Late modern subjectivity in the fictional work of Mário Cláudio: identity, memory, expression

by

João Pedro Vicente Faustino

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Abstract

This study examines the manner in which the work of Portuguese contemporary writer Mário Cláudio engages in a multifaceted reflection on the subjective consequences of modern social and economic arrangements, as they are experienced in a semiperipheral location of the world-system. The dissertation focuses on two novels by the author, *A Quinta das Virtudes* (1990) and *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* (2011). Set in different historical moments (the late-eighteenth and twentieth centuries) and formally very distinct (they re-invent the family novel and the biography), the works are united by common concerns. These relate to the assessment of the impact on the main characters of processes of national and transnational migration, social acceleration and of the emphasis on personal autonomy. This study shows how the novels recognise the challenges arising from the transition between different spaces and cultures, and from the competing desires to assert independence and creativity as well as to cultivate personal attachments. In these circumstances, characters adopt a reflective stance, which is accompanied by the questioning of notions of belonging and the development of feelings of alienation and lack of self-efficacy. Wary of radical solutions regarding the configuration of identities (the adherence to nationalist credos or to a radically fluid interpretation of identity), the works posit the acceptance of the complexity they depict and propose tentative strategies to cope with it. Among these are the critically informed re-invention of memory and the idea of the care for others. The novels furthermore recover the potential of the arts as a means to ordering the apparent chaos of life and achieving the desired harmonization between the subject and the world. The study ends with a discussion of the significance and consequence of the reflection proposed in the corpus examined, as well as in more general terms in Cláudio’s literary production.
**Introduction**

Mário Cláudio (Oporto, 1941) began his career with the publication of the collection of poems *Ciclo de Cypris*, in 1969. Over more than 50 years of artistic activity, Cláudio has written poetry and theatre, but by far his largest and most significant output has occurred in the field of narrative fiction. Cláudio’s fiction engages mostly with the past, representing well and lesser-known empirical and fictional characters, as well as the broader social and cultural landscapes they experienced. In order to do so, the author often retrieves and subverts pre-existing narrative models, such as those of the family novel, the biography and autobiography. The work of Mário Cláudio can be included in a broader artistic trend which took shape in Portuguese cultural and literary production in the 1980s and 90s of the twentieth century. The latter referred to the attention given by artists to the past and to history, which were approached critically as a means to reflect upon and process the challenges then facing a country which, after the Carnation Revolution (1974) and decolonization (1975), had become a democratic, post-imperial and semi-peripheral nation, having to negotiate its place in Europe, as well as in the wider, increasingly integrated world.¹ Likewise, Cláudio’s recently published novels *Tiago Veiga – Uma Biografia* and *Astronomia*,² a fictional biography and autobiography respectively, while fitting perfectly within the logic of the author’s wider literary production, also find their unique place in the renewed interest shown by contemporary artists in the political, social and cultural trajectory of Portugal, which emerged in the wake of the sovereign debt crisis of 2008. Cláudio’s works therefore enact a reflection on Portuguese identity (or ‘portugalidade’), one which is distinctive on account of the manner in which the author attempts to bridge the past, present and future, a fact which is evidenced in the intricate textual strategies adopted in his works, as well as in the dense social, cultural and psychological analysis they display. This being

said, one of the main arguments of this thesis is that Cláudio’s works also contribute to a much broader discussion, certainly indexed to the former, pertaining to the effects of modern and late modern social arrangements on individuals and communities. As we shall see, conditions such as increased mobility and migration, time-space compression and social acceleration are among the core concerns evidenced in the Claudian corpus. So too are the dynamics between individual freedom and ideas of community and belonging. Likewise, Cláudio contributes to the current debate on how we can best conceive and put into practice the relation between people and institutions operating at the local, regional, national and transnational scales, which in turn is linked with the controversial subject of cosmopolitanism. Cláudio’s works speak of the predicament of configuring individual and collective identities in the current circumstances, of the difficult balance between fluid and fixed identities, of the threat of cultural homogenization and also of the lure of nationalisms and fascisms. They also address the subject of memory and narration, of the uses and misuses of the past in an age in which the past itself is seemingly under threat of obliteration. Finally, Cláudio’s works, which are unavoidably informed by a complex postmodern stance, at one time affirmative and self-critical, speak of the role which literature and the arts still have as spaces of social and cultural critique, of resistance to dominant discourses and of search for alternatives, a role which is especially relevant in periods of transition and therefore of crisis.

Mário Cláudio became known for his idiosyncratic interpretation of the biographical genre, manifested in his fictional biographies, otherwise dubbed by the author himself ‘psico-sociobiografias’ or ‘biografias fantasiadas.’ These for the most part re-invent the lives of empirical artists, although occasionally they deal with the trajectories of historical figures well-known by their achievements in other areas. Additionally, we find represented in Cláudio’s fiction lesser known individuals, who may be the author’s ancestors or relatively marginal subjects (empirical or entirely fictional), from whose perspective historical events are retold and reconfigured. Of late, Cláudio

added a layer to this trend, having written the biographies of comic book characters: Corto Maltese, Bianca Castafiore and Prince Valiant. The author’s practice arguably follows in the tradition of the imaginary lives cultivated by Marcel Schwob, by which he would aim to fill in the gaps of history and, on the basis of speculative imagination, to construct psychologically dense characters who may attain a more generally meaningful dimension, that of myth. Said practice is additionally in tune with developments in the field of hermeneutics and history (New Historicism), displaying a critical stance with respect to representations of history and memory, of the self and the other. Hence the marked tension that arises between the desire to signify and the questioning of the very possibility of achieving this goal by means of literature or more broadly of the arts. Whilst it seems clear that one of the core elements of the author’s works relates to the exploration of the borders between history and fiction, factuality and imagination, and the complex processes of hetero and self-representation displayed in his works (a fact which the bulk of the academic studies on the Claudian corpus attests to), I would like to maintain that a different and complementary approach to the Claudian corpus is not only possible but necessary. Indeed, as I hinted at above, the careful consideration of the vast array of texts published by the author in the course of more than five decades leads us to conclude that another common thread runs through many of them, pertaining to a multifaceted reflection on and assessment of modern and late modern subjectivity. The latter is expressed in multiple ways, which I present below in schematic fashion. I would like to suggest here that by focusing on this subject matter, I will be able to establish connections between many of the apparently disparate strands evidenced in the author’s artistic production, and therefore to achieve a more comprehensive and in-depth understanding of its workings and significance.

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4 Mário Cláudio, Memórias Secretas (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2018).
5 Marcel Schwob, Vidas Imaginárias (Lisboa: Assírio & Alvim, 2010).
7 In an introductory study of the work of Mário Cláudio, Martinho Soares argues that this is precisely the central concern evidenced in the author’s work, what he calls its encompassing and recognisable phenomenological nucleus (‘núcleo fenomenológico reconhecível e abrangente’). Consequently, this is the thread that guides Soares’s argumentation. See: Martinho Soares, O Essencial sobre Mário Cláudio (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda, 2019), p. 10.
One of the key elements of the modern experience dealt with in Cláudio’s fiction is the question of mobility and migration (promoted by technological developments and the process of urbanization) and its respective consequences. In this regard, Claudian characters often find themselves displaced and compelled to negotiate between past and present social and cultural arrangements; the complexity of the identification processes that ensue frequently leads them to develop mixed feelings of belonging and alienation, and to question the very notion of home. In this context, the circulation of memory and its uses acquire special relevance, and indeed they become focal points in many of Cláudio’s fictional accounts. A novel like *A Quinta das Virtudes,* depicting the migration of a family from the countryside to the city, and assessing the subjective consequences of this process, provides a good example of the manner in which these matters are addressed in Cláudio’s work. So too does *Oríon,* with its portrayal of the forced displacement of a group of Jewish children from mainland Portugal to the island of São Tomé and Príncipe in the late fifteenth century.

Two other structural elements of the modern experience lie at the heart of Claudian fiction: first, the subject of individualism and autonomy versus community; second, and related to the first, another founding modern idea is assessed, that of the acceleration of social change or, in more general terms, of progress. What does progress mean exactly? What does it entail at the individual and collective levels? What dark secrets lie behind progress’s seemingly pristine face? These are questions often raised in Cláudio’s texts. If the merits of individualism are recognised in Claudian fiction, the difficulties inherent to self-assertion and the estrangement caused by the lack of attachments are also the object of the author’s enquiries. Once again, *A Quinta das Virtudes* constitutes a good example of how this matter is addressed in Cláudio’s work; likewise, the exploration of the *topos* of the Pygmalion in the trilogy encompassing *Boa Noite, Senhor Soares, Retrato de Rapaz,* and *O Fotógrafo e a Rapariga* affords a different approach to this subject.

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Complementarily, the disciplinary mechanisms used by states to control individuals are assessed in the Claudian corpus, as well as the workings and consequences of nationalist and imperialist discourses, founded on a monolithic conception of identity, and likewise proposing political projects designed precisely to ensure the advancement or progress of specific peoples. In this respect, we can consider the obvious example of Tocata para Dois Clarins,\(^{11}\) with its ironic depiction of the discourse of the ‘Estado Novo’, achieved via intertextuality and through the contrast established between the account of individual lives and the abstract boastfulness of officially consecrated discourse. But this trend is most especially evident in the works that make up the ‘Trilogia das Constelações’, Ursamaior, Orion, and Gémeos,\(^ {12}\) which delve into the violence exercised by state apparatuses on individual lives.

Another subject which has been frequently addressed in Cláudio’s work is that of cosmopolitanism, understood as a model of conviviality experienced by actors and institutions situated at the local, regional, national and transnational scales. Cosmopolitanism is part and parcel of the modern idea of progress and, having been re-interpreted during the Enlightenment, has since been critically assessed. But the reflection on cosmopolitanism present in Cláudio’s texts is not enacted from an abstract location, and it is generally examined in reference to Portugal’s semiperipheral position within the world system.\(^ {13}\) In this context, an enquiry is made into the possibilities of articulating a cosmopolitanism that does not annul regional and local differences, and that acts so as to neutralize the political, economic and cultural imbalances brought about by globalization, likewise countering old and current tribalist, nationalist entrenchments. One needs only to consider the early work Amadeo\(^ {14}\) and

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\(^ {11}\) Mário Cláudio, Tocata para Dois Clarins (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1992).
\(^ {12}\) Mário Cláudio, Ursamaior (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2000); Orion (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2002); Gémeos (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2004).
\(^ {13}\) I reference here Immanuel Wallerstein’s conceptualization of a tripartite world-system, connecting unequally core, periphery and semiperiphery. I will elaborate further on this matter throughout this study. For a summary of Wallerstein’s theory, see: Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-systems analysis: an introduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004).
\(^ {14}\) Mário Cláudio, Amadeo (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1984).
Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia\textsuperscript{15} in order to find implicit and explicit appraisals of cosmopolitanism.

Finally, Claudian fiction focuses on the strategies used by characters in order to process the contradictory situations they find themselves in, torn as they often are between multiple references and attachments, mobility and sedentarism, yearning for and rejection of the idea of home, the exhilaration of autonomy and self-discovery and the longing for a more stable identity. No easy solutions are proposed, no idealization of a local, homogenous identity, on the one hand; no simple celebration of cultural hybridity or defence of a completely fluid and deterritorialized notion of selfhood, on the other. One seems to be left with the challenge of accepting and living through the tensions of in-betweenness. This is where in my view the arts come in, and this is what likely explains Cláudio’s obsession with representing the lives of artists, a process which I agree entails an indirect and implicit mechanism of authorial self-projection.\textsuperscript{16} Indeed, as I argue in this thesis, the arts are regarded in Cláudio’s fiction as a means to fulfil a tentative hermeneutics, a fact which is visible in clearest terms in Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia and Astronomia.\textsuperscript{17} But the arts also promote a broader reflection on the human condition, and here we tap into Cláudio’s heterodox religiosity, his understanding of art as a way to combat the Weberian disenchantment of the world, and to search for the harmonization of human subjects with themselves and the world. In this regard, one must again consider Astronomia, but also Retrato de Rapaz, with its activation of the topos of the coincidentia oppositorum, and Tríptico da Salvação,\textsuperscript{18} afford examples of how in Cláudio’s work the lines between artistic and religious experiences can often be blurred.

As I have just noted, the list of works that can be used to illustrate my argument is long and, for practical reasons, I have selected two novels which address many of the points mentioned above in different and complex ways: A Quinta das Virtudes and Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia. I explain momentarily the structure of this study and the specific issues I propose to analyse in each

\textsuperscript{15} Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2011).
\textsuperscript{16} Soares makes this latter suggestion in Martinho Soares, O Essencial sobre Mário Cláudio, p. 66.
\textsuperscript{17} Mário Cláudio, Astronomia (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2015).
\textsuperscript{18} Mário Cláudio, Tríptico da Salvação (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2019).
of the works. I also clarify in general terms the theoretical framework that informs my thesis and likewise the ultimate goals I aim to achieve. For now, I would like to delve further into the reception of the work of Mário Cláudio and to summarize the trends that can be detected therein. This will enable me to better explain my stance in relation to other contributions towards the interpretation of the Claudian corpus.

The subject which critics have addressed most frequently and consistently in relation to Cláudio’s work refers to the author’s unique and inventive interpretation of the biographical genre. Broadly speaking, critics have taken postmodernism as their framework of analysis and have looked into how Cláudio’s texts disrupt conventional views of representation. As I mentioned earlier, this trend is manifested in the questioning of the boundaries between fact and fiction, history and narrative, which is often informed by an iconoclastic attitude and by an attempt to show different perspectives on characters and events, hence the variation of points of view evidenced in the works. These elements are manifested also in the self-reflexivity and metafictionality displayed in the Claudian corpus, as well as in the fact that many of the works come across as impure biographies, playing with and subverting the boundaries between biography, autobiography, auto-fiction and heteronomy. In addition to these structural elements, and following the postmodernist line of enquiry, academics have noted the use in Claudian fiction of intertextuality and mechanisms of intersemiotic representation. Among those who have contributed to this discussion, one should highlight Ana Paula Arnaut, who for many years has observed and analysed the evolution of the Claudian novelistic production. Apart from Arnaut, and with regards specifically to the subject of biography, one should underline the

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studies by Mohazir Bruck and Carla Xavier Luís, who have produced doctoral theses on this matter. And finally, a series of important contributions were made to the discussion of the issue of heteronomy, a matter which I address in detail in one of the chapters of this study.

Still in connection with the Claudian interpretation of fiction, another line of investigation refers to the so-called historical novels created by the author. Among these, one would find for instance A Quinta das Virtudes, As Batalhas do Caia, and Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias. Again, these works are generally read in reference to the postmodern interpretations of the genre, namely to Linda Hutcheon’s definition of historiographical metafiction. Hence, attention is given to aspects such as the dynamics between fact and fiction, the idea of verisimilitude, the discursive strategies of narrative self-reflexivity and metafictionality, the subversion of official versions of history through the granting of narrative voice and agency to marginalised subjects, and the use of intertextuality. Likewise, reflections are made on the contextual motivations for the production of said works. Among many others, Arnaut, Maria de Fátima Marinho and Maria Alzira Seixo have made significant contributions to this discussion.

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22 Mário Cláudio, As Batalhas do Caia (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1995).

23 Mário Cláudio, Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1997).


25 Ana Paula Arnaut, Post-Modernismo no Romance Português Contemporâneo: Fios de Ariadne, Máscaras de Proteu, pp. 274-293; Maria de Fátima Marinho, O Romance Histórico em Portugal (Porto: Campo das Letras, 1999); Maria Alzira Seixo, ‘Poética da descoincidência em Peregrinação de
Another subject which has occupied critics, and to which I have already alluded, has to do with the intersemiotic strategies evidenced in a number of Cláudio’s works which portray artists. Among these, particular attention has been given to the novels that constitute the ‘trilogia da mão’, *Amadeo*, *Guilhermina* and *Rosa*, as well as to *Gémeos*, which focuses on the latter stages in the life of Francisco de Goya. Dalva Calvão has not only produced important work in this field, but also inspired other researchers to explore the area. In a famous essay on the ‘trilogia da mão’, Calvão begins by establishing the narrative strategies that enable the intersemiotic translation from the arts of painting, pottery and music into literature evidenced in the novels. In her view, this process is manifested in the syntax and lexicon of the texts, which emulate respectively the artistic expressions and the socio-cultural background of the artists represented. Likewise, intersemiotic translation is patent in the representation of the process by which artists transform their vision into works of art, which includes the ekphrastic depiction of said works. But Calvão explores further the implications of this process and reflects on the depiction of the author-narrator in the works, and on the effects which this has in terms of an examination of the function of the arts in human societies. For Calvão, Cláudio’s novels display a critical vein, affording a self-reflexive examination of the arts (including literature) and positing that artistic creation allows for the ordering of the chaos of existence and that it likewise constitutes a means to cope with the human awareness of finitude and yearning for an extended temporality.


28 For more details, see the following quotations: ‘Nesta linha de pensamento julgamos poder, talvez, incluir o que chamamos de diálogo entre o texto de Mário Cláudio e as realizações de seus biografados: como uma poética tentativa de mergulhar sempre mais no imaterial “signo da arte”, para, através dele experimentar uma maneira especial de se entender o mundo, buscando, quem sabe, como foi dito sobre a música na biografia de Guilhermina, uma forma para “ordenar o caos” (CLÁUDIO, 1986b, p. 11).’ In Dalva Calvão, ‘Considerações sobre uma escrita habitada: Mário Cláudio e o acolhimento de outras artes’, p. 39; Following Hannah Arendt, Calvão further states: ‘Os artifícios originados do trabalho, ao contrário das ações determinadas pelo labor, são destinados a durar, e
Alongside the attention given to the specific intersemiotic strategies present in a select number of Claudian works, the influence of the Baroque in Cláudio’s texts has also interested critics. In this respect, one should note that the interpretation of the influence of the Baroque in Cláudio’s work, dependent as it is on the analysis of the intricate textual procedures evidenced in the texts, substantially benefits from the adoption of an approach that highlights clearly the conceptual dimensions of the Baroque activated in the novels and their implications.²⁹

The final subject which has merited substantial attention from academics is that of memory, identity, and how these intersect with space. In this regard, in an early and prescient text on Amadeo, Álvaro Manuel Machado had noted the concern it displayed with what Machado called the spirit of place.³⁰ Since then, many contributions were made to this discussion, focusing on...
on the representation and reflection enacted in Cláudio’s texts on the history or, more appropriately, the memory of the city of Oporto and of Portugal. I analyse this matter in detail in the course of this study, however I would like to add at this point that the manner in which Cláudio addresses the interrelated issues of memory, place (the city, the family home) and the processes of cultural and existential inscription, is for the most part ambivalent and contradictory. This in fact has been the dominant tone struck from early on not just by Cláudio’s narrative (consider for instance As Máscaras de Sábado), but likewise by other meandering and reflective Claudian texts, such as Meu Porto. Therefore, the analysis of the specific workings of the Claudian corpus in this regard must be informed by the awareness of how complex and problematizing the author’s prevalent attitude is.

To conclude, I should mention two other topics of great relevance, but to which so far little attention has been given. The first is the issue of the representation of gender in Cláudio’s work. On this matter, we find only a few articles, dealing with homoeroticism in specific works by the author, and virtually no assessment of how Cláudio represents women. Finally, the important subject of religion or religious sentiment in the work of Cláudio has so far been dealt with only by one researcher, Martinho Soares.

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As we got closer to the commemoration of the 50 years of artistic activity of Mário Cláudio, four volumes were published, which collected articles on the work of the author.\(^\text{36}\) Although emerging as a result of different processes of selection of contributions, these volumes assemble texts which for the most part are not very long and which were in most cases written by researchers who had already published articles or books on the author’s work. After considering the articles published in the volumes, one can say that they do not substantially change the landscape described above and that indeed they re-enforce the dominant trends identified here.

This study of the ways in which *A Quinta das Virtudes* and *Tiago Veiga-Uma Biografia* propose a reflection on modern and late modern subjectivity is informed by an understanding of the specificities of the Portuguese context (social, political and cultural), but also by general theories of modernity and late modernity, with special relevance being given to those which analyse the issues of mobility, migration and social acceleration, preferably from a transnational and transcultural perspective. Furthermore, I take into account theoretical work produced on the subject of individualism, autonomy and communitarian identifications. Another crucial area for this study relates to the circulation and uses of memory in the modern landscape, and specifically to the notions of the materialization of memory, the intersection between memory and space, and transnational memory practices occurring in the context of globalization. Finally, and concerning the latter issue, this study will be informed by recent assessments of cosmopolitanism and, more broadly, of models of conviviality at multiple scales, a discussion to which Cláudio contributes.

With this work, I aim to achieve a comprehensive understanding of the Claudian artistic output, established from an assumedly partial but ultimately

productive standpoint. In addition, this study will enable me to explain why and how Mário Cláudio carves a unique figure in Portuguese as well as in World literature. Indeed, although we must recognise Cláudio’s debt both to a distinct Portuguese novelistic tradition (represented for instance by Aquilino Ribeiro, Tomaz de Figueiredo, Agustina Bessa-Lúis, and harking back to Camilo Castelo Branco), and likewise to a broader European landscape (partly depicted in Tiago Veiga-Uma Biografia), the apparently classical narrative form which Cláudio elected to cultivate should not prevent us from appreciating the unmistakably innovative vein evidenced in the author’s works. More importantly, I would like to highlight here the range and depth of thought displayed by the Claudian corpus. If self and hetero-representation are relevant aspects of the reflections enacted in Cláudio’s fiction, the significance of his work relates mostly to the intricate manner in which the author addresses the challenges posed to individuals and communities by the unavoidable modern realities of migration and social change and by the emphasis on individualism and personal autonomy. As we see today, these conditions often bring about simplistic patterns of thought and collective entrenchment, generally crystallised around ideas of nationhood or religion, which in turn are dependent on notions of genetic and cultural homogeneity, as well as on the manipulation of memory. Alternatively, they may cause feelings of isolation, uncertainty and lack of self-efficacy. Cláudio is among the many who currently, in more classical or popular forms, as well as in theory, think about these challenges and propose ideas to productively tackle them; likewise, he joins a long tradition of critical reflection on the modern cultural landscape. However, as I shall demonstrate here, Cláudio’s work also affords a distinctive and quite unique approach to these matters.

This thesis is divided into two parts. The first examines A Quinta das Virtudes, and the second Tiago Veiga-Uma Biografia. A Quinta das Virtudes depicts for the most part the process of internal migration of a family from a rural to an urban context (the city of Oporto) in the late eighteenth century. This is followed by the emphasis given to individual autonomy in a new geographical and social setting, which in turn is tempered by the constitution of the bourgeois family unit and home. The novel examines the effects which
these changes have on the notion of selfhood of the characters, evidenced in a crisis of inscription and memory, the latter being related with places, objects, values and mostly stories, and marked by ambiguity and ambivalence. The first chapter of part I examines the depiction of these developments over three generations, while the second focuses specifically on the third generation portrayed in the novel. Here, I analyse the representation of the family and family home, as well as the reflections which the characters engage in, relating to continuity and caesura, permanence and impermanence; likewise, I clarify the strategies aimed at achieving control and inscription employed by the couple portrayed, namely the production of collections and the act of storytelling. The third chapter assesses the representation in the novel of the darker aspects of the modern experience, when war is waged in the name of civilization. I identify here the textual strategies implemented in order to afford an indictment of nationalist and imperialist discourses and political endeavours. The analysis produced will allow me to sustain the argument that A Quinta das Virtudes enacts an archaeology of modern subjectivity, established in reference to specific geographical, social and cultural coordinates, which moreover can be read as responding to concerns about developments in contemporary late modern societies.

Portraying the life and works of fictional Portuguese poet Tiago Veiga (1900 -1988), Tiago Veiga – Uma Biografia returns to many of the issues addressed in A Quinta das Virtudes, interpreting them in a more extreme manner. Tiago Veiga is a transnationally mobile subject who, seeking to exercise a radical form of autonomy, constantly re-invents himself throughout his life. The novel delves into the effects of this situation on Veiga’s notion of selfhood and on his ability to lead a good and productive life, as a member of society and as an artist. In chapter 1 of part II, I enter into the debate on whether Tiago Veiga should or should not be considered a heteronym of Mário Cláudio. After assessing the several opinions voiced on this matter, I provide my one take on the subject. In chapter 2, I explore how the novel portrays Veiga as a transnational and transcultural migrant, a condition which elicits in the character a reflective stance and the questioning of notions of home and belonging, which in turn are projected onto his works. In this chapter, I further
examine Veiga’s interpretation of cosmopolitanism and his final transformation into a wanderer. Chapter 3 is dedicated to the crucially important issue of the circulation and uses of memory in the *Biografía*. Using a transnational framework of analysis, I focus on Tiago Veiga’s creative engagement with transnational memory, and on how this allows him to express his multicultural identity, at the same time as it disrupts the discourse of nationalism. But I also clarify the manner in which Tiago himself may use memory in order to close himself to the world, adopting towards the end of his life a conservative ruralist stance. Finally, in chapter 4 I argue my case in favour of considering Tiago Veiga a man without qualities who ultimately becomes a Bartleby. On the basis of Hartmut Rosa’s theory of alienation and resonance, I identify the conditions that bring about Veiga’s sense of isolation and lack of self-efficacy, and likewise I explore the strategies he uses in order to cope with his predicament.  

Part I - *A Quinta das Virtudes: an archaeology of modern subjectivity*

First published in 1990, *A Quinta das Virtudes* portrays the life of a family spanning three generations, roughly between the late seventeenth and the mid-eighteen hundreds. The novel accompanies the migration of said family from a rural to an urban context, and from an aristocratic to a bourgeois social milieu, depicting and analysing the effects which these changes have on the notions of selfhood of the main characters. At the same time, the work proposes an assessment of the historical developments occurring in Portugal (and to some degree in Europe) during that period, which are represented from a specific location, the city of Oporto, situated in Northwestern Portugal. Importantly, *A Quinta das Virtudes* constitutes the fictionalization of the family history of the empirical author Mário Cláudio, which is indexed to the ancestral family home, the still existing ‘Quinta das Virtudes’, and is furthermore continued in the two novels that complete the ‘trilogia da árvore genealógica’, *Tocata para Dois Clarins* and *O Pórtico da Glória*.38

The reception of *A Quinta das Virtudes* was characterised by the attention given to two closely interrelated issues arising in the text. First, there was an immediate interest in analysing the procedures of textualization of history manifested in what was regarded as an exemplary postmodern historical novel. Apart from the subject of history and fiction, and more generally of representation, evidenced in the work, other topics of analysis included for instance the consideration of the strategies of auto-fictional projection present in the work, as well as the recovery by Cláudio of a nineteenth century narrative model (the latter fuelled by statements made by the author himself). Alongside, there was a great interest in assessing the implications of the formal strategies adopted in the novel.

Interpreting Cláudio’s use of history, in *A Quinta das Virtudes* and especially *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*,39 Maria Alzira Seixo argued that both novels expressed the intersection between factual history, textual

tradition and the poetic potential of literature, thus allowing for the past (perceived from a present-day standpoint) to be productively activated, and for literature to became the *locus* of and means for the reconstruction and reassessment of history and memory.\(^{40}\) For Seixo, *A Quinta das Virtudes* and *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias* illustrate how, by reconstituting and imagining particular characters and events in a detailed and experiential manner (a process based on verisimilitude), literature defines a new factuality in relation to history, established from a contemporary perspective.\(^{41}\) In this context, according to Seixo, the Claudian biographical novel is always a way of recovering and giving life to the body associated with a name, and therefore of reconstituting a specific existence.\(^{42}\) Moreover, in reference to *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, Seixo highlighted the specific textual strategies used in the work in order to achieve said reassessment of history in literature, namely the articulation between scenes of historical reconstruction (based on an inherited set of documents and narratives, as well as on the imagined subjectivity of the characters), and what Seixo called ‘scenes of poetic fabulation’.\(^{43}\) The latter correspond to passages in which characters are shown

\(^{40}\) ‘Creio que a obra de Mário Cláudio ganha em ser estudada à luz destes dois textos, uma vez que ambos equacionam a relação entre o contar poético e o quotidiano acontecido, pensando verbalmente o imaginário que atribui espessura ao facto do registo e da memória, e ancorando na História que é património comum, ou herança familiar, a palavra que inscreve a notação criativa, seja pessoal lembrança ou mito do passado.’ In Maria Alzira Seixo, ‘Poética da descoincidência em *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, de Mário Cláudio’, p. 233.

\(^{41}\) Referring to *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, Seixo states: ‘A História, de facto, faz parcialmente este romance, mas é no fundo ele que refaz a História, preenchendo-o com uma experiência quotidiana e conjectural (investigadora) que, por mais que seja o esforço de se adequar a tempos idos, é absolutamente de hoje. Deste modo a ficção acaba por reverter a factibilidade (desdobrando-se as personagens que viveram os factos, e multiplicando portanto os pontos de vista), instituindo-se a capacidade ficional como factibilidade do próprio facto, na medida em que converte noções abstractas e conhecimentos transmitidos numa escrita concreta, que pragmatiza o acontecido.’ In Maria Alzira Seixo, ‘Poética da descoincidência em *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, de Mário Cláudio’, p. 236.

\(^{42}\) In this respect, consider the following passage: ‘A biografia claudiana é sempre um modo de fazer respirar um nome herdado, reduzido à sua instituição tumular e limitada ao que dela ficou mais ou menos apreendido; a biografia claudiana faz reviver, subjetivando-o, o corpo anímico desse nome, e acompanha a sua gestualidade e a sua movimentação que, em relação ao passado, apenas a criação poética pode conseguir.’ In Maria Alzira Seixo, ‘Poética da descoincidência em *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, de Mário Cláudio’, p. 240.

\(^{43}\) ‘A característica mais imediatamente evidente deste livro é a da alternância (porém admiravelmente articulada, num *continuum* estilístico que tem a ver com o *glissando* dos andamentos musicais) entre as cenas de convocação histórica (situadas num lugar inusitado pelo
reflecting (generally through images represented via internal focalization) on history and human existence. As I would like to argue and shall demonstrate here, the textual strategies described by Seixo, which are in fact distinctive of Cláudio’s writing, are also very much evident in *A Quinta das Virtudes*.

Engaging in this discussion, Maria de Fátima Marinho maintained that major social and cultural changes, namely the Carnation Revolution and the subsequent process of decolonization, helped explain the renewed interest in the past and the veritable obsession with history and memory which in her view characterised Portuguese literature in the eighties and nineties of the twentieth century. In reference to this trend, Marinho identified the prevalent attitudes evidenced by Portuguese authors, from the dominant one seeking to legitimate the present in relation to the past (*see Mário de Carvalho in* *Um Deus Passeando na Brisa da Tarde*), to the more subversive stances of José Saramago, who stressed the constructed nature of history (*for instance, in* *História do Cerco de Lisboa*), and António Lobo Antunes, who adopted a characteristically iconoclastic attitude (*the most radical example of which is found in* *As Naus*). Somehow positioned between these extremes, Marinho argued, were Mário Cláudio and Agustina Bessa-Luís, authors whose works illustrated the necessity of incorporating the past into the present as a means of shaping a sense of belonging, whilst at the same time underlining the importance of contesting it. In fact, for Marinho, *A Quinta das Virtudes* depicts...

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44 ‘Em 1974, a revolução de Abril e a correspondente perda das colónias, aliadas ao regresso de portugueses cuja vida parecia estabilizada em África, criaram um novo sentimento de insegurança que se traduziu e traduz no aparecimento de um tipo de literatura que se destina a exorcizar fantasmas e a convocar memórias e momentos reconfortantes. Assistimos, então, a um recrudescimento da ficção com base histórica, numa tentativa de legitimar o presente através de um passado que se percebe não ter ainda esgotado todas as suas potencialidades.’ In Maria de Fátima Marinho, ‘Literatura e Construção de Identidade’, *História Revista*, 17.1, (2012), p. 239-251 (243) [Online]. Available at: [https://www.revistas.ufg.br/historia/article/view/21695/12767](https://www.revistas.ufg.br/historia/article/view/21695/12767) (Accessed: 23 March 2021).

the conflict between the assertion of a cohesive community, related to a given family and to the geographical and cultural reference of Oporto, to ancestral rites and customs, and the acute awareness of its impermanence. This tension between affirmation and questioning is the expression of the search for an elusive sense of identity, on the verge of being lost. As Marinho further noted, in Portuguese literature, the reflection on history, memory, belonging and alienation is manifested in a profusion of family novels in which memory (individual and collective) intersects with space, a trend of which in my view the ‘trilogia da árvore genealógica’ constitutes a fine example.46

Maria João Reynaud followed a similar tack as Marinho and, referring in general to Cláudio’s representation of the city of Oporto, elaborated on how in the Claudian corpus the memory of space is textualized and how this process entails a reflection about the present by means of the past, corresponding to a desired archaeology of the nation, the city, and of the individuals living in it.47 Moreover, Reynauld added, in relation to Oporto,

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46 ‘Assente na noção do romance de família (SMADJA, 2005), A Quinta das Virtudes, ao pretender narrar a história de uma família portuense entre meados dos século XVIII e do XIX, mostra a imponderabilidade do tempo e a importância da família primordial. Se lemos que a Casa vai deixando «fortuitos, cada vez mais fortuitos, e inautênticos, cada vez mais inautênticos, vestígios da sua passagem» (CLÁUDIO, 1990, p. 367), a verdade é que o incipit do romance aponta claramente para as origens, não propriamente individuais (mesmo que seja isso o aparentemente referido), mas de uma comunidade que se compreende como coesa [...] Entenderemos assim, a necessidade de ler de forma abrangente esta saga familiar que se revela um dos principais elementos legitimadores do presente: as descrições da cidade do Porto, acentuando a índole dos habitantes, «o sonho de uma certa opulência, que o Porto, de resto, não toleraria» (CLÁUDIO, 1990, p. 43), complementadas com referências explícitas aos ascendentes e, consequente, repúdio do estranho ou estrangeiro. Esta dualidade irreconciliável sublinha a existência de uma busca, mesmo se camuflada por uma história familiar, histórias de que há inúmeros exemplos na ficção contemporânea (MARINHO, 1999), de uma identidade difusa e em riscos de perda”. In Maria de Fátima Marinho. ‘Literatura e Construção da Identidade’, pp. 243-244. For more on this, see: Maria Theresa Abelha Alves, ‘A Quinta das Virtudes...Fora tudo, sempre, uma estranha casa.’ In Escrever a Casa Portuguesa, ed. by Jorge Fernandes da Silveira (Belo Horizonte: EdUFMG, 1999), pp. 367-381.

47 ‘Se nos voltarmos para a literatura portuguesa atual, não será difícil constatar que nenhum outro escritor, à exceção de Agustina Bessa-Luís, levou tão longe o projeto de interrogar o seu tempo a partir de um trabalho de (refundação da memória dos lugares, como Mário Cláudio. A sua obra identifica-se com o projeto, por ele anunciado há largos anos, de traçar “uma arqueologia da nacionalidade, do indivíduo, de uma cidade, de modo a descobrir os fundamentos do ser e do existir”, através de uma escrita habitada pelo dom que permite que as paisagens rurais ou urbanas ganhem aquela dimensão metafísica de que fala Aragon.’ In Maria João Reynaud, ‘Mário Cláudio: O Escritor e a Cidade’, in Mário Cláudio – Vida e Obra (Vila Nova de Famalicão: Edições Cão Menor, 2016), pp. 78-79.
Cláudio’s fiction is dominated by a sentiment of nostalgia about a world which is fast disappearing.  

I partake of the interpretation of *A Quinta das Virtudes* proposed by the authors above. Indeed, one of the goals of this chapter is precisely to elucidate how the textualization of history is enacted in the novel, and furthermore how the latter serves the purpose of promoting a reflection on the possibilities of configuring identity in the face of marked social change and mobility (geographical and social). However, my take on the work is also substantially different from the ones proposed above. Whilst I agree that the contradictory search for identity in *A Quinta das Virtudes* is undoubtedly related to a specific Portuguese context, I also argue that it is connected to a broader cultural landscape, which it is fundamental we consider. My suggestion is that we find in *A Quinta das Virtudes* an archaeology of modern subjectivity (certainly indexed to a specific semiperipheral location in the world-system), which moreover constitutes an indirect reflection and commentary on the social and cultural conditions characterising late modernity. As I shall demonstrate, spatial and social mobility, as well as the acceleration of social change occurring at the moment of transition from a predominantly rural and agrarian to an urban and capitalist society, elicit in characters the questioning of their identities, whose definition is regarded as deeply problematic. Additionally,

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48 As Reynaud puts it: ‘A obra ficcional de Mário Cláudio parece refletir a profunda nostalgia de um mundo que caminha aceleradamente para o seu fim e onde se destaca, com fulgor crepuscular, a cidade onde nasceu e vive.’ In Maria João Reyaud, ‘Mário Cláudio: O Escritor e a Cidade’, p. 84.

49 I reference here again Immanuel Wallerstein’s conceptualization of a tripartite world-system, connecting unequally core, periphery and semiperiphery. The notion of the semiperiphery is given crucial importance by Wallerstein, who sees it as a buffer between the core and the periphery, and likewise as a site for innovation. In spite of the criticism of the vagueness of the notion of semiperiphery within Wallerstein’s system, it has held its ground and has been the focus of continuous debate since its inception. Furthermore, even many of those who have expressed critical insights in relation to the concept, still use it in their analysis. A good example of this is found in the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos, who has consistently assessed Portuguese society explicitly or implicitly in reference to the notion of the semiperiphery. For a summary of Wallerstein’s theory, see: Immanuel Wallerstein, *World-systems analysis: an introduction* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004). An early example of the work of Boaventura de Sousa Santos in this field is: Boaventura de Sousa Santos, ‘Estado e sociedade na semiperiferia do sistema mundial: o caso português,’ *Análise Social*, XXI, (1985), 869-901. For a more recent analysis of the problematic notion of semiperiphery, see: Maira Baé Baladão Vieira, ‘Undocking and Collision: The Recent Paths of the Semiperiphery in The World-System’, *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations*, 7.13, (2018), 10-47.
characters use coping mechanisms in order to process an increasingly acute sense of isolation and disorientation caused by the conditions described. Among these we find, for instance, the emotional investment in the family unit and an increased attention to memory practices and to storytelling. Taking into account the aspects of the novel highlighted above, my reading of the work will for the most part be informed by recent and not so recent approaches to the configuration of modern subjectivity and to the role of the family in the bourgeois landscape, but also and more importantly to the uses of memory in the context of modernity and late modernity.

In this study of A Quinta das Virtudes, I examine how the novel addresses the tentative constitution of individual and collective identity in early modernity, in the first instance in relation to social and spatial references, such as the family home and the family unit, the city, and the nation. While doing this, I take into account the two main structural elements of the novel identified by Seixo: on the one hand, the representation of historical landscapes and episodes, based on documentary and historical memory; on the other, the imagined subjective experiences of the characters. In relation to these, I highlight the relevance of the scenes of poetic fabulation presented in the novel. Indeed, the latter are often based on places and objects that become semantic nuclei, which the characters, the narrator and the readers confront in an attempt to understand their place in society and in time.

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50 In spite of their traditional approach to the history of society and ideas, in my view the contributions of Charles Taylor and Philippe Ariès to the study of modern selfhood are still valuable today and indeed they are particularly interesting for the analysis of the period covered in A Quinta das Virtudes: Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1989); Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood (New York: Knopf, 1962). A little known author, but whose idiosyncratic approach to modernity I much appreciate is Ágnes Heller. I reference mostly her collection of essays A theory of modernity (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999).

In the first chapter, I explore the impact which the displacement of a family from a rural to an urban setting and the evolution of a bourgeois social unit spanning three generations have in terms of the processes that allow characters to form memory and identity. As will become apparent, the chapter is structured around the three generations, which will enable me to relate more clearly the social and cultural changes occurring at different times with their effects on individual subjectivity. In the second chapter, I look into how national and transnational mobility and the perceived acceleration of the pace of social change elicit in the characters of the third generation reflections on permanence and impermanence, continuity and caesura, which are directly related to the family unit and to the bourgeois home. Additionally, I delve into the strategies employed by the characters to process their situation. Lastly, in the chapter titled ‘Disasters of War’, I consider briefly the representation of nation-states in A Quinta das Virtudes. My aim here is to examine how, by establishing an intertext with the art of Francisco de Goya, the novel affords an indictment of nationalist discourses based on simplistic propositions about identity. In addition, I maintain that the fact that the violence unleashed by states ultimately induces in two of the characters a complete sense of alienation and loss of identity constitutes a denunciation not only of the apparatus of the nation-state, but also of the darkest aspects of the modern establishment. I conclude the first part of this study by arguing that the depiction of the formation of a modern bourgeois society and mindset present in the novel (in its national, but mostly familial and individual dimensions) constitutes an indirect commentary and reflection on late modern social arrangements, which I briefly describe.
Chapter 1: A Family in Time

As was mentioned above, *A Quinta das Virtudes* can be integrated into a wider contemporary trend relating to the creation of family novels that explore the subjects of origins, genealogy and memory, posing questions about individual and collective identity in relation to current social and economic conditions and to the challenges they pose. Among these, we find for instance the perceived emphasis on individual autonomy and self-reflexiveness and the precariousness of the forms of social organization, occurring in the context of increased mobility and social and historical acceleration, and more broadly of the uneven distribution of material and symbolic goods at the global scale. Specifically in the Portuguese case, there is a long tradition of reflection on the historical development of Portuguese society through the activation the *topos* of the family home. The latter goes back at least to Eça de Queirós (*Ilustre Casa de Ramires*) and is illustrated by works by authors such as Aquilino Ribeiro (*Casa Grande de Romarigães*), Tomaz de Figueiredo (*Toca do Lobo*), Agustina Bessa-Luís (*Meninos de Oiro*) and Carlos de Oliveira (*Finisterra*), among many others.\(^{52}\) As João Barrento argued, the activation of the *topos* of the family or clan and likewise of the model of the family novel in contemporary Portuguese literature allows for the representation of wider social and historical processes, generally related to moments of accelerated change, which are filtered through the concrete experiences of the characters.\(^{53}\)

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53 On this matter, Barrento offered the following reading of Portuguese contemporary literary production, which includes a specific reference to the work of Mário Cláudio: ‘O romance não pode tratar a História como uma abstracção. Por isso o romance da tradição burguesa se serve de um enquadramento que é referência privilegiada de histórias e da História, nomeadamente a casa e a família como suportes de acção e significação. Este complexo da casa e do clã encontra-se, como sabemos, há muito em crise nas nossas sociedades, e esse é, entre outros, um dos aspectos que levou à proclamação da crise do romance num mundo em que casa e família se afundaram, um mundo sem valores nem proibições e tabus a quebrar. Apesar disso (ou talvez por isso mesmo), a casa e o complexo familiar continuam a ser microcosmos importantes no tratamento da História pelo romance. Quase sempre a desagregação das relações familiares, por vezes mesmo a decadência física de uma casa, são espelho de um processo histórico e social que lhes corresponde (exemplo clássico: *Finisterra*, de Carlos de Oliveira; e outro caso exemplar desta situação-tipo: *Casa da Cabeça de Cavalo*, de Teolinda Gersão). Trata-se quase sempre, ou de crises geracionais, ou
A Quinta das Virtudes engages directly with the tradition of the nineteenth century novel, which it anachronistically seeks to reproduce, although failing to do so, since its affirmative vein is undermined by self-reflexive irony. Certainly, the structure of the work, which is based on the insertion of the story of a family into the larger history of the country, offering depictions of the major social, economic and cultural changes which occurred during that period, and how individual characters react to these, evokes the grand narratives of the nineteenth century, which sought to portray individual and collective life, imposing on them a sense of order and of historical legitimacy. Additionally, the novel explores the affinities between the nineteenth century novel and the nuclear family. Indeed, as Sarah Vandegrift Eldridge maintained, the nuclear family and the novel were mutually
constitutive, since they emerged at the same time and in fact the novel reflected changes in the modes of constituting family and bequeathing legacy in the nineteenth century. As such, the nineteenth century novel integrated social discourses on family and enquired into emerging forms of social life, as well as into the manner in which individuals related to these new societal configurations.55

In line with this and reflecting on the project of A Quinta das Virtudes before its completion, Cláudio declared his nostalgia with respect to what he designated as the ‘traditional novel’, a reference which he claimed was his unattainable ideal.56 Cláudio further clarified his intentions regarding A Quinta das Virtudes. He claimed he imagined the house to be the main character of the novel and declared that the principal goal of the work would consist in recreating the dominant emotions of the period depicted, the shifting mentalities in those tumultuous times.57 Apart from indexing the project to the nineteenth century family novel, these statements implicitly support my claim that the recreation in A Quinta das Virtudes of a world and a literary form of the past should be read as affording a response to present and future challenges, preterit tumultuousness and its corresponding subjective consequences appearing as a means to reflect about contemporary issues.

