na galera 54
À Índia da Ilusão, ao Brasil da Quimera.

It is also possible that Nobre suggested the theme of tuberculosis which appears in "Os Tísicos". In the second half of the nineteenth century, it is true, death by consumption had become something of a standard literary theme throughout the literatures of Europe.⁵⁵ And in France, a poem entitled "Les Deux Poitrinaires" can be found among the works of Maurice Rollinat, a poet whom, as we shall see

⁵⁴ ANTÓNIO NOBRE, Só (Oporto: Livraria Tavares Martins, 1974), p. 200. Subsequent page references given in the text.

⁵⁵ Well-known examples of this theme include La Dame aux Camélias by Dumas Fils, which would later provide the libretto for Verdi's La Traviata. Other examples are Clarín's El duo de la tos, Theodor Fontane's Effi Briest and Dostoevsky's Crime and Punishment.

shortly, Eugénio de Castro had certainly read:

Ils ont une toux sèche, aiguë, intermittente.
Elle, après chaque accès, est toute palpitante, 56
Et lui, crache du sang!

But this theme had something of an obsessive value for António Nobre (who would die of tuberculosis at the age of thirty-two). We find it in countless of his poems: in "Poentes de França" (p. 109) - "Ó céus tísicos, cuspindo em bacias!"; in "Ao Canto do Lume" (p. 116) - "Mês de Novembro! Mês dos tísicos! Suando / Quantos a esta hora, não se estorcem a morrer!"; in "A Vida", a poem whose use of apostrophe reminds one of "Os Tísicos" - "Olha esse tísico a tossir, à beira-mar" (p. 127). Again, we might compare Nobre's "Pobre Tísica" (p. 171):

E ao ouvir-lhe a tosse seca
Eu julgo ouvir numa oficina
Tábuas do seu caixão pregar!

with Eugénio de Castro's:

Crêem-se quase sãos, e vão pelas estradas,
Tão absortos nas suas infantis ilusões,
Que não ouvem as frias marteladas
Do carpinteiro que faz os mortuários caixões. 57

The most important influence on this group of poems is, however, that of Maeterlinck. His influence manifests itself in the composition of the "âmes paysagées" already discussed, and also more generally in the kind of imagery used by Eugénio de Castro throughout these poems, notably in images of "choses qui ne sont pas à leur place. A particular form taken by this imagery is the fall from regal state. We find it in "Nocturno":

Como Princesas desfloradas,

⁵⁶ MAURICE ROLLINAT, Les Névroses (Paris: G. Charpentier et Cie. Éditeurs, 1885), p. 110.

⁵⁷ These illusions suffered by people in advanced stages of tuberculosis are also occasionally mentioned in European literature of the late nineteenth century. In Torquemada en la Hoguera (1889), Benito Pérez Galdós describes the consumptive artist Martín as having "las ilusiones de los tísicos en último grado": Obras Completas (Madrid: Aguilar, 1970), Novelas, II, 1362.

Numa floresta, pelos ladrões. (5-6)

Como esbeltas Imperatrizes
Barbaramente destronadas. (17-18)

These lines continue a whole series of such imagery found in Serres Chaudes:

"Les pensées d'une princesse qui a faim." 58

"Et toutes les filles du roi errent, un jour de diète,
à travers les prairies!" (p. 18)

"Toutes les filles du roi sont dans une barque sous
l'orage!
Et les princesses vont mourir en un champ de
ciguës!" (p. 45)

"Princesses abandonnées en des marécages sans issues!"
(p. 73)

Another is that of people imprisoned in a situation quite incompatible with their normal sphere of activity. Lines such as the following from "Asilo":

Alguns foram jardineiros: o asilo não tem jardim ...
Outros viveram no campo: o asilo é pobre, não tem horta ..
Alguns foram almocreves: do asilo é fechada a porta ...
(16-18)

distinctly recall others from Serres Chaudes:

"L'ennui d'un matelot dans le désert." (p. 7)

"... des paysans aux fenêtres de l'usine,
... un jardinier devenu tisserand." (p. 72)

"Au loin, passe un chasseur d'élans, devenu
infirmier." (p. 8) 59

And other images from Maeterlinck's poetry seem to re-echo in this poem. Compare:

"Une musique de cuivre aux fenêtres des incurables".
(p. 7)

"Il y avait une musique de saltimbanques autour de

⁵⁸ MAETERLINCK, Serres Chaudes, p. 7. Subsequent page references given in the text.

⁵⁹ Marcel Postic (op.cit.) sees the "chasseurs d'élans" of this line as deriving from "l'imagerie symboliste", and as referring to "la recherche de ce qui est rare" (p. 27). However, it seems more probable that "élan" is to be understood here in its rather less common acceptation of "grand cerf des pays du nord" ("elk", "moose").

la prison." (p. 85)

and:

Passa na rua, em baixo, um bando de saltimbancos. (37)

Eugénio de Castro is never quite able to free himself from dependence on the ideas of others. Yet these symbolist poems remain among the most original poems he would ever write. His choice of subject is largely his own, and though reliance on other models is undoubtedly present, it never reaches the proportions of Oaristos or Horas. Most important of all, however, is the fact that he did not write these poems simply to keep abreast of symbolism as the latest poetic novelty. They derive their emotional content from his life, and it is this which assures them a relative degree of originality.

---ooOoo---

If, for the moment, we leave aside the question of their success or failure as symbolist poems, and view these poems primarily as an attempt at expressing the poet's thoughts and feelings, then we can see that they form something of a high-water mark in the poetic output of Eugénio de Castro. The exaggerated pose of Oaristos and Horas, the desire to seem bizarre at all costs, the need to present personal experience as somehow superior, these aspects of Eugénio de Castro's early poetry have given way to a genuine attempt at self-expression. These poems are characterized by an avoidance of grandiose gestures and melodramatic effects, and an effort towards genuine intensity of feeling. In a sense Aníbal Pinto de Castro is correct when he suggests that "A experiência pessoal do Poeta, recriada embora à luz das influências francesas, desempenha na Silva um papel muito mais importante do que nas produções anteriores".⁶⁰ But in fact Oaristos and Horas

⁶⁰ CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação, p. 14.

are based as much on the poet's "experiência pessoal" as these poems. The crucial difference is that these symbolist poems represent one of the few moments in Eugénio de Castro's early poetic career where his life was sufficient to fill his poetry, and where he did not have to look to literature or philosophy for magnifying effects.

This phase did not last long, it is true. Already in "Os Tísicos" we witness the emergence of a vaguely pugnacious attitude towards grief and the first signs of cultivated spleen. But for the moment it is important that these poems aim at beauty of expression and quietness of tone, and the expression rather than the explanation of grief. Horror, plangency and mock-metaphysics will soon assert themselves.

Chapter Four

From Personal to Universal Grief

a). Variations on a Theme.

As we turn from the Symbolist poems of 1892 to the later poems of Silva and Interlúdio, a change of direction can be sensed in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. None of these later poems were published anywhere before their appearance in book-form in 1894, and as a result none of them can be dated with accuracy. Nonetheless, since they clearly adumbrate themes which will reappear in Belkiss - begun, in all probability in 1893 (see chapter six) - it is safe to assume that these poems were also written around that time. Some slight evidence can also be adduced to this effect from Eugénio de Castro's journalistic writings in the early months of 1893. The following image from "Écloga" - "E com uma voz, que era uma sombra de voz" (51) - also appears in an article he had published in the Novidades of 8 February 1893: "A voz velada, como uma sombra de voz".¹

The poems which we can ascribe to 1893 can be divided into two groups: those which deal with love as an entity in itself, and those which view love as part of a wider panorama of philosophical speculation. The first of these groups deals ostensibly with the theme of escape from the suffering caused by love. Three apparent forms of escape are offered: asceticism, illusionism and egoism. The poems carrying these themes are "Pastor Solitário" and "Écloga" for the first; "Semper Eadem" (second section, 21 - end) and "Catarina de Ataíde" for the second; and "Filha de Rei guardando patos" for the third.

For the various frameworks given to the theme underlying all of these poems, Eugénio de Castro looked to a variety of sources. I touched briefly on Schopenhauer's philosophy in connection with "Um cacto no pólo" and "Epílogo" of Horas. There are clear indications in Silva

¹ The article, entitled "Conde de Sabugosa", is one of a series of "Medalhões" all signed "Israfel". For an explanation of this pseudonym see chapter five.

that between 1890 and 1893 Eugénio de Castro's acquaintance with this philosophy became considerably deeper, and the mark of Schopenhauer on his poetry becomes increasingly apparent. It is necessary now to take a closer look at Schopenhauer's philosophy if the implications of "Pastor Solitário" and "Écloga" are to be fully understood.

For Schopenhauer, the world as we perceive it is merely the concrete manifestation of the Will to Live, the ultimate reality lying behind all things. Everything in the world obeys the imperatives of this Will, seeking to assert its existence before all others, and to fulfil its desires before all others. The Will to Live is not rational: "Der Wille, welcher rein an sich betrachtet, erkenntnislos und nur ein blinder, unaufhaltsamer Drang ist" ² [The Will, which considers only itself, is unknowing and nothing but a blind, incessant impulse.] It leads Man to strive after passions which the world cannot fulfil, and thus causes inevitable tragedy.

For Schopenhauer, the only permanent means of escape from this tragedy is the complete denial of the Will to Live. And, as we ourselves are merely manifestations of the Will, this necessarily implies a very thorough-going asceticism:

Wie den Willen selbst, so mortifiziert er die Sichtbarkeit, die Objektität desselben, den Leib; er nährt ihn kärglich, damit sein üppiges Blühen und Gedeihen nicht auch den Willen, desselben bloßer Ausdruck und Spiegel er ist, neu belebe und stärker anrege. So greift er zum Fasten, ja er greift zur Kasteiung und Selbstpeinigung, und durch stetes Entbehren und Leiden den Willen mehr und mehr zu brechen und zu töten, den er als die Quelle des eigenen und der Welt leidenden ³ Daseins erkennt und verabscheut.

[As he mortifies the Will itself, so he mortifies its visible manifestation, the body; he feeds it sparingly, so that it should not thrive and prosper luxuriantly, and thereby give new life to the Will and stimulate it all the more strongly, being merely its expression

² SCHOPENHAUER, Werke, II, 323.

³ Ibid., II, 451.

and mirror. He takes to fasting and self-mortification, he takes to breaking and weakening the Will more and more through constant privation and suffering, recognizing it as the source of his own suffering existence and that of the world, and abominating it as such.]

The result of this constant self-mortification is a state of indifference before the imperatives of the Will: "Der Mensch gelangt zum Zustande der freiwilligen Entsagung, der Resignation, der wahren Gelassenheit".⁴ [The man attains the state of voluntary renunciation, of resignation, of true calmness and complete Will-lessness.] In "Pastor Solitário" and "Écloga" we find a much diluted form of this asceticism, adapted to fit the author's particular situation.

However, these two poems are not indebted solely to Schopenhauer. They witness the confluence of two of the most important influences on Eugénio de Castro's early poetry: that of Schopenhauer and that of Moréas. In chapter three, I mentioned the preface to Moréas's Pèlerin Passionné. In the Figaro of 14 September 1891 he went on to publish his "Manifeste de L'École Romane", the name he gave to the new poetic movement heralded by this preface. In this manifesto he stated: "L'École romane française revendique le principe gréco-latin, principe fondamental des lettres françaises".⁵ There are frequent signs of the influence of these precepts in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro written between 1893 and 1895.

Both "Pastor Solitário" and "Écloga" employ a bucolic convention, though it is more apparent in the first than the second. Examples of this convention can be found in the works of many Classical authors, for example Tibullus (Elegies, I, i) or above all Horace, the man most frequently connected with this state of "aurea mediocritas":

Purae rivus aquae silvaeque jugorum
Paucorum et segetis certa fides meae

⁴ Ibid., II, 448.

⁵ Quoted in JOUANNY, p. 552.

Fulgentem imperio fertilis Africae 6
Fallit sorte beatior.

In "Pastor Solitário" this bucolic idyll has a symbolic value: it represents an ascetic answer to life in the Schopenhauerian sense.

Aníbal Pinto de Castro suggests that the "encenação bucólica" of this poem is used "não para exprimir o amor, mas para traduzir o pessimismo, a desilusão e o vácuo que restam, realizado o desejo durante muito tempo perseguido".⁷ This is manifestly incorrect. The grief of the shepherd derives specifically from the fact that his desires have not been fulfilled. He makes this quite clear:

Quis ver-me bem alto
E bem admirado:
Quis ver-me bem alto,
Fui crucificado! (5-8)

Nor does the bucolic setting in any way symbolize grief. This had indeed been the case with certain images which had appeared towards the end of Safira:

Tive leito de penas, e agora durmo sobre as relvas
molhadas.
Comi em pratos de ouro, bebi em copos de prata: agora
sustento-me de raízes e o meu copo é minha mão.

But when these images reappear in "Pastor Solitário" their connotations have changed entirely:

Como pães de prata,
Louro mel, divino:
Nem uma açafata
Tem comer mais fino. (25-8)
Durmo bem e pouco
Num leito de giestas. (33-4)

A set of conditions which once depicted inner devastation now signify peace and tranquillity - voluntary solitude has replaced abandonment:

⁶ HORACE, Opera (Oxford: At the Clarendon Press, s/d), "Odes", III, xvi, 29-32. (Pages unnumbered.)

⁷ CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação, p. 15

Deste meu recinto
 Jamais me separo,
 Só se alguém pressinto,
 Que fujo e não paro. (29-32)

and suffering, we are given to believe, has been overcome as a result:

Ninguém tenha dó
 Deste foragido:
 Vivendo tão só,
 Vivo divertido. (41-44)

"Pastor Solitário" is a much weakened expression of Schopenhauerian asceticism. It reflects the author's view of life - "A vida era má, / Da vida fugi" (11-12) - and above all his experiences in love:

Num peito busquei
 Perfumes amenos,
 Perfumes busquei
 E achei só venenos! (1-4)

However, these experiences remain on an individual level. The shepherd has found love to be illusory, but does not maintain, as Schopenhauer does, that love is an essential part of universal illusion. "Écloga" takes us nearer this stance. It is the first and most explicit sign of the shift in Eugénio de Castro's poetry from the simple expression of grief to the viewing of grief in love in would-be philosophical terms. It clearly marks the transition from one phase to the other, and as such it deserves our close attention.

The bucolic convention of "Écloga" again derives from Classical and Renaissance sources. As António da Silva Gonçalves rightly points out,⁸ the following lines:

Sua estriga, dourada como o dia,
 Tão perto está de seus cabelos belos,
 Que a gente fica sem saber o que ela fia,
 Se o louro linho, se os seus cabelos. (5-8)

are visibly modelled on the following from the tenth eclogue of Rodrigues Lobo:

⁸ GONÇALVES, Um bocado da Vida, II, 125.

Duvida o que está diante,
 Quando a ve mungir o gado,
 Se he tudo leite amassado,
 Se tudo as mãos de Vilante. 9

"Écloga" provides an important variation on the traditional eclogue convention. In the Classical and Renaissance eclogue, the exuberance and lushness of Nature are interrupted by a disturbance from outside - death, grief, madness. Here, however, the disturbance comes from within. It is Nature itself which is treacherous, in true Schopenhauerian style. The lushness and exuberance of Nature are themselves the causes of grief. It is no doubt this which has caused António da Silva Gonçalves to see this poem as an "enlace artístico do gosto antigo e do moderno". 10

"Écloga" opens with a narrative passage in which there is no immediate suggestion of a personal element. Shortly after this passage, however, such an element is introduced, and it gradually becomes apparent that the entire poem is a monologue. The narrator recounts events recalled vividly, as the present tenses and the sustained use of dialogue suggest. But these events belong to the past: past tenses dominate the poem from line 42 on.

Marcos, the narrator, tells how Inês, his beloved, rushes to meet him when he arrives. She offers him pleasure in the form of physical delight. The fullness of love is expressed in terms of the fullness of Nature:

Aqui tens o mel desta comprida trança
 E o queijinho fresco deste seio em flor ... (23-4)
 Aqui tens meus lábios, aqui tens cerejas. (28)

The solution to suffering in love this poem ultimately offers will be a denial of Nature.

Marcos refuses Inês's invitation, and she realizes that he no longer loves her. He explains this sudden change

⁹ FRANCISCO RODRIGUES LOBO, Églogas: conforme a edição 'princeps' (1605): (Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1964), p. 255, l. 260-263.

¹⁰ GONÇALVES, II, 124.

by spelling out a message of Schopenhauerian asceticism:

Não te cases, sê sempre ingénua e pura ...
Semeia mágoas quem colhe beijos ... (39-40)

Love for Inês was what is sweet and wholesome. For Marcos it is what is wild and harmful. The image he employs reveals this attitude clearly:

Põe um açaimo nos teus desejos ... (38)

We are no longer in the realm of individual experience here. This poem offers a generalization on grief, clearly annotated by the unspecified "quem" of line 40. It adopts the Schopenhauerian view of love as universally harmful, and the Schopenhauerian equation of love and physical desire.

The second major innovation of "Écloga" is its didacticism - a lesson for humanity based on the generalizations mentioned. Indeed, the remainder of the poem is reminiscent of a parable. Marcos takes Inês to a spot where they find a well overgrown with weeds. A star is reflected in the water, shining at the bottom of the well like a jewel. Marcos invites Inês to try to reach the star, but she knows that this would mean certain death. This makes clear the ostensible theme of the poem, which is, in any case, spelled out unequivocally by Marcos. The star which Inês sees is not real. It is an illusion. It disguises the water - symbolizing death - with an appearance of beauty. It thus symbolizes the illusion of love: the hidden reality is suffering and pain. The philosophizing of this parable is manifestly Schopenhauerian. It employs the term "Ilusão" in its typically Schopenhauerian sense ("Schein", "scheinbar", etc.):

Inês, ingénua que te perdes
pela Ilusão! (62-63)

It signifies the veil of Maya, preventing Man from penetrating to the real nature of the Universe. Also Schopenhauerian is its use of the term "ambições" (84), signifying the passions ceaselessly aroused by the Will to Live. Within this Schopenhauerian framework, the avoidance

of suffering can be achieved only by the renunciation of love, which implies obligatory chastity:

... sejam puros teus dias,
Sejam sempre puras tuas lindas faces. (78-9)

The poem ends with reference to three objects, whose whiteness makes them symbols of purity:

Levanta os olhos às constelações,
Lava no luar as mãos,
Enfeita com jasmins as tuas ambições ... (82-4)

However, the realization that "Écloga" is a monologue rather than an impersonal narrative gives it a depth of feeling we might not otherwise have suspected. It reveals a disparity between the ostensible lesson and the real significance of the poem. Marcos presents himself throughout as a man of steel, strict almost to the point of insensitivity. But his narration furnishes us with information contradictory to the indications he gives "expressis verbis". The nature of this disparity can be seen from a study of three short passages (1-12, 45-58, 53-61) all characterized by a kind of lingering description. They are deviations from the story-line, but not digressions within the structure of the poem. They represent an upsurge of feeling on the part of the narrator, causing him to abandon the sequence of his story, and linger in the description of some element not strictly within his narrative. Presenting himself as a man of steel, he cannot allow the expression of his feelings to be explicit, but these feelings persist in his descriptive asides. The opening scene describing Inês, for example, (1-12) lingers in admiration of her graceful beauty. It breathes affection for the gentle girl spinning in the shade. This affection is apparently subverted by the following image:

E corre ao meu encontro, alegre e leve,
Toda em sorrisos de beladona. (11-12)

But this interpretation does not rise naturally from the description. It is imposed upon it as an act of mental discipline. And when Marcos lingers in description of Inês's

hands (45-8), it is his own sadness as narrator which determines the nature of the images employed:

Tomei-lhe as mãos magrinhas, desmaiadas,
Como lírios convalescentes,
Tristes como Rainhas doentes
Pedindo esmola pelas estradas. (45-8)

Again, as Marcos and Inês make their way to the well, our attention is momentarily diverted as evening falls over the sea in a scene of blinding light. The description of the sea becomes the expression of the emotive atmosphere of the poem: an atmosphere of helplessness reaching out to encroach on simple scenic description and to fill it with its own feelings of weariness and grief:

E do alto mar, em sobressalto,
Nervosamente, febrilmente,
As ondas com seus mantos de cambraia
Vinham pedir socorro à praia. (58-61)

There is thus genuine depth and insight in this poem. It is characterized by a strange tension between the desire to seem iron-willed - resulting in forceful exposition and flagrant sermonizing, and the inability to suppress feeling entirely. This ambivalence derives largely from the fact that although Schopenhauerian asceticism views love purely as physical desire - the view propounded by Marcos the sermonizer - the idea of love as affection - the view of Marcos the narrator - runs like an undercurrent throughout the poem. "Écloga" thus represents something of a half-way house along Eugénio de Castro's road from personal to universal grief. The intensity of personal feeling remains, but the attraction of philosophizing is there. This is a road which will eventually lead from genuine emotion to empty abstractions and horror.

--ooOoo--

For the themes of illusionism and egoism we must turn to France. Illusionism, which dominates "Semper Eadem" and "Catarina de Ataíde", is the first sign in the work of Eugénio de Castro of the influence of Villiers de l'Isle-

Adam, mentor and almost father-figure to the Symbolist generation. Villiers's cult of illusion was so notorious that Rémy de Gourmont later described him as "l'exorciste du réel".¹¹

There is ample evidence of Eugénio de Castro's interest in Villiers. Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho informs us that in 1889 Eugénio de Castro had attended the funeral of Villiers in Paris.¹² And from 1892 there is frequent mention of Villiers in the writings of the Portuguese poet. In an article entitled "Poesia Moderna", published in the Jornal do Comércio of 12 June 1892, he named Villiers as one of the "quatro evangelistas"¹³ to whom Portugal should look for a renewal of its poetry. In its first edition in 1894, Silva carried as its epigraph the following quotation, attributed to Villiers de l'Isle-Adam:

Je n'écris que pour les personnes atteintes d'âme.¹⁴

In the same year, Villiers was named as one of the four dedicatees of the first edition of Interlúdio. And in a speech delivered during the "processo de admissão" of João de Deus to the Instituto, part of the general assembly of 3 March 1895, Eugénio de Castro spoke of "poetas e artistas da grandeza de [...] Villiers de l'Isle-Adam".¹⁵

In his article on Villiers and Eugénio de Castro, René Poupart limits the influence of the French writer to certain ideas which appear in Belkiss and Sagramor. He

¹¹ REMY DE GOURMONT, Le Livre des Masques (Paris: Mercure de France, 4th. ed., 1905), p. 91.

¹² CARVALHO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 33. The young German poet Stefan George (see page 74) was also present at this funeral. See: A.W. RAITT, Villiers de l'Isle-Adam et le Mouvement Symboliste (Paris: Librairie José Corti, 1965), p. 397. But there is nothing to suggest that the two poets ever became acquainted.

¹³ The others were Poe, Baudelaire and Wagner.

¹⁴ I have been unable to locate this quotation in Villiers's work. However, the idea it expresses is typical of Villiers, and it was no doubt written by him.

¹⁵ O Instituto, Vol. 42 (1895), p. 130

sees as the main source of this influence the two works Axël and Akëdysséril. But the influence of Villiers is apparent in the work of Eugénio de Castro some time before the publication of Belkiss. And while it is not possible, as with certain other writers, to pinpoint the source of his influence exactly, there seems no over-riding reason to limit it to the two books mentioned. Conscious commitment to a knowingly sustained illusion is the theme of countless of Villiers's works. It appears in Véra, whose protagonist the comte d'Athol refuses to accept the death of his young wife and succeeds in recreating her in his imagination, concluding that "Les idées sont des êtres vivants".¹⁶ We find it in Isis, expressed in a formula which will reappear in Belkiss: "Gardez vos rêves! ... Ils valent mieux que la réalité."¹⁷ It is above all the message of L'Ève Future, where Edison persuades his friend Ewald to create in his imagination the illusory figure of Hadaly:

Illusion pour illusion, l'Être de cette présence mixte que l'on appelle Hadaly dépend de la volonté libre de celui qui OSERA la concevoir. SUGGÉREZ-LUI DE TOUT VOTRE ÊTRE! Affirmez-le, d'un peu de votre foi vive, comme vous affirmez l'Être, après tout si relatif, de toutes les illusions qui vous entourent. ¹⁸

Edison later declares: "Sans l'illusion tout périt. On ne l'évite pas. L'illusion, c'est la lumière".¹⁹

It should be noted, however, that the optimistic attitude towards this illusionism in the early poetry of Eugénio de Castro weighs against the probability of its having been inspired by Axël or Akëdysséril (both of 1886), as the ending of both these books points to the necessity of death to sustain the illusion. Thus, while these works cannot be ruled out completely (I shall discuss them in greater depth in connection with Belkiss and Sagramor), it

¹⁶ VILLIERS, Ouvres Complètes, II, 27.

¹⁷ Ibid., IX, 45.

¹⁸ Ibid., I, 136.

¹⁹ Ibid., I, 259.

is perhaps more probable that the message of the poems in question was inspired by some of Villiers's earlier works, where the element of pessimism is not yet present.

--ooOoo--

A valuable insight into the illusionism of "Semper Eadem" can be gained from a comparison between the original version as it appeared in the Jornal do Comércio of 5 June 1892 (dated 7/6/1891) and the version which finally appeared in Silva. The differences between the 1892 and the 1894 versions suggests that the influence of Villiers on Eugénio de Castro appeared later than 1892.

"Semper Eadem" dealt originally with the rejection suffered by Eugénio de Castro in 1891 (see pages 115-116). As the girl whom the poet addresses throughout disappears towards the end of the poem (80), the original version ended thus:

Noite cerrada. Uma lua de cera afoga-se nos pantanos
verdes. A floresta, enmusselinada de neblinas,
parece uma donzela morta ...

Minha alma, cautela!
Na colina do passado aflui
A teoria das Trespassadas. Fechemos a janela.

In the final version, however, far from disappearing from view, the moon rises in a blaze of light. And the poet, musing that the moon might be the girl, transformed, rising mystically into the sky, decides to adore her as the moon, since he can no longer adore her in reality. The operative term is "Ilusão":

Semeadora de Ilusões! Que esta Ilusão
Seja para mim uma verdade doce! (91-2)

Eugénio de Castro uses the term "Ilusão" in two distinct meanings in the poems studied in this chapter, and care must be taken to discriminate between the two. The first is that of Schopenhauer's universal illusion, as already discussed in connection with "Écloga". In "Semper Eadem", however, the moon is a purely illusory representation of

the beloved who, in her physical presence on earth, caused the poet so much real suffering and pain. He commits himself to adoring this illusion of the girl, rather than suffer the grief caused by her actual presence. There is a certain pseudo-mystical quality about this ending. The shepherd's final words describe a definite move from the conflicts of life to the unchanging and unchangeable as represented by the sky:

E vós, cansados olhos meus,
Tão fatigados da mundana guerra,
Já que a não tendes adorado na terra,
Adorai-a nos céus! (93-96)

The wording of this conclusion is not unlike that which can be found in genuine religious poetry. One need only think of the following stanza from Fray Luis de León's "Noche Serena":

¡Ay! levantad los ojos
A aquesta celestial esfera,
Burlaréis los antojos
De aquesta lisonjera
Vida, con cuanto teme y quanto espera. 20

We find the same mixture of illusionism and mysticism in "Catarina de Ataíde" of Interlúdio.²¹ The mystical element of this poem is suggested by the quotation from Camões (from a poem once believed to have been written about Catarina de Ataíde) which precedes it:

Repousa lá no céu eternamente ... 22

But despite the insistence on purity and sanctity in this poem, it soon becomes obvious that religious belief is seen merely as another form of illusionism. It frees the

²⁰ FRAY LUIS DE LEÓN, Poesias (Madrid: Compañía Ibero-Americana de publicaciones, s/d), p. 37.

²¹ The figure of Catarina de Ataíde held a special attraction for Eugénio de Castro. She had been the subject of his "No Desterro" in Canções de Abril (1884), and of the four poems "Nocturno", "A Despedida", "Estrela Confidante" and "Depois" of Per Umbram (1887). See: ALEXANDRE CABRAL, Notas Oitocentistas (Lisbon: Plátano Editora, 1973), "As Primícias poéticas de Eugénio de Castro", pp. 299-303.

²² From sonnet 48. See: LUÍS DE CAMÕES, Obras Completas (Lisbon: Livraria Sá da Costa, 1971), II, 213.

believer from contact with the real world. The term "Ilusão" appears again:

Foi-te a Ilusão qual ama carinhosa,
Qual sombra doce de floridos ramos,
Qual mão de seda, derramando mimos' ... (9-11)

This poem moves imperceptibly from the personal to the general, closing with a reference to the fate of all humanity:

Feliz! Feliz! Tiveste, ó venturosa,
O perfume de quanto ambicionamos,
Sem o travo de quanto possuímos. (12-14)

Even so, it never reaches the level of a philosophical pronouncement. These, however, will not be lacking in later poems.

--ooOoo--

The final theme of this group of poems, egoism, is given expression in "Filha de Rei guardando patos". This poem results from the fusion of three distinct influences working on Eugénio de Castro. The first of these is Jean Moréas. In an article published in the Diário Popular of 27 July 1893, Eugénio de Castro reaffirmed his desire to champion a Portuguese version of the aims of Moréas - "la communion du Moyen-Âge Français et la Renaissance Française, fondus et transfigurés en le principe [...] de l'Âme moderne" (see pages 135-136). In his article he wrote:

Toda a ornamentação dos velhos vilancicos e romances - pagens, pastores, infantes com mantéus de lhama, guerreiros vestidos de ferro, princesas guardando patos - todos os velhos ritmos, todas as velhas expressões poéticas, poderão servir anormalmente, com um valor exclusivamente simbólico, para emissão dalguns raros estados de alma, mas só com esse valor, apenas em face desses estados de alma.

This statement clearly prefigures the composition of the "Filha de Rei", and points to the origin of the story on which the poem is based. Vieira de Almeida informs us that it derives from a "conto popular" ²³. At the same time,

²³ ALMEIDA, "Descendo a Encosta", p. 107.

it is not unlike certain passages from Bernardim Ribeiro's second eclogue. There too a beautiful girl watches over ducks:

Joana patas guardava 24
pela ribeira do Tejo.
fermosa bem parecia
aos olhos de quem na olhava. 25

She too admires herself in the stream:

Dizem que neste meo
se esteve Joana olhando,
e, descobrindo o seu seo, 26
oulhou-se.

The remaining two influences are also French. As regards its theme, the "Filha de Rei" is prefaced by the following quotation from Maurice Barrès:

La force de l'intelligence et de la sensibilité
appartient à ceux-là seuls qui vivent dans un 27
contact sincère avec leur moi.

Barrès was at this time evolving his "culte du moi", spanning the trilogy Sous l'œil des Barbares (1888), Un Homme Libre (1889) and Le Jardin de Bérénice (1891), as well as L'Ennemi des Lois (1892). But if he suggested the general framework of egoism present in this poem, the details of its expression owe much to another writer - Mallarmé.

As was the case with Villiers, there is ample evidence that Eugénio de Castro was familiar with the works of Mallarmé. We have the testimony of Álvaro J. da Costa Pimpão - who, as related by M.E. de Jesus Gonçalves, has a bill of sale so proving ²⁸ - that Eugénio de Castro had,

²⁴ BERNARDIM RIBEIRO, Éclogas (Lisbon: Livraria Popular de Francisco Franco, s/d), p. 57, l. 5-6.

²⁵ Ibid., p. 59. l. 39-40.

²⁶ Ibid., p. 62. l. 100-103.

²⁷ I have been unable to locate this quotation in the works of Barrès. It does not seem to come from any of the four books I mention, and may have been taken from one of Barrès's many newspaper articles. The idea it expresses is typical of Barrès, and it was no doubt written by him.

²⁸ JESUS GONÇALVES, p. 72.

during his stay in Paris in 1889, bought a copy of "L'Après-Midi d'un Faune". Mallarmé's name appears in the "Carta ao Sr. Conselheiro Chagas" published in the Jornal do Comércio of 7 February 1892. It also appears in the first of "Os Modernos Bizantinos", a series of translations from French authors begun in the Novidades of 12 April 1893.²⁹ Later still, in the "Revista Bibliográfica" for January 1895 in O Instituto,³⁰ Eugénio de Castro would mention "os poemas [...] de Mallarmé" (p. 63).

The influence of Mallarmé on Eugénio de Castro is not of the strongest, but the similarities between the "Filha de Rei" and "Hérodiade" are unmistakable. Though not published until 1899, "Hérodiade" had been known in literary circles some time before,³¹ and there can be no doubt that Eugénio de Castro had somehow become acquainted with it. To it we can ascribe some instances of very close imitation. The lines:

Quando, distante dessa opulência real,
Nua como o luar, me banhava indolente
Do meu espelho no frígido cristal! (132-34)

clearly recall Mallarmé's:

O miroir!
Eau froide par l'ennui dans ton cadre gelée.³²

The hypersensuality of Eugénio de Castro's princess seems modelled on that of Hérodiade. The pleasure she feels as the water closes around her:

Água, és de gelo e no entretanto acendes

²⁹ The series is unsigned, but is almost certainly the work of Eugénio de Castro (see chapter six). He was on the editorial staff of the Novidades at the time. In the Novidades of 5 July 1892 it was announced: "Faz, desde hoje, parte da redacção das Novidades o nosso amigo Eugénio de Castro".

³⁰ This article is signed 'E', but can safely be attributed to Eugénio de Castro. He had been elected "sócio efectivo" of the Institute during the General Assembly of 24 November 1894. See: O Instituto, Vol. 41 (1894), p. 1025.

³¹ See PRAZ, p. 317.

³² Mallarmé, Oeuvres Complètes, p. 45, l. 140-141.

Brasas ardentes nas minhas veias. (49-50)

is similar to the thrill of Hérodiade as she feels herself enveloped by the light of the moon:

Toi qui meurs, toi qui brûles de chasteté,
Nuit blanche de glaçons et de neige cruelle! 33

A further characteristic shared by the two heroines is the towering pride which causes the princess to shun human contact of any kind. Lines such as:

E vim viver ao pé deste regato
.....
A contemplar-me, conservando intacto
O mistério da minha formosura. (104-107)

again recall Mallarmé's:

Et pour qui, dévorée
D'angoisses, gardez-vous la splendeur ignorée 34
Et le mystère vain de votre être.

or:

Oui, c'est pour moi, pour moi, que je fleuris, déserte. 35

If we turn our attention to the theme of the poem, we find that the princess of "Filha de Rei" has retreated into a Nature which is not simply comfortable, as in "Pastor Solitário", but welcoming and voluptuous. The entire poem is a study in voluptuousness. As the girl undressed, she tells of her great beauty and unrepentent Narcissism:

Fico a admirar-me nua, na corrente,
Namorada de mim, como Narciso ... (9-10)

Such is her beauty that even the elements of Nature rush to see her:

Eu, o encanto dos lípidos regatos,
Que correm léguas só para me verem nua! (21-22)

The would-be purity of her solitude is likewise a function of her sensuality. Nature is merely a reflection of herself.

33 Ibid., p. 47, l. 204-5.

34 Ibid., p. 46, l. 169-171.

35 Ibid., p. 47, l. 182.

Her enjoyment of Nature, Nature's enjoyment of her are aspects of her enjoyment of her own beauty.

As she bathes in the stream, the princess ponders over the destiny of the water, doomed to run for ever without ever standing still, leaving her beauty behind to cause disasters at sea and wash ashore the hideous bodies of shipwrecked sailors. It longs to return to her beauty, but is never able to do so fully again. This is the secret of her bliss. Loving only herself, communing only with herself, taking pleasure only from the enjoyment of her own beauty, she has freed herself from the torrent of conflicting egoisms which rules the world. She is free from dependence on anything other than herself. Unlike the river, her happiness does not depend on another's choosing to follow the path along which her destiny takes her.

--ooOoo--

Beneath the varying frameworks they employ, the five poems I have just studied share a common theme: they all propose, in their various ways, the avoidance of emotional commitment to another person. With the exception of "Écloga", which I have already examined in some depth, they formulate an optimistic attitude towards the forms of non-commitment they propose. Thus asceticism:

Vai de vento em popa
Minha vida lisa. ("Pastor Solitário", 17-8)

illusionism:

Que esta Ilusão
Seja para mim uma verdade doce!
("Semper Eadem", 91-2)
Foi-te a Ilusão qual ama carinhosa.
("Catarina de Ataíde", 9)

egoism:

E vim viver ao pé deste regato
Onde passo, vestida de ventura.
("Filha de Rei", 149-50)

Moreover, in all three of the frameworks identified, this

avoidance of commitment is presented as a positive cult of purity:

... sejam puros teus dias,
Sejam sempre puras tuas lindas faces.
("Écloga", 79-80)

Filha de Inferno, pela beleza desmedida,
E, pela pureza ideal, filha do Céu.
("Filha de Rei", 23-4)

Deu-te o Senhor o Lírio Cristalino,
Que se quebra mal vem o impuro gozo;
Tu o tomaste inteiro e luminoso,
E tal o conservaste, ingênuo e fino ...
("Catarina de Ataíde", 5-8)

But this apparent optimism cannot hide an oppressive air of confinement in many lines:

Põe um açaimo nos teus desejos. ("Écloga", 38)

Deste meu recinto
Jamais me separo. ("Pastor Solitário", 29-30)

And indeed, if we look closely at these poems, it becomes apparent that they are, at base, variations on a theme of loneliness. They preach stasis on the fringe of life. In "De Toledo para o mar", we saw how a cycle of grief was ended as the river was about to flow into the sea. In life stasis is impossible: the river must flow into the sea. But the poems of 1893 reject the return to life adumbrated in "De Toledo para o mar". In the "Filha de Rei", if the river wishes to perpetuate its enjoyment of the girl's beauty rather than experience the horrors of shipwrecks at sea, it must find a way of returning to her once it has passed her. Nature itself must be made to serve a desire for beauty:

Longe de mim, nas noites silenciosas,
Não podendo voltar para tras, sem poder
Tornar a ver meu corpo, às nuvens gloriosas
Subirá, e cairá, em orvalho, nas rosas,
Para me tornar a ver ...
Águas verdes, da cor do alecrim do norte,
Que grande chuva, que triste chuva deve haver
No dia da minha morte.
(95-102)

Or the river might stand still altogether:

Porque me deixas? porque me deixas?

Porque não paras tu, gelando, e me não matas?
(70-1)

for the cyclical movement itself implies an attempt to halt the course of life. But the achievement of circular motion is connected in each case with the idea of death. The water from the river will return as rain on the day of the princess's death. Or again, the only way the river can stop to enjoy her beauty is by freezing around her. And if it does so, she is imprisoned and dies.

This is the self-imposed limitation of these poems. If active participation in life is stopped, it is not only its horrors which are avoided: the enjoyment of its pleasures also comes to an end. And if these are to continue, they must be committed instead to illusionism. The asceticism of "Écloga" and "Pastor Solitário" is not enough, because it fulfils neither the emotional nor the physical needs of the poet. These needs find illusory fulfilment in the fantasies of "Semper Eadem" and "Filha de Rei".

The would-be optimism of these poems represents an attempt to sustain a verbal illusion of the desirability of loneliness. They express the continuation of the loneliness freely conveyed in the symbolist poems of 1892, but the attitude has changed. They attempt to embellish this loneliness by presenting it as a positive factor in a consciously chosen cult of purity or philosophy of withdrawal. But this is a literary and philosophical veil drawn over their real concern. They preach the avoidance of love to disguise the absence of love, and it is the impression of loneliness, rather than its would-be beauty, which predominates in the end.

This little group of poems is the expression of a kind of mental imprisonment. In them, Eugénio de Castro withdraws behind walls of literature and philosophy where life cannot continue, and must be replaced by verbal structures sustaining an illusion of life. Asceticism is more easily preached than practised. Schopenhauer himself made no pretence of being an ascetic, commenting wryly: "Es ist

daher so wenig nötig, daß der Heilige ein Philosoph, als daß der Philosoph ein Heiliger sei". ³⁶ [There is no more need for the saint to be a philosopher, than there is for the philosopher to be a saint.] Illusionism soon leads to despair, as Villiers was to show in his later works, notably Axël. And extreme solipsism such as that of the princess is possible only on paper. Eugénio de Castro's term of mental imprisonment was to be long. The various forms it was to take will become apparent as I turn my attention to the remaining poems written in 1893.

--ooOoo--

b). The circle widens.

In the poems studied in the first part of this chapter, Eugénio de Castro had looked to literary and philosophical frameworks to lend an appearance of beauty to a less agreeable reality. As his acquaintance with Schopenhauer grew deeper, however, the use to which he put these philosophical frameworks gradually changed. He now discovered the possibility of employing them to impose vicarious depth on the interpretation of his own experience. This of course enabled him to compensate for his own inability to interpret that experience in personal depth.

The increasing influence of Schopenhauer causes several changes in the elements Eugénio de Castro employs to express his own experience. The total equation of love and physical desire, first hinted at in "Écloga", soon asserts itself. And physical desire itself is eventually subsumed in an undifferentiated view of desire or ambition of any kind. The poems I shall study in the second part of this chapter - poems written almost certainly in the later part of 1893 - also document the move from personal grief to universal grief and pseudo-philosophical

³⁶ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 452.

pessimism. As he moves closer and closer to philosophical speculation, the poet's own tragedy is subsumed in the tragedy of life, and his personal experience, in any individual sense, disappears from view.

An important step in this move towards a purely philosophical interpretation of experience is taken by "Judite, Dulce, Lavínia e outras" of Silva, and by "Amores" and "Beijos" of Interlúdio. Structurally, the first two of these poems are closely connected. Their respective opening sets of twelve lines are merely variants of each other. In each poem, the names of the girls to whom the poet turns, or has turned his fancy follow fast on each other's heels. The opening lines of "Beijos" also present us with a fast-moving Don-Juanism where physical thrill seems to be the only goal.

There is a distinct thematic advance within this little group of poems. "Judite, Dulce, Lavínia e outras" presents us with a would-be cavalier "love-them-and-leave-them" theme. The poet likens himself to a river, merely brushing past the flowers on its banks. The entire poem consists of only one sentence, and ends on a suspension. It translates into concrete terms the sweep of the river which never halts long enough to effect real possession. The river to which the poet likens himself represents a parallel course to life itself, flowing alongside it and merely tangential to it. Permanent possession is explicitly rejected: "Amá-las de fugida / Amá-las de partida" (15-16). At the same time this poem is optative rather than narrative: "Todas elas, todas! eu quisera ter" (14); "Quisera amá-las" (18), (my italics). It describes an attitude towards love which the poet would like to adopt, but which is somehow out of keeping with reality. And it is the realities of the problem which are shown in "Amores" and "Beijos".

As against its companion-piece, "Amores" is written in the past historic. It purports to substantiate its message by reference to past events. Its message is simple: real possession results in disillusion, reality is unable

to fulfil desire. This lesson is spelled out in a formula whose abstract concepts and gnomic present - the only present tense in the entire poem - offer a generalization based on the author's experience:

Ante a posse, os desejos esmorecem. (23)

In "Beijos" too the renewal of physical stimulus is unable to bring fulfilment. Though the poet receives kisses from countless numbers of girls, disillusion is again the result of possession:

Mas ... ai! minhas pobres ilusões fanadas!
Sempre, em tantas bocas, um só beijo, o mesmo! (19-20)

The inspiration behind these poems is undoubtedly Schopenhauer. For Schopenhauer, the concept of happiness is a negative, not a positive one. It is simply, in his terms, "Die Befriedigung von einem Schmerz, von einer Not".³⁷ [The alleviation of a pain or need.] Man's servility to his passions results in a constant straining to fulfil desire. But desire once fulfilled, given the negative nature of the state attained, loses its meaning and turns to emptiness and boredom:

Zwischen Wollen und Erreichen fließt nun durchaus jedes Menschenleben fort. Der Wunsch ist, seiner Natur nach, Schmerz: die Erreichung gebiert bald Sättigung: das Ziel war nur scheinbar: Besitz nimmt den Reiz weg: unter einer neuen Gestalt stellt sich der Wunsch, das Bedürfnis ein: wo nicht, so folgt Öde, Leere, Langeweile, gegen welche der Kampf ebenso quälend ist, wie³⁸ gegen die Not.

[Between desire and fulfilment each and every human life runs out its course. Desire, by its very nature, is pain: fulfilment soon begets satiety: the object of desire was merely illusory: possession robs it of its attraction: desire and need present themselves in a new form: if not, desolation, emptiness, boredom ensue, and the fight against these is as dreadful as that against need.]

Schopenhauer resumes this part of his philosophy thus:
"Denn freilich sind Not und Langeweile die beiden Polen

³⁷ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 376.

³⁸ Ibid., II, 370.

des Menschenleben". ³⁹ [Need and boredom are indeed the two poles of human existence.]

Though all three poems pose the problem of possession, only "Beijos" has a solution to offer. And this solution is likewise Schopenhauerian. The answer to suffering in love is universal continence. The temptations of the flesh are treacherous, and avoidance of grief follows only on the cult of purity. The lesson is generalized, and addressed to future generations:

Fugi da luxúria à pérfida vaga,
Fazei da Pureza vossa noiva e irmã! (31-32)

In this little group of poems we have moved from the personal grief of "Écloga" to a view of love as unable to bring fulfilment on a universal plane. But how convincing is the philosophical framework in which the disillusion of these poems is expressed? There is in fact a lack of consequence between the solution offered, and the problem of possession as it is stated. The emphasis in these three poems is on love as physical desire. The poet seeks exhilaration. This is obvious in the images he employs:

Em cada uma eu via o céu aberto.
("Amores", 19)

Doidinho de amores, doidinho, doidinho,
Como uma menina por lendas de mouras.
("Beijos", 5-6)

But when he describes his disillusion in "Beijos", it is not simply physical. It goes much deeper. It is the result of "Beijos [...] tão feitos para a alma os esquecer" (21-22) (my italics). Love has let him down, not because it is universal illusion, but because he has reduced it to the level of physical thrill and exhilaration. Thrill and exhilaration are confused with genuine fulfilment. The answer, then, may not be a retreat into chastity, but a revision of the poet's understanding of love. This will be one of the greatest problems of Eugénio de Castro's future

³⁹ Ibid., VI, 316.

poetry, and will find its ultimate expression in Sagramor.

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In the Diário Popular of 3 September 1893 Eugénio de Castro published a review of the Aleluias of Raimundo Correia. In the course of this review he wrote of Correia:

Filosoficamente, o autor das Aleluias é um schopenhaueriano, um pessimista que não tem dúvidas sobre a absoluta autocracia do egoísmo, que contempla a vida por cristais fumados, surpreendendo a perpétua e vitoriosa assunção dos ódios, das injúrias e das deslealdades.

This quotation clearly marks a change in Eugénio de Castro's view of Schopenhauer's philosophy. Before now, the elements of Schopenhauer's philosophy included in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro have invariably been connected with the theme of love. Here, however, he moves from love to the wider implications of Schopenhauer's theories on life. The quotation given clearly reflects the philosopher's views on "der Egoismus, der jedem Dinge in der Natur wesentlich ist", ⁴⁰ [egoism, which is essential to everything in nature] and on "der Triumph der Bosheit [...] und der rettungslose Fall der Gerechten und Unschuldigen". ⁴¹ [the triumph of malice . . . and the irretrievable fall of the just and the innocent.]

This widening view is also reflected in Eugénio de Castro's poetry. He moves to interpreting tragedy not simply in terms of physical desire, but in terms of the inability of reality to fulfil desires of any kind. For Schopenhauer, Man is constantly fired not only by physical desires, but by desires and ambitions of all kinds:

Der Mensch, als die vollkommenste Objektivation jenes Willens, ist demgemäß auch das bedürftigste unter allen Wesen: er ist konkretes Wollen und Bedürfen durch und durch, ist ein Konkrement von tausend

⁴⁰ Ibid., II, 392.

⁴¹ Ibid., II, 298.

Bedürfnissen. 42

[Man, as the most complete objectivization of the Will, is accordingly the most needy of all creatures. He is concrete desire through and through, a concretion of a thousand needs.]

As such, suffering is the ultimate fate of man in every sphere of activity, because no desire is ever truly fulfilled:

Denn alles Streben entspringt aus Mangel, aus Unzufriedenheit mit seinem Zustande, ist also Leiden, so lange es nicht befriedigt ist; keine Befriedigung aber ist dauernd, vielmehr ist sie stets nur der Anfangspunkt eines neuen Strebens. Das Streben sehen wir überall vielfach gehemmt, überall kämpfend, so lange also immer als Leiden: kein letztes Ziel des Strebens, also kein Maß und Ziel des Leidens. 43

[All striving, since it springs from want, from dissatisfaction with one's state, is suffering, so long as it remains unfulfilled; but no fulfilment is lasting, on the contrary, it is always the starting-point for renewed striving. Everywhere we see striving repeatedly checked, struggling, and so always as suffering: no final end of striving, and so no halt or end to suffering.]

The first appearance of this Schopenhauerian concept of ambition is recorded in three poems of Interlúdio - "Ao Prateado Mondego", "Alma Penada" and "Interlúdio". In "Ao Prateado Mondego" it is ambition which drives the river to the sea:

A ambição te subjuga e te endoidece,
Rio, queres ser oceano! (7-8)

In "Interlúdio" it drives the Queen to search for new pleasures:

Ai! pobre Rainha, pobre ambiciosa,
A ambição seguias e ela te matou! (91-2)

In "Alma Penada", in the form of four allegorical figures (a Fortuna, a Glória, a Liberdade, a Alegria) it tempts the shepherd away from his bucolic idyll. In true

42 Ibid., II, 368.

43 Ibid., II, 365.

Schopenhauerian style, ambition invariably proves treacherous. The Queen is abandoned by the moon she thought would light her way, and crushed by the elements of nature which had tempted her. The shepherd dies a wretched death. The poet in "Ao Prateado Mondego" shipwrecks on the sea of life.

As in the poems of the last group studied, a distinct thematic advance can be sensed over these three poems of Interlúdio. As the circle widens from physical desire to ambition, the specific nature of that ambition becomes correspondingly more vague. In "Ao Prateado Mondego", the most detailed of these three poems, we meet abstractions and generalizing plurals:

Fui à cata de rútilas grandezas,
Palácios de ouro, homens leais, moças divinas. (33-4)

The allegorical figures of "Alma Penada" represent concepts of the broadest kind. And in "Interlúdio" the Queen is lured away by a pine-forest representing not a specific case of ambition, but the abstract concept of ambition. The circle widens in another sense too. Though the shepherd of "Alma Penada" falls foul of ambition, his tragedy remains to a large extent a personal one. This is also the case with the "eu" of "Ao Prateado Mondego", but at the same time his experience is subsumed in that of the river, which becomes a symbol of Humanity:

De ambicioso que és, até parece
Que tens um frágil coração humano.. (5-6)
Que és sobre a areia como nós na vida,
Que não podemos voltar atrás. (15-16)

There is no "eu" present in "Interlúdio", however, and the Queen comes to represent Mankind at large. We move gradually from personal to universal grief.