56 ‘Noto muito ao longo de todo o meu trabalho de escrita que eu sou um nostálgico do romance tradicional e só não escrevo um porque não sei... O que resulta de vanguarda, de modernidade, de uma nova proposta de escrita, é, no fondo, quanto a mim, um precipitado de várias coisas e o resultado da minha incapacidade de escrever um livro com princípio, meio e fim. Isso não quer dizer, por outro lado, que eu tenha em relação aos autores contemporâneos uma grande simpatia. Não tenho. Mas, cá está, há um problema edipiano que é difícil de resolver. Porque, se me faltar essa nostalgia, é certo que ficarei sem nada.’ Mário Cláudio, quoted by Ernesto Rodrigues, in ‘Mário Cláudio: terceiro tríptico romanesco’, Colóquio/ Letras, 147-148 (January 1998), 293-298 (296).
57 ‘... o meu projeto mais próximo, e já estou a trabalhar nele – é, de facto, um grande painel. A história decorre no Porto. É a história de uma casa...[...] Aqui, a casa é o grande personagem – onde está instalada a Cooperativa Árvore – num período muito importante para a história do Porto, de cerca de cem anos, que decorre entre o célebre motim dos tanoeiros, em 1757, e a morte da Rainha Dona Maria II, em 1853. Neste período, temos as invasões francesas, as lutas liberais, a Maria da Fonte, o avanço do capitalismo, o fontismo. [...] Eu não vou fazer uma história cronológica da casa, aquilo que seja uma história da moda, dos costumes, dos ambientes – isso é que vão eletrizar [?] –, uma história das emoções. Vou tentar estabelecer uma ideia da tragédia das emoções portuguesas dominantes nesse período de cem anos. Claro que aí haverá, pelo menos aqui ou ali, uma ou outra coincidência com os processos balzaquianos referidos, mas não só com esses. Vai estar lá o Stendhal, enfim, vai estar lá mais gente.’ Quoted by Ernesto Rodrigues, in ‘Mário Cláudio: terceiro tríptico romanesco’, p. 296.
A Quinta das Virtudes portrays the migration of a family from a rural to an urban setting and the implications that this movement has in terms of the formation of the identities of individuals and social groups. The novel begins with the definition of a rural geographical and social space in Northwestern Portugal and with the representation of individuals whose lives and sense of selfhood are bound to the land they inhabit. The text starts by describing the formation of the first social and political units and the process of Christianisation. In order to do so, it evokes medieval chronicles, which are at one point explicitly referenced (‘reminiscências da crónica lengendária da Casa de Leão’). The harshness of the reality described is tempered by the fabric of the text, marked by a distinctive cadence, as well as by the use of the conditional (which conveys possibilities not entirely confirmable nor dismissible, a distinctive feature of the novel as a whole), and by the choice of the vocabulary, made up of substantial words alluding to the land (solo, boa terra autóctone, húmus) and to the people identifying with it. In a passage referring to São Rosendo, the land is represented as a fire that supports individuals and is communicated to their muscles and veins. Alternatively, the soil is the place where human remains lie and disintegrate. This notion of an idealized emotional and physical belonging (to a space and to a community) are summed up in the following excerpt, whose subject is meaningfully a collective entity, represented as being ‘tied’ to a given geographical and emotional place, and to a community, to which individuals cling in the face of their awareness of the passage of time: ‘E pressentiam que, a ele, pelo discurso dos séculos, ficariam atados, pois que se lhes presenciara os folguedos infantis, além do instante em que, por todo o corpo, se lhes acordava esse cardo intranquilo, que só no abraço de outro corpo serenava.’

60 Conf. ‘Se outros houve, antes, e outros haveria, depois, atentos ao solo onde se lhes firmava a marcha, poucos conheceriam o mesmo solo, assim, de forma que, como um fogo, se comunicava aos músculos e às veias.’ In Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 13.
61 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 17.
A Quinta das Virtudes therefore presents us initially with a foundation narrative. According Marc Augé, such narratives, which ‘bring the spirits of the place together with the first inhabitants in the common adventure of the group in movement,’ constitute an ethnological illusion, the fantasy of ‘a society anchored since time immemorial in the permanence of an intact soil outside which nothing is really understandable.’ What we find in the novel is therefore the representation of a pre-modern society united in its usages, beliefs and institutions, and in the character of its members, in a discourse that becomes spatial, since the members of the community have supposedly mapped out completely the natural world that surrounds them, having inherited a body of knowledge passed down to them organically since the beginning of time. As Augé stresses, narratives of foundation support the notion of anthropological place, which is ‘relational, historical and concerned with identity,’ and which in his view contrasts with the modern notion of place (marked by the ambiguity deriving from the awareness of past and present conditions), and likewise with the contemporary idea of non-place, or place of non-inscription. But if Cláudio elaborates initially on the idea of anthropological place, this constitutes only the first stage in a movement that will take us from an idealized rural scenario to a modern urban setting. Moreover, this arguably nostalgic portrayal will acquire an ironic dimension, since A Quinta das Virtudes raises precisely fundamental questions about the possibility of consistently defining identity with respect to space/place and time.

A Quinta das Virtudes depicts how a clan is formed whose identity is grounded on the possession of a house (‘Casa da Manguela’) and on the awareness of shared values and modes of behaviour: ‘Seria uma estirpe, aventuráramos nós, desligada de qualquer prosápia, essa que deparara com sua sede na vetusta Casa da Manguela, em São Tiago da Carreira, que teimava em defender o seu património, sem insistir em exaltar-se por arroubos excepcionais.’ The first characters named in the text, corresponding to the first generation of the family whose lives are told in the novel, are José Pinto

63 Marc Augé, Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity, p. 44.
64 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 21.
de Meirelles and Francisca Clara de Azevedo Aranha e Fonseca, who would marry in 1756. They are placed at the crossroads between two modes of organizing society, time, and of shaping memory, and both express acutely the contradictions inherent to their situation. The text is structured around the two axes corresponding to the perspectives of the main characters, which allows for the portrayal of different but complementary views on the changes depicted and their consequences in terms of self-representation.

Francisca Clara accepts a marriage of convenience in order to build a home and a family, and importantly she cultivates an interest in genealogy and local folklore, elements relating to the memory of her community. In spite of being attracted to the idea of moving to Oporto, she seems lost in this new social setting and she often visits the family’s rural estate in ‘São Tiago da Carreira’, so as to reconnect with her ancestry, with an experience of long duration that she hopes to take with her to the city:

Em finais de Agosto, começada a edificação da Quinta, abalam os esposos, após maturada decisão, para São Tiago da Carreira, como que para retomar o profundo fôlego racial que, como maiores haustos, se continuaria. Orienta-os o intuito, ainda, de reunir os indispensáveis ao encetamento da vida nova, bens do marido, desta vez, os quais, tendo acrescido ao enxoval, acabassem enchendo as Virtudes, a sublinhar, por entre os adquiridos, a continuidade da pertença inteira.65

The passage underlines the desire on the part of Francisca Clara to recover the experience of living in a given geographical and social place, and likewise to perpetuate a feeling of complete belonging (‘continuidade da pertença inteira’), precisely via the renewal of a specific lived experience and by the selection of objects, all of which were meant to be carried to a new home and life.

In this rural setting, Francisca Clara develops a connection with the ancient rhythms of nature (‘ritmos de idade antiquíssima’) and with the basic realities of birth and death. She enjoys taking on the traditional role of the landowner (‘proprietária magnífica’) who cares for the land and people, and while her relationship with nature is of possession and manipulation, she

cannot avoid being conditioned and even seduced by it. Francisca Clara delights in contemplating the possessions of the clan (‘deliciava-se ela na consideração das posses do clã’66) and in intervening in agriculture, speculating on the best methods to sow and crop. However, she is also sensually attracted to the workings of the natural world, which connect her to the land and to her childhood:

Na centenária Casa da Manguela, só de perseguir o intenso aroma do tojo, aljofrado de orvalho, cortado para fortalecer o lume, ou de perscrutar o caruncho, em sua labiríntica escalada, pelas pernas de um aparador, assimilava ela o que mestre nenhum teria sabedoria de lhe incutir. Quase hipnotizada, ia percorrendo, com a vista, as nervuras, como que músculos esbranquiçados, da couve-galega, que afagava, depois, em sua textura acidentada, de saliências e reentrâncias. E acolhia as confidências dos criados, com um sorriso em que não punha qualquer arreganho, tão-só o respeito de seu assumido nível social, sempre que lhe descreviam a agonia de uma mãe, que fora a enterrar, ou as voltas, a imprimir ao defumadouro, para que se eliminasse o temor, que uma inocente exprimia, de certa sombra da cozinha de seus pais.67

Scents, sounds, sight, and touch all emerge in the excerpt above, relating to fire and water (dew), and contributing towards the definition of an almost hypnotic connection between the character and the environment surrounding her. This connection is further highlighted by the fact that the plant described and sensually touched by Francisca Clara is portrayed much like an animal organism, displaying nerves and muscles. Complementarily, the gentle relation with servants depicted further explores this scenario of rural harmony, as if the text were describing ancient rites, which had been taking place in this setting since time immemorial. Moreover, the experience of communion between humanity and nature includes a dimension of intuitive learning, connected with the awareness of the ephemeral condition all beings partake, the passing of time being underlined by the image of the woodworm, the burning of furze, and the reference to a mother who had just been buried, a symbol of life and death.

66 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 33.
67 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, pp. 33-34.
Underscoring the connection between the human subject and a given space, the effects of the local climate and changing weather conditions on the psyche of the people in general, and of Francisca Clara in particular, are meticulously represented. Displaying what is regarded by many in her social milieu as manly vigour, Francisca Clara attempts to resist the impositions of the climate, only to find that a slippery substance pours into her structure, as she ultimately comes across as just any other autochthonous organism, akin to a plant: ‘Uma escorregadia substância entrava em sua estrutura, gotejando depois, nas superfícies vegetais, até que uma rãstia voadora, dessas que actuam como a revelação, lentamente evaporasse tais lágrimas.’

The imagery associating human and plant life, in relation to a certain geographical and social milieu, of which we have considered two examples, is recurrent in the work of Mário Cláudio, and arguably serves to stress the identification with a given place, even if at times the latter is undesired or ambivalently considered. As we shall see, a variation of this is found in the discourse on genetics which I consider later in this study. Continuing with this first generation though, the experience of transitioning between two modes of social and economic organization produces tension and disorientation in the characters, a fact which will be manifested more acutely in subsequent generations. The rhythms of a most ancient age alluded to above (‘ritmos de idade antiquíssima’), related to birth and death and to the teachings of nature, make way for another time in another place, the city of Oporto, which Francisca Clara fantasises about in an important passage of the novel.

* A Quinta das Virtudes presents a fresco of a society in time, alternating between the individual and the collective, internal and external focalization. Sometimes, the dominant mode corresponding to the close depiction of characters and of their perceptions (main and secondary, from all social strata) is complemented by tableaux of greater amplitude that imaginatively capture in dense images specific historical events or stages in the development of the

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68 Mário Cláudio, *A Quinta das Virtudes*, p. 35.
69 This occurs for instance in *As Máscaras de Sábado*: Mário Cláudio, *Um Verão Assim. As Máscaras de Sábado* (Porto: Modo de Ler, 2009).
social and economic life of Oporto. The first example of such a narrative construction is found in Francisca Clara’s depiction of the city, represented via internal focalization. This account serves as an introduction to a wholly new social and economic scenario; however it is based on book sources and on a brief and superficial experience of the city. Additionally, this image appears in the form of a dream created by a woman who needs to escape her dull marriage. Portrayed as if on parchment, the mythical past of the city is depicted by Francisca, in an account that fuses classical references, the architectural landmarks of Oporto and the economic activity of this harbour city, which by the end of the eighteenth century had become too complex to be assimilated or represented in an uncomplicated manner:

Alçava-se o aglomerado, depois, a um plano inatingível, e não existia quem lograsse, já, contabilizar-lhe as ruas, desenhar o perfil de suas torres, apontar no mapa o sítio que lhe competia. Do Porto, nesses primórdios de mil setecentos e cinquenta e sete, disparavam novas, excitadas e alarmantes, de inquietudes e burburinhos, a par de mostras desgarradas se sumptuosas festividades, de invenções e progressos.

The city is of Oporto is thus seen here as unattainable, incomprehensible, its streets too many to be accounted for, the novelties brought about by progress making it an alien location in which it became impossible for individuals to determine their place. Moreover, following Susan Stewart, we could argue that this great tableau of the city seen from afar and above presents it as a gigantic force, a substitute for nature itself, and the embodiment of the communal, signified in the festivities alluded to in the excerpt, which as we shall see contrast with the bourgeois space of intimacy, the family home, with its small scale, and its decorations which mirror and arguably construct the individual self. I elaborate further on the construction of the space of the family home.

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70 On the visual character of the Claudian corpus, documented in intimate as well as in larger scenes, see: Carlos J. F. Jorge, 'Os Quadros da Crónica ou a História Segundo o Romancista', Colóquio/Letras, 161/162, (2002), 203-213.
71 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 37.
72 On this matter, Susan Stewart comments: 'If we attempt to describe the city from a distanced and transcendent position, to thereby miniaturize it, the tendency is to naturalize the city landscape. [...] Such a point of view enables the viewer to trivialize the cultural landscape as he or she magnifies and situates the larger natural landscape. At the same time, this view remains radically outside the scene: one cannot enter into the life of the city without experiencing a corresponding change in
and on the function of objects later, noting the difference in the way the different generations approach this matter. However, still with respect to the imaginative construction of Oporto articulated by Francisca, the fact that it is based on books and on a brief previous stay in the city during her honeymoon raises the issue of representation in the novel and moreover provides an ironic commentary on the project of *A Quinta das Virtudes* itself, underlining precisely the fictional nature of the portrayal of the city, of its history and people, presented in the novel. Indeed, once the move to the city is completed, as described at the end of the chapter, Francisca Clara becomes aware of the inaccuracy of her initial view of the town, and in another tableau the text elaborates on the places, human types and customs (in particular of the working classes) characterizing the Oporto of the late-eighteenth century. The description evidences the taste for the recreation of places and customs, often resorting to the mode of caricature and to the fusion of high and low *strata* (social and linguistic), which is a distinctive feature of Cláudio’s production and which contributes to providing the sketch a city marked by profound contradictions, but which also promised to fulfil the desires of the individuals who inhabited it: ‘Louca urbe era aquela, em que Francisca Clara penetrava, amorável e irascível, ao tamanho do desejo.’

In another passage though, Francisca’s vision of her new life is associated with the notion of the failure of an earlier structure of social organization, or better still with the failure in making it persist, as Francisca and José Pinto finally abandon their ancestral home:

> A Francisca Clara, na Casa da Manguela, tudo isto estava marcando, com a incandescência que lhe nascia do querer transpor para a história intrínseca, os genes de quanto de maravilhoso fracassara. E desfolhava ela o invisível caderno da alucinante imagética, arfando muito, sem saber bem porquê. Aos pés, deitava-se-lhe Cisaltino, obsessivamente lhe lambendo o sapatinho de seda rosada, que principiava, de facto, a romper a costura. E um vento destrambelhado, muito nórdico, com uma selvagem mistela de areão e de feno,
convidava os habitantes, em seu aconchego, a que se sentissem melhor.74

The excerpt conveys the mix of excitement, loss, and disorientation which the changes she is experiencing have in Francisca. As she unravels a notebook of extraordinary, dizzying imagery (of the city), she seeks to make the genes of that wonderful and ultimately lost world part of her own story, that is, she wishes to retain the idealized world of youthful innocence, of desired happiness and fulfilment identified with the native land and with her childhood. The dog, whose image has at least since Goya been associated with modern alienation and the desire to overcome it, attempts to no avail to mend the torn silken shoe, symbolizing the torn self and mode of life and concurrently illustrating the condition of the aristocratic woman, whose demise brings with it both sadness and excitement. In the meantime, the wind, mad and uncontrolled like the modern world with its unceasing drive for change and progress, invites people to seek comfort in their homes, which signals the relevance that the family unit and home will acquire in the urban context and bourgeois culture.

The account centring on José Pinto de Meirelles likewise highlights the tension experienced by the character in the face of the social and spatial displacement he engages in, which mirrors the one noted with respect to Francisca, while providing additional details about the economic and political changes occurring in the late-eighteenth century in Portugal.

The novel depicts the emergence of a new bourgeois society, based on commerce and industry, and specifically how a class of aristocrats adheres to new ideas and modes of behaviour, without however completely severing ties with ancestral beliefs and values. Indeed, as an army captain who enters a life of commerce, José Pinto embodies the conflict that characterised many societies in the late-eighteenth century, between an aristocratic ethic, which stressed the virtues of civic life and the pursuit of fame and renown (attained via military exploits), and a bourgeois outlook, centred on goods of production, and professing the virtues of an ordinary, ordered and peaceful life:

Nesse mesmo estatuto de nobre moderno, a quem a lida dos negócios não deslustrava, procuraria firmar o seu comportamento, actualizado com os ventos da história, assim, sem de todo romper com os gestos a que o obrigavam os imperativos de sangue.\textsuperscript{75}

Although not entirely uncommon, as Charles Taylor noted,\textsuperscript{76} the situation described here illustrates the peculiarities of the Portuguese semiperipheral situation with respect to the development of an urban bourgeois society, which was translated in the coexistence of the old and new orders during a long period spanning practically the whole of the nineteenth century.

To provide a brief context, one should note that whilst the development of the commercial activity in Portugal in the final quarter of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries is well documented, and although the bourgeoisie played a decisive role in the introduction of liberalism to the country, several structural conditions favoured a porous relation between the nobility and the higher echelons of the bourgeoisie, at the same time as it limited the growth of the bourgeoisie itself in Portugal. On the one hand, by the late eighteenth century members of the traditional nobility were increasingly pressed to enter the fields of commerce and industry, in order to cope with the difficulties they had making ends meet on the proceeds of their lands. On the other hand, according to Carlos Guimarães da Cunha,\textsuperscript{77} by the end of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Portuguese bourgeoisie had a very limited expression: numbers were small and the economic activity, restricted mainly to commerce, was greatly concentrated in the two main hubs of Lisbon and Oporto. Whereas a higher level of entrepreneurs existed, made up of Portuguese nationals and of nationals from other countries (mainly British, but also French, Dutch and Irish), the success of the enterprises depended to a great degree on good commercial contracts with the crown. This meant that the bourgeoisie was not inclined to oppose the status quo; indeed, many of the most successful businessmen of the day were given a titles and promoted

\textsuperscript{75} Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 44.
to the nobility.\textsuperscript{78} In the wake of the French invasions and of the civil war (1820-1834), Portugal faced a major economic downturn, motivated by factors such as the payments imposed by the invading French army, generalized political instability, the independence of Brazil, and by what Jorge Borges de Macedo described as Portugal's major technological problem.\textsuperscript{79} Weak industrial development stifled the growth of the Portuguese bourgeoisie, however the latter did acquire more social, economic and political relevance throughout the nineteenth century, especially from the 1850's onwards, as a consequence of the political and economic reforms implemented by the movement of the Regeneration.

The fact that the family depicted in \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes} has a noble and rural origin speaks of the porous relation between the nobility and the bourgeoisie described above; more importantly in my view, it adds a layer of tension to the processes of geographical, social and cultural transformation depicted in the novel. As occurs with the account focusing on Francisca Clara, the narrative centred on José Pinto is structured around contrasting ideas: countryside/city, identification/alienation, permanence/fluidity, certainty/ambiguity. José Pinto sees moving to Oporto as a betrayal of the

\textsuperscript{78} On this matter, Carlos Guimarães da Cunha comments: ‘Os grupos sociais possidentes não têm por hábito hostilizar o poder vigente quando os seus interesses não são minimamente beliscados e até, pelo contrário, são protegidos e incentivados. Os grupos mercantis portugueses e particularmente o seu estrato superior, os negociantes, conquistaram nos anos finais do século XVIII um prestígio social que o poder político da época não deixou de reconhecer, nomeadamente através de uma política de nobilitações e de concessão de títulos, que tornou os seus elementos de maior relevo verdadeiros aliados da Coroa e detentores de real influência na esfera do poder. [...] Essa política, que se limitava a consagrar um prestígio que a riqueza gerada pela atividade comercial e a importância crescente desta impunham no plano social, não era nova em Portugal, onde, como acentua Jorge Borges de Macedo, «o acesso ou permanência na nobreza nunca foram exclusivos da fidalguia», lembrando as numerosas nobilitações que, ao longo dos séculos, consagraram pessoas de condição humilde. O que era novo e significativo, «no último quartel do século XVIII», como afirma o mesmo autor, era «a densidade dessas promoções, a proveniência dos elementos beneficiados e a justificação teórica que acompanhava a nobilitação dos Quintelas, Braancamp, Sobrais, Cruzes e tantos outros». Assim, penso que podemos admitir com verosimilhança que, antes das invasões francesas e do conjunto de fatos que lhes sobrevieram e que alteraram completamente o quadro em que se desenvolviam as atividades mercantis e conexas, não havia seguramente no seio do que podemos chamar «burguesia comercial» qualquer sentimento generalizado de contestação ou sequer de crítica da ordem social e política vigente, que pudesse eventualmente conduzir a uma vontade de rotura com o regime.’ In Carlos Guimarães da Cunha, \textit{Negociantes, Mercadores e Traficantes no Final da Monarquia Absoluta: a Burguesia Mercantil em Portugal, dos Anos Finais do Século XVIII até ao Início da Revolução Liberal}, pp. 126-7.

people and community he had belonged to; however, his decision to do so is motivated in part precisely by his perception of the abandonment on the part of that community of ancient uses and customs:

Atraíçoar a grei, dessa maneira, ainda que fosse a grei, talvez, obediente a sucessórios usos e comandos, quem verdadeiramente o desamparava, ia-se-lhe tornando, na temporada que antecedia o definitivo êxodo para o Porto, em remorso e em atribulação.80

Tribulation and exodus establish the link with the old testament and with Jewish culture, indicating that José Pinto begins to see himself as an exile. At this stage, he is shown wandering reflectively around the estate, pondering on childhood memories, and even sometimes crying spontaneously. At this time, José Pinto displays a fascination with that which does not change (‘que não sofre mundança’81), evidenced for instance in the unwavering affection of animals (again dogs appear here as a solace for solitude), or alternatively in the consistency of identity José Pinto associates with the Jewish people. In fact, José Pinto sees in Jews traits he would like to emulate, namely their perceived cohesiveness and desire to perpetuate identity, independently of time and place:

Pertenciam eles, para concluir, a um povo que José Pinto emulava, inextinguível e coeso, em todo o tempo e em todo o lugar, tão apto a irmanar-se, se um perigo se materializava, como a entrar em concorrência feroz no seu seio, em honra da fortaleza invencível, que caracteriza o numerário.82

Moreover, as the passage also makes clear, José Pinto values the combination of individualism and sense of community that in his view Jewish people display, traits which are not undermined by the logic of capitalism, nor by urban life, but arguably reinforced by these. José Pinto therefore adheres to a given number of stereotypes about Jewish identity, namely relating to the idea of the Jew as an exile who in spite of this condition retains a consistent identity, onto which he projects his own predicaments. This vision of

80 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 38.
81 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 38.
82 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 39.
Jewishness in *A Quinta das Virtudes* should be understood as being framed by the perspective of a character who seeks to cope with changes affecting crucial aspects of his identity. Indeed, the representation of Jewish characters in the work of Mário Cláudio is not only recurrent but complex. If in part the attention to Jewish culture may derive from an idealization of the persistence of identity in this community, the fact remains that characters such as Barnabé in *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, or the seven children whose biographies are narrated in *Orion*, are represented as individuals whose identities are in flux, since they have in most cases transitioned from a Jewish cultural milieu to a Christian one, as a result of the violence exercised by the Portuguese crown. In these circumstances of externally and to a degree self-imposed exile, characters are forced to find their own ways of coping with the ambiguity of their condition. However, due to lack of self-awareness or inability to process the contradictions of their situation, they are rarely able to do so, and many of them end up engaging in self-destructive patterns of behaviour.

In a way, Jews are seen as the prototypical exiles and as such they illustrate the irremediably diasporic, unhoused character of the modern cosmopolitan subject, to take Edward Said’s expression,\(^8^3\) at the same time revealing the tension arising from the necessity they feel to retain parts of that which they lost. I return to this matter later in this chapter. For now, it is important to highlight that ambiguity with respect to identity and the ways in which this condition is processed constitutes one of the core concerns addressed in *A Quinta das Virtudes*, as is evident in the first generation depicted and will become clearer as the novel progresses.

Returning to the account centred on José Pinto de Meirelles, the first chapter of *A Quinta das Virtudes* presents the unstable balance between the assertion of individualism and self-belief, associated with a new geographical, social and economic landscape, and the need to retain traditional modes of behaviour and to affirm the notion of a collective, both of which are related with the ancient rural world. The following excerpt illustrates José Pinto’s grim view of the urban landscape, as a place of physical divisions, mirroring the deeper

social, economic and moral conflicts which characterized the Portuguese society of the late-eighteenth century:

Procurava encarar essas propriedades, separadas por divisórias que subentendiam um registo de conluios e de cisões, como se de um planeta outro fizessem parte, onde era implacável o frio, se entrecruzavam os pedintes, salpicados de pústulas, a demandar uma códea, pelas almas de quem lá temos. E acreditava em si mesmo, e nos próprios membros, ao que se vê, José Pinto de Meirelles, nada mais se exigindo, com vista a que, estrumado com fé semelhante, persistisse o velho Mundo em sua estranha e encantatória rotação.84

At the same time, the excerpt speaks of José Pinto’s belief in his own abilities, a sentiment that becomes his main source of stability in a world in which he sees himself floating at the mercy of the fickleness of opinions and of the political turmoil affecting the country.85

As occurs with Francisca Clara, the other sources of stability that present themselves to José Pinto are the objects he carries with him to a new setting, as well as the values he possesses and shares with his family as they settle into their new home. Indeed, the family and the family home would become the core element of the identity of these early-modern individuals:

Dentro do vasto Porto, nessa húmida penedia, assentariam os Meirelles, finalmente, seus arraiais, feitos de alguma sólida e persistente posse, de móveis e de imóveis e de substâncias do espírito.86

Objects in particular become more than just property that is carried to a new destination, they acquire symbolic meaning as guarantors of the preservation of continuity and memory. The items taken from the ‘Casa da Manguela’, pieces of furniture, protective religious images, crockery and trinkets accumulated throughout the centuries, are seen as moving treasures encapsulating the dreams and failures of their owners (‘um tesouro ambulante de madeiras e de porcelanas, de fracassos e de sonhos’), and as such, like

84 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 39.
85 ‘E era como se a inteligência, desapossada da nitidez de uma fé consequente, não deparasse com esteio a que se apegar, flutuando à mercê, a partir daí, de complexas causações da política e do capricho dos homens.’ In Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 43.
86 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 46.
the family, they must be carefully protected and kept together. In this context, the description of the packing of the objects and of the departure of the family comes across as the silent requiem for a lost world:

No sentimento de quem os via, agora, prestes a abandonar o que fora, por gerações sua sede natural, uma incômoda mágoa se manifestava, como se um oráculo indecifrável se tivesse exprimido, como se ficasse por cumprir alguma solene, se bem que imprecisa, ordenação atávica.  

Objects, family heirlooms to be more specific, are here related to memory and to nostalgia, and associated with an idealized rural space and with childhood (this is particularly clear in the case of Francisca Clara). As Susan Stewart argued, the awareness of a cultural break and the sentiment of disruption of time it summons explain the emergence in the early modern world of both the aestheticization of the rural and of the notion of the authentic object, whose meaning is illuminated by narrative. For Stewart, in accordance with the logic of nostalgia, the fascination with the authentic object is fuelled by distance, the object being extricated both from its context of origin (in space and time) and from the capitalist system of production and consumption. At this stage in A Quinta das Virtudes however, we have not yet reached the stage in which objects become the expression of interiority in the context of a bourgeois economy and culture, in a fusion of people and things which we will see later in the novel, namely in the configuration of the bourgeois family home. Complementing Stewart’s assessment and putting it into a wider perspective, the fact that the first generation depicted in the novel associates memory with objects can be interpreted in reference to Richard Terdiman’s view that the seemingly relentless movement of change initiated by modernity, causing the loss of the old, generated melancholia and the cultivation of memory, which in turn led to practices of materialization of memory, of which the ones seen in A Quinta das Virtudes are an example. Finally, following Marianne Hirsh and Leo Spitzer, the testimonial objects quoted in the novel can be regarded as

87 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 40.
88 Susan Stewart, On Longing: Narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection, pp. 142-3.
89 Richard Terdiman, Present Past, Modernity and the Memory Crisis, pp. 3-4, 37.
‘points of memory - points of intersection between past and present, memory and postmemory, personal and cultural recollection.’ They represent elements of the past which characters seek to preserve (a way of life, values, places), and moreover they speak of the process of transmission of memory itself, which as we have seen is the main concern expressed by both Francisca Clara and José Pinto.

To conclude, in the first chapter of A Quinta das Virtudes we find the depiction of the beginnings of the configuration of a bourgeois social and economic structure, centred on the individual and on the nuclear family, and based on capitalism. Importantly, the two characters of the first generation whose lives are portrayed in the novel experience in a conflicting manner the transition from a pre-modern societal organization (or Gemeinschaft, following Ferdinand Tönnies), in which small communities are structured around ancestral norms of behaviour and values, passed on from generation to generation, and hierarchies are determined by birth, to a modern one (or Gesellschaft), characterising urban settings, in which society provides an institutional framework for individual expression and advancement based on self-interest. The need to retain a notion of continuity in a city landscape perceived as a place of opportunities, but also as a harsh, isolating and unstable setting, leads to the reconsideration of the importance of family, which emerges as something solid and persistent, grounded as it is on the shared ownership of patrimony, physical but also and most importantly relating to common values or ‘substances of the spirit.’ Additionally, in this context objects acquire relevance as bearers of memory, a process that anticipates developments depicted and assessed at a later stage in the work. Cláudio is thus inspired by and to a degree perpetuates the idealization of a mythical primeval community (arguably one of the cultural products modernity), presenting both the end of a given mode of social and economic organization and the birth of another, through the eyes of two characters who experience

90 Marianne Hirsch and Leo Spitzer, 'Testimonial Objects: Memory, Gender, and Transmission', p. 353.
this transition in a deeply ambivalent manner, with a mix of great excitement and nostalgia.

The nostalgia that pervades the account of the lives of José Pinto and Francisca Clara fits in broad terms the three understandings of the term ‘longing’ explored by Susan Stewart in her book on this subject. As Stewart explains, longing first refers to the native country, the location of deferred desire, of origin and destiny, of past and future, ‘the point where narrative begins/ends, both engendering and transcending the relation between materiality and meaning.’ Secondly, it designates the place symbolic of the origin of subjectivity, associated with pregnancy and with the mother, but also with the earth, the rural/agrarian, and corresponds to the nostalgia of a prelapsarian utopia in which we can find ‘the articulation of the threshold between nature and culture, the place of margin between the biological “reality” of splitting cells and the cultural “reality” of the beginning of the symbolic.’ And finally, the third meaning of longing considered by Stewart, that of ‘belongings and appurtenances’, also lies very much at the heart of this narrative. As Stewart argued, this too relates directly to the process of generation of the subject and to the capacity narrative has ‘to generate significant objects and hence to both generate and engender a significant other.’ Additionally, in the context of the economy of the bourgeois subject, the function of belongings is one of supplementarity, ‘a supplementarity that in consumer culture replaces its generating subject as the interior milieu substitutes for, and takes the place of, an interior itself.’

The obsession with the rural place of origin which José Pinto and Francisca Clara display can be understood as expressing the longing for a physical and metaphorical pre-industrial utopia, in which nature and culture are harmoniously articulated, and which is associated with the land/earth and with motherhood. Additionally, the attention characters give to the objects they carry into their new home equates to the physical and narrative construction of an interior domesticity, that may serve as a bridge between two worlds,

92 Susan Stewart, On Longing: Narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection, pp. x-xi.
93 Susan Stewart, On Longing, p. x.
94 Susan Stewart, On Longing, p. xi.
objects appearing in the novel both as testimonials of the past which Francisca Clara and José Pinto wish to retain and as markers of the process of transmission of memory itself. However, as was noted before, the dominant feature of the text is the tension arising from the changes which characters experience and which are encapsulated in contrasting sets of words: ‘tribo’, ‘húmus’, ‘sangue’, ‘solo’, versus ‘ambulante’, ‘flutuação’, ‘mudança.’

In the next section, as I consider the second generation depicted in the novel, I continue examining how A Quinta das Virtudes approaches the formation and development of the bourgeois society of Oporto, and how the issues of the constitution of family and of the transmission of memory therein are dealt with in the novel. As we shall see, in this evolving social and economic framework, ideas relating to nostalgia change and acquire new modulations and meanings. Before proceeding with the textual analysis however, I will present a brief contextual sketch of some of the most relevant aspects relating the conceptualization and representation of the family unit in the period portrayed in the novel. This will be informed to a great degree by contributions by Charles Taylor95 and Phillipe Ariès96 to the study of this subject. Naturally, some critical distancing needs to be exercised when reading the Portuguese context in light of the general descriptions presented by these authors.

**Virtues Lost**

The period of transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries depicted in A Quinta das Virtudes witnessed the rise of the bourgeois institution of the nuclear family, perceived as a safe harbour in the face of what was represented as a cold, aggressive and unstable society. Taylor analyses these developments in reference to the eighteenth century English and French societies, signalling that the changes in the representation of the family were linked with the development of a mobile, large-scale, bureaucratic bourgeois

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95 Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self.*

world, and likewise that they preceded the process of mass industrialization.\textsuperscript{97} Moreover, and to complement this view, it is important to note that in societies made up of desirably free and autonomous individuals, the modes of constitution of family also changed and that choosing a partner became increasingly a matter of personal choice. Additionally, following Philippe Ariès,\textsuperscript{98} this was the period in which children emerged as the centre of family life, and in which personal fulfilment became associated explicitly with the emotional bonds established within the family unit. In urban settings, intimacy was cultivated and the family itself became one of the core elements of personal identity. Regarding this matter, Ariès connected the constitution of the family unit with the craving for privacy and identity, since ‘the members of the family were united by feeling, habits, and their way of life.’\textsuperscript{99}

In this context, the transmission of memory and values within the family became especially relevant and instruments of testation, often corresponding to biographical documents, but also to photographs and other objects, which were meant to be passed on from parents to their children, became more prevalent, signifying the transmission of memory and of values.\textsuperscript{100} Furthermore, and regarding memory practices still, as we saw earlier, the perceived breakage of the organic continuity characterizing a pre-modern societial organization led to a memory crisis which was expressed for instance in an increased interest in history, in the development of theories of memory, and likewise in the expansion of practices of the materialization of memory.

\textsuperscript{97} For the full quotation, see: ‘What seems to have happened is that, in the latter part of the century, in the upper and middle classes of anglophone and French societies, the affectionate family undergoes and intensification and comes to be seen self-consciously as a close community of loving and caring, in contrast to relations with more distant kin and outsiders, which are correspondingly seen as more formal and distant. The family is in the way to becoming that ‘haven in a heartless world’ which it has come to be for so many in the last two centuries. Of course this last development presupposes industrialization, the break-up of earlier primary communities, the separation of work from home life, and the growth of a capitalist, mobile, large-scale, bureaucratic world, which largely deserves the epithet ‘heartless.’ But the paradigms of family sentiment and self-enclosure were laid down before industrialization swept the mass of the population in its train, and in classes which were not brutally displaced.’ In Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, p. 292.

\textsuperscript{98} Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood.

\textsuperscript{99} Philippe Ariès, Centuries of Childhood, p. 413.

\textsuperscript{100} Sarah Vandegrift Eldridge, Novel Affinities: Composing the Family in the German Novel, 1795-1830, pp. 1-26.
individual and collective, aimed precisely at replacing traditional and organic modes of conveying and configuring memory.

I began to trace above the ways in which *A Quinta das Virtudes* addresses these matters. The novel presents a fictional archaeology of the formation of the modern urban landscape and of the ideas of memory and identity arising in this context, which serves as an ironic commentary on the current social and economic conditions, but also on the institutions and myths produced by modernity itself. I now proceed with my analysis of how the novel portrays the constitution of family and re-imagines the construction and transmission of memory in this context in an ambiguous manner, effectively creating a tension between belonging and alienation, place and non-place, movement and permanence, local-bound culture and nomadism. As we shall see, this process leads to the definition of a brand of critical nostalgia which, by cultivating ironic distancing and accepting the fluidity inherent in the modern (and late modern) condition, finally produces a questioning of essentialist categories of identity, a process which includes the explicit denunciation of the effects on human lives of the most distinctive modern political institution: the nation-state.

The second generation depicted in *A Quinta das Virtudes* is represented by João Manuel Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles (1767-1821) and his wife Teresa de Jesus Teixeira (?-?). This is the first generation which clearly departs from previous modes of constituting family and memory, and which also evidences in its behaviour a marked break from the earlier generation’s value system. Indeed, while, much like his wife Francisca Clara, José Pinto is characterised by his pragmatism, sobriety, and intensity of feeling, his children are represented as sullen, disoriented and aimless beings, incapable of expressing a candid opinion or of intervening in public life. Referring to the evening meetings they organize in their family home, the narrator comments: ‘Serões deste jaez, que os poetas não publicitavam e o povo não invejava, conduziriam a um estancamento da seiva, como se anunciasssem o leilão terminal de todas as qualidades de uma cadeia de gerações.’

The loss of

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continuity between generations is here thus equated to a loss of virtues and of the liveliness associated with the sap of a tree or a plant. Additionally, qualities are regarded as objects being auctioned, an image that indicates a fusion between objective and subjective values which we had witnessed earlier when José Pinto and Francisca Clara moved to Oporto, taking with them precious trinkets (embodying memories and values), but which also underlines the fluidity of values and their integration into capitalist system in which all things can seemingly be bought and sold.

João Manuel Pinto de Azevedo in particular is portrayed as a melancholic, dark-humoured character, who embodies the spirit of the fin-de-siècle and who is unable to stand out with a spark of genius from the all-pervasive surrounding gloom. He therefore embodies what is seen as the prevalent mood of the day among the upper classes of Portuguese society, which contrasts dramatically with the dominant modes of living and feeling of the working classes also minutely depicted in the novel. This portrayal further illustrates how the emergence of the idea of the autonomous individual led in the early-nineteenth century to the valorisation of individual feeling and to the cultivation of melancholy, a sentiment which in earlier periods had been regarded as a nefarious or even an illness that needed to be combatted.

Said mood is expressed in João Manuel’s imaginary Grand Tour, which he planned incessantly but never undertook, or undertook only in his imagination, whilst he sat in a beautiful unmoving carriage, contemplating a map of Europe. The fact that João failed to make the decision to travel and that the carriage bought for the purpose was nearly destroyed by his younger brother, José Pedro, who tried but was unable to drive it, constitutes an

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103 ‘E não se destacava João Manuel Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles, entrementes, daquela luz vacilante, ou do que quer que fosse, que ia sulcando a escuridão, para além da porta entreaberta.’ In Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 117.

104 In this respect, Taylor establishes the link between a ‘moral consecration of sentiment’ in England and France in the late-eighteenth century and the emergence of melancholy: ‘It no longer bears the sense of an excess of one humour. It rather refers to a mood, a feeling. It is what one experiences when one can take a certain distance from the sadness and loss in one’s life and see it as a story, under a kind of closure. Seen this way, it takes on a meaning, it can exhibit a style, a beauty, even a distinction. There is something tremendously consoling about melancholy, a beguiling pleasure, which can make suffering strangely enjoyable, a source of “les rêveries mélancholiques et les voluptueuses tristesses.”’ In Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, pp. 294-296.
indictment of the inability of the Portuguese elites of the day to lead the country and to bridge the gap separating it from Europe. But more importantly in my view, the reference to travelling, although in this case an imaginary expedition is being considered, introduces into the novel once again and in clearer fashion the issue of mobility. In this case, geographical and cultural movement is considered, related with the Grand Tour and to the cultivation of exoticism associated with it, a matter which is explored in further detail in the third generation depicted in the novel. Additionally, the social and economic mobility which would become increasingly pervasive in modern societies also plainly emerges in this section of the novel. Indeed, João Manuel, who was the main heir to the family property, chooses to marry Teresa de Jesus Teixeira, the daughter of a farmer, and is consequently forced give up his claim to the family inheritance and to move into a new house. This is a fundamentally important change because of the effects it has in terms of the definition of João Manuel’s identity and of the attention he gives both to his ancestors and to posterity, all of which he expresses in an acutely self-conscious manner.

The letter dated September 20th, 1817, addressed by João Manuel to his younger brother Joaquim, which serves as a justification of his choices and likewise as an outline of his value system and future plans, displays precisely the contrast between an individual decision, based on emotions, and the ideas of inherited values and properties, and of familial affection:

Peço-lhe que me autorize a utilizar de seu tempo o que for bastante para recordar expressões dos sentimentos, que só assim sabe justificar-se hoje em dia este seu devotado irmão, o qual procura no âmago de si mesmo algum discernimento que não o deixe soçobrar. 105

Venho pedir-lhe em resumo que assuma a titularidade da Casa e da Quinta, porque me vou unir pelos sagrados laços do matrimónio à mulher que muito amo, mas cuja condição originária é incompatível com a qualidade de senhora das Virtudes, como muito pertinente observou o mano Joaquim. Quero vender-lhe a propriedade, mano, por um preço fictício e retirar-me, com minha esposa e com os filhos com que Deus for servido abençoar-nos, para local donde fique contemplando no maior respeito a herança que nos chegou de nossos Pais, ensinando os que me sucederem a honrá-la sempre como luzeiro

105 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, pp. 199-200.
Although João Manuel seems convinced of the merits of his choice, which as the first passage makes explicit was based on sentiment, he comes across as a man torn between two worlds: his choice to give up his inheritance is motivated by his adherence to a worldview and pattern of behaviour he deliberately parts with; furthermore, he promises to stay true to the moral inheritance symbolized in the ancestral home, which he vows will remain his reference. In addition, João Manuel experiences an intense feeling of remorse on account of his decision to leave his pre-established path; so much so that in his nightmares he imagines the family home, inhabited by the ghosts of his close relatives, being consumed by flames.

João Manuel is moreover the first character in the novel to use the image of the house as a tree, the latter in turn being associated with the human subject and signifying both continuity and diversification: ‘Porque uma casa, o mano concordará comigo, é a árvore que nós somos com suas raízes que nos prendem à pátria a que estamos unidos, seu tronco que corresponde ao crescimento que formos capazes de dar a nossa existência.’

The tension between the desire for continuity and the drive for individual assertion, which the imagery of the tree condenses and which the first generation had already experienced, is now heightened. In line with this, João Manuel begins to see himself as nomad, a wanderer with fleeting convictions: ‘É que, confidenciarei ao mano sem qualquer rebuço, se tivesse eu de traçar o meu auto-retrato, pintar-me-ia como um nómada, nómada do desejo e talvez também das convicções, vagueando de querer em querer e de professar em professar, com muita e desorientadora convicção.’ As such, João Manuel is among the first of many characters without qualities to appear in Cláudio’s works: modern men and women who due to the vast array of possibilities afforded to them,

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106 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 201.
107 See: ‘...e me visitam pesadelos em que vejo a Casa a arder num braseiro e os fantasmas do Papá e da Mamã e do António passando vagarosos através das janelas incandescentes.’ In Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 201.
108 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 201.
109 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 203.
and to their acute self-consciousness and ingrained inability to take decisive action, or to act in a manner they may finally be content with, end up living in a limbo of indecisiveness, of unceasing tests and trials, which end up producing a state of continuous dissatisfaction.

João Manuel must therefore perform a balancing act. He constitutes his own family and moves to another house, but he seeks to find a location from which he can look upon the ancestral home and vows to convey the values of the Meirelles to his children. Furthermore, like his mother Francisca Clara, he develops a taste for genealogy. However, in his case, more than a playfully serious game, this inclination takes the form of an obsession which arises precisely when João Manuel is aware of being physically displaced from his family home. On the first night he spends with Teresa in a cheap hostel, separated from her by a plain wooden board, João Manuel devotes his time to scribbling details of the genealogy of the Meirelles:

E, como demorasse a conciliar o sono, naquele compartimento que um tabique, tão-só, dividia do outro, donde lhe chegava a respiração de Teresa, a dormir, já, desdobrou João Manuel uma folha de papel amarelado, mergulhando numa labiríntica incursão, que tinha o cariz de mania grandíssima, pela complicada genealogia dos seus maiores. Na pertinaz insónia, foram desfilando esses Barbosas e esses Castros, esses Guedes e esses Brandões, por entre topónimos rusticíssimos, de Lagares e de Aveleda, de Vila Seca e de Fonte de São Tiago, com prebendas e ordens, prazos e foros, de permeio. E cairia ele, através de tudo isto, num letargo abismal, pela madrugada, enquanto se ia consumindo o pavio, naquele charquito de cera coagulada, que aprisionara algumas moscas, ao derramar-se, ainda quente, antes de solidificar, na palmatória de estanho.¹¹⁰

The scene above acquires a pictorial dimension: the claustrophobic nature of the space is conveyed by the description of the boarded compartment against which Teresa breathes, and the darkness of the room is contrasted with the yellow colour of the paper and the imagined light of the candle. The final images convey ideas of perishability and impermanence, which are signified by the candlelight itself and the fly caught in the liquid wax which had poured onto the tin holder. These elements, as well as the feverish demeanour

¹¹⁰ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 207.
adopted by João Manuel, contribute to questioning the usefulness and success of his work as a genealogist and underline the awareness of the loss of continuity and the crisis of memory which João Manuel manifestly struggles to cope with.

The depiction of the second generation portrayed in the novel thus reimagines the impact which changes in the social and economic fabric of urban settings had in the lives of modern individuals. Specifically, the text highlights the manner in which the rise of the notion of the rationally and emotionally autonomous individual led to new modes of constituting family, to new practices of mobility (social and geographical), and likewise to the development of a notion of physical and moral nomadism, which in turn induces a feeling of disorientation motivated by the awareness of a vast array of possibilities which cannot be fully enjoyed. In these circumstances, a crisis of memory emerges, which João Manuel deals with by turning to genealogy. However, as is made clear in the novel, such attempts at freezing time and rooting identity are condemned to failure, and in spite of the efforts made by the characters to circumvent such realities, the overarching idea permeating A Quinta das Virtudes is that impermanence and fluidity are inextricably bound with the condition of the modern individual, as are the tension and ambiguity that these circumstances create and which can be dealt with in both productive as well as unproductive and self-destructive manners.

The Third Generation: Travel, Dwelling, and the Emergence of Reflective Nostalgia

The account of the third generation portrayed in A Quinta das Virtudes revolves around the characters of João Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles (1819-1886) and Joana Maria Mavigné (1828-1898). João Pinto is the son of João Manuel and Teresa de Jesus, and Joana Maria the offspring of Pedro Mavigné and Mary O’Keefe Bowman, of French and Irish origin, respectively. In this third generation, the intensity of what I called, following Terdiman, a memory crisis increases dramatically; the latter is coupled with a new self-awareness,

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111 Richard Terdiman, Present Past, Modernity and the Memory Crisis.
evidenced in the characters’ reflective style and, moreover, in the fact that they are both keen observers of the society they live in, at different points assuming the role of storytellers.

On the one hand, João Pinto and Joana Maria wish to forge their own identity, centred around their family, and expressed in the interior space of their home and likewise in their adoption of non-traditional patterns of behaviour (which explains why João Pinto’s family dubbed them ‘os estrangeiros’). On the other hand, while representing the experiences of the characters, the text enacts an ambivalent reflection on memory, related in the first instance precisely to the family and the family home, both of which are seen as being under threat of disaggregation and disappearance, but also to instruments of memorialization (the collection), as well as to notions of movement, travel and flânerie (real and imaginary). The result of the process of enquiry conducted by both characters is an ironic distancing with respect bourgeois society and values, and indeed to the very notion of permanence and posterity, individual and familial, but also national.

As we saw earlier, in A Quinta das Virtudes the experience of space is connected with that of time and both inform the approaches to memory and identity evidenced by the characters. As they settle into the city, notions of physical and social movement become increasingly prevalent, the idea of travel emerges, as well as that of nomadism, both physical and psychological. Concurrently, the desire to create individually meaningful spaces of existential indexation (the family home) and the development of instruments that allow for the retaining of time (objects, genealogical charts and later photography) and configuring identity (via the retelling of history or the depiction of social life) emerge as forms of resistance to the anonymous city space and to the fluid and homogenous time of modernity. Creating their own space and time becomes crucial to the characters depicted.

João Pinto and Joana Maria share three great projects and concerns, which can be regarded as complementary: the first relates to travel as a way of escaping their surroundings; the second, to constituting a family and a home and to defining instruments that encapsulate memory; and the third refers to self-consciously depicting and analysing the city and the society they live in, a
strategy which allows them to register and configure individual and collective memory, and which likewise has the effect of presenting them as doubles of the author-narrator. Throughout the novel, these projects appear as deeply problematic, in the sense that they are viewed as difficult or even impossible to realise. I begin by examining how João Pinto and Joana Maria experience space and how travel and dwelling are depicted in the novel. I seek to demonstrate the connection established in the work between spatial mobility and the development of ambiguous sentiments about home. Complementarily, I elucidate how the awareness of displacement associated with mobility and change is linked with the emergence of a reflective nostalgic sentiment, which explores the imagery of ruins. Only then do I examine the other issues outlined above, namely the preservation of memory in relation to the family and the family home, and likewise the representation of storytelling in the novel. But before moving forward, a clarification of concepts is needed.

Ágnes Heller argued that the conditions of modernity enabled the contrast between the notions of space and place to arise. Indeed, as subjects got to know more of the world, indirectly or directly, via travel, they found it increasingly hard to have a world, that is, to develop a sense of belonging to a given place. Furthermore, she added, it was in the urban setting that the question of recognising and being recognised first arose, which meant that in cities the need to define a home opposed to an anonymous mass manifested itself more acutely. These facts relate to an increasing perception of the opposition between alterity and ipseity: in the conditions described above, subjects became more clearly aware of the difference between what was familiar and what was alien to them. However, as movement increased, at smaller and wider scales, the boundaries between these poles became progressively blurred. As Heller also pointed out, some very general notions of subjectivity arose in this context: the modern subject may often assume the role of the tourist, who experiences the world in a commodified and superficial manner, or of a vagabond in search for a lost home, whether literal or figurative. Additionally, feeling homesick and feeling sick of home come across

as two attitudes that characterize the modern experience of place. In this manner, ambivalence regarding the notion of home becomes apparent, and modern subjects often relate to the idea of home in a contradictory way.

For his part, Augé stressed that the classical modern outlook, what he calls Baudelairean modernity and which is by definition an urban reality, was characterised by the tension between modes of experiencing space, as either symbolised place (seeped in history and myth) or as non-place, or place of non-inscription. This situation induced in subjects different and complementary attitudes: if, on the one hand, they may accept being submerged or lost in city life, like the flaneurs who expose themselves to the landscape of the city with a mix of pleasure and repulsion, on the other, subjects may turn into themselves and exhibit the absolute power of the individual consciousness separating them from the crowds.

In my view, João Pinto and Joana Maria express the desire to constitute a symbolized place in an urban setting, whilst revealing the awareness of living in a world in which place and non-place coexist. Additionally, they are at different times both travellers or tourists and vagabonds, and they are both homesick and sick of home. In A Quinta das Virtudes, these conditions should not be regarded as mutually exclusive, but very much as complementary. It is this latter issue that I now consider.

João Pinto and Joana Maria are pragmatic characters, in the professional and political spheres. However, although they do not partake of the political ideals of Romanticism and are content with assuming the role of distanced social analysts, they share the spirit of the times, identified in the novel with a generalized feeling of emptiness and with an acute awareness of the perishability of human enterprises. Likewise, they express a liking for an orientalist aesthetics which, although not being fulfilled in actual travels, is manifested in imaginary voyages inspired by the images of Middle Eastern ruins collected by João Pinto. I analyse later the function of the couple’s collections (of postcards, butterflies, plants and miniature portraits) and their fascination with ruins; nevertheless, I would like to make clear from the onset that the collections express the individuality of the characters, their obsession
with the impermanence and beauty found in ruins, and their inclination for escapism, which is to a great extent the consequence of being sick of home.

This very tendency and its motivations are evident in Joana Maria’s imagined Grand Tour of Europe: in need of a break from her dull surroundings, she embarks on a trip that takes her to Madrid, the Pyrenees, Paris, Venice, Florence and finally to Naples. In this manner, Joana Maria is in virtual contact with different peoples, habits and cultures, whilst intermittently also focusing on the forces of nature, which serve to question the consequence of human action. The journey thus becomes a compound of stereotypes about places and peoples punctuated by existentialist reflections. The two passages below refer to the beginning and end of Joana Maria’s trip:

Para equilibrar a exagerada densidade, com que se expressava o Porto, entretanto, em sua constituição, ocupava-se Joana Maria na conjectura de uma grande volta, pela Europa Ocidental, com vista a satisfazer, apenas, seu exigente capricho. E arrancava essa expedição, sem sair de casa, rumo a Madrid, desde logo, onde se entrava, por um crepúsculo de Agosto incandescente, quando a população descera já, para a rua. Enxameavam as ruas daqueles piquetes de mulheres, de mantilha armada e de sinal postiço, tagarelando à toa, dando-se o braço, num repto brutal, atirado ao macho.¹¹³

Em Nápoles, sob a incessante ameaça do Vesúvio, o qual prevenia de sua latente vitalidade aos que o lobrigavam, de longe, com um penacho de fumo, cinzento ou azulado, ascendendo-lhe da cratera, concluía-se a idealizada digressão de Joana Maria. Do sopé daquele titã, que exterminara milhares de seres, com seu assassino vômito, de pedregulhos e de lava e de gases, desenterrara-se Pompeia, aparatoso estância dos Romanos, quase intacta, em seus artefactos e edificações. [...] E escavavam-se, agora, colunas e cariátides, paredes policromadas e moedas de bronze, elmos e lucernas, com a vibração, ainda, do ritmo diário daquelas criaturas que os tinham visto e afagado, e que, de tais objetos, se orgulhavam e se socorriam. Experimentavam os estrangeiros, com dedos trêmulos, o tacto da terrífica substância, enegrecida e encarquilhada, em sua solidificação.¹¹⁴

In the first quotation, we find a fairly commonplace description of Spain and its people, conveying Joana Maria’s fascination with the perceived energy and

¹¹³ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.313.
¹¹⁴ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.322.
boldness of the Castilian character, illustrated by the behaviour of women on the crowded streets. The second provides an example of the existential reflections Joana Maria engages in, motivated in this instance by references to the Vesuvius and to Pompey, the remains of a lost civilization destroyed and preserved by the force of nature which elicits in tourists feelings of awe. This is the first clear sign of a larger reflection on how human endeavours are permanently under the threat of ruination, which is again picked up in the final passage of this sequence:

Dessa maneira, como se concluem as viagens todas, numa intrincada mistura de êxito e desânimo, não descobria Joana Maria escapatória que a contentasse, em seu extenso e paulatino desvario. Tinha sido um soberbo giro, o que empreendera, de que regressava, nesta altura, vitalizada na resolução de não igualar, nunca mais, as mães de família das suas relações. Pôs-se ao piano, por isso, a interpretar, com não pouca negligência, uma cançoneta que descrevia certo passeio lento, através das ruínas, enquanto as andorinhas roçavam o chão.¹¹⁵

One could argue that an imaginary journey was the only avenue which presented itself to a bourgeois woman without sufficient financial means to undertake such a voyage. Additionally, it should be noted that descriptions of imaginative digressions, occurring while characters are both awake and asleep, are a strategy commonly employed by Cláudio to reveal characters’ deepest desires, and which often allows them to make realizations which otherwise would not have been possible. More importantly however, the language of international tourism manifested in parodic fashion in the novel (effectively a pastiche of the celebrated Grand Tour) conveys the commodified and simplistic discourse of tourism which constructs a stereotypical form of alterity and constitutes a failed attempt at defining an equally simple form of ipseity. Indeed, the discourse of tourism is in direct contrast with and arguably provides respite from the complications inherent to the frustrated desire to define a place of belonging with which Joana Maria and João Pinto will increasingly need to come to terms.

In any case, not all movement in A Quinta das Virtudes is virtual. Indeed, at times João Pinto acts as a flaneur, roaming the city of Oporto like a

¹¹⁵ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.323.
vagabond, quite literally in search of his lost home. Moreover, another type of physical displacement is described in the novel, one in which travel and nostalgia are also compiled. The latter refers to the exile and subsequent travels of João Pinto’s adventurous cousin Silvério, the account of which João includes as part of his fantastic and admittedly creative retelling of the siege and liberation of Oporto during the civil war (1832-1833). I will begin with the Silvério’s story and then turn to João Pinto’s meandering walks in the city of Oporto.

Born and bred in a small town in the countryside (Tabuado), as a young man Silvério moved to Oporto and soon after enlisted in the liberal army. He was then forced into exile in England, where he remained for many years performing odd jobs. Silvério’s life is for João Pinto the stuff of legend, a collection of unlikely and to a great extent uncertain events, which convert it into a parody of sorts:

Viram-no em Newgate, desfilando em círculo, no pátio, com os outros presidiários, em Tattersall, estudando os predicados dos cavalos do Derby, em Mansion House, inclusive, ofertando o braço a uma dama, que conduzia ao grande baile. Se era tudo isto, na realidade, fábula inventada, pelos que lhe invejavam a fuga, ou uma verdade complexa, que o próprio Silvério ocultava, creio que teremos de nos contentar, em suma, com nunca o determinarmos.116

The awareness of the fictious nature of the account and of the ultimate impossibility of determining its veracity expressed by João is a common thread in A Quinta das Virtudes and arguably corresponds to an assessment of the nature of storytelling that may be applied to the novel as a whole. However, there is another important point to be made in relation to this peripatetic and picaresque sub-plot. Silvério does return to Oporto, exhibiting the traits commonly associated with the long-time emigrant, who can come across as a foreigner in transit: his Portuguese deteriorated and his complexion changed to a lighter tone, he brings with him two suitcases full of money and wanders the city (which was being rebuilt after the war) delivering speeches of incentive

116 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 294.
to the people he meets by chance on the streets. Referring to a period before Silvério’s return however, João Pinto comments:

Quanto às saudades de Portugal, não creio que o martirizassem elas demasiadamente, uma vez que era aquele indivíduo da espécie dos que se sentem nostálgicos, apenas, de um certo lar utópico, que não cessam de buscar, com supremo empenhamento, nos desvãos da alma.\textsuperscript{117}

João Pinto therefore attributes to Silvério the qualities of the vagabond who searches not for a real, geographically determined home, but for a figurative place to which existential meaning is attached and which is to be found within him, not without. Hence, Silvério keeps his distance from the specific place that serves as his reference and postpones reaching it precisely in order to enhance the intensity of his abstract quest. Additionally, João’s interpretation of his cousin’s attitude reveals one of his own inclinations: his secret desire to see his family home (and arguably the country) in ruins, so that it can more easily become the axis for a self-conscious exercise in nostalgia inspired by decay and remoteness.

In a passage of the account of the siege of Oporto which he delivers to his wife Joana and to his mother Teresa, João Pinto delves into the effects the war had had on the family estate (or the ‘Casa’, a word meaningfully capitalized in the text, which serves to stress its actual relevance and likewise to confer onto it a distinctly abstract character). After describing in detail the state of disrepair the family home had been left in after the conflict, João elaborates on the debate regarding the reconstruction of the building: while some family members argued that the ‘Quinta’ should be updated, others maintained that no changes should be made to the original plan, in order to preserve the memory of their ancestors. The conservative view prevailed; however, in a passage in which João Pinto, then only a child, considers the ruined family home and the ruined city, he indulges in the thought that perhaps it would be best if the house were to remain forever in a state of disrepair:

\textsuperscript{117} Mário Cláudio, \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes}, p. 294.
Por uma dessas perversões ininteligíveis, chegava a desejar que persistisse a Quinta naquela condição, como latitude onde a nossa nostalgia se recriasse, rasto de quanto decorrerá e não volveria mais.

João Pinto further describes how with a mix of wickedness, pleasure, and sense of loss he had witnessed the invasion of the house by lizards (themselves seemingly euphoric with the devastation) and had heard the noises produced by the crumbling building. João Pinto is a self-conscious narrator who expresses in the best way he can the brand of nostalgia which even as a child he felt in the wake of an event that changed dramatically the social and geographical landscape of Oporto, and which João Pinto in his narrative claimed had induced in its inhabitants a feeling of loss of energy and of sense of identity. I deal in detail with the effects of war on identity (individual and collective) in the chapter titled ‘Disasters of War’. For now, I would like to stress that the accounts of Silvério and João Pinto which we have just considered, as well as the novel as a whole, explore the contradictory nature of nostalgia: if, on the one hand, nostalgia asserts the desire to return to the fictional and illusory authenticity of idealized origins, which are seen a marker of stability and identity (a city, a home, an island, a nation), at the same time it reveals the awareness of the impossibility of fulfilling said desire, since the home one returns to is no longer there or was never as it was imagined, and moreover since the desiring subject has himself changed and feels alien to his home (consider the case of Silvério). In this context, problems of recognition arise - of not recognising and not being recognised - and the consequence of this process is that an awareness of uprooting becomes inevitable. As Barbara Cassin maintained, in nostalgia rooting and uprooting are inextricably bound. Furthermore, and beyond the general understanding of the contradictory logic of nostalgia expressed in the novel, I would argue that the

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118 See: ‘Nas tardes soalheiras, pareciam as sardaniscas, tão-só, respirar com uma certa euforia aquela devastação, vertiginosamente fugindo, de buraco em buraco, em demanda de um poiso nunca definitivo. E, na quietude ubíqua, que tentei exprimir para si, Joaninha, desabava uma chapola lá dentro, de gesso de um friso, com um cavo som, quase grotesco, que nos descontrolava, numa risota irreprimível.’ In Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 298.

sentiment prevailing here is akin to the notion of reflective nostalgia proposed by Svetlana Boym.\textsuperscript{120} For Boym, reflective nostalgia is the product of a time of radical social change and is characterized by the intersection of the individual and the collective. Moreover, reflective nostalgia is manifested in a fascination with ruins, in an engagement in reflections on impermanence and finitude, and in a deep irony regarding the possibility of homecoming. Boym uses this concept in order to describe approaches to memory occurring in the context of late modernity, but in reality, as I have argued, one needs to read the reflection on memory enacted in \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes} not just in reference to the historical moment portrayed in the novel, but mostly as a response to the developments taking place at the time when the novel was published. In this sense, reading \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes} in light of Boym’s concept of reflective nostalgia helps understand more accurately the arguments presented in the novel. Turning to \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes} specifically, as we have seen, nostalgia is connected with moments of abrupt social and cultural change and with the identity crisis they produce, leading to a reflective, critical approach to the possibility of homecoming, and to a fascination with ruins, visible in this third generation we are considering, but which was to a degree already anticipated in João Manuel’s dream in which he imagines the ‘Casa’ burning down. If in the earlier generations depicted in the novel, change related to displacement from the countryside to the city and to the abandonment of a given social order and consequent adoption of another, in the accounts pertaining to Silvério and to João Pinto’s childhood experiences, it relates more directly to major political and social turmoil, which is accompanied by war and by the devastation it brings about. A further example of reflective nostalgia is evident in João Pinto’s flânerie in Oporto, an account which I now consider.

Towards the end of the novel, João Pinto is depicted perambulating the areas surrounding the ‘Quinta’, a movement in space that mirrors his meandering reflection on the history of the family, on what remains or is lost as time passes, which is centred precisely on the image of the house itself: ‘Um apetite exacerbado de revolver as cinzas encaminha-o, desde logo, para

\textsuperscript{120} Svetlana Boym, \textit{The Future of Nostalgia}, pp. 49-50.
junto da Quinta das Virtudes, a examinar, com olhar renovado, aquela Casa impassível, donde tudo abala e aonde tudo retoma. In his examination, João Pinto visualizes the house as a tree from which, as if in a dream, the characters of his ancestors emerge. Moreover, in what constitutes a literal image of permanence, the ancestors are represented as being embedded in the mortar of the building, thus vitalizing structure of the home (and of the family):

Engastam-se eles, não duvida João, por este principio de trajecto matutino, na argamassa do edifício, comunicando-lhe a corrente palpitante, que lhe faculta a capacidade de ficar. Intui que, dos caboucos mais fundos, até os mais visíveis travejamentos, um torpor surdo, mas perseverante, vitaliza a construção, com seus fluidos invisíveis, enriquecendo-lhe o decrépito coração utópico, numa vontade de galgar os séculos, com que só os objetos, nunca os seres vivos, poderão contar.

Furthermore, these dead family members whose past lives are materialized in the structure of the house and in the objects they possessed, an image which evokes Joana Maria’s reflections on Pompey, express themselves in uncanny ways: in the dead sound apparent in the structure and beams of the building, in a long breath (‘certo bafo alongado’), in the condensation of water unexplainably trickling like a tear from an otherwise dry ceiling.

However, the imagined markers of permanence and persistence of life give way to the notion of decay. Indeed, after an assessment of how the continuity of life depends on a process of hideous extinction (‘extinção hedionda’), João Pinto considers in detail the decline of the house. The disappearance of a past social order is complemented by the infestation of woodworm, cockroaches, moths, and mice, as well as by the effects of the elements, which produce the erosion of the structure of the building. The description concludes with the realization of the futility of attempting to avert the devastation caused by the passing of time, on both the family and the family home:

121 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 409.
122 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 411.
123 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 411.
Constitui semelhante desgaste, deduz João, retido por tais lucubrações, no principiar de seu passeio, um certificado do que, em moldes graduais, se lhe patenteia, como dogma de toda a humanidade, e que leu, há uns anos, esboçado assim, “De tempos a tempo, recebereis uma consolação, mas nunca será bastante para vos saciar o desejo.” De pouco importa, por consequência, que se afadiguem os Meirelles, ou quaisquer outros, em apor o temporário remendo, nessa devastação, porquanto irreversível é o curso destruidor.[...] Infere João, por fim, em sua caminhada, que nessa perturbada jornada, dos racionais e de seus apetrechos, é que tudo consiste, e que uma estirpe, só para referir a Quinta das Virtudes, se desmancha nela, deixando fortuitos, cada vez mais fortuitos, e inautênticos, vestígios da sua passagem.¹²⁴

In the excerpt, the identification of the decay of the house with that of the identity of the family leads to a broader existential reflection. Furthermore, the death of Queen Maria II, described immediately after the abovementioned passages, underlines how pointless the illusion of defining identity with respect to any political institution is. The feeling of alienation with respect to the extended family, to places (the family home and the city), and to the nation-sate, which is the result of João Pinto’s reflections, is summarised in the following passage, which constitutes the ending of the novel:

E já nem apura João Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles, por fim, a que nação pertence, se à de aqui, se à de ali ou se à de além, de à de ontem, se à de hoje, se à de amanhã, pois que fora tudo, sempre e sempre, uma Cidade estranha, fora tudo, sempre, uma estranha Casa.¹²⁵

The excerpt illustrates João Pinto’s perception of being a stranger or an exile in his own town and home, of lacking indexation in time and space, a situation which is represented as one of the consequences of the complex workings of modernity. Additionally, we find here the leap from a notion of nostalgia which is immediately connected with the human experience of place, understood in relation to physical movement and to the pace of change in the temporal axis, to an alternative understanding of nostalgia. The latter is to a great degree more abstract and should in my view be associated with the Neoplatonic tradition. In this sense, nostalgia is the desire to return to an abstract and

¹²⁴ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, pp. 412-413.
¹²⁵ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 423.
absolute origin, a process which entails the subversion of a linear conception of time and progress (characteristic of the modern mindset) and its replacement with a notion of cyclical temporality. I argue that this notion constitutes a fundamental element in the later work of Mário Cláudio and is manifested in the idea of cosmos, a concept and image which enables the fleeting suspension of the notions of time and space, and which competes with an open, linear concept of time and wandering. I elaborate on the imagery of cosmos in the second part of this study.

We have seen in this chapter how, through the depiction of three generations of the same family, A Quinta das Virtudes describes the interrelated processes of increased mobility (internal migration) and of the acceleration of social change, occurring as part of the formation of a bourgeois social and economic milieu. The emphasis on autonomy, individualism and on self-definition is accompanied by excitement, but it also brings about disorientation and the questioning of notions of belonging, in relation to references of place and time. In this context, a memory crisis arises, manifesting the desire on the part of the characters to find some means of social and existential anchoring. The latter correspond to objects and places to which memory is attached, but they also relate to the constitution of the bourgeois family and family home, represented as a safe harbour of interiority and individuality in what is otherwise perceived as an anonymous and hostile urban context. Moreover, this state of affairs explains the emergence of what I called, following Boym, reflective nostalgia, which is characterised by ambiguity and ambivalence with respect to the possibility of defining a meaningful place of belonging, and which is directly connected with notions of mobility and social change. Ambiguity and ambivalence, which are indeed dominant features of the novel, are projected onto additional reflections, regarding the notions of continuity and caesura, permanence and impermanence, which are established for the most part in reference to memory and to the relationship between the human and natural world. These will be the object of the following chapter.
We saw in the previous chapter how, by focusing on the imagined experiences of a select number of characters, *A Quinta das Virtudes* depicts and assesses the complex identification processes arising within an early modern bourgeois setting. The couple representing the third generation of the family portrayed, Joana Maria and João Pinto, illustrate in the most acute manner the contradictions that characterise their situation. In this chapter, I examine the reflections on permanence and impermanence of memory and identity, on continuity and variation, belonging and alienation, which they engage in. I begin by focusing on João Pinto and Joana Maria’s exploration of the imaginary of ruins, which is connected with the representation of nature in the novel. I then examine the depiction in the work of the closely linked actions of defining a collection and telling stories, as well as of their effectiveness as modes of shaping identity and guaranteeing continuity.

**Ruins**

João Pinto’s obsession with the images of ruins in exotic settings which he collects evokes an Orientalist Romantic aesthetic inclination which associates these elements to remoteness in time and space, to escapism and to the desire for different and alternative possibilities of life. This reading is reinforced by Joana Maria’s reflections after her imagined Grand Tour of Europe examined above. However, ruins have other, arguably more relevant, implications in the novel.

João Pinto’s meandering meditation at the end of the novel, which I previously considered in relation to nostalgia, reveals how ruins support a broader reflection on permanence and change, and likewise on the relation between humanity and nature, both of which arguably relate to the conditions of modernity. Julia Hell and Andreas Schönle posit precisely the affinity between the imaginary of ruins and modernity, stressing that ruins acquired

cultural relevance during the Renaissance, ‘when the awareness of historical discontinuities and the demise of ancient civilizations raised the status of traces from the past.’ Additionally, they argue, ruins ‘reveal an ambivalent sense of time, at once the awareness of an insuperable break from the past that constitutes the modern age and the sense that some valuable trace has endured and needs to be cherished.’ And they go on to underline that the perception of historical discontinuities brought about by ruins is accompanied by reflexivity, self-criticism and ambiguity, which indeed lie at the core of the modern outlook, and are manifested for instance in the consideration of the tension between progress and destruction, the drive for the future and the need to retrieve the past, and the relation between culture and nature. In line with Hell and Schönle, Andreas Huyssen speaks of the authentic ruin as the medium through which since the eighteenth century modern subjects have expressed their obsession with asynchronous temporalities and with the passing of time. Moreover, although ruins can be used simplistically as proofs of authenticity that legitimize political projects associated with idealized (often homogeneous) identities and communities, and as such may constitute a tool for the exercise of uncritical nostalgia (what Boym calls restorative nostalgia), Huyssen stresses that the critique of the function of ruins on these grounds derives from a lack of understanding of the fundamental ambiguity which they convey: ‘The dimension present in any imaginary of ruins but missed by such reductive critiques is the hardly nostalgic consciousness of the transitoriness of all greatness and power, the warning of imperial hubris, and the remembrance of nature in all culture.’

129 Svetlana Boym, The Future of Nostalgia, pp. 41-49.
130 Andreas Huyssen, ‘AUTHENTIC RUINS. Products of Modernity,’ p. 21. For more on this, consider the following quotation: ‘Against this idea of a deep authenticity embodied in the ruins of a glorified past, I posit the idea of the authentic ruin as a product of modernity itself rather than as a royal road toward some uncontaminated origin. Nostalgia is never very far when we talk about authenticity or romantic ruins. The political critique of ruin nostalgia simply as regression corresponds to the philosophical critique of authenticity as a phantasm grounding stable identities. But such as critique misses the fundamental ambiguity of the ruin and the authentic.’ Andreas Huyssen, ‘AUTHENTIC RUINS. Products of Modernity,’ p. 21.
argument with a statement which can contribute to inform the interpretation of the imaginary of ruins present in *A Quinta das Virtudes*:

We can speak of modern authenticity of ruins only if we look at the ruin aesthetically and politically as an architectonic cipher for the temporal and spatial doubts that modernity always harbored about itself. In the ruin, history appears spatialized, and built space temporalized. My thesis is that an imaginary of ruins in central for any theory of modernity that wants to be more than the triumphalism of progress and democratization, or the longing for past greatness. In contrast to the optimism of Enlightenment thought, the modern imaginary of ruins remains conscious of the dark side of modernity, what Diderot described as the inevitable ‘devastations of time’ visible in ruins. It articulates the nightmare of the Enlightenment that all history might ultimately be overwhelmed by nature, a fear succinctly represented in Goya’s famous etching *El Sueño de la Razón Produce Monstruos*.131

In the modern cultural landscape, ruins thus communicate a complex set of ideas which reveal a critical insight into the projects and values associated with modernity itself, most notably relating to the notion progress and the obsession with the future that precludes consideration of the past, and likewise to political utopias which much too often end in destruction. A fundamental element of this reflection refers to the consideration of how humanity relates to nature, or of how human endeavours may ultimately be questioned by the workings of nature. In this sense, Walter Benjamin’s assessment that in ruins ‘human history is physically merged into the natural setting’ still proves valid, as does his assertion that ruins speak of decadence but also contain the seed for the new.132 In line with this, ruins express not only a critical assessment of the past and of the notion of posterity but may also signify the future of the past. This is a tack Boym explores via the notion of prospective nostalgia, which in her view characterises contemporary art works that express how remnants of the past discarded by the relentless movement of progress can be retrieved and help construct alternative futures, one of the manifestations of which is precisely contemporary ruinophilia.133 I pick up on this subject momentarily, but for now I return to *A Quinta das Virtudes.*

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If we consider João Pinto’s childhood vision of the ruined family home and his final wandering reflections in the area of the city surrounding the ‘Quinta’, in which the threat of ruination plays an important part, one can detect in the accounts an acute awareness of the break between past and present, which is accompanied by the consideration of what, in spite of this, remains and should continue to be cherished. The devastation brought about by human action (such as war) and by the passing of time brings about an excavation of origins that puts forward the question of the future of the past. The latter remains to a great degree unanswered, a situation which explains the emergence of an abstract notion of nostalgia. Furthermore, and in contrast to the account of the first generation depicted in the novel, which conveys the idealization of an authentic origin associated with a rural community, at this stage in the novel both individual and familial identity are seen as fluid, a fact which supports a retrospectively ironic or at least problematizing reading of the initial narration. Additionally, the grim view of a nation mourning the death of its sovereign highlights the illusory nature of the projects of greatness offered by nation-states and empires.

Huyssen argues in the quotation above that ruins articulate the modern fear that history may ultimately be overwhelmed by time and nature. This too is apparent in João Pinto’s vision of his family home being destroyed by human action and by the effects of nature over time, a reality which in the end he reluctantly comes to terms with. However, throughout A Quinta das Virtudes acceptance of the passing of time is not a prevalent attitude and several characters make frustrated attempts to freeze or control time and nature, and thus to avert the devastation caused by them. In order to do so, they use several means, such as the collection, which I will consider soon. Before that however, I focus on one of the clearest examples of this process of frustrated attempt to define a space which may somehow be immune to the destruction caused by nature: the bourgeois home.

After some time living in her home in the ‘Rua do Calvário,’ Joana Maria decides to make changes to the decoration of the rooms, removing the furniture which João Pinto had inherited, and updating it according to the fashion of the day and likewise to her own taste. Additionally, Joana decides
to create a winter garden at the back of the house, a place where she would be able to isolate herself from a city that she both loved and detested. The redecoration of the house in the terms outlined highlights the fusion of subject with object and the construction of an interior space of domesticity that reflects the desired construction of individual subjectivity on the part of Joana Maria. Moreover, it is in this context that the representation of nature and its relationship with humanity is meaningfully addressed.

First, the plants in the winter garden are likened to breathing animals, whose presence is uncanny and implicitly threatening, as if while Joana peacefully reads her favourite books they were just about to begin to move and attack her: 'A exsudação das plantas, que eram begonias, sobretudo, com seus talos, que uma penugem velava, tornando-as quase animais, e com as folhas, azuis ou arroxeadas, que ostentavam como que um mapa de saliências carnosas, cobria os vidros de vapor.' A second instance in which the connection between humanity and nature is explored relates to the project of Joana Maria’s herbarium. The couple engages in excursions to the countryside, of which Joana Maria takes advantage in order to collect plants which will integrate her herbarium: ‘Destas saídas campestres, voltava Joana Maria, as mais das vezes, com volumosa provisão de plantas, as quais destinava, pelo desejo de possibilitar a contiguidade, afinal, entre a Natureza e a habitação, à feitura de curiosíssimos herbários.’ As the text makes explicit, the creation of the herbarium is motivated by Joana Maria’s desire to explore the contiguity between nature and house/home. Referring to the herbarium, the text then draws a parallel between the effects of the passing of time on the plants collected at the micro level (‘microscópicos cataclismos’) and the action of nature at a broader scale, for instance in the shaping of continents and mountains. And finally, the narrator describes Joana Maria’s nightmare, which consists in her seeing the house and the family being engulfed and devoured by her collection of plants:

E soçobrava Joana Maria, de quando em quando, num pesadelo, em que se lhe deparava aquele território verdíssimo, exorbitando de seu

cárrecere de almaço, assenhoreando-se dos quartos, roendo o rodapé dos móveis, engolindo bibelôs e cortinados, reservando para o fim as pessoas, que estremeciam, todas nuas, num canto inóspito, a quem mordiam os artelhos, dilaceravam os ventres, rebentavam o arcaboiço das costelas, escalando e escalando e escalando, até não ser mais aquele espaço que um emaranhado de cascos e de rancos, de pernas e de gavinhas, aonde vinha pôr seu ovo imenso uma ave, que tapava a luz do Sol, e crocitava e crocitava e crocitava, até a fazer acordar.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes}, p. 339.}

The passage presents graphically the threat that nature poses to the bourgeois world, symbolised in this instance by the family home. The fact that Joana Maria sees the pages of the herbarium as a prison reveals her awareness of how the process of classification and preservation which produces this collection corresponds to an exercise of power and of desire of control over nature informed by the discourse of science. Likewise, the collection speaks more broadly of an obsession with controlling the devastations caused by nature and time. However, both the deterioration affecting the herbarium and the feared ruination of the house and the decay of the people inhabiting it reveal Joana’s understanding of the inadequacy of such strategies as guarantors of stability and continuity.

Joana Maria therefore expresses a predominantly critical view regarding the idea that the formation of a bourgeois family and the definition of a family home as centres of individuality opposed to the world may prove effective is dealing with the challenges posed by a fast-changing society which has an inherently distant and instrumental relation with nature. A passage that further illustrates this point relates to Joana Maria’s reflections at the end of one of her daytrips to the countryside, in which the contrast between the workings of nature and the bourgeois family home is explored, and which is striking on account of the concatenation between the description of external realities (the behaviour of young lovers strolling the countryside assessed critically by Joana) and the exercise of speculative imagination by the main character, all of which contribute to shaping Joana’s ironic stance with respect to the bourgeois way of life:
'Dentro de uma hora, mais ou menos', calcula Joana Maria, ‘darão sinal as cigarras e as rãs, mas já não estaremos presentes, nenhum de nós, nem eu, nem o João, nem os namorados, porque temos todos uma casa, a que é preciso regressar, e lareiras e louceiros e lavatórios, e sei lá eu que mais, dentre aquilo que fabricamos, para nos atafalhar a vida, cada vez mais oca.’

As we saw above, Joana is also sceptical about the development of instruments of control of nature, such as the collection, since in the end nature’s destructive logic seems to her inescapable. Nevertheless, after pondering whether it would be best to just destroy the herbarium (in a fit of uncontrolled rage), Joana refrains from doing so, on account of the powerful and crazed feeling of seduction (‘uma tão poderosa e enlouquecida sedução’) that nevertheless the collection holds over her. Again, as an illustration of the characters’ mindset, ambivalence inevitably creeps into the discourse of the novel.

To conclude, in *A Quinta das Virtudes* the threat of ruination reveals subjects’ awareness of historical discontinuities and of how they affect the processes of configuration of memory and identity, especially in relation to places and communities. Additionally, the imaginary of ruins enables an exploration of the relationship between human history and nature. In this context, nature is represented as a potentially destructive force that may at any time upend the projects devised by human beings. This perspective contrasts notably with the perception and experience of the natural world which we saw characterised the first generation depicted in the novel, which found in nature a connection with the natural rhythms of the world and with a cyclical experience of time. Finally, although in *A Quinta das Virtudes* we find a critical view regarding the possibility of retrieving the past, and likewise about the effectiveness of attempting to define places of belonging and individuality (the family home) or instruments of control of nature (the collection), characters are shown to be unable to restrain their desire to cling to these elements and, as a consequence of this, tension and ambivalence become the prevalent features of the work. In the next section, I elaborate further on the

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The Collection: Individuality, Flawed Technique of Control

As we saw earlier, Joana Maria and João Pinto are avid collectors. They collect pictures of ruins, plants, but also and most importantly miniature paintings. The pictures of ruins collected by João Pinto are not actual souvenirs and they can be read as manifestations of escapism inspired by a nineteenth century orientalist aesthetics. Regarding the herbarium, I related its representation to the imaginary of ruins in A Quinta das Virtudes, and especially to a reflection on the relation between humanity and nature. I now turn my attention to the collection of miniature paintings, which is a common project of the couple, and I assess its many implications in the novel. As will become apparent, my analysis is informed for the most part by Susan Stewart’s contribution to the study of this subject.\textsuperscript{138}

The couple’s collection is made up of small painted portraits of people of varied origins and times. Such portraits or limnings were generally gifted to family members or close friends and were either framed in order to be displayed in the family home or inserted in medallions and other pieces of jewellery to be worn as ornaments. According to Stewart, limnings are objects of contemplation in which the face ‘becomes a text, a space that must be read and interpreted in order to exist.’\textsuperscript{139} The need to create narratives that support the existence and indeed the possession of said portraits referenced by Stewart is exemplified in Joana Maria’s fictional speculations about the lives of the characters (‘desarvoradas efabulações’), which João Pinto also engages in. Furthermore, the text explores the ways in which the collection is constituted and displayed, and likewise it addresses the relevance miniatures have in relation to the process of configuration of bourgeois intimacy and interiority.

\textsuperscript{138} Susan Stewart, \textit{On Longing: Narratives of the miniature, the gigantic, the souvenir, the collection} (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 1993).
\textsuperscript{139} Susan Stewart, \textit{On Longing}, pp. 125-126.
João Pinto displays the portraits in specially made cases and according to a methodology only known to himself. In this manner, the collection becomes a parallel universe, de-contextualized and self-contained, created by the collector:

Esmeradamente perfilados, em gavetas especiais, de acordo com certa metodologia de João Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles, tão labiríntica, em sua concepção, que ninguém estaria apto a discerni-la, eram as miniaturas como que um universo paralelo, com o condão de facilitarem, a seus possuidores, uma oportunidade de refúgio e de evasão. Inseridas nos encaixes, sob uma numeração esotérica, conduziam a que se destacasse, contra o escarlate do estojo, a lisura de seu fundo, de uma almura amarelada, por regra, as tonalidades matinais dos retratados, em seus traços fisionómicos e nas matérias de seu vestido.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 342.}

As the excerpt clarifies, this parallel universe is to João Pinto and Joana Maria a refuge and an escape from their surroundings; it constitutes an individual world created according to their own criteria of selection and organization, and likewise to their imagination. Moreover and importantly, implicit in the description is the idea that the collection is removed from the flow of time, which as we saw is one of the main concerns of both characters. Indeed, for Stewart, the collection is ahistorical, it is a series severed from its origin: ‘the point of the collection is forgetting - starting again in such a way that a finite number of elements create, by virtue of their combination, an infinite reverie.’\footnote{For the full quotation, see: ‘The collection does not displace attention to the past; rather the past is at the service of the collection, for whereas the souvenir lends authenticity to the past, the past lends authenticity to the collection. The collection seeks a form of self-enclosure which is possible because of its ahistoricism. The collection replaces history with classification, with order beyond the realm of temporality. In the collection, time is not something to be restored to its origin; rather, all time is made simultaneous or synchronous within the collection’s world. [...] Once the object is completely severed from its origin, it is possible to generate a new series, to start again within a context that is framed by the selectivity of the collector. [...] While the point of the souvenir may be remembering, or at least the invention of memory, the point of the collection is forgetting - starting again in such a way that a finite number of elements create, by virtue of their combination, an infinite reverie.’ In Susan Stewart, On Longing, pp. 151-152.}

Furthermore, Stewart argues, the interiority of subjects is projected in the infinite variation within the finite series of the collection and, in this sense, it mirrors and reaches its maximum expression in the bourgeois home, the place
where objects and decoration are expressions of interiority. The fact that the collection is made up of miniatures has the effect of further highlighting these elements, for the miniature is relatable with interiority and subjectivity, personal narrative and presentness. This is what Stewart calls the effect of transcendence of time and space operated by the miniature.

Another interesting aspect of the collection is that, like the intimate space of the family home, it too establishes a dynamics between inside and outside, private and public, individual and collective time. This explains why both Joana Maria and João Pinto almost ritualistically show the collection to selected guests, in sessions which are generally accompanied by the already mentioned speculative fictional narrations about the traits and lives of the characters represented in the miniatures:

The passage conveys the pride João Pinto takes in his collection, but also the feeling of control it provides him, not just because of the immediate control he has over the miniatures, but also because he is able to condition the reactions of the carefully selected spectators, involving them in a play of sorts. However,

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144 On this subject, Stewart comments: ‘It is not sufficient to say that the collection is organised according to time, space, or internal qualities of the objects themselves, for each of these parameters is divided in a dialectic of inside and outside, public and private, meaning and exchange value. To arrange the objects according to time is to juxatpose personal time with social time, autobiography with history, and thus to create a fiction of the individual life, a time of the individual subject both transcendent to and parallel to historical time. Similarly, the spatial organization of the collection, left to right, front to back, behind and before, depends upon the creation of an individual perceiving and apprehending the collection with eye and hand. The collection’s space must move between the public and the private, between display and hiding.’ In Susan Stewart, *On Longing*, pp. 154-155.
there is another side to collectors’ lot, and it refers to obsession, mania, to effectively being controlled by the collection. In the novel, João Pinto’s obsessive behaviour is seen as an illness for which there is no cure and to which all must be sacrificed: ‘E doía-lhe, a ele, aquela compulsão coleccionística, a que tudo sacrificava, saldando-se numa exaustão, sedenta e insaciada, para que se não tornava praticável qualquer cura.’\textsuperscript{146} In this respect, Benjamin highlights the obsessive nature of the task of the collector, who is additionally seemingly chosen by the collection, his passion being guided by the objects themselves.\textsuperscript{147} On her part, Stewart sees in the collector’s mania an overloading of the collector’s self with signification, which is a logical consequence of the radical projection of interiority and subjectivity onto the collection.\textsuperscript{148}

If the collection is an extreme expression of selfhood in the context of a bourgeois society whose economy is based on the production of mass goods, one bordering as we saw on mania, the question arises as to the motivations behind the project itself. And it soon becomes clear that these portraits, indeed these people who make up a varied European tribe, otherwise designated in the novel as prisoners or ghosts, are identified by João Pinto and Joana Maria with their own family. The fact that the miniatures are represented as prisoners stresses the contradictory dynamics of control characterizing the collection: the collector appears as the almighty jailor who is in turn imprisoned by his own game. Additionally, the idea that this is a varied European assortment of characters expresses the couple’s awareness of their own varied origins. However, the fundamental point here is that the couple’s main concern is with the ultimate destiny of their allegorical family. In this context, like what occurred with the herbarium, the desire for control (over time, over the family destiny) ends up being regarded as unfulfillable. After asking João Pinto about the likely destiny of the collection and receiving an unsatisfactory reply, in which her husband associated it with the destiny of their own family, Joana Maria is shown reflecting: ‘Não professava grande fé, em tal filosofia, aquela esposa,

\textsuperscript{146} Mário Cláudio, \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes}, p. 343.


obcecada pelo exército de personagens, prisioneira do pavor de que seu desaparecimento, ou seu extravio, haveria de simbolizar, de alguma maneira, o esquartejamento da família que ajudara a conservar e a reconstruir. So, the issue of posterity is again at stake here, of aggregation versus separation, of what remains or is lost as time passes, of memory and forgetfulness, desire for the perpetuation of identity and the awareness of the futility of said craving. Since in reality the ability to control, organize, provide order onto the world (as seen in the workings of the collection) is inevitably upended by the passing of time and by the effects of nature on human endeavours. Reflecting on the miniatures, Joana Maria again imagines a gigantic force of nature, in this case a hurricane, causing them to be dispersed and thus, without pity, annihilating the moving patience (hers and João Pinto’s) that had aggregated them:

Era como se um furacão indomável, rompendo os quatro pontos cardeais, aniquilasse a comovente paciência, que as havia agregado, espalhando-as sem dó, precipitando na desolação seus anteriores titulares, os quais não mereceriam mais, porventura, que esse resto de pétalas, que esvoaçam, em todos os outonos, e que vão cair, com as primeiras chuvas, aos pés dos que insistiram em acreditar.