In keeping with the terms in which the problem of ambition is stated in these poems, the solution they offer is also Schopenhauerian. It is the denial of all desires, the attainment of absolute indifference. The sage, as Schopenhauer points out, "hört [...] auf, irgend etwas zu wollen, hütet sich seinen Willen an irgend etwas zu hängen,

sucht die größte Gleichgültigkeit gegen alle Dinge in sich zu befestigen" ⁴⁴ [leaves off desiring anything whatsoever, takes care not to set his will on anything, seeks to instill within himself the greatest indifference towards all things]. As in "Pastor Solitário", this asceticism is expressed in terms of a pastoral convention. The ghost of "Alma Penada" says to the shepherd:

Como eu te invejo, a ti, que achaste o encanto
Desta suave solidão macia!
Não deixasse eu a minha, e não teria
Sofrido tanto ... (13-16)

The same idea is implicit in "Ao Prateado Mondego":

Busca na solidão um carinhoso abrigo,
Enforca as ambições que te andam a tentar. (41-2)

In this last poem, as in the "Filha de Rei", if the river is to avoid flowing into the sea - i.e. into the tragedies of life - it must achieve circular motion, here symbolized by the lake:

Antes te beba a terra ou te demude em lago!
Detém-te! (45-6)

This poem ends with a wish for conversion, a baptism of desire to an ascetic way of life:

Lava-me a vista, que tão suja trago
De ver tanta impureza! (47-8)

The problems of interpretation posed by these poems are similar to those encountered in connection with the last group of poems studied. The Schopenhauerian solution offered is only tenable if it follows on a genuinely Schopenhauerian exposition of the theme of ambition. But Eugénio de Castro's presentation of the problem does not comply with its apparently Schopenhauerian mould. Beneath the abstractions and the generalizations the real concern of his poetry filters through. The appeal of ambition is not undifferentiated. It is invariably directed at the senses. In "Alma Penada", "a Fortuna" says to the shepherd:

⁴⁴ Ibid., II, 449.

Em ouro nadarás [...]

Terás jardins, palácios e cavalos! (58-9)

These terms reappear in "Ao Prateado Mondego":

Fui à cata de rútilas grandezas,
Palácios de ouro ... (33-4)

In "Interlúnio" the appeal is overwhelmingly sensual:

Ar, que aqui se aspira, derrama carícias,
Fonte, que aqui canta, é um festim de cores,
Quem cá mora, bóia num mar de delícias,
Músicas, aromas, pedrarias e flores. (61-4)

The figures in these poems are not betrayed by a philosophical concept of ambition, but by sensuality. And indeed, it is not Schopenhauerian ambition, but the scope and limitations of the senses which will dominate Eugénio de Castro's future.

One's overall reaction to the poet's whole output of 1893 is very much of a piece: the greater Eugénio de Castro's dependence on philosophical precepts becomes, the more he loses his battle with other people's ideas. The confusion of exhilaration with genuine fulfilment which runs through these poems undoubtedly derives from Eugénio de Castro's life. Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho, for example, has this to say of him:

Para Eugénio de Castro o sonho do amor era o verdadeiro amor; atingida a fase de cristalização, a sua imaginação poética elevava-o a regiões inacessíveis a muitas que lhe provocavam esse estado de alma. Por isso, neste capítulo, nunca ultrapassou o domínio da pura galanteria. Nada mais verdadeiro do que seus versos de Silva: Judite, Dulce, Lavínia e outras. 44

But it is not the exploration of the poet's experience which gains in importance. It is the statement of Schopenhauer's philosophy which eventually dominates these poems to such an extent that the real conflict on which they are based is almost lost from view.

44 CARVALHO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 41.

Coupled with this, there is a move throughout these poems from quiet intensity to melodrama and a certain complacency in images of ugliness. Between "Judite, Dulce, Lavínia e outras" and "Beijos" we move from the scented flowers which line the river-bank to images of ugliness and disease:

Antes neles nasçam cancos e gangrenas
Do que neles poisem beijos de mulher!
("Beijos", 35-6)

Images of ugliness also appear in "Ao Prateado Mondego":

Onde eu vira os jardins fabulosos de Armida,
Achei uma estrumeira! (39-40)

There is likewise much melodrama in the prophetic gestures of "Beijos", and melodrama is particularly in evidence in "Interlúnio". Here, in the description of the sufferings of the Queen, we have a literal example of the flowing of "blood, sweat and tears":

O seu sangue a veste, seu suor a cobre,
Lágrimas que chora, queimam, são carvões. (95-6)

This exaggeration occasionally borders on the absurd:

Vendo-a os carniceiros lobos atrevidos
Mais os corvos negros fogem com pavor. (15-6)

Though these poems do not topple over into the boredom of unrelieved horror, they prepare us to some extent for the poems I shall discuss in the following chapter.

The real importance of these poems in the work of Eugénio de Castro is that they introduce one of the most important themes of his early career. Their real concern is not the treachery of the passions, or of ambition, but the confusing of spiritual fulfilment with a cruder exhilaration. The "eu" of "Amores" and "Beijos" strives to maintain this exhilaration by the renewal of physical stimulus. And it is the hope of greater sensual thrill which brings the shepherd of "Alma Penada" and the Queen of "Interlúnio" to grief. But to isolate this theme, we must wade through melodramatic gestures, indulgence in grotesque imagery, and philosophical precepts and concepts

which, in their attempts to deepen the implications of this theme, only succeed in obscuring it. But this is a theme which will persist in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro long after the particular philosophical system in evidence here has been cast aside.

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Before bringing this chapter to a close, it should be pointed out that two of the poems of Interlúdio present structural difficulties which require some comment. Thus in "Interlúdio", we are informed in line 80 that when the Queen left the palace she "abalou a ocultas, disfarçada e só" (my italics). Given this, not even the greatest deference to poetic licence and symbolic metonymy can allow us to accept as feasible that, being disguised, she should still be wearing her crown:

Na corrida, cai-lhe o diadema de ouro,
Põe-se a procurá-lo, mas não o acha, não! (33-4)

This is a minor discrepancy, and can be attributed no doubt to a simple oversight. But it is perhaps even more the result of a certain over-dependence on this kind of metonymy visible in many of Eugénio de Castro's poems.

The problems with "Alma Penada" are of a more serious nature. Like "Semper Eadem", this poem is composite in construction, though the boundaries between the various elements are not so clearly drawn. One can recognize as the older part of the poem the opening words of the ghost to the shepherd (17-33): these lines had first appeared as a fragment of a "Carta" published in the Jornal do Comércio of 15 May 1892, and addressed no doubt to Helena Bordalo Pinheiro. Though there is no external evidence, it is safe to conjecture that the passage between lines 89 and 123 also belongs to the original "Carta". It deals visibly with the broken engagement of 1892, and has no necessary connection with what comes before or after. On the contrary, it causes some incongruity in the interpretation of the poem.

The surviving elements of the original "Carta" and the allegory into which they were later incorporated are, indeed, highly anomalous in their impact. On one reading it would seem that the shepherd failed to reach the four allegorical figures because he was distracted from his purpose by the beauty of the girl he met while he was following them:

Alcançado quase as tinha
Quando, um dia, por meu mal,
Vi, à porta dum casal,
Certa moça trigueirinha ... (88-91)

or again:

Vendo-me distraído,
As quatro tentadoras
Tinham partido ... (129-131)

The natural inference to be drawn from this suggestion is that the ambitions symbolized by the four figures are attainable if one is careful to avoid the ambushes of love. Yet any suggestion of this kind is out of the question within the Schopenhauerian framework of Eugénio de Castro's pessimism as it was now evolving. Ambition of any kind must end in failure and grief. The only chance of happiness is complete withdrawal from the world of men.

Chapter Five

An Interlude of Horror

An important influence to appear in the work of Eugénio de Castro some time in 1892 is that of Edgar Allan Poe. The first sign of Eugénio de Castro's interest in Poe appears in the article "A Poesia Moderna", published in the Jornal do Comércio of 12 June 1892. Here, along with Baudelaire, Wagner and Villiers, he is named as one of the "quatro evangelistas" who would lead a movement of renewal in Portuguese literature. In the same year, in the newspaper Novidades, Eugénio de Castro stopped signing his series of "Prosas Decorativas" by his own name on October 4, and, from October 6, employed the nom-de-plume "Israfel". This no doubt reflects the influence of a poem by Poe of the same name, describing "the angel Israfel, whose heart-strings are a lute, and who has the sweetest voice of all God's creatures".¹ Poe's name crops up again in the review of Raimundo Correia's Aleluias published by Eugénio de Castro in the Diário Popular of 3 September 1893. When Interlúdio was published in 1894, he was one of its dedicatees. In 1895, during the "processo de admissão" of João de Deus to the Institute, Eugénio de Castro spoke of "a obscuridade em que viveram e os grandes desdêns de que foram vítimas poetas e artistas da grandeza de Edgar Allan Poë".² And, during a lecture also delivered in the Institute on 2 February 1896, he lamented how "Edgar Poë sofreu dos seus compatriotas as mais danadas injúrias".³

The most important of these references to Poe is that included in the review of Raimundo Correia's Aleluias. In the course of his review, Eugénio de Castro wrote:

perfilho em absoluto os princípios do grande percussor [sic] da estética moderna, os princípios de Edgar Poë. Acho que uma obra de arte não pode ser feita au petit bonheur de la fatalité, sem um fim preconcebido, sem o premeditado intuito de empolgar, num crescendo de

¹ EDGAR ALLAN POE, Works (Philadelphia: J.B. Lippincott Company, 1905), V, 37.

² O Instituto, Vol. 42 (1895), p. 130.

³ This lecture is reproduced in the magazine Arte, Vol. 1 (1895-6). The quotation can be found on p. 263.

entusiasmo, os espíritos cuja atenção reclama.

These words reflect an unmistakable acquaintance with Poe's essay on poetic theory, The Philosophy of Composition. In this essay, Poe expounded his conviction that in poetry:

every plot, worth the name, must be elaborated to its dénouement before anything is attempted with the pen. It is only with the dénouement constantly in view that we can give a plot its indispensable air of consequence, or causation, by making the incidents, and especially the tone at all points, tend to the development of the intention. 4

For Poe, every poem should begin with the "consideration of an effect",⁵ and should proceed "step by step to its completion with the precision and rigid consequence of a mathematical problem".⁶ This principle has an obvious effect on Eugénio de Castro's composition of the poems I shall study next.

At the same time as this interest in Poe becomes apparent, Eugénio de Castro gives clear indications as to what he considered to be the effects which poetry should attempt to produce. In his article on "A Poesia Moderna" he talks of the creation of "uma técnica nova, expressiva e vibrante, toda cheia de requintes, jeitosa para exprimir todos os fugidios nevoeiros, todos os sonhos e todas as alucinações da alma moderna". In the Novidades of 2 December 1892, reviewing the Improvisos of Carlos Harrington, he described "a poesia moderna" as "exprimindo o espírito moderno, este espírito cheio de contradições e de mistério", and he stressed that:

a musa de hoje é a imperatriz Teodora, trágica e incompreensível, arrastando brocados metálicos sobre preciosos mosaicos, religiosa e depravada, esposa de Justiniano e amante de piratas, cobrindo-se de jóias, polvilhando os cabelos com pós azuis, dorando as unhas.

He takes the same line in an article on "Cosmopolitas e

⁴ POE, Works, V, 180.

⁵ Ibid., V, 181.

⁶ Ibid., V, 182.

Nacionalistas" in the Diário Popular of 27 July 1893. Here he talks of "a complicação das almas modernas, amantes de emoções fortes e inexplicáveis, cheias de sonho, de vertigem, de jogos de luz e pacificações [sc: palpitações] de cor". This idea also spilled over into his views on pictorial art, a topic which claimed much of his attention around that time. Commenting on the work of Silva Porto in the "Exposição do Grémio Artístico" of 1893 (Diário Popular, 7 March 1893), he wrote:

o meu desejo seria vê-lo abandonar tal vereda, vê-lo procurar nos campos, nos rios, nas charnecas, nas alvoradas e nos poentes, símbolos diversos, que dessem a linha e a expressão dos complicados estados de alma modernos.

These quotations reaffirm one of the most constant preoccupations of Eugénio de Castro's poetry: the need to be "moderno" at all costs. The word recurs insistently: "poesia moderna", "espírito moderno", "almas modernas", "estados de alma modernos", "musa de hoje". We have encountered this before. But here a new emphasis is introduced. Modernity is no longer simply the probing of the "recantos mais inacessíveis da alma" as it had been (in theory) in Sáfira. It is now the study of the "complicação", "alucinações", "contradições" of the "alma moderna". It is clear that Eugénio de Castro, following Poe's principle of intentionality, considered this to be the intention of his poetry. A more precise view of the nature of these "alucinações" etc. can be found in certain of his articles on pictorial art published in 1893. In an article on "A Pintura Moderna" in the Diário Popular of 4 August 1893 he discussed the work of "Odilon Redon, o trágico criador de pesadelos, que, perdido o senso da beleza normal, conseguiu vestir o Horror e o Mistério com uma beleza nova". Indeed, it is clear from Eugénio de Castro's poetry that the feeling he saw as most characteristic of modernity was horror, and it is horror that he most sought to provoke. Horror becomes a means to an end - proof of attachment to the "avant-garde". The naivety of such a view need hardly be pointed out.

This interlude of horror belongs mainly to Interlúdio, but it is prefigured by four poems from Silva, all of which have Classical titles: "Quo Non Ascendam?", "Circe", "Epigrama" and "Superbia". The first three, all addressed to a Beloved named Lídia, deal with a tale of unhappy love. They present us with a relationship built on aggression and spite, in poems dominated by exclamation, churlishness and peevishness. There is a thematic advance within this group. In "Quo Non Ascendam?" the poet strives to dominate Lídia:

Sê orgulhosa para os outros; para mim
Sê rasteirinha como um verme! (11-12)

But in "Circe" he exclaims that she has corrupted his innocence:

Minha inocência chora sangue sob os teus beijos,
Como fria cabeça espetada num poste ...
Lídia! Qual Circe foste:
- Em porcos transformaste os meus beijos! (21-24)

His revenge, explained in "Epigrama", is to give Lídia a ring containing a carbuncle:

Toma este anel ... Que o teu espírito destrince
Da minha oferta a epigramática razão:
Lídia! os carbúnculos são
Feitos de urina de lince. (21-24)

Aníbal Pinto de Castro suggests that "Quo Non Ascendam?" employs "tópicos que a poesia do Renascimento usara na expressão do sentimento amoroso".⁷ Indeed, these poems present several Renaissance and Classical characteristics. The central theme of "Quo Non Ascendam?", that of the poet winning immortality for his Beloved through his verses, was not uncommon in the sixteenth century. One of the best-known examples is the sonnet by Ronsard which ends:

Vous vivrez (croyez-moi) comme Laure en grandeur;
Au moins tant que vivront les plumes et le livre. 8

⁷ CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação, p. 14.

⁸ PIERRE DE RONSARD, Les Amours (Paris: Éditions Garnier Frères, 1963), p. 420.

But the theme is also to be found among the sonnets of Camões:

Celebrada serás sempre em meu canto;
Porque, enquanto no mundo houver memória, 9
Será minha escritura teu letreiro.

Of a more specifically Classical nature is the name "Lídia" given to the Beloved,¹⁰ while a secondary theme of "Quo Non Ascendam?", that of the contrasting values of wealth and poetry in the battle of love, is also to be found in Classical literature. It makes several appearances in the poetry of Tibullus:

Ad dominam faciles aditus per carmina quaero.
.....
At mihi per caedem et facinus sunt dona paranda, 11
Ne iaceam clausam flebilis ante domum.

In these reminiscences, no doubt, Eugénio de Castro was responding to the influence of Moréas's "École Romane". But any Classical characteristics these poems might contain are marginal to their real concern. For just as Lídia has changed the poet's desires into swine, in these poems Eugénio de Castro transforms the beauty of earlier poems into images of horror and ugliness. The poet's reaction to having been betrayed is not grief, but gall. This is expressed throughout in images of poison, blood and disease. In "Epigrama", the coprographic image encountered in "Ao Prateado Mondego" (see page 183) reappears: "As flores mais belas / São as que nascem nas estrumeiras" (19-20). This similarity helps us to date these poems some time in the second half of 1893.

This little series of poems is something of a mystery in the work of Eugénio de Castro. There are no clues to the

⁹ Sonnet 49. See CAMÕES, ed. Sá da Costa, I, 214.

¹⁰ Horace uses the same name in Odes VIII and XIII of Book I, both of which Eugénio de Castro translated in the third section of his Depois da Ceifa (1901)

¹¹ TIBULLUS (ALBIUS), Omnia Opera (Paris: Bibliotheca Classica Latina, 1826), p. 53, Elegies, II, iv, 19-22.

identity of Lídia, though the indications of erotic adventure in "Circe" (17-20) almost certainly rule out Helena Bordalo Pinheiro as the figure behind the name. It is possible that "Lídia" does not refer to anyone in particular, but given the heavily autobiographical nature of Eugénio de Castro's poetry, this is highly unlikely. A similar figure appears later in Sagramor (Fúlvia) and O Filho Pródigo (Lívia), again under Classical names.

"Superbia" does not deal with love. It reflects the widening view recorded in the poems studied in chapter four. It is a grandiose indictment against God for exiling the poet in a world unworthy of his inner greatness. Following "Das minhas ilusões o dramático enterro" (4), his pride is the only possession he has left:

Tirar-mo, era tirar à escura noite a lua!
Vê as chagas cruéis que o meu peito consomem ...
Não mo tires, Senhor! a culpa é toda tua:
Eu devera ser anjo e tu fizeste-me homem! (41-44)

The kinship of "Superbia" with the three poems already studied cannot be denied. The images of poison - "o mundo venenoso" (14), "um filtro envenenado" (39) - blood - "Choro sangue" (7) - and disease "os dedos dum leproso" (16), "um tísico a morrer" (17) - all reappear. Its tone is resentful, its style turgid. It provides a clear link between "Os Tísicos" and the poems of Interlúnio.

---ooOoo---

Interlúnio was written as a study in pessimism and horror. The pessimistic note is struck in the four quotations which form the epigraph to the book:

"L'homme esgaré qui ne sçait où il va ... "
Ch. d'Orléans. 12
"Aujourd'hui est mauvais, et chaque jour sera plus

¹² From Ballade LXIII. See CHARLES D'ORLÉANS, Poésies Complètes, I, 82.

mauvais - jusqu'à ce que le pire arrive.

A. Schopenhauer. 13

La mort est bonne, cependant il vaudrait mieux
n'être jamais né.

H. Heine. 14

Il faut pleurer les hommes à leur naissance et non
pas à leur mort.

Montesquieu. 15

The attempt to create an atmosphere of horror corresponding to this pessimistic view takes two different forms: in the first instance a group of poems which hope to horrify by simple insistence on the gloomy, the ugly and the disgusting; in the second, a group of poems which try to outrage by subverting normal ethical standards.

The first group consists of "Presságios", "Treze", "Bodas Negras" and "Podridão". In these poems star-crossed men lament their fate; horrible diseases cluster round the poet, dragging him down to a nuptial bed in the grave; the touch of rotting reaches out to contaminate all. There is a gradual move from the personal to the universal. In the first two poems Eugénio de Castro offers details from his own life. In "Presságios" he mentions the death of his twin sister at birth: 16

Porém, a gémea que Deus me dera,
Logo morria, mal nascera. (9-10)

In "Treze" he plays on the fact that he was born on the

¹³ From "Nachträge zur Lehre vom Leiden der Welt", in Parerga und Paralipomena. See SCHOPENHAUER, VI, 320: "es ist heute schlecht und wird nun täglich schlechter werden, - bis das Schlimmste kommt".

¹⁴ From "Ruhelehzend". See HEINRICH HEINE, Werke und Briefe (Berlin: Aufbau-Verlag, 1961), II, 195: "Der Tod ist gut, doch besser wär's, / Die Mutter hätt'uns nie geboren".

¹⁵ From Lettres Persanes. See MONTESQUIEU, Lettres Persanes (Paris: Editions Garnier Frères, 1960), p. 86.

¹⁶ Olmedilla says of Eugénio de Castro: "Tuvo éste una hermana gemela que, menos feliz - o acaso más dichosa - murió al nacer" (p. xvi). This detail is corroborated by Eugénio de Castro's entry concerning his father in his genealogical work Os Meus Vasconcelos (Coimbra: Coimbra Editora lda., 1933), p. 29.

fourth of the month (4 March 1869):

Somando os teus dois algarismos,
Encontro um quatro, ó cavador!

.
Num dia quatro fui nascido. 17 (31-36)

In "Bodas Negras", however, the "teoria apavorante das Doenças" which threatens the poet (3) do not represent his private misfortune. Everyone is at their mercy. The same can be said of "Podridão", who is seen as "a rainha mais poderosa / Do mundo inteiro" (45-46).

As an exercise in the grotesque these poems are at best unrefined: a pseudo-gothic night-mare cluttered with all the cadaverous décor the ultra-Romantic junk-box could provide. Skulls, tombs, gravediggers, worms, coffins, all abound. They attempt to horrify through sheer insistence on the grotesque. The adjectives they use and over-use derive almost entirely from "romantismo cemiterial": "negro", "sinistro", "lúgubre", "sombrio", etc. They offend the intellect through their lack of subtlety, but are incapable of producing the slightest spiritual anguish. ¹⁸

--ooOoo--

There has been considerable speculation as to the literary precedents of these horror-poems. The man most

¹⁷ It was no doubt this poem that Vittorio Pica had in mind when he described Interlúnio as a book "in cui al più disperato pessimismo si mescolano le più puerili superstizioni" (p. xx).

¹⁸ In a sense these poems correspond to what in Classical Greek theatre was known as "Spectacle" (σφῆις) the carrying out of scenes of violence, murder and atrocities of all kind on stage. The only judgement they deserve is that passed by Aristotle on such use of Spectacle twenty-four centuries ago: "οἱ δὲ μὴ τὸ φοβερόν δια τῆς ὀφειδῆς ἀλλὰ τὸ τερατῶδες μόνον παράσκειυοντες οὐδὲν τραγῳδία κοινωνοῦσιν". [Those, however, who, through the use of Spectacle, present us with what is merely grotesque and does not produce fear, have nothing whatsoever to do with tragedy.] See ARISTOTLE, Poetics (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1968), p. 21.

frequently seen as the principal source of influence is Maurice Rollinat. Thus, Alfredo Pimenta suggests of Interlúdio: "Nos motivos, de uma morbidez desconcertante, quase pasquinesca - o que não está no feitio e no temperamento de Eugénio de Castro, a influência de Maurice Rollinat é manifesta".¹⁹ This opinion is repeated by Denyse Chast:

Les symbolistes [...] ont été obsédés - certains d'entre eux du moins - par l'idée de la mort, la grisaille des canaux, les relents de l'hôpital [...] Rollinat a poussé beaucoup plus loin que Baudelaire les incursions dans ce domaine et Interlúdio révèle parfois son influence. 20

Urbano Tavares Rodrigues takes the same line: "O Interlúdio, de 1894, reflecte, com apurado sentido estético na expressão do mundo interior, certo ascendente espiritual de Schopenhauer e a sugestão do necrofilismo de Rollinat".²¹ Rollinat, who had caused a sensation in Paris in the mid-1880's with the publication of his Névroses, was undoubtedly known to the young poets of Coimbra around 1890. In 1889 the magazine Boémia Nova had spoken of "os últimos cenáculos - a igreja simbolista, o mallarmismo, os poetas misteriosos como Rollinat".²² But the extent of his influence on Interlúdio has perhaps been over-rated in the past.

On a thematic level, there are visible points of contact between Interlúdio and Les Névroses. Like Eugénio de Castro, Rollinat reveals a preoccupation with the process of rotting, and exploits the traditional horror-value of the number thirteen. In "La Bibliothèque" we find "treize lampes de fer" (2), "treize fauteuils" (7), "treize grands portraits" (8); and the following detail:

¹⁹ PIMENTA, "Eugénio de Castro", pp. 188-9.

²⁰ DENYSE CHAST, "Les Thèmes Symbolistes dans l'Œuvre d'Eugénio de Castro", in O Instituto, Vol. 109 (1947), p. 104.

²¹ RODRIGUES, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 143.

²² Quoted in SIMÕES, História, p. 173.

La pendule venait de sonner treize coups
 Dans le silence affreux de la chambre maudite. ²³

can also be found in "Treze":

Onde os relógios desarranjados
 Dão treze horas! (23-24)

"Bodas Negras" is dedicated to Rollinat, so that it would be unreasonable to rule out his influence altogether. But, at the same time, he was not included among the four dedicatees of Interlúdio, and it is difficult to find anything in Interlúdio which goes beyond simple reminiscence of Les Névroses. There is no large-scale borrowing, or anything to suggest that Rollinat was the most important influence in the composition of these poems. Indeed, the characteristic the two books can most properly be said to share is the quality of their poetry. After a period of initial enthusiasms, the French public was to alter its opinion of Rollinat. In the words of Guy Michaud: "Bientôt on n'a plus qu'un mot à la bouche: C'est un cabotin". ²⁴ Ham-acting, too, characterizes many poems in Interlúdio.

Another comparison is suggested by Maria Elsa de Jesus Gonçalves: "Se [...] passarmos às poesias 'Podridão', 'Vaidosas' ou 'Bodas Negras', julgaremos ler as próprias páginas de 'Flores do Mal'". ²⁵ Hardly. Baudelaire was, it is true, one of the dedicatees of the first edition. And the ghoulishness of poems such as "Une Charogne", "Voyage à Cythère", indeed, the obvious propensity of what Mario Praz terms the "parte deteriore doll'opera del Baudelaire" ²⁶ towards images of rotting and decay was notorious in Portugal at the time. Hernâni Cidade sees it in the following terms:

O legado baudelaireano, porém, não se cingia a tão

²³ ROLLINAT, Les Névroses, p. 265.

²⁴ MICHAUD, Message, II, 243.

²⁵ JESUS GONÇALVES, p. 108.

²⁶ PRAZ, p. 82.

pouco. Havia nessa poesia, na verdade, o patentear ao leitor do que antes dele só ao confessor se dizia em voz baixa - as misérias do nosso lodo. A poesia podia ser agora tanto ou mais fosforescência de podridão, do que flor de veiga, nuvem do azul, raio de sol. 27

It is safe to assume that Eugénio de Castro's familiarity with the poetry of Baudelaire encouraged him to use imagery of this kind. But again, there is no preponderance of Baudelairian imagery in Interlúnio, and any comparison between the two poets on artistic grounds is out of the question.

The literary exploitation of the grotesque was not a novelty introduced into Portugal by Interlúnio. It was a literary tradition of a standing of at least twenty years, and there was little need to look abroad for sources of inspiration. Alfredo Pimenta reveals this clearly when he states that "o poema Podridão tem de considerar-se filho da Vala Comum da Velhice do Padre Eterno". 28 The points of contact between Eugénio de Castro's poem and that of Guerra Junqueiro are many:

- "Vala comum - tasca nojenta,
Mesa redonda, sepulcral." 29
- "Nos cemitérios de todo o mundo
Tens mesa posta noite e dia." (13-14)
- "Crânios de heróis, ventres de párias" (p. 189)
"Seios de virgens, ventres de velhas" (21)
- "Nada que te encha ou te sufoque.
Monstro, absorver é o teu destino" (p. 194)
- "Mas nada farta, nada sacia
Teu falstafiano ventre rotundo" (15-16)

There is also the technique employed in both poems of referring to well-known figures from literature or history:

"Trituras, lôbrega sargeta,
Sem que o horror te engasgue e abafe,
Os seios virgens de Julieta

27 CIDADE, O Conceito da Poesia, p. 244.

28 PIMENTA, p. 189.

29 GUERRA JUNQUEIRO, A Velhice do Padre Eterno (Oporto: Livraria Chardron, s/d), p. 189. Subsequent page references given in the text.

E a paça obscena de Falstaff" (p. 192)

"Os lindos corpos de Inês de Castro
E das duquesas de Brabante,
De Laura, a de pupilas de astro,
E da lirial Beatriz do Dante" (49-52)

As we can see, even the detail of Falstaff's paunch is shared by both poems. The poetic techniques employed in both poems are likewise similar. Both are apostrophic; but, above all, "Vala Comum" is, like "Podridão", an attempt to overwhelm the reader by sheer insistence. The number of horror-terms employed in this poem easily vies with those of "Podridão": "sepulcral" (2), "lúgubres" (6), "podres" (8, 60), "negra" (12), etc., etc. Guerra Junqueiro is not noted for his subtlety. It is unfortunate that, in borrowing his theme, Eugénio de Castro should also have borrowed his rough-hewn poetic technique.

"Podridão" is rightly to be considered the child of "A Vala Comum". But Junqueiro's poem is not without its own family history. It is the child of "A Vala" from the Alma Nova of Guilherme de Azevedo, published in 1874. "A Vala" too (from line 30 on) is apostrophic. It too offers details such as the following: "E visto haver na fera abismos insondáveis"; ³⁰ "Eu quero vê-la farta, a lúgubre pantera" (13). It too tells of "A larva que partilha as ânsias do teu ser" (38), of "o D. Juan da Morte, o cavalheiro Verme" (53). And the following detail:

Veremos rebentar num tapete de flores
O lixo que em ti há! (59-60)

reappears in "Podridão":

Tu possuis, entre tais horrores,
Uma virtude de almos brilhos:
Crias as flores. (77-79)

"Podridão" would seem to borrow elements from both poems. Conjecture as to which influenced it more directly is unnecessary. What is important is that the material which

³⁰ GUILHERME DE AZEVEDO, Alma Nova (Lisbon: Tipografia Sousa e Filho, 1874), p. 122, l. 10.

Eugénio de Castro recruited for service in his horror-poems is of an exclusively bookish origin. We are in the realm of the cerebral. These poems are an abstract exercise in horror, and lack real vitality as a result.

---ooOoo---

The second group of poems comprises "Vaidosas" and "A Uma Mãe", as well as "Grávidas" which, it should be said in favour of his better judgement, Eugénio de Castro omitted from the second and subsequent editions of Interlúdio. These poems have much in common with those of the first group. In "Vaidosas", for example, a cardboard cast of ultra-Romantic props - skeletons, coffins, roots and worms - dangle on strings as they dangled in previous poems. But this poem is not only an attempt to horrify, it is a deliberate attempt to outrage. In its original version it was headed by the following quotation from the seventeenth-century ascetic Frei António das Chagas:

Belezas que não servem para mais, que para ser iscas de vício, ó que feia coisa.

The antiphrasis soon becomes apparent. "Vaidosas" is a roisterous invitation to indulge in the pleasures of licentiousness, carried through at the rollicking rhythm of a goliardic drinking-song. It is aggressive, spiteful and Satanic in the sense that it deliberately flouts the Christian ethic, in terms of which it is an exhortation to wrong-doing.

Similar exhortations to evil dominate "A Uma Mãe" and "Grávidas". These two poems are variations on the same theme. They suggest that it is a crime to bear children into a world where only suffering awaits them. They can be seen as the vulgarization of a Schopenhauerian idea expressed in the essay which supplied one of the epigraphs to Interlúdio:

Denn wer es weiß, dem können zu Zeiten die Kinder vorkommen wie unschuldige Delinquenten, die zwar nicht zum Tode, hingegen zum Leben verurteilt sind,

jedoch den Inhalt ihres Urteils noch nicht vernommen haben. 31

[The man who is aware of this may well look on children at times as innocent delinquents, condemned not to death, but on the contrary to life, but who have not yet understood the content of their sentence.]

Both poems transvalue motherly love into a source of suffering and grief, and offer as a solution the suggestion that the child should be murdered when it is born.

The shock-tactics employed by Eugénio de Castro in these poems are childish and naive. Following Poe's poetic theory, it is his intention to shock, and nothing remains sacred as he attempts to put this intention into effect. In "Vaidosas" the "roué" asks the young girls:

Orgulhosas porquê? De que sois orgulhosas?
Duma membrana vil que, em breve, há-de rasgar-se? (31-2)

In "Grávidas" the state of pregnancy is seen as grotesque:

Ei-las, as grávidas, passeando sem pudor,
Pesadas, bestiais, grotescas nos meneios. (3-4)

The reproduction of the human race becomes the work of Satan. It is the outcome of a "noite infernal, inclemente, / Em que Satã, a rir, as deixou fecundadas" (7-8).³² In view of the perverted mental associations which fill these poems, and which we have to attribute to the persona here adopted by Eugénio de Castro, it is ridiculous that he should make this same first person voice declare:

E eu, que sou doce e bom, sinto uma nobre fúria
Contra essa legião de trágicas devassas. (13-14)

Rather than sweetness and light of any kind, the emotional atmosphere of this poem is one of Satanic hysteria. The poet calls down death and destruction on those mothers who do not obey his command to murder their children at birth:

Se não fizerdes tal, que as mágoas mais profundas

³¹ SCHOPENHAUER, VI, 320.

³² This detail is reminiscent of Rollinat's "Vierge Damnée": "Et je vais cette nuit me donner à Satan" (p. 90).

Vos castiguem, hostis, como estemas de espinhos,
 Que os vossos filhos sejam raquíticos, carcundas,
 Surdos-mudos, tuberculosos, aleijadinhos;
 Caia azeite a ferver nessas almas obscenas,
 Vossas almas sejam rasgadas e escupidas,
 Vossos ovários sejam cheios de gangrenas,
 E os vossos filhos sejam todos matricidas! (29-36)

These poems represent the wilder ravings of an immature artistic temperament striving to shock at all costs. But the crudity of the methods employed indicates the nature of the shock produced. It results simply from the attack mounted on good taste, and not from any deeper psychological disturbance. These poems constantly evade reality. At no other time is Eugénio de Castro's poetry so completely abstract. They are addressed to abstractions -- "Podridão", "Treze" -- to groups representing a concept -- "Vaidosas", "Grávidas" -- or to individual figures symbolizing such a group -- "A Uma Mãe". Even in their detail there is a constant avoidance of the specific in favour of the general. The star-crossed man of "Presságios" awaits not a specific misfortune, but "Ódios, tormentos, lutos, naufrágios" (15); the poet of "Bodas Negras" dreams of not one, but many diseases. This avoidance of the specific obviously weakens the impact of these poems. They offend the reader's aesthetic sensitivity, but fail to produce any real anguish. They are the symptom of a passing phase, the lurid excrescence of a self-induced disease which would vanish leaving, thankfully, little trace behind.

--ooOoo--

The final poem of Interlúdio, "A Resposta da Lua", brings these horror-poems to a muted but suitably gloomy end. In so doing, it introduces a new topic into the poetry of Eugénio de Castro -- the death of God and the dissolution of the organizing principle of the Universe. It perhaps reflects Nietzsche's famous, and, at this date, recent pronouncement: "Riechen wir noch Nichts von der göttlichen Verwesung? -- auch Götter verwesen! Gott ist tot! Gott

bleibt tot! Und wir haben ihn getötet!" ³³ [Can we still not smell the decaying of the Gods? -- Even Gods decay! God is dead! God remains dead! And we have killed him!] As we shall later see, Eugénio de Castro was undoubtedly familiar with some of Nietzsche's ideas.

The confusion of the world is conveyed by a series of Maeterlinckian images like those of "Asilo". They depict types of people (highlighted by the use of capitals) in situations radically opposed to those in which they would be fulfilled. As in "Interlúnio", the moon is seen as a symbol of enlightenment, and the poet asks it to lead him to a place of rest. But though ambition has been replaced by this desire for rest, the answer continues to be pessimistic. The moon rises above a grove of cypress-trees, Classical symbol of death, and the answer to the tragedy of life is simply its cessation. In the culmination of this series of poems, despair has been chosen to win the day.

--ooOoo--

Criticism of the poems just studied has been (not surprisingly) consistently adverse. Vittorio Pica wrote of Interlúnio as early as 1896: "il De Castro ha avuto il torto di chiedere troppo sovente immagini e similitudini agli spettacoli disgustosi degli ospedali e dei cimiteri". ³⁴ José Régio's opinion of the book is that:

Certa insistência, quase brutal [...] em alguns pormenores e motivos de doença -- não nos parece revelar no poeta senão o seu gosto de surpreender, de escandalizar, de irritar, ou influências aliás 35
mais ou menos superficiais.

This opinion is shared by Vitorino Nemésio: "O Interlúnio

³³ FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE, Werke (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1973), Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft, aphorism 125.

³⁴ PICA, p. xxv.

³⁵ JOSÉ RÉGIO, Pequena História da Moderna Poesia Portuguesa (Lisbon: Editorial Inquérito Lda., 1941), p. 57.

é repassado de uma preocupação negra a que a consciência estética da virtuosidade da dor e do terror não é alheia", ³⁶ and by João Gaspar Simões: "Em Interlúdio afirma-se, de facto, uma concepção da vida que no seu pessimismo macabro mais não representa ainda que uma nova tentativa para impressionar e inovar". ³⁷

The opinions listed here offer a judgement with which it is difficult to disagree. There can be little doubt that notoriety was something which Eugénio de Castro cherished dearly, and it seems certain that the facile horror of Interlúdio was at least partly designed to achieve this end. From this point of view, it is unfortunate that he was so influenced by Poe at this time. The serious defects of these horror-poems derive specifically from the fact that in them Eugénio de Castro pays greater attention to the effect to be produced than to the problem of relating his poetry to his own experience. The truth of the matter is that he was largely incapable of interpreting his own experience in a manner he could consider suitably distinctive. As it was, Poe provided the perfect excuse for diverting his attention from where his problems were greatest. With the authority of Poe for placing the emphasis on effect, Eugénio de Castro binds his poetry, in Interlúdio, to the service of vicarious, but quite meaningless grandeur.

Nonetheless, if we dismiss these poems as modish and futile verbiage, we may overlook their underlying concern. The grandeur sought by Eugénio de Castro in Interlúdio was to reveal itself in the expression of the "complicação das almas modernas". Influential in this grand design were, as already pointed out, his views on pictorial art, particularly that of the expressive value of horror, as exemplified by the works of Odilon Redon. But for Eugénio de Castro the

³⁶ VITORINO NEMÉSIO, "Perfil de Eugénio de Castro", in O Instituto, Vol. 109 (1947), p. 18.

³⁷ SIMÕES, História, p. 187.

implications of horror went much deeper than its simple power to shock. In his article on "A Pintura Moderna" (Diário Popular, 4 August 1893) he wrote: "Pode mesmo afirmar-se que a única arte é a arte ideista; a arte que materializa o que de mais alto e divino no mundo existe, a flor do espírito, a Ideia". The vagueness of the term "Ideia" causes difficulties here similar to those encountered in the "Advertência" of Safira; but this is the article in which Eugénio de Castro first dealt with the value of horror, and the close connection between horror and spirituality is obviously important.

Eugénio de Castro's ideas on the function of art would seem to have been much influenced by Huysmans, and particularly by his novel À Rebours, a great part of which is dedicated to the subject of painting. Indeed, his opinion of Redon seems to derive largely from À Rebours, where Huysmans had dealt at some length with that particular painter, showing how his works expressed "les mirages d'hallucination et les effets de peur".³⁸ But painting was a subject which fascinated Huysmans, and it had an important role to play in his more recent novel Là-Bas (1891), which, as we shall shortly see, Eugénio de Castro had almost certainly read. And indeed, the key to the horror-poems of Interlúdio may lie in certain ideas expressed in Là-Bas. Commenting on a crucifixion by the German painter Mathaeus Grünewald, Huysmans arrives at a fusion of horror and spiritual anguish which may well have influenced Eugénio de Castro's ideas on this subject:

Il [Grünewald] était allé aux deux extrêmes et il avait, d'une triomphale ordure, extrait les menthes les plus fines des dilections, les essences les plus acérées des pleurs. Dans cette toile se révélait le chef-d'œuvre de l'art acculé, sommé de rendre l'invisible et le tangible, de manifester l'immondice éplorée du corps, de sublimer la détresse infinie de l'âme. 39

³⁸ HUYSMANS, À Rebours, p. 86.

³⁹ HUYSMANS, Là-Bas (Paris: Librairie Plon, s/d), p. 10.

This was in all probability the aim of Eugénio de Castro. He no doubt saw his horror-poems as a magnification of the anguish expressed in earlier poems, extracting "d'une triomphale ordure [...] les essences les plus acérées des pleurs", and expressing "la détresse infinie de l'âme". That he failed is beyond question. The entire period of Eugénio de Castro's career with which I am dealing is characterized by a certain over-reaching on his part. The result is at times works of poetry which, in a sense, are greater than his real ability as a poet, and at others more or less abject failure. Eugénio de Castro was not poet enough to mix horror and anguish successfully, and these poems represent the most resounding failure of his entire career.

Part Three

Passion and Pessimism

Chapter Six

The Price of Involvement

a). Belkiss.i). Background

On 23 July 1894, Eugénio de Castro completed the composition of Belkiss, the third book he would publish in that year. But, though published in 1894, Belkiss would not reach the public until early in 1895. In the Novidades of 8 January 1895, a small article announced that Belkiss would be "posto à venda no 10 do corrente", adding that the book was to be "no formato dos antigos breviários". This detail concerning the format of the book is not merely casual. It confirms the testimony of Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho, who recalls that "Eugénio de Castro ligava a maior importância ao aspecto gráfico dos seus livros e era este um dos pontos mais debatidos com seus editores [...] das suas primeiras edições a que mais lhe agradava era a de Belkiss".¹

Belkiss proved to be something of a milestone in Eugénio de Castro's career, particularly as regards his reputation abroad. It was this book which, more than any other, gained for him a readership in France. Through the reviews of the French literary magazines it took his fame to Italy and South America. Thus Louis-Pilate de Brinn'Gaubast :

¹ CARVALHO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 46.

² In O Instituto of March 1895 Brinn'Gaubast published the poem "Vers Eden: à Eugénio de Castro: 6 avril 1891" (p. 173). As the poem obviously deals with the early acquaintance of the two - "Tous deux [...] Titubants du bonheur d'avoir pressé nos mains" (1-2) - it shows that their friendship goes back as far as 1891, and Brinn'Gaubast was no doubt responsible for the unsigned review of Horas which appeared in the Mercure de France of June 1891 (see page 22). In his Servitude et Grandeur Littéraires, Camille Mauclair dismissed Brinn'Gaubast as a nonentity: "Il y avait des gens de la première heure, dont on ne parlait déjà plus, par exemple Louis-Pilate de Brinn'Gaubast, dont je n'ai jamais su que le nom, mais il suffit" (Paris: Librairie Ollendorf, s/d), p. 43. Nonetheless, the diffusion of Eugénio de Castro's works abroad owes a great deal to his efforts.

described Belkiss as "le premier modèle de grande prose lyrique et le premier modèle de grande prose dramatique dont ait le droit de s'enorgueillir le Portugal".³ And Émile Bernard spoke of it as a work "qu'un de mes confrères a pu, sans m'étonner beaucoup, qualifier du nom de chef-d'œuvre".⁴

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Before entering on an examination of the poem proper, I intend to deal now with the more extrinsic details of my study of Belkiss. The subjects I shall deal with under this general heading are the period of composition of Belkiss, and the origin of the various kinds of material found in the setting of the poem.

The only critic to have considered the period of composition of Belkiss is Álvaro J. da Costa Pimpão; but I am unable to agree with the conclusions he draws from what seems to be too small a sampling of the evidence available. Pimpão bases his conclusion on three items. Firstly, he refers to the last lines of the final poem of Oaristos as proof that the story of Belkiss and Solomon had been in Eugénio de Castro's mind as early as 1890.⁵ He adduces further evidence from an announcement which appeared in a book of poetry entitled Azul, published in 1890 by António de Oliveira Soares. Here the publication by Eugénio de Castro of A Rainha de Sabá is advertised as "iminente".⁶

³ This review appeared in the Revue Blanche of March 1895 (pp. 229-231). All subsequent references to Brinn' Gaubast in this chapter will be to this review.

⁴ This review, which appeared in the Mercure de France of April 1895 (pp. 113-4), was signed "E.B.", but the real identity of the author is revealed in the "Revista Bibliográfica" of O Instituto of April 1895 (p. 256). All subsequent references to Émile Bernard in this chapter will be to this review.

⁵ PIMPÃO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 171. The lines in question are: "Irei buscar-te, amigo meu, como a lendária / Rainha de Sabá foi buscar Salomão".

⁶ The announcement is on the last page of the book under the general heading of "Literatura Decadente".

Thirdly, he refers to lines 7-8 of "Engrinalda-me com teus braços" which, as we saw in chapter three (see page 116), was written towards the end of 1891 or the beginning of 1892:

Teu corpo é esbelto, ó zagala esguia,
Como as harpas que o pai de Salomão tangia!

Pimpão offers these indications as part of an argument which, he claims with reference to Belkiss, "mostra não se tratar de uma obra improvisada, ou decalcada sobre sugestões próximas".⁷ This, however, would seem not to be the case. Nothing seems more certain than that Belkiss is, in fact, the fruit of "sugestões próximas". And the nature of these "sugestões" can be deduced with considerable accuracy.

A key-exhibit in the dating of Belkiss is an article entitled "O Teatro Moderno" published by Eugénio de Castro in the Diário Popular of 18 August 1893. The importance of this article lies in three of its elements: firstly, in its praise of Maeterlinck's drama:

No honesto intuito de purificar a arte de Shakespeare e de Gil Vicente, e de aristocratizar o gosto popular, alguns príncipes da Ideia têm sulcado novos caminhos.

Entre estes, Henrik Ibreu [sic], o genial norueguês, e Maurice Maeterlinck, o iluminado flamengo, merecem uma particular menção.

Eugénio de Castro's interest in Maeterlinck's drama may have been initially aroused by a letter he received in 1891 from António Feijó, thanking him for the copy of Horas he had sent him. Discussing what he saw as the shortcomings of Horas, Feijó suggested that in order to:

atingir uma intensidade trágica [...] V. apenas teve de lançar mão, como Maeterlinck, dos elementos naturais e simples que nos rodeiam. Uma janela que se abre, à noite no campo; o vento esfusiando (?) pelos corredores; a chuva a cair sobre as árvores despidas; pios de aves nocturnas; um ferrolho a bater numa arca (?); um cão aranhando uma porta, - e sem mais artifícios, com isto apenas, Maeterlinck deu à Princesse Maleine uma grandeza emocional, quase

⁷ PIMPÃO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 171.

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Whatever the case, Eugénio de Castro makes no mention of Maeterlinck's drama in his writings before this article in 1893. Yet one of the most striking characteristics of Belkiss is the very clear influence it reveals of what Mario Praz terms Maeterlinck's "tragicità balbettante".⁹ This faltering style of dialogue consists, in the words of Maeterlinck himself, of "répétitions étonnées qui donnent aux personnages l'apparence de somnambules un peu sourds constamment arrachés à un songe pénible".¹⁰ Its presence in Belkiss has already been noted by René Poupart: "Nous retrouvons ces longs et pesants dialogues si caractéristiques de Maeterlinck, où les répliques identiques tombent avec une obsédante insistance".¹¹ Its effect is to make of Belkiss at times a slow-motion play. It causes a feeling of anguished anticipation summed up by Zophesamin just before the end of the poem:

Estar à espera da desgraça, vê-la surgir a cada instante, senti-la em cada ruído, é suplício bem maior que o peso de todas as desgraças juntas. (XIV)

The suggestion here, then, is surely that Belkiss, so clearly influenced by this particular aspect of Maeterlinck's drama, belongs to 1893, when an interest in Maeterlinck's drama first becomes apparent in the writings of Eugénio de Castro.

The second important feature of "O Teatro Moderno" is the clarity with which it reveals Eugénio de Castro's considerable interest in the idea of Symbolist drama. Another of the most striking features of Belkiss is its clearly symbolic nature. Already in 1896 Vittorio Pica wrote of

⁸ Quoted in CRABÉE ROCHA; Epistolografia, p. 375. The queries were inserted by the editress.

⁹ PRAZ, p. 274.

¹⁰ From Maeterlinck's own preface to his Théâtre (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1925), I, vii-viii.

¹¹ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 99

this poem: "In quanto alla psicologia dei personaggi non si può negare che essa potrebbe essere un po' più complicata e profonda".¹² This is undoubtedly true; but in the same breath he gives an explanation for this. Eugénio de Castro, he points out, "ricerca l'intensità artistica nella personificazione di simboli eterni e pur sempre nuovi".¹³ Émile Bernard echoes the same idea: "Pas un seul des poètes contemporains d'aucun pays ne me paraît s'entendre mieux que M. de Castro à rajeunir l'économie, la signification, la portée des symboles".

The idea of a Symbolist drama had been very much in the air in France towards the end of the 1880's and the beginning of the 1890's. There was particular interest in the idea of a drama of several levels. These works would present characters who would be seen by the initiate as symbolizing philosophical concepts, but who would appeal to the ordinary spectator in a more accessible fashion. For example, in a review published in the Revue d'art dramatique of 15 September 1889 Gustave Kahn had spoken of "l'œuvre à plusieurs degrés, offrant, à mi-pente, aux non-initiés, un drame accessible, cachant sur les cimes, pour l'élite des spectateurs ou des lecteurs, une haute signification philosophique".¹⁴ In the early 1890's, Maeterlinck more than any other French writer was connected with this idea of a Symbolist drama. In L'Estafette of 21 November 1891 Maublair had praised his drama because it:

réalisait l'idéal du théâtre: s'élever aux plus nobles conceptions métaphysiques et les incarner en des êtres fictifs pour les offrir à la méditation des artistes et des penseurs, tout en réservant à la foule le drame passionnant et parfaitement intelligible e'êtres simples où elle se devine et se retrouve. 15

¹² PICA, pp. xl-xli.

¹³ Ibid., p. li

¹⁴ Quoted in JACQUES ROBICHEZ, Le Symbolisme au Théâtre: Lugné Poe et les débuts de l'Œuvre (Paris: L'Arche, Éditeur, 1957), p. 48.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 167.

As we have seen, Eugénio de Castro expresses his admiration for Maeterlinck in his article. But the second author he singles out for special mention is also of considerable importance in this respect. He is Henrik Ibsen:

Os Revenants e L'Intruse, La Maison de Poupée e La Princesse Maleine vivem como astros recentemente nascidos, astros da primeira grandeza só visíveis pelo telescópio dos Intelectuais.

The modern reader may find it difficult to understand how the works of Ibsen, described by some as "The Triumph of Realism",¹⁶ could be connected with the idea of Symbolist drama. But we must keep in mind that the ideas expressed by Eugénio de Castro in "O Teatro Moderno" were heavily influenced by those current in France.¹⁷ And his view of Ibsen imitates that of the young French intellectuals of the time.¹⁸ As Jacques Robichez points out, French readers insisted on interpreting Ibsen in Symbolist terms:

on a été tout naturellement porté à voir derrière chaque personnage d'Ibsen une notion d'ordre moral ou philosophique, derrière chacune de ses intrigues la confrontation d'un certain nombre de concepts, habillés tant bien que mal en images, derrière chaque indication scénique, aussi banale qu'elle fût, un sens caché. On a voulu que la pluie des Revenants et

¹⁶ ALLARDYCE NICOL, World Drama (London: Harrap, 1968), p. 424.