The relation between human (in this case individual) history and nature is established here once more in negative terms, nature appearing as a foe that brings about the realisation of human powerlessness; however, at the same time and at least implicitly, a parallel is drawn between the fate of human projects and that of decaying petals in the Autumn, thus positing the integration of the human in the processes of the natural world.

While João Pinto and Joana Maria maintain an ultimately ambivalent stance regarding the workings of nature and the effects of the passing of time on human endeavours, the subject of the relation between humanity and nature is explored further in A Quinta das Virtudes, namely in the representation of the garden of the estate in the novel. One can even argue that in the chapter titled ‘OS CONSTRUTORES DO JARDIM’, a reconciliation of sorts between the human and the natural world is posited.

149 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 344.
150 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 345.
151 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, pp. 349-384.
Here, a description of the stages of the construction of the garden of the Virtudes (today a well-known tourist attraction of the city of Oporto) is presented, as well as the characters and actions of two of its head gardeners, Pedro das Virtudes and José Marques Loureiro. In this manner, the novel recovers the *topos* of the garden as a representation of society and uses the depiction of its evolution in order to represent major social, economic and cultural changes. More importantly, the imagery of the garden supports a reflection on the relation between humans and plants, exploring ideas of continuity and variation, permanence and impermanence, life and death. Among other elements, this is achieved by means of the exploration of the commonalities between human and plant life, through the attribution of human traits to plants and of plant traits to humans, as well as via the image of the kaleidoscope as a signifier of continuity, differentiation, life and death. The garden of the Virtudes therefore appears as an allegory for the evolution of individuals and families through time, taking place according to an organic logic of continuity and individuation. In this sense, the garden is arguably a signifier of order in the face of apparent chaos,\(^{152}\) favouring the integration of humanity into the natural world. Thus, the workings of nature, so feared by João Pinto and Joana Maria, are accepted, and consequently nature is no longer regarded as an adversary that must be externally mastered and controlled.

**Storytellers and Storytelling**

*A Quinta das Virtudes* narrates the story of a family and of a country throughout the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Moreover, the novel exhibits a self-reflexive vein and explores the process, function and potential of storytelling and story writing, in reference to a crisis of memory and identity caused by accelerated social, spatial and cultural mobility.

\(^{152}\) A more direct activation of the imagery of the garden as a refuge of order and harmony in the face of chaos is present in Cláudio’s novel *Gémeos*. Here the garden is the solace found by the main character Francisco Goya and his gardener Simón after their wanderings through the battlefields during the Napoleonic wars, which had provided the material for Goya’s series of paintings titled ‘The Disasters of War’. See: *Gémeos* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2003), pp. 61-2.
As we saw in the introduction, it is commonly recognised that many of Cláudio’s works present reflections on narrative representation, especially in relation to the biographical genre, which is interpreted by the author in idiosyncratic manner, as an exercise of imagination based on historical data, by which the author, shedding claims to factual accuracy, would like his fictions to ultimately attain the dimension of myth. Cláudio arguably puts into practice the genre of biographical fiction, which became increasingly prevalent from the mid-1980s onwards and explores the borders between fact and fiction, both asserting and questioning fiction’s representational and sense making potential. Unlike what occurs in many of Cláudio’s fictional works though, in which the author-narrator appears as a character who plays an important part within the self-reflexive narrative process, in *A Quinta das Virtudes* the chronicler/narrator-character has a fairly muted presence. However, like in many of Cláudio’s texts, the reflections on creativity, storytelling and writing presented in *A Quinta das Virtudes* take place for the most part en abyme, that is, they are delegated to characters in the novel, especially to João Pinto and Joana Maria, who act as de facto doubles of the chronicler. Given this context, I now examine the representation of storytelling and of narrative speculation in *A Quinta das Virtudes*, which will bring us to the crucial issue of how and why one should write a family novel.

The first reference to storytelling in *A Quinta das Virtudes* relates to the function of fiction in the context of the primeval communities described early on in the novel:

Povos de louca fantasia, viam-se acocorados, por lôbregos serões, a escutar a narração de feitos intermináveis, bem ligados, em geral, aos sítios donde provinham, de touros e de serpentes, de eleitos que, a um gesto de seus dedos, dirimiam contendas e levantavam moradas.\(^{154}\)

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Acolhia-se um ancião, por vezes, a um rescaldo mortiço, com as pálpebras semi-cerradas, entre um enredo de rugas, relembrando factos que não testemunhara, que adivinhava, tão-só, do passado e do futuro, de uma isenta dimensão que ninguém mais intuía.155

As the first passage shows, within the depiction of the anthropological place, narration is regarded as an expression of fantasy which serves to bind the members of a community to each other and to a given geographical location. The second passage explores the traditional imagery of the elder who through fiction passes on the memory of said community to later generations. However, from the very onset, the issue of unreliability creeps into the representation of fiction, since the elder is shown to create stories on the basis of intuition, therefore of guess work only, a fact which nevertheless does not seem to undermine the effectiveness of the accounts. These are very simple propositions which nevertheless are not fully lost in the course of the novel, although in this respect the perspective expressed in the work acquires various levels of complexity, mirroring the complexity of the social arrangements depicted.

The bulk of the reflection on storytelling in A Quinta das Virtudes occurs within the context of the portrayal of the third generation, beginning with that of the experiences of Joana Maria’s parents, Pedro Mavigné and Mary O’Keefe Bowman, who are of French and Irish origin, respectively.156 Here transnational and transcultural mobility leads to an enhanced problematization of notions of identity and belonging, and to the development on the part of the characters of Pedro and Mary of a keen interest in familial and national history, as well as, in the case of Mary, in traditional Irish folk tales. Although these are represented as frail and precarious means, they clearly emerge as part of the process of cultural adaptation, which includes the establishment of links

155 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 18.
156 As I mentioned earlier, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries Portugal witnessed a spell of economic development, which brought to its two main cities of Lisbon and Oporto entrepreneurs from several countries, among whom the British, Irish, French and Dutch were the most representative. These events are reflected in the evolution of the family portrayed in A Quinta das Virtudes, namely in Joana Maria’s background.
between different spaces and cultures, and the competing desires for innovation and continuity.157

In any case, reflections on storytelling and story writing come into full force only with the characters of Joana Maria and João Pinto. The first clear instance of this refers to Joana Maria’s opinions about the work of Almeida Garrett. As Joana delves into Garrett’s writing, she reveals her own implicit desire to become a writer, which as we later see is evidenced in her abilities as a social analyst:

Parecia-lhe admirável, sempre, que se esfalfasse o escritor, por arquivos empoeirados e bafientes sacristias, à caza de ocasionais notícias, ilustrativas da natureza das pessoas e da urbe onde se debatiam. E sonhava ela, que sofria da mórbita saudade do cheiro do papel e da tinta, suas companhias de quando secretariara o pai, com a utopia de colaborar em idênticas empresas, de captura de dados e de confronto de datas, de listagem de factos e de sintetização de resultados, num todo bem mais coerente, tanta vez, do que a própria e autêntica realidade, em que se alicerçavam.158

In the excerpt above, the first reference to the collection of information in archives, which provide material for literary creations, is later complemented by Joana Maria’s view of literature as a medium that allows for the writer to shape reality, turning it into a more coherent whole. The mirroring effect established between these reflections and the literary project of A Quinta das Virtudes.

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157 For illustrative quotations, see, on Pedro Mavigné’s attitude: ‘É um cavalheiro, porém, que dedica, à contemplação das suas raízes, orgulho de casta muito especial, coisa que o conduz a invocar, a cada passo, triunfos de seus avós e favores de vários monarcas. Das ruas do Porto, onde vai actuar, fará como que outras alamedas das Tulherias ou de Saint-Cloud, topónimos que compõem a datação dos documentos de família, que mui ciosamente continua a arquivar.’ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 162. And on Mary O’Keefe: ‘Haviam os proventos da actividade mercantil feito subir, em grau apreciável, o rendimento do clã, de molde a facultar-lhes, mais do que um desafogo, o contexto de firmeza, em que se notavam, até mesmo, os básicos sinais do prazer do luxo. Mas nada traía a fidelidade à origem comum, expressa pela saudade de uma antiquíssima igreja românica, sobre cuja torre a cruz celta se espetava, imagem que Thomas Stearns O’Keefe elegia, como privilegiada identificação de seu princípio e de seu fim. Obedecendo a um imperativo, todos eles, que não acertariam em diagnosticar, não era rara a noite de temporal, em que se viam implicados em difusas narrações, encadeando nomes de tribos variadas, aparentadas com a sua, ao [sic] de terras multiformes, cuja configuração se ia desgastando. E percebiam, na paisagem dos arrabaldes do Porto, trechos que rimavam com os do país donde eram oríundos, como se uma só etnia os houvesse afeiçoado, de modo a ecoarem, pelos séculos, uns nos outros, puido o nó inefável, para todo o sempre, que os estreitara, por certo, nas eras irrevocáveis.’ Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 168.

158 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 246.
Virtudes comes across as relatively clear, and indeed the same can be said of other en abyme reflections on representation of family history and society in the novel.

Both João Pinto and Joana Maria are portrayed as acute and keen observers of the society they live in, which they describe and analyse, taking advantage of social occasions, such as functions in their home or family outings, especially to the theatre. One of the most striking instances of this occurs in a passage dominated by the critical gaze of Joana Maria. In a long narrative section taking place on the occasion of a ball, Joana Maria is shown exercising her qualities of social analysis (‘suas prendas de analista apurada’):

Como muito escrúpulo, então, o que pressupunha uma tácita de pretensas ausências e abstracções, perscrutava a conduta, expressa e tácita, dessa pequena multidão, dançando derramadamente, num despreendimento meio postiço, tagarelando sobre quase nada, em redor dos dois bornes centrais, encostando-se ao vão de uma janela, numa benévola solidão, decorada pelos jarrões de gladíolos. E eis que procedia à catalogação daqueles intervenientes, injectando na tarefa um rigor de biólogo, quando não uma severidade de julgador.  

What follows the statement of intent above is an extensive description of characters and modes of behaviour, but also a more general assessment on the part of Joana Maria of the dominant intellectual and emotional landscape of the time. The text is marked by great detail and insight which would merit further attention; however, what I would like to stress here is that beyond the narrative device that allows for the portrayal of a given social and cultural milieu through the eyes of one of the main characters, the long section creates a double narrative layer which has the effect of foregrounding the mechanisms of subjective representation and its function. This reading is supported by the fact that the passage immediately succeeds the brief biographical sketch of the couple’s children, in which the narrator’s voice is clearly manifested. Moreover, the process by which Joana Maria shapes reality into a more coherent whole in order to make sense of it is highlighted by the evidently reflective tone adopted by the character, while incidentally she lies in bed listening to her husband snoring:

159 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 251.
Assim, concluía Joana Maria, em seu quarto rectangular, na Rua do Calvário, no Porto, urgia redigir uma sentença, condenatória ou absolutória, da idade em que viviam. Ali estava ela, na cama, entre alvos lençóis, que cheiravam a alfazema, cheia de paciência, para com os ruídos do companheiro, à sua esquerda, buscando sinónimos, como uma colegial, daquilo que os pregadores designavam por ‘sinais dos tempos’.  

A similar strategy of double layering as the one considered above is found in the account by João Pinto of the siege of Oporto at the end of the civil war in 1834, which is of crucial importance in reference to the subject of storytelling, its process and effects. The story told by João Pinto is addressed to Joana Maria. It is based on the narrator’s lived experiences, on accounts from family members and other random informants, and even on one official document quoted by João Pinto: as such, it is openly partial and unreliable, and it deliberately fuses memory with history. Before examining the content and function of said narrative, I would first like to note how the act of storytelling is framed by the narrator, who portrays João Pinto as an enthusiastic storyteller/actor who unravels a fiction designed to entertain Joana Maria and himself:

‘Cá vai a narração, pois, de que tanto gosta», principiava João Pinto de Meirelles o relato seguinte, dirigindo-se à mulher, e a si mesmo, mal terminavam a ceia. «Quando morreu aquele pobre diabo do Dom João VI, que garantiam que fora envenenado, com umas laranjas que merendara, encontravam-se formadas, já, as duas correntes de opinião. [...]».

‘Esvaía-se o Reino, assim, numa contenda interminável’, ia continuando João Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles, tomando o intervalo, apenas, de se assoar, o que fazia, muito demoradamente, socorrendo-se de um lenço de riscadinho.

‘Mas, como leio, neste momento, em seus olhos, que está desejosa de conhecer a continuação da saga do nosso primo, apronte-se para escutar’, prosseguia João, dando asas ao seu talento de narrador.

160 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 255.
161 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 265.
162 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 267.
163 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p. 273.
We can see from the quotations above how the *en abyme* structure allows for the staging and foregrounding of the act of storytelling, denouncing the subjective and constructed, rhetorical nature of the account, while implicitly indicating the very personal motivations which underlie it. The account is based on historical facts, hearsay and complete and unashamed speculation, and it provides a broad and complex sketch of the siege of Oporto by the forces loyal to Dom Miguel and the final victory of the liberal army. Furthermore, it focuses on multiple events and people from all social *strata* and, having as its axis the ‘Quinta’, it often presents detailed tableaux of major or marginal events, so much so that the narrative frequently acquires an almost cinematic quality:

‘Nos seus aposentos do Palácio das Carrancas, onde se acomodara’, efabulava João, com vista a aguçar o apetite de Joana Maria, ‘martirizantes apreensões assaltavam o Dom Pedro IV, as quais afectavam, em parte, as desgarradas utopias, a que persistia em se entregar. Atingiria ele o fito de toda aquela empresa, que era resgatar a cidade do Porto, em riscos de sucumbir, das presas do usurpador, o Dom Miguel? Na fria câmara, de invulgar pé-direito, à débil luminosidade de uma lamparina, apenas, que acendia estes temores, agigantavam-se fantasmas, pelas paredes, que eram como o trio de Parcas, em que acreditavam os Gregos, fiando o cabelinho da existência, coisa que, a todo o instante, ameaçava quebrar-se […]’.

The excerpt shows how the portrait of the events both personal, familial and relating to social types and well-known figures depends on speculation and on an ability to recreate atmospheres on the basis of the exercise of a visual imagination. As the chapter ‘A CIDADE DIVIDIDA’ progresses, one realises that through the repeated act of telling this story, which indeed corresponds to a complex thread of unending and meandering descriptions, insights, and speculations, fusing history and memory in an account that reveals its own constructed nature, João Pinto seeks to restore a sense of belonging to a community or to multiple communities, corresponding in the first instance to his family, but also in more general terms to the city of Oporto and even more broadly to the nation. The effort and dedication employed in the account by João Pinto, which is a manifestation of his desire to take possession of

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memory and history, nevertheless contradictorily denounces the ineffectiveness of this device in allowing him to overcome a growing sense of alienation, which will be condensed in the radical statement of estrangement that constitutes the coda of *A Quinta das Virtudes*.

The final instance of reflection on storytelling and writing in novel which I would like to consider refers to the collection of miniatures. In my view, it displays in graphic manner the processes by which a family novel is constructed, the goals sustaining such projects and their ultimate lack of effectiveness.

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, the collection of limnings is for Joana Maria and João Pinto a projection of their family. Indeed, like their family, the limnings correspond to a varied European group which is preserved in the form of miniature paintings; moreover, Joana Maria and João Pinto explicitly connect their concern with the destiny of the collection with that of their family members. On another level, the collection of miniatures appears as a commentary on how and why one should write a family novel. Indeed, each miniature represents an individual whose traits and life story must be presented in narrative fashion, so that their memory can be perpetuated and so that later generations can not only understand these people but also to a degree themselves through their ancestors. Therefore, like the collection, narrative is meant to suspend the effects of time. Thanks to her gifts of speculative imagination and narration, Joana is especially effective in bringing the ghosts in the limnings back to life.\(^\text{165}\) In this manner, she enacts a task akin to the one of the narrator of *A Quinta das Virtudes*. In fact, the sequence mentioned here is immediately evocative of a passage in which, after drawing

\(^{165}\) See: ‘O espantoso milagre, que permitiam, do desenho de uma certa órbita, em torno do tempo e dos espíritos, constituía a base do estonteamento que, ao contemplá-elas, se apossava de Joana Maria, a qual, sobre aqueles rostos, imobilizados num tênuo fundo, onde resplandecia o azul ou uma nuvem corria, não evitava, jamais, desarvoradas efabulações. “Este homem, por hipótese”, explicitava ela, a uma confidente de sempre, dessas sobre cuja confiança não nutria quaisquer dúvidas, e que sabia suficientemente imaginosas, pelos testemunhos prestados, para não escarnecer dela, “este homem, por hipótese, nunca foi afortunado, pois que teve de se curvar, coitado dele, para um berço pobre, onde os bebês penosamente abafavam, de um mal indetível, uns depois dos outros, e deu-se o caso de a mulher, a quem muito amava, se habituar a dormir, à toa, com este e com aquele, deixando uma liga bordada, com colibrís e miosótis, aos que maior consolo lhe traziam.” In Mário Cláudio, *A Quinta das Virtudes*, p. 340.
a brief narrative sketch of the children of the couple, the narrator explicitly
draws a parallel between the narration and an imperfect frame on which the
characters just depicted would be forever etched: ‘Como paradigma da continuidade, aqui ficam, no entanto, nesta moldura de oiro envelhecido, um pedacinho emperrada, que para eles, só para eles, nos demos ao trabalho de preparar.’

The collection of miniatures also helps underline the constructed, selective and subjective nature of any fictional account. In fact, they are gathered and ordered by the collector/narrator, so that another more basic level of manipulation must be considered here. These elements are in turn linked to a desire for completeness and totality, associated in the novel with the idea possession and control. Indeed, João is represented as an anxious jailor who surveils his prisoners, but he is also to an extent controlled by the collection. And finally, regarding motivations, it is clear that Joana Maria and João Pinto’s main concerns are explicitly prospective, relating to the future, and implicitly retrospective, concerning the establishment of a connection with the past. The fact that Joana imagines the collection being dispersed in diverse and in her view undignified places, that strip the miniatures of the meanings she and her husband had projected onto them, expresses the couple’s awareness of the perishability of their condition and enterprises, and acts as a further ironic commentary on the writing of family novels.

João Pinto and Joana Maria use fiction in order to attain a precarious sense of identity and to speculate about their place in time, in relation to both their ancestors and to those who would come after them, but also in reference more broadly to the society they lived in and its history. Whilst in *A Quinta das Virtudes*

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167 Through the prism of ekphrasis, Mariana Caser da Costa briefly explores the connection between the representation of the miniatures in *A Quinta das Virtudes* and the process of writing a family novel. She further argues that the establishment of this parallel allows for an abstract reflection on the human condition to be presented in the novel. While in general terms I agree with Caser da Costa, in her analysis she does not consider the logic of constitution of the collection; likewise, her approach to the workings and implications of the miniature is superficial. Finally, the interpretation of the use of collection of miniatures in *A Quinta das Virtudes* is virtually absent here, as well as are any considerations on the effectiveness of João Pinto and Joana Maria’s endeavour. See: Mariana Caser da Costa, ‘Viagem Ao Porto “Numa Mirabolância de Ilusionista”: Literatura e Outras Artes na Quinta das Virtudes, de Mário Cláudio’, *XV Abralic*, (2016), 5065-5076, in <https://abralic.org.br/anais/arquivos/2016_1490918496.pdf> [accessed 5 July 2021].
Virtudes there is a great degree of ambivalence regarding the motivations and mostly the effectiveness of such devices, when pursued by individuals, the novel is much clearer in its indictment of the discourse of nationhood, which is based on simplistic narratives about identity. This is evident in the manner in which war and its effects on individuals are depicted in the novel, a subject which I address in the next and final chapter on the novel.
Chapter 3: Disasters of War

*Quinta das Virtudes* represents and examines the tensions arising from the perceived discontinuity between the pre-modern and the modern worlds; moreover, it specifically addresses the political dimensions of this shift, manifested first in the French revolution and in the Napoleonic political and military programme that followed it, and later in the Portuguese liberal revolution and the civil war that succeeded it.

The revolutions of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries promised to create a new beginning, which in the political sphere was to be manifested in the individual exercise of citizenship, ideally within the institutional context of a republic. However, as Ariella Azoulay argued, the politics of a new beginning were ‘part and parcel of the frenetic and destructive imperial movement of the new.'\(^\text{168}\) This meant that they were accompanied by the destruction of alternative ways of being in the world, mostly in the colonial context,\(^\text{169}\) and likewise by eruptions of violence that revealed the contradictory nature of the agenda of progress proposed. Obvious parallels can be drawn with respect to the current context of capitalist globalization, which is portrayed as affording an avenue for progress at the cost of the destruction of alternative modes of being in the world, and arguably of the planet itself.

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\(^{169}\) For a more complete assessment of Azoulay’s arguments, see the following passage: ‘Eighteenth century revolutions generated the figure of the citizen as part of a revolutionary “new beginning” materialized in the sovereignty of a republic. Paradoxically, though the protagonists of imperial revolutions promoted the relentless imperial movement of progress, in order to secure their rights of plunder over others, they had to establish some institutions that contradicted this movement as it materialized in relatively fixed institutions and constitutions. This also revealed that it was not just the monarchy that stood in their way, as their spokespersons stated and historians repeated, but also the many who imagined themselves as cocitizens in the different polities the revolutions established. Rather than relating to such foundational acts as barriers to the unstoppable imperial movement as Arendt does in *On Revolution*, I question the political new beginning and show it to be part and parcel of the frenetic and destructive imperial movement of the new, and hence incapable of stopping it. Eighteenth-century revolutions halted pre-imperial forms of being together in a common world, even as they unleashed such desires. Imposing a totally new beginning required a violence against the many, who - like their predecessors in different moments and at different places since the “new world” was invented - sought ways to oppose the destruction that the new brought about and insisted on preserving parts of their worlds, in which they could continue to have active lives irreducible to the needs, visions and enterprises of others. The present of the many was not a time-space unit placed somewhere on the road to progressive history, a stage along the path to progress, but the fabric of life.’ Ariella Aisha Azoulay, *Potential history. Unlearning Imperialism*, p. 47.
In *A Quinta das Virtudes*, Cláudio’s approach to this subject is mediated by the work of Francisco de Goya. This strategy is not unique in the author’s body of work. In fact, Cláudio’s novel *Gémeos*\(^\text{170}\) explores a similar tack. *Gémeos* portrays de final years in the life of the painter, occupied with the production of the sequences of the *caprichos* (1797-1798), *the disasters of war* (1810-1820) and the *black paintings* (1819-1823). Taking advantage of the potential offered by ekphrasis, *Gémeos* is organized in narrative canvases and explores the *topos* of the carnival (the world upside down) in order to represent the ambiguities and contradictions characterizing a period in which individuals seemingly witnessed the death of one world and the birth of another, and in which the lines between progress and destruction, reason and irrationality, civilization and barbarity became increasingly blurred. If the sequence of the *caprichos* arguably inspired the Claudian interpretation of the imagery of the carnivalesque in the work of Goya present in *Gémeos*;\(^\text{171}\) in this novel we also find a clearer indictment of the darker facets of the politics inspired by the Enlightenment, in the already mentioned sequences of *the disasters of war* and the *black paintings*, whose process of production *Gémeos* reimagines. While representing the Napoleonic invasions of Northwestern Portugal and particularly of Oporto, *A Quinta das Virtudes* likewise enacts a dialogue with the engravings of *the disasters of war*. The novel examines the effects which the destruction caused by war has on individuals and at the same time as it proposes forms of care which are altogether unrelated to and disregard the processes of identification with both nation-states and imperial transnational projects.

The narration of the French invasions in *A Quinta das Virtudes* is set in March 1809, at the time of the invasion of Portugal by general Soult, and revolves around two characters: François Bertin, soldier in the French army, and Manuel Joaquim Lambrou, lawyer of French origin living in Oporto. The account begins with a reflection on fictional invention, which underlines its effectiveness in reimagining past events and experiences: ‘não nos cabe mais

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do que inventar, pois que nisso, apenas, é que melhor nos aproximaremos do real sentimento dessas almas, ascendidas ao descanso perpétuo’. The latter is immediately followed by the introduction of the character of François Bertin, who, we are told, like Goya, saw everything: ‘tudo presenciou.’ The story is narrated in the third person, combining internal and external focalization, and is centred around two contrasting events: on the one hand, the siege of Oporto, seen in various narrative engravings corresponding to different scales, and, on the other, an event occurring in a moment prior to the siege, a brief interregnum to the madness of war. I begin with the latter.

While on his way to the city of Oporto and as the French army pillaged the countryside, François Bertin strolls into the woods and stops near a stream. There, he sees a young Portuguese militia soldier, António. The meeting is marked initially by tension: ‘E quedaram-se os dois, assim, na expectativa que dura uma eternidade, e que caracteriza esses encontros, sempre, a que não preside a ideia do próprio desfecho.’ But surprise and suspicion are soon replaced with empathy and, as the boys realize that none of them will shoot, Bertin gets close to António, touches him and introduces himself:

Tocou-lhe aquela mão, primeiro, enclavinhada na arma, percebendo que dois dedos, apenas, lhe sobravam e que um deles se não arriscava a desapertar o gatilho. E, apontando para si mesmo, ousou apresentar-se, enfim, “François”, com um sorriso que exprimia a maior oblação. Depois o outro o fusil, recuou dois passos, para um certo ponto de claridade, no meio da sombra, onde se lhe iluminava o ouro baço da cabeleira, e articulou “António”, a medo, nominação que lhe haviam dado, numa tarde de domingo, na pia baptismal. Achegou-se-lhe Bertin, de novo, a roçar-lhe o rosto, quase, com o próprio rosto, a aspirar aquele aroma de ervas, que de António se evolava, e que era, muito justamente, o que se desprendia de Rosalie, sua longínqua conversada. Apoiando a dextra, entretanto, no ombro do camponês, pretendeu aflorar-lhe os lábios, com os próprios lábios, mas recusou-se-lhe o outro, oferecendo-lhe a face. E prenderam-se, num esboço de abraço que, tão rápido se fechou, se desfez, sem que o tempo se imobilizasse.174

172 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.139.
173 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.141.
174 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.142.
The situation described in the excerpt comes across as a suspension of hostilities occurring in a seemingly Edenic space, removed from the political and military circumstances of the day. Furthermore, the scene is evocative of ideas relating to the ethical imperative proposed by Levinas, in that the physical presence of the other, and especially the contemplation face of the other, constitutes the basis for empathy and ethical behaviour to emerge. The acts of touching, caressing and holding each other, even though only briefly, highlight that an alternative world is possible, one characterized by care for the other whose individual and very physical presence is recognised as summoning ethical action. The world of care presented here is otherwise also seen in this chapter of *A Quinta das Virtudes*, titled ‘OS FRANCÊSES’, in the way Manuel Lambrout cares and is cared for by his partner and former maid Cândida Branca. However, the chapter focuses first and foremost on the disasters of war and on their effects on individuals.

As François enters the city and witnesses the atrocities committed by the invading army and by those who attempted to survive, he becomes numb (‘atordoado e interdito’) and aimlessly wanders around the town, occasionally obeying the orders shouted at him, in what is likened in the novel to a personal pilgrimage or *via sacra*. The scenes described become progressively more

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175 Emmanuel Levinas develops his ethics of alterity precisely on the basis of the notion of embodied consciousness. For Levinas, the other is perceived sensitively and affectively, and interpellates the subject directly with its interrogative and imperative gaze signifying ‘do not kill me’. And while Levinas does conceive of a transcendental ego, associated with conscious intentions, for him the embodied self remains the locus from which transcendence first emerges, as transcendence-in-immanence. In this sense, subjectivity is constantly happening in relation to the other and the sensuous body is the place where inside and outside meet. A fundamental aspect of his thought is that ethical meaning begins in the interhuman and arises primarily from the contemplation of the face of the other: ‘But that face facing me, in its expression - in its mortality - summons me, demands me, requires me: as if the invisible death faced by the face of the other - pure alterity, separate, somehow, from any whole were my business. As if, unknown by the other whom already, in the nakedness of his face, it concerns, it “regarded me” before its confrontation with me, before being the death that stares me, myself, in the face. The death of the other man puts me on the spot, calls me into question, as if I, by my possible indifference, became the accomplice of that death, invisible to the other who is exposed to it; and as if, even before being condemned to it myself, I had to answer for that death of the other, and not leave the other alone to his deathly solitude. It is precisely in that recalling of me to my responsibility by the face that summons me, that demands me, that requires me - it is in that calling into question - that the other is my neighbour.’ In Emmanuel Levinas, *Alterity and Transcendence*, trans. by Michael B. Smith (London: The Athlone Press, 1999), pp. 24-25.
evocative of Goya’s etchings and acquire a dark, almost nightmarish, dimension:

Desconhecia ele os movimentos do monolítico exército, de que era um numeral, nessa península estrangeira, onde tudo se exprimia intoxicantemente, dos sentimentos que albergava, até os factos que registavam os diários dos generais. E uma chuvada transversal, mais uma espécie de poalha, incidia nos objetos, entretanto, como se lhes incumbisse emprestar, àquela gravura nevoenta, uma escassa luminosidade, na total ausência de cor. Dos complicados escombros fumegantes, do que fora uma dessas coelheiras, sem dúvida, onde as familárias se justapunham, assaltou-o uma velhota, aos trambolhões, rindo com muito descaro e estendendo-lhe uma laranja.176

The passage establishes a parallel between the narrative description and an etching (‘gravura’), blurry and devoid of colour. Additionally, it underlines the figuration of the army as a gigantic, monolithic force, which contrasts with and oppresses the individuals who constitute it, numbers only. Finally, the appearance of an old lady, a witch-like figure, who offers François an orange, highlights the loss of innocence of this youth, his coming of age, the orange being precisely a common symbol for the transition from the innocence of youth to the knowledge associated with maturity, a process which in the extreme circumstances of war may lead to madness and alienation, as seen in both François and the old woman. Another of the many striking scenes depicted in the novel which are relatable to Goya’s etchings refers the rape of Cândida Branca, partner of Manuel Lambrou, in their home of Gaia, which is witnessed by François in the following terms:

E, como num sonho vagaroso, de desfecho implacável, observava o soldado Bertin, pálido de quanto sofrera e daquilo a que o forçavam a assistir, essa parelha de militares, que aprisionava a pequena, lhe apertava os braços e lhe afastava as coxas, preparando-a para o entrecho premeditado, de que seria protagonista o que os chefiava, o qual se ia desapertando, descendo as calças, rasgando as roupas que estorvavam, penetrando metodicamente, num ritual que se lhe impunha realizar, sob o respeito da mais correcta liturgia.177

177 Mário Cláudio, A Quinta das Virtudes, p.148.
The description is made particularly shocking on account of the soldier’s methodical approach to the violence he enacts and of the complete lack of empathy and emotion he reveals, which radically contrasts with the tone of the encounter between François and António. This effect is highlighted by the fact that the events are presented as if in a slow-paced dream, which the rhythm of the text conveys. The parallels with plates 9 and 10 of *The disasters of War*, scenes of rape titled respectively ‘No quieren’ and ‘Tampoco’, are evident. Importantly, the effects on François Bertin of this exposure to violence are twofold: first, complete alienation and, later, an acute awareness of the contradictions of the political project he takes part in. The following excerpt illustrates the first reaction:

Acostou-se a umas escadinhas, à saída do templo, e desbarretou-se, e eis que, de súbito, se lhe tornou tudo muito branco, como se uma aridez de calcário se tivesse interposto, persistente e inexorável, entre ele e o exterior. E procurou recordar-se, sem sucesso, do nome que tinha e do da terra de sua naturalidade e só se lhe apresentavam, à visão atona e sonâmbula, aquelas duas mulas, postadas ali, na praça, surgidas de um tempo sem tempo, num lugar sem lugar. Um vômito de escarros revolvidos e de resíduos de rancho, afinal, se lhe entornou, pelo dólman, e se lhe vergaram os membros, e se deixou cair, semiconsciente.  

The shock of war elicits in François a feeling of isolation, represented by the image of a limestone wall placed between himself and the outside world. Additionally, he forgets his name and place of origin and imagines the possibility of being in another time and place. A similar sense of radical alienation characterises Manuel Lambrout’s reaction to the events he had witnessed during the invasions, especially the rape of Cândida Branca, which in spite of his French origin he had been unable to avert. Immediately before his death, Manuel Lambrout is shown reflecting:

Tremia Lambrout, em seu passageiro assombramento, e acudiam-lhe miragens da violação de Cândida Branca, entremeadas das do cortejo cerimonial, que ordenara, por escrito, para o seu féretro. “Não percebo onde estou, nem quem me aparece, nem para que destino me encaminho”, choramingava o infeliz. Entrava a amiga, a limpar-lhe a baba, e permitindo-lhe a continuação da jeremiada, nestes termos, “Só

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The scene portrays Lambrout living in the constant nightmare caused by the shock of the rape of Cândida Branca, who is represented here as a white defenceless girl, to stress her (and his) powerlessness. Lambrout’s trauma equates to a loss of bearings and more importantly to a loss of identity, which can only be restored if he is able to wake up, that is, to extract himself from the Goyaesque nightmare he is enveloped in. His final statement also equates to a final act of resistance and of affirmation of individuality in the face of the blind violence he had witnessed.

Lambrout and François Bertin thus experience a sense of disorientation and radical alienation in the face of the extreme violence unleashed by Napoleon’s armies. The fact that they are both of French origin adds a note of irony regarding the merits of the identification with national or transnational imperial projects. The realization of the contradictions inherent to the campaigns is expressed by Bertin precisely in bitterly ironic terms. After crossing in a small boat a Douro river full of dead bodies (‘através daquela grossa modalidade de sopa de mortos’), François Bertin is finally aware of his name and of where he really is:

Lembrava-se de seu nome, agora, e de como se chamava o rincão onde fora parido, e de que Napoleão Bonaparte o mandara, até ali, a libertar os povos desgraçados, do jugo que os oprimia, convertendo a França em mãe das nações.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes}, p.149.}

The chapter of \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes} ‘OS FRANCESES’ proposes a critical assessment of the action of nation-states and implicitly of the discourse they use to impose political, economic and cultural programmes. The effects of state-condoned violence on individuals are illustrated in processes of radical

\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{A Quinta das Virtudes}, p.161.}
alienation, disorientation and loss of identity. Complementarily, alternative and productive modes of being in the world are also briefly touched upon. These rely on the recognition of the individual dignity of human subjects arising from a basic form of encounter and contemplation of the other, which creates the conditions for a world of care to emerge. Moreover, via a dialogue with the work of Goya, A Quinta das Virtudes complements its general appraisal of modernity and puts forward an analysis of the ambiguities and contradictions that lie at the heart of the modern project, in which progress and destruction, reason and monstrosity are so often all too closely linked.

As a final note, I would like to stress that the critical view of the discourse of nationalism and imperialism (in its political, institutional, economic, military and cultural dimensions) present in A Quinta das Virtudes is a common trait of the Claudian corpus. Like individual and familial identities, in Cláudio’s work national identity is regarded as a deeply problematic concept. In fact, it is arguably deconstructed in a much more radical manner than the previous ones. In several ways, A Quinta das Virtudes questions the very basis of the modern notion of the nation-state, namely the idea that it is grounded on an essential ethnic and cultural identity, based on blood, of which the metaphor would be the genealogical bond of the family. It does so by underlining the cultural and subjective effects of mobility, which are evident precisely in the way a family evolves and changes through time. But it achieves this also by highlighting the effects of the nationalist and imperial discourses, proposing a reflection on the violence promoted by states and suggesting the virtues of the careful treatment of individual subjects whose sheer presence summons ethical action. And finally, the novel undermines the basis of the nation-state by delving into the constructed nature of memory and identity and by problematizing the idea of belonging.

Another example of the Claudian critical take on nationalism is found in Tocata para dois clarins, the second volume of the ‘trilogia da árvore genealógica’, with its denunciation of the imperial discourse of the ‘Estado Novo’. Moreover, as I mentioned in the introduction, in the ‘trilogia das constelações’ Cláudio examines the mechanisms used by states to exercise

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power over individuals, namely in the first two novels, *Ursamaior* and *Orión*, those of imprisonment and forced exile.

But returning to *A Quinta das Virtudes*, we have seen how, having as its axis the depiction of the story of a family spanning three generations, the novel examines the consequences on individuals of the transition from a rural agrarian to an urban capitalist society in the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, which was accompanied by accelerated social, geographical and cultural dynamics. The novel depicts changes in the way individuals constructed and perceived memory and identity in this new context, and how the nuclear family became a fundamental element of personal identity, and the family home emerged as signifier of individuality. In *A Quinta das Virtudes*, the awareness of accelerated change brought by the new social arrangements leads to a growing sense of uneasiness, which is expressed in the tension between the notions of belonging and alienation, continuity and rupture, and which ultimately produces a distinctive sense of groundlessness. As we have seen, this situation causes in turn the development on the part of the main characters of what I called (following Boym) a sentiment of reflective nostalgia, associated in the novel with a fixation with the ancestral family home, with family heirlooms, genealogical charts and most importantly with the articulation of an imaginary of ruins. Reflective nostalgia speaks of a past that is not attainable, but which is still in some ways present, for instance in the form objects, buildings and ruins. In this respect, *A Quinta das Virtudes* explores modern ideas relating to the ambivalence of ruins, which signify both the awareness of temporal discontinuities and of radical change, and the view that elements of the past remain in the present and should continue to be cherished; moreover, ruins express the reluctant acceptance of the precariousness of human endeavours and of the inevitable fact that ultimately they will be upended by nature. These very ideas are projected onto the collection of miniatures, which emerges in *A Quinta das Virtudes* as a flawed technique of expression of individuality and of control over time and nature, and likewise as an allegory of the family itself. In the novel, nature thus appears as an irresistible foe, a gigantic destructive force: of the collection, of the family home and of the family itself. Nevertheless, via the imagery of the
garden, nature is also linked with organic processes of continuity and diversification, both genetic and cultural, and it is therefore associated with the fluidity of the modern cultural identity, which is in this manner accepted. *A Quinta das Virtudes* also delves into simplistic approaches to identity, which bind it with political entities, as in the case of nationalism, and which in many places and times have been regarded as avenues to overcome the complexities of the modern identity. In this respect, by activating a Goyaesque intertext, the novel presents a scathing attack on the illusions proposed by nationalist discourses and their destructive effects, as well as more generally on the simplistic identification of modernity with progress. In line with this critical outlook, the novel turns on itself and is ambivalent in its depiction of the act of storytelling, whose constructed nature is examined and whose effectiveness is problematised. By interpreting the collection of miniatures as a representation of the family novel, I was able to demonstrate how *A Quinta das Virtudes* can be read as an account that reveals itself to be an expression of the desire to control and order the past, which, although being regarded as effective, displays its constructed and ephemeral nature.

*A Quinta das Virtudes* does not propose simple solutions to the ambiguities of the modern condition; it denies easy paths to the fulfilment of the desire of individuals to find harmony, order, and their place society and history. Ambivalence comes across as the dominant feature of a novel that problematises the complexities and contradictions of the modern world. As we have seen, possible avenues to resolving the tension between belonging and alienation, continuity and diversification, lie in an integration of the human condition into the organic processes of the natural world or in the establishment of a mode of relationality that allows for the construction of a world of care, which takes into account other individuals and the memory of the past.

If it is true that, like other texts by Mário Cláudio, *A Quinta das Virtudes* can be integrated into a broader tradition that offers a critical assessment of modernity, of its social and economic formations, its institutions and especially of its impact on individual subjectivity, it certainly relates to a specific context. As I highlighted at the beginning of this study, in Portugal the concomitant
processes of de-colonization and of the dismantling of the social and economic structures of the ‘Estado Novo’, which were almost immediately followed by Portugal’s accession to the EU, meant a radical break with the past and generated a trend of reflection about memory, which included a reassessment of Portuguese history and identity, in relation to the colonial experience and to Europe. In this context, the family and the family home became recurrent topoi that catalysed said assessments. However, I would like to relate the novel more precisely with Portugal’s progressive integration into the present world-system during the 1980s, as well as to the boom of memory which was evidenced in many societies during this period.

It is generally accepted that we live in a world characterised by global flows of material and immaterial goods, which affect unevenly different peoples and individuals in all parts of the globe, a fact which contributed to the increasing complexity of the processes of individual and collective identification. Despite enormous variations worldwide, time-space compression and the acceleration of social change produced social

182 For Arjun Appadurai, globalization designates a world of flows – of objects, persons, images, and discourses – which emerge as a consequence of the functioning of advanced transnational capitalist globalization. Although these flows coexist with structures, organizations, and other stable social forms, among them most notably that of the nation-state, by their nature they surpass the sphere of said structures. Hence, the perceived crisis of sovereignty of nation-states. Additionally, these flows are marked by disjunction, meaning that they ‘are not coeval, convergent, isomorphic, or spatially consistent.’ Simply put, ‘the paths or vectors taken by these kinds of things have different speeds, axes, points of origin and termination, and varied relationships to institutional structures in different regions, nations, and societies.’ In Arjun Appadurai, ‘Grassroots globalization and the Research Imagination,’ in Arjun Appadurai (ed.), Globalization (London and Durham: Duke University Press, 2001), pp. 1-21.

183 David Harvey sees time-space compression as the result of accelerated global capitalist production and consumption of objects and services, but also of the erasure of space brought about by new technologies of transportation and communication which fuel capitalism. For him, the rate of production and circulation in space creates a sense of ephemerality which finds as a countermovement the affirmation of place-bound identity, or as he puts it ‘the search for secure moorings in a shifting world’, a process which is regarded as essential to the shaping of identity, but also as marked by irony, since in Harvey’s view there is no escaping commodification. The other critique Harvey makes to this stance is the fact that it may slide to parochialism, myopia or self-referentiality, or at worst into sectarian politics. See: David Harvey, ‘Time-Space Compression and the Postmodern Condition’, in The Condition of Postmodernity (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990), pp. 284-307.

184 Hartmut Rosa defined late modern society as being characterized by the acceleration caused by three elements: technical acceleration (resulting from the introduction of new technologies or from the improvement of existing technologies), the acceleration of social change, and the acceleration of the pace of life. According to Rosa, technical acceleration increases the pace of social change, which leads to the perceived acceleration of the pace of life and to the notion of scarcity of time, which in
arrangements marked by an increasingly fluidity.\textsuperscript{185} In these circumstances, subjects need to navigate an intricate network of references and attachments, identity being understood in these circumstances as non-essential, dislocated, decentred and fragmented, continuously being redefined along and beyond ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious and national lines.\textsuperscript{186} Under these conditions, and following Giddens,\textsuperscript{187} Margaret Archer concluded that reflexivity had turn motivate further technical acceleration, thus renewing the cycle of acceleration. In these circumstances, subjects are confronted with a multiplicity of choices which they are not possibly able to experience in their lifetimes. For Rosa, the alteration in the \textit{tempo} of social and cultural change evident in contemporary societies leads to the erosion of the conditions and institutions that in modern societies helped define ‘a priori substantial identities’, the content of which was determined by one’s place in long-lasting social structures. These are therefore replaced by \textit{a posteriori}, situational identities, dependent on individual choices. See: Hartmut Rosa, \textit{Social acceleration: a new theory of modernity} (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013).