¹⁷ A further indication of this can be found in the following suggestion Eugénio de Castro gives for an ideal play: "o mais lindo espectáculo para um inteligente de agora, seria formado não pela representação duma longa peça através de cujos meandros a atenção se perde e a vista se fatiga, mas pela sucessão de três quadros, um deles declamado, outro representado por mímica e outro dançado". These ideas clearly recall Gustave Kahn's suggested creation of a "comédie de cirque". In his article in the Revue d'art dramatique of 15 September 1889 he had envisaged using "tous les éléments muets et parlés du cirque en les réduisant à figurer les différentes facettes d'une idée" (Quoted in ROBICHEZ, p. 48).

¹⁸ The fact that Eugénio de Castro quotes the titles of Ibsen's Gengangere and Et Dukkehjem in French (Les Revenants, La Maison de Poupée) suggests that he had read the translation of these two works by Cte. Maurice Prozor, published in one volume in 1889.

le soleil voulussent dire quelque chose et l'on a nommé symboliste ce théâtre à double sens, ce théâtre à clef, malgré les protestations unanimes des Scandinaves, malgré les affirmations de l'auteur lui-même. 19

This opinion is seconded by Marcel Postic who affirms that in France "Ibsen, presque malgré lui [...] est annexé par les Symbolistes". 20

It is clear from this, then, that Eugénio de Castro's mention of Ibsen, like his mention of Maeterlinck, is to be interpreted as reflecting his interest in Symbolist drama. And the suggestion here, again, is that Belkiss, a clearly Symbolic work in the terms described, is more or less contemporary with this article, in which Eugénio de Castro's interest in Symbolist theatre appears for the first time.

The third point of interest of "O Teatro Moderno" is that it reveals Eugénio de Castro's renewed interest, in 1893, in the story around which he would construct Belkiss, the story of the Queen of Sheba. Exemplifying the ideas on drama presented in his article, he gives the outline of an ideal play. In its second movement we find the following indications:

Segue-se-lhe a mímica: a Rainha de Sabá visita Salomão, no bíblico palácio de Jerusalém. Velhas opulências, costumes mortos, apagadas decorações, tudo revive com um brilhantismo inédito.

A second item worth mentioning in connection with the dating of Belkiss concerns the little-known French author Albert Lantôme. In the October issue (No. 6) of Les Écrits pour l'art, 1891, Lantôme published a fragment of his projected work Schelomo describing the meeting of Solomon and Belkiss in Jerusalem (pp. 238-240). Eugénio de Castro was certainly familiar with Les Écrits pour l'art,²¹ and

¹⁹ ROBICHEZ, p. 153.

²⁰ POSTIC, p. 41.

²¹ He had published two poems in the previous issue of the same magazine (see page 25).

it is safe to assume that he became acquainted with this fragment when it was published there in 1891.²² But it is not until 1893 that the fruits of this acquaintance become apparent. In his series "Os Modernos Bizantinos" published in the Novidades in 1893 a translation of this precise fragment appeared on April 28. The fragment in question is a "colóquio amoroso" between Solomon and Belkiss. Eugénio de Castro undoubtedly had it in mind when he wrote the episode "Sob as Nogueiras" of Belkiss (XIII). Similarities of detail put the matter beyond doubt:

"Tous deux marchent, entre des bordures d'aloés, et leurs ombres s'agrandissent sur le chemin teinté de lune. Balkis, le corps voilé du pallium blanc rayé de vert, a les cheveux ondes comme les femmes de Iérouschalaïme. Du pouce elle balance le sachet de myrrhe que retient à son cou une chaînette d'argent."

"Salomão e Belkiss avançam, lentamente, na pompa das suas túnicas farfalhentas, entreolhando-se extasiadamente, e brincando, distraidamente, com os saquinhos de mirra que trazem ao pescoço."

Both scenes take place during the evening; both are lyrical, not a common feature in Belkiss; both are filled with sensuality.

And so here again we have details concerning Belkiss which, though available to Eugénio de Castro some time before, do not show any positive result in his writings until 1893 - further evidence that it was then, and not before, that the theme of the finished Belkiss was uppermost in his mind.

In view of the indications just given, it is my own opinion that Eugénio de Castro planned two quite different works on the Queen of Sheba at different times. The first of these, A Rainha de Sabá, he embarked on in 1890. It was no doubt meant to be a sequel to Oaristos, to be written in the same Romantic-Decadent style. For reasons best known to the poet, however, (perhaps nothing more than a sudden

²² The projected Schelomo never in fact appeared. Eugénio de Castro would have had no other way of becoming acquainted with this fragment except through Les Écrits pour l'art.

upsurge of interest in Symbolism), this work never appeared, and, in its place, in 1891, Eugénio de Castro published Horas. It seems more than likely that many of the exotic details of Horas come from the originally planned Rainha de Sabá. This can be seen from the fact that many of these details in "A Epifania dos Licornes" reappear in the completed Belkiss:

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| "Ó sempre em méio das sororais polifonias
Dos burcelins, das nubélias gementes." | {6-7} |
| "trompas, címbalos, nubélias." | {XII} |
| "Granito róseo de Siena." | {32} |
| "colonelós de granito rosado, de Siena." | {II} |
| "Em de cobre babilónicas caçoilas,
Fumegavam resinas do Madagascar." | {44-5} |
| "duas grandes caçoilas de cobre esmaltado
onde fumegam resinas aromáticas." | {II} |
| "Peridotes, obsidianas [...]
Sueiras, esmeraldas de Juba, cimofanas." | {51, 53} |
| "esmeraldas de Juba, astérias, lápis-lazúli
de Nadai, peridotes, dáfnias, obsidianas." | {IX} |

The following detail from the "Epílogo" also reappears in Belkiss:

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| "E que nunca da Índia
Tenhamos de mandar vir a PEDRA DA ÁGUIA." | {23-4} |
| " <u>pedras da águia</u> , que favorecem os partos." | {IX} |

Having shelved A Rainha de Sabá in favour of Horas, various influences experienced by Eugénio de Castro between 1892 and 1893 persuaded him to exhume the theme, conserving much of the exotic detail, but recreating the work entirely in the light of more recent personal and literary experience. If the publication of A Rainha de Sabá was announced as "iminente" in 1890, it is only reasonable to assume that a delay in publication - in this case a delay of four years - must have answered to a serious desire to introduce not simply additional detail, but new elements of major importance into the work. The exotic details mentioned above no doubt form the oldest sub-stratum of the book; they probably include Episode XII, "A Chegada", - a simple exercise in visual exoticism - in its entirety. But other aspects of the poem - the influence of Maeterlinck's drama, above all its symbolic potential - are more in tune with

interests recorded by Eugénio de Castro in 1893.

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The background material used in the setting of Belkiss falls into two broad categories: historical and exotic. I shall examine the sources of the historical material first. This material forms only a back-drop against which the action of Belkiss takes place. It is not essentially connected with the significance of the poem.

In a fanciful introduction to the Spanish translation of Belkiss Leopoldo Lugones wrote of Eugénio de Castro: "Muchos infolios y palimpsestos debe haber hojeado entre la riquísima bibliografía y cartografía de los tiempos medios".²³ He went on in the same vein to mention such colourful names as "Ricardo de Haldingham", the "Breviario Grimani de Venecia", the "Libro de Horas de Luis XI". But however interesting these suggestions, his introduction is more fanciful than accurate on many scores. The most obvious source of the background information in Belkiss is that quoted by Eugénio de Castro himself at the beginning of the book - the Bible. The Episodes in which this Biblical material is most apparent are Episode IV - Hadad's interview with Belkiss - and Episode IX - Nastosenen's description of Jerusalem.

Almost all the details of Episode IV are taken from Kings 2 and 3. Two of the most obvious are the defeat of Hadad's father by David in the Valley of Salt, and David's occupation of Edom (2, viii, 13-14): "Fecit sibi quoque nomen, cum reverteretur capta Syria in Valle Salinarum [...] Et posuit in Idumaea custodes, statuitque praesidium et facta est universa Idumaea serviens David", and Hadad's refuge at the court of the Pharaoh (3, xi, 19): "Et

²³ LEOPOLDO LUGONES, in Belkiss, traducción del portugués, por Luis Berisso, precedida de una noticia crítica por el mismo y de un "Discurso Preliminar" por Leopoldo Lugones (Madrid: Editorial América, 1919), p. 12.

invenit Adad gratiam coram Pharaonem valde".²⁴ Hadad's enmity towards Solomon is also mentioned here (3, xi, 25): "eratque adversarius Israeli cunctis diebus Salomonis", as is the marriage of the Pharaoh's daughter to the king (3, iii, 1): "Confirmatum est igitur regnum in manu Salomonis, et affinitate coniunctus est Pharaoni regi Aegypti: accepit namque filiam eius, et adduxit in civitatem David".

The argument between Belkiss and Hadad in the same Episode is, likewise, closely modelled on sections of Kings 3. These are, in the order in which Eugénio de Castro uses them:

"Pharao rex Aegypti ascendit, et cepit Gazer [...] et dedit eam in dotem filiae suae uxori Salomonis" (ix, 16).

"... hodi occidetur Adonias. Misitque rex Salomon per manum Banaiae filii Joidae, qui interfecit eum" (ii, 24-5).

"Fuerunt ei uxores quasi reginae septingentae, et concubinae trecentae" (xi, 3).

"et erat sapentior cunctis hominibus: sapentior Ethan Ezrahita, et Heman, et Chalcol, et Dorda" (iv, 31).

Solomon's views on women as reported to Belkiss by Hadad derive word for word from Proverbs (v, 2-4): "Ne attendas fallaciae mulieris. Favus enim distillans labia meretrix, et nitidius oleo guttur eius; novissima autem illius amara quasi absynthium, et acuta quasi gladius biceps".

In Episode IX, the account of Solomon's wealth given by Nastosenen contains the following details all from Kings 3:

"Habitabatque Juda et Israel absque timore ullo [...] a Dan usque Bersabea, cunctis diebus Salomonis" (iv, 25).

"Ipse enim obtinebat omnem regionem quae erat trans flumen, a Thapsis usque ad Gazan" (iv, 24).

"Et habebat Salomon quadraginta milia praeseptia equorum currilium" (iv, 26).

"Erat autem cibus Salomonis per dies singulos, triginta cori similiae et sexaginta cori farinae, decem boves

²⁴ In the interests of his plot, Eugénio de Castro omits the fact that Hadad married the Pharaoh's sister-in-law.

pinguis, et viginti boves pascuales, et centum arietes, excepta venatione cervorum, capreorum, atque bubalorum, et avium altilium" (22-23).

"Itaque Hiram dabat Salomoni ligna cedrina" (v, 10).

"Et aedificavit domum, et consummavit eam: texit quoque domum laquearibus cedrinis" (vi, 9).

"Fecit etiam rex Salomon thronum de ebore grandem: et vestivit cum auro fulvo nimis [...] et duo leones stabant iuxta manus singulas. Et duodecim leunculi stantes super sex gradus hinc atque inde" (viii, 18-20).

The references to Solomon's parables in the same Episode derive from the same source (iv, 32): "Locutus est quoque Salomon tria milia parabolas; et fuerunt carmina eius quinque et millia", as do the references to his various buildings:

"Haec est summa expensarum, quam obtulit rex Salomon ad aedificandum domum Domini et domum suam, et Mello, et muram Jerusalem, et Hezer, et Mageddo, et Gazer" (ix, 15).

"Aedificavit ergo Salomon Gazer, et Bethoron Inferiorem, et Baalath, et Palmiram" (ix, 17-18)

In Nastosenen's description of the temple too there is much that can be traced back to various passages from Scripture:

"Et coepit Salomon aedificare domum Domini in Jerusalem in Monte Moria" (Paralipomenon, 2, iii, 1).

"Et finxit duas columnas aereas. Duo quoque capitella fecit, quae ponerentur super capita columnarum, fusilia ex aere; et quasi in modum retis et catenarum sibi invicem miro opere contextarum. Et perfecit columnas, et duos ordines per circuitum retiaculorum singulorum, ut tegerentur capitella, quae erant super summitatem, malogranatorum [...] et statuit duas columnas in porticu templi" (Kings, 3, vii, 15-21)

"Fecit quoque velum ex hyacintho, purpura, cocco et hyssop" (Paralipomenon, 2, iii, 14).

"Fecitque Salomon omnia vasa in domo Domini: altare aureum, et mensam super quam ponerentur panes propositionis, auream, et candelabra aurea" (Kings, 3, viii, 48-9)

"Oraculum autem in medio domus, in interiori parte fecerat, ut poneret ibi arcam foederis Domini" (vi, 19).

"Et intulerant sacerdotes arcam foederis Domini in locum suum, in oraculum templi, in Sanctum Sanctorum, subter alas cherubim. Siquidem cherubim expandebant alas super locum arcae, et protegebant arcam et

vectes eius desuper" (viii, 6-7).

"Texit quoque cherubim auro" (vi, 28).

"Fecit quoque mare fusilium decem cubitorum a labio usque ad labium" (vii, 23).

Episodes IV and IX carry the bulk of the Biblical material in Belkiss, but minor instances of Biblical influence occur elsewhere. They include the naming of King Amraphel in Episode I. He is mentioned fleetingly in Genesis, along with the name of his kingdom (xiv, 1): "Amraphel, rex Sennear". However, the Bible does not account for all the details in these Episodes. In the description of the temple, for example, we find the only two Hebrew words in the entire book: "hekal" (mistakenly written "kekal") and "debir". These establish that Eugénio de Castro also had resource to an authority whom, in another context, he had described as "sem dúvida um dos homens que mais contribuiu para a oxidação espiritual deste século" ²⁵ - Ernest Renan. It was in Renan's Histoire du Peuple d'Israel that he could find the additional material concerning the temple:

La cella (hékal) n'était éclairée que par de petites baies grillagées, placées au haut de l'edifice. Elle était coupée par un écran, qui laissait voir au fond un petit sanctuaire, le debir, appelé plus tard ²⁶ Saint des Saints.

It was also there that he found the name of the Pharaoh with whom Hadad had stayed (Episode IV): "Le roi de Tanis, Psioukhanou II [...] avait conquis l'ancien territoire du Dan et en particulier la ville chananéenne de Gézer [...] Le roi d'Egypte donna Gézer en dot à sa fille et la maria à Salomon". ²⁷

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Other than purely Biblical material, there is a

²⁵ In an article entitled "Ernest Renan" published in the Novidades of 4 October 1892.

²⁶ ERNEST RENAN, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, Éditeurs, s/d), VI, 403.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 384.

considerable amount of egyptological material in Belkiss. It is particularly noticeable in the ritual of Episode III, "Amon-Ra-Harmakhis", though it appears sporadically throughout the rest of the poem. It is not always consonant with historical or geographical truth. The theogony of Episode III is entirely Egyptian. Yet Axum, where the scene takes place, is in modern Ethiopia, a region which was not under Egyptian influence at the time (c. 1000 B.C.).²⁸ Similarly, the various geographical details of Episode VIII - the Tower of Isis, Memphis and the second cataract (of the Nile) - are all in Egypt, while Sheba, where Belkiss has by this time removed, is in the modern Yemen, on the other side of the Red Sea. Federico Olivero has already noted this disparity, pointing out that "Il regno di Belkiss è posto invece dal De Castro in Egitto".²⁹ These inaccuracies, however, are incidental and have no effect on the meaning of the poem. They show that for Eugénio de Castro literary atmosphere was more important than scholarly precision.

The particular source of this material - if indeed it is to be ascribed to one particular source - I have been unable to ascertain. Perhaps Eugénio de Castro culled this information from a book such as Ernest Rose's Isis dévoilée, ou l'égyptologie sacrée, which Álvaro Maia describes as an exhaustive (and exhausting) account of all the rituals and rites of ancient Egypt.³⁰ The use of some such encyclopedic source is obvious.

From a similar encyclopedic source come, no doubt, several other details of the legend of Belkiss herself of a more strictly Jewish or Arabic origin. These details originate mostly from the Muslim commentators on the Koran,

²⁸ Solomon is believed to have lived from 1030 to 933 B.C. See: The Jewish Encyclopaedia (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1907), XI, 436. For the extent of Egyptian influence at the time see: The Penguin Atlas of Ancient History (1970), p. 41.

²⁹ OLIVERO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 7.

³⁰ MAIA, Vento sobre a charneca, p. 202.

and include the name of the Queen.³¹ Muslim tradition also supplies the tale of Solomon's ruse of the "glass floor",³² which appears in Episode XIII of Eugénio de Castro's poem. There is also one detail from Abyssinian legend: the return of Belkiss's son to Jerusalem, with which the poem closes.³³

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The exotic detail which abounds throughout Belkiss derives from two major sources: Gustave Flaubert and Pliny. Attempts have been made in the past to discover a profound influence of Flaubert on Belkiss. In 1896, for example, Vittorio Pica suggested a similarity between Belkiss and Flaubert's Salammbô.³⁴ There have been more recent attempts to sustain a similar thesis. In 1950 Federico Olivero saw the same "spirituale affinità" between the two heroines, going so far as to suggest that Belkiss is a figure "di

³¹ The French writers of the nineteenth century invariably refer to the Queen of Sheba as Balkis, a name believed to have been formed on the Greek "παλλακίς" "prostitute". This was the name used by Gérard de Nerval in his Voyage en Orient (1867), and by Lantoiné in the fragment quoted earlier. Eugénio de Castro follows a different tradition, which sees the name of the Queen as deriving from the Hebraicized form of "παλλακίς", "pilgesh". For a discussion of the Queen's name see: The Encyclopaedia of Islam (London: Lizac and Co., 1954), p. 1220. The naming of the Queen would seem to belong only to the 1894 version of Belkiss. In Qaristos and Azul she is "a Rainha de Sabá".

³² Encyclopaedia of Islam, p. 1220: "Muslim commentators [...] supplement the story at various points: the Queen's name is given as Bilqīs; the demons at Solomon's court, afraid that the king may marry Bilqīs, spread the rumour that the Queen has hairy legs and the feet of an ass. Hence Solomon's ruse of constructing a glass floor which the Queen mistakes for water thus causing her to lift her skirts."

³³ Enciclopédia Portuguesa Ilustrada (Oporto: Lemos e Ca., s/d), p. 591: "educou [o filho] até estar em estado de ter professores, e aproveitou as lições do seu pai. Mandou-o então para Jerusalém, para ali ser educado junto dele".

³⁴ PICA, p. xxxvi

cui Salammbô è la sorella maggiore".³⁵ René Poupert also refers to her as "une sorte de Salammbô devenue maeterlinckienne".³⁶ But these suggestions do not bear scrutiny. Belkiss and Salammbô belong to the same broad class of exotic heroine, and the vogue caused by Flaubert in Portugal no doubt influenced Eugénio de Castro in his choice of figure.³⁷ But it is difficult to see any real spiritual affinity between the two. Belkiss is the incarnation of a sexual urge. She is a symbolic character in a didactic poem. The same could hardly be said of Salammbô. Flaubert supplies exotic detail in great abundance, but very little else.

Federico Olivero, who considers the influence of Salammbô and La Tentation de Saint Antoine on Belkiss as "spicatissimo",³⁸ has given a broad outline of the more obvious borrowings. He points out the similarity between the account given by Nastosenen of his travels (Episode IX) and those given by Abdalonim, by the Chef des navires and by the Chef des voyages in Salammbô.³⁹ He mentions that, as regards his physical appearance, Zophesamin "ha il suo prototipo in Schahabarim", from the same novel.⁴⁰ He adds that in Salammbô, as in Belkiss, we find the precious stone "callaïs" (p. 143), the plant "baaras" (p. 176), as well as "des lacs tout couverts de dragons" (p. 138) which might have suggested Eugénio de Castro's "Lago da Demência"

³⁵ OLIVERO, p. 9.

³⁶ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 98.

³⁷ Flaubert seems to have been much read in Portugal at the time. In Os Maias (1888), a novel full of interesting indications of literary themes in vogue, Eça tells how Carlos "compôs contos arqueológicos, sob a influência da 'Salammbô'" (p. 90).

³⁸ OLIVERO, p. 5.

³⁹ See: GUSTAVE FLAUBERT, Ouvres Complètes (Paris: Club de l'Honnête Homme, 1971), II, Salammbô, pp. 137-144. Subsequent page references given in the text.

⁴⁰ OLIVERO, p. 8.

(Episode XI) "coalhado de serpentes brancas". He also points out that several of the fabulous beasts mentioned in the Tentation reappear in Belkiss.

But he could have mentioned more. In Salammbô we find "un lac communiquant à la mer" (p. 112). Eugénio de Castro's "Lago da Demência" is described in similar terms: "Dizem que é muito fundo e que comunica com o mar" (XI). Solomon's temple, "todo revestido de coloquintidas abertas" (IX), reminds us of that of Tanit, where "Des grenades et des coloquintes chargeaient les chapiteaux" (p. 96). Other details coincide. Zophesamin, carrying "um saquitel cheio de omoplatas de cinocéfalo e de cordeiro, cobertas de inscrições" (II), recalls Abdalonim, who carries "des omoplates de mouton chargées d'écritures fines" (p. 139). As well as the "callaïs", in Salammbô we find "céraunies" (p. 143) and "sandastrums" (p. 143), both of which figure in Nastosenen's account of his journey (IX). Again, just as Salammbô has "ses colombes, frottées de musc" (p. 176), so Belkiss has "pombas de alas almiscaradas" (IV). Finally, the Phoenician sacrifice in Episode VIII of Eugénio de Castro's poem is based on a similar sacrifice to Moloch in Salammbô (pp. 230-238).

As for the Tentation de Saint Antoine: despite a personal appearance by the Queen of Sheba in Flaubert's work, Eugénio de Castro's heroine owes little to the Queen as she appears there. The Tentation provides material mainly for the account of Nastosenen's journey in Episode IX. From it Eugénio de Castro takes the following details:

"la fontaine Asbadée, dont l'eau rend les parjures
hydropiques". 41

"Este tem água da fonte Asbadea, que torna
hidrópicos os perjuros".

"Veux-tu que je t'enseigne où pousse la plante
Balis, qui ressuscite les morts?" (p. 114).

"Folhas de balis, que ressuscitam os mortos".

⁴¹ FLAUBERT, Oeuvres Complètes, IV, La Tentation de Saint Antoine, p. 104. Subsequent page references given in the text.

"Demande-lui plutôt l'androdamas qui attire l'argent, le fer et l'airain! (p. 114).

"andródamas, que atraem a prata, o cobre e o ferro".

"de l'encens du cap Gardefan" (p. 59).

"incenso de Gardefan".

"une outre de chalibon, vin réservé pour les rois d'Assyrie" (p. 59).

"vinte garrafas de chalibon, vinho precioso, reservado para os reis da Assíria".

The following detail, with a slight variation, may also derive from Flaubert:

"Tu baigneras ton corps dans le lac d'huile rose de l'île Junônia" (p. 113).

"Aquele tem óleo de rosa .. Enchi-o na ilha Titis, num maravilhoso lago desse líquido".

Occasional details occur in other Episodes:

"et l'on me frottait le corps avec des feuilles de cnyza pour me faire chaste" (p. 104).

"Zophesamin deu-me folhas de cnyza, que chamam a castidade" (V).

Also to be found in the Tentation, as in Belkiss, are the "Blemmyes" (p. 166), the "Martichoras" [sic] (p. 167), the "Catoblepas" (p. 167) and the "Astomi" (p. 165). Finally, the ritual to Adon Adonim in Episode VIII is probably based on a similar ritual to the same god (though he is never explicitly named) in the Tentation (pp. 131-2).

The second major source of exotic detail in Belkiss is Pliny, whom Flaubert freely acknowledged as the source of many of the exotic details to appear in his works. However, Eugénio de Castro did not simply copy Flaubert in this. He did not, for example, repeat the other's misspelling of the "mantichoras". The list of borrowings is a long one. As they are too numerous to itemize here (there are twenty-eight in all), I list them all, along with their source in Pliny, in Appendix B.

Unlike the historical material discussed earlier, the exotic detail borrowed from Flaubert and Pliny has more than a decorative role to play. It is not simply part of the back-drop against which the action of the poem takes place. It is an integral part of the forces at work in the

poem. It represents the exteriorization of an exaggerated appeal to the senses. In this way it symbolizes the erotic impulse which moves through the entire poem. It fulfills in Belkiss the function Mario Praz sees it fulfilling in the works of Flaubert:

ideale esotico e ideale erotico vanno di pari passo, e anche questo fatto costituisce un'altra prova di una verità abbastanza evidente, che cioè l'esotismo è solitamente una proiezione fantastica di un bisogno sessuale.

42

This exoticism is confined initially to the sub-plot of the return of Nastosenen's fleet, a sub-plot which culminates in the description of the sexual attractions of Solomon. It creates a stream of light running parallel to the main plot where, due to the influence of Zophesamin's asceticism, darkness prevails. However, within the Schopenhauerian framework of Belkiss, the light of eroticism proves illusory. When the two plots converge in Episode IX a black cloud appears, and permanent darkness overtakes the poem.

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ii). Plot.

Beneath the wealth of exotic detail in which the poem is clad, the action of Belkiss is relatively simple. Belkiss is driven by her desires to go to Jerusalem to be with Solomon. Of the fifteen Episodes in the poem, thirteen are concerned with the lead-up to her ultimate union with Solomon. After one night together, however, Solomon abandons her. She returns to Sheba, where, after languishing in despair for nine years, she dies.

The principal characters are Belkiss and Zophesamin. Their conflicting views dominate the entire poem. In the style of Symbolist drama, they each play a double role. They

present both philosophical and human values, though the philosophical values dominate throughout. The symbolic significance of the poem is not always clear. At least three different factors are brought in at different times to account for the actions of Belkiss. At times, some attempt is made to integrate these factors into the plot. At others, an influence of later date is crudely interpolated within a structure with which it is not compatible. On these occasions the result is a hiatus or change of direction within the continuity of the poem.

The conflict around which the plot turns at the beginning of the poem is one with which we are already familiar. It is the struggle of Schopenhauerian asceticism against the tyranny of the passions, a struggle which René Poupert describes as "l'épuisant combat qui peut opposer le corps et l'âme".⁴³ This conflict is represented by Zophesamin (asceticism) and Belkiss (physical desire). The complementary nature of these two figures must be stressed, as it has not always been appreciated in the past. Leopoldo Lugones, for example, does Zophesamin considerable injustice when he suggests that "Los demás personajes son meros accidentes del drama. Belkiss, el alma de Belkiss, los vestidos de Belkiss, los ensueños de Belkiss, eso es todo".⁴⁴ It is on the human and abstract values crystallized around both Zophesamin and Belkiss that the plot turns. They are different sides of the same coin, expressing between them the two halves of the same basically Schopenhauerian world-view. So long as the original conflict remains uppermost in the poem, these two characters will remain very much complementary aspects of each other.

The basic elements of this conflict are stated in the "Prólogo" (from "Mas não lhe faltará vontade" to the end) and in Episode II. We should make no mistake about the

⁴³ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 86.

⁴⁴ LUGONES, p. 18.

urge driving Belkiss as it is presented at this point in the poem. As a symbol of the Schopenhauerian Will, she exhibits desires which are exclusively physical. She longs for "as sonhadas delícias que a sua idade requer" (my italics). It is not her heart, traditionally viewed as the seat of the emotions which is seen as fit to break, it is her flesh and blood: "Às vezes, revolve-se tanto no leite, agita por tal forma o corpo, que dir-se-ia que a sua virgindade quer quebrar-lhe os ossos e rasgar-lhe as carnes para fugir, como uma águia presa numa gaiola estreita ... " In Episode II her words revolve irresistibly around a notion of physical desire:

"ainda uma noite sem beijos ... sem carícias ..."

"Até as feias são beijadas e enleadas com amor! E eu, eu que sou linda - como a água do meu banho me tem mostrado, vivo aqui, pobre flor estéril! gelada pelas tuas palavras, petrificada pelos teus conselhos, amordaçando os meus desejos e amamentando o meu tormento, que me morde como um escorpião!"

"Ah! mas eu não posso estrangular este grande amor."

"Amo-o com um amor de fogo!"

In her frustration she cries: "Quero beijos! Quero os beijos de Salomão [...] Quero os beijos de Salomão!" The violence of many of these images (rasgar, amordaçando, estrangular, morde, fogo) is symptomatic of the atmosphere being created by Eugénio de Castro. Despite its lack of action, Belkiss is an extremely violent poem. One need only think of the suicide of Amraphel (I) or the projected suicide of Belkiss (II); of the savage rituals of Episodes III and VIII, or the hideous monsters which appear in Episodes VI and XI. This violence, like the exoticism, is the exteriorization of a driving physical urge.

The physical nature of the urge driving Belkiss must be kept in mind if we are to negotiate successfully the meanderings of the plot and fully understand the symbolic significance of the poem. In Episode II, desire is heightened by the exhilaration of grandeur, symbolized by the figure of Solomon: "Ah! ... como deve ser bom vê-lo ajoelhado a meus pés, ele que tem o mundo inteiro ajoelhado

em torno de si!" Anyone offering less possibility of exhilaration is rejected. For this reason she refuses Amraphel ⁴⁵ and Hadad. In the plot as originally conceived, Belkiss clearly represents physical thrill -- a mixture of sensuality and vanity. She herself will admit as much in Episode X. Here, after a change in the direction of the plot which I shall discuss later, she explains her previous actions in the following terms: "Não são os sentidos que me perdem, já não são os beijos de Salomão que me chamam, nem a vaidade que me tenta".

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Against Belkiss stands Zophesamin. When we first hear of him, he is described as opposing "os prazeres da carne", "a luxúria" (I). His stance is one of Schopenhauerian asceticism. Schopenhauerian beyond any doubt are his exhortations to self-mortification: "A luzinha [a Verdade] é deveras biqueira, rejeita todas as comidas vulgares. Quem a quiser clara como o sol, tem de a sustentar com desgostos e martírios" (II). So also is the cult of chastity he propounds. This is first mentioned in the prologue: "quer livrá-la de amarguras conservando-a casta". It is then reiterated in Episode II:

BELKISS: "Para que nasci eu com uma tão linda boca?"

ZOPHESAMIN: "Para que a conserves pura, se a quiseres conservar linda"

A second characteristic of Zophesamin's stance which cannot be overlooked is its clear didacticism. Owing, no doubt, to his pontifications on "a arte pela arte", Eugénio

⁴⁵ It would be wrong to probe more deeply than the slim psychology of the poem allows and suggest that the reason why she rejects him is that he is effeminate: "Parecia uma princesa vestida de homem" (I). She will also refuse Hadad, yet he has no doubts as to his own sexual prowess: "os meus beijos despertariam estátuas e amansariam leões" (IV). And Solomon himself is not without effeminate detail: "Tem uma boca de donzela" (IX).

de Castro quickly gained for himself a reputation for being aloof from didactic purpose. João de Barros assures us that "para aquele extraordinário poeta de Beleza, só a Beleza, só o sentimento e a emoção da Beleza eram objectivo confessável".⁴⁶ Alfredo Pimenta goes even further:

A obra poética de Eugénio de Castro não se inspira em qualquer intuito teleológico: ele não o pôs ao serviço fosse do que fosse, além da Beleza. Ele não tem no nicho do seu altar o Bem ou o Mal, a Verdade ou a Mentira, a Humanidade ou a Pátria, a Guerra ou a Paz. ⁴⁷

And Leopoldo Lugones says of Belkiss as a whole: "La obra de que se trata es exclusivamente emocional, wagneriana, lírica en el elevado sentido de la palabra, y, para decirlo de una vez, una obra antinaturalista".⁴⁸ But it is impossible to miss the didactic intent of passages such as the following, all spoken by Zophesamin in Episode II:

"A luzinha [...] tem um nome. Chama-se Verdade".

"servirá para os outros, para afastar os outros dos perigos em que vão cair".

"Quem seguir o que neles se aconselha diminuirá as suas dores".

While the original conflict remains uppermost, Zophesamin will also preserve this markedly didactic stance.

In Episodes III and IV the original plot is joined by two sub-plots: the arrival of Hadad, and the story of Nastosenen's fleet. The first serves admirably to illustrate Belkiss's obsession with Solomon, but, curiously, this sub-plot is never brought to a satisfactory end. It disappears in mystery towards the end of the poem when we learn first that Hadad has overcome Solomon in battle, and are then left to gather for ourselves that he has not. It is one of the main structural defects of the poem. The second will disappear for a while, and reappear to converge with the main plot in Episode IX. The return of Nastosenen, laden

⁴⁶ BARROS, Eugénio de Castro, p. 15.

⁴⁷ PIMENTA, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 189.

⁴⁸ LUGONES, p. 19.

with riches and tales of exotic adventure brings to a climax the sensuous element within the poem. And as the culmination of this crescendo of physical exhilaration Solomon appears in a blaze of sexuality which Belkiss cannot resist:

Ia deixando atrás de si um carreiro de mulheres que beijavam, de joelhos, os sinais dos seus pés ... Outras, com a boca na poeira do caminho, estendiam os cabelos cheios de perfumes, no sítio onde Salomão ia passar ... Um velho de barbas brancas [...] acercou-se dele, e mostrando-lhe uma filha linda como a lua, pediu-lhe que a recebesse no seu leito ... As virgens ajoelhavam-se a seus pés, e rasgando as túnicas, exibiam a frescura intacta dos seus seios arquejantes como rolas feridas, procurando assim cativar os olhos do rei ...

Her first question is significant: "E é lindo Salomão?" Her next establishes the combination of impulses we saw before -- sexuality and vanity: "A magnificência de Salomão é quase divina, pois não é verdade?" The enormity of the physical appeal is too much for Belkiss, and motivates her immediate decision to go to Jerusalem: "Quero ir a Jerusalém! Quero ir ter com o meu senhor!" This decision precipitates the dénouement of the poem.

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Having thus established the conflict of asceticism and desire in the symbolic figures of Zophesamin and Belkiss, Eugénio de Castro should, we might feel, have carried it to a conclusion in keeping with the terms in which it was initially stated. This, however, is not the case. Intrusive factors contribute in different ways towards clouding the central issues of this original plot, thus causing considerable confusion within the structure of the poem. The three most important factors are: firstly, a certain ambiguity at times in the attitude of Zophesamin; secondly, a hiatus caused within the development of the poem by Episodes V to VII; thirdly, a change in the direction of the plot operated by Episodes X and XI.

While the original plot remains uppermost, Zophesamin's

stance remains basically Schopenhauerian. But his words seem at times to bear the mark of Villiers's illusionism. This first appears in suggestions such as the following, concentrated towards the end of Episode II:

"não te digo que enjeites esse amor, mas acho que deves purificá-lo ... Guarda-o bem guardado, como uma jóia de grande valor no fundo de uma arca; torna-o discreto, espiritual e vago, como essas luas que nascem pouco depois do meio-dia, nos dias de sol."

"continua a sonhar essa delícia, mas não a queiras colher. A realidade é mais amarga que o heléboro."

"Sonha ... sonha ... e não despertes ... Não há acordar tão amargo como o que apaga um sonho doce."

These words clearly re-echo statements from various of Villiers's works quoted already in chapter four:

"Ah! les idées sont des êtres vivants". ⁴⁹

"Gardez vos rêves ... Ils valent mieux que la réalité." ⁵⁰

The critic who has dealt in greatest depth with Villiers's influence on Belkiss is René Poupard. He rightly points to the influence of Axël on Eugénio de Castro's poem, though I feel he over-estimates it. He suggests, for example, that in creating the figure of Zophesamin Eugénio de Castro took from Maître Janus "le portrait moral du personnage". ⁵¹ There are points of contact between the two. For example Zophesamin's imperative "torna-o [amor] discreto, espiritual" recalls that of Maître Janus: "spiritualise ton corps: sublime-toi". ⁵² But such remarks by Zophesamin are extremely infrequent, and fade into insignificance when compared with those of a more Schopenhauerian flavour. Zophesamin's debt to Schopenhauer is considerably greater than his debt to Villiers. Indeed, I am unable to agree with René Poupard that Eugénio de Castro was "largement inspiré" ⁵³ by Axël. Its influence on Belkiss seems

⁴⁹ VILLIERS, Ouvres Complètes, II, 32.

⁵⁰ Ibid., IX, 45.

⁵¹ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 90.

⁵² VILLIERS, IV, 194.

⁵³ POUPART, p. 90.

confined to minor points of contact. The mysterious force which catches Belkiss's arm in Episode X recalls a similar incident in Axël: "elle va pour la frapper au visage; sa main, déjà haute, s'arrête soudain, comme secrètement immobilisée".⁵⁴ Or just as Belkiss talks of "palavras que [...] ficam transformadas em esqueletos de ideias" (VI), so Axël talks of "mots-spectres".⁵⁵ And Zophesamin's warning: "a realidade é mais amarga que o heléboro" recalls the words of Axël: "Toutes les réalités, demain, que seraient-elles, en comparaison des images que nous venons de vivre".⁵⁶

A second area in which I am unable to agree with René Poupart is in his assessment of the influence on Belkiss of Villiers' short-story Akëdysséril. He sees this as the most important source of Villiers's influence on Eugénio de Castro's poem. He suggests that the arrival-scene in Belkiss (XII) is reminiscent of that of Villiers's Indian princess, and sees a strong physical resemblance between Zophesamin and Villiers's high-priest. But I am unable to find any firm evidence that Eugénio de Castro was influenced by this tale, or that he had ever read it. Any similarity between the two arrival-scenes can be reduced to the very broadest similarity of oriental exoticism. There is nothing specific to suggest that the one was influenced by the other.⁵⁷ Similarly, the proposed similarity between Zophesamin and the high-priest is that of the standard hieratical figure. However, Poupart sees a much more profound influence of Akëdysséril on Belkiss. He suggests that "le symbole moral contenu dans ce conte n'a pas laissé indifférent le poète portugais et il existe une évidente

⁵⁴ VILLIERS, IV, 50.

⁵⁵ Ibid., IV, 146.

⁵⁶ Ibid., IV, 261.

⁵⁷ There is some evidence that "A Chegada" is one of the oldest parts of Belkiss and may have belonged to the poem planned in 1890 (see page 213). If so, it would have been written before Eugénio de Castro's acquaintance with the works of Villiers, which would seem to be later than 1892 (see page 165).

affinité entre le pessimisme et l'idéalisme qui s'expriment dans Akëdysséril et dans Belkiss".⁵⁸ I am not at all convinced that this is the case. But, since a proper discussion of this matter requires a detailed study of the ending of Eugénio de Castro's poem, I shall postpone further comment on it until later in this chapter.

Whatever the true extent of Villiers's influence on Belkiss, however, the fact remains that traces of his illusionism are occasionally visible in the words of Zophesamin. But these remarks are clearly in conflict with his stance in the greater part of the poem. They suggest that fulfilment is possible, even if only in dream, whereas for Zophesamin the Schopenhauerian ascetic no fulfilment of any kind is possible.

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A second and considerably greater cause of confusion within the structure of Belkiss is that constituted by Episodes V to VII. In these Eugénio de Castro abandons his plot as originally conceived and, with very little attempt at reasonable transition, imposes an additional element upon it. The theme of Episodes V to VII is not immediately clear. In Episode V Belkiss seems to have been overcome by a kind of all-embracing ennui: "Não sei o que me falta ... Não estou bem aqui [...] E a noite é tão comprida! [...] Que tristeza a deste palácio". But we should make no mistake as to the real nature of this intrusive element. It is sadism. As Mario Praz points out: "L'ennui non è che l'aspetto più generico del mal du siècle; l'aspetto specifico è: sadismo".⁵⁹

Though it only comes to the fore in Episodes V to VII, this sadistic element has already been vaguely adumbrated in the "Prólogo". It appears in a mild form in Belkiss's

⁵⁸ POUPART, pp. 88-89.

⁵⁹ PRAZ, p. 143.

apparent treatment of her servants: "Ora nos dá pancada, ora nos enche de jóias". But it is present above all in the episode of her previous suitor Amraphel. This episode is violent and brutal. It deals with Belkiss's whimsical mutilation of a corpse: "a rainha mandou arrancar o coração de Amrafel [...] pô-lo a macerar numa infusão aromática, e depois, metendo-o num saquinho de púrpura, fez dele uma pela para jogar".

Episodes V to VII clearly form a hiatus within the structure of the poem, a hiatus introduced by the flimsy expedient of magical intervention. In Episode V Belkiss's sexual desires have been stilled by the magical plant "cnyza". But even so, desire remains, eager for a new object of desire: "Quero desejar alguma coisa e não sei o que hei-de desejar". A prisoner of chastity before, she is now seen as a prisoner of boredom: "Sou como um preso a ver sempre a mesma paisagem". This ennui soon turns to the sadism typical of much Decadent writing: "Como eu ficaria contente, se o fogo pegasse agora no palácio [...] os repuxos de jardim transformar-se-iam em repuxos de sangue [...] E os lagos cheios de sangue!"⁶⁰ and it eventually becomes a thirst for exacerbated sensation: "Estou com sede de coisas misteriosas, de coisas novas e estranhas, que me despertem, que me agitem, que me sacudam". In Episode VII Belkiss describes herself as "constantemente chicoteada pela ânsia do irreal e do misterioso", she describes her "espírito" as "sequioso de inauditismo, de absurdos, de anormalidades". In other words, her desire for sexual exhilaration has been replaced by a longing for the thrill of fear, a further variation on the theme of sado-masochism: "eis-me finalmente às portas do imprevisto,

⁶⁰ The references to burning down the palace suggest some influence of the legend of Nero, dear to Romantics and Decadents alike (see PRAZ, pp. 159-60). Eugénio de Castro was certainly familiar with this legend. In the first editions of Salomé e outros poemas (1896) and A Nereide de Harlém (1896) he announced as "em preparação" a book to be entitled Nero. (It would never in fact appear.)

em face dum mundo novo, que me amedronta com um pavor tão intenso que chega a ser voluptuoso!"

In Episode VII, driven on by her desire for new sensation, Belkiss enters the mysterious forest which surrounds the palace at Sheba. There she encounters people suffering from various forms of hallucination: a man poisoned by "ophiusa", and a mad woman. As she flees from the latter, she falls on a clump of "anacâmpseros, planta que tem a virtude de despertar e avivar paixões amorosas", and her sexual desires are rekindled, allowing the plot to return to its original conflict. Thus this unfortunate digression is brought to an end in the manner in which it had begun - by resort to magical intervention.

Attempts have been made to integrate Episodes V to VII into the poem as a whole. Leopoldo Lugones, for example, suggests that the "anacâmpsero" is essential to the structure of the plot:

Belkiss, después de haberse frotado con hojas de cnyza, siente morir sus deseos bajo su túnica y desvanecerse el divino ensueño de los besos de Salomón. ¿Sabéis cómo renace ese amor defunto? Huyendo de los espantos de la selva en que fue a apagar su sed de misterio, la reina de Sabá cae desmayada sobre una mata de anacampseros, "planta que tiene la virtud de despertar y avivar pasiones amorosas". He aquí, precisamente, todo el encanto de esta preciosa leyenda. Algo que sorprende en medio de los monótonos desenlaces naturalistas. 61

But this is hardly the case. Once we remove the magical effect of the "cnyza" the counter-effect of the "anacampsero" is no longer required. In any case, it is the description of Solomon by Nastosenen and not the effect of the plant which will arouse in Belkiss the irresistible desire to go to Jerusalem. Zophesamin makes this point: "Que alma a tua que, tendo já abandonado tão absurdo amor, voltaste a recebê-lo e acariciá-lo com dobradas carícias, assim que ouviste Nastosenen descrevendo as magnificências de Salomão?"

61 LUGONES, p. 12.

Episodes V to VII cannot be integrated successfully into the poem. On the contrary, the disruption they cause within the unity of the plot is considerable. If we compare the Belkiss of other Episodes with Belkiss as she appears here, she seems almost schizophrenic. Elsewhere she is a young girl who is moved to tears by harsh words (II), and who jumps for joy on hearing good news (VIII). Here she is a Decadent vampire who dreams of scenes of carnage in an attempt to overcome her boredom, and who had earlier taken pleasure in mutilating a corpse. And if we contrast the symbolic debate of earlier and later Episodes with the phantasy-elements which dominate Episode VII, it is difficult to avoid concluding that in this entire interlude emotional and philosophical conflict have been replaced by simple spookery and horror-effects of the crudest kind. Perhaps the measure of this interlude is that if we ignore the references to the forest at the beginning of Episode VIII we can omit Episodes V to VII without feeling the lack of any intervening period.

Yet, despite the digressionary nature of Episodes V to VII, the main-stream of criticism has tended to look on them as the touch-stone for an understanding of the entire poem. Thus Leopoldo Lugones describes Belkiss as a "perversa finisecular calzando sandalias antigas",⁶² while Maria Elsa de Jesus Gonçalves refers to her as a "vítima do Tédio inevitável".⁶³ Álvaro J. da Costa Pimpão sees this interlude as containing the explanation of Belkiss's love for Solomon: "Em Belkiss, o prestígio do Salomão, o Bem-Amado, não resulta da contemplação directa, mas do paroxismo nostálgico da Rainha, da sua obsessão do mistério e do desconhecido".⁶⁴ Feliciano Ramos sees it as explaining the final tragedy of the poem: "o tédio apodera-se completamente de Belkiss, que morre cheia de tristeza

⁶² LUGONES, p. 16.

⁶³ JESUS GONÇALVES, p. 120.

⁶⁴ PIMPÃO, p. 172.

e de mortificação".⁶⁵

Not all critics, however, have accepted this view. Vittorio Pica saw the basic plot as "un fiero dibattito che simbolizza l'eterna lotta tra la passione e la ragione, tra la carne accesa del desiderio e la mente sagacemente ammonitrice".⁶⁶ And indeed, if Belkiss's desire for Solomon is to be reduced simply to the call of mystery, the desire for new and titillating experience to ward off encroaching boredom, the fabric of the poem is irremediably weakened as a result. Zophesamin's constant preaching and sermonizing is not directed against the search for new experience. He cries out against the tyranny of the passions, above all the tyranny of the flesh. If we are to consider Belkiss as belonging simply to the wearisome Decadent band of "collezionisti di sensazioni"⁶⁷ the greater part of the poem becomes meaningless. But we cannot consider her as such. Once these three Episodes are over, her sexual urge returns with a vengeance, and Zophesamin, strangely silent during this interlude, resumes his old Schopenhauerian stance: "Estrangula esse desejo, torce-lhe o pescoço sem piedade, e pisa-o como se pisasses uma víbora" (X). His former didacticism also returns: "A força de gritar, para te desviar dos abismos, a minha voz tornou-se mais fraca ... " (VIII). Indeed, if we take Belkiss as a whole, the greater part of the poem is meaningful only insofar as we are prepared to see its heroine as what she was originally intended to be: an incarnation of Schopenhauerian desire.

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The third factor contributing to the confused nature of Belkiss arises in Episode X. It is here that the concept

⁶⁵ RAMOS, Eugénio de Castro, p. 44.

⁶⁶ PICA, p. xxxviii.

⁶⁷ PRAZ, p. 186.

of Destiny makes its first appearance in the poem. Under its influence, Belkiss's attitude towards her desire for Solomon changes again. In the opening Episodes her longing had been expressed as a function of her will, the emanation of her own desire: "Embora, quero ser dele!" (II); "Quero os beijos de Salomão!" (II); "Embora, quero ser de Salomão" (IV)(my italics). But now it is expressed in quite different terms: "é a desgraça que me empurra, Zophesamin! é a desgraça que me empurra!" (X). Physical impulse and the thrill of grandeur have been subordinated, at least for the time being, to what seems to be an irresistible external force directing Belkiss's actions despite the dictates of her will: "Eu própria vejo a loucura do meu intento, mas não posso abandoná-lo [...] quanto mais quero parar, mais corro para lá". It is she who introduces the concept of Destiny into the poem: "Cada um tem o seu destino certo mas ignorado; eu, porém, aí de mim! tenho um destino de enternecer rochedos e, aí de mim! conheço-o e não lhe posso fugir". And once introduced, Destiny seems to dominate the plot, causing a considerable change of direction within the structure of the poem. Even Zophesamin seems to bow before its power. In lines like the following, he comments repeatedly on its presence:

"Foi o destino que nos mandou parar aqui [...] O destino, que é a vontade embaçado dos deuses, gosta de fazer surpresas, mas desta vez despiu todos os embustes e mostra-se como é: pavoroso, inexorável, mortífero" (XI).

"O destino traz-nos por caminhos cheios de tristeza" (XI).

"Já não te digo que voltes para trás, porque sou mais fraco que o destino, e foi o destino que te conduziu até aqui ... " (XI).

"O destino é muito forte e eu sou muito fraco" (XI).

This arrival in force of the concept of Destiny points to two separate influences working on Eugénio de Castro at the time: Maurice Maeterlinck and Classical literature. Vittorio Pica⁶⁸ seems to have been the first to indicate

⁶⁸ PICA, pp. xxxvi, xliii. He specifically mentions La Princesse Maleine.

the influence of Maeterlinck's drama on Belkiss. More recently, Denyse Chast has suggested that it was under the influence of Maeterlinck that Eugénio de Castro "a fait peser sur ses drames une atmosphère lourde de présages".⁶⁹ Federico Olivero has also pointed out that "L'affinità col Maeterlinck è evidente nelle imagini e nell'atmosfera di mistero".⁷⁰ None of these writers goes into any detail on the matter. For a detailed study we must look (as was the case with Villiers) to René Poupert. He rightly points out reminiscences of both La Princesse Maleine and Pelléas et Mélisande in Belkiss.⁷¹ He further suggests that Eugénio de Castro had "parfaitement assimilé les conceptions de Maeterlinck", as delineated in the following extract from Maeterlinck's own introduction to his collected dramas:⁷²

Des destinées innocentes mais involontairement ennemies s'y nouent et s'y dénouent pour la ruine de tous, sous les regards attristés des plus sages qui prévoient l'avenir, mais qui ne peuvent rien changer aux jeux cruels et inflexibles que l'amour et la mort promènent parmi les vivants [...] Au fond, on y trouve l'idée du Dieu chrétien mêlée à celle de la fatalité antique.⁷³

Though I would disagree with him as to the extent to which Eugénio de Castro had "parfaitement assimilé" Maeterlinck's ideas on destiny, his identification of the sources is undoubtedly correct. To the reminiscences of La Princesse Maleine he mentions the following might be added:

"Elle [la comète] a l'air de verser du sang".⁷⁴

⁶⁹ CHAST, "Les Thèmes Symbolistes", p. 95.

⁷⁰ OLIVERO, p. 12.

⁷¹ Both Olivero (p. 12) and Poupert (p. 98) see a similarity between "le petit Allan" of La Princesse Maleine and Belkiss's son David (XV). But he is perhaps more reminiscent of little Yniold of Pelléas et Mélisande. Compare: "Petite mère...petite mère... vous allez partir" (MAETERLINCK, Théâtre, II, 58), and "Onde está a mãesinha? Fugiu? Fugiu, não é verdade?" (XV).

⁷² POUPART, p. 98.

⁷³ MAETERLINCK, Théâtre, I, ix.

⁷⁴ Ibid., I, 4.