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Zygmunt Bauman famously defined fluidity as the state in which ‘social forms (structures that limit individual choices, institutions that guard repetitions of routines, patterns of acceptable behaviour) can no longer (and are not expected) to keep their shape for long, because they decompose and melt faster than the time it takes to cast them, and once they are cast for them to set.’ In Zygmunt Bauman, \textit{Liquid Times. Living in an Age of Uncertainty} (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2007), p. 1. Bauman relates this condition to the transition from ‘heavy’ to ‘light’ modernity. According to him, the first corresponds to a mode of physically relating to and dominating space through instrumental reason and was fulfilled in the great political and technological innovations of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Instead, light modernity is the product of the post-industrial economy and refers to the era of software and of instantaneous time, of global capital flows and disembodied labour. For Bauman, utter precariousness, which is defined as ‘the combined experience of insecurity (of position, entitlements and livelihood), of uncertainty (as to their continuation and future stability) and of unsafety (of one’s body, one’s self and their extensions: possessions, neighbourhood, community)’, is the result of this process. In Zygmunt Bauman, \textit{Liquid Modernity} (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), p. 161.
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\textsuperscript{185} For more on this, see: ‘The subject, previously experienced as having a unified and stable identity, is becoming fragmented: composed, not of a single, but of several, sometimes contradictory or unresolved, identities. Correspondingly, the identities which composed the social landscapes “out there,” and which ensured our subjective conformity with the objective “needs” of the culture, are breaking up as a result of structural and institutional change. The very process of identification, through which we project ourselves into our cultural identities, has become more open-ended, variable and problematic. This produces the post-modern subject, conceptualized as having no fixed, essential, or permanent identity. Identity becomes a “moveable feast”: formed and transformed continuously in relation to the ways we are represented or addressed in the cultural systems that surround us (Hall, 1987). It is historically, not biologically defined. The subject assumes different identities at different times, identities which are not unified around a coherent “self.” Within us are contradictory identities, pulling in different directions, so that our identifications are continuously being shifted about. [...] The fully unified, completed, secure, and coherent identity is a fantasy. Instead, as the systems of meaning and cultural representation multiply, we are confronted by a bewildering, fleeting multiplicity of possible identities, any of which we could identify with, at least temporarily.’ Stuart Hall, ‘The Question of Cultural Identity’, in \textit{Modernity: an introduction to modern societies}, ed. by Stuart Hall et al. (Cambridge, Mass.; Oxford: Blackwell, 1996), pp. 596-632.
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become an imperative, meaning that subjects are increasingly compelled to engage in a process of self-fashioning, which may be more or less productive depending on their degree of self-awareness and ability to engage with the social structures they are integrated in. More broadly, communities in different contexts react to these circumstances differently, and if it is true that, as Hall and Bauman have noted, they have often given rise to a search for roots, and to movements inspired in ethnic, nationalistic and religious constructions, more complex ways of experiencing and dealing with this reality are also to be found in diverse settings. In this respect, James Clifford highlighted precisely the complex dynamics between local and global cultures taking place in the current global and post-colonial context, providing important insights into how individuals and communities around the world navigate the challenges of negotiating identities in the late twentieth and early twenty first centuries, and stressing the manners in which local and global cultures interact, and how local practices and memories persist in competition with the pressures of global homogenization.

Refocusing our attention in the timeframe in which A Quinta das Virtudes was published, I would like to relate the literary project of the ‘trilogia da árvore genealógica’ with the turn towards the past which was noticeable in many societies in the 1980s and 90s, and which Huyssen contrasted with the

188 Margaret Archer recognises that self-reflexivity is an imperative in the current conditions of social and cultural change (or morphogenesis), however she stresses that structural constraints are imposed on individuals’ actions, who are compelled to negotiate meanings in the context of a broader process of cultural elaboration. According to Archer, the hyperbole of liquid modernity needs to be moderated, recognising that all social structures are only relatively enduring, but also bearing in mind that the current conditions of social and cultural change may be substantially different from the ones characterizing past circumstances, and that such changes likely influence the way individuals define themselves and make decisions. For instance, individuals exercise self-reflexivity in different manners and, whilst some of them may fall into the trap of isolation or adhere to the values of autonomous self-fulfilment in various spheres, many make the conscious decision to identify with and follow the norms of social groups and communities, and also, in some cases, they decide to engage with and address issues relevant to broader communities, in fact attempting to remake the social order. See: Margaret Archer, ‘A brief history of how reflexivity becomes imperative’, in The Reflexive Imperative in Late Modernity (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), pp. 10-46; Margaret Archer, ‘Conclusion’, in Late Modernity. Trajectories towards Morphogenic Society (Cham: Springer, 2013), pp. 292-315.


earlier present futures trend, associated with pre-1968 political utopias, and likewise with the view of an eternal present offered by global capitalist culture, which was summed up in Francis Fukuyama’s proclamation of the end of history and epitomized in technologies of instant communication. Huyssen linked the resurgence of memory in many societies precisely to time-space compression, cultural acceleration and to the informational and perceptual overload, which ‘neither our psyche nor our senses are that well equipped to handle.’ He further claimed that the attention given to memory had both political and cultural motivations: ‘Politically, many memory practices today counteract the triumphalism of modernization theory in its latest guise of “globalization.” Culturally, they express the growing need for spatial and temporal anchoring in a world of increasing flux in ever denser networks of compressed time and space.’ In this sense, the present pasts trend recovers the high modernist dream of a better past, which consisted in living ‘in a securely circumscribed place, with a sense of stable boundaries and a place bound culture with its regular flow of time and a core of permanent relations.’ However, Huyssen argues, the question was no longer that of recovering a golden mythical past, but simply ‘the attempt, as we face the very real processes of time-space compression, to secure some continuity within time, to provide some extension of lived space within which we can breathe and move.’ This required in his view contesting the denial of time, space, and place proposed by cybercapitalism and globalization, and finding a permeable place and time from which to speak and act. And somehow memory, individual, familial, regional, and inevitably national, was seen as providing the coordinates for this exercise of resistance. But memory, Huyssen alerted, is transitory and unreliable and its uses are multiple, depending on the perspective of the agent constructing it, and moreover, he stressed, we should

not forget to remember the future and that memory should indeed constitute the seed for alternative futures.\(^{195}\)

*A Quinta das Virtudes* is therefore arguably a peculiar product of the major changes outlined, to which it effectively responds. The characters in the novel express the need to find temporal and spatial coordinates from which to articulate their subjectivity, and they reach out to memory (familial, regional and national) in order to achieve this goal. This attempt is nevertheless materialized in a brand of reflective nostalgia, which Boym suggests is the product of times of accelerated social and cultural change and conveys an ironic stance regarding the possibility of retrieving and understanding the past. As we have seen, the novel presents a critical assessment of the processes of construction of memory, thus invalidating simplistic uses of the past, such as the ones evident in populist national discourses, which convey monolithic views of identity grounded in part on the exercise of restorative nostalgia, and which the novel directly deconstructs. Nevertheless, although only partially or in ruins, traces of the past remain, and forms of continuity are also proposed in the novel, signifying that in the past may lie alternatives for the future.


A *Quinta das Virtudes* depicts and assesses the effects of mobility (social, but mostly geographical and cultural) and social change on the perceptions of selfhood of characters representing three generations of the same family living in the city of Oporto during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Moreover, the novel examines the strategies used by said characters in order to cope with the challenges posed by the complexity of their situations, including the emergence of a self-reflective stance with respect to processes of negotiation of identities, associated in the work with feelings of belonging and alienation in reference to communities and spaces at several scales. As such, the novel constitutes an archaeology of modern subjectivity grounded on a retrospective outlook, which moreover serves as a commentary and critical reflection on the social and cultural conditions of the late twentieth century. *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, the novel which is the object of the current chapter, picks up on many of the subjects addressed in *A Quinta das Virtudes*, arguably expanding the scope and complexity of the enquiry enacted in relation to them.

*Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* tells the story of the life and writings of the fictional poet Tiago Veiga, paying special attention to the reconstruction of the social and cultural settings he lived in. Born in 1900 in Irajá, Brazil, and deceased in 1988 in the small rural town of Venade, in the Northwestern Portuguese region of Minho, Veiga is a cosmopolitan subject and, more importantly, a cultural hybrid who is the product of geographical and cultural mobility. *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* depicts and examines the consequences of these conditions on the conduct of the main character, as well as on his possibilities of consequentially intervening in the world, and most especially of expressing himself artistically. Throughout the novel, Veiga feels compelled to constantly reinvent himself, adapting to new jobs and to new social and cultural surroundings. His life is defined by moments of energy and creativity, followed by those of disbelief and disappointment, which in turn give way to a state of slumber that precedes a new beginning, the latter invariably ending in renewed
frustration. These life cycles coincide with displacements in space: having as his axis Venade, and the progressively decaying family estate, Veiga departs from this place, for which he feels a mix of affection and disgust, only to return to it at a later stage. His travels are for the most part the result not so much of choice but of chance, frequently being precipitated by unsolicited job offers which the anti-hero gladly if somewhat listlessly accepts. The unfinished nature of his life and artistic projects reveals a cosmopolitan subject at odds with and unable to deal with the complexity and contradictions of his situation. This fact relates to a deep-seated polarization in Veiga’s attitudes: his desire for autonomy and for the exercise of his free will coexist with his need to identify with the realities he knows and to relate to the people he encounters in his travels; moreover, his yearning for wandering, disorder and re-invention contrast with his longing for stability and for the semblance of a firm identity. So, whilst Tiago Veiga displays an openness to abandon traditions and welcomes new experiences, he is also attracted to memory, found in places, customs, texts, and ghosts from the past, which accompany him in his wanderings and inform his work. His writings therefore become increasingly akin to an excavation of ruins and to the desired resurrection of dead bodies, of the *strata* that define Veiga’s identity, as well as the culture of Minho, and more broadly that of Europe itself. When the quest to discover and fashion his identity through writing reveals itself to be unfruitful, Veiga turns either to devices such as religion and mysticism, or the idealization of nature and childhood; alternatively, he opts for self-effacement, and ultimately chooses to eliminate his work and himself. In the context of Veiga’s life journey, art (literature, painting and music) becomes a fundamental reference, promoting a mode of self-analysis by projection, a trend which evidences the need on the part of the character to understand himself and his life. Likewise, Veiga seeks to understand the history of Portugal and Europe, which he witnesses first-hand in parodic fashion via the odd jobs he performs at the behest of historically relevant personalities (Veiga is consecutively a personal secretary, translator, guide, editor). As we shall see, the processes of analysis and deciphering are crucially relevant in the novel and, since the main character ultimately fails to enact them effectively, it is the author-narrator who takes on
the role of decipherer of Tiago’s life. While doing so, the author-narrator converts Veiga’s life into a work of art and additionally proposes possible solutions to the conundrum of identity formation in the late modern world. Through the construction of a web of coincidences and divergences within the novel, most notably but not exclusively between Tiago Veiga and the author-narrator, the novel illustrates both the complexity of identity and the logic of projection that is involved in writing someone else’s life. In this regard, I shall argue that, while the *Biografia* presents fundamentally an examination of the problematic definition of individual and collective identities in the current social, economic and cultural circumstances, it is also a means by which the empirical author Mário Cláudio, autobiographically represented in the novel, looks to understand and explain his own artistic choices differentially, that is, by approximation and distancing with respect to his creation and arguably his mask Tiago Veiga.

In part II of this study, I elucidate the points above by means of the close reading of selected passages of the novel. In chapter 1, I begin by considering the process of construction the character of Tiago Veiga. In this regard, I examine whether Veiga should be labelled a fake author, a heteronym, or perhaps something in between. The bulk of this study is however dedicated to tracing and understanding the profile of Tiago Veiga and the reflection that through him is proposed regarding the subjective consequences of the processes of national and transnational migration, social change and personal re-invention depicted in the novel.

Taking into consideration these objectives, in chapter 2, I examine how from the very beginning of his trajectory, Veiga is represented as a migrant subject, a cultural hybrid for whom the notion of home is deeply problematic, and who is constantly divided between feelings of belonging and estrangement. Moreover, I stress how these conditions elicit in Tiago Veiga a self-reflexive stance, which is projected onto his initial works, and which in fact becomes prevalent throughout his life, to a great degree explaining his failure to assert himself as an individual and artist. In this second chapter, I further examine how the initial depiction of the effects of geographical and cultural mobility in Tiago Veiga gives way to a contradictory reflection on the subject
of cosmopolitanism, articulated by a character situated in a semiperipheral position in the world-system. Finally, I delve into Veiga’s failed cosmopolitan projects and analyse the transformation of the poet into a wanderer and the consequences which this process has in terms of Veiga’s strategies of identification and artistic projects.

The third chapter is devoted to the analysis of the representation of memory and its uses in the Biografia. Adopting a transnational memory studies approach, I explore the representation of the circulation of memory across several scales (local, regional, national and transnational) in the novel; likewise, I analyse how and with what ends memory is activated and re-invented by Tiago Veiga. In this respect, I argue that Veiga’s practice of writing as an excavation of ruins and resuscitation of ghosts should be considered a productive engagement with memory, a means for the poet to articulate in the present his transnational and multicultural identity. In this sense, I establish the role that memory may play in practicing a form of situated cosmopolitanism. Moreover, I also highlight that the Biografia depicts and denounces the problems posed by conservative approaches to memory, manifested by Tiago Veiga and his father, but mostly evident in the cultural politics of fascism portrayed in the work.

Finally, in the fourth chapter, I put forward my case that Tiago Veiga is as a man without qualities who becomes a Bartleby. I explain the reasons for Veiga’s predicament and I furthermore examine the strategies he puts into place in order to cope with his situation.
Chapter 1: Tiago Veiga as Mask - Real, Fake or Something in Between?

Since the publication of *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* in 2011, the novel has been approached from different but interrelated angles. Indeed, readings of the *Biografia* have clustered around two main subjects: on the one hand, the reinvention of the Portuguese and European cultural landscapes present in the work, with special emphasis on the evolution of the Portuguese and indeed European cultural and literary scenes throughout the twentieth century; on the other, attention has also been given to issues relating to representation and referentiality, and especially to the process of creation of a fictional author, arguably a heteronym, as well as to the implications which this has in terms of the reconsideration of notions of subjectivity and agency in the present context. Whilst in chapter 3 below I address the first of the subjects noted here, that of memory, I now turn my attention to the question of heteronomy in relation to the character and works of Tiago Veiga.

The quasi obsession on the part of both journalists and critics with determining whether or not Tiago Veiga existed, or whether or not he is a Claudian heteronym (a process which included several attempts to extract a veritable confession from Mário Cláudio himself) reveals an awareness of the relevance of the phenomenon of heteronomy, and likewise testifies to the grip it still has over the Portuguese imagination. At the same time, the pursuit of this inquest entailed, to some degree at least, a disregard for the most distinctive traits of the fictional practice of Mário Cláudio, a point which the

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author tried to make in the interviews he gave soon after the publication of the work. In order to assess the issue at hand, I propose first to present a brief account of the debate on heteronomy which followed the publication of Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia: I start by describing the process of publication of Veiga’s works and by outlining some of the elements in the novel that may support the view that Veiga is a heteronym of Mário Cláudio. I then summarize the arguments of both Cláudio and his readers, and I sketch out the new theory of heteronomy delineated in the aftermath of the debate. This will allow me to argue my own case on the subject, relating it to a more general assessment of the phenomenon of heteronomy in contemporary literature, and of its emergence in Cláudio’s work in particular.

To begin with, let us consider the definition of heteronomy. According to Carlos Reis, heteronomy can be distinguished from pseudonymity by the fact that the latter involves only a change in the name of an author, but not of his character and style, while the former corresponds to a more complex strategy, by which a given author (ortónimo) creates an alternate author (heterónimo), who not only has a specific name, but also a defined character and biography, and most especially a distinctive writing style:

[heteronímia] parece resultar da convergência e acção conjugada de três componentes: um nome próprio, atribuído a um sujeito poético; uma identidade própria, dotada de características psicológicas e ideológico-culturais próprias; finalmente – aspecto decisivo e indispensável – um estilo próprio, estabelecido por uma escrita poética autónoma em relação à do ortónimo.198

Does Tiago Veiga fill the criteria outlined above, and if so in which way can he be linked and at the same time distinguished from other practices of heteronomy and especially from the personae created by Fernando Pessoa? More importantly, how does the phenomenon of Tiago Veiga fit into the Claudian corpus and into the author’s artistic process? And finally, what does the Cláudio seek to achieve by means of this putative heteronym?

The fictional creation of Tiago Veiga began on 18 August 1988, when on the occasion of Veiga’s death Mário Cláudio published in the weekly Tempo

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a short biographical note on the author, marked by the syntax of occultation (Tiago’s) and revelation (Cláudio’s):

Há pouco mais de duas semanas, numa aldeia dos arredores de Paredes de Coura, com oitenta e oito anos, faleceu serenamente, após prolongada moléstia esse que se ocultou por décadas e décadas, e que subsistia, até essa altura, entre pinhas e vinhedos e linhas manuscritas, nas maiores das solidões.199

Much later, in 2005, Veiga’s *Sonetos Italianos* were released, and in 2008 and 2010 two other texts were published: *Gondelim* and *Do Espelho de Vénus*, respectively.200 Meanwhile, Veiga had made a brief appearance in the 2008 novel *Boa Noite, Sr. Soares*, which narrates a period in the life of the character Bernardo Soares, Pessoa’s semi-heteronym and supposed author of *Livro do Desassossego*, whose life is here represented from the perspective of the young António Felício.201 Veiga’s biography was released in 2011 and, in recent years, two other collections of poems by the poet were published: *Dezassete Sonetos Eróticos e Fesceninos*, in 2015, and *Responso de Balbininha, Algebrista de Venade*, in 2019.202 The latest addition to the ensemble of texts on Tiago Veiga was *Embora Eu Seja Um Velho Errante*,203 a book divided into three parts, corresponding to a monologue by Tiago Veiga, a diary written by Ellen Rasmussen, Veiga’s second wife, and a testimonial by Mário Cláudio himself. With the exception of *Gondelim*, Veiga’s works are accompanied by a critical apparatus, made up of introductions or prefaces written by Cláudio himself and by well-known literary critics. These contain

201 ‘Às duas por três, e numa pausa que se abriu no nosso falatório, chegou-nos esta pergunta do taberneiro, dirigida ao sujeito amarelinho que ia comendo a sua refeição, “E então, senhor Tiago Veiga, caçou muitos elefantes lá na Guiné?” Rebentámos os quatro num riso sem controlo que obrigou o tasqueiro a virar-se lentamente para nós, fixando-nos com um olhar que significava diversas coisas, e entre elas que não admitia que uma molhada de gaiatos fizesse troça dele.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Boa Noite, Senhor Soares* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2008), p. 38.
interpretations of the poems, as well as occasional biographical notes on Tiago Veiga. Nevertheless, the construction of the character and of his work was for the most part achieved by means of the Biografia.

Before the publication of the novel, two elements had already predisposed audiences to place Tiago Veiga within the ranks of the heteronyms. First of all is the fact that in Sonetos Italianos Veiga puts into practice the form of the dramatic monologue, with its patent implications in terms of the enactment of depersonalization and of the exercise of the negative capability, both of which are romantic in origin and were further adopted by the modernists, whom, according to Mário Cláudio, Veiga would have attempted to emulate. Second, the appearance of Veiga in Boa Noite, Sr. Soares is relevant for this discussion, not only because this text deals precisely with the semi-heteronym of Pessoa, but also on account of the play on identities and representation present in the work. The latter is made evident mainly in the main character António Felício’s actions as an observer-narrator. Indeed, António self-consciously constructs the narrative and projects his own coming-of-age digressions onto the character of Bernardo Soares, António’s (mostly) imaginary guide, who appears progressively in the narrative as an individual devoid of identity, a blank canvas who lends himself to said process of self-projection on the part of his observers. Furthermore, the novel ends with a typically Claudian reflection on the workings of fiction, verbalized by the character of an author to whom António entrusts the task of writing his story (possibly the one being read), and who can arguably be interpreted as a fictional representation of the empirical author.

204 ‘E eu descortino o senhor Soares, deslocando-se por entre aquela gente que já morreu, e que se encaminha para um horizonte sempre ilusório, mas sempre promissor de eternidades. Ninguém reparo nele, pobre fantoche escanzelado, movendo mecanicamente as magras pernas, de cabeça ao de leve inclinada sobre o próprio ombro, e a correr o risco de que o chapéu lhe caia no ladrilho do passeio. Não há quem se interesse por precisar de onde ele vem, nem para onde vai, e se de repente trocam o olhar cansado dele pelo indiferente olhar que levam, fazem-no como se se cruzassem com uma ausência, ou com um homem que por ser todos os homens atravessasse a existência como homem nenhum.’ In Mário Cláudio, Boa Noite, Senhor Soares, p. 48.

205 ‘Por intermédio do amigo de um amigo meu, inteirado da ambição em que eu andava de contactar um profissional, a fim de que escrevesse ele o relato do meu convívio com o senhor Soares, consegui abordar um autor mais ou menos respeitado. Eu achava-me ao corrente do facto de que o homem possuía uma larga experiência em se aproveitar de histórias alheias, transformando-as em suas, e declarando, parece que se especializara nisso, que lhe haviam enviado
Turning to the *Biografia*, several passages in the novel contribute to its being immediately associated with the discussion on heteronomy. First, from the very onset, the biographer speculates on the possible emergence in Veiga’s writings of several entities or characters, arguably masks of the author in the fashion of the romantics and modernists (and not necessarily heteronyms, presumably because they would have had lacked proper biographical substance). Furthermore, the biographer adds, this process may constitute a trait uniting Veiga and himself:

The homology between Veiga and Cláudio noted in the passage is further highlighted by the fact that, like Cláudio, Veiga maintains a complex relation with his own identity: Veiga too assumes a pseudonym, and he is often represented regarding himself externally as a character. Additionally, at times he is seen projecting himself into works of art, especially paintings, which is to say, Veiga identifies with characters in paintings, which help him reflect about his life.

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uns papéis, e que não era ele, se bem se considerasse, o responsável pelas obras que paria. O fulano atendeu-me com cortesia, mas foi também directo. “Senhor Felício”, disse ele, “é claro que não lhe cobro um tostão pela tarefa, mas quero avisá-lo do seguinte, aquilo que eu contar distinguir-se-á bastante daquilo que o senhor contaria.” E explicou-se, “Eu utilizo palavras que o senhor é capaz de ignorar, recuso-me a aplicar umas quantas das que o senhor usa, cometo umas elegâncias que alguns julgam excessivas, mas de que há quem goste, e acrescento por capricho vários posinhos ao que para certas pessoas mereceria um posinho só.” E continuou, “A verdade é que nenhum de nós narra um qualquer enredo de maneira igual, nem o senhor, nem eu, nem seja quem for que tente decifrar o que nós redigimos.” E lançou-me este ultimatum, “Aqui tem as minhas condições, e é pegar, senhor Felício, ou largar.” Atordoado com semelhante discurso, eu peguei, e veremos agora o que dali irá sair.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Boa Noite, Senhor Soares*, pp. 91-2.

Moreover, the novel works on establishing commonalities between the biographer and his character in terms of aesthetic and life options, which however do not preclude substantive differences: for instance, they share roughly the same cultural background, they frequented similar places, although at different times, and they are both united by a tension between cosmopolitanism and attachment to local cultures, and arguably by similar concepts of the artistic process (writing as an excavation of ruins); nevertheless, they also have very different outlooks and patterns of action. This fact is most evident in the marked contrast between Veiga’s wandering character and inability to define a literary stance and to consistently produce works of art, and Cláudio’s measured, patient work of analysis, which allows him to ground himself and to define a literary path. These matters are elaborated in what the novel designates as ‘Teoria das Coincidências’, which is as much a theory of coincidences as of dissimilarities.207

The last and perhaps decisive piece of the puzzle of heteronomy in _Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia_ is seemingly found at the very end of the novel. In a scene of reconciliation between master and reluctant disciple, taking place after the poet’s death and while the character of Cláudio reflects on the destiny he should give to the memory of the poet, the biographer imagines Veiga as a phantom with whom he communicates and eventually completely identifies:

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207 I analyse this subject later in this study, when I elucidate how the issues of autonomy and attachment are addressed in the work via the activation of the master/disciple archetype, which in turn concomitantly leads to the reinvention of the imagery of the Pygmalion, in this case of the artist (Cláudio) trying to assert himself and avoid being dominated by the character he was in the process of creating (Veiga).
The passage sets the scene by evoking the imaginary of communication via microwaves, which has the effect of placing the events described in the realm of experiments not quite predictable or controllable. Afterwards, the fictional biographer relates his experience of becoming Veiga, that is, of completely if fleetingly adopting Veiga’s identity, which helps him reflect about and process his own concerns, in this case relating to the responsibility and to the very possibility of writing Veiga’s life story.

For the attentive reader of the novel, the content of the scene is not altogether unexpected, in the first instance because of the web of coincidences and dissimilarities briefly described above. Additionally, there are many examples in the work of incomplete, differential identifications between characters, that is, of characters in the novel being transformed into other personae as a result of the subjective operation of the viewer. The idea here is not just that a certain character reminds the viewer (in most cases Veiga) of another person, but that, although briefly, a given character is indeed viewed as another person.

The first clear example of this is found at the beginning of the novel when, at a time in which Veiga had just arrived in London to begin his degree at the Royal Naval College, he is represented perambulating the city. After encountering an old woman on the street and exchanging a few words with her, Veiga is shown reflecting:

Pressentiria o português naquela mulher a saudosa tia Genoveva, penando numa longa peregrinação após a morte, mas ali encarnada numa velhota de crespa cabeleira branca, e com um brilho que se lhe ia apagando no olhar, denunciador do muito que conhecia, mas sem disso possuir consciência, sobre a Casa dos Anjos em Portugal. 209

The passage shows that for Veiga the woman he met by chance not only reminds him of his recently deceased aunt Genoveva, but that in his view she in fact incarnates Genoveva and her consciousness. In another passage, a

similar but more complex game of differential identifications is enacted. As he travels through Southern Italy, Veiga engages with the painting *Il Ritorno del Figliol Prodigo*, by Mattia Preti. As frequently occurs in the *Biografia*, Veiga reads the painting in relation to his life, which he projects onto the scenes depicted:

> Em Nápoles vira *Il Ritorno del Figliol Prodigo*, de Mattia Preti, e desenrolara diante do quadro o latente drama da sua vida. O velho que recebia o filho tresmalhado, balbuciando entre lágrimas as ordens aos criados, “Tirai depressa o mais belo vestido, e vesti-lho, e metei-lhe um anel no dedo, e calçado nos pés, trazei também o vitelo gordo, e matai-o, e comendo-o, façamos a festa”, era o seu próprio pai, desprendido já do vulto do soldado feroz que ele avistara na distante pintura popular, ilustrativa da estação da Via - Sacra de Braga. O desgraçado que regressava naquela altura a casa, e que não se distinguia de um qualquer lazzarone encardido, vendendo cigarros na Porta Capuana, em tudo coincidia com ele nesse instante, vagabundo numa paisagem que lhe cuspiu no rosto prazer e dor. A surpresa da descoberta de si mesmo, motivada pelos talentos do artista barroco que nunca se situara no horizonte dos seus interesses, impelia-o ainda mais para sul...210

The baroque painting leads Veiga to self-reflection, allowing the poet to discover himself (‘a surpresa da descoberta de si mesmo’) and to realise his condition as a vagabond desirous of returning home and of being received by his father. As Veiga well knows and as we shall see in the following chapter, this desire is impossible to fulfil, because his father is absent, but also and more importantly because Veiga does not really have a place he can call home. However, for the poet, at the very instant of the viewing, both his father and he himself coincide exactly with the characters in the painting. I elaborate further on the relationship between the arts and life below, in a reading which will be informed by hermeneutics. It suffices to underline here that the passage illustrates the logic of fleeting projection of life into art which is recurrent in the *Biografia*, as well as the potential which the arts have to condense and express meanings which the characters would otherwise not be able to articulate. Interestingly, the game of identifications continues in this very sequence. In the wake of his dialogue with Preti’s painting, Veiga decides to go further South

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in order to visit the cave of the Cumaean Sibyl, looking perhaps for a few lines which might enable him to decipher his life and future. As he steps out of the cave, he sees a ragged tourist, whom he proceeds to identify concurrently with his dead mother and with the sybil.211

The fact that the three examples mentioned above refer to identifications between specific characters and family members of Tiago Veiga, who are both absent (in reality) and present (in memory) is significant, signalling Veiga’s attachment to said relationships and to the memories associated with them, an attitude which contrasts with his characteristic drive for autonomy and independence. The issue of the presence and absence of the past is the manifestation of a Baroque intertext present in the Biografia, which includes a component of perspectivism manifested in the subjectivity of Veiga’s apprehensions. Additionally, this strategy of projection ultimately reveals the poet’s awareness that relationships and that the cultivation of memories may present a productive if never assumed avenue to self-discovery and engagement with the world. These are crucially important matters to which I return later. For now, I would like to focus on the formal discussion about Tiago Veiga and heteronomy.

Miguel Real argued in a short opinion piece published in 2011 in the Jornal de Letras Artes e Ideias, in an issue which contained an interview with Mário Cláudio on the subject of the Biografia, that Tiago Veiga had indeed signified an innovation which in turn would justify a new theory of heteronomy.212 In his view, in our world of images and social networks, it was not enough for Cláudio to follow Pessoa and create a simple biography of his character, but it was crucial for him to develop a new concept, that is, a biography that included photographic and documental evidence, and moreover in which a web of well-known historical characters would appear, whose function would be primarily to validate his existence. He proceeded to


make a few annotations regarding relevant subjects present in the novel, namely the aforementioned reinvention of Portuguese and European historical memory, especially attentive of the recreation of the cultural and literary landscapes which Veiga knew, and the issue of cosmopolitanism. He ended by noting the fact that while working for António Salgado Júnior, Tiago Veiga had taken on the name of Guilherme Cunha, and that he had later created a pseudonym, Rodrigo de Matos, who however had remained unpublished.

José Vieira picked up on some of Real’s suggestions and, on the basis of the *Biografia*, proposed a more developed theory of heteronomy. Vieira argued that, through Tiago Veiga, Cláudio takes the practice of heteronomy beyond that of Pessoa in a number of respects: first, Veiga is a heteronym who is not a contemporary of his creator; second, the length of the biography allows for greater complexity both in terms of the definition of the main character and of the relationship between Veiga and Cláudio than what occurred between Pessoa and his heteronyms; and finally, the *Biografia* would be innovative in the sense that Tiago Veiga appears to be himself a creator of heteronyms (I must note that the text does not in any way confirm this assertion). Vieira then interestingly connects this last issue with the non-fixation of identity characteristic of the post-modern subject, and likewise to ideas of travel and wandering (following Bauman). Although his thesis focuses mainly on the subject heteronomy, Vieira does not contextualize the phenomenon of Tiago Veiga within the broader Claudian corpus; additionally, he does not to fully explore the very interesting tack he had initiated with respect to the issues relating to modern subjectivity and agency raised by the figure of Tiago Veiga. I return to this last and in my view fundamental matter in chapter 2 below.

In a brief introductory text to the work of Mário Cláudio, Martinho Soares does reflect about the phenomenon of Tiago Veiga in reference to the practices of depersonalization and fictional self-projection which characterise the Claudian corpus. Soares begins by positing a similitude between the

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214 Martinho Soares, *O Essencial sobre Mário Cláudio*.
strategy of adoption of masks on the part of Bernardo Soares, Tiago Veiga and Mário Cláudio. With respect to Veiga, he gives the example of the dramatic monologues evidenced in *Sonetos Italianos*, and, in reference to Mário Cláudio, he mentions the emergence in his fiction of characters who are ambiguously representative of the empirical author. However, in his argumentation, Soares ends up compounding the *topos* and practice of heteronomy in Mário Cláudio with that of Pessoa, when he states speculatively that Veiga stood for Cláudio much like Álvaro de Campos and Ricardo Reis for Pessoa.\(^{215}\) I do not partake of this interpretation, and I would like to distinguish between the heteronymic practices of Cláudio and Pessoa, which in my view function in interrelated but qualitatively different ways. I argue my case here in favor of conceiving Tiago Veiga technically as a heteronym, since he in fact fulfils all of the criteria defined by Reis: Veiga has an autonomous authorial name, his own distinctive body of work and style, as well as a rather lengthy biography. At the same time, I argue that Veiga can be understood as the extreme expression of a process of depersonalization involving self-projection which is characteristic of the Claudian artistic process and which I examine below. In the context of this analysis of Cláudio’s specific engagement with heteronomy, I suggest that Veiga can be best described as an elaborate mask created by Mário Cláudio in order to fulfil specific purposes. To properly present my argument, like Soares, I will need to take a step back and understand how Tiago Veiga fits into the work of Mário Cláudio and indeed into the wider landscape of contemporary interpretations of authorship and heteronomy. Before proceeding though, it is useful to consider Cláudio’s statements about the *Biografia*. In fact, notwithstanding the elusiveness and irony which they reveal, they also illustrate some of Cláudio’s ideas about how fiction works, ideas which will help me articulate my stance within the context of this discussion.

\(^{215}\) See: ‘Mas a ativação do gene pessoano ganha outra dimensão quando o autor decide criar um avatar poético que poderá estar para ele como Bernardo Soares, Álvaro de Campos, Ricardo Reis ou Alberto Caeiro estão para Fernando Pessoa.’ In Martinho Soares, *O Essencial sobre Mário Cláudio*, p. 76.
In an interview conducted shortly after the publication of the *Biografia*, and when confronted with the direct question of whether he could confirm that he was indeed Tiago Veiga, Cláudio replied:

Não posso, porque Tiago Veiga (TV) não sou eu (risos). Tenho uma personalidade mais afável do que ele. Mas qualquer biografado é muito contaminado pela personalidade do seu biógrafo. E, de certa forma, a inversa também é verdadeira.²¹⁶

So, from the very beginning, although he asserts Veiga’s historical existence, later claiming that anyone can check the records to find out factual details about the poet’s life, Cláudio diverts the discussion from the question of referentiality to the realm of fiction and to his own creative process, in this case openly accepting the specular relationship between Veiga and himself. In line with this, he later added:

Todo o romance tende para a biografia ou autobiografia e toda biografia ou autobiografia tende para o romance. É impossível uma biografia, seja de quem for, sem que nessa observação não se inclua o próprio biógrafo. E como inventar seja que personagem for se não na base de elementos biográficos ou autobiográficos? Este livr é uma forma de testemunhar essa ambiguidade, dando conta de um personagem que a maior parte das pessoas dirá que é inventado e ao mesmo tempo ficcionando um personagem que não é inventado. Não há biografias puras. São sempre mescladas com alguma invenção. Ainda bem que assim é.²¹⁷

Recognising that he invents characters through an imaginative process which includes a great degree of self-projection, and which confers onto any fictional biography he writes an autobiographical dimension, in the passage above Cláudio seems to argue that Veiga could not possibly be his heteronym, given that in order to invent his characters, to shape them and give them psychological depth, he needs specific chronological and spatial references. According to this logic, Cláudio required Veiga to have existed. Moreover, if Tiago Veiga is convincing as a character, then surely he must have existed.

this being the true measure of his ‘reality’. However, at the same time as Cláudio elaborates on this deliberately mystifying discourse, he cannot hide his clear awareness of the implications of the game he is playing, which is precisely based on exploring the ambiguity, the veritable undecidability between reality and fiction enacted in the *Biografia*, and arguably in the practice of heteronomy in general.

As noted in the introduction, a dominant feature in the work of Mário Cláudio has been his inclination to write fictional biographies of artists and writers, so much so that his texts can easily be integrated into a wider trend of fictional reflection on artistic practice, which gained traction in the decade of the 1980s of the last century and remains present until this day. Charline Pluvinet studied the manifestations and implications of contemporary fictions which have authors and authorship as their main subject, and which in her view form a corpus in which an enquiry is made into the possibilities and ethical implications of being a creator, at a time when traditional models of subjectivity and agency have been upended. Pluvinet organizes the works she selected, originally written in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish, in a symmetrical model, structured on the basis of criteria relating to the referential nature of the character of the author represented in the text (historically real or imaginary), as well as on whether the account is written in the first or third person:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Auteurs imaginaires</th>
<th>Auteurs supposés</th>
<th>Auteurs réels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pseudonyme</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Fictions”</td>
<td>Notice biographique</td>
<td>Vies imaginaires</td>
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<td>Roman de la biographie</td>
<td>Biographie supposé</td>
<td>Biofiction &amp; Fiction biographique</td>
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<td>Roman de l’écrivain Métafiction</td>
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<td>Fiction d’auteur Roman biographique</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roman à la première personne Autobiographie fictive</td>
<td>Autobiographie supposé</td>
<td>Métaphiction Autofiction</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

According to Pluvinet, the novels placed in the first two columns reveal a pull towards concreteness, what she calls ‘réalisation’, which is manifested for instance in the use of documents, photographs, and in the detailed reinvention of social and cultural landscapes designed to create an illusion of reality.
Alternatively, the works that fit into the third column reveal a pull in the opposite direction, that is, they display strategies of fictionalization which have the effect of revealing their constructed nature.\textsuperscript{218} Importantly for us, Pluvinet places heteronomy at the very centre of this dynamic:

Au croisement de cette double dynamique se trouve l’auteur supposé qui conjugue à la fois le statut d’auteur réel et celui d’auteur imaginaire: les fictionnalisationssions l’écrivain sont attirées par cette figure paradoxale dont les occurrences dans l’histoire littéraire sont pourtant maigres. Cela peut paraître contradictoire au premier abord mais cette situation s’éclaire si nous prenons en compte le fait que l’hétéronymie est toujours une forme éphémère et, d’un certain point de vue, une forme inexistante. […] L’hétéronymie est bien un auteur impossible, né de la conciliation des contraires – l’existence et l’inexistence. C’est une forme vers laquelle les auteurs tendent sans jamais pouvoir l’atteindre: ils poursuivent indéfiniment une figure fantomatique dont il faut s’approcher prudemment car, à peine saisie, elle change de nature. Ainsi, bien que les auteurs réels des récits étudiés s’engagent rarement dans l’élaboration d’une véritable mystification littéraire, l’auteur-hétéronyme exerce un fort pouvoir d’attraction sur eux, telle une forme rêvée qu’ils s’efforcent de rejoindre de diverses manières.\textsuperscript{219}

As the passage elucidates, Pluvinet understands the heteronym as a phantom of sorts located at the point of intersection between reality and fiction. The heteronym’s ambiguous status would allow it to be regarded either as an author who indeed existed, or instead as a complete fiction (‘auteur supposé’), depending on interpretation of the reader. Pluvinet’s words remind us of Cláudio’s statements above, in which he referred to the status of Tiago Veiga as that of a character living between reality and fiction, as well as to the

\textsuperscript{218} On this matter, see: ‘Les personnages d’écrivain sont ainsi pris dans un double mouvement symétrique entre fiction et réalité : les auteurs de l’histoire littéraire se déréalisent dans la fiction tandis que les auteurs imaginaires gagnent vraisemblance historique, comme si leur statut référentiel respectif tendait à s’inverser. Il est vrai que l’on peut se demander dans quelle mesure ce constat résulte d’un simple effet de lecture, du même ordre que l’ambivalence de la perception de la vérité dans une autobiographie et dans un roman. […] Ainsi, lorsque l’auteur est manifestement emprunté au réel, nous remarquons davantage ce qui le sépare de sa réalité historique. Par contre, si le personnage de l’écrivain se présente d’abord comme un être d’imagination, les effets de référentialité sembleront d’autant plus forts que nous les découvrons dans un second temps.’ In Charline Pluvinet, ‘Dynamiques du Personnage d’Auteur’, in Fictions en quête d’auteur (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2012), p. 141.

\textsuperscript{219} Charline Pluvinet, Fictions en quête d’auteur, p.145.
demands which this situation placed on readers. Pluvinet’s insights equally at least in part explain the scene of the novel in which Veiga is perceived by the character of the biographer as a phantom. However, they do not quite explain why Cláudio would literally put himself into Veiga’s shoes. In order to address this matter, I will need to return to the work of Mário Cláudio, starting from the very beginning, that is, from his authorial name. Nevertheless, before doing so, I would like to consider two additional reflections by Pluvinet on the subject of fictional authorship which may prove helpful for this discussion.

Pluvinet argues that the contemporary author survives in fiction, the medium through which an enquiry into the authority, responsibility and the very possibility of being an author is made. If, on the one hand, fiction allows for the romantic dream of uniting the name of an author, his life and work, to be fulfilled, on the other hand the fact remains that in contemporary works the mode of fiction itself imposes a critical distancing in relation to the possible conclusions of said enquiry. To add to this, fictional works often put forward what Pluvinet calls the negativity of authors, which corresponds to a range of problematic authorial conditions: authors who lose their names, whose works disappear or remain unfinished, who refuse to publish; infamous authors who are unknown or exhibit morally questionable behaviour; authors who flee society, who hide away or become restless nomads; authors who efface themselves and who end up committing suicide; authors who become phantoms and return after their death; and importantly, authors who practice depersonalization and whose desire is to efface themselves and to take on the lives of others. As Pluvinet stresses, each novel needs to be read on its own merits, but it can be argued that in general these works propose a questioning and refoundation of authorship, as well as possible and tentative paths to becoming an author. In addition, I would like to add, this reflection has wider implications, because thinking about authorship equates to thinking more broadly about subjectivity and agency. While sharing many of the features outlined by Pluvinet in reference to the corpus of contemporary novels she selected, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, a great work about two fictional authors (Veiga and Cláudio), proposes its own take on these interrelated matters,

which this chapter aims to clarify. But the *Biografia* is an extreme example of a reflection and poetic practice that began when Mário Cláudio published the first of his many works more than five decades ago, and it was followed by equally puzzling novels such as *Astronomia* and *Memórias Secretas*.

As I noted above, Cláudio’s works express a postmodern critical stance regarding representation and subjectivity, a fact which informed Rui Manuel Pinto Barbot Costa’s decision to use the pseudonym Mário Cláudio. As David Martens highlighted, the process by which an author adopts a pseudonym entails a fictionalization of the self: This means that by taking a pseudonym an author becomes a character, in fact a supposed author, a strategy of depersonalization which is in some ways similar to the one involved in the creation of a heteronym. On the reasons for the choice of the first name Mário, Cláudio commented in a recent interview that it had been taken after an uncle of his who had died in his infancy and of whom his grandmother often spoke. Following Martens, by taking a fictional name, Cláudio created a *persona* of himself. In this process though, he importantly recovered, perpetuated and reinvented the memory of his family, in this case that of his grandmother and of an ancestor deceased in infancy.

Turning to Cláudio’s fictional practice, we saw above how he recognised the dynamics of projection between himself and the characters he wrote about, which turned every fictional biography he wrote into an

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221 See: ‘Ainsi, le pseudonyme a beau être perçu, [...] comme s’il désignait purement et simplement un individu empirique, il ne reste pas moins que son fonctionnement s’appuie sur la toile de fond d’un comme si, autrement dit sur une structure de fiction.’ In David Martens, *L’Invention de Blaise Cendrars. Une poétique de la pseudonymie* (Leuven: Catholique University of Leuven, 2007), p. 44.

222 See: ‘Não havia qualquer razão. Mas admito que houvesse algo no subconsciente, eu também conto isso no meu livro *Astronomia*. A minha avó tinha tido vários filhos, ficou viúva muito cedo, com trinta e poucos anos, e entre eles havia um menino que tinha morrido com três anos, chamado Mário. Desde criança, habituei-me a ouvir falar do Mariozinho. O Mariozinho era uma espécie de anjo protector da família, que esvoaçava todos os dias por cima de nós. Ainda havia lá a roupinha dele, que a minha avó mostrava com muito desvelo. Era um culto um pouco mórbido, que fazia parte do imaginário de uma viúva daquela época, para quem casar em segundas núpcias era uma coisa impensável, que estava inteiramente fora de questão, ainda para mais com aqueles filhos todos, e ainda por cima todos masculinos.’ In Mário Cláudio: *A Verdade e a Beleza Continuarão a Existir. Interview with Mário Cláudio* (interviewed by José Jorge Letria) (Lisboa: Guerra & Paz, 2020), pp. 47-8.