"Só vejo um astro no céu, e esse mesmo parece que está a chorar sangue" (XI).

"Ici une fenêtre s'ouvre violemment sous un coup de vent [...] le fou apparaît à la fenêtre restée ouverte et ricane tout à coup".

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"Um grande trovão. O vento abre tragicamente uma janela e fora, na treva, aparece o fantasma branco da rainha Isimkhib, mãe de Belkiss" (X).

But the concept of Destiny in Belkiss, and the attitude of the protagonists towards it, would seem to derive in particular from Pelléas et Mélisande. Despite the atmosphere of foreboding in his early plays, Maeterlinck does not verbally formulate the concept of Destiny until this later play (1892), whose occasional textual influence on Belkiss is readily observable. Thus Belkiss's attitude to destiny is close to that of Mélisande: "C'est quelque chose qui est plus fort que moi", ⁷⁶ while Zophesamin's resignation seems modelled on that of Arkel:

"je ne me suis jamais mis en travers d'une destinée". ⁷⁷

"si vous croyez que c'est du fond de votre vie que ce voyage est exigé, je ne vous interdis pas de l'entreprendre, car vous devez savoir mieux que moi les événements que vous devez offrir à votre destinée". ⁷⁸

Eugénio de Castro's interest in Classical literature around this time is clearly documented. In the January issue of O Instituto, 1895, he published Tirésias, a poem of visibly Classical origin. It was dated 18 May 1894 and was, therefore, written during the period of composition of Belkiss. In Salomé e outros poemas (1896) he published two further poems of Classical origin: "Hermafrodita", dated 27 September 1894 - only two months after the completion of Belkiss - and "Pan", dated 24 May 1895. Álvaro J. da Costa Pimpão offers other evidence to the same effect. Commenting on a note written by Eugénio de Castro in the early part of 1895, he points out that during this

⁷⁵ Ibid., pp. 142, 145.

⁷⁶ Ibid., II, 42.

⁷⁷ Ibid., II, 19-20.

⁷⁸ Ibid., II, 53.

period "Ideias e projectos vários assaltam-lhe o espírito em febre, e são postos de lado: O Jardim das Hespérides, o Regresso de Ulisses, fruto da sua leitura recente de Homero". 7:

Some internal evidence for the influence of Classical literature on Eugénio de Castro's concept of Destiny in Belkiss can be found within the poem itself. Thus Zophesamin refers, throughout the greater part of the poem, to only one God, Amon:

"Prouvera a Amon que eu estivesse a sonhar" (VIII).

"Bem se vê que Amon-Ra-Harmakhis é teu amigo" (X).

"Prouvera a Amon que neste jardim se abrissem agora duzentas cavernas de leões" (XIII).

"Cada um dos nossos semelhantes é um espelho que Amon nos deu para vermos e acautelarmos" (XV).

"Tudo nos diz que Amon faz governar este mundo por uma rainha: a Desgraça! e todos queremos fugir à vontade de Amon" (XV).

In Episode II he goes so far as to talk simply of God:

"A luzinha chama-se Verdade. Ficam próximos de Deus todos os que a possuem".

Yet, at certain points in the poem after the introduction of the theme of fatality, he tends to adopt a polytheistic view reminiscent of the Classical concept of Destiny:

"O destino, que é a vontade empuçado dos deuses" (XI).

"cada um de vós, julgando-se excepcionalmente favorecido pelos deuses, julgando que a miséria é só para os outros, corre atrevidamente atrás da ventura, como se os deuses fizessem excepções" (XIV).

These are the only instances in Belkiss where we find the form "deuses" employed. But this same form occurs in two of the poems of Classical origin already mentioned: Tirésias:

Pelos Deuses, meu berço foi disposto
No verde bosque. (28-9)

and "Hermafrodita":

Ó Deuses! atendei esta súplica ardente. (21)

In his article on "O Teatro Moderno", the two plays of Maeterlinck which Eugénio de Castro singled out for special mention were L'Intruse and La Princesse Maleine. This would suggest that in August 1893 he was not yet acquainted with Pelléas et Mélisande. The reminiscences of this play in Episodes X and XI, and the affinities of the concept of Destiny with the poems of Classical origin written by Eugénio de Castro in 1894-5 suggest, therefore, that this interlude belongs to 1894, and is a later addition to the poem begun in 1893. This is borne out by the later developments of the plot. In the ensuing Episodes all consciousness of Destiny on the part of Belkiss disappears, and Zophesamin's apparent resignation does not last long. In Episodes XIII and XIV he is as vigilant as ever, and Belkiss is forced to trick him in order to join Solomon. He also resumes his old Schopenhauerian stance which, though masked at times, persists doggedly throughout:

"Corações miseráveis! Quando tudo vos impele para o caminho da simplicidade e da resignação, meteis-vos por complicadas veredas, que levam ao desespero" (XIV).

"Estrangulemos pois os nossos desejos e viveremos quietos" (XIV).

As was the case with the elements of sadism discussed earlier, there has been a tendency among critics to interpret Belkiss predominantly in the light of this concept of Destiny introduced late on in the poem. Rubén Darío, for example, sees Belkiss as the "simbólica vítima de una fatalidad irreductible",⁸⁰ while René Poupert describes her as "le jouet de forces inconnues".⁸¹ But can such an interpretation be justified?

Some light can be thrown on the feeling of helplessness experienced by Belkiss in Episodes X and XI by comparing her with the Queen of "Interlúnio". The Queen, like Belkiss, succumbs to the call of desire and sets out in search of her goal. Having done so, she carries on blindly, even though pleasure has long since given way to suffering and

⁸⁰ DARÍO, Los Raros, p. 221.

⁸¹ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 98.

pain: "Resignada, avança, cheia de desgosto, / Já quase sem forças, quase a sucumbir" (37-8). Her original desires eventually become meaningless: "Corre, corre atrás não sabe já de quê" (105). This situation offers clear analogies with that of Belkiss in Episodes X and XI; but whereas in Belkiss, under the influence of Maeterlinck and Classical literature, Eugénio de Castro attributes this helplessness momentarily to the power of Fate, there is no mention of Fatality in "Interlúnio". And indeed, seen over the poem as a whole, Belkiss, like the Queen, is the victim of her own desire, and not of Fate. Since, in Schopenhauerian terms, Man is the helpless victim of the Will, it is possible to integrate Belkiss's helplessness to some extent into the logical development of a plot whose main characters are symbols of certain Schopenhauerian tenets. The confusion would then be caused not by the helplessness itself, but from its being attributed to the power of Fate.

It would be extremely difficult to reconcile the view of Belkiss as primarily the victim of external forces with the rest of the poem. If she is not responsible for her own actions, then all Zophesamin's preaching is a waste of time. Her helplessness is either an irrelevance, or it is that of those who, in Schopenhauerian terms, yield to the call of passion. They then find that their passions take over entirely, and drag them on even when they know it is too late. In that case, Destiny would be merely another name for the Schopenhauerian Will.

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Only the conclusion of the poem now remains to be studied. The action of the closing Episodes is simple enough. Belkiss arrives at Jerusaem and achieves her ambition of physical union with Solomon. She returns to Sheba where, after languishing for nine years in dreadful unhappiness and despair, she dies. However, owing to the mixing of elements within the body of the poem, the interpretation of this ending has been the cause of some

confusion in the past.

As required by Symbolist drama, Belkiss and Zophesamin each play a double role, that of human being and symbol, carrying both human and philosophical values. Of the two, their symbolic role predominates by far. I shall, therefore, turn my attention first to the symbolic significance of the conclusion.

Pursuing his thesis of the predominant influence of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam on Belkiss, René Poupard interprets this ending in terms of certain of Villiers's ideas. For him, Belkiss's tragedy lies in her never being able to recapture the bliss of those first moments spent with Solomon. This he suggests had been the moral illustrated by the two young heroes of Akëdysséiril:

Ils n'accepteraient pas [la Vie] parce que la possession éteint le désir et que rien ne peut rendre le ravissement des premières étreintes. C'est la raison pour laquelle Belkiss revient déçue de sa nuit d'amour avec Salomon et meurt de cette désillusion.

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Some slight evidence for such an interpretation can be found in the poem. Thus at one point Zophesamin warns Belkiss: "Assim te enfastiarias dos beijos de Salomão, se ele tos desse" (II). But I am unable to agree with it for several reasons. In the first place, it would suggest that it is Belkiss who leaves Solomon, whereas it seems certain (though we are never explicitly told so) that it is Solomon who abandons her. This was also a fate with which Zophesamin had threatened her earlier in the poem:

Se fosses ter com ele, talvez te beijasse, talvez ... mas, no dia seguinte, toda te vestirias de humilhação, porque, se lhe perguntassem o teu nome, não saberia dizê-lo, tão pouco caso teria feito de ti.

And it is one which she herself had foreseen: "Não faria caso de uma taça de licor finíssimo quem se embebeda todos os dias com vinho ordinário" (V). This was the interpretation followed by Eugénio de Castro's supporters in France, who

⁸² POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 90.

were in constant touch with the poet. Thus Louis-Pilate de Brinn'Gaubast interprets the ending in the following terms: "Et la voici, neuf ans après, qui, de retour au palais de Saba, meurt d'avoir été délaissée par celui qui l'a rendue mère: que n'a-t-elle cru Zophesamin! que n'a-t-elle évité le piège de la Nature!" Émile Bernard repeats the same idea:

Délaissée, la reine de Sabá ne survit point à la mort de ses illusions, et chante, en son délire, les strophes d'une vieille chanson, qui expriment, sous une forme poétique et vague, la doctrine de Schopenhauer (chère à l'auteur) sur la trahison de la nature.

Secondly, Belkiss and Solomon can hardly be said to comply to the pattern of Villiers's heroes and heroines. Villiers's lovers realize that Life will never be able to match the bliss of their first moments together, and they consciously choose death. This is the fate of Sedjnoun and Yelka in Akèdysséril. It is also the fate of Axèl and Sara, who commit suicide. This is far removed from the situation of Belkiss and Solomon. Villiers's lovers do not languish as Belkiss does at the end of Eugénio de Castro's poem.

But the greatest argument against Poupart's view is that it amounts to interpreting the conclusion in terms of an influence which, in the body of the poem, is of strictly secondary importance. Traces of Villiers's view of tragedy are extremely rare in Belkiss. And certain indications which may seem to fit into this category - e.g: "ainda não experimentei o calor dos teus beijos e já sinto o frio com que a saudade deles há-de vestir a minha alma" (XIII) - can just as easily be interpreted as a foreboding of abandonment and rejection. These indications appear generally in isolation, and well removed from the mainstream of Schopenhauerian thought. When the two come into contact, the result is nonsense: "Donde vêm os nossos sofrimentos? - Da saudade dos desejos realizados e da impossibilidade de realizar desejos ... " (XIV). If desires cannot be fulfilled, then the "saudade dos desejos

realizados" is an absurdity.

The principal philosophical framework of Belkiss is clearly Schopenhauerian, and it is surely in terms of this that we must interpret the ending of the poem. Zophesamin's view of unhappiness complies visibly with the Schopenhauerian theme of the inability of desire ever to be permanently fulfilled: "mal um sonho se fazia realidade, por mais dourado que fosse, logo se desdorava" (II). He touches on the Schopenhauerian problem of possession (already discussed in chapter four): "realizar um desejo é matar esse desejo ... A posse deprecia os objectos amados" (II). And he interprets Belkiss's final tragedy in terms of the Schopenhauerian tenet of the treachery of the passions. He makes this perfectly clear: "Quando tudo vos impele para o caminho da simplicidade e da resignação, meteis-vos por complicadas veredas, que levam ao desespero" (XIV). " ... tudo vos diz que a felicidade é mais inacessível que os planetas" (XIV). "Belkiss realizou o seu desejo, foi enleada pelos braços lisonjeiros de Salomão, mas, em paga, ficou com a alma em farrapos" (XV). It is the wisdom of his asceticism which is vindicated at the end of the poem, in the words of Horstiatf: "Algumas vezes, cheguei a duvidar da tua sabedoria, mas agora é que vejo que tinhas razão, que tiveste sempre razão" (XV).

It is in Episodes XIV and XV that the symbolic and didactic nature of Belkiss is most clearly revealed. In Episode XIV we reach the climax of the plot -- the satisfaction of Belkiss's physical desires. Yet the entire scene is dominated by Zophesamin's sermonizing.⁸³ Belkiss is lost from sight amidst the generalizations of his outcry.

⁸³ It should be pointed out that though Zophesamin's outburst beginning "Está tudo perdido! Já ninguém pode valer-lhe" is the culminating point of this scene and the climax of the didactic element of the poem, it has, in every edition including the first, been obviously misplaced. Its proper place is at the end of the scene, after Zophesamin's final words, "Está tudo perdido", i.e. after he realizes Belkiss is not in her room.

It is directed to an unspecified plurality, expressed in either the first person plural - "nossos" - or the second - "vós". Thus, at the climax of a plot carried by her, Belkiss's individual tragedy is given no real relief. This situation is repeated in the "Epílogo" (XV). Belkiss's life is seen as an exemplary tale to caution others: "A vida e morte de Belkiss serão um grande exemplo, uma aterradora prevenção para todos os insensatos que não sabem ler o próprio destino no destino dos outros ... " She becomes almost a surrogate of suffering Humanity: "dir-se-ia que acumulou no coração todas as tristezas de todos os corações". On its symbolic level, the tragedy of the poem is clearly revealed in these two final Episodes: it is the generalized tragedy of Mankind, helpless slaves of the Schopenhauerian Will.

However, it would be wrong to see Belkiss as nothing more than a "débat philosophique".⁸⁴ The symbolic function of its characters is clearly the most obvious feature of the poem, but for Belkiss there is tragedy on a personal level as well. Indications of this personal tragedy are rare in the main plot, but when they occur, they revolve around themes with which we are already familiar: rejection, abandonment, humiliation:

"no dia seguinte, toda te vestirias de humilhação, porque, se lhe perguntassem o teu nome, não saberia dizê-lo, tão pouco caso teria feito de ti ... " (II).

"Não faria caso de uma taça de licor finíssimo quem se embebeda todos os dias com vinho ordinário" (V).

"ainda não experimentei o calor dos teus beijos e já sinto o frio com que a saudade deles há-de vestir a minha alma ... " (XIII).

However, personal tragedy is most clearly stated in the story of Eglá and Horsiatf at the end of Episode II, a story whose function within the structure of the poem is clearly to adumbrate the future tragedy of Belkiss. Its

⁸⁴ This, in the opinion of Marcel Postic (p. 155), is what the majority of Symbolist dramas written in France between 1893 and 1897 tended to become.

theme is the death of love:

"Os nossos corações são dois namorados paralíticos, sentados um defronte do outro: querem beijar-se e não podem ... "

"O amor, que julgávamos eterno, é hoje um amor de doentes, um amor de outono, um amor moribundo ... "

"Como os nossos beijos perderam o sabor que tinham! Os nossos beijos de agora são sombras de beijos ... "

The imagery employed here clearly recalls that of Safira, of "Amores Fanados" and the early poems of Silva. And this is the key to the personal tragedy of Belkiss. Belkiss, like Safira, is almost certainly a symbolic recreation of the events of 1892. Like the "eu" of Safira, Belkiss goes in search of her Beloved, but finds only rejection, suffering and pain. By 1893, the increasing influence of Schopenhauer has caused Eugénio de Castro to recreate this experience in a symbolic form where the forces at work are not human conflicts but philosophical concepts. But though heavily overshadowed, the personal tragedy remains. Why does Belkiss suffer so greatly at the end of the poem? She does not die of prolonged sexual frustration or intolerable humiliation (her vanity is a function of her sexual desire). We find in Belkiss the disparity already encountered in "Beijos". Though Belkiss is presented as the incarnation of physical desire, her grief goes much deeper:

"ainda não experimentei o calor dos teus beijos e já sinto o frio com que a saudade deles há-de vestir a minha alma ... " (XIII)

"Belkiss realizou o seu desejo [...] mas, em paga, ficou com a alma em farrapos" (XV).

Indeed, beneath the Belkiss who symbolizes physical desire, there is a Belkiss as human being who had hoped to find lasting love in Solomon, just as Eglá and Horsiatf had hoped to find lasting love in each other. But Solomon abandons her, and she dies of a broken heart. Belkiss's personal tragedy is, like Eugénio de Castro's, the death of love.

Belkiss highlights the conflict between personal and universal grief which will dominate Eugénio de Castro's

poetry until 1896. Beneath the philosophical framework of the poem there is a story of personal grief. But this is transformed into a conflict of philosophical tenets which dominates the plot. Belkiss thus complies with the requisites of the Symbolist ideal, but it inverts the order of priorities. Gustave Kahn had described Symbolist drama as "offrant, à mi-pente, aux non-initiés, un drame accessible, cachant sur les cimes, pour l'élite des spectateurs ou des lecteurs, une haute signification philosophique".⁸⁵ But Belkiss would be more properly described as "offrant sur les cimes une haute signification philosophique, cachant, à mi-pente, un drame accessible".

Belkiss is not the "chef-d'œuvre" Émile Bernard thought it was. It suffers from serious structural flaws. And philosophy has replaced personal experience almost entirely. Yet it is arguably the best work Eugénio de Castro ever produced. It has a genuine intensity of emotion lacking in later dramatic poems. And the presence of Belkiss's personal tragedy, however diminished, means that the poem is to some extent a personal communiqué, not simply a philosophical debate. It is a lesson in tragedy whose structure is clearly based on literature, but whose undercurrents of emotion continue to flow from the poet's life.

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b). Pan.

Closely connected with Belkiss in terms of its philosophical content is "Pan"⁸⁶ from Salomé e outros poemas.

⁸⁵ Quoted in ROBICHEZ, p. 48.

⁸⁶ "Pan" was given considerable publicity in France. A translation by Brinn'Gaubast appeared in L'Ermitage, January 1896, before the poem was published in Portugal.

⁸⁷ Several poems in this collection have no place in the present study. "Salomé" is a superficial study of feminine pride. As Vieira de Almeida points out: "o poema acaba onde o drama começaria" (Lusitânia, September 1924, p. 107). The subject-matter of other poems - "Os Olhos da Ilusão", "O Anjo e a Ninfa" - lies outside the themes of passion and pessimism.

Dated 24 May 1895, this poem is of obviously Classical origin, and reflects the continuing influence of Jean Moréas. In his article "Éloge de Maurice du Plessys", published in La Plume, 15 March 1892, Moréas wrote:

Les mythes de la Grèce l'emportent, certes, sur ceux du Nord et de l'Orient de tout l'ordre de leur beauté. Mais ils ont encore pour le poète français un autre avantage: "ces charmants fantômes", pour le lecteur, "délités d'adoption" depuis un âge déjà lointain, deviennent aisément synonymes de pensées, symboles d'abstractions; signes communs et naturels où les âmes incorporelles se tracent aux sens corporels. 88

The symbolic potential of figures from Classical legend was a lesson Eugénio de Castro would absorb and put frequently into practice.

The legend on which "Pan" is based is to be found in Ovid's Metamorphoses:

Tum deus, "Arcadiae gelidis sub montibus" inquit
"inter hamadryadas celeberrima Nonacrinas
naias una fuit: nymphae Syringa vocabant.
Non semel et satyros eluserat illa sequentes
et quoscumque deos umbrosaue silva feraxque
rus habet.

.....

Redeuntem colle Lycaeo
Pan videt hanc pinuque caput praecinctus acuta
talia verba refert. - restabat verba referre
et precibus spretis fugisse per avia nympham,
donec harenosi placidum Ladonis ad amnem
venerit; hic illam cursum impredientibus undis
ut se mutarent liquidas orasse sorores,
Panaque cum prensam sibi iam Syringa putaret,
corpore pro nymphae calamos tenuisse palustres,
dumque ibi suspirat, motos in harundine ventos
effecisse sonum tenuem similemque querenti,
arte nova vocisque Deum dulcedine captum. 89

This story-line remains unchanged in Eugénio de Castro's poem. But the interest of the poem does not lie in its narrative; it lies, rather, in its value as a vehicle for certain philosophical ideas.

88

Quoted in JOUANNY, p. 556.

89

OVID, Opera (Argentorati: Studiis Societatis Bipontinae, 1807), II, 39: Metamorphoses, Book I, lines 689-94, 698-709.

The background against which the action of the poem is set is one of great sensuality:

Andam filtros subtis, doces e lisonjeiros,
Pelo éter, a acordar e a suscitar delícias ...
Há gemidos de amor ... e os braços dos loureiros
São braços de mulher sequiosos de carícias ... (13-16)

This sensuality affects even the animals of the fields:

... e os fulvos touros mugem
Nos pastos, perseguindo as céleres novilhas ... (11-12)

This scene is interrupted by Pan calling for silence. He wishes to sleep and flee from the sadness of his experiences with Syrinx. He recounts these as an exemplary tale to the satyrs. His narrative is unmistakably didactic:

Amigos, eis a história
Que deveis gravar, bem fundo, na memória,
Que deveis lembrar, como segura adarga,
Contra as frechas hostis da decepção amarga. (69-72)
Meus conselhos fixai para vos defenderdes. (77)

The philosophical framework given to the legend is entirely Schopenhauerian. The treacherous nature of the passions is stressed even before Pan's narrative proper begins:

É doce o desejar e amargo o possuir,
Feliz o que deseja e infeliz o que alcança! (39-40)

These admonitions are almost a word for word repetition of Zophesamin's advice to Belkiss: "É doce o desejar ... mas realizar um desejo é matar esse desejo ... A posse deprecia os objectos amados" (II). In true Schopenhauerian style, love is synonymous with physical desire. The attraction of a naked nymph glimpsed fleetingly in the forest can only be physical, yet Pan assures us he is "doido de amor" (49, 63), "levado pelo amor" (53). As he is about to reach the nymph, she turns into reeds. Within the philosophical ambit of the poem she symbolizes the treachery of nature, the universal illusion, the inability of the Will ever to find lasting satisfaction.

Based on a premise of physical desire, symbolized by the nymphs, the solution offered in "Pan" is necessarily

one of asceticism. As in "Ecloga", as in Belkiss, love is seen as savage and brutal, something which must be stifled at all costs:

Amordaçai o Amor, o javali cruento,
Apunhalai sem dó os lascivos desejos,
Vossas bocas mordei quando pedirem beijos! (74-76)

But it is the Will which triumphs in the end. Despite his preaching, Pan sets out in pursuit of another nymph. His sagacity is only apparent. Passion has reasserted itself; he is a true slave of the Will: "das Ziel war nur scheinbar: der Besitz nimmt den Reiz weg: unter einer neuen Gestalt stellt sich der Wunsch, das Bedürfnis ein".⁹⁰ [the object of desire was merely illusory: possession robs it of its attraction: desire and need present themselves in a new form.]

⁹⁰ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 370.

Chapter Seven

Crime and Punishment

Towards the middle of 1894, a new variation on the theme of passion appears in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. This new approach to the problem of desire is not one to which he dedicated a major section of his work. Its expression is confined to the three poems Tirésias (published in the January issue of O Instituto, 1895, dated 18 May 1894), "A Monja e o Rouxinol" (from Salomé e outros poemas), and A Nereide de Harlém. The solution to the problem of desire proposed in these poems can, to some extent, be considered a development of the illusionism of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, but there are significant differences. The connection of the themes of these three poems with the overall theme of passion and pessimism tends to be implicit rather than explicit. But it is present. And, from the point of view of the influence of Schopenhauer on Eugénio de Castro, it can be seen to constitute a curious variation on certain fundamental Schopenhauerian ideas.

The three poems I shall study in this chapter are all based on legends of one kind or another. The Classical origin of the legend employed in Tirésias points again to the influence of Jean Moréas, as discussed towards the end of the last chapter. Indeed, the overall debt of Tirésias to Classical and Renaissance poetry is obvious. The poem is written in the form of an eclogue. And Manuel da Silva-Gaio, reviewing Tirésias for O Instituto in April 1895,¹ rightly saw the "terza rima" employed in this poem as reflecting Eugénio de Castro's interest in the poetry of the sixteenth century. He went so far as to describe Tirésias as "uma feliz e clara reconstrução da arte

¹ The review is signed "G", but is almost certainly the work of Manuel da Silva-Gaio, who had been elected "sócio efectivo" of O Instituto at the same time as Eugénio de Castro (see O Instituto, Vol. 41, 1894, p. 1025). A.J. da Costa Pimpão has also recognized the identity of the writer. In Gente Grada (p. 175) he writes of Tirésias: "Manuel da Silva-Gaio verá logo a sugestão de leituras dos nossos poetas de Quinhentos, entre estes, de Sá de Miranda".

quinhentista - em que se revela, entre outras, a leitura de Sá de Miranda" (pp. 253-4).

Like Belkiss, Tirésias was given considerable publicity in France. Thus, Louis-Pilate de Brinn'Gaubast suggested that Eugénio de Castro's use of the eclogue as a vehicle for poetic symbols had given new depth to this "genre": "le voici [le genre] qui s'adapte, élargi, magnifié, sans prétensions, sans phrases, à l'expression, sobre et limpide, des symboles les plus transcendants".² And Émile Bernard continued the tradition of exaggeration prevalent among Eugénio de Castro's supporters in France by writing of the young poet, with reference to the supposed Classicism of Tirésias: "l'on ne peut s'empêcher de se demander tout bas si, dans ce poète de vingt-six ans, il n'y a point (j'ose à peine le dire) l'étoffe d'un Goethe!"³ His reluctance is understandable.

Much has been made of the apparent Classicism of Tirésias. Andrés González-Blanco is typical of many critics when he writes: "Dans Tirésias [...] l'art d'Eugénio de Castro semble déjà s'orienter vers cette clarté et cette sobriété qui semblent la norme de l'éternel art classique".⁴ And Aníbal Pinto de Castro makes very much the same point when he suggests of this poem: "Retomando, agora à maneira renascentista, a écloga em tercetos de versos heróicos [...] Eugénio de Castro abre definitivamente as portas da sua obra ao classicismo".⁵ But, despite the frequency of judgements such as these, there are, as we shall see,

² This review appeared in L'Ermitage in May 1895 (pp. 299-301). All subsequent references to Brinn'Gaubast in this chapter will be to this review.

³ This review was signed "E.B." (see page 206, note 4). It appeared in the Mercure de France of July 1895 (pp. 110-112). All subsequent references to Émile Bernard in this chapter will be to this review.

⁴ ANDRÉS GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, "Eugénio de Castro". This article is reproduced in its entirety in: Eugénio de Castro, Obras Completas, Vol. III. The quotation is from page 36.

⁵ CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação, p. 17.

reasons for doubting the sobriety of this poem, and for questioning to what extent it can properly be described, in the words of González-Blanco, as an "églogue ingénue".⁶

Tirésias is based on a Greek legend given its fullest expression in the work of Callimachus, notably in his hymn In Lavacrum Palladis:

- 57 Ἀθαναΐα νύμφαν μίαν ἔν ποκα Θήβαις
 πουλύ τι καὶ πέρι δὴ φίλατο τᾶν ἑταρῶν,
 ματέρα Τειρεσίαο, καὶ οὔ ποκα χωρὶς ἔγεντο.

 Ἄλλ' ἔτι καὶ τήναν δάκρυα πόλλ' ἔμενε,
 καί περ Ἀθαναΐα καταθύμιον ἔσσαν ἑταίραν.
 70 Δὴ ποκα γὰρ πέπλων λυσαμένα περόνας
 ἔπλω ἐπὶ κράνα Ἐλικωνίδι καλὰ ῥεοῖσα
 λῶντο· μεσαμβρινὰ δ' εἶχε ὄρος ἄσυχιά.
 Ἀμφότεροι λῶντο, μεσαμβρινὰ δ' ἔσαν ὦραι.
 πολλὰ δ' ἄσυχία τήνο κατεῖχεν ὄρος.
 75 Τειρεσίας δ' ἔτι μῶνος ἅμα κυσὶν ἄρτι γένεια
 περὶ ἄζων ἱερὸν χῶρον ἀνέστρέφετο.
 διψάσας δ' ἄφατόν τι ποτὶ ῥόον ἤλυθε κράνας,
 σχέτλιος· οὐκ ἐθέλων δ' εἶδε τὰ μὴ θεμιτὰ
 τὸν δὲ χολωσαμένα περ ὅμως προσέφασεν Ἀθάνα·
 80 'Τίς σε, τὸν ὀφθαλμῶς οὐκέτ' ἀποισόμενον,
 ὦ Εὐηρεΐδα, χαλεπὰν ὁδὸν ἄγαγε δαίμων;
 ἃ μὲν ἔφα, παιδὸς δ' ὄμματα νύξ ἔλαβεν.
 ἑστάνη δ' ἄφθογγος, ἐκόλλασαν γὰρ ἀνταῖ
 γῶνατα καὶ φωνὰν ἔσχεν ἀμαχανία.

- 57 [There was once in Thebes a nymph whom Athene loved
 far more than any of her companions; she was the
 mother of Tiresias, and the two were constant
 companions.
 And yet tears in plenty awaited her, beloved
 companion of Athene though she was. For once, when
 70 she had loosened the clasps of their gowns, the two
 were bathing in the Hippocrene stream which flows
 gracefully down Mount Helicon. The hush of mid-day
 lay on the mountain. The two were bathing, the hour
 was noon, and a deep hush lay heavy on the mountain.
 75 Tiresias, alone with his dogs, was walking close to
 the sacred spot. Thirsting unspeakably, he came up
 to the flowing stream, unfortunate youth. Without
 wishing, he looked on what no man is allowed to see.
 Furious at him nonetheless, Athene said to him:
 80 "What demon led you along this evil path, son of Eures?
 You will not leave here with your sight." So she
 spoke, and darkness clouded the eyes of the youth.

⁶ GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, p. 50

He stood there speechless, for grief would not let him move, and he was powerless to talk.]

A little later, as Tirésias's mother Chariclo ⁷ is lamenting the fate of her son to the goddess, Athene says to her:

127 Δωσῶ καὶ μέγα βάκτρον, ὃ οἱ πόδας ἐς δέον ἄξει,
δωσῶ καὶ βιότῳ τέρμα πολυχρόνιον.

[I shall give him a great staff, which will lead his steps in safety, and I shall grant him a long term of life.]

"A monja e o Rouxinol", on the other hand, looks to medieval legend for its inspiration. Rubén Darío seems to have been the first to mention its connection with legend, though he does not go into any detail on the matter: "Si os fijáis bien, podréis encontrar que ese ruiseñor es hermano de aquél que oyó el monje de la leyenda". ⁹ The legend on which the poem is based has been examined in depth by José Joaquim Nunes, in a study published by the Academia das Ciências de Lisboa in 1919. In this study, Nunes states that the earliest form of this legend to be found in the Iberian Peninsula is that given by Cantiga 103 of the Cantigas de Santa María of Alfonso X el sabio:

Como Santa Maria fez estar o monge trezentos anos
ao canto da passarinna porque lle pedia que lle
mostrasse qual era o ben que avian os que eran en
Paraiso.

Quen a Virgen ben servirá
a Paraiso irá.

E d'aquest'un gran miragre
vos quer'eu ora cantar
que fezo Santa Maria
por un monge que rogar
ll'ia sempre que lle mostrasse
qual ben en Parais'ha
e que o viss'en sa vida,

⁷ Her name is given in the Greek poem (67). It is also mentioned in Eugénio de Castro's poem (30).

⁸ Callimachus, ed. R. Pfeiffer (Oxford: at the Clarendon Press, 1953), Vol. 2, pp. 32, 34.

⁹ DARÍO, Los Raros, p. 221. Darío translated this poem in full during his lecture on Eugénio de Castro (pp. 218-20).

ante que fosse morrer;
 et porende a Groriosa
 vedes que lle foi fazer.
 fez lo entrar en ãa orta
 en que muitas vezes ja
 entrara, mais aquel dia
 fez que ãa font'achou
 mui crara e mui fremosa,
 e cab'ela s'assentou;
 e pois lavou mui ben sas mãos
 diss': ai Virgen, que será?

Se verei do Paraíso
 o que ch'eu muito pedi,
 algun pouco de seu viço
 ante que saia d'aquí,
 et ben saiba do que ben obra
 que galardón averá.

Tan toste que acabada
 ouv'o mong'a oraçon
 oiu ãa passarinna
 cantar log'en tan bon son
 que se escaeceu seendo
 et catando sempr'alá.

Atan gran sabor avia
 d'aquel cant'e d'aquel lais
 que grandes trezentos anos
 esteve assi o mais,
 cuidando que non estivera
 senon pouco, com'está

mong'algũa vez no ano 10
 quando sal ao vergeu.

The third poem, A Nereide de Harlém, is based on a legend whose source Eugénio de Castro himself quotes at the beginning of the poem:

... no mar de Holanda se apanhou um peixe mulher,
 ou mulher marinha, que foi levada a Harlém ...
 sustentava-se com pão e leite ... mas não falou nunca.

P.N. DE AUCOURT E PADILHA, Raridades da Natureza.

These poems illustrate the variety of ways in which

¹⁰ Quoted in The Oxford Book of Portuguese Verse, pp. 43-45.

¹¹ Though published separately towards the middle of 1896, this poem was written only one day after "A Monja e o Rouxinol". In their first editions, they are dated 20 September 1895 and 19 September 1895 respectively.

Eugénio de Castro was able to adapt material borrowed for the starting-point of the composition of his poems. As far as his reproduction of the basic narrative is concerned, the first two poems represent a condensation, and, particularly in the case of "A Monja e o Rouxinol", some alteration of the original legend. In A Nereide de Harlém, on the other hand, only the initial suggestion for the narrative of the poem is supplied by the source employed. The drama which Eugénio de Castro weaves around the figure of the mermaid is entirely of his own making, as is the symbolic meaning of her situation, and that of the protagonists of the other two poems. It will be on the symbolic superstructures imposed on these legends by Eugénio de Castro that I shall concentrate in this chapter.

--ooOoo--

In keeping with the eclogue form of the poem, the narration of Tirésias is presented through a dialogue: the speakers are Sílvio, a young shepherd, and Tirésias himself. At the beginning of the poem Tirésias is already an old man:

Era um velhinho magro e combalido,
Seus cabelos, a idade os branqueara. (5-6)

He is blind, and finds his way with the stick mentioned in the Greek legend (127):

Os abismos temendo, co'uma vara
Tateava o solo, e tão direito ia,
Que dir-se-ia que o pau olhos criara. (7-9)

As Tirésias recounts the story of his blindness, it becomes obvious that Eugénio de Castro follows the story-line of the original fairly closely. But there are two main differences. The first is one of detail. In the legend as recounted by Callimachus, Tirésias's mother is also bathing in the pool when the youth happens on her and Athene. In Eugénio de Castro's version she is nowhere present. This change is conditioned to a large extent by the nature of the sin for which Tirésias will lose his

sight in Eugénio de Castro's poem. In the Greek version he looks on the goddess without wishing (78). In Eugénio de Castro's poem he lingers in delighted appreciation of her body. Eugénio de Castro no doubt felt that this frankly sensual enjoyment would have been inhibited by the inclusion of Tirésias's mother in the scene.

The greatest difference between the two versions of the legend lies in Tirésias's reaction to the punishment visited on him by the goddess. In the Greek legend he is overcome by grief (83-4). In Eugénio de Castro's poem this has been replaced by obvious joy, which has lasted throughout Tirésias's life. This is apparent almost from the beginning of the poem:

Que o teu espírito alumiado seja
Como o meu! por me veres velho e cego,
Não me volvas piedade mas inveja. (19-21)

The explanation for this significant change is to be found in the symbolical meaning of Eugénio de Castro's poem.

Before losing his sight - so he informs Sílvia - Tirésias had fallen into a state of all-embracing ennui. He had found himself unable to sustain for any length of time the pleasure afforded by the delights of this world:

Transformavam-se montes em planuras,
Via no mar de prata um cristal baço,
E nos dias de sol noites escuras;
Parecia-me nevoento o claro espaço,
Sem cheiro o nardo e o alecrim do norte,
E sem beleza o mais formoso paço. (46-51)

In this state of ennui, he had longed for a beauty which would be lasting:

Cansadas, dos meus olhos as meninas,
Cansadas das terrenas formosuras,
Já buscavam, ansiosas, as divinas. (43-5)
Meus olhos suspiravam pelas eternas
Olímpicas belezas duradouras ...
Por um par de asas como eu dera as pernas! (58-60)

Brinn'Gaubast interprets this as "aspirations vers l'Absolu". Hardly. However generic the concept of beauty in Tirésias might seem to be, it conceals a much more

specific view of pleasure:

Mas da terra as variadas maravilhas
Cansam como as carícias femininas. (41-2)

The connection between terms signifying beauty, and those conveying the idea of sensual pleasure is central to this poem. When Tirésias catches sight of Minerva bathing in the Hippocrene, the language of the poem becomes unmistakably sensual:

Deslumbrados e acesos, meus olhares,
Por entre as folhas, iam-se a beijá-la,
Quais finas frechas golpeando os ares ... (73-5)
Meus olhos a queimaram, vivas brasas! (82)

It is not simply her beauty which rivets his attention. It is the sensual enjoyment of her beauty which gives his soul the wings that earthly delights (60) had been unable to provide:

De ver encantos tais, iam medrando
Na minha alma rufladoras asas. (79-80)

The transformation is complete. Earlier Tirésias had said of earthly delights: "os olhos livres fazem a alma escrava" (27). But the delights of the goddess's body are eternal, and their ability to exhilarate cannot turn to ennui. The question of resistance to time is essential to this and the other two poems:

... vi Minerva
Despindo-se, com seu frescor perene. (67-8)
Jamais envelhecida como a Lua! (114)

Furious at having been seen, Minerva strikes Tirésias blind. But, as a result, he retains vividly for the rest of his life the sensual delight of the scene he was enjoying at the moment of being struck blind.

It is essential to realize that, despite a certain verbal insistence on the concept of beauty in the poem, the vision which Tirésias carries around with him is not simply one of ineffable celestial beauty. It concentrates not on the aesthetic appreciation of ideal beauty, but on the sensual thrill of viewing the goddess's sexual attractions:

Mas de Minerva, em paga, via o colo,
 O peito e a boca (boca de criança!)
 E a coma negra, onde brincava Eolo. (91-3)

These erotic overtones continue by implication throughout the poem: "Mas vejo a Deusa, que divisei nua" (107). References to looks and eyes abound. Tirésias lives in the unending exhilaration of a supreme moment of sacrilegious voyeurism. And his vision never fades. This is the reason for the delight which accompanies him throughout his life:

Invejai-me, ó mortais, cujas amadas,
 Passado o maio que lhes tinge o rosto,
 Se tornam velhas, feias, enrugadas ... (121-3)
 Vejo a manhã romper a todo o instante! ¹² (127)

There is an intentionally double-edged quality to this poem. In the context of the original legend, the blinding of Tirésias can be seen as symbolic castration: the sexual offence is committed by the eyes and the eyes are removed. It is punishment by purification in the extreme sense. But in Eugénio de Castro's version of the legend, it is the very nature of the punishment received which ensures the continuation of the crime of sensual delight. Tirésias points out the ambivalent nature of the situation himself:

Foi-me a cegueira tão suave e mansa,
 Que a recebi (assim me acuda Zeus!)
 Por extremo de amor, não por vingança! (94-6)
 E por castigo só me dá confortos! (111)

We find a similar ambivalent attitude towards purification in "A Monja e o Rouxinol". In connection with the medieval legend on which this poem is based, José Joaquim Nunes describes Eugénio de Castro as "pouco mais aproveitando do que o número dos anos". ¹³ In fact, his treatment of this legend is fairly similar to that given

¹² Brinn'Gaubast makes the point that Minerva "fut longtemps, pour l'esprit de ses adorateurs, la jeunesse du Matin, l'Aurore", thus giving an added depth to this line.

¹³ JOSÉ JOAQUIM NUNES, O Monge e o Passarinho (Coimbra: Imprensa da Universidade, 1919), p. 10.

to Tirésias. There are minor alterations of detail: the Blessed Virgin is nowhere present in "A Monja e o Rouxinol", though the nightingale's song retains a pseudo-mystical quality; and the monk of the original has been replaced by a nun. What Eugénio de Castro changes most are the implications of the legend. The element of purification here is one of choice. The nun has given up the pleasures of this life for the ascetic life of the convent. Her self-mortification is highlighted by the fact that she was once a princess:

A princesa real que se fez monja,
Que uma coroa trocou pelos cilícios. (13-4)

Like the monk of the original legend she falls into a state of mystical ecstasy when she hears the nightingale's song. She becomes oblivious to all that is going on around her, and lives entranced for three hundred years. But despite the Christian terminology of this poem, the mystical ecstasy of the nun cannot be considered a spiritual experience. The state which sustains her for so long is no more one of spiritual bliss than that which had sustained Tirésias was one of aesthetic contemplation. Her vision too is one of sensual delight. Though the matter is not stressed, the indications are unmistakable. As the nightingale starts to sing, we read of:

A linda monja, cujos olhos mansos
Sê vão cerrando em mística volúpia. (49-50)

(my italics). As the song continues we hear: "Oh! que delícia aquela! que delícia!" (83)

Voluntary purification is subverted in this poem just as punitive purification was subverted in Tirésias. The nun may have renounced the splendours of her former life, but her beauty remains undiminished. It is annotated throughout (2, 37, 49, 73, 82). As already pointed out in connection with Tirésias, beauty in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro is intimately connected with the idea of sensual desire. And it is the sensual fulfilment of the nun's beauty which is the central theme of this poem. The

asceticism and sanctity of religious life are inverted to provide the sensual fulfilment of her beauty on an esoteric level. Paradise for the nun is not a place of spiritual union with God (there is no mention of God in this poem). It is a place where seraphim enjoy an unending existence of obvious delight:

Leva-a surpresa pela Via-Láctea,
Onde há florestas brancas, todas brancas,
E onde em lagos de leite nadam cisnes,
Dos serafins extáticos, puxando
Os barcos de cristal, cheios de lírios. (66-70)

The mysticism of the original legend has been subverted to enable the nun to sustain a state of sensual delight which her former life of regal state could not provide.

Similarly, the mermaid of A Nereide de Harlém is transported to another world as, "alheia a tudo" (44), she listens to her shell. It too is a private world of sensuality:

Vê de novo tritões com algas na cabeça,
As ninfas perseguindo, ornadas de corais. (11-12)
Contempla na água azul sua nudez divina,
E, nas tranças dispondo alvos fios de pérolas,
Parte, doida, a chamar pelo tritão que a fascina.
(14-16)

Her owner, Rabbi Moisés, attempts to coax her to speak. Kings and princes come to admire her, but as with the nun, the splendours of regal state are meaningless compared to her inner vision. The Rabbi's son falls in love with her. But the languid ecstasy of her vision is permanent, and she is not even aware of his advances. In "A Monja e o Rouxinol" there was a background of violence: the nun had slept unheeding through the horrors of a war. In A Nereide de Harlém this violence comes to the fore. The Rabbi's son hangs himself in despair, and Moisés murders the mermaid "numa explosão de angústia paternal" (41). But not even violence can destroy the melancholy bliss of her vision, and she dies without even realizing what has happened.

Implicitly or explicitly, desire in these poems is connected with the idea of crime: Tirésias's vision is sacrilegious; within the religious framework of "A Monja e o Rouxinol" desire is seen as sinful; only in A Nereide de Harlém is the element of sin not explicit. Since desire is seen as criminal, and all three protagonists represent aspects of the theme of desire, they also present variations on the theme of punishment: they have all been desexualized - the symbolic blindness of Tirésias, the obligatory chastity of the nun, the mermaid (a figure we shall meet again in Sagramor) for whom, being fish from the waist down, no sexual fulfilment is possible. Their situation, particularly in the case of Tirésias and the mermaid, symbolizes the dilemma of Schopenhauerian man, whose greatest crime is to have been born into a world ruled by desire.¹⁴ This crime is punishable by a life of frustration arising from man's essential inability (as in the case of the mermaid) ever to fulfil those desires. Tirésias's symbolic castration is specifically seen as punishment for his attempt to achieve a level of fulfilment which, being divine, is not permitted to man. The nun takes us one step further into Schopenhauer's philosophy. She appears to have adopted a stance of Schopenhauerian asceticism against the crime of desire, symbolized by her former regal state.

But, by a process of mental sublimation, the idea of crime and punishment in these poems is subverted in every sense. In each case, the process of punishment by desexualizing is accompanied by a sublimation of desire; this releases desire from dependence on the transient stimuli of earthly pleasures, and ensures its constant fulfilment on an esoteric level. It is precisely because Tirésias is blind, because the nun is entranced, because

¹⁴ Schopenhauer frequently illustrated this point in his philosophy by quoting the well-known lines from Calderón's La Vida es Sueño: "Pues el delito mayor / del hombre es haber nacido". See SCHOPENHAUER, Werke, II, 300; II, 419; III, 692.

the mermaid is "alheia a tudo" that they are able to prolong indefinitely the sin of sensual delight. The nun enjoys her vision for three hundred years. The approach of old age has done nothing to diminish Tirésias's sacrilegious pleasure (in the original legend he is granted "a long term of life", l. 128), and the vision of the mermaid, a creature of legend, is not even interrupted by death.

Andrés González-Blanco is of the opinion that in Tirésias Eugénio de Castro composed a poem which was "très sobre et dans le goût de la Renaissance plus que dans le style des décadents".¹⁵ But the subversion of punishment and purification into the enjoyment of sacrilegious pleasure gives to Tirésias and "A Monja e o Rouxinol" an intriguingly Decadent flavour, even if the element of sacrilege is not explicitly stressed. This subversion is further reflected at a structural level in these poems. A typically Decadent theme of "Le Bonheur dans le Crime"¹⁶ is presented to us in the form of a Classical eclogue, thus undermining the apparent sobriety of a poem which so many critics have seen as a model of Classical luminosity, and through a medieval legend of Christian mysticism, whose ingenuous sanctity is irreverently stood on its head.

---ooOoo---

I am now in a position to examine in detail an interpretation of Tirésias which has predominated among critics in the past.¹⁷ Manuel da Silva-Gaio seems to have been responsible for first propagating the

¹⁵ GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, p. 36.

¹⁶ This is the title of one of Barbey d'Aurévilly's Diaboliques.

¹⁷ Brinn'Gaubast did not offer an interpretation of the poem. He was of the opinion that its meaning was "assez clair pour quiconque n'est pas illettré".

interpretation in question. In his review in O Instituto in 1895, he suggested that "TIRÉSIAS é todo o artista, que vive da visão íntima da sua arte" (p. 254). One year later Vittorio Pica, no doubt following the suggestion of Manuel da Silva-Gaio, re-echoed the same idea:

"Tiresias - ecco il simbolo - è il poeta che cessa di vedere il mondo per non vedere altro che la sua Arte".¹⁸ Émile Bernard shared the same opinion, though less exclusively:

dois-je vous expliquer que Minerve, probablement, représente l'art; et Tirésias, le poète? À quoi bon? vous seriez capables d'y découvrir autre chose, et peut-être auriez-vous raison, - sans que j'eusse tort.

Eugénio de Castro may have suggested this interpretation himself. But if we are to interpret the poem in this sense, we must be careful to qualify the term "art" in conformity with the predominantly erotic content of the poem. Tirésias's vision is not one of aesthetic contemplation. And if Minerva symbolizes art, then art is not simply a cult of beauty: it is the sublimation of an erotic urge. Art assumes the function of Tirésias's vision. It provides cerebral fulfilment for desires which reality is unable to fulfil.

There is a certain Schopenhauerian flavour to the cult of art symbolized in Tirésias. Tirésias specifically sees his vision as freeing him from the slavery of earthly desires - "os olhos livres fazem a alma escrava" (27). Schopenhauer believed that the cult of Art offered a partial escape from the tyranny of desire. He saw the state of disinterested contemplation achieved in the purely aesthetic appreciation of a work of art as affording man a temporary release from the slavery of the Will. In this state of disinterested contemplation, he said, "wir sind, für jenen Augenblick, des schnöden Willensdranges entledigt, wir feiern den Sabbat der Zuchthausarbeit des

¹⁸ PICA, p. xix.

Wollens, das Rad des Ixion steht still".¹⁹ [we are, for that moment, released from the vile oppression of the Will, we celebrate the Sabbath of the forced labour of desire, the Wheel of Ixion stands still.] But for this state of Will-less contemplation to be attained, it is essential that the work of art should present the objects with which it deals in a sublime form, as Platonic ideas existing in their eternal and universal qualities.²⁰ Art should not simply present objects as life-like realities apt to arouse the passions and desires of the beholder. Schopenhauer considers as the opposite of sublime those art-forms which present us with "Dasjenige, was den Willen, dadurch daß es ihm [...] die Erfüllung unmittelbar vorhält, aufregt".²¹ [that which rouses the Will by placing its fulfilment immediately before it.] And (keeping in mind the subject of Eugénio de Castro's poem), while he praised nudity as represented by Ancient sculpture - i.e. in a sublime form, arousing aesthetic contemplation, not desire - he considered unworthy of art all:

nackten Gestalten, deren Stellung, halbe Bekleidung und ganze Behandlungsart darauf hinzielt im Beschauer Lüsterheit zu erregen, wodurch die rein ästhetische Betrachtung sogleich aufgehoben, also dem Zweck der Kunst entgegengearbeitet wird. 22

[naked forms whose posture, half-dressed state and whole manner of treatment aims at arousing desire in the beholder, thereby annulling purely aesthetic contemplation, and counteracting the aim of art.]

In view of the indications given, it becomes clear that Tirésias highlights the increasingly ambivalent nature assumed by Eugénio de Castro's poetry around 1894-1895. It seems certain that, on at least one level, Eugénio de Castro did intend this poem to be an expression

¹⁹ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 231.

²⁰ The title of this particular section of Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung is "Die Platonische Idee: das Objekt der Kunst".

²¹ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 244-5.

²² Ibid., II, 245.

of the cult of art as a release from the disillusion which follows indulgence in earthly pleasures. The poet who is brave enough to turn from the passing beauties of this world to the infinite beauties of art will be amply rewarded for his sacrifice - this was no doubt intended to be the message of Tirésias's didacticism:

Minhas palavras na tua alma grava,
Que ao teu tempo darás um bom emprego. (23-4)

But aesthetic contemplation is not enough. A study of the poem clearly reveals the erotic concern which underlies all Eugénio de Castro's early poetry. Art becomes a means of cerebral eroticism. It is seen implicitly as a source of sensual exhilaration which the forces of reality are powerless to diminish. Tirésias thus undermines the cult of "a arte pela arte" which Eugénio de Castro claimed to profess around that time.²³ It likewise subverts the Schopenhauerian view of art, just as "A Monja e o Rouxinol" subverts the Schopenhauerian view of asceticism as the denial of the passions.

The attitude towards desire inherent in these poems is basically pessimistic. Fulfilment is seen as possible only in a cerebral sense. It is in this sense that the solution offered can be seen as a development of the illusionism of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. But whereas illusionism had provided an escape from an emotional reality, here it has been replaced by cerebral eroticism whose function is to provide esoteric fulfilment of sensual desire. Nonetheless, fulfilment in real life remains impossible, and the underlying emotion of these poems is again one of loneliness. Eroticism is sublimated, but the feeling of sin connected with unfulfilment remains.

--ooOoo--

Before leaving these poems, we might note that from

²³ As in his review of Viriato by António de Vasconcelos in O Instituto of January 1895, p. 61.

a formal point of view they reveal Eugénio de Castro in many ways at his best. He is invariably more at ease refurbishing simple traditional legends than when he attempts to create complicated legends of his own (as in Sagramor). His language is relatively simple, his mood laconic. Tirésias exhibits several lines remarkable for their economy:

Serenas olimpíadas transpus. (33)

Olímpicas belezas duradouras. (59)

And A Nereide de Harlém is characterized by a restraint which has been described as Parnassian.²⁴ Moreover, these poems do not groan under the weight of a cumbersome philosophical superstructure as do many of Interlúdio. Between Tirésias and A Nereide de Harlém, however, stands Sagramor, which will in many ways be the negation of the successes achieved in these poems.

²⁴ See GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, p. 43.

Chapter Eight

Venus - Uranian and Dionaeae

a). Sagramor.

Between September 1894 and February 1895, Eugénio de Castro dedicated himself to the composition of Sagramor.¹ Like Interlúdio, Sagramor was written as an intentionally pessimistic book. The reader is immediately apprised of this by the two quotations which precede the text proper. They are from Théophile Gautier:

L'étoile fuit toujours, ils lui courent après;
Et le matin venu, la lueur poursuivie,
Quand ils la vont saisir, s'éteint dans un marais.²

and Dante:

lasciate ogni speranza voi ch'entrate.³

Like its immediate predecessors, Sagramor added considerably to its author's renown in France. This was again due principally to the efforts of Brinn'Gaubast, who referred to Sagramor as "l'un de ces documents en lesquels se résume, ainsi qu'en Werther ou René, l'état d'âme d'une génération dans un pays".⁴ The ideas expressed in Brinn'Gaubast's review were taken up and used by other magazines in France as well as by several others abroad. They took Eugénio de Castro's fame to Sweden in the North, Italy in

¹ The name "Sagramor" was taken from the protagonist of the Memorial das Proezas da Segunda Távola Redonda (1567) by Jorge Ferreira de Vasconcelos. See PIMENTA, p. 195.

² From "Ténèbres" (124-6), in Poésies Diverses (1833-1838). See GAUTIER, Poésies Complètes, II, 61.

³ Inferno, III, 9. See DANTE ALIGHIERI, La Divina Commedia (Milan: Riccardo Ricciardi Editore, s/d), Inferno, p. 30. This quotation confirms the following statement by J. Chaix-Ruy, subsequent to an interview with Eugénio de Castro: "Schopenhauer et aussi Goethe - et, à d'autres moments Dante lui-même, qui vient, à son chevet, rejoindre les maîtres germaniques, sont ses guides" (op. cit., p. 25).

⁴ This review appeared initially in the Revue Blanche of 15 August 1895, and subsequently in L'Ermitage of November 1895 (pp. 236-8). All subsequent references to Brinn'Gaubast in this chapter will be to this review.

the South, Constantinople in the East.⁵ Sagramor was also received with interest in South America, as Belkiss had been. In his lecture on Eugénio de Castro delivered in the Ateneo of Buenos Aires in 1896, Rubén Darío translated the closing section of the poem for his audience.⁶

Like all of Eugénio de Castro's works, Sagramor is heavily indebted to suggestions from other writers. And there has been considerable speculation as to the literary precedents of this poem. Brinn'Gaubast suggested a certain parallelism with René and Werther. Vittorio Pica took this one step further: "il protagonista può quasi considerarsi come un cadetto di Manfred, di Werther, di René, un cadetto meno enfatico, più pensoso ed anche più intensamente sconcolato".⁷ This idea has been taken up more recently by Álvaro J. da Costa Pimpão. He suggests that, in Sagramor, Eugénio de Castro "acaba, no entanto, por restituir a Sagramor a melancolia e a desilusão românticas de René e dos seus descendentes".⁸ And it is difficult to see what other work of Eugénio de Castro Carlos Eduardo de Soveral had in mind when he wrote: "é obvia em Eugénio de Castro a constante presença de Goethe e as suas trágicas criaturas - Margarida, o jovem Werther".⁹

There can, however, be no real question of any similarity with, let alone influence of Die Leiden des Jungen Werther. Werther's tragedy is quite different from

⁵ In L'Ermitage Brinn'Gaubast gives the following list of critics and magazines to use his review: "Marc Legrand, à la Fraternité et à la Petite Revue; G. Oudinot, au Jour et à la Revue Française; Iwan Gilkin et W. Ritter, en Belgique; Accinelli et Vittorio Pica, en Italie; Hans de Wolzogen et Wilhelm Storck, en Allemagne; Gøeran Bjørckmann [sic], en Suède; Edgar Prestage, en Angleterre; X. de Carvalho, au Brésil; le Stamboul, à Constantinople; die Zeit, à Vienne".

⁶ DARÍO, Los Raros, pp. 215-217.

⁷ PICA, p. xxvii.

⁸ PIMPÃO, p. 169.

⁹ CARLOS EDUARDO DE SOVERAL, "O Tempo Europeu de Eugénio de Castro", in Boletim da Sociedade de Estudos de Moçambique, Vol. 37 (1968-9), p. 58.

Sagramor's. He is unable to fulfil his love for Lotte for the relatively straightforward reason that she marries someone else. And, unlike Sagramor, his despair eventually results in suicide. There are however, several points of contact with René. René, like Sagramor, searches for fulfilment in communion with nature and in travelling:

plein d'ardeur, je m'élançai seul sur cet orageux
océan du monde, dont je ne connaissais ni les ports
ni les écueils. Je visitai d'abord les peuples qui ne
sont plus: je m'en allai, m'asseyant sur les débris 10
de Rome et de la Grèce.

But it would be a mistake to push the similarities between Sagramor and René too far. The basic conflict of the two books is quite different. And many of the themes of René soon became the stock-in-trade of Romantic writers. The theme of travel was, as Mario Praz points out, part of the "patrimonio comune del nascente romanticismo".¹¹

The work most frequently suggested as having inspired Sagramor is Goethe's Faust. Armando Navarro seems to have been the first to make this suggestion. Reviewing Sagramor in the Novidades of 2 and 3 July 1895, he found "o entrecho do poema um pouco à Fausto". Since then, this idea has become well-established. It was taken up again by Andrés González-Blanco, who saw Sagramor as a "tentative réalisée de créer un Faust portugais, d'après l'œuvre de Goethe, son poète préféré".¹² João Gaspar Simões has also described Sagramor as a work in which Eugénio de Castro "à imitação do Fausto, de Goethe, faz a apologia da ignorância e da simplicidade de espírito".¹³ And René Poupart has described Sagramor as "une sorte de Faust portugais qui tente successivement de satisfaire les principaux désirs de l'homme".¹⁴

¹⁰ CHATEAUBRIAND, Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Pourrat Frères, Éditeurs, 1836), XVIII, 108.

¹¹ PRAZ, pp. 66-7. See also note 30, page 66.

¹² GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, p. 51.

¹³ SIMÕES, História, p. 188.

¹⁴ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 92.

Eugénio de Castro quotes the first lines of Faust's opening soliloquy as an epigraph to Canto V of Sagramor, in which he deals with a typically Faustian theme, the futility of knowledge. It is certain, therefore, that he had some acquaintance with Faust. And there are other points of contact between the two poems. Like Faust, Sagramor could well say: "Und so ist mir das Dasein eine Last", ¹⁵ or more typically:

So tauml ich von Begierde zu Genuß,
Und im Genuß verschmacht ich nach Begierde. ¹⁶

[And so I stagger from desire to enjoyment,
And in enjoyment I thirst after desire.]

But there is nothing in Sagramor to suggest any all-pervading influence of Faust. Sagramor shares Faust's restless energy, his constant searching for an ultimate truth. But these characteristics are not the exclusive province of Faust. There is a certain kinship of spirit between the two poems; but there is no reason to see Faust as informing the overall structure of Sagramor.

Vittorio Pica suggested the influence of Byron's Manfred along with that of Werther and René. This idea has been taken up recently by Federico Olivero. He sees Sagramor as a poem "in cui il ricordo del Manfred s' intreccia a quello del Faust". ¹⁷ But there is no evidence to suggest any real reminiscence of Manfred in Sagramor. Sagramor could say of Cecília what Manfred says of Astarte: "I loved her and destroyed her". ¹⁸ And indeed he does say something similar: "Choro aquela para quem fui o algoz e o enlevo (I, iii, 58). But the Romantic hero who destroys what he loves is hardly a monopoly of Manfred. As Mario Praz points out of the lines from Manfred just quoted:

¹⁵ GOETHE, Gedenkausgabe der Werke, Briefe und Gespräche (Zürich: Artemis-Verlag, 1950), Faust, p. 190.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 245.

¹⁷ OLIVERO, p. 4.

¹⁸ BYRON, Works (London: John Murray, 1901), IV, 106. Act 2, scene 2, line 116.

"Quel che Manfredo dice di Astarte [...] sarà la divisa degli eroi fatali della letteratura romantica".¹⁹ Other themes shared by the two poems - the futility of knowledge, the search for truth in mystery - are subsumed in Faust, whose influence on Byron's poem is obvious.

Not surprisingly, certain influences present in Belkiss reappear in Sagramor. As René Poupert rightly points out,²⁰ the scene in which Cecília loosens her hair (I, i, 49-55) is clearly modelled on a similar scene in Maeterlinck's Pelléas et Mélisande:

Oh! oh! qu'est-ce que c'est? ... Tes cheveux, tes
cheveux descendent vers moi! ... Toute ta chevelure,
Mélisande, toute ta chevelure est tombée de la tour!
... Je la tiens dans les mains, je la touche des
lèvres ... Je la tiens dans les bras, je la mets autour 21
de mon cou ...

But Maeterlinck's influence is present nowhere else in Sagramor.

René Poupert also mentions the influence of Villiers's Axël. This had already been suggested in 1895 by Philéas Lebesgue. In a poem entitled "À propos de Sagramor", published in O Instituto of August 1895, he described Sagramor as the "Noble frère d'Axël, moins courageux peut-être, / Mais à coup sûr plus tendre, encore que plus seul" (p. 482). Certain similarities with Axël seem obvious. The description of the room in Canto V offers a close parallel with that described in Part II of Villiers's work:

"Sur le spacieux manteau de cet âtre sont empilés de
poudreux in-folio. - Sur de larges établis en bois
noir, adjacents, sont disposés des alambics, des
sphères astrales, d'antiques lampes d'argile, de
démessurés ossements d'animaux d'espèces disparues." 22

"Confusamente, sobre as mesas, sobre as cadeiras e no
chão, montes de infólios, manuscritos, caveiras,
máquinas eléctricas, telescópios, microscópios,

¹⁹ PRAZ, p. 75.

²⁰ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 93.

²¹ MAETERLINCK, Théâtre, II, 68-69.

²² VILLIERS, IV, 61.

balanças de precisão, retortas ... "

And the words of the Queen of the Prologue to Sagramor echo those of Sara to Axël:

"Ah! mon cher, si tu quittais l'exil et daignais me suivre en ce monde de fêtes, de luxe et d'amours ... " 23.

"É preciso que deixes imediatamente esta solidão [...] que conheças e saboreies a vida [...] o amor [...] o esplendor das festas [...] a opulência".

Verbal reminiscences of this kind can be found recalling other works by Villiers. In the Prologue, the Queen destroys Sagramor's innocence with a kiss:

A RAINHA: [...] Beija-o, voluptuosa e demoradamente na boca.

SAGRAMOR: Como que despertando: "Mas que foi isto? Onde estou eu?"

A RAINHA: "Vem comigo ... "

In Villiers's Elën Samuel too is roused, though from voluntary chastity, by a kiss:

Elle [Elën] embrasse au front Samuel qui se réveille en sursaut.

SAMUEL: "Hein? ...Qu'est-ce?" Après un profond silence. "Oh! comme vous êtes belle."

ELËN: "Voulez-vous venir avec moi, monsieur." 24

René Poupert, however, sees the influence of Villiers, and particularly of Axël, as going beyond simple verbal reminiscence. He says of Sagramor:

Parmi les thèmes essentiels que développe cette œuvre, deux s'imposent par leur importance: la déception qui suit le désir réalisé et la vérité du rêve. Par ces deux thèmes, le drame poétique d'Eugénio de Castro s'apparente encore à l'œuvre de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam et spécialement à Axël. 25

The themes mentioned here are present in Sagramor. But just how essential they are to the poem I shall discuss in my examination of the text.

23 Ibid., IV, 119.

24 Ibid., VIII, 233.

25 POUPART, p. 92.

Eugénio de Castro himself has given some indication of other possible influences at work in Sagramor. In his article on "O Teatro Moderno" in the Diário Popular of 18 August 1893 he had spoken of "[o] o honesto intuito de purificar a arte de Gil Vicente". There is a certain similarity between part of the Prologue of Sagramor and a passage from Gil Vicente's Auto da Alma. There the Soul, like Sagramor, is tempted with a cloak and precious rings:

Vesti ora esta brial,
metei o braço por aqui: 26
Oh como vem tão real!

Vedes aqui um colar
d'ouro mui bem esmaltado, 27
e dez anéis.

It too is urged to indulge in the enjoyment of pleasure:

Dai-vos, dai-vos a prazer,
que muitas horas há nos anos 28
que lá vêm.

However, if Eugénio de Castro did find the suggestion for these details in the Auto da Alma, there is no question of any other similarity with Gil Vicente's play. Indeed, the comparison of Sagramor with a genuine allegory such as the Auto da Alma throws light, as we shall see, on the real nature of Eugénio de Castro's poem.

In the same article, Eugénio de Castro mentioned Henrik Ibsen, "o genial norueguês". And there has been considerable speculation as to the influence of Ibsen on Eugénio de Castro. Rubén Darío, for example, was certain that the prose-style of Belkiss had been influenced by that of Ibsen's Kongsemnere.²⁹ And, in his article on "Les Lettres Portugaises" in the Mercure de France of February 1897, Philéas Lebesgue went so far as to say that, just as Ibsen's

²⁶ GIL VICENTE, Obras Completas (Lisbon: Livraria Sá da Costa, 1968), II, 12.

²⁷ Ibid., II, 16.

²⁸ Ibid., II, 19.

²⁹ DARÍO, "Henrik Ibsen", in Los Raros, pp. 183-4.

Peer Gynt was the "symbole de la Norvège et du peuple norvégien", so Sagramor was "le symbole du Portugal et de la nation portugaise" (p. 419). There are certain superficial similarities between Sagramor and Peer Gynt. Peer is a quest hero like Sagramor, and searches for fulfilment in various realms of human experience.³⁰ Sagramor's seduction and immediate abandonment of Cecília recalls Peer's treatment of Ingrid (Act I). There are also, at times, apparent similarities of poetic technique. As Sagramor leaves the valley at the end of the Prologue, the trees and the fountains call him back. Towards the end of Peer Gynt the elements of Nature likewise gain voice to admonish Peer, though in this case for his past, not for his future errors:

duggdråper:

Vi er tårer
der ei ble felte.
Isbrodd, som sårer,
kunne vi smelte.
Nu sitter brodden
i bringen lodden;
såret er lukket,
vår makt er slukket.

³⁰ Quest-heroes of this kind (Faust, René, Manfred, Peer Gynt) were common in European literature of the nineteenth century. In Pierre in Tolstoy's War and Peace we find another such quest-hero, though on an individual, not on a symbolic or allegorical level. Towards the end of his novel (Book 4, part 4, chapter 12) Tolstoy describes Pierre thus: "Он всю жизнь свою смотрел туда куда-то, поверх голов окружающих людей ... Он не умел прежде видеть великого, непостижимого и бесконечного ни в чем. Он только чувствовал, что оно должно быть где-то, и искал его. Во всем близком, понятном, он видел одно ограниченное, мелкое, житейское, бессмысленное ... Таким ему представилась европейская жизнь, политика, масонство, философия, филантропия". Полное Собрание Сочинений (Moscow: Государственное Издательство, 1940), XII, 205. [Throughout his life he had looked somewhere above the heads of the people around him ... He had never before been able to see the great, the inconceivable, the infinite in anything. He only felt that it must exist somewhere, and looked for it. In everything that was near or intelligible, he saw what was restricted, small, everyday, senseless ... This was how he had found European life, politics, free-masonry, philosophy, philanthropy.]

brekkede strå:

Vi er verker;
 du skulle øvet oss!
 Tvil, som kverker,
 har krøblet og kløvet oss.
 På ytterste dagen
 vi kommer i flokk
 og melder sagen, -
 så får du nok.

31

[drops of dew: We are tears that were never shed. We could melt the jagged ice that wounds. Now the point sits in your shaggy breast; the wound has closed, our power has gone.

broken straws: We are works: you should have carried us out. Stifling doubt crippled and maimed us. On the last day we shall flock round and tell all we know - then you will pay.]

But it would be wrong to push these similarities too far. Peer's quest is quite different from Sagramor's. Peer's ceaseless activity is the pretext for a constant evasion from himself: in the final scene the Button-moulder threatens to melt down his soul specifically because Peer has never had a true self. Sagramor, on the other hand, searches for unending exhilaration. Peer discards Ingrid because she no longer represents adventure. Cecília is abandoned because Sagramor fails to achieve transcendence through her. And there are significant differences between the end of the Prologue of Sagramor and the passage from Peer Gynt just quoted. In Peer Gynt there is a strict sequence of symbolism: dew-drops symbolize tears, broken straws uncompleted works, etc. There is no symbolism of this kind in Sagramor. The trees and fountains belong to the standard scenery of the bucolic idyll we find in the Prologue. They represent Nature, not specific aspects of Sagramor's life.

Sagramor's relationship with Peer Gynt is very much the same as his relationship with the other quest-heroes mentioned. He is part of a tradition of quest-heroes who

³¹ HENRIK IBSEN, Samlede Werker (Oslo: Glyndal Norsk Forlag, 1968), p. 350.

seek various kinds of Infinities in various different ways. It is possible to see similarities with these other heroes. But, at the same time, Sagramor is not closely modelled on any of them. He searches for a particular kind of Infinite which is not to be found in the works already mentioned. It is on the nature of this Infinite that I shall concentrate in my study of the structure of the poem.

--ooOoo--

Despite the initial impression it gives of being a clearly structured allegory, Sagramor is a confused and chaotic poem. The reasons for this are many. But before going on to examine those inherent in the conception of the poem, I shall deal now with the more extrinsic causes of confusion. In 1907 Eugénio de Castro answered a series of questions for the literary survey "Como trabalham os nossos escritores". During his interview with Albino Forjaz de Sampaio he confirmed that he had written Sagramor between September 1894 and February 1895, and added: "Mas nesse período fiz muitas outras coisas, entre elas algumas das composições que formam o volume 'Salomé e outros poemas', publicado em 1896".³² Sagramor is a lengthy poem, and a statement such as this implies an unusually high work-rate. But, had Eugénio de Castro been completely honest, he would have admitted that many of the passages included in Sagramor had been written before he had conceived the idea of the poem. These passages were later drafted for service in a work to which they did not originally belong. It is an interesting indication of the independent nature of many of these passages included in Sagramor that several of them appear as set-pieces in their own right in Eugénio de Castro's Poesias Escolhidas, published in 1901.

The first examples of this extraneous matter appear

³² ALBINO FORJAZ DE SAMPAIO, Grilhetas (Lisbon: Empresa Literária Fluminense, 1916), p. 147.

in the fourth scene of Canto I. Here, Sagramor's opening words to Fúlvia can be reduced to five passages of "conceptismo". One of these (85-102) appears as a set-piece in the Poesias Escolhidas, while another (31-44) proves, on closer inspection, to be a sonnet. These passages evidently belong to late 1891-early 1892, when Eugénio de Castro had made a similar use of "conceptismo" (see page 136). This is confirmed by the fact that one of them contains a definite reminiscence of a poem from Moréas's Pèlerin Passionné, the book which most influenced this particular aspect of Eugénio de Castro's poetry in 1891 and 1892:

"agora acho
Que são bem verdadeiros os que contam
Que o abuso do mel tira a razão" (80-82)
"J'eusse pu me nourrir de miel
Nouveau, pendant des mois, et bien que l'on prétende 33
Que sa saveur trouble les sens ... "

But this "conceptismo" is quite out of place here. As deployed in this scene, it completely contradicts Fúlvia's description of Sagramor as "um ingénuo" (15).

Likewise, Canto III, purporting to deal with the "efficacité du Voyage pour tuer l'Ennui" (Brinn'Gaubast), is composed largely of two episodes which have nothing whatsoever to do with that theme. These are the story of Sappho and Alcaeus, and that of the Triton, both of which appear in the Poesias Escolhidas (pp. 67 ff, 75 ff). The latter seems to be Eugénio de Castro's own invention. The former brings together information taken mostly from Strabo's Geography, as well as some direct quotation from each of the poets in question.³⁴ The information relating to Alcaeus's life comes mostly from Strabo:

Ἀλκαῖος ... φήσας ἀφ᾽ ἵχθαι καὶ αὐτός εἰς Αἴγυπτον. 35

³³ MORÉAS, I, 201.

³⁴ Eugénio de Castro no doubt gathered this material from some common source, which I have been unable to identify.

³⁵ STRABO, Geographica (Lipsiae: Sumptibus et Typis B.G. Teubneri, 1852), I, 47: Book 1, chap. 37.

[Alcaeus ... said that he himself had gone to Egypt.]

Μυτιλήνη ... ἄνδρας δ' ἔσχεν ἐνδόξους ... τὸν ποιητὴν Ἀλκαῖον καὶ τὸν ἀδελφὸν Ἀντιμενίδαν ὃν φησὶν Ἀλκαῖος Βαβυλωνίοις συμμαχοῦντα τελέσαι μέγαν ἄθλον ... ἐτυραννήθη δὲ ἡ πόλις κατὰ τοὺς χρόνους τούτους ... ἐν δὲ τοῖς τυράννοις καὶ ὁ Πιττακὸς ἐγένετο. Ἀλκαῖος μὲν οὖν ὁμοίως ἐλοιδορεῖτο καὶ τούτῳ καὶ τοῖς ἄλλοις, Μυρσίλῳ καὶ Μελαγχρῳ. 36

[Among the famous men of Mytilene were the poet Alcaeus and his brother Antimenides, who, according to Alcaeus, won a great contest while fighting for the Babylonians ... At that time the city was ruled by tyrants ... and among these tyrants was Pittacus. But Alcaeus reviled him and others alike, such as Myrsilus and Melanchros.]

(Compare 37-42, 53-72). The account given of Alcaeus's works (30-36) can be found partly in Himerius's Orations:

ἐθέλω δὲ ὑμῖν καὶ Ἀλκαίου τινὰ λόγον εἶπεν ... ὅτε Ἀπόλλων ... ἐπιβὰς ἐπὶ τῶν ἁρμάτων ἐθήκε τοὺς κύκνους εἰς Ἰπερβορέους πέτεσθαι. Δέλφοι μὲν οὖν, ὡς ἥσθοντο, παιᾶνα συνθέντες ... ἐκάλουν τὸν θεὸν ἐξ Ἰπερβορέων ἐλθεῖν... ᾄδουσι μὲν ἀηδόνες αὐτῷ. 37

[I will tell you of a poem of Alcaeus ... telling how Apollo ... mounted on his chariot and ordered his swans to fly to Hyperboreoi. But the citizens of Delphos, when they learned of this, composed paeans ... and called on the god to come from Hyperboreoi ... and the nightingales sang to him.]

Other details come from Pausanias's Description of Greece:

βουσί γὰρ χαίρειν μάλιστα Ἀπόλλωνα Ἀλκαῖος τε ἐδήλωσεν ἐν ὕμνῳ τῷ ἐς Ἑρμῆν γραφας, ὡς ὁ Ἑρμῆς ὑφέλοιτο τοῦ Ἀπόλλωνος 38

[Alcaeus showed that Apollo was especially fond of oxen in the hymn he wrote to Hermes, telling how Hermes stole Apollo's oxen.]

The tale of Sappho's suicide also comes from Strabo:

Λευκαδὸς ... ἔχει ... τὸ ἄλμα τὸ τοὺς ἔρωτας παύειν πεπιστευμένον. Οὐδὲ γὰρ λέγεται ... Σαπφῷ ... τὸν ὑπέρκκοπον θηρῶσα Φάων' οἰστρῶντι πόθῳ ῥῖψαι πέτρας ἀπὸ τηλαφανοῦς. 39

[Leucados ... is where there is ... the leap which

³⁶ Ibid., II, 863: Book 13, chap. 617.

³⁷ Quoted in: D.L PAGE, Lyrical Graeca Selecta (Oxford: University Press, 1968), p. 79.

³⁸ PAUSANIAS, Descriptio Graeciae (Lipsiae: Sumptibus et Typis B.G. Teubneri, 1862), II, 51: Book 7, chap. 20.

³⁹ STRABO, II, 637: Book 10, chap. 452.

was believed to bring an end to love. It is from there that Sappho ... pursuing the arrogant Phaon, is said, to have leapt, urged on by her grief, from the far-shining rock.]

(Compare 167-174). Alcaeus's love for her is mentioned in Athenaeus's Learned Banquet:

Λέσβιος Ἀλκαῖος δὲ πόσους ἀνεδέξατο κώμους
Σαπφῶς φορμίζων ἡμερόεντα ποθὸν
γινώσκεις. ὃ δ' ἀκοιδὸς ἀηδόνας ἤρασθ' ὕμνων. 40

[You know in how many a serenade Alcaeus, from Lesbos, revealed his delightful love for Sappho, as he sang of it on his lyre. The poet loved that nightingale of hymns.]

Finally, the short conversation reported between Alcaeus and Sappho (117-8, 123-7) is a free translation of a similar conversation reported by Aristotle in his Rhetoric:

Σαπφῶ πεποιημέν' εἰπόντος τοῦ Ἀλκαίου· θέλω τι εἰπὴν ἀλλὰ με
κωλύει αἰδώς·
αἰ δ' ἤχες ἔσλων ἡμερον ἢ κάλων
καὶ μή τι εἶπην γλώσσ' ἐκκα κάκων,
αἶδως κεν οὐκ ἤχεν ὅππατ'
ἀλλ' ἔλεγεσ' περὶ τῷ δικαίως. 41

[When Alcaeus said to her, "I want to tell you something, but shame forbids me", Sappho replied, "If your intentions were right and honourable, and your tongue were not mixing a brew of evil words, then shame would not make you turn away your eyes, but you would say what it is right to say.]

Other examples of interpolations are not difficult to find. In Canto IV, the entire poem "A Senhora dos Ladrões" is an obvious insertion, having no necessary connection with the plot whatsoever. It too appears as a set piece in the Poesias Escolhidas (p. 82). The legend of the unsightly flower in the same Canto has a more visible connection with the plot, illustrating as it does the futility of glory. But it too is a narrative in its own right. Sofia, who recounts the tale, refers to it as a "velha história" (IV, iii, 14). It is based on a legend

40 ATHENAEUS NAUCRATITA, Dipnosophistarum (Lipsiae: B.G. Teubneri, 1890), III, 318: section 598b.

41 Quoted in Lyrice Graeca Selecta, pp. 123-4.

which Eugénio de Castro quoted as an epigraph to this Canto in the first, though not in subsequent editions of Sagramor:

On ne tourmente pas les arbres stériles et desséchés;
ceux-là seuls sont battus de pierres dont le front
est couronné de fruits d'or.

Abenhamed.

Likewise, the poem which opens Canto V has little or no real connection with the plot (its "conceptismo" suggests a considerably earlier date of composition). And the same can be said of the three poems which make up the bulk of Canto VI, Scene 2. They have little to do with death, the stated theme of that Canto. Two of them (30-49. 97-125) also appear in the Poesias Escolhidas (pp. 80, 73).

The inclusion of these independent poems is the most immediate cause of the confusion in Sagramor. Despite its appearance of a unified plot, Sagramor is to a large extent a mosaic of set-pieces which were not originally composed with the later poem in mind. They give the poem an uneven texture, and reveal all the more clearly how fragmentary the philosophizings of Sagramor were in Eugénio de Castro's mind.

--ooOoo--

Over and above these interpolations, there is a further cause of confusion in Canto V, which deals with the theme of Knowledge. Here, as in Episode XIV of Belkiss, the order of the lines has been confused in the printing. This would not be difficult to explain: one page misplaced in the manuscript would be enough to account for such an error. But considering the care Eugénio de Castro is reputed to have taken over the publishing of his works, ⁴² it is difficult to see how it could have escaped his scrutiny. In the passage as it is printed, Sagramor begins

⁴² Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho points out that Eugénio de Castro "Pelas gralhas então tinha verdadeiro horror" (p. 46).

by telling of his vast reading, and how he has turned to death for solace (66-73). He then interrupts this sequence of thought to go back over his various pursuits of happiness in the past. He enumerates these (74-85), and eventually returns to the theme of reading. Then, without transition, he suddenly returns to the theme of death (86-88), on which the Canto then ends. It seems certain, however, that the lines should read as follows:

- 75 Enfastiado do amor, da glória, das viagens
E do ouro, foi então que eu, cego entre os mais cegos,
Fiz no mar do Mistério ingênuas, vãs sondagens,
Sem nunca o fundo achar daqueles fundos pegos!
Quis saber tudo, quis conhecer a Verdade,
Ansioso, interroguei teorias, cemitérios,
80 E afinal o que achei? Vaidade, só vaidade!
Só treva e confusão! Só nevoeiro e mistérios!
Nada, nada encontrou meu desejo insubmisso,
Que hoje se estorce e morre em doridos arrancos;
Passei anos a ler, e c que lucrei com isso?
85 Algumas rugas mais e mais cabelos brancos!
66 Li tudo! Aprofundei as ciências mais estranhas!
Meu fatigado olhar andou léguas e léguas
Nos livros que em redor de mim formam montanhas,
E com os quais travei um combate sem tréguas.
70 O vencido fui eu!
Desiludido enfim
Desta vida, cravei os meus olhos na morte,
Julgando encontrar nela a Torre de Marfim,
73 A Meca espiritual dos meus sonhos sem norte;
86 Ó morte, ó minha astral, derradeira ilusão,
És em mim como um astro a brilhar numa onda ...
Quem és tu? Como és tu? Teus beijos como são?

In this order, the passage begins, as we might expect, with a recapitulation of what has gone before. Furthermore, the sequence of the lines dealing with the idea of reading forms the theme into a logical whole. This is also the case with the theme of death, which, in the passage as it is printed, seems to appear long before its time.

---ooOoo---

I am now in a position to turn my attention to the themes and structure of Sagramor. In his review of the poem, Brinn'Gaubast confined his analysis to its allegorical sequence:

Sagramor est l'histoire d'une Âme, développée au moyen de sept grands épisodes ou symboles, de nature lyrique, où nous sommes introduits par un Prologue en prose. Chacun de ces symboles, subdivisé lui-même, représente le cycle complet des phases de l'une des illusions qui successivement trompent cette Âme à la recherche du Bonheur. 43

This interpretation was taken up in the following year by Rubén Darío:

A través de soberbios episodios, en mágicos versos, desfila una sucesión de visiones y símbolos que va a parar al obscuro reino de la invencible Desilusión, a la fatal miseria del Tedio. 44

and by Vittorio Pica: "È infine la triste istoria di un' Anima moderna in cerca della Felicità e che non trova che delusioni ed amarezze e precipita fatalmente nel Tedio". 45

The idea of a search for happiness of this kind, in various of the realms of experience open to man, was not new to Eugénio de Castro. It had first appeared in his short story "Dois Solitários", published in the Novidades of 23 August 1892. In this story the protagonist searches for fulfilment in many of the areas which will be tried by Sagramor - travel:

Ao princípio lembrei-me de ocupar meu tempo com contínuas viagens. Esta existência de nómade, cheia de imprevistos e deslumbramentos, ao correr da qual, mudando constantemente de convivência e de afeições, me seria fácil chegar à suprema felicidade, quero dizer ao supremo egoísmo, parecia-me a melhor das existências.

art:

Busquei um refúgio na arte. Circundei-me de tudo o que encontrei jeitoso para exaltar a minha sensibilidade amante de raridades e complicações. Os meus mais pequeninos movimentos eram dirigidos por um grande sopro artístico. Longe de todas as coisas

⁴³ Despite the superficial nature of his review, Brinn' Gaubast expressed the opinion in L'Ermitage that it had "acquis le droit d'être considéré en France, comme exprimant, sur Sagramor, tout ce qu'il importe d'en dire".

⁴⁴ DARÍO, Los Raros, p. 215.

⁴⁵ PICA, p. xxviii.

vulgares, entre coisas fidalgas, julguei ter finalmente encontrado o abrigo que me convinha.

philosophy:

Voltei-me então para a filosofia. Adoptei e modifiquei com uma certa originalidade a concepção de Fichte. Comecei a considerar-me como o centro do universo, a considerar as coisas e as pessoas como simples prolongamentos do meu eu, quero dizer, as coisas e as pessoas como simples aparências das minhas ideias.

religion:

Na minha alma moravam ainda alguns vestígios de velhas crenças divinas. Tentei aproveitá-los nutrindo-me do mais ardente e exaltado misticismo.

However, with the transportation of this theme to Sagramor, a significant change occurs. The plot of "Os Dois Solitários" remains on an individual level. It has no symbolic resonance for the rest of Humanity. Sagramor, on the other hand, purports to deal with far-reaching intellectual and philosophical problems, and to present an allegory of modern man's search for fulfilment. Thus Sagramor laments the futility of Knowledge. He expatiates on the meaninglessness of religions, dabbles in occultism, decries the illusory nature of wealth. He points to the emptiness of glory, above all to the treacherous lure of love. But these philosophizings do not bear scrutiny. They constitute only the ostensible structure of the poem. A close examination reveals that the philosophical content of Sagramor is nil, nothing but a mixer-maxter of received ideas. The entire poem is bedevilled by the pseudo-intellectualism of an author who wished to create a symbolic superstructure of serious metaphysical dimensions, but who lacked the insight to conceive of such an idea in any depth, and the ability as a poet to render it convincingly into words. Beneath the many apparent themes of this poem, and at times conflicting with them, the true theme of Sagramor is the limitations of the senses, the problem of physical desire.

The problem of desire is posed immediately in the Prologue. Sagramor is presented to us as living in a pastoral idyll of unworldly innocence. He watches his sheep, entertains himself by playing his flute, and knows no-one else in the world except his mother. But his life of innocence comes to a sudden end. Attracted by the music of his flute, a mysterious queen appears and attempts to lure him away. She is characterized by prodigious beauty, but this is not to be understood in any spiritual sense. The temptations she offers Sagramor are, from the outset, of a material nature. She gives him a crystal flute, a sumptuous cloak, rings. She turns the horns and hoofs of his sheep to gold, and their sheep-bells to strings of pearls. The appeal soon moves from the merely sensorial to the sensual: "É preciso [...] que conheças e saboreies a vida [...] Terás todas as delícias que apeteceres"; "as mais lindas princesas [...] hão de acariciar-te com as suas mãos de seda" (my italics throughout). The Queen offers Sagramor physical thrill. This may take various forms: "o amor, o vinho, a agitação das cidades, o esplendor das festas, a glória e a opulência", but it is the exhilaration of these experiences which is implied.

Sagramor resists these temptations for a time, but his protests are finally overcome by a kiss. It is again the physical sensation of the kiss which is emphasized: "Beija-o, voluptuosa e demoradamente, na boca". As a result, he is filled with the desire for even greater sensation:

Oh! como este vale me parece agora estreito! Nunca me pareceu tão estreito! Dizei-me: para além daqueles montes, há outras terras, outros campos, outros vales, não é verdade? E são lindas essas paisagens? Quem me dera vê-las!

At the end of the Prologue, he leaves the valley in search of this.

Throughout the Prologue, the Queen refuses to name herself. But there can be no doubt as to what she really represents. She is physical excitement, exhilaration achieved through the senses. She overcomes Sagramor's resistance by the erotic thrill of her kiss. She thus

represents Eros, or, to borrow the terms of Edgar Allan Poe, Venus in her Dionaeon, as against her Uranian form. ⁴⁶

As Sagramor leaves the valley, his state of communion with Nature is broken. The consequences of this break will be far-reaching. He gives up communion with Nature for a state in which he will abuse Nature as a source of physical excitement. This future abuse is implicit in the Queen's statement: "Os teus passos deslizarão sobre rosas desfolhadas". Nature answers this abuse with hostility. A recurring motif in the remainder of the poem will be images of spines and thorns:

"Manda-nos caminhar, descalços, sobre espinhos!"
(I, iv, 106)

"O cume era alto, crepuscular,
Cheio de cardos o caminho." (I, vi, 80-81)

"Pára! contigo irei por caminhos de abrolhos."
(I, vi, 64)

"... ingênuas princesas
Numa cisterna seca, ouriçada de abrolhos." (II, i, 19-20)

"Em abismos caiu, pelas silvas foi rasgado."
(III, i, 182)

"Fui, é certo, infeliz; no Amor colhi só cardos."
(III, i, 193)

"Nos lírios vejo duros abrolhos." (III, ii, 27)

"Dizei-me, senhor, que espinhos
Vos estão a apunhalar?" (IV, iii, 1-2)

"Deixei traçado o meu caminho
Com o sangue dos pés mortificados." (VII, 13-14)

"Ai! quem me dera colher um lilás,
Em vez de picar-me nos cardos secos!" (VII, 260-1)

The Queen - Dionaeon Venus, eroticism - is Satanic in the sense that she disrupts and perverts Nature for egotistical gratification. But Nature reacts aggressively, and as a result, Sagramor suffers throughout the poem.

Vittorio Pica saw the situation of Sagramor thus:

"sua sorte [...] simbolizza quella della intera miserabile umanità". ⁴⁷ This is what we might expect of a philosophical

⁴⁶ POE, Works, V, "The Poetic Principle", p. 123.

⁴⁷ PICA, p. xxviii.

allegory; and there are some suggestions to this effect later in the poem:

Tem paciência, tem paciência,
 Todos na vida são como tu ... (III, ii, 159-60)

But the generalization of Sagramor's experience belongs to the symbolic superstructure of the poem, which is not always in harmony with the indications of the text. Sagramor, in the Prologue, does not represent humanity, but, in the first instance, a subsidiary order of generality: the artist. It is the excellence of his music which attracts the attention of the Queen in the first place: "És um artista incomparável! Ah! ... mas agora reparo ... um artista como tu, embrulhado num gibão tão esfarrapado!" And his artistry is the principal reason why the Queen insists on his leaving the valley: "Um artista de tão grande génio não deve estar escondido neste ermo, como um tesouro no fundo do mar". Sagramor is thus the great artist whose very gifts, by drawing the attention of others to him, and bringing him the exhilaration of acclaim, corrupt his innocence. But even this subsidiary order of generality soon breaks down. After the Prologue, Sagramor's artistry loses all importance. It is only mentioned once again in the entire poem, in Canto VII, and even then it appears as little more than an afterthought.⁴⁸ Sagramor is not a purely allegorical figure, not even in the sense of symbolic artist. Later in the poem his individuality disappears beneath a mass of pseudo-philosophical generalizations, but at this point in the poem Sagramor is the author's stylization of himself. Manuel da Silva-Gaio, reviewing Sagramor for O Instituto in August 1895 (p. 529), saw the real essence at least of the beginning of the poem, though he makes the mistake of applying it to the poem as a whole:

⁴⁸ A discrepancy arises here. In Canto VII Sagramor says: "Quando eu era ditoso, / Tinha uma flauta, inveja dos pastores" (32-33). But if, as he asserts in the Prologue, the only person in the world he knew was his mother, how could his flute have been the "inveja dos pastores"?

O novo livro do belo poeta corresponde, como Belkiss, a uma compreensão e sentimento pessimista da Vida. Em vez, porém, de lamentar-se directamente, ou de manifestar-se-nos interessadamente pessoal, o autor, que é acima de tudo um artista quis, como sempre, dar formas de beleza, e objectivar em criações poéticas os sentimentos próprios. SAGRAMOR, a figura central do poema, revela-o, é uma cristalização do modo de ser e de sentir do poeta.

The question of artistry is not essential to the allegory, and has not been carefully integrated into the structure of the poem as a whole. It is present simply as a characteristic of the author himself.

--ooOoo--

Sagramor's search for exhilaration is illustrated in the following six Cantos, each of which deals with a different area of human experience. Canto I, which deals entirely with the theme of love, is prefaced by the following quotation from Petronius:

Foeda est in coitu et brevis voluptas, 49
Et taedet Veneris statim peractae.

Love is represented by Venus - i.e. eroticism - and the result is ennui. It is under these signs that Sagramor will conquer his first love, Cecília.

In the setting of a narrow street "de aspecto medieval", Sagramor finds Cecília imprisoned for having stolen jewellery. He is immediately attracted by her beauty, which is emphasized throughout the scene. His storming of the prison is immediately followed by the physical consummation of the desire aroused by this beauty: "Ao nascer da lua, pela janela de Cecília, sai um murmúrio de beijos e de vozes apaixonadas". But there is more to this episode than the gratification of lust. Cecília's beauty is seen as somehow celestial. Its quasi-divinity is stressed

⁴⁹ PETRONIUS, Satyricon, II, 248, Fragment XVIII. We are already familiar with this quotation from Horas (see page 83).

at length:

"Que linda que tu és ... Que angélica beleza!" (2)

"Que doce crime o teu! Crime de anjo travesso." (13)

"O nome [Cecília] duma santa!" (18) ⁵⁰

"Pobres dedos, que estão pedindo alvos arminhos,
 Bem dignos de tanger as celestes violas!" (41-2)

" ... as tuas mãos albetes
 São dois anjos a rir numa floresta de ouro!" (51-2)

The conquest of her beauty represents by implication the attainment of a celestial state. Celestial aspiration, the desire to attain a state of divine beatitude, will be one of the most important motifs of Sagramor. It is symbolized throughout the poem by reference to the sky, the moon, stars, wings, anything implying elevation. But due to his initiation into eroticism by the Queen, celestial bliss has come to mean for Sagramor a state of unending physical exhilaration. ⁵¹ His means of conquering Cecília's beauty and the divinity associated with it are purely erotic. Divinity is seen in terms of physical thrill. This will be the essential conflict in Sagramor. Aspiring towards celestial bliss (which is infinite), but attempting to achieve it through eroticism (which is dependent on the finite capabilities of the senses), Sagramor is never able to achieve a state of exhilaration which is lasting. This is the cause of his disillusion in the following scenes.

Viewing Sagramor in the context of the evolution of Eugénio de Castro's early poetry, A.J. da Costa Pimpão suggests that in this poem "Passara a fase virulenta da sugestão decadentista". ⁵² On the contrary, Sagramor is

⁵⁰ Saint Cecilia being the patron saint of music, this ties in neatly with Sagramor's presentation as a musician in the Prologue.

⁵¹ At this point Sagramor is reminiscent of the Minnesinger Tannhäuser, made famous in the nineteenth century by Heinrich Heine and above all by Wagner. Having been once seduced by Venus, Tannhäuser is no longer able to sing of love in any other than erotic terms.

⁵² PIMPÃO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 169.

the work in which Eugénio de Castro makes greatest use of material borrowed from the Decadents. From beginning to end Sagramor is fired by the desire for the Infinite which was a common aspiration of both Romantic and Decadent heroes. But he does not look for this Infinite in any spiritual or emotional sense, as a Romantic hero might have done. He looks for it through a studied cult of sensation, an essentially Decadent ideal.⁵³ This cult of sensation becomes more and more exacerbated as the poem goes on, toppling over into sadism and satanism in Canto VII. This mixing of the divine and the satanic is yet another typically Decadent theme. The subversion of divinity is visible on a structural level at certain moments in Sagramor. This is the case, for example, in Canto I, whose chivalresque convention gives it the form of a medieval tale - the rescue of a damsel in distress. Yet chivalresque values are subverted by the story's actual content: Sagramor's profanation of the divinity associated with Cecília.

Sagramor's conquest of Cecília's beauty does not bring him the fulfilment he had hoped for. In scene two he explains his disillusion, and in scene three we find Cecília dead, presumably from grief. Here Sagramor describes his feelings for her now that she is dead. The real causes of Sagramor's disillusion in these two scenes are difficult to ascertain. The confusion arises from the fact that, in order to express them, Eugénio de Castro makes injudicious use of themes borrowed from Villiers de l'Isle-Adam. As René Poupert rightly points out,⁵⁴ lines such as the following from scene two clearly reveal the influence of Villiers:

CECÍLIA: "Mas que dor escurece os teus olhos divinos?"
 SAGRAMOR: "A saudade sem fim dos teus primeiros
 beijos." (11-12)

⁵³ For the importance of sensation for the Decadents, see Chapter One, page 67.

⁵⁴ POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 90.

"Só o primeiro beijo é suave e voluptuoso,
Os outros beijos são fantasmas do primeiro." (19-20)

In L'Eve Future, Edison likewise says of the first moments of bliss:

Éterniser une seule heure de l'amour, - la plus belle, - celle, par exemple, où le mutuel aveu se perdit sous l'éclair du premier baiser, oh! l'arrêter au passage, la fixer et s'y définir! y incarner son esprit et son dernier vœu! ne serait-ce donc le rêve de tous les êtres humains? 55

But Eugénio de Castro's borrowing of expressions from other authors does not always imply the borrowing of the original themes. The essential antagonism in Villiers's work is between dream and reality. Sagramor's problem, though apparently similar in detail, is different in essence. When he explains the disillusion which has followed the consummation of his desire for Cecília, we find that what was missing was that element of magic which he had hoped would transport him to a region of lasting celestial bliss: he has not been able to achieve transcendence via his senses alone. The world has not changed before his eyes as he had thought:

Quando aqui penetrei, esta enxovia tinha
A opulência real dum alcáçar de lendas,
E esta enxerga pareceu-me um leito de rainha
.

Mas hoje tudo é negro, embaciado, sombrio,
Rendas, jóias e flores em cestos de áurea verga,
Tapeçarias, metais sonoros, tudo fugiu!
Adormeci no céu e acordei numa enxerga! (37-9, 45-8)

The point is made appositely by Cruz Malpique, though he lays too much stress on the simple physical drive, without mentioning the celestial aspiration:

Mercê da imaginação a alta temperatura - a temperatura que lhe é comunicada por exaltadas hormonas - transforma cascalho em diamantes, cabanas em palácios, lona pintada em deslumbrantes paisagens, belezas modestas em superlativos fulgores estéticos, mas, uma vez epidermicamente

55 VILLIERS, Oeuvres, I, 262-3.

calandrado, tudo algebriza com o sinal - . 56

It is at this point in the poem that a new series of chthonian or subterranean images begins to appear: wells, abysses, graves and the like. They represent the collapse of the transcendental vision committed to the senses. They subvert the celestial images, which they follow throughout the poem:

"Não posso aqui viver, neste abismo alarmante." (49)

"... hão de desabar e sepultar-nos vivos!" (52)

Between them, these two leitmotifs symbolize the antagonistic forces of the poem: the pursuit of Infinity, and the limitations of erotic thrill.

In scene three another theme points to Villiers as its source of inspiration. It is what René Poupard refers to as "la vérité du rêve": 57

Só amo aquilo que me é defeso,
Só amo aquilo que ao longe vejo! (43-44)

However, I cannot agree with him that this cult of dream is one of "les thèmes essentiels" of Sagramor. It appears fleetingly in this scene, then vanishes from sight. And, bar a passing reference in Canto VI (ii,63), it will never be seen or heard of again. Viewing Sagramor as a whole, this theme is an irrelevance. It will be of no avail to Sagramor at the end of this scene, where he will be seduced by the very real presence of Fúlvia. This is a further sign of Eugénio de Castro's heavy dependence on

56 MALPIQUE, "Eugénio de Castro, poeta pagão", p. 74. The "sinal - " is a minus sign.

57 POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 92.

58 This theme is not peculiar to Villiers, needless to say. Armando Navarro (loc. cit.) suggests that this idea is more effectively resumed in the following quatrain from Camões than in the entirety of Sagramor:

É o gozado bem em água escrito,
Vive no desejar, morre no efeito:
O desejado sempre é mais perfeito,
Porque tem parte alguma de infinito.

Sonnet 130 in the old enumeration. See CAMÕES, ed. Escritório da Biblioteca Portuguesa, II, 70.

his sources, from whom, to put it simply, he borrows too much. The importance of this scene lies not in its cult of dream, but in Sagramor's grief at having lost Cecília. I shall discuss the implications of this grief more fully towards the end of this chapter.

Scenes four, five and six of the first Canto bring the theme of love to a suitably pessimistic end. Following the death of Cecília, Sagramor is overcome by the nakedness of Fúlvia. Eroticism again predominates: he remembers Fúlvia later as a "cobra de desejos" (I, vi, 72). Nonetheless, within the allegory of the poem, this episode represents an anomaly. Here, for the one and only time in Sagramor, the failure of Sagramor to achieve fulfilment does not stem from himself. For reasons which are not explained, he does not tire of Fúlvia as he had tired of Cecília, and as he will tire of all his other pursuits in the poem. On the contrary, it is Fúlvia who tires of him.⁵⁹ Again, there is no mention of the celestial urge which will fire him throughout the remainder of the poem, though its reappearance in the episode of Marta and Violante (scene five) will be immediate and abrupt.

This anomaly can perhaps be explained by reference to Eugénio de Castro's other works. The path of Sagramor's love in the first Canto reflects that of the earlier books of poems. The sequence: Cecília - Fúlvia - "Marta e Violante" runs parallel to that of: Amada (Oaristos, Horas) - Lídia (Silva: like Fúlvia, Lídia betrays the poet) - "Judite Dulce Lavínia e outras" (Silva, Interlúdio). Given the autobiographical basis of the earlier poems, it is reasonable to assume that Fúlvia's presence in Sagramor

⁵⁹ This scene was originally prefaced by the following quotation from François Premier: "Femme souvent varie; / Est bien fol qui s'y fie". The quotation is slightly incorrect. The correct version is: "Souvent femme varie / Mal habile qui s'y fie". These lines were scratched by the king on the window of his room in the Château de Chambord. See: LÉO CLARETIE, Histoire de la Littérature Française (Paris: Librairie Paul Ollendorff, 1905), I, 235.

is based on considerations of autobiographical rather than allegorical consistency.⁶⁰ She is present not as the vehicle of a transcendental vision, as the structure of the allegory demands, but as a stylization of the poet's own experience.

Marta and Violante restore the allegory to the status quo. The antagonism of senses and soul reappears:

"Vieste pedir-nos abraços e beijos,
De beijos e abraços sedosos te enchemos." (5-6)

"Os olhos das almas, ó lindas amadas,
Anseiam, deliram por ver cousas novas." (9-10)

There is a move from seeking lasting exhilaration in love to seeking it in experience of any kind - "cousas novas" (10). From now on, any possibility of autobiographical detail will fade, and we stand on the threshold of the allegory proper.