223 The idea of recovering and reinventing memories, and of memories as ghosts, entities which are both present and absent in fiction and in life, is a crucial element in the work of Mário Cláudio. As we shall see, it also plays an important role in the *Biografia*. 
autobiography of sorts. Furthermore, Cláudio has stated seeing himself as an actor interpreting the lives of the characters portrayed in his fiction. This amounts to a mechanism of depersonalization and simultaneously of imaginative ‘derealization’, to adopt Pluvinet’s words, by which Claudian characters would acquire a generally meaningful mythical dimension, akin to myth. In a recent interview, in which he reflected about the interrelated practices of depersonalization and self-projection, Cláudio commented:

O que posso dizer é que, ao fim deste tempo todo, foram 50 anos de trabalho. As coisas confundiram-se de tal maneira que eu já não sei onde acaba a vida e começa o romance. Sou predominantemente romancista, embora tenha cultivado outros géneros literários. Mas é essa dimensão ficcional que faz com que ande muitas vezes fora de horas. Já não sei se a vida que estou a viver é a minha ou se é a dos personagens, se é, inclusivamente, a de um outro personagem que sou também eu, ou de um outro personagem que já não sou eu. É isso que posso dizer. Começou no inverno de 1941, numa noite de Novembro.224

In the passage Cláudio claims to see himself enveloped in fiction to such a degree that he does not know whether in this medium he is living his own life or the life of the characters, or perhaps the life of a character who is also himself.225 However, what seems clear is that although Cláudio may see himself as a character of fiction, he does not feel comfortable assuming this persona, preferring instead to hide behind the characters whose lives he interprets:

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224 In Mário Cláudio: A Verdade e a Beleza Continuarão a Existir, Diálogo com José Jorge Letria, p. 21.
A maior de todas as personagens somos nós, e vive em nós o que nos calhar viver, ora reclamando direitos incomportáveis com os nossos, ora arrastando-nos para as misérias da promiscuidade. Perecível como suas irmãs, deambula entretanto como alma penada. E assusta-nos o bastante para que, incapazes de abater com um tiro de caçadeira, fujamos dela como o diabo da cruz.226

The image of an author eager but unable to shoot his own persona with a shotgun is a strong one and corresponds to a radical illustration of the Claudian desire for self-effacement, which does not however preclude self-revelation.

Two elements recurrently found in Cláudio’s fiction further contribute to this discussion. First, in Cláudio’s texts we often encounter an author-character who reflects upon his own writing process. And second, in the Claudian corpus we frequently find the depiction of characters of artists and authors taking on different personae. In relation to the former point, we are reminded of illustrative passages in the novels belonging to the ‘trilogia da mão’, which are very similar to the example in Boa Noite Sr. Soares provided above.227 In the Biografia similar strategies are employed, although in this case the procedures become more complex, since in the novel the reflections on the construction of the biographical narrative are enacted by both the character of the biographer and by Tiago Veiga himself. Towards the end of the narrative, and at a time in which Veiga insists on charging Cláudio with the task of writing his biography, the poet challengingly states:

‘Vais agora escrever-me a biografia’, começou a planejar, ‘servindo-te das conversas que tivemos até hoje, e daquelas que haveremos de ter, e do que a tua fantasia engendrar para preencher as lacunas’. E tirando partido da minha atónita imobilidade, explicou o nosso poeta, ‘Nada desse truque com barbas dos papéis achados, ou entregues, mas um corajoso embuste apoiado nos teus movimentos da alma, e nos teus ímpetos do coração’. ‘É claro’, preveniu ele, ‘que irão acusar-te de me teres inventado, considerando-se muito argutos pela descoberta, mas não será verdade que cada biógrafo inventa o seu biografado, e que andamos todos nós a inventar-nos uns aos outros?’228

227 Conf. footnote 201 above.
228 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 650.
Veiga stresses the play between factuality and fantasy which fictional writing entails, and he further recognises that the hoax that any biography amounts to requires the exercise on the part of the biographer of a great degree of courage, grounded on personal investment and emotion. And he finalizes by highlighting that inventing others is not only part and parcel of the work of the biographer, but indeed of the human condition. On his part, the character of the biographer concurs with Veiga’s opinions, although emphasising the weight which his subjective views would have on the outcome of the narrative.229

The coincidences between the views of both characters about fiction and the ones expressed by the empirical author Mário Cláudio are obvious. Furthermore, the details in terms of the description of the writing process and aesthetic options, as well the justification for these, support my view that, among many other things, Cláudio’s fiction often proposes what I would call a poetics in action, effectively fusing fiction and essay. This trend is manifested in multiple ways and has the double consequence of making the reflections enacted both more convincing (because they are fictional) and less consequential (due to the ironic distancing inevitably involved in this process).

As for the second point mentioned above, which also bears on the mechanisms of projection and depersonalisation present in the Claudian corpus and relates the fact that in the Claudian fiction so many characters, mostly artists, are represented taking on masks, I provide now a few examples. In Astronomia, a fictional autobiography of Cláudio, the author not only represents himself in general terms as another person, that is, as the main character of a fictional account, but in one passage he actually depicts his character taking on the personae of several people who inhabit the family

229 See: ‘À semelhança do que me ocorrera em anteriores ocasiões, nem sequer seria a peregrinação de Veiga por este mundo que sobremaneia me importava, mas o cenário de atmosferas em que a mesma se desenrolara, a acrescer aos inegáveis factores de relevância intelectual, o seu assumidíssimo anonimato, e as múltiplas facetas de uma obra que, estilhacada embora, se imprimia com tamanha originalidade no contexto da nossa literatura. […] No acervo das minhas apreensões uma determinação ia-se entretanto configurando, da qual me defendia de abrir mão. Não conseguindo projectar-me a pedir a Tiago Veiga informes sobre o que quer que lhe dissesse respeito, nem o concebendo a prestar-me a minudente documentação, reclamada pelos biógrafos encartados, apostava eu numa intervenção do ingrediente ficcional em grau muito superior àquele que Tiago desejava para o meu trabalho.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 692.
home, interpreting their voice, accents, and views of the world.\textsuperscript{230} In \textit{O Fotógrafo e a Rapariga}, a novel arguably dealing with the potential of literature as \textit{simulacrum} (a fact which for Charles Lutwidge Dodgson and Alice Liddell is regarded both as a liberation and a curse),\textsuperscript{231} a similar process is described. At one point in the account, Charles is shown reflecting about his childhood fixation with theatre: he first claims always to have felt the urge to act as a spectator of himself, and then proceeds to describe how as a child he would interpret different characters, which in turn ultimately revealed his own \textit{persona}, or his own craziness, as Charles puts it.\textsuperscript{232} But perhaps the best example of said fictional representations is found in \textit{Naufrágios de Camões}, a novel about characters (the first of them Veiga’s grandson Timothy Rasmussen) who reinvent themselves by taking on different \textit{personae}, which are eventually regarded as projections of themselves. \textit{Naufrágios de Camões} meaningfully ends with the account of a period in the life of the poet Luís de Camões, produced by a scrivener named Ruy (a clear reference to Cláudio’s legal name), who is represented in a picture preceding the account as the empirical author Cláudio himself, half-covered by a cloth, an image of the author both present and absent in his fiction.\textsuperscript{233} More recently, Arnaut argued that \textit{Memórias Secretas}, a compilation of three interrelated biographical accounts on the fictional characters of Corto Maltese, Bianca Castafiore, and Prince Valiant, lends itself to an ambiguous autobiographical interpretation.\textsuperscript{234}

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\textsuperscript{230} Mário Cláudio, \textit{Astronomia}, p. 135.
\textsuperscript{231} The assessment of the literature as \textit{simulacrum} in \textit{O Fotógrafo e a Rapariga} can arguably be read in connection with the philosophy of Gilles Deleuze and thus implicitly with that of Fredrich Nietzsche. See: Gilles Deleuze, \textit{The Logic of Sense} (London and New York: Bloomsbury, 2015).
\textsuperscript{232} See: 'Nunca deixei na verdade de agir como espectador de mim mesmo, e o único afinal que me assegura o entusiasmo, e sobretudo a assiduidade, da sua comparência. [...] Meus irmãos passavam por mim, quando eu construía um teatrinho em cartolina recortada, e com o grude que a minha mãe preparava como ninguém, e lançava-me a representar nele, utilizando figurinhas características, uma impagável farsa, abrillantada pelas personagens que haviam sido celebrizadas pelo nosso velho Will Shakespeare, o bobo do Lear, o Malvolio da Noite de Reis, ou o Falstaff de As Alegres Comadres de Windsor, envolvendo-as em lances absurdos, com os quais se ilustravam, não as loucuras de tais máscaras, mas a minha própria toleima.' In Mário Cláudio, \textit{O Fotógrafo e a Rapariga}, pp. 82-3.
\end{flushright}
All of this comes across as quite complicated, the web of narrative levels and references appearing at times as very intricate. However, given what was said above, my general conclusion is that the fictional work of Cláudio recovers the notion of the potency of the mask, which it places at the centre of the creative process. In so doing, Cláudio’s fiction both evokes the imagery of the artist in Plato’s Ion and radically subverts it, through its positive valuation of the procedures of depersonalization and artistic interpretation depicted in the texts. As Cláudio himself recognised implicitly while reflecting on Tiago Veiga, this stance is at least in part traceable to the romantic and modernist traditions, to which he seems indebted. In this context, without disputing the classification of Tiago Veiga as a heteronym, I would like to argue that if this character, his works and biography are to be contextualized in reference to the Claudian artistic process, they should be regarded as an extreme example of a strategy of depersonalization and assumption of masks, which entails an ambiguous mechanism of self-projection and is otherwise manifested in multiple ways in many of Cláudio’s texts.

The Biografia is in fact a fictional metabiography working at many levels in order to create an elaborate game of deception which serves multiple purposes. The novel puts into place strategies that create an illusion of reality, and which are supported by a number of external texts, including: the biographical note, the publication of poetry collections prior to the novel, duly accompanied by prefaces and introductions, and importantly the integration in the Biografia of photographs, documents, specific historical references, all of which constitute strategies of “réalisation”, to take Pluvinet’s words. At the same time, as we have seen, many indexes contained in these very elements contribute to the revelation of Tiago Veiga as a creation onto which the author Mário Cláudio is projected.

Apart from the range of improbable if not unbelievable coincidences in Veiga’s life, which obviously undermine the supposedly desired effect of reality that the many historical references would aim to achieve, the multi-layered structure of the narrative imposes a complex mirroring effect which reveals the constructed nature of the account, as well as the strategy of projection therein. This is a fictional biography that tells the story of a writer (Veiga) and of his
unfinished writing projects, an account which in turn becomes the fictional autobiography of the biographer (Cláudio) trying to impose his authority on this character.\textsuperscript{235} In this respect, Cláudio echoes Veiga’s desire to assert himself, but ends up differentially identifying with his creation. As we have seen, all of this occurs while a great theory of coincidences and dissimilarities between the fictional characters of Veiga and Cláudio is established.

Tiago Veiga can thus be regarded as a phantom, an author who is both present and absent, but furthermore, I would like to argue, he is one of the two masks Cláudio adopts and onto which he is projected in the novel: the more literal one corresponding to the character of the biographer and the more distant one to the poet who wished to be his guide. Despite their commonalities, Veiga is in many respects the negative of Cláudio, an author who, in the face of complex challenges relating to mobility and transnational and intercultural identifications, did not manage to position himself culturally nor existentially, and who consequently was unable to lead a productive life. As we shall see in more detail, according to a logic of coincidences and contrasts, and in the context of a complex web of fictional references, Veiga allows Cláudio to explain his own cultural stance and his artistic options. And moreover, if I might risk an even more openly biographical note, given the fact that Veiga is the grandson of Camilo Castelo Branco and likewise the intimate relationship between Cláudio and Veiga documented in the \textit{Biografia}, one can speculate that, through Veiga, Mário Cláudio is able to invent for himself another connection with the literary tradition he most closely relates to. More broadly Tiago Veiga is the mask Cláudio takes in order to reflect about contemporary subjectivity and to imagine the possibility of a cosmopolitanism that works, although via the negative example of the poet from Minho. Finally, by means of the reconstitution of the Portuguese and European cultural landscapes of the twentieth century, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia} proposes an

\textsuperscript{235} On the autobiographical dimension of \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, Ana Paula Arnaut stated: ‘À semelhança, pois, do que lemos em Amadeo, ou de outras suas biografias, Mário Cláudio vai intrometendo-se na vida que relata com tal subtilidade que, a dado momento, biografia e auto-biografia – e por que não autorbiografia – quase parecem fundir-se e confundir-se.’ In Ana Paula Arnaut, 'Tiago Veiga: uma biografia (Mário Cláudio): a invenção da verdade', p. 65.
enquiry into how local cultures can deal productively with the dynamics of globalization.
Chapter 2: Migration, Anxiety, Creativity

_**Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia**_ tells the story of a character whose life is defined by geographical and cultural mobility, as well as by the complex network of identifications and the pervading sense of alienation which these circumstances produce. As a subject who circulates between places and cultures and whose identity is in constant flux, Tiago Veiga presents an extreme example of transnational migrancy. Although seemingly grounded in the rural village of Venade, Veiga’s trajectory is marked by digression and return, and by an unresolvable dynamics between travel and dwelling, home and not home, belonging and estrangement. In this context, memory acquires special relevance: individual and familial memory, in the first instance, but also concerning more broadly different communities interacting at multiple scales: regional, national and transnational. In this respect, Tiago Veiga embodies and explicitly reflects on how memory circulates and is processed by individuals and societies in diverse times and locations. As a result of this situation, Tiago Veiga develops an acute sense of contingency and anxiety, which I propose to relate to the character’s self-reflective stance and artistic creativity. The latter, I argue, has an eminently hermeneutic function, allowing Veiga to think through and express the contractions of his position. The ultimate question posed in the novel therefore refers to the processes of negotiation of identity in the context of a globalized, multicentred world. In this regard, I argue that the novel affords a reflection on these matters primarily via the character of Veiga himself, represented as an individual who needs to develop the skills that will allow him to fashion his life and art, in a context characterised by multiple references and demands. But furthermore, I would like to stress, the _Biografia_ proposes a broader examination of how communities may deal with the challenges brought about by globalization and manage to avoid the snares of both cultural homogenization and nationalism, as well as the difficulties inherent to the assertion of a radically non-fixated and fluid practice of identity. In this regard, I argue that, while Veiga’s life is to a great degree characterised by frustration and unfulfillment, it also affords positive answers to the question raised above, one of which importantly relates to the recognition of the
concomitantly complex and fleeting, but also situated and territorialized nature of identity.

In this chapter, I first consider how the issues raised above emerge in the representation of the childhood and youth of Tiago Veiga. In the first section, ‘Ominous Beginnings’, I begin by exploring Veiga’s birth in Brazil and subsequent migration to Venade, paying special attention to the dynamics between travel and dwelling, home and not home, belonging and estrangement, present in the work. Likewise, I briefly analyse the figurations of memory emerging in the narrative relating to this period, and finally I discuss the origins and functions of Veiga’s first literary creations. In the second section, ‘Conquering the Globe: On Semiperipheral Cosmopolitanism’, I examine the ways in which Veiga engages with the discourse of cosmopolitanism and specifically I look into the manner in which a young Tiago Veiga responds to and appropriates the cosmopolitan imaginary of the first generation of Portuguese modernists. In this respect, I highlight the deeply contradictory perspective articulated by Veiga, which I read as distinctive of an individual located in a semiperipheral position in relation to the core of the world system. Finally, in ‘A Philosophy of Travel: Tourism, Flânerie, Wandering’, I attempt to clarify how Veiga’s desire for European and arguably universal belonging, expressed in his prolonged stays in London and Paris, ends in frustration, an outcome which in turn leads our hero to adopt the guise of a wanderer. In this regard, I examine the reasons for the frustration and deep seeded sense of alienation which become prevalent in Veiga’s last moments in Paris, and I also characterise the nature and function of the nomadic demeanour assumed by Veiga, as well as its effects on his sense of self and agency.

**Ominous Beginnings**

Born in Irajá, a neighbourhood of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, Tiago Veiga was the offspring of Inácio Manuel dos Santos and Mary Leonard O’Heary.

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236 Located in the northern area of the municipality of Rio de Janeiro, the district of Irajá was founded by Portuguese settlers in 1613. With ideal conditions for agriculture and cattle breeding, Irajá became a centre for the exploration of sugar cane, hence the name, taken from the Tupi-
Inácio Manuel was an illegitimate son of Nuno Plácido Castelo Branco and Berta Maria dos Anjos. His mother having died at childbirth and his father being absent, Inácio had been raised by his maternal aunts Genoveva and Ifigênia in the ‘Casa dos Anjos’, located in the rural village of Venade. On her part, Mary Leonard O’Heary was born in Kilrush, on the Southwestern coast of Ireland, and had immigrated with her family to Brazil, where she had married Inácio and given birth to Tiago Manuel. From the very onset, Tiago’s life is therefore linked to migration and to the sense of alienation deriving from the awareness of a break, not just with respect to a place of origin, but also and more meaningfully in relation to parents who are either deceased or absent.

Inácio Manuel displays a deep sense of rootlessness, emerging from his acute awareness of being an orphan, a fact which had led him precisely to question his identity and to choose to emigrate:

Quem sou eu afinal que não conheço quem me gerou, que fiquei tão pequenino sem a mãe que me guiaria, que me converti em motivo da chacota das criadas que me chamam “órfão”, quando não “filho das ervas”, e a quem a tia Genoveva olha como a um que não devesse ter nascido?237

‘Quem sou eu afinal?’ and later, as he arrives in Rio de Janeiro, ‘Mas que venho eu cá fazer?’, are two fundamental questions Inácio will look to answer in his life. They reveal a reflective vein induced by the lack of definition of origins and by migration, which characterise his trajectory and which, as we shall see, Tiago Veiga will share and express in more complex ways than his father.

From his mother’s side of the family, Tiago receives a few folk Irish tales passed onto him by his grandmother, as well as a marked perception of death

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Guarani word meaning ‘place from which honey springs.’ The plantations originally used slave workers, many of them indigenous. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, although maintaining its connections to agriculture, and remaining a supplier of food to the central areas of Rio de Janeiro (which it still is to this day), Irajá was progressively urbanised and became a lower to middle income neighbourhood. By this time, it was a privileged destination for incoming immigrants, such as Tiago Veiga’s parents. For more information on the urban history of Rio de Janeiro, see: Gerson Brasil, Histórias das Ruas do Rio (Rio de Janeiro: Bem-Te-Vi, 2015); Maurício de A. Abreu, A Evolução Urbana do Rio de Janeiro (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar, 2006).

237 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 35.
and abandonment. Indeed, unable to overcome the death of her first-born baby girl, Mary O’Heary sinks into a state of depression, which renders her unable to take care of Tiago (her second-born) and ultimately leads her to commit suicide. The scene in which Inácio Manuel beholds the body of his dead wife hanging from a beam in the kitchen of their home is especially significant:

Estava a doida pendurada de uma trave pela tira de croché, de olhos esbugalhados, e mantendo intacto o sorriso de sempre. Por baixo dela, divertindo-se a manejar um dos sapatos de pele de crocodilo que tombara do pé da enforcada, Tiago Manuel exibia espantosamente a capacidade da fala que tardara um pouco a chegar, balbuciando o começo daquela estúpida narrativa, ‘The King of Greece was of them, and the King of France, the King of Greece...’

By the time Tiago is sent by his father to Venade, to be raised by his conservative aunts Genoveva and Ifigénia, he is thus (like his father) in practical terms an orphan. More so, as the passage above relates, he is an orphan who had been the first person to discover the body of his dead mother and to take hold of her belongings (the shoe which had fallen from one of her feet). Additionally, Tiago’s experience of loss had prompted him to speak a few words, which we assume from the account are his first, corresponding to a tale that connected him to his mother’s culture. What we find in the decisive moment in the early childhood of Tiago Veiga is therefore a radical experience of rootlessness, associated with the loss of family and with migration, which however does not preclude the persistence of memories and of cultural transmission.

As became apparent from what was said above, the occurrences in Tiago’s life in some ways emulate the ones in his parents’. Likewise, a similar pattern is found in the lives of Tiago Veiga’s children. Like Tiago, his children not only have an absent father, but they also lose their mothers at an early stage in their upbringing, being raised by third parties and leading lives marked

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238 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 44.
239 The *topos* of the orphan is explored repeatedly in the work of Mário Cláudio, in works in which it is almost invariably connected with mobility and its consequences in terms of the complex processes of negotiation of identity on the part of the characters portrayed. In this respect, consider for instance *Orion* (2002) and the narrative ‘Corto’, in *Memórias Secretas* (2018).
by travelling, instability and cultural complexity. Here again is manifested the logic of coincidences which to a great extent characterises the structure of the novel. Moreover, it is important to stress that being without roots, a condition associated in the *Biografia* with being an orphan and an individual on the move, entails at least to some degree being free from constrictions. This may explain in part Tiago’s preoccupation with autonomy and his decision to abandon the two families he fleetingly constitutes, in order to pursue a wandering, nomadic lifestyle designed to fulfil ever changing objectives and plans. Freedom, autonomy, and assertion of individual will, on the one hand, and the desire for cultural indexation and belonging, on the other, are the two extremes that will characterise the life of Tiago Veiga, and which eventually he will not be able to reconcile.

From the very brief presentation above, we begin to see how in the narrative of the childhood and youth of Tiago Veiga, transnational migration is associated with complex processes of identification, established in relation to indexes of space and time. In this context, cultural transmission and memory play a crucial role. Likewise, said circumstances prompt individual expression, which engages precisely with memory. In this chapter, I discuss how these matters are dealt with in the novel, taking as a point of departure a transnational and transcultural framework. The latter has the virtue of shifting the focus from the fixity and sedentarism linked with the nation-state, a construct based on the fiction of one language, culture and territory, to the circulation of people, ideas and objects across transnational spaces pertaining to multiple scales (local, regional, national, transnational) and connected in dynamic and uneven manners. Furthermore and crucially, a transnational approach facilitates the examination of the often multifaceted and contradictory effects of said processes on individuals and communities. On the basis of selected passages is the *Biografia*, I argue that Tiago Veiga is represented in the novel as a mobile subject placed in a border zone of space

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and culture. Said zone is marked by liminal identifications, which favour creativity, but also the development of tensions linked with the anxiety to adjust and accommodate to different spatial and cultural references. As we shall see, in-betweenness, translation, convergence and disjuncture are the markers of Tiago Veiga as a migrant subject.

As might have become apparent by now, the reading of the *Biografia* presented in this chapter is informed by the work which Homi Bhabha developed with respect to the nation-state and identity in relation to spatial displacement and reflectiveness in time characteristic of modernity. Although the concept of hybridity proposed by Bhabha is contentious, on account of its possible links with colonialist discourses, and moreover due to its misuses over the past decades, it provides valuable insights in view of the *Biografia*. For Bhabha, the hybrid subject is characterised by restless strategies of identification occurring in a border zone, between the foreign and the familiar, a third space which Bhabha regards as subversive and productive. In this respect, Bhabha famously claimed that the ‘interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy.’

Furthermore, he stressed, in this space in between, constant re-writing and constant intercultural translation occur; however, no synthesis or amalgamation is achieved as a result of this process, only more translation, the latter equating to renewed and fleeting attempts at articulating identity. One of the problems with this classic account, or at least with the interpretations of the thought of Bhabha up to this day, is the idealization of the creative potential of border thinking and feeling, and the non-recognition of the potentially problematic consequences of the tensions arising from the liminal processes of identification described. More recently, in his analysis of the national and transnational dynamics, Bhabha addressed precisely this point, whilst adding other elements to his argumentation.

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Bhabha stresses that in order to think about transnational mobility, one needs to begin by considering internal mobility within nation-states, as evidenced for instance in the transition from a rural, pre-capitalist societal organization to an urban and capitalist structure. This has the effect of bringing to the forefront the inherently heterogenous and multicentred constitution which nation-states attempt to subsume. For Bhabha, mobile subjects expressed during this period what he calls a migrant consciousness, of which he finds parallels in the present post-migration world. Said consciousness is the product of geographical and ontological mobility and is defined by an anxiety of accommodation to new circumstances, ‘unsettled by cycles of loss and disoriented by processes of social transition and cultural translation,’ and experienced by individuals for whom notions of home and belonging are deeply questioned and ambivalent. Careful to avoid almost completely touching on the notion of hybridity, Bhabha speaks of migration as a ‘borderline condition for both culture and consciousness’ and insists on the idea of translation between cultures and on the creative nature of the dialogue with difference established by individuals on the move. Taking a wide cultural stance and adopting a transnational perspective, Bhabha uses the words circulation, convergence and disjuncture to describe a multicentred geographical and cultural dynamics, marked by incommensurability and ambiguity.

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243 Homi K. Bhabha, ‘On Disciplines and Destinations’, p. 4.
244 For more details on Bhabha’s stance on this matter, see the following quotation: ‘The hermeneutic of the “homeland” reveals the site of domestic affiliation to be a space of iterative and belated return, not a springboard of identitarian authenticity from which cultural narratives of selfhood and statehood must naturally begin as if emerging from a centered point of national origin. [...] The homeland, as I conceive of it, is a destination at which you arrive beset by the anxiety and anticipation of an extraneous geographic consciousness and a contingent sense of cultural history narrated through passages of life shaped by itinerancy and exile—conditions of being that are as vividly present within the internal life-worlds of nations and regions, as they are crucial forces in shaping inter-cultural global relations. An unsettled sense of a “homeland” is not a place of domestic habitation or habituality—no local comforts of home here; no “homeland security” even when you are at home. Anxiety and anticipation, as they dwell together in the homeland, resonate with the uncanny feeling that Heidegger associates with the ontology of Dasein.’ In Homi K. Bhabha, ‘On Disciplines and Destinations’, p. 5.
245 See: ‘Circulation takes a measure of mobility—the movement of languages, ideas, meanings, cultural forms, social systems—as it converges in specific and singular spaces of representation negotiated through a dialogue of difference. Incommensurable customs, disjunctive symbolic structures, itineraries that are diverse and yet proximate, continuities that become contingent over time—these dis-proportionate convergences generate an energy of interdisciplinary circulation.'
We saw how *A Quinta das Virtudes* depicts internal migration and the ‘uneasy transitions and liminal self-identifications’ experienced by characters belonging to the three generations of the family portrayed in the work. *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* follows another route and presents us from the very beginning with a subject defined by transnational mobility and its consequences. The fact that Tiago is born in Brazil and then moves to Venade, which becomes his base for national and international travel, adds to the complexity of the ambiguous dynamics of affiliation to local, regional and transnational references of space and time. Given what was said above, I now turn to the text and focus on the ways in which Tiago Veiga expresses what Bhabha calls a migrant consciousness. As I mentioned above, I argue here that the young Tiago Veiga can be seen to occupy a border area, an in-between space, from which he engages in processes of cultural translation. These amount to restless strategies of negotiation of identity which are evident in the self-reflective stance adopted by the poet and which are furthermore projected onto the Veiga’s first writings. As we shall see, his reflections and writings are designed to define a home and to construct a sense of belonging which however prove irredeemably elusive.

Tiago Veiga liked to present himself as someone whose origins were in the region of Minho, which justifies why he attempted to convince others that he had been born in Castro Laboreiro, and not in Irajá. But the lines between belonging and alienation, travelling and dwelling, place and non-place, are all too often blurred in the *Biografia*, and this attempt on the part of Veiga to define a simple, fixed point of origin, comes across ultimately as a superficial and ineffective ploy. Indeed, the young Veiga grows up divided between seemingly incompatible realities: that of the society and culture of Venade, a small village in Northwestern Portugal, and those of migration and cultural hybridity.

Instead of the binary logic of comparison and connection, we now have a logic of convergence launched by a kinetic burst of energy that, metaphorically, has a certain ballistic tendency. I use the term “ballistic” for the limited purpose of designating a form of motion whose trajectory is shaped by contending and competing forces. [...] The aim of convergence as critique is to track the spatial and temporal territories that open up within, and through, the act of circulation. The iterative dynamics of circulation and convergence reveal lateral meanings and interstitial spaces produced in transit.’ In Homi K. Bhabha, ‘On Disciplines and Destinations’, pp. 8-9.

246 Homi K. Bhabha, ‘On Disciplines and Destinations’, p. 3.
Following Augé, Venade could have been for Tiago an anthropological place, a geographical and social setting steeped in ancestral customs and traditions, passed on from generation to generation, which would have formed the axis of the poet’s identity. However, things would not be that simple and even as a boy reflectiveness, detachment and isolation always find a way of creeping into Veiga’s life.

Veiga’s relationship with the rural culture of Venade is mediated by Felício, a deaf-mute servant of the household, and it is marked by Veiga’s yearning to understand and to belong to that space, which is however upended by his awareness of a barrier that frustrates his wishes. This is clearly discernible in three episodes related early on in the Biografia, whose very narrative structure contributes to highlighting the reflective register prevalent in the novel. Indeed, as we shall see, the accounts are based on letters written by the poet, who depicts and reads his journey, and they are in turn filtered by the biographer’s own voice and perspective.

Soon after arriving in Venade, Tiago is taken under the wing of Felício, who guides the boy in his explorations of the natural surroundings of the estate. For Tiago, Felício enacts a collective unconscious linked with that place, holding within him secrets of which he is not fully aware, and which Tiago himself barely grasps. Proximity and distancing become the distinctive features of Tiago Veiga’s relationship with the local space and culture, a fact which is expressed in Tiago’s attitude of external observation of the reality which Felício interprets and attempts to introduce to the boy.

The passage in which Tiago discovers a salamander in the water trough, and his subsequent interactions with Felício, illustrate these points: ‘Tiago enamorara-se daquele achado com a presciência de quem assiste à lenta revelação de uma cadeia de segredos, iniciada em tempos imemorais, e desenvolvida em sentidos que sucessivamente se enriqueciam.’ At the age of six, Tiago intuitively perceives the salamander as a cultural symbol that condenses meanings and secrets accumulated throughout the ages, secrets which he would later associate with an ancient people that had inhabited the

247 Marc Augé, Non-Places: Introduction to an Anthropology of Supermodernity, p. 43.
248 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 51.
region. Aware of the boy’s fascination with the animal, Felício enacts a scene that would make a great impression on Tiago:

Numa bela manhã Felício adiantou-se, muito sério, tomou o seu menino pela mão, e conduziu-o a uma das lojas situadas por baixo do alpendre. Havia ali faias dispersas, um carro de bois sem serventia, e montículos de tojo, destinados ao enxugo da fossa. O surdo-mudo encarou o pequeno com pupilas que chispavam na escuridão, retirou do bolso o animalejo, levou-o à boca, e começou a devorá-lo num vagar de pesadelo, e com o sangue e as vísceras a escorrerem-lhe pelo pescoço, primeiro a cauda, o ventre depois, e até que lhe ficou, saindo-lhe por entre os beiços, aquela cabeçorra de verdadeiro sáurio, de olhos escancarados de pavor.

As the poet explains in a letter written to the biographer and quoted in the *Biografia*, the event described in the passage revealed to him the connection between humanity and animality, in his view the source of both human glory and misery, and likewise the curiosity that all humans have for their surroundings. Coincidentally, curiosity and fascination come across as the dominant features of the young Tiago’s attitude towards this world, which he observes as a spectator, as if a film separated him from the realities he encounters, which remain in essence secret and hidden.

A habit of Tiago’s noticeably evidences the contrast between his external gaze and Felício’s unconscious interpretation or enactment of this world. The poet often described how as a child he had observed Felício in his sleep, imagining what he might have been dreaming of:

Tiago Veiga haveria de repetir frequentemente que, observando Felício, quando o mesmo não se apercebia do exame a que o sujeitavam, o menino da Casa dos Anjos que então era pressentia no surdo-mudo aqueles conhecimentos que os poderes ocultos reservam a quem não pode formulá-los. O criado adormecia, encostado a um carvalho, as moscas pousavam-lhe tranquilamente no rosto suado, e a maravilha dos segredos que guardava surgia de forma palpável na tarde de Junho.

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249 ‘Surgia-me aquele bicho terrível, traçado a fogo, em cima do acampamento de um povo que, mais tarde, eu identificaria com os Citas, alastrando na noite – até explodir em milhares de centelhas, que subiam ao céu estrelado.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 51.
251 Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 54.
As the excerpt shows, Tiago wished he had access to the mind and dreams, arguably to the worldview of Felício, but the scene depicted highlights how impossible it is for him to achieve this goal, as the immigrant boy is left to speculate on secrets ultimately inscrutable to him, and discernible only in Felício’s facial expressions which Tiago attempts to read and examine. A similar logic of proximity and distancing is apparent later, when the biographer tells of Felício and Tiago’s expeditions in search of mushrooms, which in the end amount to a somewhat frustrated initiation rite:

[Felício] Levava à boca as tranches delgadíssimas, e trincava-as numa consciência igual à do escravo-provador que houvesse abraçado com paixão o encargo de defender o amo de toda a suspeita de veneno. Só depois as passava ao seu pupilo, o qual introduzido assim em mistérios que adivinhava, mas de que não retinha a chave, se ia prestando à cerimónia com o espanto tranquilo dos que progridem em sabedoria.²⁵²

Although Tiago was learning with Felício to understand the context he lived in, unlike his companion and first master, he did not yet hold the key to the mysteries of nature, which he only tentatively and partly devised (‘adivinhava’). The episode meaningfully ends with Felício stopping Tiago from eating a poisonous fruit, a fact which underscores precisely the boy’s eccentric condition in relation to the space he inhabited, a status which is furthermore compounded by the social isolation Tiago experiences, deriving from his standing and origins.

The uneasiness caused by Tiago’s ambivalent borderline situation is explicitly related in the novel with his engagement with memory and with his first poetic creations. In this respect, the idea of circulation and reinvention of memory across geographical and social spaces becomes crucial. This is a fundamental aspect of Veiga’s trajectory which I will deal with in detail from a transnational memory studies perspective in the following chapter.²⁵³ In this

²⁵² Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 56.
introductory analysis, I would like to highlight that in the Biografia transnational and transcultural memory operates on at least two different but often interrelated scales: the first corresponds to familial memory, which in the case of Tiago Veiga quite evidently subverts national borders and unites incongruously Veiga’s complex familial cultural heritage: of people, customs and traditions both Portuguese, Irish and Brazilian. These references often take the form of ghosts or familial hauntings, with whom Veiga creatively engages in order to negotiate his place in the world. Alternatively, there is in the Biografia another complementary idea of memory, relating to a more extended temporal perspective. In this case, memory is seen as being present and reinvented in practices which compositely unite disparate elements, which in turn are the result of the circulation of culture through different places and at different times. This understanding is apparent for instance in Tiago Veiga’s representation of the behaviour of Felício as an expression of latent cultural strata characteristic of the society of Venade, which we saw just now. Furthermore, I would like to suggest that this vision of culture as an accumulation of memory through time, and of all places as inherently multicultural, is one of the many Romantic reminiscences present in the Biografia. If in general Romantic concepts are retrieved by Tiago Veiga in the novel as a means to deal with his situation and with notions of detachment, isolation and lack of ability to intervene in the world, in this instance they serve to highlight the heterogenous, multifaceted and constructed nature of all cultural identities.

I now examine two examples of the ways in which the young Tiago Veiga engages with familial memory and how this filters into his ideas about and practice of writing. The first of these corresponds to an episode related in yet another letter written by the poet. In the letter, addressed to Jerónimo Paiva de Lima Sagres on 18 April 1969, Veiga first mentions the sensual relation which as a child he maintained with nature. In this case, in a scene evocative of Proust’s madeleine, he describes how the aroma of the figs he ate after the Sunday lunches reminded him of the stream he had bathed in and of a bird he had seen soaring on the sky. He then proceeds to tell of the traditional rhymes
the women sang as they wove on the family loom, and which he heard while lying half asleep in bed. After this, he remarks:

Mas como que escavando fundo, no meu passado de menino de sete anos, crescia o relato da avó irlandesa, dentro de mim, fixados miraculosamente, quando tinha eu um ano; e era a batalha que se travara em Finnrigh, The White Strand.\textsuperscript{254} Lutavam as palavras inglesas, com as palavras de Portugal, na perpétua redondilha:

\begin{quote}
Em Finnrigh, lugar do Outeiro,
So remote, e em Strand,
Há um bush de loureiro,
Dominating quem lá ande.
[...]
\end{quote}

Teria sido tudo isto uma raiz, uma toada das estrelas, que me acompanharia, até então, e que o Jorge de Sena me confidenciou achar-se contida, no caso dele, naquele poema da Pedra Filosofal, intitulado ‘Para o Aniversário do Poeta’, que começa assim:

Não passam, Poeta, os anos sobre ti?\textsuperscript{255}

The quality of the poem created by the young Veiga, or the lack thereof, is not important for the current discussion. What I would like to highlight is the fact that, as a seven-year-old, Tiago felt the urge to retrieve, or more precisely to excavate from his past the memories he had carried to Venade of the sagas his Irish grandmother had told him, and that said urge arose while he was half-asleep, and presumably was able to access and express the ideas in his subconscious more easily. We are here in the realm of memories and of the unconscious, which, as we shall see momentarily, is associated in the \textit{Biografia} with the resurrection of dead bodies and with ghosts. Moreover, a clear bond is established in the passage between the process of excavating memories, as they are retained by and emerge from the subconscious, and

\textsuperscript{254} In the passage, Tiago Veiga re-invents the Irish folk prose narrative \textit{Cath Finntrágha}, known in English as \textit{The Battle of Ventry Strand} (or White Strand). Set precisely in Ventry, in present day Republic of Ireland, \textit{Cath Finntrágha} (Finntrágha meaning literally ‘fair strand’) is an early Modern prose narrative belonging to the Finn Cycle, which dates probably to the 15th century, although apparently relying on older material. It relates the deeds of the warrior-hero Fionn Mac Cumhail (Finn McCool) and his Fianna, a band of itinerant warriors charged with the protection of Ireland from invasion by Dáire, the so called king of the great world.

\textsuperscript{255} Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, p. 53.
the creation of poetry. So much so that creating poetry becomes synonymous with retrieving and reinventing the past. Finally, it is important to note that, while the poem is the result of the fusion between the Irish and Portuguese folk traditions, this process is not represented as seamless, taking instead the form of a struggle (‘Lutavam as palavras inglesas, com as palavras de Portugal…’), a fact which, following Bhabha, signals the unresolvable tensions deriving from mobility and displacement, and informing hybridity and migrant consciousness.

If one can argue that the passages of the *Cath Finntrágha* which Tiago Veiga retains are a second-hand manifestation of the ghosts of Tiago Veiga’s mother and grandmother, a fundamental episode in the poet’s childhood more clearly engages with the imagery of death and resurrection of the past, once again relating these to the act of writing. In mid-1909, after a strange spot of humidity appeared on one of the slabs of the floor of the chapel of the family estate, a stone was lifted, and a coffin drawn out. The latter immediately fell to pieces, revealing the perfectly preserved body of a boy aged around five. At the sight of such a beautiful dead body, Tiago’s aunt Ifigénia commented:

‘Deve ser o nosso priminho Donato, de quem nos falava às vezes o Avozinho, e que, ao morrer, causou tamanho paixão a sua mãe que a infeliz terminaria por se ir deitar ao rio Coura à beira da ponte de Rubiães’, declarou Ifigénia, apertando na sua a mãozita de Tiago Manuel que se achegava muito a ela. Não concluíra porém a frase, e já se desregavam as feições do cadáver, mais os seus dedos delicadíssimos, e se desvaneciam os tecidos de que estava vestido.256

These were therefore the remains of a family ancestor, the boy Donato. The fact that his body and clothes turned to dust as they were exposed to the elements constitutes a radical illustration of the process of ruination, converting Donato’s body into a symbol for the ambiguity of memory resulting from its frail persistence, from its precarious and creative reinvention of material which is both present and absent. Moreover, Tiago Veiga asserted that this episode had constituted the main inspiration for his concept and

practice of poetry, which he viewed as an act of resurrection of the past (and, as we shall see, arguably of himself):

O poeta acreditava que radicaria no sucedido o seu pendor para conceber o acto poético como escavação da arqueologia, algo que se lhe antolhava como arriscada empresa, situada a meio caminho entre uma determinada modalidade de ressurreição, vivida antecipadamente, e uma espécie de fracasso da coragem, experimentado no confronto com o medo terminal.²⁵⁷

As the passage underlines, Donato evokes contradictory ideas of resurrection and unfulfillment, the two extremes of Tiago Veiga’s life, which (again evoking Romantic guidelines) is defined primarily in aesthetic terms. Furthermore, we may add, this confrontation with failure and eventually with death will at least in part explain Veiga’s suicide. It is therefore fitting that one of Veiga’s first poems, written in 1913, was dedicated to Donato and elaborated on the passage described above. Indeed, as Veiga had repeatedly stated, Donato had become a ghost who had haunted him since the day of his exhumation, inspiring his work and at the same time threatening to extinguish his creativity, which is the same as saying his life, by blowing the candle on the budding poet’s bedside table.²⁵⁸

There are commonalities between the concept of writing professed by Tiago Veiga and statements by the empirical author Mário Cláudio, in which he valued the process of excavation of memory, implicitly linking the latter to his own writing process.²⁵⁹ Moreover, as I noted above, Cláudio’s choice of first

²⁵⁷ Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 63.
²⁵⁸ Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 63.
²⁵⁹ In 2019, answering a question on cultural identity, individual and collective, Cláudio declared: ‘Houve uma altura em que era de mau tom falar em portugalidade: achava-se que tinha a ver com opções nacionalistas, com inclinações identitárias. A verdade é que, quanto a mim, não tem. É simplesmente uma escavação de raízes, uma arqueologia das raízes que se faz através da tentativa de descoberta da portugalidade. Por isso é que acho muito interessante as pessoas investigarem as suas genealogias. Muitas vezes pensa-se que a investigação da genealogia é uma coisa snobe e pretensiosa que tem a ver com a descoberta dos brasões. Tem a ver com o que as pessoas foram. O facto de eu ter antepassados castelhanos, por exemplo, permite-me alimentar a possibilidade de parentes meus, mais ou menos chegados, terem andado a combater com os astecas nas tropas do Cortez. Era muito possível, porque era ali a área de recrutamento dessas tropas. À luz dos nossos conhecimentos e da nossa cultura atual, eram assassinos, impiedosos. Eu tive, provavelmente, antepassados desses. Como tive antepassados ligados a Santa Teresa de Ávila, o outro lado. Pensar nisso leva-nos a reflectir sobre nós próprios.’ Later, upon being asked about what he thought the latter facts said about him, Cláudio further elaborated on the question of memory, in the following
name arguably constitutes an act of resurrection or at least of partial preservation of the memory of an ancestor deceased in his infancy. In any case, my interest here is not in coincidences or biographical projections, but in stressing the link established in the *Biografia* between geographical mobility, cultural hybridity and an obsession with memory and its uses. Furthermore, I look to enquire into the relation between past, present and future established in the novel. How can we best interpret the ghosts and ruins so very present in Veiga’s imaginary, and so clearly important in his worldview and work? In more general terms, does the novel evidence a nostalgic outlook, or does it propose positive ways of conceiving and using memory? It is not possible now, on the basis of only a few passages referring to the poet’s childhood, to present a convincing argument in this respect, and indeed I elaborate further on the imaginaries of ruins and ghosts in the following chapter. What the passages allow us to conclude though is that the conditions of geographical and cultural mobility described above generate in the young Tiago Veiga doubts about his identity and favour complex processes of identification, in the context of which memory is artistically retrieved and reinvented. In the case of Donato specifically, the ghost plays a productive role in the life and writings of Tiago Veiga, as it inspires a concept of poetry that will be to a great degree fruitful; at the same time however it signals the frustration and unfulfillment that will eventually come to define the poet’s life.

Like in *A Quinta das Virtudes*, in the *Biografia* heritage and memory are thus critically surveyed and assessed, emerging in the form of ghosts, but also of ruins and of the heterogenous *strata* of culture accumulated by individuals and communities. I would like to maintain that Tiago Veiga engages with these elements in order to reflect about the past but mostly to invent future possibilities. I shall analyse in detail the context, process, modalities and

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consequences of said engagement later. For now, I would like to focus on the issue of cosmopolitanism, the consideration of which will provide the backdrop for an assessment and understanding of how the dynamics between travel and dwelling, digression and return, belonging and alienation, assertion of autonomy and search for identification are developed in the *Biografia*.