--ooOoo--

When we move from the first to the subsequent Cantos, a distinct change takes place in the texture of the poem. Brinn'Gaubast describes Sagramor as being "sous une forme le plus souvent dramatisée". But one or more people speaking does not constitute "une forme dramatisée". In the second Canto, for example, action is completely replaced by narrative, and Cantos II to VI are dominated by narratives listened to by Sagramor (III, 1; III, 2; IV, 3), narratives recounted to others by Sagramor (IV, 1; VI, 1), and straightforward monologues (III, 2; IV, 2; V; VI, 2; VI, 3). In short, as soon as we abandon the theme of love for more intellectualizing themes, the drama of the poem is reduced to nil. The inference is clear. The philosophizing undertaken by Eugénio de Castro in his desire to create an intellectual allegory outreaches his

⁶⁰ She is a figure who appears in other autobiographical poems. We find her again in O Filho Pródigo, under the name of Livia.

own experience. The only part of the poem he is capable of treating dramatically is that which is based firmly on his own experience - the theme of love. It is to it alone that he is able to impart some of the drama through which he himself had lived.

The remaining problems posed by Sagramor form a catalogue of intellectual concepts into which Eugénio de Castro is incapable of breathing the slightest breath of life. Bookish precedents can be found for them all. He himself gives a number of these in the epigraphs to the various Cantos. As a preface to Canto II (riches) he quotes the Apocalypse:

Quia dicis: Quod dives sum, et locupletatus, et nullius egeo: et nescis quia tu es miser, et miserabilis, et pauper, et caecus, et nudus.

Apocalypse, cap. III, vers. 17.

and Petronius:

Non est (falleris) haec beata, non est,
Quod vos creditis, vita, non est,
Fulgentes manibus videre gemmas,
Aut testudineo iacere lecto,
Aut pluma latus abdidisse molli,
Aut auro bibere et cubare cocco.
Regales dapibus gravare mensas,
Et quidquid lybico secatur arvo,
Non una positum tenere cella. 61

For Canto III (travelling) he quotes Baudelaire:

... Nous avons vu des astres
Et des flots; nous avons vu des sables aussi;
Et, malgré bien des chocs et d'imprévus désastres, 62
Nous nous sommes souvent ennuyés comme ici.

As a preface to Canto IV (glory) we have a quotation from the Goncourt brothers:

J'ai vu aujourd'hui la Gloire chez un marchand de
bric-à-brac: une tête de mort couronnée de lauriers

⁶¹ See PETRONIUS, Satyricon, II, 268: Fragment XXX, "De Vita Beata".

⁶² From "Le Voyage" (57-60) See BAUDELAIRE, Les Fleurs du Mal, p. 230.

en plâtre doré. 63

and another from Alfred de Vigny:

La gloire. - J'ai cru longtemps en elle; mais,
réfléchissant que l'auteur du Laocoon est inconnu, 64
j'en ai vu la vanité.

Faust ushers in Canto V (Knowledge):

Habe nun, ach! Philosophie,
Juristerei und Medizin,
Und, leider! auch Theologie
Durchaus studiert mit heißem Bemühn.
Da steh ich, ich armer Tor!
Und bin so klug, als wie zuvor ... 65

Canto VI (death) is prefaced by a Portuguese translation
of the following lines from Shakespeare:

To die, to sleep;
To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
For in that sleep of death what dreams may come 66
When we have shuffled off this mortal coil.

In the first edition, this was accompanied by the following
quotation, in English, from Swinburne:

Death, if thou be or be not, as was said
Immortal; if thou make us nought, or we
Survive, thy power is made but of our dread, 67
Death, if thou be.

The facile and inconsequential manner in which the
themes of Cantos II to VI are treated clearly reveals how
little at home Eugénio de Castro was in a situation
requiring serious, let alone original philosophical thought.

63 From an entry to the Journal made on 11 March
1862. See EDMOND ET JULES DE GONCOURT, Journal: Mémoires
de la vie littéraire (Paris: Bibliothèque-Charpentier,
1895), II, 21.

64 From an entry to his Journal made in 1828. See
ALFRED DE VIGNY, Œuvres Complètes (Paris: Louis Conard,
Libraire-Éditeur, 1935) Le Journal d'un Poète, p. 47.

65 Lines 354-9. See GOETHE, Werke, V, 155.

66 Hamlet, Act 3, Scene 1.

67 From "A Dialogue" (23-6), in A Century of Roundels.
See ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE, Complete Works (London:
William Heinemann Ltd., 1925), V, 11.

He was incapable of fulfilling the role of metaphysical pessimist he seems to have set himself. This did not escape the shrewd perception of Armando Navarro, who wrote of Eugénio de Castro's attempts to present himself as a pessimist (loc. cit.):

Enganou-se, julgando sê-lo [um pessimista]. E a sua obra ressent-se disso, porque o entrecho do poema, um pouco à Fausto, prestando-se a uma obra de demorada, profunda e experiente cogitação, é tratado em alguns pontos, quase infantilmente, numa rapidez liquidadora, mas errada.

Thus, in Cantos III and V a handful of lines inform us that travelling is pointless, and that Knowledge is "vaidade, só vaidade" (V, 72). The theme of glory (Canto IV) fares no better. Its confutation is effected by the scene of a young poet being stoned by a mob. His crime - "fazer versos divinos" (i, 93). In Canto II, for the theme of wealth, Eugénio de Castro adopts a form of allegory - allegory within allegory - which he is unable to redeem from the sphere of the merely bookish. Sagramor is transported to scenes of wealth in an enchanted palace. And the confutation of riches is entrusted to the one truly unrealistic element of the décor: a rain of gold-dust which threatens to suffocate him, and eventually drives him out. In Canto VI, amidst another allegorical setting of sphinxes and towers, death is frightened off by a mysterious "dúvida" (iii, 67) whose nature is never explained. Canto VI reveals more clearly than any other the confused nature of the ideas to be found in Sagramor. At the beginning of the Canto, Sagramor makes a formal renunciation of all religions:

Religiões, palácios no ar, véus de incerteza,
Torres de fumo, torres de ilusão! (i, 7-8)

He repeats this at the beginning of the third scene (9-12). Yet, at the end of the first scene he calls on God to help him:

Senhor! encaminhai meu coração de poeta,
Tirai dele, Senhor, toda a erva ruim. (195-6)

Moreover, his renunciation of religion includes Buddhism:

"Fui-me deitar no regaço de Buda / E tive fome ... " (3-4). Yet the majority of the ideas on which this Canto is based are drawn from Buddhist doctrine. There are explicit references to the Buddhist doctrine of metempsychosis, or the transmigration of souls ("samsara"):

Lá de cima verás a origem da tua alma,
Suas transformações, suas metempsicoses (iii, 40-1)

There is also implicit reference to the Buddhist doctrine of "kharma", the idea that the soul retains the merits or demerits of its previous personifications:

Dos corpos onde passa os instintos conserva,
Qual vinho que apreende os aromas da urna. (ii, 9-10)

The Indian origin of these ideas is indicated by the reference in scene two of this Canto to the Indian poet Amaru:

A alma de Amaru passou por cem mulheres
Antes de o animar,
Por isso nunca mais entre os humanos seres
Houve canto de amor que dos seus fosse o par. (1-4) 68

The flimsiness of each of these Cantos as a separate unit is compounded with a lack of rigorous sequence within the poem as a whole. The motivation for Sagramor's actions varies from Canto to Canto. In Canto II he looks for "a Felicidade":

A Felicidade! A Felicidade! À cata dela,
Lá vão seus olhos num fundo halo violáceo. (i, 33-4)

This positive quest is followed by a negative quest in Canto III - escape from "o Tédio":

Venci enfim o Tédio, o supremo inimigo,
Vivo liberto enfim do seu domínio atroz. (i, 201-2)

This is a logical extension of the sequence: desire -

⁶⁸ Eugénio de Castro's interest in Buddhist religion is also apparent in his review in O Instituto of August 1895 of Émile Burnouf's translation of the Bhagavad-Gita. In the Bhagavad-Gita, Eugénio de Castro wrote, "é vigorosamente enunciada a Unidade do princípio absoluto das coisas, essência e ponto culminante da filosofia indiana" (p. 528).

fulfilment - satiety - tedium as personified in Canto I by: the Queen - Cecília - "Marta e Violante". But this is only partly repeated in Canto II. Sagramor is driven from the enchanted castle by the symbolic satiety of the gold-dust which threatens to suffocate him. The outcome in this case, however, is not tedium but frenzy:

E Sagramor lá vai, lapidado por estrelas,
Corre, tropeça, cai, depois ergue-se exangue,
E lá corre e lá vai pelas avenidas belas,
Sob a chuva infernal ... Ouro e sangue ... (77-80)

As a result, when Sagramor states in Canto III: "Venci enfim o Tédio", we sense a hiatus in the structure of the allegory. Moreover, having once appeared, tedium vanishes from sight, is absent from the three following Cantos, and reappears in the final Canto only, where it dominates the scene. The search for happiness returns in Canto IV: "Sou feliz, meu amigo: a Glória me deslumbra!" (i, 1). It is superseded in Canto V by the search for truth: "Quis saber tudo, quis conhecer a Verdade" (70), which reappears in Canto VI:

Fui a Meca, ao Indústão, fui a Jerusalém,
E a boca da Verdade eternamente muda! (iii, 11-12)

There are thus three forces at work in the five central Cantos: the search for happiness, escape from boredom, and a philosophical search for the meaning of life. These are by no means mutually exclusive categories. But, as they are presented in Sagramor, they are not always in harmony; and they are all subsumed in the question of tedium at the end. But the naming of these forces, like the categorizing of the stated themes of Cantos II to VI, tends to mask rather than illustrate the real theme of the poem as described earlier: the problem of sensuality.

Sensuality is never far away. In the enchanted castle in Canto II the accent is on exaggerated sensuality. It is expressed in terms of Asiatic voluptuosity:

Em paçudos, brutais perfumadores asiáticos,
Um perfume de harém, voluptuoso, fuma ... (ii, 7-8)

and of the excesses of the late Roman Empire - a theme

dear to the Decadents: "Nem o de Trimalcião vencera os seus banquetes!" (ii, 35). There are also reminiscences of Baudelaire's Paradis Artificiels, with the accent again on voluptuosity:

O haschich e o ópio dão-lhe sonhos encantados,
Preguiçosas visões, voluptuosos torpores. (ii, 37-8)

Sagramor does not explain the nature of "a Felicidade", but the indications in Canto II are clear. When we learn that "Sagramor é feliz" (ii, 13), we also learn that "A sua vida flui constantemente nova" (ii, 41) (my italics). What is in question is renewed physical stimulus. In Canto III there is the corresponding correlation between tedium and the absence of renewed stimulus:

O imprevisto não se renova,
Pobre desejo!
Nem sequer uma sensação nova!
Julgo ter visto tudo o que vejo! (ii, 9-12)

Delight is identified with violent sensation:

Para que o meu pobre peito friorento
Viva e remoce,
Dá-lhe um desejo nobre, e violento,
E que resista, glorioso, à posse! (ii, 41-44)

The equation of "nobre" and "violento" is the Decadent ethic in a nutshell. In Canto IV Sagramor's desire for glory has an erotic end in view:

E rainhas líricas virão meter-se nuas
Em meu leito, a tremer e a suspirar de amores! (i, 7-8)

(We might note the plural "rainhas" - it is again a question of repeated stimulus.) Even his search for the meaning of life in Canto V is not free from sensationalism:

Nada, nada encontrou meu desejo insubmisso,
Que hoje se estorce e morre em doridos arrancos. (74-5)

(my italics). These lines illustrate the Decadents' obsession with the sin of knowledge, and the pleasure of profanation to be derived from it. They express what Mario Praz describes as "fermento di testa, exacerbatio cerebri, la sensualità baudelairiana; bisogno del frutto proibito perché proibito, per 'sapere'; nel che i teologi

vedono il supremo peccato contro lo Spirito Santo".⁶⁹
 Sagramor's view of reading also complies with the function of literature for the Decadents, as seen by George Ross Ridge: "Literature is a source of sensual satisfaction, not a disinterested, scholarly pursuit".⁷⁰ Much the same can be said of his pursuit of mystery in Canto VI: "Para violar o Mistério, em vão, em vão te abrasas!" (iii, 18) (my italics). Also in Canto VI, Nature becomes a living hell for those who have indulged in excesses of sensuality. The streams call out:

Preguiçosos, sensuais, quais feras levantinas,
 Vivemos a dormir em leitos rescendentes
 Com lácteas concubinas! (i, 108-110)

the jasmins:

Fomos uns luxuriosos!
 Subjugando-as com o nosso olhar, violámos santas,
 E pervertemos moças de olhos melodiosos. (127-9)

the excrement of the oxen:

Vestimo-nos de lhama e pedras preciosas,
 De perfumes e flores. (111-2)

At times this cult of sensation topples over into sadism. The toads, who had once lived among "faraónicos luxos" (148), tell how "mandámos enforçar crianças e velhinhos" (151). Theodora and Heliogabalus, arch figures of the Decadence,⁷¹ appear transformed into rocks, singing of their excesses:

Meu leito nupcial parecia o de um bordel:
 Dormia nele com reis, bandidos e ladrões. (159-60)
 Martirizei, matei, por gosto, heróis e poetas,
 Da luxúria ensaiei os gozos derradeiros. (171-2)

The stated themes of Cantos II to VI are, therefore, variations on an underlying theme of sensuality. But even these stated themes are constantly interrupted by

⁶⁹ PRAZ, pp. 92-3.

⁷⁰ RIDGE, The Hero in French Decadent Literature, p. 51.

⁷¹ See PRAZ, pp. 159-60, 375.

digressions which gravitate around the theme of desire. The first of these is the story of Sappho and Alcaeus recounted to Sagramor by the Klephta in Canto III. Here love is referred to in the violent terms already encountered in Belkiss: "Mata esse amor que te devora" (i, 131).

Another such digression is the tale of the Triton in the same Canto. One day the Triton had seen a king and queen embrace on a passing ship. He tells us how "o amoroso par ao amor me induzira, / E senti-me com alma!" (ii, 75-6). But he, like Sagramor, confuses "alma" (this word almost invariably symbolizes the Infinite) and sexual urge. This could not be more obvious. When he climbs up to embrace the figure-head of a ship, he describes himself as "de carícias sedento" (133). And when he looks to the mermaids to satisfy his new-found desires, he can only exclaim: "Mas, da cinta para baixo, ai de mim! ... eram peixes!" (80).

The Triton is a mirror-image of Sagramor. He too has been awakened to the fascination of eroticism. And, just as Sagramor tries to find sexual satisfaction on a plane which is higher than his nature - i.e. on a supernatural or transcendental level - so the Triton longs for sexual satisfaction on a level higher than his nature - i.e. on a human level. Sensuality reappears in the oriental legend of Canto IV, where the flowers are said to be the victims of "a beleza maldita, / Que acaba por morrer entre as mãos dos que enleia" (iii, 59-60). And it is present in the poem which opens Canto V: "em julho ama-se com a boca" (34), "Em dezembro mata-se o frio com abraços" (38). In scene two of Canto VI, Sagramor meets a princess he knows he has loved in the past. Love is again seen as desire:

Ai de ti, neve em flor! se um dia adorasses,
Se acolhesses, piedosa, os meus ruivos desejos! (66-7)

In one form or another, the theme of passion is present throughout the poem.

Alongside these affirmations of sensuality, and deriving such meaning as it has from them, the current of celestial images symbolizing Sagramor's constant desire to transcend continues throughout these central Cantos. Thus,

in the enchanted castle in Canto II "Abrem-se astrais, gloriosas galerias" (ii, 9) (my italics throughout this section). Sagramor's wealth is a "tesouro astral" (ii, 14), the gold is "ouro astral" (ii, 69). After hearing the story of Sappho and Alcaeus, Sagramor says of love: "O Amor é, ao princípio, um astro numa vaga" (III, i, 187). In the same Canto he says of himself:

Querendo ser anjo, sinto-me homem,
Querendo ser homem, sinto umas asas! (ii, 47-8)

Likewise the Triton says of his misfortune in love: "Pus mais alto que a lua o meu sonhado bem" (III, ii, 87). In Canto IV Sagramor affirms:

Mas em breve verás como é que um nome humilha
Os límpidos clarões da estrela que mais brilha! (i, 9-10)

or again:

Os próprios reis terão invejas venenosas,
Por me verem tão alto e tão perto de Deus. (i, 9-10)

In Canto V he says of Death:

Ó Morte, ó minha astral, derradeira ilusão,
Ês em mim como um astro a brilhar numa onda. (86-7)

In Canto VI the Sphinx cries: "Queres voar, voar, voar! ... e não tens asas!" (iii, 20). But Sagramor, committing this vision to the finite capabilities of his senses, never achieves the transcendence he desires, and the counterpoint of chthonian imagery follows him throughout the poem:

A Torre de Marfim mudou-se em cripta escura.
(II, i, 11)

Olha que vais cavando a tua própria cova!
(II, i, 22)

Em abismos caiu. (III, i, 182)

A cisterna ficou o que é: uma cisterna! (V, 50)

Sem nunca o fundo achar daqueles fundos pegos!
(V, 69)

The ultimate expression of this series of images is death, often violent: the suicide of Sappho, the Triton dashed against the rocks. It is this chthonian element which

prevails. Every Canto ends with disillusion, and Sagramor arrives at the final Canto devoid of hope.

--ooOoo--

Though it shares the confused and chaotic nature of the rest of the poem, the final Canto holds the key to the interpretation of Sagramor. It opens with the reappearance of Tedium. Tedium has been absent since Canto III, and has been vicariously present in the intervening Cantos only through the chthonian imagery which has pursued Sagramor. The identification of Tedium and chthonian imagery is now rendered explicit:

E já distingo além o Tédio, o meu coveiro!
- Olá, coveiro! Então, vai adiantada a cova? (4-5)

Tedium now establishes itself firmly as the price Sagramor has to pay for his repeated failures throughout the poem.

Canto VII puts beyond any doubt the real significance of "o Tédio" in Sagramor. Following Sagramor's regrets for the death of his "ilusões", a procession of historical of semi-historical figures passes before our eyes to illustrate the omnipresence of Tedium.⁷² The list of names reads like a catalogue of Decadent prototypes. The procession is led in by Sardanapalus, a favourite figure of Romantics and Decadents alike.⁷³ Then come two figures equally dear to the Decadents: Cleopatra, "una delle prime incarnazioni romantiche del tipo della donna fatale",⁷⁴ and Caligula. They are followed by Frei Gil de

⁷² Eugénio de Castro had quoted a passage from Swinburne as an epigraph to Canto VI (see page 296). It is possible, therefore, that this procession was suggested by a similar procession of historical or legendary queens in Swinburne's "Masque of Queen Bersabe".

⁷³ He had inspired Byron's Sardanapalus, and the well-known painting by Delacroix, "La Mort de Sardanapale".

⁷⁴ PRAZ, p. 188. I omitted to mention in the text that between Sardanapalus and Cleopatra come Belkiss and Solomon.

Santarém, the only Portuguese figure present,⁷⁵ and Gilles de Rais, the fifteenth century French sadist.⁷⁶ Next comes Ludwig II of Bavaria, another figure who held a fascination for the Decadents.⁷⁷ And last but not least comes Baudelaire, finishing the list as the most complete expression of ennui.⁷⁸ But these figures have not fallen foul of Tedium through having exhausted the possibilities of life, as the allegorical structure of Sagrador would have us believe. Their connection with Decadent writing is not fortuitous. They represent a fundamentally Decadent theme. Tedium, in each case, is the result of the devastation of the senses, of sensual excess. Orgiastic excess is the hall-mark of the first five: Sardanapalus - "Piso rosas no chão, durmo com cem donzelas" (98); Belkiss:

Foi cheia de luxúria a minha estranha boda;
O sábio Salomão, que eu fora visitar,
Desde a cabeça aos pés, beijou-me toda, toda! (103-5)

Solomon - "Tenho no meu harém trezentas concubinas" (111). It is especially the case with Cleopatra - "Ensaio com António as mais subtis luxúrias" (122) - and Caligula - "Levei o amor lascivo aos maiores exageros" (127).⁷⁹

⁷⁵ In Viagens na Minha Terra Almeida Garrett says of Frei Gil: "Algures lhe chamei o nosso Doutor Fausto: e é com efeito. Não lhe falta senão o seu Goethe" (Lisbon: Portugália Editora, 1963), p. 282.

⁷⁶ He is the central figure of Huysman's Là-bas.

⁷⁷ In keeping with his obsession for Wagner's music, Ludwig comes dressed in Sagrador as Lohengrin "in silberner Waffenrüstung" - "de armadura argentina" (150) See RICHARD WAGNER, Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen (Leipzig: Siegels Musikhandlung, 1907), II, Lohengrin, p. 73.

⁷⁸ Baudelaire is accompanied by details from the Paradis Artificiels and Les Fleurs du Mal. Among other poems recalled is "La Géante": "Duma gigante aspiro aos beijos imortais" (159). See Les Fleurs du Mal, p. 35.

⁷⁹ A little later Caligula says: "Ao meu Itacus dei eburnea mangedoura" (130). This is either a printing error, or a mistake by Eugénio de Castro. The name of the horse was Incitatus. See SUTTONIUS, Opera (Lipsiae: B.G. Teubneri, 1933), Vol. 1, Caligula, chap. 55, section 3: "Incitato equo [...] praesaepe eburneum [...] dedit" (p. 186).

With Frei Gil de Santarém the cult of sensation becomes Satanism:

Do meu laboratório é sempre aberta a porta
Ao Diabo que me deu um poder sem igual. (146-7)

And with Gilles de Rais it becomes sadism, culminating in the total profanation of human life. This is the Decadent cult of sensation carried to its extreme:

As crianças que violo, a uma sentina as lanço,
Depois de as torturar com punhais e alabardas. (138-9)⁸⁰

This cult of sensation is also present in less obvious forms. Thus, the lunacy of Ludwig II centres on the sensuality of art: "Wagner leva-me a ver maravilhosos mundos" (154), while Baudelaire's aberrations attempt to reconcile the forces seen as antagonistic in Sagramor - sensuality and Infinity: "Duma gigante aspiro aos beijos imortais" (159) (my italics). Life, for all these figures, has been reduced to the sphere of the senses, and it is these that are seen as incapable of bringing lasting fulfilment to Man.

Following this refutation of the cult of sensation, Sagramor recalls the excesses of his past life. These are symbolized by Babylon, arch-capital of sin. Sin is again seen primarily as lust:

Na velha catedral,
Negra e maciça,
A luxúria dizia missa,
Em grande pontifical. (198-201)

The language becomes apocalyptic as he tells how seven queens invaded his heart. Though he does not name them, they are probably the seven deadly sins. They are connected with the idea of hell: "Tinha no peito sete

⁸⁰ These details are taken directly from Huysmans's Là-bas: "Après quoi, il leur sciait lentement la gorge [aux enfants] et l'on plaçait le cadavre, les linges, les robes dans le brasier de l'âtre bourré de bois et de feuilles sèches, et l'on jetait les cendres, partie dans les latrines, partie au vent, en haut d'une tour" (p. 166).

estrelas infernais" (220). These lines record the subversion of the celestial urge: the stars have become "infernais". Sagramor now comes face to face with the turpitude of his own soul, in the form of a "donzela ensanguentada" (227) - "Pobre donzela, estava leprosa!" (230). And the moon itself, formerly one of the symbols of the celestial aspiration, becomes contaminated:

Rompeu o luar ... e a lua era cheia
De cancos e feridas. (248-9)

Sagramor's vision of celestial bliss has suffered the contamination of the senses to which he committed it, and aspirations based on the senses now become meaningless for him. The desires of previous Cantos gather round him at the very end of the poem. But they merely emphasize their limitations by offering him not the Infinite he has been seeking throughout, but exotic pleasures, which he now knows from experience will not enable him to transcend:

Pede os mais raros, doces prazeres!
Queres ser estrela, queres ser rei?
Vamos, responde! Dize, o que queres? (320-2)

These pleasures have thus become pointless, and Sagramor can only answer: "Não sei ... não sei ... " (323).

Sagramor thus ends on a note of apparent despair. But this despair is not universal, as the structure of the allegory would have us believe. It is circumscribed by limits which, if not always clearly defined, are nonetheless present. The despair of Sagramor arises specifically from the realization that the senses alone - the Decadent cult of sensation, eroticism, Venus in her Dionaeian form - are unable to bring lasting fulfilment. But there is another side to the poem!

This other side is represented by Cecília as Sagramor thinks of her after she is dead. These feelings are expressed at length in the final Canto, where they repeat certain ideas which had already appeared in scenes three and six of Canto I. In the third scene of Canto I, in which we find Sagramor, overcome by grief, mourning

Cecília at her graveside,⁸¹ he says of her: "Só lhe achei o valor depois de a ter perdido" (59). Indeed, an astonishing change has come over him. Earlier in the poem, he had seen Cecília simply as a means of achieving transcendence through erotic thrill. His conquest of her beauty had been a physical, purely erotic one. There was never any question of a genuine relationship between them. As a result, Sagramor had nothing to fall back on when sensual exhilaration failed to bring about the transcendence he was hoping for, and his disillusion was complete. Here, however, under the weight of remorse and "saudades" (16), eroticism has given way to something nearer an emotional concept of love - Venus in her Uranian, not her Dionaeon form. The vocabulary of spectacular beauty of scene one is replaced by a vocabulary of more emotive implications:

Pesa-te a terra, doce beleza.	(9)
Ai desse tempo, quando nós dois	
Fomos um só!	(25-6)
De novo te amo, nuvem sumida.	(39)
Por isso, volto a amar-te hoje,	
Amor bem triste.	(45-6)

Cecília is still not evaluated here as a person in the full sense - she is referred to as "beleza", "nuvem". She is surrounded by an aura of melancholy sentimentality where she becomes a symbol of wistfulness and gentleness more than anything else. But, at the same time, she is no longer seen as the physical vehicle of an angelic vision, and there is the implication in these lines that another view of love is possible: the term "doce" appears again

⁸¹ This scene is modelled visibly on the graveyard-scene in Hamlet (Act 5, scene 1). As we saw, Eugénio de Castro had quoted a passage from Hamlet as an epigraph to Canto VI. In the first edition of Sagramor he also gave the following line (again in Portuguese translation) as an epigraph to Canto I, scene 2: "O mal principia agora, o pior ainda está para vir". It also proves to be from Hamlet: "Thus bad begins, and worse remains behind" (Act 3, scene 4, line 179).

and again in Sagramor's memories of her. This more emotional and spiritual view of love again dominates his memory of Cecília in scene six of Canto I:

Fiel e doce,
Jamais achei quem fosse
Mais fiel e mais doce. (44-6)

These lines are touching and poignant in a way in which the cerebrations of Cantos II to VI will never be:

- Jamais esquecerei o olhar que me volveste,
Cecília, à hora da partida. (55-6)

Cecília returns to Sagramor's memory in Canto VII. Between the procession already described and Sagramor's refusal of the aspirations of Cantos II to VI - i.e. between two different refutations of the cult of sensation - Sagramor again laments her loss:

Ó carinhosa, ó tímida, ó celeste,
Ó maior de Todas! (166-7)

Cecília's presence in Canto I may well have answered to autobiographical considerations. But when she reappears in Canto VII, following the successive disillusionings of Cantos II to VI, she is completely subsumed into the allegorical structure of the poem, and carries a message in relation to the conflicts of the preceding Cantos. Sagramor's memory of her in Canto VII does not correspond to fact. It represents a desire, in the light of subsequent experience, to have loved her in a way he now realizes might have brought him fulfilment:

Como nós fomos cândidos e puros! (170)
Ai! quem me dera regressar à paz antiga
E amar-te com amor de jaspe e luar. (262-3)

Here, at the very end of the poem, a term symbolizing celestial aspiration is linked with a description of emotive, not sensual implications: "Ó carinhosa, ó tímida, ó celeste" (166).

Nonetheless, there is, as already pointed out, some confusion in the structure of Canto VII. The causes of this confusion are twofold. The first is the failure in

Sagramor (as in all Eugénio de Castro's early poetry) to distinguish formally, on a verbal level, between erotic and a more emotional view of love. The second is that Eugénio de Castro's desire to live up to the title of "pessimistic poet" ⁸² has led him to conclude Sagramor in a manner which is not in total harmony with the indications of the text. The result of these two factors is that, at the very end of the poem, Cecília will, by implication, be included in the rejection of an undifferentiated view of love which is still predominantly erotic. Yet, as she is now seen by Sagramor, this is a view of love to which she does not properly belong:

Eu sou o Amor,
Quero dar asas aos teus desejos!
Por lindas bocas, taças em flor,
Beberás doces, macios beijos! (284-7)

For an understanding of the real implications, as against the affirmations of Sagramor, it is essential to keep in mind that Sagramor's regrets at having lost Cecília are expressed at considerably greater length and with much greater sincerity of feeling than his final rejection of love. Love (symbolized by the kiss - i.e. erotic love) is dismissed in four lines, and in a summary and apophthegmatic style which belongs to the pessimistic intention of the poem, purporting to show that no fulfilment is possible:

Beijos? Os beijos, vertigens loucas,
Venenos são!
Desfolham rosas por sobre as bocas
Mas abrem chagas no coração! (288-91)

Yet Sagramor's grief at having lost Cecília and his longing to be with her again suggest that he realizes that she could have saved him, had he been able to see her then as he sees her now.

⁸² In his review of "La Littérature Portugaise" in L'Ermitage of March 1895 Brinn'Gaubast described Eugénio de Castro as "pessimiste". In his review of Sagramor, he went on to say with typical exaggeration: "Jamais les nations latines n'ont eu, même en Leopardi, un poète 'pessimiste' d'égale envergure. See also the quotation from Manuel da Silva-Gaio on page 288.

This suggestion runs counter to the allegorical structure of Sagramor. Just before the end Sagramor affirms: "Se eu conservasse minha ignorância / Jamais me vira tão desgraçado" (310-11). But it is not his yielding to the temptation to leave the valley which has brought about his downfall. It is the fact that, having been once initiated into eroticism and the cult of sensation, he is unable to realize in time that another view of fulfilment is possible. This second view is one of love as involving emotional commitment. And love as emotional commitment can continue independent of the renewal of stimulus required to sustain sensual exhilaration. If the allegory represents the course of human life, then no-one retains the innocence of childhood for ever. It is not the knowledge of the senses which damns, but whether or not one is the slave of the senses. Sagramor realizes this too late. But the message of hope, if somewhat obscured and confused, is nonetheless present at the end.

---ooOoo---

Before leaving Sagramor, it is worth while examining the implications behind Rubén Darío's description of the work as "un poema simbólico y extraño, de un sentimiento profundamente pagano, hondo y audaz"⁸³ Sagramor, as already pointed out, is undoubtedly the poem in which Eugénio de Castro made greatest use of Decadent themes. Throughout the poem, Sagramor tries to achieve the Infinite through a cult of sensation. From a Christian point of view, exaggerated sensuality has always been considered sinful, and it was no doubt this that Darío had in mind when he employed the term "pagano".

Baudelaire, more than any other writer of his time, was responsible for the overturning of the Christian ethic which dominated the Decadent literature of the end of the

⁸³ DARÍO, Los Raros, p. 215.

nineteenth century. He suggested that Man could fulfil his desire for the Infinite not only through the recognized Christian channels of sanctity, but also from the practice of what, from a Christian point of view, would be termed evil, or vice. In his chapter on "Le Goût de l'Infini" in Les Paradis Artificiels he wrote:

Hélas! les vices de l'homme, si pleins d'horreur qu'on les suppose, contiennent la preuve (quand ce ne serait que leur infinie expansion!) de son goût de l'infini [...] tout mène à la récompense ou au châtement, deux formes de l'éternité. 84

The same idea occurs in his "Hymne à la Beauté" in Les Fleurs du Mal. Here he says of Beauty:

Que tu viennes du ciel ou de l'enfer, qu'importe,
O Beauté! monstre énorme, effrayant, ingénu!
Si ton œil, ton souris, ton pied, m'ouvrent la porte 85
D'un Infini que j'aime et n'ai jamais connu?

In Huysmans's Là-bas we find, in Gilles de Rais, the same co-existence of two apparently antagonistic extremes: "Il s'exalte, tour à tour, dans le bien comme dans le mal et il plonge, tête baissée, dans les gouffres opposés de l'âme".⁸⁶ These two impulses, the divine and the Satanic, run (at least in theory) side by side in Decadent literature, though the Satanic urge undoubtedly exercised the greater fascination on the majority of Decadent writers. In Sagrador, however, these two forces are finally shown to be antagonistic. Sagrador's constant failure derives from his attempting to achieve through sensual excess - i.e. through a Decadent or pagan means - a state of fulfilment which he senses at the end is only to be achieved through a more spiritual view of human relationships. Sagrador illustrates the futility of the Decadent search for Infinity through the cult of sensation, and points to the value of a more spiritual view of love. The poem ends, therefore, not only with a refutation of

84 BAUDELAIRE, Les Paradis Artificiels, p. 6.

85 BAUDELAIRE, Les Fleurs du Mal, p. 39.

86 HUYSMANS, Là-bas, p. 219.

the Decadent ideal, but with a revindication, however implicit, of spiritual values. The implications of the poem therefore constitute the negation of what would normally be implied by its characterization as "pagano".

--ooOoo--

b). Shorter Poems.

Intimately connected with Sagramor, with which they form a thematic unity, are three poems from Salomé e outros poemas - "O Amor e a Saudade", "Hermafrodita" and "O Peregrino". Like the majority of the poems in this collection, they employ fables or legends as a vehicle for philosophical thought.

The tale employed in "O Amor e a Saudade" (dated 5 October 1894) has a traditional flavour. It is the kind of tale one might expect to find in Plutarch's Moralia or even in the works of Ovid: Love, growing old, decides he is too weak to watch over lovers all night. He therefore arranges to share the work with his daughter Saudade. The result is that those who go to sleep at night with love, wake in the morning with "saudade". This poem is frankly allegorical - i.e. symbolic in a well-defined or traditional mode. And precisely because of this, it makes much more coherent sense of a theme which is the subject of considerable confusion in Sagramor.

The narrative of "O Peregrino" (dated 31 August 1895) would seem to be a personal invention by the poet. A knight, seeking his Beloved, is enticed to cross a bridge by a mysterious woman claiming to be the One he has been searching for. As he moves across the bridge, he falls to his death through an opening underfoot he had not realized was there. This could be seen as a variation on the theme of the "Belle Dame sans Merci". Nonetheless, the setting of this poem is distinctly reminiscent of that of the ending of Herculano's short story "A Dama Pé-de-Cabra" in the Lendas e Narrativas. There too a gaping hole appears

in a bridge, in this case under two knights and their wild ass, as a woman's voice calls them over the river. Here, however, it is only the animal which falls, while the men are saved:

Que veria o cavalleiro? Um fojo aberto, bem proximo delles sobre a ponte, e que depois rompia pela agua [...] E Pardalo [o onagro] descia remoinhando por esse boqueirão, como uma penna caíndo em dia sereno do alto de uma torre abaixo. 87

The most important of these three poems is "Hermafrodita" (dated 27 September 1894).⁸⁸ Like Tirésias and "Pan" it is of visibly Classical origin, thus reflecting, like these works, the continuing influence of Jean Moréas. The original version of the legend, like that of "Pan", is to be found in Ovid's Metamorphoses:

[nympha iuvenem]
pugnantemque tenet, luctantia oscula carpit,
subiectatque manus, invitaque pectora tangit,
et nunc hac iuveni, nunc circumfunditur illac.
.....
utve so ent hederæ longos intexere truncos:
utque sub æquoribus deprensus polypus hostem
continet, ex omni dimissis parte flagellis,
perstat Atlantiades sperataque gaudia nymphae
denegat, illa premit commissaque corpore toto
sicut inhaerebat, "pugnes licet, improbe," dixit,
"non tamen effugies. ita di iubeatis, et istum
nulla dies a me nec me deducat ab isto."
vota suos habuere deos; nam mixta duorum
corpora iunguntur, faciesque inducitur illis
una. velut, si quis conducat cortice ramos,
crescendo iungi pariterque adolescere cernit,
sic ubi complexu coierunt membra tenaci,
nec duo sunt et forma duplex, nec femina dici
nec puer ut possit, neutrumque et utrumque videntur. 89

⁸⁷ ALEXANDRE HERCULANO, Lendas e Narrativas (Lisbon: Livraria Bertrand, s/d), II, 50-51. This edition retains the old spelling and accentuation of the original.

⁸⁸ Its publication had, in fact, been announced as imminent at the time of the first edition of Belkiss. A French translation by Brinn'Gaubast had also appeared in the Mercure de France of January 1895 (pp. 42-46).

⁸⁹ OVID, II, 105-6. Metamorphoses, Book IV, lines 358-60, 365-79.

The most significant change which Eugénio de Castro introduces into the original legend (which accounts for lines 1 to 28 of his poem) is that, far from being reluctant, the youth here is a willing lover, and wishes for union with his Beloved as much as she does with him.

The common theme of these poems is that of Sagramor -- the impossibility of achieving lasting fulfilment through a view of love which is predominantly, if not exclusively erotic. The force with which this theme is presented varies considerably from poem to poem. In "O Amor e a Saudade" the treatment is low-key. This is apparent in the colloquial tone of Love's conversation with his daughter. Nonetheless, the indications are unmistakable. The lovers' aspirations ("ansiedade") are committed to the senses ("beijos"). And the poem's ending, though the tone of its attractive "dying fall" is much attenuated, nevertheless recalls the melancholy felt by Sagramor after his disillusion in love:

Desde essa noite azul, ébrios de pasmo e dor,
Os que se beijam com ansiedade
Adormecem ao pé do Amor
E acordam junto da Saudade ... (37-40)

In "Hermafrodita", however, the exposition of the theme is more powerful. The initial part of the poem, based on the legend, is dominated by eroticism. The indications are ample:

E a ninfa treme e enleia o moço deslumbrado,
Com um prazer que até chega a ser doloroso. (3-4)
Ele -- forte, a arquejar, como, com cio, um touro. (6)
... se enroscam, sensuais, febris, como se enrosca
No tronco a vide em flor, e a hera nos castelos.
(11-12)

Under the sign of this eroticism, it is not complete spiritual union that the two lovers long for, but complete physical union:

Dos dois corpos a união, entre lascivos ais,
Cada vez, cada vez se torna mais completa. (13-14)
Num doido frenesi, entrar parecem querer
Ela -- no corpo dele, ele -- no corpo dela! (17-18)

Fundi num corpo só nossos corpos que se amam! (24)

This poem is a variation on the Romantic/Decadent pursuit of Infinity which runs through Sagramor. Like Sagramor, it complies with the Decadent ethic in that the means used to achieve Infinity is a cult of sensation. But like Sagramor it also points to the failure of this ideal. In their search for infinite sensual experience, both the partners of this relationship, Hermafrodita and Salmacis, try to become possessed of both the subject and the object role by absorbing the other's sexual function. But the achievement of this aim means the immediate dissolution of the relationship as such. Thus the cult of sensation taken to this extreme results in sexual ambiguity (hence the Decadent obsession with homosexuality, lesbianism, androgynism) and permanent unfulfilment. Hermafrodita and Salmacis have no spiritual bond to fall back on. There is no more question of their union being a genuine relationship as there was of Sagramor's initial conquest of Cecília forming the basis of a relationship. As in the case of Sagramor and Cecília there is no real spiritual union. This is explicitly stated:

Os dois corpos estão num só corpo fundidos,
Porém os dois corações nada os pôde fundir! (43-44)

What remain are two opposing physical desires, both doomed to eternal unfulfilment:

Tem as ânsias sensuais da mulher e do homem,
Mas para as saciar não pode desuni-las! (47-8)

At the end of the poem, the spirits of the two lovers lodge themselves in the poet's soul, where they continue their struggle against one another. They symbolize the battle raging within the poet between the fascination of the senses, and the knowledge that the cult of sensation will not bring the attainment of the Infinite, only despair. This is the dilemma which inhabits the poet's soul, a dilemma which, so far, has invariably led to tragedy.

However, just as there is a revindication of spiritual

values implicit in Sagramor, in "O Peregrino" the possibility of a more emotional view of love is also envisaged. This poem was written considerably later than "Hermafrodita", and indeed, some time after the completion of Sagramor. And like Sagramor, it marks a change in the treatment of the love-theme in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. The opening words of the knight are little more than a repetition of the message of earlier poems - "Amores", "Beijos", "Judite, Dulce, Lavínia e outras":

Judite, Arminda, Inês, Ana, a de tranças pretas,
E Lídia, a sensual, foram todas as mesmas! (5-6)
Fartei-me de colher o mesmo beijo
Em lábios desiguais:
Não consegui adormecer meus ais,
Não consegui matar a sede do meu desejo. (9-12)

There is the same opposition of the terrestrial and the ethereal which we discovered in Sagramor:

Em vão meus pardos dias, tristes lesmas,
Quiseram ser douradas borboletas. (7-8)

But by the end of the poem the knight moves from his predominantly physical view of love to something approaching a more emotional view. The driving physical urge of earlier poems is gradually toned down: "Embalde busco seus encantos e meiguice" (29). The themes of comfort and consolation which had reappeared in Sagramor also reappear towards the end of this poem:

Mas o que me dói, sempre, por toda a parte,
É a lembrança, ó misteriosa amada,
De que vives talvez bem desgraçada,
Sem que eu possa valer-te e consolar-te. (33-6)

Eugénio de Castro remains faithful to his title of pessimistic poet: the knight's more spiritual view of love does not prevent him from being deceived, and he plunges to his death. Nonetheless, there are distinct signs in this poem, as in Sagramor, that the cycle of eroticism in Eugénio de Castro's poetry is now beginning to play itself out.

Chapter Nine

The End of an Era

In the first editions of Salomé e outros poemas (1896) and A Nereide de Harlém (1896), Eugénio de Castro announced as "em preparação" the three following works: Nero, O Anel de Polícrates and Inês de Castro. Nero would never appear. Inês de Castro¹ would provide the starting-point for Constança (1900). And O Anel de Polícrates would have to wait eleven years for publication (1907).² In the drama which eventually bears the title O Anel de Polícrates, the original poem would seem to provide only the secondary of the two plots. It can be recognized, no doubt considerably modified, in the three narrative passages which deal with the legend of Polycrates (II, ii, 16-109; III, ii, 32-76; IV, i, 11-14). Despite its title, the central drama of the finished poem concerns the two lovers Agamedes and Melissa (it is a thinly disguised version of the legend of Pygmalion). Polycrates is only referred to in the play. He never appears on stage.

When O Rei Galaor appeared in 1897, its composition had not been announced.³ Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho recalls that Eugénio de Castro "leu poesias suas em várias festas académicas, como o Rei Galaor na dos estudantes premiados de 1895".⁴ But this is certainly an error. The poem is

¹ The poem "Olhando as Nuvens" in A Sombra do Quadrante (1906) was originally part of the projected Inês de Castro. See BARROS, Eugénio de Castro, p. 15.

² In his thesis on "A Expressão da Cor em Eugénio de Castro", João Aníbal Coelho Pinheiro states that the first edition of O Anel de Polícrates was published in Coimbra in 1896. This is incorrect. This error derives from Volume VI of the Obras Completas where, under the heading "Bibliografia", the following mistaken information is given: "O Anel de Polícrates, primeira edição. Francisco França Amado editor. Coimbra, 1896". In the same volume the poem itself is dated: "Coimbra, 21 de Setembro de 1906" (p. 116).

³ It is possible that O Rei Galaor lies behind an announcement in the Coimbran magazine Resistência (1896, No. 168) concerning the preparation by Eugénio de Castro of a tragedy for the Théâtre de l'Œuvre. See Biblos, Vol. 22 (1946), "Bibliografia", p. 285.

⁴ CARVALHO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 43.

dated 3 September 1896. And it is in the programme of the "Sarau literário-musical oferecido pelo Instituto de Coimbra aos alunos laureados da Universidade, no dia 8 de dezembro de 1897" that we find the following indication: "Final: 'O Rei Galaor' - Poesia, pelo sr. Eugénio de Castro".⁵

Álvaro J. da Costa Pimpão lists O Rei Galaor among those works of Eugénio de Castro which "conheceram, como Belkiss, a aura internacional".⁶ The poem was, it is true, translated fairly rapidly into Italian. A translation by Antonio Padula appeared as early as 1900. Translation into Spanish, however, was slower to come. Two translations eventually appeared in 1913. One was by the "modernista" poet Francisco Villalpesa. He suppressed Eugénio de Castro's name and tried to pass the poem off as his own. The plagiarism was discovered, however, and caused considerable scandal among the literary circles of Madrid at the time.⁷ The second, a legitimate translation, was by Juan González Olmedilla. The author of the unsigned article on Eugénio de Castro in the Grande Enciclopédia Portuguesa e Brasileira⁸ also claims that O Rei Galaor was staged as a play in the Teatro Cervantes of Jaén in 1922. Nonetheless, in comparison with its predecessors, the coverage which this poem received in France was relatively slight. It marks the beginning of a downward trend in Eugénio de Castro's reputation as a poet of European renown. From the turn of the century on, the impact made by his subsequent works abroad would gradually diminish to nil.

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O Rei Galaor sees a resurgence in the work of Eugénio

⁵ O Instituto, 1898, p. 2.

⁶ PIMPÃO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 178.

⁷ See GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, Eugénio de Castro, p. 51.

⁸ Vol. 6, p. 237. For the authorship of this article, see page 10, note 9.

de Castro of the influence of Maurice Maeterlinck. There is much in this poem which is visibly Maeterlinckian. Antonio Padula points out that in O Rei Galaor "Il luogo e l'epoca si lasciano all'immaginazione del lettore o dello spettatore".⁹ This avoidance of precise location was, as Marcel Postic suggests, an essential feature of the symbolism of Maeterlinck's dramas:

Prenant [...] un décor recomposé, dans une époque indéfinie, celle de la légende moyenâgeuse plutôt que médiévale, l'auteur place des êtres dans une situation universelle, pouvant être reconnue à n'importe quel moment, dans n'importe quel lieu. 10

Again, the setting of the third scene of O Rei Galaor - "Noite de temporal. Relâmpagos, trovões." - is reminiscent of certain violent atmospheres which Maeterlinck himself borrowed from Shakespeare.¹¹

Reviewing O Rei Galaor for the Mercure de France in August 1898, Philéas Lebesgue described the poem as being "D'un art plus sûr, d'une marche plus ferme et d'une indéniable unité cette fois" (p. 592). This relative concision and compactness also suggests the influence of Maeterlinck. The action of his plays tends to take place within a restricted area, and generally covers a short period of time. But the influence of Maeterlinck is present even in the atmosphere of Eugénio de Castro's poem. René Poupart rightly says of O Rei Galaor within the works of Eugénio de Castro:

Jamais cependant nous n'en avons rencontré d'aussi parfaitement maeterlinckienne: rythme de cauchemar, atmosphère pesante, longs silences qui sont comme la présence de l'invisible, répétitions qui traînent leur insistance jusqu'au malaise, rêves prémonitoires, marches tâtonnantes dans de sombres couloirs vers

⁹ Eugénio de Castro: Il Re Galaor, traduzione dal portoghese di Antonio Padula preceduta da un esame critico (Acireale: Tipografia dell'Etna, 1900), p. 2.

¹⁰ POSTIC, p. 133.

¹¹ Ibid., p. 43.

une princesse languissante, nuages noirs, éclairs. ¹²

It seems certain that the preponderant influence of Maeterlinck on O Rei Galaor can be traced back to one specific play. Denyse Chast reproduces a letter from Maeterlinck to Eugénio de Castro, dated December 1895. ¹³ This letter concerns Eugénio de Castro's proposal to translate the one-act drama Les Sept Princesses (the proposal was never put into effect). The points of contact between O Rei Galaor and Les Sept Princesses suggest that this particular drama was influential at least in the setting of Eugénio de Castro's poem. Galaor and Gudula recall "le vieux roi" and "la vieille reine" of Les Sept Princesses. Like Maeterlinck's characters, Eugénio de Castro's king and queen are desperately old, and seem to be on the point of death with every step they take. The first edition of O Rei Galaor contained a brief description of the four characters (removed from subsequent editions). In this we find Galaor described in the following terms: "Tendo sessenta anos apenas, parece ter mais de cem". The seven princesses are, like Sibila, locked in their chamber. Marcellus, like the Desconhecido, comes from distant lands in search of his beloved.

But the influence of Maeterlinck goes deeper than the setting and atmosphere of O Rei Galaor. Antonio Padula suggests that "Il poeta portoghese afferma in questa composizione la sua facoltà di rinovellarsi, perchè presenta tipi di nuova creazione, che non trovano riscontro con quelli degli altri suoi poemi". ¹⁴ A little later he added: "In Galaor è uno strano pessimismo, su cui aleggia il soffio inclemente d'un despotico casualismo". ¹⁵ Philéas Lebesgue had also described O Rei Galaor as "pénétré d'un pessimisme étrange peut-être importé d'Allemagne", and as

¹² POUPART, "Villiers et Maeterlinck", p. 104.

¹³ CHAST, "Les Thèmes Symbolistes", p. 94.

¹⁴ PADULA, p. 1.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 2.

being a book which "exhale le relent d'un fatalisme où passe quelque chose d'oriental" (p. 592). This points to the influence of Maeterlinck on a thematic as well as on a structural level.

In Le Figaro of 24 September 1894 Maeterlinck had published an article entitled "L'Étoile". This article was later gathered into the collection Le Trésor des Humbles, published in 1896. In "L'Étoile", Maeterlinck saw fatality as the greatest theme of modern theatre:

Aujourd'hui c'est elle [la fatalité] qu'on interpelle, et c'est peut-être là le grand signe qui marque le théâtre nouveau. On ne s'arrête plus aux effets du malheur, mais au malheur lui-même, et l'on veut savoir son essence et ses lois. 16

Many of the ideas which go to make up this article reappear in O Rei Galaor, and it seems certain that it was influential in Eugénio de Castro's choice of theme:

"Nous savons surtout que certaines idées sont extrêmement dangereuses, qu'il suffit de se croire un instant à l'abri pour appeler la foudre, et que le bonheur forme un vide dans lequel ne tardent pas à se précipiter les larmes." 17

"... o riso atrai a dor,
Que atrás do riso é o servo atrás do senhor ...
Choremos sem cessar!" (I, 179-181)

"Est-ce que de grands hasards ne dorment pas, qu'un mouvement trop brusque réveille à l'horizon, et ce malheur serait-il arrivé aujourd'hui, si des pensées en fête n'avaient fait trop de bruit dans votre âme ce matin?" 18

"A Desgraça está dormindo agora,
Mas seu sono é fugaz, bem pouco se demora,
E se eu abrisse a negra porta da prisão,
Jubiloso, feliz, teu nobre coração
Havia de pulsar com tamanha alegria,
Que a Desgraça, ai de nós! logo despertaria!" (I, 79-84)

Others occur which I shall mention later in analysing the plot.

¹⁶ MAETERLINCK, Le Trésor des Humbles (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1898), pp. 210-11.

¹⁷ Ibid., p. 220.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 222.

João Gaspar Simões suggested that the plot of O Rei Galaor was "inspirado num tema de romanceiro".¹⁹ He no doubt bases this opinion on the fact that, at the beginning of the poem, we find Sibila imprisoned in a tower by her father. Indeed, the damsel in distress imprisoned in the tower has become the greatest cliché of chivalresque balladry.²⁰ Furthermore, as Antonio Padula rightly points out, Galaor is "un nome gaulois, che s'incontra in qualche antico romanzo di cavalleria".²¹ The name Galaor had long been connected in the Iberian Peninsula with tales of chivalry. Galaor was the brother of Amadis de Gaula, hero of the chivalresque novel of the same name, and had also figured in a drama by Gil Vicente, likewise entitled Amadis de Gaula.

But, despite the medieval atmosphere of O Rei Galaor, chivalresque balladry is not the only, or even the most probable source for the situation with which the poem opens. Other examples of maidens locked in towers are not difficult to find.²² And Aníbal Pinto de Castro rightly points out a certain similarity between the situation of O Rei Galaor and that of Calderón's La Vida es Sueño.²³ However, the most probable source is Christian hagiography. We have already encountered several examples of indebtedness to this type of source in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro,

¹⁹ SIMÕES, História, p. 188.

²⁰ For actual instances of this theme we need only think of the Spanish ballad of "Gaiferos y Melisanda" (an amusing version of which can be found in Book II, chapter 26 of Don Quijote) or of the situation of Lunete in Chrétien de Troyes' Yvain (l. 3564 ff).

²¹ PADULA, p. 2.

²² Classical literature offers the legend of Danae, imprisoned by her father to avoid the advances of Zeus. Germanic folk-tales include the well-known story of Rapunzel, and that of Maleine, dramatized, as we have seen, by Maeterlinck.

²³ CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação, p. 22. On this point, it is interesting to note that the servant who once saved Galaor's life is called Segismundo (I, 113).

and he would return to such material in his later career.²⁴ The legend he seems to have had in mind when writing O Rei Galaor is that of Saint Barbara. There are clear similarities between the initial situation of his poem - the dénouement is his own invention - and that of Saint Barbara as told by the countless Flores Sanctorum of the Middle Ages. In his Legenda Aurea, the Italian hagiographer Jacopo de Voragine recounts the legend in the following terms:

Erat [...] vir quidam gentilis [...] cui erat filia speciosissima nomine Barbara. Ipsa autem, quia erat corpore pulcherrima, eam pater plurimum diligebat: quapropter reclusit eam in turri altissima: quam eidem edificari fecerat, ne ab aliquo homine videretur. 25

This legend offers similarities with O Rei Galaor which are not present in the other possible sources mentioned. The most notable is that the girl is kept captive here to preserve her purity from all men. Her captivity is not simply an expedient to discourage the advances of one particular suitor, as, say, in the legend of Danae.

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O Rei Galaor is the last poem I shall study in this thesis. It brings to a head the conflict between hope and pessimism already implicit in Sagramor. Eugénio de Castro attempts to resolve this conflict in favour of pessimism, but the poem takes over and, despite his efforts, resolves it in favour of hope. It is the overcoming of pessimism -

²⁴ In "Epílogo" of Horas Eugénio de Castro wrote: "Tu como Inês, a santa de cabelos bastos, / Eu como o puro e honesto São Luís Gonzaga" (3-4). Luís Gonzaga reappears in "Beijos" in Interlúdio: "Coroai-vos com os lírios de São Luís Gonzaga" (30). In the Jornal de Comércio of 28 February 1892 he retold the legend of "Maria Egípcia". Christian hagiography also provides the source for the unedited poem "Los Siete Durmientes" (which now exists only in Spanish translation), and for the narrative poem A Tentação de São Macário (1922).

²⁵ JACOBUS DE VORAGINE, Legenda, ut vocant, Sanctorum (Lyon: Apud Eustathium Barricatum, 1553), p. 167, legend 188.

however implicit - which marks the end of this era in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro.

Dismissing O Rei Galaor as an insignificant work, G. Battelli expresses some surprise as to how "algún crítico entusiasta, como Silva Gaio,²⁶ llegó a encontrar en la figura [de Galaor] una grandeza shakespeariana".²⁷ His surprise is understandable. Galaor was undoubtedly meant to be a grandiose figure. Eugénio de Castro no doubt saw him striking a titanic pose in his desperate battle against the forces of Destiny. He even appears at one point as a Christ-figure: "Como Cristo, dir-se-ia / Que está sofrendo as dores da humanidade inteira!" (III, 10-11). But, in the final analysis, he is less imposing than he might at first appear.

The various motivations given to Galaor's actions constitute one of the central paradoxes running through O Rei Galaor. When he first gives his reasons for imprisoning Sibila, he explains:

Tendo-a presa na torre, o que eu quero é livrá-la
De tudo o que lhe pode acontecer ... (I, 16-17)

The poem thus opens with an implicit reference to Fate, the "grand signe qui marque le théâtre nouveau". At first glance, however, the Fate of O Rei Galaor seems to be Fate with a difference. Antonio Padula quotes Manuel da Silva-Gaio as saying of this poem:

Qui l'azione non è determinata dalla fatalità
inessorabile, da quello che deve accadere, dal-
l'inevitabile, torturante o spaventosamente previsto.
L'azione, qui, è come l'eco d'una voce vaga, e
l'emozione nasce tutta precisamente da un fondo

²⁶ This is a case of mistaken attribution. The opinion in question was given, not by Manuel da Silva-Gaio, but by Carlos de Lemos. In his review entitled "Saudades do Céu, de Eugénio de Castro" in Ave-Azul in 1899, he wrote of the king: "parece a alma de Hamlet falando pela boca do Rei Lear" (p. 122).

²⁷ G. BATTELLI, "El Rey Galaor", in Diccionario Literario (Barcelona: Montaner y Simón, S.A., 1959), VII, 206.

d'incertezza. Questo sostituire all'emozione della Fatalità l'emozione della Possibilità è un tratto notevole e importante, sia sotto l'aspetto della psicologia, sia sotto quello dell'originalità artistica dell'opera.

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But this question of "Possibility" is merely one of successive veils thrown over the real nature of Fate.

Galaor's fear of "what might happen" is closely linked with an unwillingness to believe in Divine Providence. This lack of belief is expressed through one of the most heavily laboured images of the poem: the comparing of human life to the tumult of the waves. Man, accustomed to the noise of the waves, soon grows indifferent to them. God, in Galaor's view, has likewise grown indifferent to the torments and the supplications of Man. This has important implications for the nature of the Fatality feared by Galaor. Without a Divine Providence to ensure that everything will turn out for Man's good, there is the equal chance that everything will turn out to his harm. Galaor gives examples of events where the chances of the consequences being favourable or harmful seem even:

Dois homens, uma vez, entraram numa cova,
Abrasados os dois pela mesma sede de ouro:
Um encontrou a morte, o outro achou um tesouro ...
(I, 162-4)

But he does not stop there. It soon becomes obvious that what Galaor fears is not whether the consequences of any given action will be good or bad. His terror is of the form, as yet unknown, which the evil consequences of that action will take. This is the view of Fate propounded by Maeterlinck. In the first quotation from "L'Étoile" given (page 322), he clearly equates "fatalité" and "malheur". He repeats this point later in his article: "Aller à la recherche du destin, n'est-ce pas aller à la recherche des tristesses humaines? Il n'y a pas de destin de la joie: il n'y a pas d'étoile heureuse".²⁹ Despite the assertions of

²⁸ PADULA, p. 3. I have been unable to find this quotation in the original.

²⁹ MAETERLINCK, Trésor des Humbles, p. 207.

Manuel da Silva-Gaio, and the occasional indications put in the mouth of the king himself, Fate for Galaor does not imply the possibility of human suffering, but the inevitability of human suffering. It is not chance which Galaor sees haunting his palace. It is Misfortune: "A Desgraça, de noite, este palácio corre" (I, 77). And "a Desgraça" is no doubt the unnamed figure who haunts his dreams at night: "Ela lá vem! ... e espia / Tudo o que eu faço aqui!" (III, '8-9). Chance is not seen as impartial: it is threatening:

Do acaso as asas inclementes
 Não deixam de ruflar sobre nós, como espadas.
 (I, 98-99)

... nem um passo dou nesta vida de lutos,
 Que não trema de horror, vendo as mágoas sem par
 Que esse passo há-de em breve atrair e causar!
 (I, 175-6)

And again, despite the assertions of both Antonio Padula and Manuel da Silva-Gaio, this kind of pessimism is not new in the work of Eugénio de Castro. There is, as we shall see, nothing new in O Rei Galaor. It is a compendium of elements from all of Eugénio de Castro's earlier works. Only the relative dosages have changed. Lines such as the following spoken by Galaor:

Um pai e uma mãe
 Podem cúmplices ser dos crimes mais perversos ...
 Imagina em que dor devem andar imersos
 A mãe dum grande poeta e o pai dum celerado!
 (I, 146-9)

are little more than a repetition of lines already found in "A Uma Mãe" of Interlúdio:

Sabes tu, ó mãe enganada,
 Qual há-de ser o seu destino?
 Será traidor, ladrão de estrada,
 Poeta, mártir ou assassino? (25-28)

The same idea had appeared in "Grávidas":

Dos seus ventres sairá um bando de infelizes
 Cujas almas serão sementeiras de dores:
 Tísicos e ladrões, mártires, meretrizes,
 Assassinos cruéis, poetas, salteadores. (17-20)

The "possibility" of misfortune is a concept in which

Galaor does not believe. His obsession is with the inevitability of suffering. It is to the source of that suffering that I shall now turn my attention.

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In its treatment of Fate and pessimism, O Rei Galaor exhibits discrepancies already encountered in Belkiss and Sagramor. Galaor presents his pessimism as being based on a fear of fate, and as being universal; his contention is that any action of any kind will bring evil consequences. But, as in Belkiss, Fate soon proves to be simply another name for physical desire. And, as in Sagramor, universal pessimism is soon narrowed down to a pessimism based on the mistrust of physical passion. In a sense, Galaor takes up where Sagramor left off. He is a Sagramor grown old in the knowledge that physical passion can only bring despair. And, having been unable to save himself, he now directs his efforts towards ensuring that Sibila will not suffer. At one point he states this explicitly:

Amo-a! quero-a livrar da angústia que me pesa,
Amo-a muito, e por isso é que a conservo presa!
(I, 75-6)

He also appears as an exaggerated version of Belkiss's mentor Zophesamin, who had attempted to keep the young queen imprisoned in a philosophy of asceticism. But in this poem the roles have been reversed. Here it is Galaor's tragedy which is the central theme, not Sibila's. It is no longer love which brings tragedy, but the attempt to eradicate love.

The pretext of Fatality initially propounded by Galaor (I, 16) is kept up by sporadic reference throughout the poem. Sibila explains Galaor's actions in the following terms: "Prendeu-me pelo terror / Do que está para chegar" (II, 66-7). But these statements belong only to the development of the theme of Fatality on the surface of the poem. Galaor's generic obsession is soon resolved into the specific aim of robbing Sibila of any opportunity

of ever yielding to a sexual urge:

- Ingénua, não terá desejos maus ... e, presa,
Ninguém lhe roubará a angélica pureza ... (I, 187-8)

His vigilance is directed entirely towards the suppression of love. And, like Sagramor, he understands love in purely erotic terms. When he learns that Sibila has been talking of a "formoso senhor" who will come in search of her (I, 257-8), he flies into an uncontrollable rage. He realizes that, despite his efforts, these are the first signs of love on her part. In his rage he exclaims: "Tudo perdido, tudo!" (I, 269) (my italics). Indeed, all his efforts have been directed not against the possibility of misfortune, not against misfortune arising from any event, but against the unavoidable tragedy of love. Despite the varying motivations ascribed to Galaor at different points in the poem, his specific, obsessive aim is to free Sibila from the lure of passion, of sensuality, from the treachery of the senses. At one point, he realizes that she will soon be tall enough to see out of the window of her tower. And, in his obsession, even ugliness becomes a positive factor in an equation whose constant is passion:

Os seus olhos vão ver! vão ver as cousas feias,
Que lhe dirão como é formosa, e as cousas belas,
Rosas, nuvens, cetins, crepúsculos e estrelas,
Que lhe dirão como a beleza é requestada!
(I, 296-99)

At the end of the first scene, Galaor's obsession takes such a hold of him that he pierces Sibila's eyes to prevent her from seeing out of her window. Vision, for him, has an erotic teleology:

Seus olhos, ao passar da brisa embalsamada,
Das árvores vão ver os lascivos enleios,
Que de luxúria agitarão seus virgens seios!
(I, 300-2)

This outburst of rage and consequent blinding of Sibila is the passage in the poem where the true nature of Galaor's concept of Fatality is most clearly revealed. Yet despite the heavily charged atmosphere of this scene - it is one of the emotional climaxes of the poem - Galaor's

language is wooden and stilted. It is a compendium of stock exclamations:

Partes-me o coração e abrasas-me a cabeça!
 Horror! Horror! Horror! Vamos, vamos, confessa,
 Foste tu, foste tu, ó mãe desnaturada,
 Que envenenaste aquela alma imaculada,
 Falando-lhe no amor, que é guerra, fome e peste!
 Ai! o que fizeste tu! Ai o que fizeste!
 (I, 259-64)

These lines clearly smack of effort, of theatricality rather than sincerity. Indeed, pessimism in the work of Eugénio de Castro is fast becoming an element of theatrical effect rather than the expression of genuinely held conviction.

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Before leaving the first scene of O Rei Galaor, there is one small episode which requires closer study. It is the episode in which we learn of Galaor's son by a previous relationship (I, 206-222). He had abandoned the boy by the wayside immediately after his birth, and had never seen or heard of him again. Antonio Padula suggests that this event is of paramount importance for an understanding of Galaor's pessimism:

In qual modo sono nate nel suo cervello così
 malinconiche idee, così sconcertanti teorie?
 Sventura (egli dice) a chi si arrischia di avere
 un figlio!
 È dunque il pensiero incessante di quel figlio
 abbandonato che fa delirare, rende pazzo Galaor.
 L'infelice nella chiaroveggenza in lui prodotta dalla
 pazzia vede avvicinarsi la sventura, come giusta
 espiazione del suo odioso delitto. 30

Galaor does at one point suggest that the anguish he feels may be some sort of expiation for his crime:

Às vezes, muita vez, a conversar comigo,
 Penso que este tormento é o horrível castigo

Do meu odiável crime ... (I, 202-4)

But I am unable to agree with this as an interpretation of his pessimism. Andrés González-Blanco is of the opinion that "Dans O Rei Galaor ce sont les éléments humains qui sont mis en jeu".³¹ But O Rei Galaor is one of the most uncompromisingly symbolic poems Eugénio de Castro would ever write. Its characters are almost completely symbolic figures. G. Battelli comes much nearer the mark when he points to the "completa ausencia de humanidad en la figura de Galaor".³² Galaor is not a person; he is merely the projection of a given idea. He symbolizes an obsessive fear of desire, just as Sibila (like Cecília in Sagramor's memory) is a symbol of gentleness and tenderness. And remorse of this kind does not fit into Galaor's symbolic stance. For him, misfortune does not come from within. It is imposed by the external forces of what he calls Fatality - i.e. desire in the Schopenhauerian sense, seen as governing Man's existence.

The fact that Galaor had a son by a previous relationship is undoubtedly important for the plot of the poem. But its importance is in bringing about Galaor's downfall in a sensationalistic ending which, in any case, is visible half-way through the poem. It is not important as the constant motive of his pessimism. Later in the poem the son will become an essential cog in the mechanism of fatality which Eugénio de Castro has imposed on O Rei Galaor to ensure ultimate tragedy. And Galaor's apparent remorse is little more than a lame attempt to justify the workings of this mechanism on a more profound level. The relative lack of importance of this incident in explaining Galaor's pessimism can be seen in the levity with which it is handled when it is first introduced. It causes no reaction whatsoever in Gudula. And Galaor's remorse is never mentioned again in the entire poem. Moreover, the

³¹ GONZÁLEZ-BLANCO, p. 52.

³² BATTELLI, p. 206.

whole episode takes up only a tiny section of the poem, some seventeen lines in all.

Antonio Padula's judgement of the importance of this episode would seem to arise partly from a misinterpretation of the lines he quotes to support his theory. When Galaor says: "Ai de quem / Se arrisca a ter um filho!" (I, 145-6) this is not simply a personal statement. It is to be understood in more general terms. "Um filho" here does not mean so much "a son" as "a child". And if we are to interpret it on a personal level, then it should be taken as referring to Sibila, and not to the son. It is Sibila's fate which dominates Galaor's thoughts throughout the poem.

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Galaor's view of desire is essentially Schopenhauerian. The solutions he offers are introduced in scene one, and developed more fully in scenes two and three. They prove to be a compendium of solutions already suggested in the past. Initially his stance, like that of Zophesamin in Belkiss, is a completely no-saying attitude to life: "Ninguém, ninguém se mova!" (I, 161). Sibila's physical situation is merely a projection of his mental situation. The point is made by Gudula:

Sonhei que estavas prisioneiro
Num cárcere sem luz. (III, 46-7)

He suffers from self-imposed mental imprisonment. As he dreams of Misfortune prowling his palace at night he cries out: "Tranquem as portas! Fechem todas as janelas!" (III, 6). His belief in the value of asceticism repeats the message of the oriental legend in the fourth Canto of Sagramor:

A flor que brota em penha erma,
Vive e falece em paz; mas as plantas de raça,
Que sonham em jardins reais, cheias de graça,
Decapitadas são por dedos refulgentes. (I, 94-7)

But as the theatricality of pessimism increases in O Rei Galaor this asceticism becomes more and more exaggerated

in a search for effect, and Eugénio de Castro moves further and further away from Schopenhauer. Galaor's frenzied horror of the evils of passion tips the balance of Schopenhauerian asceticism into exaggerated privation and cruelty. His ideal becomes not one of tranquillity, but one of positive sadness:

Não, eu nunca pensei em fazê-la ditosa. (I, 13)

Vive triste, bem sei, mas não amargurada,
E é triste que eu a quero. (I, 178-9)

He ultimately moves to the contemplation of collective suicide by setting fire to the castle and destroying Gudula, Sibila and himself: ³³

Vou incendiar
O palácio!

Será uma aurora de brasas,
E as chamas dar-me-ão um rútilo par de asas,
Com as quais fugirei deste poço de horrores!
(III, 32-5)

At this point Eugénio de Castro parts company with Schopenhauer altogether. Schopenhauer held that suicide "Weit entfernt Verneinung des Willens zu sein, ist [...] ein Phänomen starker Bejahung des Willens" ³⁴ [far from being a denial of the Will, is ... a sign of strong affirmation of the Will.] He saw suicide not as a genuine extension of asceticism, but merely as a renunciation of the sufferings of life in the hope of finding a better life after death. Galaor looks on death as such a source of respite: "Na morte apenas vejo um asilo onde me acoite!" (III, 79). But for Schopenhauer, the lure of peace after death is merely an illusion:

wen die Lasten des Lebens drücken, wer zwar das Leben möchte und es bejaht, aber die Qualen desselben verabscheut, und besonders das harte Los, das gerade ihm gefallen ist, nicht länger tragen mag:
ein solcher hat nicht vom Tode Befreiung zu hoffen

³³ Like Episode V of Belkiss (see page 232) this passage shows every sign of deriving from the projected Nero.

³⁴ SCHOPENHAUER, II, 471.

und kann sich nicht durch Selbstmord retten; nur mit
falschem Scheine lockt ihn der finstere kühle Orkus
als Hafen der Ruhe. 35

[the man who is oppressed by the burdens of life, the
man who desires and affirms life but abominates its
torments, the man who, above all, can no longer bear
the cruel fate which has befallen him in particular
- such a man can not hope for release in death, and
cannot save himself through suicide. It is with a
false illusion that the cool shades of Orcus tempt
him as a haven of rest.]

In fact this projected suicide has little to do with the
philosophical symbolism of the poem. Philosophy is no
longer capable of providing a sufficient framework for
tragedy in O Rei Galaor, and aberrations of this kind are
part of an essential process of exaggeration preparing
the tragedy at the end.

The arrival of the Desconhecido at the beginning of
Scene II completes the paradox of O Rei Galaor. He is the
"formoso senhor" of whom Sibila has been dreaming, and he
has come to rescue her. On discovering Sibila imprisoned,
he flies into a rage just as Galaor had done at the end of
Scene I. But his rage, like Galaor's, is expressed through
a series of stereotyped images whose theatricality is
discouraging. Violent emotion is substituted in O Rei
Galaor by the facile expedient of mere verbalism:

Hei-de rasgar-te, leão! com os dentes e com as unhas,
Hei-de espancar-te, rei! com o áureo ceptro que empunhas,
etc., etc. (II, 85 ff)

The essential paradox of the poem lies in the fact that
the Desconhecido has come in answer to a spiritual call,
not to a physical one. He has been led on by the beauty
of Sibila's voice, not, as in the case of "Pan" for
example, by a vision of her nakedness. The sign of their
love is not the eroticism which dominated Sagrador's first
meeting with Cecília. The driving physical passion of
earlier poems has no part to play in either this or the
following scenes of O Rei Galaor. The feelings of the

35 Ibid., II, 331.

Desconhecido towards Sibila are characterized by tenderness. When he kisses her in Scene IV, we find him "beijando-a com ternura". He, as much as she, is a symbol of ideal, spiritual love.

As a result of this, it becomes obvious that Galaor's measures vis-à-vis Sibila are doomed to failure. He is obsessed by the treachery of the senses, and understands human relationships in exclusively physical terms. Consequently, it is against the senses that he draws up his battle-plan. But Sibila's love is not simply a physical urge, and measures taken solely against the senses entirely miss the mark. This becomes clear when Galaor pricks out her eyes. She sees her Beloved with the eyes of her spirit, not with those of her body, and physical blindness cannot impair her inner vision. This inner vision is one of gentleness and light; it is not an erotic vision such as that sustained by the blindness of Tirésias:

Picaram-me os olhos
Enquanto dormia,
Cega estou, mas vejo
Melhor do que via.

O meu lindo noivo,
Com suas mãos belas,
Caminha pelo céu
A apanhar estrelas. (I, 313-20)

Galaor fights an enemy who, in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro, no longer exists.

The ending of O Rei Galaor attempts to reconcile the opposing elements of the paradox, but fails. The Desconhecido frees Sibila, and they both escape on his horse. Gudula, trying to restrain him, breaks off a ring hanging by a chain round his neck. This ring proves, rather predictably, that he is Galaor's long-lost son and is, therefore, Sibila's half-brother. On learning this, the king dies.

Despite some good precedents in Classical Greek drama - particularly in the plays of Euripides, Ion, Iphigenia in Tauris - this ending is little more than a

badly managed melodramatic trick.³⁶ It represents the culmination of the theatrical elements introduced into O Rei Galaor to provide an artificial atmosphere of "sacred terror" which the basic conflicts of the plot are unable to sustain. And Eugénio de Castro would not have had to look to Classical literature for melodramatic tricks of this kind. Mario Praz rightly points out that "la vecchia agnizione del romanzo grego è uno dei perni del romanzo nero, come lo sarà del romanticismo in genere: genitori che ritrovano i figli nelle circostanze più drammatiche".³⁷ And his explanation as to why this formula was so popular among the Romantics is no doubt also correct. It was, he says, "una formula che trovava favore agli occhi dei romantici anche pel sapore d'incesto che se ne poteva estrarre".³⁸ It is the implications of incest which bring about the ultimate tragedy in O Rei Galaor. They cause Galaor to die of grief as he sees his last hopes of preserving Sibila's purity destroyed.

Within the symbolic structure of the poem, these implications of incest clearly signify the corruption

³⁶ This particular kind of anagnorisis (διὰ τῶν σημείων) (by means of signs) is that which Aristotle considers to be "ἡ ἀτεχνωτάτη καὶ ἡ πλείστη χρῶται δι' ἀπορίαν" [the least artistic, and most often used through lack of invention] (Poetics, p. 25, chap. 16). It was no doubt for this reason that it became one of the most popular elements not of later Greek tragedy, but of the New Comedy, and of the Latin comedy of Plautus and Terence.

³⁷ PRAZ, p. 107. In the Peninsula, a fairly similar incident can be found at the end of Martínez de la Rosa's Romantic drama La Conjuración de Venecia: before being recognized by his father Morosini, Rugiero secretly weds his half-sister Laura.

³⁸ Ibid., p. 108. Incest, "un tema caro ai romantici" (Ibid., p. 101) was enjoying something of a vogue towards the end of the nineteenth century. Besides countless examples in the works of the minor French Decadent writers (amply annotated by Praz), we find the same theme in Spain in Emilia Pardo Bazán's novel La Madre Naturaleza (1887), and in Portugal in the epic novel Os Maias (1888) by Eça de Queiroz.

arising not simply from sensual love, as in Sagramor, but also from ideal love. As we already saw, Eugénio de Castro's attempts to justify universal pessimism in Sagramor were not entirely successful. Through the persistence of Cecília in Sagramor's memory as a symbol of ideal love, the poem ended in paradox. In O Rei Galaor Eugénio de Castro, consciously or unconsciously, attempts to circumvent this problem by approaching the theme of love from a different angle. He borrows the idea of Destiny from Maeterlinck and imposes on O Rei Galaor a cumbersome framework of Fatality which he succeeds in propping up by sporadic reference throughout the poem. He then attempts to structure this framework in such a way that, by involving incest, it will ensure the ultimate corruption of love, whether that love is seen as physical - as by Galaor - or ideal - as by Sibila and the Desconhecido. The mechanism of Fate which Eugénio de Castro forces on his poem decrees that, despite Galaor's vigilance, Sibila will be abducted. It also ensures that despite the ideal nature of their love - they are both symbols of ideal love - Sibila and the Desconhecido will fall into the corruption of incest.

But, if we look beneath the surface of the poem, does the Fatality hold, and is ideal love in fact corrupted, thus justifying universal pessimism and tragedy? Praz's words concerning the theme of incest in Chateaubriand could easily be applied to countless writers of the nineteenth century, particularly of the Decadence: "la relazione tra fratello e sorella amanti in tanto l'ammaliava in quanto egli la sentiva attraverso la coscienza d'una trasgressione".³⁹ The love of Sibila and the Desconhecido can only be corrupted by incest if they consciously indulge in sin. But there is no suggestion of this in O Rei Galaor. Sibila and the Desconhecido never learn that they are brother and sister, so there can be no

³⁹ PRAZ, p. 102.

sense of guilt on their part. Galaor feels that the greatest of all impurities has been committed, but there can be no question of this being the case for the two lovers. Love thus brings tragedy only in Galaor's eyes, it does not bring tragedy for them. The stance of the two lovers throughout the poem is one of gentleness and innocence. Antonio Padula rightly says that:

Sibilla, povera martira del morboso pessimismo paterno, è, nella fosca grandiosità del dramma, la luce che irradiò al suo nascere gli orrori del caos! In tanta tetragine il lettore prova un sollievo ineffabile nel vagheggiare l'angelica creatura, tutta grazia e innocenza, la quale ama il genitore a tal segno, da scusarne la crudeltà e supplicare che gli venga risparmiata la vita. 40

Her capacity for forgiveness borders on the unbelievable. It is scarcely possible to see how she can refer to Galaor as "um velhinho inerte" (II, 95) or as "bom, clemente" (II, 107). But, if exaggerated, these indications stem from the gentleness and innocence of which she is a symbol. Again, as the Desconhecido is about to go, Gudula says to him:

Senhor! lindo senhor, tu cujo olhar tão doce
Mostra bem que possuis uma alma doce e pura. (IV, 20-1)

Both lovers preserve this purity to the end.

Sin emanates from within, not from without. But Eugénio de Castro is unable to extract sin from the relationship of Sibila and the Desconhecido as he describes it. Yet he is still keen to create an illusion of universal corruption and pessimism. And, in order to achieve this he is obliged, for the second time in successive works, to impose tragedy on ideal love through an external structure of which that love is not an essential part. Tragedy does not issue from love itself in O Rei Galaor, thus it is not love which fails in this poem. What fails is Galaor's mistaken view that love is merely physical passion. He dies, the lovers live on in happiness. What also fails is Eugénio de Castro's attempt to make a

40 PADULA, p. 3.

tragedy of a poem whose ending is far from tragic. Madness and cruelty come to an end, love and happiness live on. The would-be horror of the incest dies with Galaor.

The failure of tragedy in O Rei Galaor is much clearer than in Sagramor because the artificiality of the attempt to undermine ideal love is considerably more obvious. In Sagramor the value of ideal love as an escape from universal pessimism only begins to dawn on Sagramor at the end of the poem, and it is obscured by an allegorical structure which was not designed solely to cancel it out. In O Rei Galaor, on the other hand, the value of ideal love is much more firmly established in Eugénio de Castro's mind. Sibila never thinks of love in any other way, and the Desconhecido is a reincarnation of the younger Sagramor whose purity has not yet been corrupted. But, as in Sagramor, Eugénio de Castro goes to considerable trouble to live up to his self-appointed title of "pessimistic poet". He appeals to Destiny for tragedy. The tragedy is provided, but it is as thin as I have shown the concept of Fatality to be. Tragedy is unsuccessful in O Rei Galaor because, for reasons which we shall see, tragedy is no longer in keeping with the spirit of Eugénio de Castro's works. As a result, it has to be sustained by artificial concepts, philosophical ideas pushed to absurd extremes, and the fake emotions of theatrical rhetoric. Despite its ending, O Rei Galaor is not a truly tragic poem. The tragedy, carried by the concepts embodied in Galaor, dies with him.

---ooOoo---

At the beginning of this chapter I examined some of the literary influences at work in O Rei Galaor. But these explain only the setting and the mechanism of Fatality employed in the poem. They do not explain why, despite Eugénio de Castro's efforts to bring love into a general framework of universal pessimism, he fails to make love convincingly tragic in this poem. The explanation is no doubt supplied by an event which took place in Eugénio de

Castro's personal life around this time: the entry into his life of Dona Brígida Correia Portal, whom he would eventually marry in 1898.⁴¹ This relationship cannot be documented as the previous one with Helena Bordalo Pinheiro has been by Hernâni Cidade. Nonetheless, its development can be traced with sufficient clarity through several of the short poems published by Eugénio de Castro around this time. The first reflection of this new relationship is a poem, still hesitant, entitled "A Coroa de Rosas". It was published in O Instituto in 1898, dated 5-viii-96. It was, therefore, written one month before the completion of O Rei Galaor:

Afim, oculto amor, de coroar-te,
De adornar tuas tranças luminosas,
Uma coroa teci de brancas rosas,
E fui pelo mundo fora a procurar-te.

Sem nunca te avistar, crendo avistar-te
Nas moças que encontrava donairosas,
Cego de todo, fui-lhes dando as rosas
Da coroa feita com amor e arte.

Trago, de caminhar, os membros lassos,
Acutilam-se os ventos e as geadas,
Já não sei o que são noites serenas ...

Sinto que vais chegar: oiço-te os passos ...
Mas aí! nas minhas mãos ensanguentadas
Uma coroa de espinhos trago apenas.

42

This poem heralds the end of one era, and the beginning of another in the life of Eugénio de Castro. It is undoubtedly addressed to his future wife. This can be seen from the fact that its message is repeated in a more positive form in the poem "Epílogo: A Minha Mulher" of A Sombra do Quadrante (1907):

A cem portas bati por noite agreste,
Em que o vento mugia como um touro,
Antes de enfim parar à porta de ouro,
A cujo limiar me apareceste.

Nos versos que aí ficam, se é que os leste,

⁴¹ They were married on 22 May 1898. The date is given in Eugénio de Castro's entry on himself in Os Meus Vasconcelos, p. 29.

⁴² In O Instituto, 1898, p. 49.

Talvez para a nossa estima achas desdouro,
Sob o cipreste vendo, ou sob o louro,
Tantas amadas de perfil celeste.

Mas não! Ao pé de ti, sou outro. A vida,
Sopro de bênçãos, no meu horto flui ...
E aquele que divaga nas alfombras

Deste livro, lunática avenida,
Não sou eu, é a sombra do que fui,
Uma sombra saudosa doutras sombras!

Other poems follow, gaining in confidence: "Êxtase",
published first in O Instituto in 1897, dated 27-x-97, then
reproduced, without the date, in the Poesias Escolhidas
of 1902 (p. 205), under the general heading "Poemas Inéditos":

Pois quê, Senhor, não é um sonho isto?
Não é um sonho esta gentil figura,
Retrato fiel da linda criatura,
Que, em sonho, tantas vezes tanho [sic] visto?

Vendo-a, como a estou vendo, não assisto
À farça dum delírio? É humana a pura
Voz que me embala em ondas de ternura?
São dois olhos reais, esses que avisto?

Não sereis dum fantasma encantador,
Ó finas mãos de celestial pureza,
E vós, lábios em flor, que me fazeis

Tantas promessas de leal amor?
De que não sonho, ó Deus, dai-me a certeza,
E se estou a sonhar ... não me acordeis! 43

The only other poem which can be dated with certainty around
this time is "Saudades". It too was first published in O
Instituto in 1898, dated 29-i-98. It was later included,
slightly modified, in A Sombra do Quadrante:

Cada uma das palavras que vais ler
Com teus olhos de mansa claridade,
Leva-te, meu amor, uma saudade
Mais triste do que as rolas a gemer.

São poucas as palavras que, a tremer,
Aqui te escrevo, ó toda suavidade.
Mas fossem mil, não eram nem metade
Das saudades que enublam meu viver.

Se, arrancados, meus olhos lacrimosos
Pudessem ver os teus, tão piedosos
Que, ao vê-los, tudo ama e se converte,

43 In O Instituto, 1897, p. 685.

Ó estrela da manhã, sem hesitar,
 Arrancara-os eu já para tos mandar,
 Feliz de me achar cego para ver-te! 44

The two remaining "Poemas Inéditos" of the Poesias Escolhidas, "De longe" (p. 206) and "O teu nome" (p. 208), also belong, no doubt, to this period. The poem "Tristíssima" of A Sombra do Quadrante may also have been written around this time. It is interesting to note that, with the exception of "De longe", all the poems mentioned in this section are sonnets. As Eugénio de Castro moves closer to a stable personal relationship, this new-found emotional stability is reflected in the form of his poetry. It returns from the confused and chaotic structure of Sagramor to the greater stability and poise of the sonnet-form, an occasional feature of the poems written to Helena Bordalo Pinheiro.

It is not too much to assume that love fails to be tragic in O Rei Galaor because, after a long absence, love has re-entered the poet's life. Sibila and the Desconhecido represent the poet and the woman who has brought love back to him. The similarity of the poetry of this period with that of the early 1890's is not confined to considerations of form. The language of love in O Rei Galaor recalls in detail that of Oaristos and Horas. For example, the original misfortune of the Desconhecido:

Pobre órfão, sem irmãos, a maldizer a sorte,
 A chorar sem descanso e a apetecer a morte. (II, 23-4)

is turned to joy at the thought of his Beloved:

... a suave canção
 Continuava a embalar minha alma renascente,
 E nunca mais deixou, fada linda e ridente,
 De me dourar, pratear e dourar os dias. (II, 38-41)

Likewise, the "eu" of Oaristos I had said:

Meus dias eram maus, longuíssimos, tristonhos,
 A minha mocidade era uma ruinaria.
 Mas ao vê-la surgir triunfalmente fria,

44 In O Instituto, 1898, p. 101.

Grácil como uma flor, triste como um gemido,
 Meu peito recobrou o seu vigor perdido,
 Todo eu era contente e alegre como um rei! (50-55)

Again, the journey of the Desconhecido to find Sibila:

À neve, à chuva, ao sol, visitei mil países,
 Como os profetas, sustentei-me de raízes,
 Muita vez, no alto mar, da morte me vi perto,
 Atacaram-me os leões e a sede no deserto. (II, 45-8)

recalls that of the knight of "Dona Briolanja":

Venho de bem longe, trago os pés em sangue,
 Venho quase morto, combalido e exangue.
 À vossa procura, dormi aos relentos,
 Atravessei rios, prados lamacentos.
 Sem desvelos calmos, sem mansos carinhos,
 Piquei-me nas urzes duras dos caminhos. (75-80)

The escape of Sibila and the Desconhecido clearly heralds the end of an era in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. Pessimism is no longer the real spirit of his work, and has to be imposed from outside. The lovers leave pessimism behind to die with Galaor. Galaor's tower becomes something of a symbol of Eugénio de Castro's mind. It is a dark and confined enclosure where ideas remain deprived of the air of life for so long that they turn sour like rotting fruit. What the lovers escape from is a vitiated form of what was itself once propounded as a means of escape. The whole question of the incest is a last attempt by these vitiated ideas, all bookish in origin, to impose their horror on life. But they fail. The lovers escape and preserve their innocence, and the horror of the incest kills only the man who had conceived it, Galaor. He represents the last, most advanced stage of an illness before recovery begins. The themes of passion and pessimism literally die with Galaor.

Conclusion

O Rei Galaor brings this thesis to an end in terms of each of the main premises of its title: symbolism, and the themes of passion and pessimism. Neither passion nor pessimism is completely absent from Eugénio de Castro's later work, but the nature of each changes, as does the relationship between the two. In Saudades do Céu, written in 1897, one year after O Rei Galaor, various kinds of passions make a brief appearance. But they have nothing to do with the passion of earlier works. Saudades do Céu is an adaptation of certain chapters of Genesis. A generation of humans appears on earth, the offspring of angels and mortal women. They long to return to Heaven from where their fathers came. Finding this impossible, they indulge their passions as a form of "eficaz remédio" (IV, 7) against their frustration. In Sagramor passion was seen as a means of achieving the Infinite. It now becomes a form of consolation for failing to reach this goal. In Belkiss asceticism was seen as an "eficaz remédio" against the treachery of the passions. They now become an "eficaz remédio" against the frustration of human limitations. And even in this capacity their nature has changed. Within the context of Saudades do Céu they are brought on by drink:

Bebei! e sabereis que infinitas delícias
A luxúria contém! como o incesto é gostoso,
Como o estupro vos guinda aos píncaros do gozo!
(IV, 60-2)

In the true spirit of the Bible, they are seen as a manifestation of evil. They are explicitly referred to as "aquelas perversões" (IV, 110), and eventually call down the wrath of God in the form of the Flood. From being the driving-force of the Universe in Belkiss, from being a means of achieving Infinity in Sagramor, passion has become a means of escape through self-indulgence. From being an agent of magnification, it has become one of depravation.

O Rei Galaor is also the last truly Symbolist poem Eugénio de Castro would ever write. Carlos de Lemos suggested that in Saudades do Céu "O poeta da Lenda o que

lhe interessa é - a lenda: e na lenda o que ele aproveita é o símbolo".¹ On the contrary, Saudades do Céu is a largely Parnassian poem. It is based heavily on the passages from the Bible quoted as a preface to each of its six parts. Roughly ninety per cent of the poem is simple description, a rehashing of the Biblical narrative. The elements added by Eugénio de Castro are concentrated almost entirely in Part IV. And the element on which he concentrates - the longing of Man to regain Heaven - is simply illustrated by an already existing narrative. Its characters are not employed to symbolize certain abstract values, as was the case with Pan and Tirésias, for example. Saudades do Céu is more an exemplary than a symbolist poem.

Only one other poem has any claim to symbolist content. It is O Anel de Polícrates (1907). The relationship between its hero Agamedes and the statue of his lover Melissa can be seen to symbolize the relationship between the artist and his creation. But O Anel de Polícrates is filled with human beings. It is not peopled by abstractions. The question of the relationship between the artist and his creation is part of the human drama between Agamedes and Melissa, and neither of these is in any way a symbol. The symbol is part of the human drama. It does not claim to have far-reaching philosophical implications. The interest of the poem is personal, not metaphysical.

In terms of content and style, the poetry written by Eugénio de Castro after Saudades do Céu lies outside the range of this thesis. With the publication of Constança in 1900, the changing nature of his poetry is already more than apparent. Constança is a sweet, sentimental tale. And its ultra-Romantic "sensiblería" soon establishes itself as a norm in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. The poem "De longe" in the Poesias Escolhidas (p. 206) clearly reveals his return to the themes and sentiment of the ultra-Romantics. In it he exhumes one of the most thread-bare

¹ LEMOS, "Saudades do Céu", p. 124.

of Romantic commonplaces:

Assim que me levanto e antes de me deitar,
No meu alto balcão passo horas e horas,
A olhar na direcção em que deve ficar,
Ó frágil Beatriz, a aldeia onde tu moras.

Nesse ponto do céu, que é todo o céu para mim,
Mal anoitece, vejo uma estrela inconstante,
Que ora treme em fulgores de esmeralda e rubim,
Ora se apaga com um olhar de agonizante.

Quero crer que no azul procuraste também
A direcção da estrela, onde estou desterrado,
E que a estrela que eu vejo, ó meu único bem,
É a mesma em que poisa o teu olhar magoado.

Deste modo se explica a inconstância da estrela,
Que é, alternadamente, um desmaio e um clarão:
Fulge quando tu estás, minha santinha, a vê-la,
E desmaia se o olhar retiras da amplidão.

Se assim é, como julgo, ah! que feliz eu sou,
Como se enche de flores da ausência o duro açoite!
- Toda a noite passada a estrela cintilou,
Sinal de que a fitaste, ó linda, toda a noite!

The triviality of this poem is scarcely credible. Its theme was so exhausted of vitality that it had been ironized more than fifty years before by Ramón de Campoamor, himself so prone to this particular brand of Romantic mawkishness:

"En la noche del día de mi santo"
(a Londres me escribiste)
"mira la estrella que miramos tanto
la noche en que partiste."

Pasó la noche de aquel día, y luego
me escribiste exaltada:
"Uní en la estrella a tu mirar de fuego
mi amorosa mirada."

Mas todo fue ilusión; la noche aquella,
con harta pena mía,
no pude ver nuestra querida estrella ... 2
porque en Londres llovía.

With few exceptions, this ultra-Romanticism dominates the poetry of Eugénio de Castro from now on. It is frequently thinly disguised as academic neo-Classicism. But, as Carlos de Queirós rightly points out, this neo-Classicism is mostly characterized by the "frustes efeitos de uma

² RAMÓN DE CAMPOAMOR, Obras Poéticas Completas (Madrid: M. Aguilar-Editor, s/d), pp. 214-5.

nímia subordinação aos valores clássicos".³ Ultra-Romanticism dominates most of the remaining longer poems, O Filho Pródigo, O Cavaleiro das Mãos Irresistíveis, A Tentação de São Macário. Aníbal Pinto de Castro rightly says of O Cavaleiro das Mãos Irresistíveis:

Pelo seu conteúdo exclusivamente lírico, pelo medievalismo, pelo recurso ao maravilhoso popular, pela nota religiosa que aflora aqui e além, pela inclusão de tipos populares, e até por um certo toque de sátira anti-clerical, este poema integra-se perfeitamente na corrente romântica que Garrett iniciara com Dona Branca. O mesmo se pode dizer da Tentação de São Macário.⁴

After the turn of the century, the problematic content of Eugénio de Castro's poetry dwindles visibly. Júlio Dantas points out that Constança "marcou, na evolução do poeta, o início da simplificação neo-clássica", and refers to Eugénio de Castro's later works as "uma confirmação impressionante da 'lei da simplificação'".⁵ This simplification is clearly accompanied by a falling away in the quality of Eugénio de Castro's poetry. The point is made by Vitorino Nemésio:

Mas o eclectismo, se de momento significa uma perturbação trazida pelo sistema simbolista (logo que aprendido, abandonado), vai-se pouco a pouco desagregando, até dar definitivamente, na maturidade literária embora no começo dum certo declínio da inspiração, ao classicismo castilhiano da última fase do escritor.⁶

Other judgements have been more harsh. Cruz Malpique believes that "Eugénio de Castro deixou de ser o poeta-artista, para ser apenas o trivialíssimo versejador, no dia em que renunciou ao seu revolucionarismo inicial".⁷

Judgements of Eugénio de Castro's symbolist poems

³ QUEIRÓS, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 492.

⁴ CASTRO, Tradição e Renovação, p. 28.

⁵ JÚLIO DANTAS, "Eugénio de Castro", in O Instituto, 1947, pp. 82-83.

⁶ NEMÉSIO, "Perfil de Eugénio de Castro", p. 15.

⁷ MALPIQUE, "Eugénio de Castro, poeta pagão", p. 21.

vis-à-vis his later output have been varied. Celso Pedro Luft refers to the poems written between 1889 and 1896 as a "veleidade passageira".⁸ And Ruy Galvão de Carvalho suggests that "com o rodar dos anos e a larga experiência que adquiriu pela vida fora, Eugénio de Castro começou a humanizar e a dar outra orientação à sua arte poética".⁹ These judgements stem, however, from a misunderstanding of Eugénio de Castro's poetry, and perhaps from a misunderstanding of what makes poetry "humano". Eugénio de Castro's later poetry is certainly free from the literary-cum-philosophical eclecticism of the earlier output, but it is completely lacking in depth. It is only into his earlier poems that Eugénio de Castro puts any of his own soul, and the obscurity which bedevils them is an essential aspect of the expression of his inner reality. His later works are a collection of sentimental whimsies where genuine inner conflict is replaced by mere charm. The only section of his poetry which can justifiably command our attention is that written between 1889 and 1896. It constitutes the most problematic, and at the same time the most interesting and worthwhile part of his uneven poetic career.

--ooOoo--

In his preface to Oaristos,¹⁰ Eugénio de Castro described himself as taking the "expresso da ORIGINALIDADE [...]" preferindo deste modo um descarrilamento à secante expectativa de ficar eternamente parado na concorridíssima estação da VULGARIDADE". The significant terms here are "concorridíssima" and "VULGARIDADE". They imply by contrast a cult of the rare, which is seen as superior. The result of these ideas is immediately apparent. Throughout Oaristos

⁸ LUFT, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 72.

⁹ RUY GALVÃO DE CARVALHO, No Primeiro Centenário do nascimento de Eugénio de Castro", in Gil Vicente, Vol. 20 (1969), p. 86.

¹⁰ This preface was dated 10 January 1890.

and Horas a relatively straightforward relationship is presented to the reader in terms of superior experience. This would-be superiority is inherent in the themes employed, and in the words through which these themes are expressed. There is general agreement that the so-called Symbolist works of Eugénio de Castro "assimilam sobretudo o lado exterior, decorativo, policromo e 'nefelibata' do Simbolismo francês - mais perto da atitude literária dum Jean Moréas que da grave busca dum Mallarmé".¹¹ But it was precisely these "nefelibata" elements of Symbolism that Eugénio de Castro was most keen to adopt at this point in his career. By aligning himself with the French Symbolists and Decadents, he aligned himself with a group of writers several of whose minor acolytes cultivated superiority identified with the obscure and the esoteric.¹² Many of the authors Eugénio de Castro was reading at the time repeat this idea. Moréas was a particularly enthusiastic exponent of the superiority of obscurity, and prefaced his Pèlerin Passionné in 1891 with the following quotation:

l'estoire iert si rimée, par foi le vous plevi,
Que li mesentendant en seront abaubi,
Et li bien entendant en seront esjoï. 13

Another writer with similar ideas was Barbey d'Aurévilly.¹⁴

¹¹ COELHO, "Simbolismo", p. 769.

¹² There is no suggestion here that a writer of the stature of Mallarmé cultivated obscurity simply in order to feel superior to those who did not understand. With writers such as Moréas, however, it seems certain that this was at least partly the case.

¹³ MORÉAS, Oeuvres, I, 147.

¹⁴ Barbey was a constant idol of Eugénio de Castro. In his article on "A Poesia Moderna" in the Diário Popular of 18 August 1893 he named him as one of the "quatro evangelistas" of the literature of the future. In 1894, he included him among the four dedicatees of the first edition of Interlúdio. In his lecture on João de Deus delivered in the Instituto de Coimbra on 2 February 1896, he described Barbey as "o supremo artista". See: Arte, Vol. 1 (1895-6), p. 263.

Among his Pensées Détachées we find the following statement: "Je ne crois qu'à ce qui est rare".¹⁵ Other supporters of this ideal were the Goncourt brothers. They profess their cult of literary esotericism extensively throughout their Journal. At one point, for example, they say: "L'épithète rare, voilà la marque de l'écrivain".¹⁶

The mark of ideas such as these can be seen clearly in the preface to Horas, where they make their first explicit appearance:

SILVA esotérica para os raros apenas.

.....

Tal a obra que o Poeta concebeu longe dos bárbaros, cujos inscientes apupos, - al não é de esperar, não lograrão desviá-lo do seu nobre e altivo desdém de nefelibata.

17

This cult of exclusivism (raros) and obscurity (esotérico) is part of an ideal of superiority (nobre, altivo) present in Oaristos and Horas. It accounts for the facile verbal obscurity of both books. For Eugénio de Castro, as for the

¹⁵ BARBEY, Oeuvres, II, 1236. Eugénio de Castro was certainly acquainted with the Pensées Détachées. He quotes the following (LXIII) as an epigraph to "Escuridão" in Silva: "Quelle est la plus belle destinée? Avoir du génie et rester obscur". In all the editions of the Pensées I have been able to consult, this formula has been given as: "La plus belle destinée: Avoir du génie et être obscur". However, in his Le Connétable des Lettres Barbey d'Aurévilly (Paris: Mercure de France, 1939), Aristide Marie gives (p. 291) the original formula as it appears in Barbey's diary of "Disjecta Membra". The wording of the original tallies with that given by Eugénio de Castro.

¹⁶ GONCOURT, Journal, III, 32. Eugénio de Castro mentions the Goncourt brothers in his "Carta ao Sr. Conselheiro Chagas" in the Jornal do Comércio of 7 February 1892. He also quotes a passage from the Journal as an epigraph to Canto IV of Sagramor.

¹⁷ The "apupos" mentioned here are not simply a generalization. On the evidence of Manuel da Silva-Gaio, Juan González Olmedilla tells how, in the streets of Lisbon, Eugénio de Castro was followed by bands of youths who "repetíanle a coro y por mofa, las poesías que consideraban de más irritante novedad e intención" (p. xxiv).

writers just mentioned, obscurity was a sign of initiation, of membership of an exclusive, and in his mind superior elite. The lexical obscurity of Oaristos and Horas reflects on a verbal level the superiority the poet attempts to affirm on a thematic level in both books.

Nonetheless, Oaristos and Horas occupy a special place in Eugénio de Castro's early output. Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho reports Eugénio de Castro as referring to Horas in 1907 as a "velha blague".¹⁸ Vitorino Nemésio's judgement of both books is along the same lines: "O Simbolismo foi, para Eugénio de Castro, uma aventura e uma intriga vividas na mocidade, com o saudável desplante de quem faz uma boa partida ao próximo".¹⁹ Indeed, despite their exaggeration and their wilful obscurity, there is a boyish naivety about Oaristos and Horas which saves them from unduly harsh criticism. There is a certain tongue-in-cheek quality about them which we find again in the early poems of Silva. It suggests that the emotional conflicts described in these poems are less dramatic than we are invited to believe, and that the cult of superiority is as much the result of youthful impetuosity as of a profound need to assert unusual levels of experience. Nonetheless, the ideal of superiority is there, and it will soon develop into one of the most fundamental aspects of Eugénio de Castro's work.