**Conquering the Globe: On Semiperipheral Cosmopolitanism**

We saw earlier how Tiago Veiga is a migrant who lives in a border zone, circulating between different spaces and cultures, and who consequently needs to negotiate his identity in reference to multiple and changing attachments. How to live productively in this space in-between is perhaps the fundamental question posed in the text, one for which there will be multiple answers. Compounded with this issue however are the interrelated matters of provincialism and cosmopolitanism. They correspond to a thread that runs through the *Biografia* and which has implications both at an individual level and at a broader scale, concerning an assessment of the position of Portuguese culture in the context of globalization, and in reference mainly to Europe. In this sense, the more general discussion on migration across transnational spaces at several scales is here refocused and acquires a more specific dimension, relating to the challenges faced by Veiga as a Portuguese individual located in a semiperipheral position in the world-system.²⁶₀

In this section, I examine the ways in which the subject of cosmopolitanism is addressed in the *Biografia*. I explore how ideas of world travel first emerge in the teenage years of Tiago Veiga, and how internal migration to Lisbon enables the young poet to engage with the first generation of Portuguese modernists, the generation of *Orpheu*, and with their contradictory cosmopolitan imagery. I suggest that, while reinterpreting the cosmopolitan discourse of *Orpheu*, Tiago Veiga searches for ways in which to relate contrasting realities (the rural and the cosmopolitan), in what would

²⁶₀ For more details, see footnote 49 above.
amount to a desired but never accomplished form of rooted cosmopolitanism, conceived and practiced beyond nationalism and patriotism. In more general terms, I argue that the *Biografia* is inscribed in the nineteenth century discussion on the relationship between Portugal and Europe. I conclude that the *Biografia* contributes to the reassessment of past discourses on Portuguese cosmopolitanism, but that it also engages in a discussion about the present and the future, reflecting about the complex challenges posed to particular individuals and societies, regarded in the novel as multifaceted and heterogenous, by globalization and by the threat of cultural homogenization which they experience under the aegis and pressures of the global market economy.

Before beginning my analysis of the *Biografia* in relation to the matters above though, I would first like to set out a working definition of cosmopolitanism, and to briefly mention some of the main issues which any discussion of the concept of cosmopolitanism raises, highlighting the ones that may prove useful in view of the interpretation of the novel.

Whilst globalization designates the circulation of people, ideas, goods and services within an uneven framework of economic and financial structures and relations at multiple scales, it can be argued that cosmopolitanism or more accurately cosmopolitanisms propose models of conviviality, which vary according to diverse epistemological, ethical and inherently political stances. In this context, the debate on cosmopolitanism inevitably includes the consideration of the dynamics between local and global references, the particular and the universal, the core and its peripheries, selfhood and otherness. In this respect, Eduardo Mendieta stated:

> […] cosmopolitanism is the dialectical interplay between singularity and universality, placedness and displacement, rootedness and rootlessness, home and homelessness, stationariness and mobility. One is never cosmopolitan without setting out from some locality, whether it be spatial or temporal. One is never simply rooted, localized without that indexicality being deciphered with reference to some view of the global map.\(^{261}\)

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\(^{261}\) Eduardo Mendieta, 'From imperial to dialogical cosmopolitanism', *Ethics & Global Politics*, 2.3, (2009), 241-258 (242).
According to a commonly accepted narrative, the modern notion of cosmopolitanism originates in the discourse of the Enlightenment and is illustrated in the cosmopolitan view articulated by Kant, which Mendieta characterises as imperial. For Mendieta the thought of Kant is exemplary of how imperial cosmopolitanism operates by establishing a hierarchy of epistemological, ethical and political values, which it then imposes onto the world. Additionally, he argues, this is a naïve form of cosmopolitanism, that is, oblivious to its own material conditions of existence, a fact which is often coupled with a self-righteous affirmation of its own biases.

The notion of cosmopolitanism was reinterpreted and in fact re-founded by contemporary thinkers, as they grappled with the increasing complexity and contradictions inherent to globalization. Authors such as Martha Nussbaum, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Ulrich Beck, Seyla Benhabib, Walter Mignolo and Judith Butler, among others, have all in different ways contributed to the development of models of conviviality which are reflective and critical. This is not the time or the place to assess each individual contribution to the present discussion on cosmopolitanism, however some common ideas should be noted. These new proposed models of conviviality are meant to be reflective of their own stance and material locatedness (epistemological and ethical) and tend to stress the importance of conceiving a universal that includes the particular. This means that ideally the particular should act as a critical element with respect to the universal, which it continuously and to different degrees suspends. These are ultimately rooted, situated models of cosmopolitanism.

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based on constant negotiation, which should include non-hegemonic voices in reference to the global capitalist system.\textsuperscript{264}

Taking into account the brief discussion above and likewise the analysis of the \textit{Biografia} in the previous section, we can conclude that from the very beginning of his life, Tiago Veiga is a cosmopolitan subject who needs to find ways of navigating productively the challenges raised by the uneven dynamics between singularity and universality, placedness and displacement, rootedness and rootlessness, home and homelessness, as Mendieta put it. As would inevitably be the case, Veiga engages with these matters from a situated perspective: that of an individual who grew up in Portugal, a country in whose cultural landscape the notion of a marked detachment with respect to central and Northern Europe increasingly gained traction since at least the eighteenth century and the first generation of ‘estrangeirados.’ The latter reflected a general awareness of the country’s semiperipheral place in a world-system which, via the navigations of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and through a peculiar interpretation of empire, it had fleetingly contributed to defining.

Boaventura de Sousa Santos in particular has explored this subject over the past decades.\textsuperscript{265} In ‘Between Prospero and Caliban: Colonialism, ...

\textsuperscript{264} Walter Mignolo regards the global capitalist system as the latest manifestation of the colonial/modernity complex and conceives dialogical cosmopolitanism as a tool to productively subvert said system. For a summary of Mignolo’s stance, see: ‘Critical and dialogic cosmopolitanism as a regulative principle demands yielding generously (“convivially” said Vitoria; “friendly” said Kant) toward diversity as a universal and cosmopolitan project in which everyone participates instead of “being participated.” Such a regulative principle shall replace and displace the abstract universal cosmopolitan ideals (Christian, liberal, socialist, neoliberal) that had helped (and continue to help) to hold together the modern/colonial world system and to preserve the managerial role of the North Atlantic. And here is when the local histories and global designs come into the picture. While cosmopolitanism was thought out and projected from particular local histories (that became the local history of the modern world system) positioned to devise and enact global designs, other local histories in the planet had to deal with those global designs that were, at the same time, abstract universals (Christian, liberal, or socialist). For that reason, cosmopolitanism today has to become border thinking, critical and dialogic, from the perspective of those local histories that had to deal all along with global designs. Diversality should be the relentless practice of critical and dialogical cosmopolitanism rather than a blueprint of a future and ideal society projected from a single point of view (that of the abstract universal) that will return us (again!) to the Greek paradigm and to European legacies (Žižek, 1998).’ In Walter Mignolo, ‘The Many Faces of Cosmo-polis: Border Thinking and Critical Cosmopolitanism’, p. 744.

\textsuperscript{265} As noted earlier, one of his first forays into this matter occurred in the mid-80s: Boaventura de Sousa Santos, ‘Estado e sociedade na semiperiferia do sistema mundial: o caso português,’ Análise Social, XXI, (1985), 869-901.
Postcolonialism, and Inter-Identity’, Sousa Santos examined the semiperipheral condition of Portugal with respect to Europe in reference to the Portuguese colonial system.266 According to Sousa Santos, said condition would have been evident in the inability which the Portuguese had shown to assume the civilizing role of Prospero. Instead, they would have always been situated in a border area between failed Prospero and Caliban.267 More recently, in ‘Tales of Being and Not Being’,268 Sousa Santos related the weight of the past in Portuguese culture (what he calls the problem of the past in contemporary Portuguese society) precisely with the country’s semiperipheral condition in the world-system, experienced in what were perceived as moments of both rejection (in the late-nineteenth century) and acceptance (in the wake of the Carnation Revolution) by Europe. The search for the past equates in Sousa Santos’s view to the search for deficiencies which might explain the distance from the core, conducted in the context of the acceptance of hegemonic norms. For Sousa Santos, Portugal’s doubly peripheral status (in relation to the European core and its neo-colonial projects) is also evident in the contrasting attitudes of adherence and resistance to progress which he identifies as characteristic of Portuguese society, a society which in his view effectively traverses a time-in-between times and a space in-between spaces, with respect to the European and the colonial zones. Sousa Santos’s perspective is somewhat partial, as indeed many other reasons may be provided to explain the obsession with the past evident in Portuguese society in the wake of the Carnation Revolution and more recently of the sovereign debt crisis and subsequent austerity measures imposed by Brussels. An assessment of wider social and cultural processes, relating for instance to late


267 In this respect, Ana Paula Ferreira critically signalled the fact that the reading proposed by Sousa Santos is based on an established view of ‘lusofonia’, as designating a ‘time-space of official Portuguese language’ across a ‘vast multi-secular contact zone involving the Portuguese people and other peoples of America, Asia, and Africa’. See: Ana Paula Ferreira, ‘Specificity Without Exceptionalism: Towards a Critical Lusophone Postcoloniality’, in Postcolonial Theory and Lusophone Literatures, ed. by Paulo de Medeiros (Utrecht: Portuguese Studies Centre, University of Utrecht, 2007), pp. 21-40.

modernity and globalization, may also at least in part explain this trend. In addition, even if the rapport of Portugal to Europe and Empire constitutes one of the core elements of this discussion, it is not self-evident that the search for a flaw or shortcoming, with its implicitly self-deprecatory implications, is at work here. More productive and positive stances may also be found in the Portuguese cultural production, as I seek to demonstrate in my reading of the work of Mário Cláudio. Indeed, the retrospective stance prevalent in the *Biografia*, relating to an assessment of discourses on Portuguese cosmopolitanism mediated by the character of Tiago Veiga, is arguably coupled with an evaluation of the present and with the search for future possibilities, as the novel enquires into models of conviviality that might be effective in dealing with the contradictions signalled by Mendieta and so very present in the novel.

I now turn to the *Biografia*, and I would like to begin with the end. Towards the end of the novel, the biographer becomes incensed by a letter he receives from Tiago Veiga, in which the poet expresses a cosmopolitan view which the biographer labelled as characteristic of a provincial subject. In this instance, Veiga voices a deprecatory opinion with respect to Portugal and likewise an apparently acritical positive view of Europe. At the end of his life, it is Veiga who positions himself along the two extremes of provincialism and cosmopolitanism, when he gloomily declares:

Não sou daqui, nem de parte alguma, desisti de simbolizar a ruralidade que a dinamização cultural extinguiu, nunca ascendi ao cosmopolitismo para que me julgava talhado, e no que respeitava a poeta, condição única a que poderia aspirar, ‘horseman, pass by.’

These are the words of an individual who, having lived divided between contrasting spatial and cultural references, feels he had failed to accomplish anything of relevance in his life. As a consequence, he had ended up culturally

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269 See: ‘Informou-me apenas por carta da sua resolução de vender três bouças em Carreiros, e anunciou-me a vontade que entretinha de arejar as suas vistas, inquinadas pelo “sarro português”. Começava a enfadar-me todavia aquele cosmopolitismo de provinciano, e lembro-me de lhe ter proposto em resposta, e com alguma insolência, que gozasse o que lhe competia, não esperando de uma Europa cada vez menos internacional o que lhe ia escasseando da caixa respiratória.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 581.

and existentially lost and detached, a condition which in Veiga’s statement is implicitly linked to his shortcomings as an author. However, one should ask, how and why does Veiga reach this state of despair, when in reality his life begins with such high hopes? As will become clear, this outcome is due to Veiga’s failure to situate himself and to bridge effectively the rural and cosmopolitan, the local and the global, tradition and innovation, the past and the future, his contrasting desires for autonomy and attachment. Or, at the very least, this state of affairs is the consequence of the fact that Veiga did not have the clarity of mind that would have enabled him to follow through with the interesting paths he often initiated.

The second stage in the life of Tiago Veiga is particularly important in order to understand his localized engagement with cosmopolitanism. During this period, notions of imaginary and idealized world travel emerge. These are in turn permeated by an ambiguous nostalgia for local attachment and are integrated into what I would like to call Veiga’s life cycles.

As I mentioned earlier, the cycles in Veiga’s life generally correspond to a sequence beginning with frustration and slumber, generally coinciding with more or less prolonged stays in Venade, which are followed by moments of resurrection, associated with new projects and with travel, the latter being understood as an escape which favours self-discovery. Here we see surfacing again the clear contrast between the rural and the cosmopolitan, the local and the global, digression and return, which will mark Veiga’s trajectory, although it must be said that the relation between these extremes is often reconsidered and understood in more nuanced fashion.

The first cycle, which opens up the prospect of imaginary and real travel, occurs early on in the narrative. At the age of 11, Tiago had decided to move to Braga, where he would attend a religious school. But, being dissatisfied with his choice, he begins to imagine new projects in new places, by which the young Veiga would be able to discover and express his true self. In this respect, and while affording his first reading of Veiga’s poems and trajectory, the biographer states:

> Insinuava-se assim o que haveria de se converter em traço dominante de toda uma personalidade, a implantação das convicções em solo
prevalecentemente estético, aproveitando-as depois como alicerce das teorias de vida que lhe facultassem o giro pelo mundo. A imagem de um Portugal desacertado com os respectivos propósitos, cambaleante como os magalas broncos que ao domingo à tardinha regressavam à caserna, avantajava-se-lhe como pretexto a um empenhamento de auto-revelação.271

At this stage, the representations of slumber and travel constructed in the text are quite dramatic and vivid. Indeed, after imagining his father (in the guise of a threatening turk) chastising him for his decision to become a priest, Tiago is shown having another imaginative digression, as he lies in bed in his small room: ‘Deitou-se por cima da colcha, e inteiramente no escuro, e eis que se lhe descerrou por baixo do corpo uma eira vazia, e ali se achava ele, nu e transido de frio, e à medida que adormecia desprendiam-se das árvores as folhas daquele Outono agreste, sepultando-o numa tumba de que jamais haveria ressurreição.’272 Like many poets, Tiago thinks through images. In this case, they relate to isolation, frailty, autumnal decay and to a deathly slumber from which the teenager believes there will be no resurrection. However, resurrection does eventually come, and as often occurs in Veiga’s biography, it is brought about by a guide and associated with the idea of travel.

And so Tiago meets an elderly Cruz Teixeira (an atheist and freemason counsellor), who becomes his second guide and offers him a window into the wider world. The vague exotic stories which Cruz Teixeira tells Tiago have the effect of inducing in the boy the desire to conquer the globe (‘…o voo dos ímpetos da conquista do Globo.’273) and lead him to take the decision to quit his studies:

Pelo termo do ano lectivo de 1913-14 estava tomada a decisão do jovem. Desistiria dos percursos teológicos, iria saborear o chocolate do México, ou o mazagrá de Mombaça, viajando de aeroplano, se necessário, mas inteiramente só, e sem o rebanho dos seminaristas negros, e completamente broncos, à sua volta. Ao participar tal resolução ao conselheiro, recebeu por resposta um rasgado elogio, e este aviso transmitido em tom quase sério, ‘Não diga a ninguém que fui eu quem o influenciou porque não fui, e se precisar de mapas, de binóculos, ou de livros, para as suas empresas, já sabe onde deve ir

271 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 77.
272 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 77.
273 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 81.
The excerpt encapsulates important aspects of Veiga’s mindset and demeanour. First, his childish belief that travelling will somehow automatically provide him with new opportunities and life prospects, perhaps with a new identity, however superficial his attitude may be; second, it highlights how Tiago would like to see himself as an individual detached from the crowds, hence his option to travel entirely by himself; and third, the passage shows how before engaging in new travels and projects, the protagonist feels he must return to Venade, in order to reflect on the destiny he should choose. The use of the verb ‘to choose’, and its association with a reflective stance, is crucial here, signalling that, even at this early age, Tiago Veiga sees himself as an isolated individual who feels he needs to decide on his path and to think of ways to begin his life anew.

From one guide to another, Cruz Teixeira introduces Tiago Veiga by letter to Bernardino Machado, then president of the Portuguese Republic. It is under his wings (‘Sob as asas do moscardo mesureiro’) that Veiga’s contradictory provincial cosmopolitanism comes into full force. Tiago Veiga’s stay in Venade, which precedes his encounter with Machado, is marked by contradictory feelings. The not yet adult poet wanders the countryside, alone, remembering his childhood walks with Felício, but nostalgia is overcome by discomfort and anticipation of the future. The lack of purpose and the fear of becoming stranded in the small rural town, as well as Veiga’s high hopes are condensed in the following passage: ‘A imagem de uma barca que encalhara nos pinhais do Alto Minho assaltava-o de quando em quando, mas logo a afugentava, imaginando um destino de êxitos pessoais que as tias, fixadas na rotina de o mi mar com toda a casta de tagatés, como que iam adiando sine

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274 Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, pp. 82-3.
275 Bernardino Machado (born in Rio de Janeiro in 1851, and deceased in Oporto in 1944), was president of the Portuguese first Republic on two occasions. Machado first became president in 1915, succeeding Manuel Teixeira Gomes, and remained in office until 1917, when a coup d’état led by Sidónio Pais removed him from power and forced him into exile. Later, in 1925, he again became president, however he was removed from office only a year later, in the wake of the military coup of 28 May 1926, which spelled the beginning of a military dictatorship that paved the way to the creation of the ‘Estado Novo.’
The excerpt introduces for the first time the **topos** of maritime travel, which will become recurrent in the novel as Veiga engages with modernist aesthetics. Likewise, it highlights another idea recurrent in the *Biografia*, that is, that throughout his life Veiga constantly postpones the fulfilment of his potential.

Following the logic of constant renewal that entails at least to some degree an elimination of the past, the protagonist’s first visit to Bernardo Machado is meaningfully represented as a turning point which, in the narrator’s words, determined the archive of the past and opened a book of blank pages on which Tiago would write his future. Thus Tiago Veiga moves to Lisbon as part of the president’s entourage, which provides him with an insight into the wider world or, as the narrator puts it, a terrace from which the young poet was able to contemplate the universe.

Veiga’s worldview at this time is very much informed by his adherence to the aesthetics of Modernism, to which the poet is introduced by his colleague António Bernardo Sequeira. In this regard, the imagery of maritime travel in particular becomes fundamental to Veiga’s thought process during this period. So much so that the young poet becomes obsessed with Álvaro de Campos’ ‘Maritime Ode’ and Arthur Rimbaud’s ‘Drunken Boat’, adopting the ode’s verse ‘Ter a audácia ao vento dos panos das velas!’ as his motto and major source of inspiration.

Veiga, who by this time wished to become a ‘poeta-marujo’, interprets in a very perceptive if slightly superficial manner the semiperipheral cosmopolitan worldview of the generation of *Orpheu*, especially as it is expressed in the ‘Maritime Ode’, a fact which is reflected in both his imaginative digressions and in his poetry.

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276 Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 86.
277 ‘Tiago Manuel desceu por isso a Mantelães com o natural embaraço a que se adiciona a curiosidade irreprimível, e pressentiu, ao tocar a sineta que desencadeava a arremetida dos caes ladradores, a absoluta certeza de dobrar uma dessas esquinas da vida que, determinando o arquivo de um passado, descerram as folhas em branco de um livro que o porvir preencherá com um texto de rigor inalterável.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 87.
278 ‘Considerando-se sob as asas do insecto de casaca e cartola que ascendera à mais alta magistratura da Nação, não retirava disso porém qualquer laivo de arrogância, mas apenas o direto de acesso a um terraço donde pudesse contemplar mais largamente o Universo.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 98.
Two passages illustrate the digressions of the young Veiga. The first occurs as a reaction to the task he is given, of organizing incoming and outgoing official mail, which Veiga cannot help reading:

A tarefa proporcionava-lhe contudo como que uma espreitadela para o largo mundo, ou para aquilo que ele supunha sê-lo, um carrossel de emoções esparsas, convergindo numa rede que o estonteava, e se tornava ofuscante à inextinguível luz de uma metrópole de fantasia. Percorriam-na velocíssimas composições, transportando uma multidão sem poiso certo, e quem quer que se postasse como estátua na gare de uma estação electrificada apenas avistaria o brilho de um lenço de cetim, ou o desenho hirto de uma aigrette, rumando a uma qualquer capital de Europa desenfreada.

The passage activates the common imagery of the metropolis, related to trains and electricity, speed and movement, to multitudes of people, as well as to the sophistication signified by the pieces of clothing mentioned. But importantly, although Tiago lives in Lisbon, this is the representation of a vague city which is the product of imagination, of the creative investment on the part of the poet, which is arguably inspired by his reading of the poetry of Álvaro de Campos. As such, the description is evocative not only of modernist texts, but of modernist paintings, hence the direct reference to the contours of objects (‘o desenho hirto de uma aigrette’). Moreover, these sophisticated and anonymous people, whose faces Veiga cannot see, are travelling towards a random European capital seemingly far away, which is characterised as unbridled (‘desenfreada’), in contrast to Lisbon, one can assume. The passage therefore expresses a cosmopolitanism aware of its own non-cosmopolitan stance, or alternatively of its semiperipheral location. From this position, the poet must fantasise, desire a world which is not there and which lives only in his imagination:

Descortinou então dentro de si aquele grande oceano à saída de Lisboa, navegado por paquetes que rumavam às sete partidas do mundo, e onde seguiam multidões de passageiros, envoltos nas suas mantas de deuche, e eternamente saudosos do que fora, ou daquilo que nunca haveria de ser. ‘Ter a audácia ao vento dos panos das velas!’ converter-se-ia na última frase murmurada antes de adormecer, na primeira que lhe marcava o despertar, e na que lhe correspondia ao...
Veiga’s dreams are distinctly modernist, the boldness and energy of his attitude being conveyed by the verse of the ode. But at the same time, they are tinged by a sense of undefinition and vagueness, the threat of unfulfillment being associated with ‘saudade’, a sentiment which the poet projects onto the passengers of the ocean liner he imagines. This is in fact a peculiar form of cosmopolitanism, balancing major and minor tonalities, and likewise expressing an awareness of local and transnational references, and of the proximity and distance that separate them.

While recognising the marked contrast between peripheral and semiperipheral positions with respect to the core of the world system, I would like to suggest that the cosmopolitan stance expressed in the two excerpts immediately above fits Mariano Siskind’s reading of peripheral cosmopolitan discourses. In *Cosmopolitan Desires: Global Modernity and Latin American Literature*, Siskind claims that said discourses share a common epistemological structure, corresponding to what he calls the desire for the world, that is, the desire by the peripheral intellectual and artist for universal belonging. For Siskind, this sentiment is grounded on the awareness of a flaw, corresponding to the distance that separates a given artist from core geographical and cultural references, and it is materialized in an imaginary subjective belonging, designed to overcome the shortcomings of which the peripheral artist and intellectual is acutely conscious.

As I argued above, the particular take on cosmopolitanism present in the *Biografia* is also directly linked with that of *Orpheu*. This is evident in the first instance in Veiga’s obsession with Álvaro de Campos and with the ‘Maritime Ode’. Likewise, this view is supported by the fact that Veiga later establishes a personal connection with Pessoa, by which time he is nicknamed ‘Esfinge Magra’, a play with Mário de Sá-Carneiro’s self-imposed nickname

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280 Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 94.
‘Esfinge Gorda’. However, these are merely superficial indexes of a deeper connection with the cosmopolitan imaginary of *Orpheu*.

Regarding the magazine, Fernando Beleza contended that both the cultural project of *Orpheu* and the poetry of Álvaro de Campos convey what he designates as a territorialized peripheral cosmopolitan perspective. On the basis of the reading of passages of several documents pertaining to *Orpheu* and to previous editorial projects developed by Fernando Pessoa, Beleza is able to place *Orpheu* within the early twentieth century trend that corresponded to the exercise of a cosmopolitanism that included national concerns. In opposition to the nationalism proposed by the *Renascença Portuguesa*, Beleza claims, *Orpheu* aimed to internationalize Portuguese culture, seeking to understand how it related and moreover how it could contribute to a broader European landscape. Likewise, it sought to ensure that European culture would reach Portuguese audiences, and so ultimately to make the country more cosmopolitan. In terms of the artistic practice associated with the magazine, Beleza focuses on ‘sensacionismo’, contending that Campos’s desire to feel everything in every possible way (‘Sentir tudo de todas as maneiras’) corresponds in fact to the expression of a semiperipheral, situated cosmopolitan stance. In relation to Campos still, and based on proposals by Siskind and Michel Foucault, Beleza argues that the ‘Maritime Ode’ displays the materialization of a territorialized modernism, in which desire, cosmopolitanism and sexuality intersect in order to configure a peripheral cosmopolitan heterotopy. Furthermore, Beleza adds, the desire for the world present in the poem allows for imaginary forms of cosmopolitan egobodies to be constituted, the axis of which is the Lisbon pier. The latter emerges in his view as a peripheral cosmopolitan heterotopy, which allows for

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283 In his argument, Beleza takes into consideration Ihor Junyk’s account of the contradictions found in the practices of artists coming from the periphery and semi-periphery of the world system to the Paris of the early twentieth century, which were manifested in the coexistence in their art of both national and cosmopolitan concerns. See: Ihor Junyk, *Foreign Modernism: Cosmopolitanism, Identity, and Style in Paris* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017).
the poetic subject to communicate his desire for global, universal belonging, while being cognizant of his peripheral situatedness.\(^{284}\)

If we consider Tiago Veiga’s poetry of this period, we will see that it too engages with these matters, in distinctive and arguably more obvious ways. In contrast to the proclamations of Almada Negreiros in his futurist ultimatum about the need to create a radically new and truly European Portugal (the first reading of the manifesto is depicted in the novel), and in contrast also to the belief that war would either bring total annihilation or change the face of the world and of Portugal for the better, voiced by Inácio, one of Machado’s many children, Veiga’s poetry seeks to find a middle ground between contrasting geographical and cultural references. This is evidenced in ‘Descida de Aónio à Praia da Adraga’, a poem which the biographer-narrator reads in the following terms:

Parece ter sido sua intenção, a avaliar pelos vinte e cinco versos que subsistiram, e que a seguir se transcrevem, estabelecer um ajuste entre o lirismo de uma certa ruralidade que tivera em Guerra Junqueiro o seu último, e já então amesquinhado cultor, e uma poética da urbanidade progressista, a mesma que o engenheiro Álvaro de Campos elegia como seu território de privilégio, e como enquadramento dos seus dissabores de homem moderno.\(^{285}\)

According to the narrator and biographer, the poem displays an attempt to reconcile a literary and cultural tradition associated with rural Portugal with the progressist, modernist stance of Campos. And indeed it does so, since it portrays a subject arising from a rural space, who roams the industrial areas of the Lisbon harbour by himself, striving to adjust to a new and aggressive setting by merging references both past and present, rural and urban, in a free verse poem.\(^{286}\) As such, Veiga’s poem comes across as the peculiar expression of a semiperipheral, situated and deeply contradictory cosmopolitan subject.


\(^{286}\) Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 102-3.
We can argue that Veiga’s life and art are defined to a great extent by repeated attempts at articulating a form of rooted, situated cosmopolitanism. Notwithstanding the fact that Veiga’s example is ultimately negative, since the poet struggles throughout his life to deal with the complications inherent to his situation and ends up committing suicide, positive avenues are also clearly explored in the work. I examine these in due course, however at this point I would like to stress that cosmopolitanism has been a subject which Mário Cláudio has recurrently treated throughout his career, often in biographical novels which recreate the lives of artists. Said treatment frequently involves the examination of the position of Portuguese artists and culture in relation to a wider global cultural landscape. It is therefore not a coincidence that the ‘Trilogia da Mão’, the first sequence of novels published by Cláudio, dealt precisely with these matters. Amadeo, for instance, enquires in very clear terms into the trajectory of the Portuguese painter Amadeo de Souza Cardoso, highlighting the productive consequences of the exercise of a form of cosmopolitanism that reconciled local and global references, the artistic language of the avant-garde and the particular, rural references and landscapes of Amarante. Rosa, in turn, presents a complementary reflection on cosmopolitanism, displacement and cultural hybridity. Reinventing the life and works of the folk Portuguese artist Rosa Ramalho, who Veiga will show an interest in at a late stage in his biography, the novel deals with organic hybridity, showing how folk art may be the expression of the layers of culture which are the product of mobility and characterise even the smallest of rural communities. In this sense, the novel seems to posit that mobility and its effects (cultural hybridity) have always ever been part of human life. Furthermore, as I noted briefly in relation to the Biografia, the novels belonging to the ‘Trilogia da Mão’ also contain an assumedly essayistic element. Indeed, Mário Cláudio often mentioned that Amadeo was originally meant to be an essay, which Vasco Graça Moura, in the mid-1980s the director of the Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda, had asked Cláudio to write. Finally, the

novels of the ‘Trilogia da Mão’ bring into relief the fact that although many of the works of Mário Cláudio are retrospective, presenting a reinvention of the history and evolution of Portuguese society, re-imagined from a particular angle, they lend themselves to being read in relation to contemporary problems and challenges. In this instance, the reflection on the early-twentieth century interpretations of cosmopolitanism present in both Amadeo and in the Biografia has a bearing on current issues relating to globalization. Once again, I would like to stress, the fictional revision of history present in Cláudio’s work constitutes an enquiry into the past, but also into present and future possibilities.

In the wake of this first self-conscious cosmopolitan experience in Lisbon, and of his engagement with Orpheu and Campos, very much dependent as we saw on imagination, fantasy and desire, Tiago Veiga travels to London and Paris, where he remains for extended periods. In London, he attempts to follow in the footsteps of Campos, by enrolling in the Royal Navy College an trying to become a naval architect, whilst in Paris he arguably seeks to emulate Sá-Carneiro and adopt the bohemian Paris lifestyle he epitomised. But in each instance, Veiga’s attempts to fulfil his dreams of global belonging end in frustration, as he realises that his idealized notions would not be fulfilled. In both cities, Veiga begins by taking on the role of a tourist who abhors his own condition, and soon adopts the guise of a flaneur who later becomes a wanderer. This transformation has crucial implications, both in terms of Veiga’s concept of travelling and of the ways in which he negotiates his identity. Indeed, wandering and nomadism become the distinctive feature of Veiga’s life from that period onwards. I address these matters in the following section, paying special attention to the exact characteristics, qualities and desired goals Veiga’s nomadic travels.
A Philosophy of Travel: Tourism, Flânerie, Wandering

So far, we saw that Tiago Veiga is represented in the *Biografia* as a migrant who traverses national borders and cultural formations, a fact which leads the character to adopt a self-reflective stance, and to question traditional notions of identity and belonging, associated with specific and clearly if artificially delineated places, social settings and cultures. The prevalent sense of ambiguity that sets in is projected onto Veiga’s writing, through which the poet seeks to understand himself, reinventing the multiple strands of memory that make up his heteroclite identity. If, in a broad sense, Veiga’s situation is from the very beginning of his biography that of a cosmopolitan subject, in the second stage in his life, the poet’s migration to Lisbon enables him to engage in a more conventional practice of cosmopolitanism. In this respect, the novel enquires into the possibility of developing a semiperipheral cosmopolitanism that works, that is, which might allow Veiga to bridge vastly different but inevitably interrelated geographical, social and cultural references: the local and rural, on the one hand, and the European and even universal, on the other. In the final section of this chapter, I focus on Veiga’s trips to the cities which, alongside Berlin, were regarded in the early twentieth century as the centres of European culture: London and Paris. I examine how Veiga’s dreams of universal belonging are frustrated and how he follows a route that, from the condition of a tourist, will lead the poet to adopt the guise of a wanderer, one which indeed he will never shed throughout his life. My interest here is in determining the conditions that favour Veiga’s choice to become a wanderer, and to characterise in very precise terms the workings and implications of said condition. I demonstrate that nomadism is associated in the *Biografia* with new artistic projects, and that both of the latter are related to processes of self-discovery and chameleonic reinvention on the part of the main character. I conclude by elucidating why this process is fraught with contradictions and how its logic leads to frustration, and I look into the manners in which Veiga will attempt to overcome his disappointments and situate himself productively in border area, between competing references (spatial and cultural) and desires: for autonomy and belonging, wandering and placedness, for personal
independence and the establishment of bonds with others, for innovation and the cultivation of memory.

José Vieira examined the dynamics of tourism and wandering in *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, and how the latter conditioned and indeed determined processes of identification on the part of the fictional poet. To summarise briefly his arguments, Vieira interprets Veiga’s trajectory in light of Zygmunt Bauman’s concept of the vagabond, a figure symbolic of the intersection between displacement and the fluidity characteristic of late modern identity, which was elaborated by Bauman in his text ‘From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity’. According to this logic, Veiga’s trajectory is identified with that of a nomad or vagabond, who constantly re-invents himself, a process which entails two different elements. Firstly, the erasure of the past; and secondly, the creation by Veiga of different characters of himself, manifested in his artistic projects, but also in practices of depersonalization, which include the projection of Veiga’s self into different works of art, mainly paintings. Vieira’s logical leap at this point is to connect Veiga’s practice of re-invention of himself and depersonalization with heteronomy, following the biographer’s initial cue. In this respect, I would like to note that, while Veiga may see himself as a chameleon, his trajectory is very consistent, and although he does change and dabbles in depersonalization strategies, his poetic works are not attributable to different *personae*, with different names and biographies.

My interest in this analysis of the *Biografia* lies in the first part of Vieira’s argument, which does not relate specifically to heteronomy. In this respect, I follow and develop Vieira’s arguments, establishing important contrasts of interpretation regarding specific issues. Furthermore, this line of argumentation allows me show that, whilst applying Bauman’s concepts to the *Biografia* may help clarify some of the questions raised in the work, it also contributes to obfuscating other crucial aspects of the novel. This often occurs

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when one uses specific theoretical tools in order to read a particular work of
art, but it becomes more likely when we are dealing with a novel as nuanced
as the Biografia and likewise working with a theoretical basis as extreme and
at times hyperbolic as Bauman’s. Notwithstanding, after my analysis of the
possibilities of reading Veiga’s trajectory in reference to Bauman’s thought, I
too will suggest theoretical contributions that may help interpret more
comprehensively Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia.

As Vieira noted, in Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia the contrast between
tourism and wandering emerges most clearly in the narrative of Veiga’s stay
in Paris. In the chapter meaningfully entitled ‘O boletineiro perdido’, Veiga
moves to Montmartre in order to experience the Parisian bohemian lifestyle he
had idealized, only to realise that the milieu of artistic innovation he had
dreamed of no longer existed. In these circumstances, Veiga ends up seeing
himself as a tourist, who superficially and externally observes the city:

Observava ele o pequeno formigueiro humano, mais alimentado por
forasteiros em busca do pitoresco do que consistente em moradores
entregues a vagabundagens criativas, e tomava-o o receio de ter
errado na escolha do enquadramento para o que lhe restava de
juventude. Subia e descia a rue Mont Cenis, ou ascendia à Place du
Tertre, irritando-se por se achar na pele de mais um touriste, lançando
o olhar guloso a cada porta entreaberta, ou deliciando-se com o
presumível pintor que carregava o cavalete às costas, duas telas nuas
debaixo do braço, e a caixa das tintas debaixo do outro.

The excerpt begins by positing the contrast between the attitudes of tourists
and of those described as creative vagabonds, without precisely defining the
latter. In order to underline the externality of Veiga’s touristic gaze and the
mismatch between ideal and reality, the passage explores the syntax of
observation, of the city and of Veiga himself, which it associates with the dyad
recognition versus non-recognition. So, while Veiga recognises the city, he
understands that the Paris he now got to know did not fit the image of it he had
created in his mind; likewise, Veiga does not recognise himself in the body of

292 José Vieira, ‘Um Tiago Veiga Líquido’; José Vieira ‘A Escrita do Outro: Mentiras de Realidade e
Verdades de Papel’, p. 260.
293 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, pp. 159-60.
Veiga’s new job, as newspaper distributor, allows him to break with the ready-made imagery characteristic of a provincial subject attempting to live a cosmopolitan ideal. Moreover, it is while distributing newspapers in his motorcycle that Veiga assumes the role of a peculiar type of flâneur, who in fact is well on his way to becoming a wanderer:

Veiga is not exactly a flâneur, because he is moving in a motorcycle, and additionally he does not engage with people, with the crowds, nor does he consequently display at this stage any inclination for depersonalization in Baudeláreian fashion. However, the idea of being overwhelmed, even stunned, by the city is evocative of flânerie, as well as the notion that movement itself, and a superficial apprehension of the city landscape, would be enough to somehow justify Veiga’s existence. In any case, as we shall see momentarily, the idea that a given individual needs a justification for their existence, and that said justification is to be achieved or, better still, discovered through disordered movement, is an important component of wandering as it is understood and practiced in the Biografia.

Before consciously deciding to become a nomad though, Veiga marries Jean Chazot, with whom he has a child, Judith Chazot O’Heary dos Anjos. He therefore adopts a bourgeois lifestyle, which is the complete opposite of what he had imagined for himself when he had initially moved to Paris. It is the

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294 See: ‘Não era porém dentro de si mesmo que se reconhecia, mas no corpo de um adventício ridículo, colecionador de bilhetes-postais.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 160.


296 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 161.
boredom of this situation that in the end forces Veiga’s hand. Bearing in mind the monotony of the bourgeois routine, in typical fashion Veiga examines his life until that moment and he concludes: ‘Era como se nenhuma dessas fases lhe dissesse realmente respeito, constituindo tão-só segmentos desarticulados de uma cadeia que não bastava para o início de uma biografia.’

Veiga again represents his life externally as a disarticulated chain, in which he does not recognise his ideal self. In these circumstances, he will regard a new beginning and a wandering lifestyle as the means to achieve said articulation.

Tiago Veiga explores the notion of wandering by engaging with Pablo Picasso’s paintings ‘Girl on a ball’, ‘Family of Acrobat with Monkey’ and ‘Family of Saltimbanques’, as well as with Rainer Maria Rilke’s *The Duino Elegies* (notably with the ‘Fifth Elegy’, which was inspired in the first painting). Veiga evidently projects himself, his daughter, wife and father, onto the paintings and poem, according to a logic of identification and self-observation: ‘Na *Família de Acrobat com Macaco*, identificava-se com o palhaço pobre…’; ‘E observava-se a si mesmo na *Família de Saltimbancos*…’

Moreover, following a commonly accepted interpretation of Picasso and Rilke’s works represented in the novel, Veiga understands them as signifying the human condition of travel and wandering, which in his view his own family illustrated: ‘O mundo era exatamente aquilo. Perdiam-se pelas sendas de uma vagabundagem sem tréguas, e a cada prazer sucedia o cansaço, e a cada cansaço o prazer, e iriam descer, misturados com uma multidão de anónimos, à vala comum do Père-Lachaise onde apenas se assinalava a tumba dos que haviam conseguido quebrar a brutalidade do ciclo.’

The act of seeing oneself as another in order to better examine and understand one’s situation is a recurrent theme in the *Biografia*. It is present for instance in the sequence on tourism examined above, in general assessments and accounts of Veiga’s life (produced by Veiga himself and by the biographer), and it is also clearly evident in Veiga’s engagement with

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paintings, music and poetry, as exemplified in the previous paragraph. One can also argue that Veiga’s poetry too serves the purpose of self-revelation, which is testified in his ‘Elegia a Um Malabarista’, a poem quoted in full in the Biografia and which corresponds to an elaborate pastiche of Rilke’s ‘Fifth Elegy’. Finally, as we shall see in further detail later, the Biografia itself can be regarded as the medium by which Veiga’s life is given a particular interpretation and meaning. Whilst I concur with Vieira that a clear degree of depersonalization is at work in all of the situations listed here,\textsuperscript{300} I would like to argue that Tiago Veiga’s engagement with the arts serves mostly a hermeneutic function, in the context of which said projection occurs. Indeed, as the passage mentioned above illustrates, Veiga’s interpretation of art works takes the form of a dialogue or encounter that enables him to partly disclose meanings in the works, relating to his life and situation, as well as more generally to the human condition. The same could be said about Veiga’s poetry, which enables him to articulate a very personal and individual, but also a more general insight. The processes of creative engagement with the arts and of poetic creativity briefly described here are clearly evocative of Hans-Georg Gadamer’s theories of hermeneutics. Indeed, Gadamer conceived the relation between subject and work of art precisely as an encounter that allowed the viewer/listener to participate in any given work and, through said participation, to discover individual and general meanings. This reading of the Biografia is furthermore supported by the fact that Gadamer developed his proposals partly on the basis of an analysis of Rilke’s poetry. In this context, it is perhaps no coincidence that Veiga’s interpretation of Rilke’s elegy is similar to Gadamer’s own views of the poet’s work.\textsuperscript{301}

As we saw above, Picasso and Rilke elicit in Tiago Veiga a general interpretation of the human condition as that of non-fixation and alienation which, following Jean Starobinski’s classical reading of the figure of the

\textsuperscript{300} José Vieira, ‘A Escrita do Outro: Mentiras de Realidade e Verdades de Papel,’ p. 265.

saltimbanque in painting and in the poetry of Rilke, is relatable to the criticism of bourgeois society and utilitarian values, from which Veiga detaches himself at this stage in his life.\textsuperscript{302} At the same time, again following Starobinski, Veiga’s identification alternatively with a clown or with a saltimbanque equates to a contradictory assessment of himself as a poet and artist. In fact, ambiguous representations of the clown in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which are arguably traceable to the poetry of Baudelaire, express how the energy and festivity symbolized by clowns and funambulists are tainted by the threat of listlessness, failure and ultimately of death. Veiga’s trajectory mirrors these two attitudes, as in fact the optimistic and enterprising Veiga is always seemingly on the verge of falling down and failing to attain his goals, a fact which in the end precipitates his suicide.

In the wake of his engagement with Picasso and Rilke, Veiga decides to leave his family behind and to become a nomad, a decision which would come to define his life. So the time has come to understand the precise interpretation Veiga gives to wandering, as well as the goals he would like to achieve and the actual consequences of his behaviour. In my analysis of these matters, I attempt to highlight the contradictions inherent in Veiga’s conduct. As we shall see, for Veiga travel equates to an exploration of different possibilities of being, which takes place within the framework of a wider project of acquisition of identity based on personal reinvention and dependent on the exercise of individual autonomy. But while Veiga displays at times a great degree of optimism regarding the possibilities of achieving his goals, his trajectory is also marked by moments of deep frustration. Living in search for one’s identity can be disorienting, and the consequences of this process are often dire. In addition, however obsessively erratic Veiga’s behaviour may be, the fact remains that he dreams of forging an identity, which might provide him a semblance of a structure, a more solid path and place in the world, and, more importantly, which might confer meaning to what Veiga sees as the disarticulated chain of events of his life. Likewise, although Veiga would like to

regard his travels as a medium for self-assertion, his wandering conduct is influenced (even determined) by external interventions, and Veiga’s yearning for independence does not preclude his need for attachment. The conflicting nature of Veiga’s conduct and goals in many ways explains his failure to lead a good and productive life. Veiga thus illustrates to an extreme degree the complexity of identity formation in the conditions of late modernity, marked by mobility and cultural complexity, and experienced by individuals and communities located at the intersection between local, national and transnational references. Importantly, as I shall demonstrate, in spite of his disorientation, Veiga never gives in to easy solutions, as the ones afforded by nationalism and fascism, with their monolithic and excluding views of identity, and for the most part takes the challenges he faces head on.

Picking up the narrative where we had left off, after Veiga’s realisation that he needed to leave his family behind, he finds himself alone, without familial attachments, masters or guides, and he begins to identify with the figure in another painting, ‘Retrato de um Jovem Cavaleiro’. Onto the painting, Veiga projects the mix of indecision and determination he sees in himself, and which again is understood as illustrative of the general human condition. By this time (November 1925), Veiga accepts the charge of Francisco Homem Cristo to travel to Italy in order to contact in his name the Italian Fascist movement. Veiga regards this as an opportunity to forget his recent past and to re-invent himself:

Impunha-se-lhe preparar a bagagem, inventar-se diverso nos propósitos, e voltar a esquecer um passado recentemente vivido, rumando a essa que Francisco Homem Cristo, secretamente alcunhado por Veiga ‘o encantador de serpentes’, caracterizava como ‘la premièr ville du Monde’.  

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303 See: ‘Representava um cavaleiro jovem, um rapaz indeciso quanto às suas vocações, mas animado pela quieta determinação do triunfo. Quem quer que ele fosse, atravessaria no momento em que fora surpreendido pelo admirável pintor, igualmente anónimo, aquela fase da existência de cada homem em que o medo, posto que avassalador, se engole como a água bebida de uma fonte, acabando por conferir energia a uma compleição que busca realizar-se.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 187.

304 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 186.
Reading the excerpt above in relation to the circumstances of Veiga’s life, one might be led to believe that Veiga’s practice of wandering and personal reinvention entailed a radical exercise of autonomy, and likewise that this process would somehow lead him to discard or forget the past. However, this is not the case, and Veiga always seems to tread a fine line between autonomy and external conditioning, individual assertion and attachment to people and places, and likewise in his wanderings he almost invariably engages with the past and with memory (personal, familial, national and transnational).