In 1892 and 1893, following the personal tragedy of the broken engagement with Helena Bordalo Pinheiro, this cult of superiority loses all sense of playfulness in the poetry of Eugénio de Castro. Oaristos and Horas tell of unrequited love, but there was something to hope for, and the poet could afford to be playful. After 1892, however, a period of loneliness begins in Eugénio de Castro's life, loneliness which will dominate his work until O Rei Galaor.

¹⁸ CARVALHO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 48.

¹⁹ VITORINO NEMÉSIO, "Eugénio de Castro", in Litoral, 1944, p. 317

Vitorino Nemésio is undoubtedly right when he writes: "Nas fronteiras do monge íntimo com o hábito da sua Ordem se desenrolava o drama da solidão radical de Eugénio de Castro".²⁰ The poems written between 1892 and 1895 deal with the loneliness of an emotional vacuum which Eugénio de Castro attempts to hide behind the showy spectacle of colourful external structures.

A cult of superiority inevitably implies hidden feelings of inadequacy. In his preface to Safira, for example, Eugénio de Castro talks of his "apaixonado desejo de vir a ser alguém". The obvious implication of this is that he does not consider himself to be "alguém". For some time, in the early poetry of Silva, there is the suggestion that he will attempt to achieve the greatness he craved through a poetic exploration, in depth, of his own feelings and emotions, thus securing for himself a place among the great writers of his time. But, in the long run, Eugénio de Castro lacked the ability to interpret his own experience consistently in real depth, and he soon returned, this time with a vengeance, to the more easily accessible, if less worthwhile form of superiority prefigured in Oaristos and Horas.

Between 1892 and 1895 Eugénio de Castro dedicated himself to the elaboration of a philosophy of literary elitism based on what he termed Intelligence and Art. Here again he aligned himself with certain currents of thought prevalent in France at the time: the cult of Art for Art's sake, of Art as an intellectual experience accessible only to the privileged few.²¹ These become the main features of his new and much more serious search for exclusiveness. In the preface to Safira he states: "Quero a arte para meia-dúzia", adding "porque só é bom o que não é vulgar". In his article on "O Teatro Moderno" he proclaims the exclusiveness of Intellect. The plays of

²⁰ NEMÉSIO, "Perfil de Eugénio de Castro", p. 10.

²¹ The theory of Symbolist drama (see page 209) is based on a distinction between "élite" and "non-initiés".

Maeterlinck and Ibsen are, he says, "astros da primeira grandeza só visíveis pelo telescópio dos Intelectuais". This obsession remains constant throughout the period in question. Reviewing the Union des Trois Aristocraties by Hugues Rebell in the "Revista Bibliográfica" of O Instituto in September 1895, he stated: "nesta era de balofas vaidades, a única nobreza justificável é a do Génio, que deve viver à lei da nobreza, isto é, à respeitável distância dos bárbaros, dos não-iniciados" (pp. 593-4). Genius and Art (which he sees embodied in himself) become the great ideals. His reviews in O Instituto in 1895 provided a platform for the expression of these ideas. In August he described Le Bocage of Ernest Raynaud as "um bosque onde irão refugiar-se as almas delicadas, que olham com desgosto as mórbidas e anti-artísticas frivolidades deste desamorável fim-de-século" (pp. 528-9). In January he had said of Viriato, a historical study published by António de Vasconcelos: "Trabalhos como o VIRIATO só os realiza neste país de indiferença e tédio, quem à gloriola barata, ao aplauso da massa obtusa e ignorante, prefere as nobres voluptuosidades da arte pela arte" (p. 61). Rubén Darío sums up Eugénio de Castro's constant obsession with the exclusiveness of Art and Intellect when he says of him:

En los tiempos que corren, dice de Castro, el dilettantismo literario, ese joyero de piedras falsas, dejó de ser un monopolio de los burgueses, ha pasado hasta las más bajas clases populares. Cuando las otras preocupaciones intelectuales, la filosofía y el derecho, las matemáticas y la química, por ejemplo, son respetadas por el vulgo, no hay por ahí boni frate que no se juzgue con derecho de invadir el campo literario, exponiendo opiniones, distribuyendo diplomas de valer o de mediocridad. 22

As already mentioned, the germ of these ideas can be found in several of the authors Eugénio de Castro was reading at the time. Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, for example, was also attracted by the aristocracy of genius. In L'Ève Future he refers to his hero Edison as an "homme de génie

²² DARÍO, "Eugénio de Castro", p. 213.

(sorte de gens dont la noblesse toute spéciale humiliera toujours les égalitaires".²³ Another important source of influence for these ideas in the work of Eugénio de Castro is Friedrich Nietzsche.²⁴ A leisured aristocracy of genius is an essential part of Nietzsche's cultural ideal:

Eine höhere Cultur kann allein dort entstehen, wo es zwei unterschiedene Kasten der Gesellschaft gibt: die der Arbeitenden und die der Müssigen, zu wahrer Musse Befähigten: oder mit stärkerem Ausdruck: die Kaste der Zwangs-Arbeit und die Kaste der Frei-Arbeit. 25

[A higher culture can only arise where there are two distinct castes in society - the caste of working people, and that of leisured people equipped for genuine leisure; or, to put it more strongly, the caste of forced labour and the caste of free labour.]

Eugénio de Castro did not confine these ideas to literature. Elitism clearly characterizes his ideas on politics as well. In the "Epílogo" of Horas he had spoken of his "coração católico e monárquico" (17). Many thought this a figurative expression of his concept of literary aristocracy. On the contrary. In his article "Nuvens Negras" in the Jornal do Comércio of 31 January 1892 he ridiculed the ideas of democracy and social equality. Indeed, he lived in horror of democracy, fearing, no doubt, that it might threaten his supposed superiority by allowing others to "invadir el campo" of a very precarious exclusiveness. He remained opposed to democracy even after the formation of the Republic in 1910. His anti-democratic views were notorious. In 1914 he was appointed by the

²³ VILLIERS, I, 88.

²⁴ There seems little doubt that Eugénio de Castro was acquainted with Nietzsche's writings, though it is difficult to say to what extent. The first mention of Nietzsche we find by him is in the "Revista Bibliográfica" of O Instituto of January 1895, where he mentions in passing "os assombrosos trabalhos de Nietzsche" (p. 63). But the influence of Nietzsche is obvious in the review of the Union des Trois Aristocraties quoted on page 353.

²⁵ NIETZSCHE, Werke, II, Menschliches, Allzumenschliches, p. 327, aphorism 439.

Republican government, "sem concurso", to the Chair of French in the University of Coimbra. This appointment raised a storm of protest and a series of virulent articles in the press. Supporters of the Republic objected to a declared enemy of democracy receiving such an honour from a republican government.²⁶

In his political as well as in his literary ideals, Eugénio de Castro conforms to the beliefs of the group of French writers who so dominated his way of thinking around that time. The Goncourt brothers, for example, were fiercely opposed to democracy, and were dedicated defenders of the principle of aristocracy:

Dans l'élite de ceux qui pensent, il se fait une visible réaction contre le suffrage universel et le principe démocratique; et des esprits se mettent à voir le salut de l'avenir dans une servitude de la canaille sous une aristocratie bienfaisante des intelligences. 27

This aristocratic crisis makes frequent appearances in their Journal:

Bien décidément la République est une belle chimère de cervelles grandement pensantes, généreuses, désintéressées; elle n'est pas praticable avec les mauvaises et petites passions de la populace française. Chez elle: Liberté, Égalité, Fraternité, ne veulent dire qu'asservissement ou mort des classes supérieures. 28

Indeed, an essential part of Eugénio de Castro's all-embracing elitism was what we might term his aristocratic complex. Hernâni Cidade mentions the "preocupação do Poeta pela sua prosápia".²⁹ This is something of an understatement, Eugénio de Castro (like Villiers de l'Isle-Adam) was obsessed with the supposed nobility of his lineage. All his early books of poetry carried as their

²⁶ A list of the articles in question is given in the "Bibliografia" of Biblos, 1946.

²⁷ GONCOURT, Journal, III, 206.

²⁸ Ibid., IV, 231.

²⁹ CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", p. 62.

motif a drawing of a "cata-sol", ³⁰ the heraldic symbol of the "morgados de Cata-Sol, de que o Poeta descendia". ³¹ He likewise wrote a series of newspaper articles under the pseudonym of Cata-Sol. This aristocratic complex makes sporadic appearances in his poetry. He wrote one poem claiming Sá de Miranda as his ancestor - "A Sá de Miranda", in Depois da Ceifa - and another "À memória do meu 13^o avô Diogo de Barros, I.^o Adail-Mor de Portugal" - "Os Ossos do Infante", in A Fonte do Sátiro. The culmination of this particular obsession was his publication in 1933 of Os Meus Vasconcelos, a work of wearisome genealogical research documenting his family history back to its origins among the early Portuguese nobility, and listing the titles of aristocracy devolving on him by succession.

These views of political and literary elitism stem from a common cause. To counterbalance his personal vulnerability, Eugénio de Castro constantly pandered to restricted sections of society. He clearly saw literature as an "escola de elogio mútuo" between reader and writer: the reader enjoys the pleasure of understanding works written for a superior few; the writer enjoys the praise of the reader for thus assuring him of his superiority. Society becomes divided into the tiny clique of initiates and the mass of "bárbaros", and political elitism is the almost inevitable result. Eugénio de Castro consequently pandered to the aristocracy, hoping that to adopt their cause would mean inclusion among them. In adopting this stance, Eugénio de Castro was aligning himself with a world which even then was coming to an end. Were he simply a political thinker, we would be within our rights to dismiss him as superficial and irrelevant, defending ideas

³⁰ This particular caprice reaches its high-point with A Nereide de Harlém, which has at least one hundred "cata-sóis" drawn on the front cover.

³¹ CIDADE, "O Diamante Negro", p. 62.

which today seem misplaced and out of date. But he is not a political thinker, and this cult of elitism is an essential part of the emotional conflict which is the touch-stone of all his early output. It is in this function that these ideas come alive, and assume a human and personal significance that is relevant at any point in time.

Eugénio de Castro aims for superiority in his poetry by expressing emotional experience in a manner which will raise it above the level of ordinary experience: through intellectualizing structures, in terms of philosophical systems, with clear pretensions of metaphysical depth. This is already apparent in the poems written, as has been conjectured, in 1893. Here he rationalizes his own experience in terms of philosophical structures borrowed from Villiers de l'Isle-Adam and above all from Schopenhauer. These same structures reappear in Belkiss, while a highly distorted version of Schopenhauer's ideas lies behind many of the horror-poems of Interlúnio. Tirésias presents the theme of eroticism in terms of a grandiose cult of Art. Sagramor transforms the conflict of spiritual and physical love into a wide-ranging quest for the meaning of life. O Rei Galaor offers the same theme in the guise of a desperate battle against the forces of Destiny. But the real conflict of these poems remains the search for emotional stability through the conflicting channels of physical and spiritual love. It is from the instability implied by this search that the feelings of inadequacy arise. And, fearing to reveal his inadequacy to the eyes of the world, Eugénio de Castro expresses his search in terms of intellectual and metaphysical concepts, identified in his mind with the superior. These are the verbal superstructures he imposes on his work. They are elevated as outward signs of superiority, but are in fact towering monuments to a tragic misconception of human dignity. The symbolist poetry of Eugénio de Castro presents us with a man for whom grief was a sign of weakness, and who constantly endeavoured to transform grief

into a grandiose battle against supernatural forces. Thus Belkiss's personal tragedy is forgotten amidst the generalizations of Zophesamin's endless didacticism. Sagramor's personal tragedy with Cecília is superseded by the universal failure of life to answer man's needs. Eugénio de Castro's early output is tragic in a sense quite different from that intended by the poet. It is not the visions of horror in Interlúdio which provide the tragedy, or the failure of Sagramor's quest for the meaning of life. It is the entire intention of his poetry, where human feeling is cheapened and can only be revalued through the creation of a bookish world providing the titanic forces the poet was unable to recognize in the real one.

"Art for art's sake", in the case of Eugénio de Castro, is a verbal trick. The reality of the situation would be more properly expressed by the phrase "art for ego's sake". Poetry becomes a form of mental Narcissism, where the author admires himself in the magnifying mirror of his art. He lives in a wilderness, like the "Filha de Rei", yet, like her, he admires his magnified reflection in the stream. But the magnified image is not true, and there is the constant fear that someone may break through and smash the mirror. And so crudely built walls of obscurity and facile esotericism go up. The elements of Symbolism which Eugénio de Castro borrowed with greatest consistency - obscurity, pretensions of metaphysical depth, philosophical debate - are less a "modo de vestir"³² than a "modo de armar". In his interview with Albino Forjaz de Sampaio in 1907 he defined his art in a manner which puts this particular aspect of his poetry beyond doubt:

Para mim, a Arte é o jardim do meu espírito, um
jardinzinho discreto, de vastas sombras, onde me
refugio e esqueço a ouvir o passado da voz das
fontes. A grade com que o cerquei vestiu-se toda de
trépadeiras que dissimulam a hostilidade das
lanças de ferro.

33

³² MAIA, Vento sobre a charneco, p. 291.

³³ SAMPAIO, Grilhetas, p. 147.

But even so Eugénio de Castro never succeeds fully in concealing the real conflicts lying behind his poems. Their verbal superstructures are constantly eroded by the profound emotional turmoil they were meant to transform into superior experience. When we examine his poetry closely, the intellectualizing themes crumble away leaving a narrative of loneliness which is profoundly human, not the speculation of a superior enquiring mind. Belkiss is presented as the victim of physical desire. But when she is abandoned by Solomon she dies of a broken heart. Beneath the grandiose terminology of the poem, her deepest desire was to be loved by the king. Sagramor, too, may lament the collapse of a universal vision, but the most poignant lines of the entire poem tell of his grief for the loss of Cecília. Galaor sees himself fighting against Fate, but the would-be tragedy of the poem is turned into a message of hope through the final victory of spiritual love.

The symbolist poetry of Eugénio de Castro illustrates an attempt to revalue experience following a tragic misunderstanding of the value of human emotion. But the cult of superior experience, the obscurity, the intellectual structures and the philosophical pretensions merely lead the poet to falsify the experience he was trying to enhance. Eugénio de Castro is the victim of his own inadequacy, encouraged by contemporary trends of thought which ultimately prove pernicious. He attempts to assert superiority through the crude expedient of exclusivism and empty erudition. But he merely distorts life, the interpretation of which alone could have made him great. And in the final analysis emotions are stronger than words: his emotional conflicts swirl through his poems, dragging away the reader who refuses to hold on to the verbal structures Eugénio de Castro invites us to accept. His poetry is the complete illustration of an ideal of superiority which can only fail, because it denies the value of human life.

The would-be superiority of Art was an ideal Eugénio de Castro would hold on to for some time. In his interview with Albino Forjaz de Sampaio in 1907 he stated: "Cada vez me parece mais verdadeiro o verso de Goethe: 'Werke des Geist's [sic] und der Kunst sind für den Pöbel nicht da'".³⁴ But even this was an ideal he would relinquish in the end. From 1900 on, the need to prove superiority through the crude expedient of wilful obscurity diminishes, and Eugénio de Castro's poetry becomes less and less abstruse. Amadeu Ferraz de Carvalho is no doubt right when he attributes this change to the security brought into the poet's life by his wife, who, he says, "lhe deu um lar de vida tranquila e doce, onde no mais venturoso ambiente decorreu a fase mais feliz e mais gloriosa da sua existência",³⁵ adding:

Estou convencido de que, além doutras razões, grandemente contribuiu para o novo carácter que, a partir de 1900, assumiu a sua obra poética, a paz, o sossego, a felicidade, a vida remançosa, regrada e tranquila que passou a ter no aconchego do lar.³⁶

It is possible to see a certain "condição jânica" in³⁷ the poetry of Eugénio de Castro, looking forwards and backwards into each century with a different face. From the turn of the century on, he withdraws more and more from the contemporary scene and the ideas he had found there. When Albino Forjaz de Sampaio asked him for the names of his favourite authors in 1907, he gave the list as: "Camões, Castilho, João de Deus, Homero, Virgílio, Petrarca, Schelley [sic], Goethe, Leopardi, Lamartine, Vigny e Verlaine".³⁸ Of his old idols, only Verlaine remains. When he published Descendo a Encosta in 1924, Vieira de Almeida, reviewing the book, rather lamented:

³⁴ SAMPAIO, p. 147.

³⁵ CARVALHO, p. 46.

³⁶ Ibid., p. 48.

³⁷ SOVERAL, "O Tempo Europeu de Eugénio de Castro", p. 52.

³⁸ SAMPAIO, p. 147.

o não muito feliz pendor das suas últimas obras, louvaminhadas por quantos, nunca tendo podido subir à altura a que o poeta os convidara, folgavam agora de vê-lo descer à sua compreensão, e ao seu critério artístico, em que trivialidade é sinónimo de simplicidade. 39

Indeed, by this time Eugénio de Castro had dropped to the level of popular poetry, of which he himself had once said:

Mas a poesia moderna, exprimindo o espírito moderno, este espírito cheio de contradicções e de mistério, ao mesmo tempo materialista e místico, interesseiro e generoso, não pode seguir o veio da poesia popular. 40

--ooOoo--

Eugénio de Castro is not a great poet. His powers of perception were restricted, and he proved incapable of creating a personal idiom for the expression of his own thoughts and feelings. These two failings are facets of each other: Eugénio de Castro lacked the insight necessary to recognize the value of his own thoughts and feelings. The philosopher Wittgenstein suggested that a man's universe is only as large as his vocabulary. Seen from this point of view, the poetry of Eugénio de Castro represents an attempt to magnify his own universe by mere dint of words. A more favourable expression of the same idea constitutes what might be called the official interpretation of his poetry, again formulated by Manuel da Silva-Gaio (here with particular reference to Sagramor):

Assim, [o poeta] talha-se uma vida bela e nobre, fora da vida agitada e tumultuosa, e as coisas e aspectos do mundo, pela especial refrangência do seu espírito, convertem-se e formam uma larga criação de Arte, onde aparecem banhadas na graça e pureza dum mundo novo, onde as próprias atitudes dador são eurítmicas, plásticas, os soluços musicais, e as próprias coisas cenográficamente harmónicas, embora por vezes envolvidas de tintas magoadas e

39 ALMEIDA, "Descendo a Encosta", p. 124.

40 In his review of the Improvisos of Carlos Harrington in the Novidades of 2 December 1892.

mortas. ⁴¹

But this is far from representing the truth of the matter. The words used by Eugénio de Castro accumulate around him until they hem him in like the tower of Galaor. They do not widen his universe because they do not correspond to a vision which itself has any depth. José Régio saw the main defect of Eugénio de Castro's poetry as "a insuficiência de ideias caracterizadas e próprias, de emoções violentas ou profundas, de paixões ou sentimentos diferentes - que exigissem expressão imediata". ⁴² But it would be wrong to suggest that these feelings and emotions do not exist in his poetry. The lack of ideas stems precisely from Eugénio de Castro's failure to evaluate those feelings and emotions properly. He attempts to transform them into bookish and philosophical precepts, instead of grasping them as living realities. But by committing himself to self-expression through words in the first place, he inevitably expresses his true situation through his very attempts to transform it. The poetry of Eugénio de Castro shows the inevitable victory of real emotion over empty erudition, but it is a victory the poet did not want to win.

It is difficult to avoid concluding that contemporary writers over-rated the value of Eugénio de Castro's poetry. The Brazilian writer Afrânio Peixoto, for example, grouped him along with Gabriele d'Annunzio and Maurice Maeterlinck into "a trindade santíssima que adoro". ⁴³ But, in so doing, he did the Belgian considerable injustice, though the comparison with d'Annunzio is perhaps to the point. Jorge de Sena comes closest to a true judgement of Eugénio de Castro when he includes him in the class of "grande poeta menor". ⁴⁴ He lacked the depth of vision and the

⁴¹ In O Instituto, 1895, p. 529.

⁴² RÉGIO, Pequena História, p. 55.

⁴³ See CIDADE, O Conceito da Poesia, p. 257.

⁴⁴ JORGE DE SENA, "Camilo Pessanha e António Patrício", in Estrada Larga, I, 136.

power of expression necessary to be a great poet. Nonetheless, his work is the expression of a complicated set of mental and emotional relationships. The interest which these relationships offer, coupled with the fact that Eugénio de Castro was in all probability unconscious of them, go together to make him great in a secondary way. It would be unfair to dismiss him as a literary hack. Some of the poems of Silva are excellent. Belkiss, too, despite its faults, cannot be overlooked. It stands on the line which divides literature as expression and literature as conscious magnification. Its literary and philosophical structures allow Eugénio de Castro to rationalize his own experience without distorting it beyond recognition. There is genuine human conflict, at times forcefully expressed in this poem. As a result, it remains a worthwhile, and perhaps unjustly neglected work of art.

After the turn of the century, the quality of Eugénio de Castro's poetry levels out. There are no more abject failures like Interlúnio, but nothing that can compare with the best poems of Silva or with Belkiss. The period between 1889 and 1896 contains his poetry at its best and at its worst. At its worst it would honour no-one. At its best, it still repays being read.

Appendix A

Safira

Jornal do Comércio: 6 March 1892.

SAFIRA

Advertência: Dizer cousas raras, cousas de sonho, - a música dos sentimentos, a cor dos apetites, o perfume dos espíritos, - dizer cousas raras, cousas de sonho, por meio de fórmulas inéditas, virgens, imprevistas: - tal a suprema ambição dos que fazem do verso e da prosa um supremo culto.

A ideia buscada nos recantos mais inacessíveis da alma; a forma floreada de esmaltes, de filigranas, de gemas, como um peitoral bizantino.

Cada verso como um broche de diamantes, sob um tufo de rendas; cada retalho da prosa como um fruto proibido num prato de vidro veneziano, oiro e verde.

E, no verso e na prosa, a ideia brilhando realçada pelas joalherias verbais.

Assim, uma completa reforma de processos se tornava imprescindível.

Neste sentido, bem ou mal, mas honestamente, quem estas linhas escreve vangloria-se de, em alguns meses, ter dotado a poética do seu país com invoações que, a despeito do modo como foram recebidas, já hoje começam a ser usadas mesmo por aqueles que delas pior disseram.

Vai a sua obra em começo.

E no seu apaixonado desejo de vir a ser alguém, pensa remodelar a prosa, como já remodelou o verso, sonhando uma prosa onde a música das palavras se case com a tendência musical das ideias, uma prosa requintada e singular como certas estufas de Nice onde se violenta a natureza, onde os lilases florescem em pleno dezembro.

Porque só é bom o que não é vulgar.

Dessa prosa vai sair brevemente um ensaio, um volume chamado SAFIRA.

São desse ensaio os capítulos seguintes.

I

Morena é minha Amada, morena mas fermosa, como a
Esposa do Cântico dos Cânticos.

Já de púrpura e linho fresco e de ramos verdes de
alecrim está armado o leito para as nossas Núpcias. Não
deve tardar a minha Amada, que já rompeu a Estrela da tarde.

No alto do meu terraço estou esperando por Ela. Aplico
o meu ouvido mas inda não oiço o tumulto da sua comitiva;
sinto um perfume lento, embebedando-me, mas não sei se é o
aroma da sua boca que se aproxima, se a respiração das
amendoeiras que agora começam a florir no meu horto; vejo
um clarão ao longe, não sei se é Ela que chega, se o Luar
que nasce.

Amada, minha doce Amada! Rosa do meu outono, Peliça
do meu Inverno, Chuva de Maio, Tarde de Estio;

Amada, minha doce Amada! Serra da Estrela dos Desejos,
Asilo das minhas Ambições, florida Meca dos meus Beijos,
Pastora das minhas Ilusões;

Amada, minha doce Amada! Abat-jour da minha Tristeza,
Palácio da minha alegria;

Parque dos meus cuidados, Berço e Navio dos meus
sonhos, Casa de campo dos meus dissabores, Otomana do meu
Tédio, Vaidade e Regalo dos meus Olhos, tenra Erva para os
meus Apetites, Irmã da Caridade da minh'Alma;

Amada, minha doce Amada, vem! não tardes.

Como hão-de os frutos crescer à sombra? Vem! Abre teus
seios ao calor dos meus beijos e eles medrarão e tomarão a
cor dos pêssegos.

II

Morena é minha Amada, morena mas fermosa.

O corpo da minha Amada é como a dispensa [sc: despensa]
dum rei: os seus lábios distilam licor de romã; seus olhos
são duas cabacinhas de cristal cheias dum vinho estonteante;

os dedos das suas mãos são longos e pálidos como os espargos, suas unhas como as amêndoas, seus dentes como as camarinhas, seus peitos como frutas verdes.

A sua voz é como um perfume que cantasse.

O seu nome é como uma pastilha aromática que logo aromatiza os beijos que o pronunciavam; o seu nome é fresco e cheiroso como um jacinto ou um cravo: por vezes tenho vontade de o pôr no peito.

Na boca dos profanos, o nome da minha Amada seria como uma Hóstia na boca dum Elefante.

Por isso uma vez que estávamos bebendo, eu e alguns amigos, sob uns loureiros, querendo eu falar da minha Amada me arreceei de pronunciar seu nome, porque no ouvido dos vulgares tal nome seria como um vinho precioso num botijo de barro.

Busquei então entre as Flores um nome jeitoso para designar a minha Amada: mas todos os nomes me pareceram murchos ao pé do nome da minha Amada.

Busquei entre os Perfumes um nome jeitoso para designar a minha Amada: mas todos os nomes se evaporaram ao pé do nome da minha Amada.

Busquei entre as Estrelas um nome jeitoso para designar a minha Amada: mas todos os nomes me pareceram pálidos ao pé do nome da minha Amada.

Afelândra, Mirra, Vésper: todos estes nomes me pareceram indignos dEla.

Subitamente, e já os meus companheiros se inquietavam com a longa interrupção da minha narrativa, quando um cabelo de sol, filtrado pelas folhas, veio incidir sobre uma safira, que eu trago no dedo e que sobrenaturalmente se iluminou com tão doirado beijado.

E então me pareceu jeitoso o nome de Safira para designar a minha Amada, preciosa como as safiras, discreta como as safiras, de um brilho constante, de dia e noite, como as safiras.

Safira lhe chamei, por Safira a conhecem: mas só eu sei o verdadeiro nome dessa que é morena como o incenso, cheirosa como o bálsamo da Judeia.

Safira! meu doce jardim de Êxtases! vem, não tardes ... Que a aleluia dos teus olhos me alumie e que os teus braços me engrinaldem.

III

Há uma flor, arum dracunculus, flor maravilhosa para a vista, feita dos mais sedosos tecidos, corada das mais finas cores, mas repugnante para o olfacto, porque o seu cheiro é como o cheiro dos cadáveres.

As outras mulheres são para mim como essa flor: se a pelúcia dos seus olhos, o veludo dos seus cabelos e a seda das suas carnes me tentam e delas me aproximo, logo fujo espavorido, porque sinto o cheiro cadavérico de suas almas.

Há uma flor, e desta ignoro eu o nome, que só de noite tem perfume; de dia ninguém a vê, ninguém a sente, mas à noite, ao luar, é tal o seu aroma, tão perturbante e tão subtil, que quem passa junto dela logo é tomado dum delíquio e cai no chão desmaiado.

Tal é a minha Amada. À luz crua da vida, ninguém a vê, ninguém a sente, mas apenas o crepúsculo da minha melancolia a reveste, é de ver como ela se levanta, insinuante e prestigiosa, derramando carícias.

Safira! Czarina doce, vem! acode aos meus Desejos deportados na Sibéria da tua Ausência!

13 March 1892.

IV

Para esperar a minha Amada ergui-me e vim para este terraço inda a Lua não tinha nascido, inda não tinham nascido as Constelações.

Já a Lua morreu, já as Constelações morreram, já o Sol nasceu, já o Sol é alto: - e minha Amada sem vir!

Ela me prometeu que viria, eu a espero! que a sua palavra nunca mente.

Mas já o meu coração se sobressalta com a demora, já a minha vista se cansa de querer ver e não ver, meu ouvido de querer ouvir e não ouvir, minha boca de ter sede sem avistar quem lha mitigue.

Os músicos que mandei vir, os músicos vestidos de claras sedas, os músicos que mandei vir para tocarem nas nossas bodas, já estão cansados de esperar, cansadas estão suas harpas, suas cítaras, suas violas; as flores que mandei vir, as flores de seda, as flores claras como os vestidos dos músicos, as flores que mandei vir para florirem as nossas bodas, dir-se-ia que têm síncopes e extenuadamente se fanam; os perfumes que mandei vir, os perfumes claros e macios como as sedas claras dos vestidos dos músicos, os perfumes claros que mandei vir para perfumarem as nossas bodas, já parecem almas que querem amar e não podem.

Para assistir às nossas Núpcias, Safira! ergueu-se El-Rei, meu Pai, o activo velho de barbas brancas, ergueu-se El-Rei, meu Pai, de manhãzinha cedo, pôs na cabeça sua coroa cravejada de pedrarias preciosas como o teu nome, pôs aos ombros seu real manto cor do meu entusiasmo, pôs aos ombros seu real manto forrado duma inocência de arminhos, de arminhos brancos como a tua incoência, tomou em suas mãos seu ceptro de oiro, de oiro como a tua palavra, e veio, Safira, veio para assistir às nossas núpcias!

Mas El-Rei, meu Pai, é muito velho (suas barbas são cor da sua consciência), e porque é muito velho e porque perdeu a noite e porque o esperar fatiga, já mal se pode ter em pé, já se deixa cair exausto sobre as poltronas de veludo e de ébano.

Os olhos de minha Mãe, a Rainha, já se humedecem de me verem inquieto, inquieto pela tua demora.

E são tão húmidos os olhos de minha Mãe, de minha Mãe,

a Rainha, que parece que as pedras do seu diadema desceram aos seus olhos, ou que as lágrimas dos seus olhos subiram ao seu diadema.

Cansadas de esperar, minhas Irmãs as Infantas, as loiras Infantas de olhos verdes, desceram ao pomar colher amoras; mas eis que regressando ao palácio, seus vestidos de lhama se rasgaram nos espinhos das roseiras. E agora, vendo rasgados os seus vestidos de lhama, choram, choram, e todas se apoquentam, minhas Irmãs, as Infantas, as loiras Infantas de olhos verdes.

Pela altura do Sol vejo que é meio dia. E a minha Amada sem chegar!

V

É meia-noite, meia-noite sem estrelas ...

Safira me prometeu que viria ao romper da manhã: é meia-noite e ainda não chegou!

Vendo a minha desesperação, El-Rei, meu Pai, chora, chora como uma criança e as suas lágrimas, deslizando nas suas barbas brancas, são como uma chuva de estrelas num campo cheio de neve.

Angustiadamente, minha Mãe, a Rainha, chora, chora, e os seus soluços são como o estalar das cordas duma harpa.

Minhas Irmãs, as Infantas, as loiras Infantas de olhos verdes, choram, choram, e os seus olhos parecem esmeraldas aflitas.

Minha aia, a velha aia que me criou, vai pelos corredores, aos gemidos, despenteando-se e rasgando-se.

Os músicos que mandei vir, os músicos vestidos de claras sedas, com mãos trémulas arrancam gemidos à alma das violas, das gemedoras violas que parecem almas feridas.

Todos choram, todos me olham com enternecida piedade! Só eu não choro, só eu não posso chorar!

VI

- Minha aia, minha aia,
Ide meu aio chamar,
Dizei-lhe que vá, depressa,
Meu jinete aparelhar.
Infantas, minhas Irmãs,
Ide depressa, buscar
As minhas esporas de oiro
E o meu manto verde-mar.
- Aonde vais tu, meu filho,
Que assim nos queres deixar?
- Vou à cata da Princesa
Com quem me quero casar.
- A Princesa te mentiu,
Não na deves procurar.
- Perdoa-me, minha Mãe,
Mas não vos posso escutar.
- Andaste, filho, em meu seio,
Dei-te, filho, de mamar,
Filho das minhas entranhas,
Não me dês tanto penar.
Não partas, que é noite escura,
Noite escura, sem luar,
Espera, filho, que amanheça,
Que te podes transviar.
- Perdoa-me, minha Mãe,
Que não vos posso escutar ...
- A Princesa te mentiu,
Não na deves procurar ...
Princesa que mente não
Deve contigo casar.
- Perdoa-me, minha Mãe,
Mas não vos posso escutar,
Nunca mais descansarei
Enquanto a não encontrar;
A ela estou preso e dela
Não me quero desligar.
- A Princesa te mentiu,
Não na deves procurar ...

Tem dó, filho, de nós todos,
 Não nos vás abandonar.
 - Adeus, adeus, que me parto,
 Não me posso demorar,
 Adeus, adeus, minha Mãe,
 Que me heis dado de mamar.
 Vinde meu Pai, meu senhor,
 O vosso filho abraçar,
 Dai-me, ó minhas Irmãs loiras,
 Vossas bocas a beijar;
 Perdoai-me, perdoai-me
 O mal que vos vou causar,
 E rezai, rezai por mim
 Se não me virdes voltar!

20 March 1892.

VII

Alvorece. Depois de ter andado toda a noite pelas landes, sob a murmuração marítima dos pinheiros, eis-me chegado alfim ao palácio de Safira.

Alvorece, é quase dia, mas tão triste se apresenta o céu, tão cheio de estagnadas nuvens cor de cinza, anda no ar um tão baço nevoeiro de melancolia, que mais parece um entardecer que uma alvorada.

O palácio de Safira, o altivo palácio de sete torres, o altivo palácio de basalto e mármore, fica num monte, entre jardins onde, pelo calado da noite, as fontes choram, o alegre palácio hoje me parece triste, infinitamente triste, triste como estoutro palácio de Safira, a minha alma.

Nos jardins, as flores parecem donzelas doentes; as fontes choram e chamam umas pelas outras como infelizes amantes paralíticos; os repuxos morrem como aspirações assassinadas; o vento arrasta as folhas secas ...

Nos jardins, as flores parecem donzelas doentes, e os

pavões, os pavões brancos, os pavões fogem espavoridos como se um leão os perseguisse.

Sinto que me está para acontecer uma desgraça, sinto a aproximação da desgraça na agonia das flores, no choro das fontes, na valsa das folhas secas e no fugir dos pavões, dos pavões brancos.

Uma serva passa, vertendo copioso pranto; uma serva passa, dela me acerco:

- Dize-me tu, trigueira serva, o motivo da tua angústia; dize-me tu, trigueira serva, e eu te darei seis onças de oiro fino, e eu te darei um saiote de veludo, e cem varas de linho branco para o teu enxovial e dois brincos de pedras para as tuas orelhas, dize-me tu onde está tua ama, tua ama, a Princesa Safira.

Ouve-me a serva, chorando sempre, e a sua boca é sem resposta como uma lira sem cordas.

- Eu te darei, trigueira serva, um anel de rubins, um cinto de prata e um pente de marfim, se me disseres, trigueira serva, a causa da tua aflição, se me disseres, chorosa serva, onde está tua ama, tua ama, a Princesa Safira.

Ouve-me a serva e não responde, chorando sempre.

Murcham-se as flores, as fontes gemem, os repuxos morrem, o vento arrasta as folhas secas, e os pavões fogem, os nupciais pavões, os pavões brancos.

VIII

A alegria fugiu de mim, meu coração é triste como um jardim onde as flores nascessem murchas, a tristeza me abraçou como um polvo.

Inda há dois dias o meu coração era alegre como um craveiro à janela duma rapariga: hoje, sinto que passam bandos de corvos na minha alma.

A minha alma é triste como uma agonia num deserto,

como uma epidemia numa creche, como um suicídio num sepulcro, como uma ínsua depois duma cheia.

Na minha alma, duas mãos, monstruosamente cruéis, estão queimando com um ferro em brasa os seios puros, os seios de veludo e leite, das Virgens que dormiam na minha alma.

Na minha alma chove cinza: a minha alma é como uma floresta onde uma alcateia de lobos andasse perseguindo um bando de criancinhas nuas.

- Virgem dos Andores e dos Vitrais, Virgem Consoladora dos Aflitos, pelos rubins de sangue de vosso Filho Crucificado, pelos diamantes de suor de vosso Filho Crucificado, pelas ametistas das chagas de vosso Filho Crucificado, tende piedade de mim!

Eu vivia alegre e sereno, Virgem dos Andores e dos Vitrais, eu vivia alegre e sereno na corte de El-Rei, meu Pai, aguardando a hora do meu noivado, alegre e sereno, esperando a minha Noiva, a Princesa Safira, que deveria chegar por uma manhã de flores, grácil e pálida, entre a aclamação das palmas verdes e das magnólias brancas.

O nosso amor era puro, puro como um véu de Noviça, puro como as fraldinhas do Menino Jesus, vosso Filho, puro como a flor da farinha, como os seixos que dormem no fundo dos ribeiros e como as asas dos Arcanjos.

O nosso amor era brilhante, brilhante como os pátios da Alhambra, como os nimbos das Santas bizantinas, como as dalmáticas dos Mártires, como uma Novena, como um incêndio na loja dum ourives.

O nosso amor era florido, florido como um Missal gótico, florido como uma alma de Poeta, como a imaginação duma virgem, como um jardim no alto duma torre, como o brocado dos vossos mantos, Virgem dos Andores e dos Vitrais!

O nosso amor era discreto, discreto como uma jóia de grande valor arrecadada num velho baú de sola, como um perfume sem ênfase, como uma lua nascida às quatro horas da tarde, por um dia de sol.

Eu vivia alegre e sereno, ó Virgem dos Retábulos e dos Esmaltes! eu vivia alegre e sereno, na corte de El-Rei, meu Pai.

E eis que, há dias, Safira me mandou dizer: "Amanhã, ao nascer do sol, acompanhada de meu Pai, de minha Mãe, de meus Irmãos, os Infantes, de minhas aias e de meus pagens, irei, amigo meu, irei ter contigo, e trocaremos as nossas alianças, o Arcebispo nos abençoará, a alma das harpas hinárias se casará com a do incenso, e os teus lábios, como meninos travessos, colherão as cerejas dos meus lábios, e as palmas das minhas mãos, maceradas de unguentos e perfumes, te encherão de carícias!"

Com púrpura e linho fresco e ramos verdes de alecrim mandei armar o leito para as nossas núpcias. E chamei músicos e mandei buscar flores e resinas aromáticas para as nossas núpcias, e ainda não tinha nascido a Lua, inda as Constelações não tinham nascido, já eu estava no alto do meu terraço, olhos fitos na estrada por onde Safira deveria chegar.

Nasceu a Lua, nasceram as Constelações, morreu a Lua, morreram as Constelações, o Sol nasceu, o Sol subiu e eu sempre [no] alto do meu terraço, olhos fitos na estrada por onde Safira deveria chegar, Safira que não chegava!

Os músicos cansaram-se de esperar, e as suas harpas, suas cítaras, suas violas emudeceram em suas mãos; as flores tiveram síncope e extenuadamente se fanaram, os perfumes se extinguiram, El-Rei, meu Pai, caiu sem força sobre as poltronas de veludo e de ébano, minha Mãe, a Rainha, vendo-me inquieto, começou a chorar, e, não podendo estar quedas minhas Irmãs, as Infantas, as loiras Infantas de olhos verdes, desceram ao pomar, a colher amoras, e rasgaram seus vestidos de lhama nos espinhos das roseiras.

Chegou a meia-noite, a hora dos sobressaltos e dos receios. E o jaquemart de chumbo que vela perpetuamente na sua guarita, saiu da guarita e com o seu pesado martelo deu, em vez de doze, treze marteladas no sino do relógio, treze marteladas que encheram de pavor as florestas vizinhas.

Não podendo conter-me, despedi-me do meu Pai, de minha Mãe, e de minhas Irmãs, resistindo à imploração de suas vozes e ao rogo dos seus braços que baldadamente tentavam prender-me.

Parti. Montado no meu jinete, atravessei, num galope doido, charnecas e pinhais, despertando ninhós, pondo em alvoroço os cães de guarda. E quando atravessava povoações humildes, os camponeses que se erguiam ao tinir das ferraduras do meu jinete, os camponeses, vendo-me passar, vendo o negrume de meus olhos, de meus cabelos soltos, e das crinas do meu jinete, julgavam que era a Morte que passava, levando almas, e, transidas de susto, benziam-se e trancavam suas portas com trancas de ferro.

27 March 1892

Já o céu se tingia de roxo, como uma olaia começando a florir, já alvorecia, quando, morto de fadiga, cheguei ao palácio de Safira, ao altivo palácio de sete torres.

Mas aí de mim! - Virgem dos Oratórios e das Medalhas! - nesse amanhecer de angústia tudo era viuvez, morte, solidão ... Nos jardins, as flores pareciam donzelas doentes, os pavões fugiam entre crisântemos e tuberosas murchas; os repuxos agonizavam; as fontes choravam a morte dos repuxos, seus noivos; o vento varria as folhas secas ...

Uma serva passou rente de mim, e eu lhe perguntei pela minha Noiva. A serva não me respondeu e os seus olhos se turvaram de lágrimas.

Vestido de dor, preendi o meu jinete ao tronco duma faia; vestido de dor, transpus o largo portão real; vestido de dor, subi as escadarias de pórfiro que levam aos aposentos de Safira.

E pelas escadarias de pórfiro, pelos corredores soalhados de cedro, pelos salões forrados de damasco, nem viva alma passava, nem viva alma encontrei; tudo era abandono e silêncio.

Té que cheguei aos aposentos de Safira ...

- Virgem dos Missais e dos Nichos! - vede a grandeza da minha Dor: - num leito de pau-santo, florido de metais preciosos, estrelado de pedras finas, entre uma alva ingenuidade de linhos virgens, estava deitada a minha Noiva, que parecia morta e dormia ... Em torno do leito, o Rei, a Rainha e os Infantes choravam ...

Dela me acerquei, trémulo como um velho de cem anos, tomei-a nos braços, e aconcheguei-a, como uma criancinha, contra o meu coração. E falei-lhe, e semeei beijos nos seus cabelos e beijei-lhe os seus olhos. Safira abriu os olhos, mas não me viu, que estava cega! e não me ouviu, pois tinha ensurdecido! e não me falou, porque a doença lhe tirara a fala.

Cega! surda e muda!

E como se tudo isto não fosse bastante para me crucificar e me coroar de espinhos, tendo-me Safira reconhecido por este anel, que Ela me deu em tempos de ouro, magrinha e nervosa se desembaraçou dos meus braços e repelindo-me com desgosto, como se um sapo lhe tinha tocado, Ela que tão carinhosa fora até aí, me repeliu, fugiu aos meus beijos e me dilacerou a cara e as mãos com suas unhas talhadas em mitra.

A doença a cegou, a doença a ensurdeceu, a doença lhe tirou o falar e lhe mudou em ódio o amor, - amor de mel e de açucenas, - que me tinha.

De novo me aproximei de Safira: de novo me repelia.

E então parti, como um doido, e passei o dia e a noite correndo pelos campos e florestas ... e nunca mais tive alegria, e nunca mais falei a não ser comigo mesmo, e vivo nesta solidão, e, se ouço passos, logo me escondo nos bosques.

- Virgem dos Andores e dos Vitrais, Virgem Consoladora dos Aflitos! pelos rubins de sangue de vosso Filho Crucificado, pelos diamantes de suor de vosso Filho Crucificado, pelas ametistas das chagas de vosso Filho Crucificado, tende piedade de mim! Que as vossas Mãos,

derramadoras de bálsamos, me embalsamem; que os vossos
Olhos consoladores me consolem!

A minha Amada está cega; fazei com que Ela me veja!

A minha Amada está surda; fazei com que Ela me ouça!

A minha Amada está muda; fazei com que Ela me fale!

A minha Amada me expulsou; fazei com que Ela me receba!

E eu vos levantarei um altar de prata, e, em vossa
honra, queimarei todos os dias um celamim de incenso e
outro de mirra; e apertarei o vosso manto com um peitoral
de crisolitas!

VIII [sc: IX]

Há quatro [sc: quantos] dias ando por estes descampados,
perdi-lhe a conta, não sei. Os dias contam-se pelos sóis,
e o sol é coisa que já não vejo há longo tempo.

Tive leito de penas, e agora durmo sobre as relvas
molhadas.

Comi em pratos de oiro, bebi em copos de prata: agora
sustento-me de raízes e o meu copo é a minha mão.

O manto dos meus ombros rasgou-se nos cardos e nas
silveiras: o meu manto é de veludo azul bordado a oiro; -
assim rasgado, parece que trago aos ombros um farrapo de
noite, menos escura, porém, que a noite que me veste a alma.

Minhas Irmãs tinham inveja das minhas mãos: as minhas
mãos parecem agora as dum pastor.

Adormeci à sombra duma nogueira e, apenas adormeci, a
minha alma pôs-se a cantar. E a canção era esta:

Cansadas de fazer, vãmente, apelos vãos,
Adormeceram no meu jardim as tocadoras de harpa
(A aranha fez um tear de cada harpa ...),
E as harpas de marfim caíram-lhe das mãos ...

Os lagos do jardim tornaram-se em paúis,
Os repuxos leais calaram-se nos lagos.

Cantando, os cisnes afogaram-se nos lagos,
Sardas de outono, as folhas secas navegaram nos paúis ...
Partiram, ao som das violas, as comungantes virgens,
E voltaram, depois, vestidas de viúvas ...
Esverdeado, um halo, anunciador de chuvas,
Nimbou a Lua, mãe das Comungantes virgens ...
Desdourou-se a tiara dA que não veio,
O temporal despedaçou a cristalina estufa,
Um lírio de veludo preto, entre as ruínas da estufa,
Nasceu com sete espadas a martirizar-lhe o seio ...
E a Donzela, que aguardava a vinda flava das estrelas,
Cegou ... A noite desceu das escarpas ...
Cessaram no ar silente as angústias das harpas ...

Appendix B

Borrowings from Pliny in Belkiss

The edition used is GAIUS PLINIUS SECUNDUS, Naturalis Historia, Hamburg, 1851. Volume and page references are given in the text.

"blémios" (VIII): Book v, section 46: "Blemmyis traduntur capita abesse ore et oculis pectori adfixis" (Vol. I, page 351).

"ástomos" (IX): vii, 25: "ad extremos fines Indiae ab oriente circa fontem Gangis Astomorum gentem sine ore, corpore toto hirtam, vestiri frondium lanugine, halitu tantum viventem et odore quem naribus trahant; nullum illis cibum nullumque potum, radicum tantum florumque varios odores et silvestrium malorum" (II, 9).

"mantichoras" (VI): viii, 75: "Apud easdem nasci Ctesias scribit quam mantichoran appellat, triplici dentium ordine pectinatim coeuntium, facie et auriculis hominis, oculis glaucis, colore sanguineo, corpore leonis, cauda scorpionis modo spicula infigentem" (II, 92).

"catoblepas" (VI): viii, 77: "iuxta hunc fera appellatur catoblepas [...] alias internicio humani generis, omnibus qui oculis eius videre confestim expirantibus" (II, 92).

"stirax" (IX): xii, 125: "styrax" (II, 363).

"bacchar" (IX): xxi, 29: "Baccar quoque radicis tantum odoratae est" (III, 368).

"ofiusa" (VII): xxiv, 163: "Ophiusam [...] qua pota terrorem minasque serpentium observari ita ut mortem sibi eo metu consciscant" (IV, 95).

"terionarca" (VI): xxiv, 163: "Therionarca [...] omnes feras torpescere" (IV, 95).

"heliantes" (IX): xxiv, 165: "Helianthes [...] hac cum adipe leonino decocta, addito croco et palmeo vino perungui [...] ut fiat corpus aspectu iucundum" (IV, 96).

"anacâmpseros" (VII): xxiv, 167: "anacampserotem [...] cuius omnino tactu redirent amores" (IV, 97).

"ónix" (IX): xxxvi, 59: "Onychem in Arabiae tantum montibus nec usquam aliubi nasci putavere nostri veteres" (V, 317).

"andródamas" (IX): xxxvi, 146: "alterum androdamanta dicit vocari [...] trahere autem in se argentum, aes, ferrum" (V, 355).

"esmeralda" (IX): xxxvii, 70: "[Smaragdus] illud peculiare, quod quidam ex his senescunt, paulatim viridate evanita" (V, 406).

"berilos" (IX): xxxvii, 140: "India eos [berullos] gignit, raro alibi repertos [...] probatissimi ex iis sunt qui viridatem maris puri imitantur" (V, 408).

"poederos" (IX): xxxvii, 84: "Paederos" (V, 412).

"ametistizontes" (IX): xxxvii, 93: "amethystizontes, hoc est quorum extremus igniculus in violam exeat" (V, 416).

"sandaresus" [sic] (IX): xxxvii, 100: "Cognata est et sandastros [...] commendatio summa quod veluti in tralucido ignis optentiis stellantibus fulget intus aureis guttis, semper in corpore, numquam in cute" (V, 419).

"anthracitis" (IX): xxxvii, 99: "Est et anthracitis appellata [...] contra aquis perfusae exardescunt" (V, 419).

"calais" (IX): xxxvii, 110-2: "callaina [...] e viridi pallens [...] nascitur post aversa Indiae apud incolas Caucasi montis, Phycaros [...] in rupibus inviis et gelidis, oculi figura extuberans leviterque adhaerescens [...] fundis e longinquo incessunt [...] inclusae decorantur auro, aurumque nullae magis decent" (V, 424-5)

"cianos" (IX): xxxvii, 119: "Cyanos [...] inest ei aliquando et aureus pulvis" (V, 428).

"ametistas" (IX): xxxvii, 121-4: "Amethysti [...] ebrietati eas resistere [...] si lunae nomen et solis inscribatur in iis atque ita suspendantur e colo cum pilis cynocephali et plumis hirundinis, resistere venificiis" (V, 431).

"ceraúnia" (IX): xxxvii, 134: "Est inter candidas et quae ceraunia vocatur, fulgorem siderum rapiens" (V, 436)

"ágatas" (IX): xxxvii, 140: "[achates] quae et sacra appellatur, quoniam putant contra arachnorum et scorpionum ictus eam prodesse" (V, 438).

"aromátita" (IX): xxxvii, 145: "Aromatitis [...] ubique lapidosa et murrae coloris et odoris, ab hoc reginis frequentata" (V, 441).

"apsictos" (IX): xxxvii, 148: "Apsyctos septenis diebus calorem tenet excalefacta igni" (V, 442).

"bucárdia" (IX): xxxvii, 150: "Bucardia, bubulo cordi similis, Babylone tantum nascitur" (V, 443).

"brontea" (IX): xxxvii, 150: "Brontea [...] e tonitribus cadit" (V, 443).

The "topázios da ilha Titis" (IX) may also be an error for the following:

xxxvii, 107: "in Arabiae insula qua Cytis vocabatur [...] eruerunt topazon" (V, 423).

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- 1(a): Works of Eugénio de Castro.
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- 2(a): Portuguese Literature.
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- 4: Classical Literature.
- 5: Other Literatures.
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