The ambiguity signalled above is illustrated in Veiga’s trip to Italy which we are considering here. Once in Italy, Veiga quickly distances himself from his recurrent condition as secretary, translator, and emissary, and wishes to affirm himself in a way that would provide a structure to his life. Importantly, Veiga finds this individual route in an engagement with memory and in the practice of de-personalization manifested in his *Sonetos Italianos*. These are effectively dramatic monologues which reinvent historical characters in their imagined complexity, and as such in some sense act as an antidote to the simplistic discourse of fascism. Veiga in fact becomes increasingly critical in relation to the latter, in which he sees a fabricated unanimity (‘uma espécie de unanimidade fabricada’), based on the manipulation of history and culture, which in his view is easily unmasked by travel and the actual contact with the diverse cultural landscape of Italy. Taking a step back will allow us to realise how contradictory Veiga’s demeanour is at this stage. While he claims to want to determine his own life choices, he accepts a more or less unwanted mission. And while he wants to re-invent himself in new circumstances, he does so by taking on masks, a fact which signals the potency of the mask as an ambiguous enabler of self-discovery and expression. Finally, before the start of his trip, Veiga had stated that he wanted to forget his immediate past, but it is with the past that he engages, although admittedly a remote and alien one.

In any case, Veiga’s understanding of travel as a means of expanding his existential possibilities is assessed at the beginning of his life for the most part in positive terms, as the following excerpt demonstrates: ‘Estava diante de si mesmo, se bem que atento às vozes que lhe tinham confiado alguns
segredos, e o caminho a seguir afirmava-se claramente o da progressiva aquisição da identidade. 305

As the practice of the dramatic monologue had already announced, Veiga’s project of progressive acquisition of identity often leads the poet to adopt the role of a chameleon. In this respect, and before Veiga begins a new adventure, the narrator comments:

Mas o seu raro destino de apanhar oportunidades de sobrevivência, usando de instantaneidade idêntica à da língua de um camaleão na captura dos insectos, reservar-lhe-ia um itinerário mais, e daqueles que não se continham no seu roteiro anterior. 306

The excerpt is meaningful in many ways. According to this interpretation of Veiga’s trajectory, he takes advantage of every new opportunity to travel, for each trip brings with it new jobs and projects, therefore guaranteeing the conditions for Veiga’s survival as an individual and a poet. The image of the chameleon puts Veiga in the position of a shapeshifter, so much so that one could argue that, through travel, Veiga would become, or wish to become, another person. Finally, the passage also hints at the obsessive and inconsequential nature of Veiga’s conduct, and implicitly at the sense of disorientation it induces.

Veiga’s chameleonic itinerant demeanour is reminiscent of that of the Baudelairean flâneur, evidenced for instance in the poem ‘Crowds.’ This reading is supported by Veiga’s own characterization of himself as ‘homem cruzeta’ (a cross between a man and a coat hanger), meaning that he sees himself at one stage as someone who wears and discards personalities as others do clothes. However, this is only part of the story, and the fact that Veiga’s statement comparing himself with a clothes hanger is pronounced at a moment of crisis is significant. Indeed, as we shall see, in spite of recognising the relevance of travel as enabling self-discovery, deep down Veiga does not want to be a shapeshifter, a fully de-territorialized and utterly non-fixed postmodern subject. I will return to this important point momentarily. For the moment, I would like to consider yet another element of Veiga’s wandering. It

305 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 194.
306 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 268.
concerns his aversion to sedentarism, and the difficult and ambiguous relation he maintains with Portugal and Venade.

Towards the middle of the novel, after having returned from another trip to Italy and while in Venade, Veiga reflects on his voyages:

A filosofia da viagem, encarada esta como fundamental sustentáculo da existência, ocuparia a atenção de Tiago Veiga nas semanas a seguir ao seu regresso de Itália. Magoava-o a constatação de não lhe assistir a atitude fruidora, característica dos estetas, e que Manuel Teixeira Gomes, seu mestre de vária matéria, não fora capaz de lhe instilar. Ao invés disso deparava-se Tiago com a permanente tentação predadora, a qual haveria de alimentar, umas quantas décadas decorridas, o fenomenal turismo de massas.  

Tiago is aware that travel had become the basis for his existence, and likewise that he interpreted this practice in a predatorial manner. And although Veiga associates this attitude with tourism, his following decision to depart to Morocco seems to contradict this assertion. In fact, on his new travel plans, he comments: ‘e eis que de súbito se lhe afigurava a cultura muçulmana pedra indispensável à construção de si mesmo.’  

So, in contrast to the external, detached stance of tourists, for Veiga travel presents an opportunity to add new elements to his identity, a process which in the case of Veiga involves the creation of poetry. Furthermore, in Morocco Veiga will also accomplish the very personal task of processing traumas from his past, relating to two unresolved relationships: with Helena, his first lover, who had abandoned him and thus precipitated the first great crisis in the life of the poet; and with Manuel Teixeira Gomes, perhaps Veiga’s principal guide, whom Veiga had himself abandoned, in an attempt to assert his autonomy and escape the power dynamics that characterised their relationship. In addition to this positive rationale, Veiga’s decision is motivated by a negative attitude towards Venade, where the poet cannot suffer to remain during the winter. Still, even if Veiga’s

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307 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 414.
308 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 415.
nomadism derives to a great extent from a critical view of Venade, and more generally of Portugal, it is important to stress that Veiga’s life is marked by constant returns to the country and to his family’s ancestral home, and that his relationship with these references is markedly ambiguous.

So far, we have established that Tiago Veiga is portrayed in the *Biografia* as a vagabond for whom travelling is a means of discovering himself and of progressively defining his identity. We have also established how travelling became the basis for the poet’s existence, bringing with it a chain of constant changes, so much so that he began to see himself as a chameleon who obsessively took advantage of every new opportunity to re-invent himself. Additionally, I have noted the contradictions inherent to this process, relating for instance to the contrasting ideas and attitudes that emerge within it: autonomy versus conditioning and attachment, confidence versus self-doubt, fluidity versus solidity/structure, desire for innovation versus engagement with the past, caesura versus continuity, wandering versus placedness, digression versus return.

As I mentioned above, I partake of the view that the dynamics of identification present in the *Biografia* should be read against the backdrop of modern and late modern social and cultural conditions. As such, the issue of mobility and its effects on the processes of negotiation of identity which I explored in reference to Veiga’s childhood acquire throughout the poet’s life a more radical expression, as his movement across spaces and cultures becomes increasingly unhinged. In reference to this discussion, I would like to consider how we could frame in general terms the ideas of mobility, tourism and wandering at play in the *Biografia*. One possible avenue is to read the *Biografia* in light of Bauman’s proposals regarding late modern processes of identification and identity building, a tack which was followed by Vieira. I now delve into more detail into Bauman’s ideas, in order to demonstrate that, while they may be help elucidate aspects of the *Biografia*, they likewise constitute a framework which limits a more complete understanding of the work.

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310 José Vieira, ‘Um Tiago Veiga Líquido’; José Vieira, ‘A Escrita do Outro: Mentiras de Realidade e Verdades de Papel.’
In an early text on postmodern identity,\textsuperscript{311} Bauman spoke of how the modern conditions of increased mobility (social, spatial and cultural), increased pace of change and the modern wager on individualism had favoured the development of the notion of identity as a task. The task of identity building would have been understood as a means by which individuals would be able to neutralize uncertainty and it followed the religious template of the pilgrimage, which was thus brought into people’s daily lives. According to this view, life would take the form of a route in search of an ideal of success, corresponding to a destination which would lend continuity and a sense of completeness to the fragments of a given subject’s biography, thus justifying their trajectory. For Bauman, the fluidity of all social structures characteristic of postmodernity would have made this model for the construction of identity virtually impossible to sustain. Indeed, he argued, the latter was based on an assumption of predictability, which the postmodern conditions of disposability and obsolescence would have undermined. In this respect, Bauman commented:

\begin{quote}
The horror of the new situation is that all diligent work of construction may prove to be in vain; its allurement is the fact of not being bound by past trials, being never irrevocably defeated, ‘always keeping the options open.’ [...] And so the snag is no longer how to discover, invent, construct, assemble (even buy) an identity, but how to prevent it from sticking. Well constructed [sic] and durable identity turns from an asset into a liability. The hub of postmodern life strategy is not identity building, but avoidance of fixation.\textsuperscript{312}
\end{quote}

Bauman therefore structures the postmodern views of identity around the notions of non-fixation and non-committal, of constant re-invention lived in a continuous present. In a more recent text, he added that, because the logic of obsolescence of the market economy had penetrated all social and individual spheres, the new art of life equated to creative destruction.\textsuperscript{313} For Bauman,

\begin{quote}
To practice the art of life, to make one’s life a “work of art”, amounts in our liquid modern world to being in a state of permanent transformation, to perpetually self-defined through becoming (or at least trying to become) someone other than one has been thus far. “Becoming someone else” amounts, however, to ceasing to be who one has been.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{311} Zygmunt Bauman, ‘From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity’, pp. 18-36.
\textsuperscript{312} Zygmunt Bauman, ‘From Pilgrim to Tourist - or a Short History of Identity’, pp. 23-4.
\textsuperscript{313} In this respect, consider the following passage: ‘To practice the art of life, to make one’s life a “work of art”, amounts in our liquid modern world to being in a state of permanent transformation, to perpetually self-defined through becoming (or at least trying to become) someone other than one has been thus far. “Becoming someone else” amounts, however, to ceasing to be who one has been.
identity building in a liquid world therefore takes the form of extreme re-invention, which implicitly involves eliminating the past and constantly starting anew, dividing life into self-contained time stretches, with the goal of finding and expressing an authentic self. These are what Bauman called palimpsest identities, fitting a world in which ‘the art of forgetting is an asset’. This process would in turn relate to the search for ephemeral happiness, which would go hand in hand with individualism and with the refusal by individuals to relate to others in meaningful ways.

Bauman projected the logic above onto the figures of the stroller, the vagabond, the tourist, and the player. In simple terms, one can describe each figure as follows. The stroller perambulates, taking in the world and others as momentary and fleeting surfaces. Vagabonds in turn are homeless and they move because there are no settled places available to them, while tourists move for specific purposes and in order to fulfil purely aesthetic goals. They seek new experiences, under the condition that these will not stick and that they can return safely home, satiated and for the most part unchanged. Finally, for Bauman, players are postmodern individuals who see life as a time-limited game, forever renewing itself without consequences, a fact which in his view is reflected in the quality of contemporary relationships. These distinctions are of course artificial, and it would be impossible to identify Tiago Veiga completely with any one of the figures defined by Bauman. As we have seen, Veiga briefly acts as peculiar type of stroller; he also clearly sees himself self-deprecatingly as a tourist, but soon refuses this role and becomes a vagabond or nomad. More generally, one could read the trajectory of Tiago Veiga as an illustration of the model of re-invention proposed by Bauman, and regard Veiga as a vagabond who, like a chameleon, constantly re-invents and re-discovers himself, forgetting the past in a relentless drive forward, in search of the fulfilment which always proves elusive. Moreover, following the Bauman thread, we could also read Veiga as a deeply individualistic character, who

thus far; to breaking and shaking off one’s old form as a snake shakes off its skin or a shellfish its carapace; to rejecting one by one, the used-up personae – shown by the steady flow of “new and improved” opportunities on offer to be worn out, too tight or just not as fully gratifying as they have been in the past. [...] When engaged in “self-defining” and “self-asserting”, we practice creative self-destruction. Daily.’ In Zygmunt Bauman, The Art of Life, p. 73.
looks to his own happiness and who is unable to relate to others meaningfully. However, interpreting the *Biografia* exclusively in these terms would lead us to ignore some of the most important facets of the novel. Bauman’s framework does not allow us to understand the marked discomfort Veiga expresses with respect to his condition of constant wanderer and to what he perceives as the lack of definition of his character and life. If anything, Veiga is indeed a secular pilgrim engaged in a quest to find his path and to articulate in a meaningful manner the fragments that make up his life, ultimately trying but failing to convert his trajectory into a pre-ordained and self-justified journey. The fact that said quest ends in failure should not prevent us from recognising it. Furthermore, in this process, which culminates with Veiga’s desperate appeal to the character of Cláudio to write his biography, the poet engages first and foremost with the past and with memory, attempting to bridge individual and collective references pertaining to different and often distant spaces and times. Indeed, even with respect to the arts, Veiga looks to subvert the modern logic of constant destruction and erasure and find some middle ground between innovation and the preservation of tradition. In relation to memory and its uses too, there is therefore a huge rift between Bauman’s extreme views and Cláudio’s much more nuanced approach. Finally, although Bauman does suggest (following Levinas) that the adoption of responsible behaviour towards other human beings would constitute a positive change to subjectivity in what he calls the liquid world, his proposals regarding liquid love do not really allow us to understand the tension between Veiga’s desire for autonomy and his need to establish significant relations with others, otherwise manifested in a contradictory emotional, cultural and physical relation to Portugal and Venade. To conclude, if reading Bauman allows us to develop a valuable set of insights into the *Biografia*, whether by approximation to or distancing from his assertions, other approaches may inform a more nuanced examination of the processes of mobility and identification present in the work.

First of all, as Margaret Archer made clear, the hyperbole of liquidity or fluidity must be moderated. Archer recognises that the current conditions are those of accelerated social and cultural change (or morphogenesis), but she

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argues that said conditions are relative to processes of morphostasis. Furthermore, if self-reflexivity, and consequently self-fashioning, are imperatives in the current context, structural constraints are still imposed on individuals’ actions, who are compelled to negotiate meanings in the context of a broader process of cultural elaboration, in which more or less individualistic approaches are equally possible.  

In reference specifically to the effects of movement and displacement on subjectivity, the work of James Clifford provides insights which may also prove useful in view of the interpretation of the Biografia. In a text that anticipated current debates on transnational and transcultural approaches, The Predicament of Culture, Clifford posited the possibility of understanding travel, not as supplementary to dwelling, but as designating a complex range of experiences that are always involved in the constitution of cultural meanings. According to Clifford, if travel and displacement were regarded as the norm, as always already there in human societies, then one would be able to perceive collective and individual identity inevitably as the product flux and negotiation, of translation across geographical and cultural spaces. Likewise, this would also allow us to conceive in new ways the notions of travel and dwelling, which would be seen as deeply interconnected, as ‘dwelling-in-travel’, to use Clifford’s expression. Likewise, local, regional and transnational dynamics would in this manner be reassessed. Furthermore, this framework would enable us to understand differently how people and communities fashion networks and articulate complex worlds ‘that both presuppose and

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316 ‘During the course of this work, travel emerged as an increasingly complex range of experiences: practices of crossing and interaction that troubled the localism of many common assumptions about culture. In these assumptions authentic social existence is, or should be, centered in circumscribed places - like the gardens where the word "culture" derived its European meanings. Dwelling was understood to be the local ground of collective life, travel as a supplement; roots always precede routes. But what would happen, I began to ask, if travel were untethered, seen as a complex and pervasive spectrum of human experiences? Practices of displacement might emerge as constitutive of cultural meanings rather than as their simple transfer or extension.’ In James Clifford, Routes, Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1997), p. 3. See also: James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1988); James Clifford, Returns: becoming indigenous in the twenty-first century (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2013).
exceed cultures and nations.’ In reference to this discussion, like Clifford, we may ask: ‘What skills of survival, communication and tolerance are being improvised in today’s cosmopolitan experiences? How do people navigate the repressive alternatives of universalism and separatism?’

We began to see how the *Biografía* engages in a reflection on the processes of negotiation of identities, under the light of modern mobility. This discussion includes the consideration of the possibilities of defining a productive cosmopolitan stance, as a mode of processing and situating oneself in the face of multiple references and attachments. This is evident in the manner in which Veiga is represented as a nomad, not fixed in his identity, but also unable to discard specific cultural and geographical references. Ultimately, Tiago Veiga needs to tackle what Clifford designated as the predicament of culture:

> I do not accept that anyone is permanently fixed by his or her ‘identity’; but neither can one shed specific structures of race and culture, class and caste, gender and sexuality, environment and history. I understand these, and other cross-cutting determinations, not as homelands, chosen or forced, but as sites of worldly travel: difficult encounters and occasions for dialogue. It follows that there is no cure for the troubles of cultural politics in some old or new vision of consensus or universal values. There is only more translation.

We again return to the subject of liminal spaces and to the challenges inherent to the practice of translation as a mode of existence, to the difficulty of finding a non-reductive place from which to articulate (however tentatively) one’s position and agency. I will now focus on two instances that illustrate how the *Biografía* addresses these matters.

Tiago Veiga’s first stay in London shows how his wandering conduct relates to a project of self-discovery that includes translation and negotiation, as well as the establishment of links between realities and people, pertaining to disparate spaces and times. The sequence is marked by the dynamics between contrasting ideas of liberation and attachment, caesura and continuity, transnational, as well as national and regional belonging.

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317 James Clifford, *Routes, Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, p. 11.
In a familiar first stage in Veiga’s wandering, the poet perceives his departure to London optimistically, as signifying the opening of new and confident perspectives: ‘Mas uma nova concepção da existência parecia descerrar-se para o nosso biografado, caracterizada por uma vontade de arquitetura dos dias que não admitia falha, nem hesitação.’\(^{319}\) Moreover, for this programme of self-discovery within a cosmopolitan setting to be realised, Veiga needed to be free from previous constraints, especially those imposed by his former guide Manuel Teixeira Gomes, but also more generally by his background, which the poet perceived as being out of sync with Europe.\(^{320}\)

Reflecting on the political developments in Portugal, it was Teixeira Gomes himself who had told the young poet: ‘toda a construção do futuro se alicerça na ruptura, não raro dolorosa, com o que nos ampara.’\(^{321}\) So, caesura and freedom from those who might want to mould Veiga in their own image are the necessary conditions for the poet’s wanderings in London, an attitude which somehow harmonized the poet with the spirit of post-war period in Europe.

In November 1918, Veiga arrives in London in order to complete his degree in naval architecture. For the most part, he explores the city alone, has new experiences and frequents cultural circles in order to understand this (for him) new world and to situate himself therein. However, Veiga is never fully adjusted to the place and cultural trends of the day, a fact which clearly relates to the poet’s attachment to his past experiences, as well as to Portugal and especially Venade. This is evident in the way Veiga often interprets what he sees in relation to the prior realities and people he knew. So, in the first days of his arrival, an old woman he meets by chance on the street becomes for Veiga fleetingly his recently deceased aunt Genoveva. Later, the same occurs with Edith Sitwell, whose representation in a painting is immediately associated by Tiago with Eleutéria, the putative girlfriend of his Lisbon companion António Bernardo Sequeira. Likewise, as he watches his only close acquaintance in London Alvaro Guevara fight in a boxing rink, Tiago is

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\(^{319}\) Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 119.

\(^{320}\) See: ‘Só em Lisboa se penava, deduzia Veiga, naquele imbricado de travessas sórdidas, habitadas por ceguinhas que tocavam viola, e crianças que rapavam as cânhebas pegadas ao fundo de um tacho rapado.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 109.

reminded of the blood spectacle of the ‘Semana Santa’ in Braga. Veiga’s attention is therefore always partly turned to Portugal and he needs to navigate the new and the old, his past and present, the rural references he inherited and the urban, international and cosmopolitan landscape he experienced.

The semiperipheral position occupied by Tiago and Guevara in London becomes apparent in the way they interact within the circle of Edith Sitwell, which both artists begin to attend. After Tiago translates one of Sitwell’s poems into Portuguese, she christens him ‘Portugal’ (Guevara had already become known as ‘Chile’), a name which Tiago seems to take as a marker of distinction. Tiago’s poetry too is out of touch with respect to his new surroundings. In fact, his *Sonetos de Vénus* are evocative of the aesthetics of Symbolism, and the only poem of his Tiago reads aloud in one of the meetings is titled ‘Festa Setentrional’. Although, according to Veiga himself, it was influenced by the animal poems of T. S. Eliot, as the narrator underlines, the work is actually a pastiche of Portuguese folk poetry and displays a traditional ironic vein aimed at the meetings themselves.

Both in terms of his social circles and aesthetic options, Veiga therefore feels out of place. In this respect especially, between the new trends in English speaking modernism and the Portuguese modernists (who in Veiga’s view are too attached to Italian futurism and oblivious to things Portuguese), Veiga sees himself at a crossroads:

O nosso biografado encontrava-se pois numa encruzilhada, e a tentação a que se mostrava difícil ceder era mais a de recolher no pretérito as sementes de uma eventual Renascença do que a de se atirar a um porvir que ameaçava despedaçar o discurso numa espécie de charivari catita, situado ao alcance de qualquer mediocre com habilidade. ‘Não concebo o “moderno”’, desabafaria com uma amiga sua, ‘senão na renovação de formas históricas, nunca no atropelo propiciador da tábu rasa, e creio que tão-só os loucos furiosos, entre os quais me não incluo, inventam o sentido dos seus urros.’

Having failed to find a place in a cosmopolitan setting, in part due to the persistence of past references in his worldview, Veiga decides to situate himself in a cultural and aesthetic middle ground. In this manner, he explicitly

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questions the radical implementation of the modern logic of creative self-destruction in both culture and the arts.

We have established that in the Biografia identity is fluid, but also that Veiga cannot shed the past and re-invent himself completely in a new setting. However, what happens when the poet returns home? Can he find his place in Venade? Is home even a possibility for a migrant subject like Tiago Veiga?

Veiga’s stay in Venade beginning in October 1921 illustrates the ambiguous relationship that the poet maintains with his place of origin, which as we saw was evident in his childhood and will continue throughout his life. Here, the dream of returning to an idealized home, a place of simplicity in the country, is undermined by Veiga’s awareness that said desire is not attainable. For Veiga, Venade is as much a place of nostalgia as of confinement:

Confinado no seu canto no Noroeste de Portugal, e na extrema indecisão quanto a um futuro que apenas acertara em que não teria de transitar pelas artes da marinharia, Tiago Veiga aproveitava cada aberta das chuvas para os seus longos passeios solitários. Decalcava os trajectos que empreendera com o velho Felício, mas os cogumelos de antanho, ou haviam desaparecido por completo, ou tinham cedido lugar a diferentes espécies. O nosso poeta enfrentava isto como sinal inegável da perda de uma inocência que fizera do convívio com a Natureza uma irrepetível celebração.323

The excerpt portrays the poet as a romantic wanderer, who reflects on lost innocence and seeks in nature solace and refuge from the wider world. Nature additionally provides Veiga with an opportunity to analyse himself and possibly determine his future path. Finally, continuing this exploration of a clearly neo-romantic imagery, the narrator describes how, through his communication with nature, Veiga achieves a fleeting harmonization with his surroundings.324 The novel thus retrieves the melancholy discourse which emerged as a consequence of the changes brought about by the modern conditions of mobility, urbanization and commodification, and which was fulfilled in the figure

323 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 140.
324 ‘A folhagem mais alta dos carvalhos agitava-se à volta dele num aceno de tranquilo reconhecimento, e era como se todo o mundo vegetal de repente o escutasse, respondendo-lhe por murmurios indizíveis, e a eternidade se lhe postasse ao alcance da mão. Mas não durava o fenómeno mais do que escassos segundos.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 141.
of heimat/home. Created in the late-nineteenth and early twentieth century, heimat-discourse was structured around oppositions, such as: country/city, province/metropolis, tradition/modernity, nature/artificiality, organic culture/civilization, fixed, familiar, rooted identity versus cosmopolitanism. However, at the same time as we detect in the Biografia Veiga’s desire to find a home (steeped in the past and in nature), otherwise also clearly expressed in the poet’s encounter with Mattia Preti’s painting Il Ritorno del Figliol Prodigo, examined in the first chapter, Veiga understands that this goal is not achievable or even desirable, as no one can escape the realities of modern mobility and its corresponding subjective and cultural consequences. Hence the reference at this point in the novel to the mass emigration movement from the Portuguese countryside to Brazil, and most especially the use by Veiga of images of confinement and claustrophobia, with respect to Venade, to the family home and specifically to his room: ‘...um cubículo irrespirável, de tecto de ripas pintadas a azul, e atravessado pelas aranhas que a chuva acordara.’ If Veiga cannot forget his past, he does not manage to live with it either.

We are reminded here again of Ágnes Heller’s ideas regarding modern displacement, tourism and wandering, to which I referred earlier. According to Heller, as modern subjects got to know more of the world, through increased mobility, migration and travel, it became ever more difficult for them to have a world, that is, to define a place of belonging, a home which might constitute the basis for the configuration (however tentative) of their identities. To put it differently, to a de-centred or multi-centred world accordingly corresponded a de-centred subject. In any case, Heller stressed, even if a pervading

326 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 140.
327 Heller elaborates on this subject in the following manner: ‘The question remains as to whether there is a privileged place for modern men and women, a place that could be described as the center of their world. Just as the self has become de-centered, so the world-one-has (and not the world one just knows) has become de-centered. Traditionally, we have called the center of a world that we have our “home”. But where are we at home? Do modern men and women “have” a home? I referred to the de-centered self not in order to find a good metaphor, for an entirely de-centered self has no identity (whereas for an entirely one-centered self(s) identity is also inflexible and rigid). Similarly, an entirely one-centered world (which one has) differs absolutely from the world one
awareness of diaspora and contingency may lead to the questioning of placedness and belonging, one must recognise the tensions lying at the heart of the modern experience of place, evidenced for instance in the coexistence of the desire to build a home and a world with the notion of the difficulty in achieving said goal. In this context, Heller argues, home and not home, belonging and not belonging, homesickness and sickness of home become inseparable and contradictory poles characterising modern ideas of place. According to Heller, these are only a few examples of the many other paradoxes of modern life, ‘such as the fear of freedom and the fear of unfreedom, the desire for independence and the desire to belong, of individualism and communitarianism.’

Heller’s views help us understand Veiga’s stance with respect to the possibility of finding a home, his contradictory idealization and negative appreciation of Venade, as well as his constant digressions and returns, and his connection with and detachment from the people and places he is in contact with.

As he leaves Venade again for Paris, Veiga states he wants to forget: ‘…de momento, apenas pretendo esquecer, mas não entendo bem o quê.’

According to Veiga’s own nomadic procedures examined above, by forgetting he would want to forge a new identity and thus to escape from and overcome his predicament. However, as a consequence of this attitude, Veiga will only

knows. An entirely one-centered world displays a rigid continuity and a rigid identity (collective world identity). If the world is many centered, so that no center has a privileged position (in the world that we have), there is “multiculturalism”, for all centers are de-centering identities but, in all likelihood, men and women are nowhere really “at home.” If one is never at home, one only has left the united world of tourism, in which one can act, understand, or move with some confidence. But since the united world of tourism is through and through a modern virtual and actual reality, one has no tradition. A man or woman who lives in no other world than that of the united world of tourism will live without tradition. A person without tradition is a person who lacks historical imagination and must live exclusively on the meager ideological diet of technological imagination. This means that without setting foot on one (or two, or three) privileged points or centers on Earth, one will lose the double-bind.’ In Ágnes Heller, A theory of modernity, pp. 190-1.

328 ‘Homesickness means that one is longing to return home. But it could also mean that one is getting sick of being at home. The moderns are homesick in both senses of the word. This emotional relation to the centerpoint of life (in place), both its attraction and repulsion, is one of the recurring experiences of the paradoxes of modern life, such as the fear of freedom and the fear of unfreedom, the desire for independence and the desire to belong, of individualism and communitarianism.’ In Ágnes Heller, A theory of modernity, p. 193.

329 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 141.
accomplish the re-enactment of a cycle of frustration. In any case, productive avenues are also experimented by Tiago Veiga throughout his life. In light of the territorialised cosmopolitan project one detects in the poet’s actions and reflections, the most interesting of these relates to Veiga’s critical and inventive engagement with memory: familial and communitarian; regional, national and transnational. In this context, Veiga will become a very different kind of wanderer, one who is aware that in his travels he both carries and retrieves memories, ruins and ghosts.

We saw in this chapter how Tiago Veiga’s condition of transnational and transcultural migrant forces him to navigate multiple references and attachments and elicits in the character a contradictory sense of proximity and distancing in relation to the place, society and culture he grew up in. We also looked into how Veiga’s subsequent migration to Lisbon created the conditions for the initial depiction and assessment of identity and cultural belonging to be transferred from Veiga’s concurrently local and transnational familial references to the local/universal and the rural/urban dyads characteristic of cosmopolitanism. Stays in London and Paris, marked initially by the frustration in articulating a cosmopolitan stance typical of subjects who speak from a semiperiphery, lead the poet to initiate a wandering trajectory, practiced as a means to discover, add to and affirm his identity and agency. However, although Veiga would like to see in each new trip an entirely new beginning, arguably an opportunity to completely fulfil himself as a person and artist, he realises that in practice the past follows him wherever he goes and that he cannot re-invent himself completely at each new stage in his life. Returning to Venade, to realise the romantically inspired dream of complete belonging also proves deeply unsatisfactory. Therefore, taking into account the conditions of constant movement across geographical and cultural spaces, Veiga will need to find ways to relate old and new, as well as local, regional and global references. As we shall see, this process can be confusing, a situation which is made more acute by Veiga’s relentless pace of travel and his condition of solitary wanderer. The awareness of being disoriented, of lacking definition of character and consequence of action, recurrently leads Veiga to develop an extreme sense of alienation and the desire for self-effacement. The latter is
manifested in lack of energy and slumber, as well as, in several instances, in Veiga’s decision to destroy his works, and, on two occasions, in the poet’s decision to commit suicide. This is Veiga’s final transformation, from man without qualities to Bartleby, which I will deal with in the final chapter of this study, in which I also focus on the coping strategies which Veiga uses to tackle the aforementioned sentiments of detachment and despair.

In the next and third chapter though, I examine the important subject of the uses of memory in the Biografia. In this regard, I demonstrate how Veiga’s constant and almost obsessive engagement with memory will enable him momentarily to establish lines of continuity and tension across borders and cultures, and thus to test the possibility of developing a territorialized cosmopolitan stance, while resisting both the temptations of the reductionist discourse of nationalism/fascism and the homogenising drive of globalization.
Chapter 3: Memory - Circulation, Re-Invention, Uses

The subject of memory in *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* has merited attention since the publication of the work. By re-inventing the biographical genre, the novel evidently presents a distinct view and interpretation of the history of Portugal throughout the twentieth century, with a marked emphasis on developments in the political and cultural spheres. The work moreover expands its scope and focuses on the interaction between actors and events located at different scales (local, national, transnational), which makes it possible for a broader view of developments taking place in Europe and North America to be achieved, as well as an examination of the tensions occurring between actors situated in and across diverse societal and cultural frameworks.

José Cândido de Oliveira Martins argued that in *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* we find three articulated forms of memory: personal, intertextual and collective. By personal memory, Oliveira Martins understands the re-invention of the biographical genre enacted in the *Biografia*, which in his view explores the borders between fact and fiction, and between biography and autobiography, in order to fulfil a heteronymic project, by which, while relating the life of the eccentric Tiago Veiga, Mário Cláudio both reveals and hides himself. As for intertextual memory, Oliveira Martins recognises the laborious and playful intertextual work evidenced in the *Biografia*, which serves to illustrate Tiago Veiga’s trajectory, as well as to present what he calls a new and destabilizing view of the nineteenth-century literary canon, which we could more accurately extend to the literary movements of the twentieth century. According to Oliveira Martins, the two first elements identified above contribute to the construction of an almost documentary narrative representing three quarters of a century of Portuguese culture and literature:

Por outras palavras, a escrita da biografia de Tiago Veiga institui-se em verosímil pretexto para traçar um prolongado retrato de Portugal contemporâneo, através de múltiplas referências sobre os meandros

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I concur with Oliveira Martins in his assessment of the *Biografia* as a work that presents a vivid portrayal of the evolution of contemporary Portuguese society, which should be read in reference to the interrelated processes of decolonization and globalization, and to Portugal’s post-imperial and semiperipheral position in the world-system. Broadly speaking, this is a view of the work of Mário Cláudio which is shared by other critics. I also agree with Oliveira Martins when he importantly signals that, much like *A Quinta das Virtudes*, the *Biografia* should be integrated in a wider trend of fictional accounts that promote a reflection on the historical development of Portuguese society by activating the *topos* of the symbolic family home.

However, my take on the representation of memory in the *Biografia* substantially differs from the one above. My interest is in examining the ways in which, via the portrayal of a migrant and nomadic character, the novel represents the circulation of memory across several scales (local, regional, national and transnational), and likewise how and with what ends memory is

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activated and re-invented by Tiago Veiga. My reading of the work in this respect is informed by a transnational and transcultural studies approach. The latter helps me elucidate the implications of the fictional reflection on memory (circulation, re-invention and uses) enacted in the Biografia, in terms of the possible subversion of the discourse of nationalism/fascism, and of the reconsideration of the idea and practice of cosmopolitanism. Moreover, I seek to contextualize the discussion of memory in the Biografia, not just in relation to developments in Portuguese society and cultural production, but likewise in reference to a broader understanding of memory practices today.

I begin by briefly considering Tiago Veiga’s first trips to Italy, in which the poet engages with ruins and with the Baroque. Here, I elucidate three interrelated matters. I examine the importance of material memory and of the traces of the past in Veiga’s outlook and art; I consider the imagery of ruins and of the Baroque and how it is used to neutralize the discourse of fascism; and finally, I analyse the contradictory view of cosmopolitanism presented at this stage in the novel.

I then turn to another aspect of Veiga’s approach to memory, namely to his attempt to retrace his Irish roots, which unwittingly has the effect of further complexifying Veiga’s range of cultural references, a fact which is projected onto his works. In this respect, I highlight the manner in which Veiga’s almost organic cosmopolitan stance makes him reject the ideas of national heroism advanced by the ‘Estado Novo’ and opt instead for an engagement with memory via the literary recreation of ghosts. The latter correspond to a mix of diverse references, both personal and cultural, used by Veiga and by his wife and painter Ellen Rasmussen in their interrelated works.

I conclude by delving into Veiga’s subsequent literary projects, in which I identity an attempt on the part of the poet to think about cultural landscapes and about individual and collective identity beyond national borders, and in reference to extended notions of space and time. Finally, I establish how these goals are undermined by a progressively conservative interpretation of memory and its uses, as well as by Veiga’s characteristic inability to understand and situate himself.
Wandering Among Ruins

Tiago Veiga’s first trip to Italy, which took place immediately before his decisive stay in Paris, exemplifies the poet’s complex relation with and use of the traces of the past in his work. Acting as a personal secretary, Veiga accompanies brothers Osbert and Sacheverell Sitwell, as well as a bookseller named Orioli, to several Italian locations, which include Venice, Rome and Naples. The tour itself, the fascination with ruins and with art displayed by Veiga, and likewise his reflections on wandering as a form of cosmopolitanism, quite obviously situate the trip within the confines of the late eighteenth and nineteenth century Grand Tour. Moreover, the fact that Veiga’s account of his experiences is conveyed in the form of letters inserted into the narrative supports the intertextual association between Veiga’s and other famous Italian journeys, for instance the ones undertaken by Goethe and most especially by Chateaubriand.335

Veiga’s contact with the landscapes, the architecture and the art of the three cities elicits in the poet recurrent feelings of vertigo and wonder (‘vertigem’, ‘estonteamento’). These are the result of the awareness of the frail boundaries between life and death, beauty and decay, which they induce, and which Veiga explicitly links with the aesthetics of the Baroque. In a letter written to Fernando Taborda Linhares, in which he tells of his stay in Venice, Veiga states:

Começarei por te dizer o que te espantarás: Veneza faz-me pensar mais, mas muito mais, na terra do que na água. Porquê? Porque é à fragilidade desta terra que me agarro, para não cair no abismo em que vejo tudo despenhar-se à minha volta. Este suporte de lodo e de lama, estes estratos a que tu chamarias «fríáveis»: eis o que me ampara os passos, ameaçando-me de morte, como um sismo imóvel.336

In the face of impending dissolution (‘Às vezes, sinto-me resvalar, entornado na laguna, como um ornamento infame desta coroa…’), Veiga clings to the strata of history he sees in the mud on which the city is grounded, which

335 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Italian Journey (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982); François de Chateaubriand, Voyage en Italie (Poetry in Translation, 2010).
336 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 147.
however he fears is too frail to warrant his survival. Thus the tension between permanence and impermanence, consistency and disintegration, which the text explores through several images, and which culminates in the oxymoron of the unmovable earthquake (‘um sismo imóvel’). In these circumstances, Veiga claims he cannot assume the role of a tourist and instead becomes a wanderer who roams among ruins, implicitly in order to achieve a desired sense of order. Furthermore, this trip also reveals the manner in which the poet understands and uses the past. Traces of the past do not elicit in Veiga melancholic ruminations on *vanitas*, but a creative engagement designed to discover the outside world and himself. In Rome, for instance, he attempts to unveil his own face in the paintings of the galleries he visits, and he additionally resurrects the people represented in the works he encounters in his dramatic monologues.

On the one hand, we could say that Veiga’s attitude is akin to the one found in contemporary ruinophilia. According to Boym, the latter relates to ‘a material and visceral experience of the irreversibility of time that comes together with care for the world’, so that ruins cannot be seen merely as ‘symptoms but also sites for a new exploration and production of meanings.’ On the other hand, returning to Huyssen, in the *Biografia* ruins also carry with them ‘the hardly nostalgic consciousness of the transitoriness of all greatness and power, the warning of imperial hubris, and the remembrance of nature in all culture.’ I elaborate further on the first part of the argument in the following section, in which I highlight the productivity which the traces of the past have in Veiga’s work. For now, I would like to discuss how the aesthetics of the Baroque activated in the *Biografia* relates to a criticism of imperial hubris.

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337 See: ‘Compreenderás, a avaliar por aquilo que acabo de descrever, que me tem sido difícil traçar um roteiro, à maneira dos turistas bem-comportados, no meio desta desordem, que, por regra, não percebo se é de fora, se de dentro; acho que é dos dois lados.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 147.


It is certainly not a coincidence that the first two trips undertaken by Tiago Veiga to Italy (occurring immediately before and after his stay in Paris) were marked by the poet’s engagement with the art of the Baroque. It is not coincidental either that, in both cases, before encountering and reflecting on Baroque art, and moreover on the complexity of the layers of culture present in any given place, the poet meets two representatives of the Portuguese conservative and later fascist movement: António Ferro and Francisco Homem Cristo Filho. I would like to suggest here that the imagery of ruins and the aesthetics of the Baroque effectively neutralize the affirmative and simplistic discourse of fascism. This becomes apparent for instance in Veiga’s meeting with Ferro. Although Veiga is at first seduced by Ferro’s feverish and irreverent gospel (‘evangelho febril e irreverente’), likely because it markedly contrasted with the poet’s experience of complex processes of identification and with his indecisive streak, he quickly distances himself from it as he realises the ultimate consequences Ferro’s discourse. Likewise, the

341 António Ferro (born in Lisbon in 1895 and deceased in the same city in 1956) was a Portuguese writer, journalist, politician and diplomat. After an initial period in which he shared conservative Republican ideals, Ferro’s political stance became more extreme, and he got progressively closer to the European fascist movements. Having interviewed Benito Mussolini, Adolf Hitler and Primo de Rivera, in 1932 he took on the role of creator and subsequent director of the ‘Secretariado da Propaganda Nacional’, the government branch charged with defining and promoting the doctrine of the newly instituted dictatorial regime, the ‘Estado Novo.’ In this role, which he exercised until 1949, Ferro was instrumental in the implementation of the internal and external propaganda of the regime, which arguably reached its height in the ‘Exposição do Mundo Português’, which took place in Lisbon in 1940. For a characterization of António Ferro’s thought and political action, see: Ernesto Castro Leal, António Ferro: Espaço Político e Imaginário Social (Lisboa: Cosmos, 1994).

342 On Veiga’s ambiguous approximation and ultimate distancing from Fascism, see: ‘Descontava o temperamento do ideólogo, manifestado em exibicionismos declamatórios que terminavam por desfocar o desenho da sua fácil filosofia, mas robustecia-se na crença de que, se não se abria ali a melhor via a seguir, se encontraria ela numa qualquer bifurcação. A relutância perante todos os sistemas, característica do nosso biografado, e que não raro se confundia com a reticência na adoção do que entretanto se lhe apresentava como mais aconselhável, levava-o a rir-se à socapa daquele teórico, vendo nele uma reedição do sapateiro Bandarra, tingida por certo racionalismo. Mas logo se encantava com alguns conceitos, o da autoridade inteligente, essa que porventura dispensaria o protagonismo dos militares, e o da importância da disciplina, ou o do valor do trabalho, pedras de ângulo na mística de vida dos adultos mais jovens, e mais propensos à indecisão. António Ferro apagava-se notoriamente sob a girândula destas construções, isto porque a sua paisagem natural era muito mais a das imagens do que a das ideias. E Tiago apiedava-se do jornalista, detectando naquela silenciosa capitulação uma espécie de vénia com que as artes principiavam a saudar o poderoso Senhor do Sentido Prático, o que lentamente se transfigura em Soberano da Guerra, e em Autómato da Destruição.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 198.
contrast between Veiga’s creative approach to the past and the manipulative
and reductionist use of it by nationalists will become apparent in clearer terms
in the following section of this chapter, where I demonstrate how Veiga’s
imagery of spectres opposes the discourse of heroes promoted by the ‘Estado
Novo.’

The last point I would like to make in relation to Veiga’s Italian journeys
has to do with the poet’s interpretation of cosmopolitanism at this stage in his
life. In the course of these trips, Tiago celebrates his anonymity and his lack
of cultural indexation, and he experiences in exhilarated fashion the fact that
neither his nationality nor his country seem to exist in his journeys. However,
at the same time, he cannot help using Portuguese references in order to
interpret the reality he encounters. So, for instance, a virgin in a painting by
Titian immediately reminds Veiga of the women of Venade, and examples of
miniature art he encounters elicit a comparison with the work of Machado de
Castro. Veiga is therefore represented as a ‘estrangeirado’, who thinks about
Portugal even as he tries to forget about it, seeing the country with a mix of
distant criticism and unwitting obsession, and at times even idealizing it.343 The
main impression that comes across from Veiga’s first Italian trip is that, in spite
of the inevitable comparisons between Portugal and Italy that emerge in the
text, the poet’s cosmopolitan stance is based on the establishment of a break
and on a dynamics of non-communication between two spaces: the foreign
being regarded as a centre of European civilization, whilst Venade is
represented in a distanced and idealized nostalgic fashion. In the next section,
I examine a very different and more productive take on cosmopolitanism
evidenced in the Biografia. In this instance, I analyse how the novel recovers
the idea it had initially explored that individual and familial connections across
different spaces and cultures may lead to a positive understanding and
practice of cosmopolitan identity. Moreover, I clarify the manner in which a
creative and personal appropriation of different cultural strands may help
counteract the discourse of nationalism.

343 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 158.
Ghosts versus Heroes

We saw earlier that Tiago Veiga’s childhood had been defined by migration and cultural translation across different geographies and social environments. In this context, traces of the past pertaining to diverse familial and cultural references acquired special relevance and were re-invented in the young Veiga’s early poetry. I now return to this topic and examine the ways in which the Biografia develops ideas of migration and cross-cultural translation, and I consider the effects of this in terms of the possible definition of a cosmopolitan stance, both local and transnational, which at the same time subverts artificial and monolithic views of identity. I pay special attention to the relation established in the novel between memory and phantasmatic apparitions, or ghosts, which is a recurrent feature of the Biografia and whose implications I elucidate. As I note, spectres from the past are likewise present in other works by Mário Cláudio, and indeed in different ways in texts by other Portuguese contemporary authors, so that this imagery needs to be contextualized more broadly in order for it to be adequately understood.

The reflection on these matters enacted in the Biografia is very much centered on the circulation and re-invention of memory across borders and it hinges on the interaction between diverse familial and local references. I would like to frame this discussion in reference to a transnational and transcultural memory studies approach, and I shall base my analysis mainly on proposals by De Cesari and Rigney.344

De Cesari and Rigney use a transnational framework in order to disrupt the naturalised association between roots, national borders and notions of belonging. In this respect, they argued: ‘Although the national frame has until recently been politically the most important and academically the most theorized, it co-exists and has long co-existed with multiple others.’345 Therefore, without excluding its relevance, the authors maintain that it would be productive to look for connections established before and beyond the nation.

and seek to identify the ‘non-linear trajectories and complex temporalities’ characterising the circulation of memory between different scales: familial, local, national and transnational. De Cesari and Rigney furthermore highlight the multidirectional nature of memory circulation and its distinctive cross-scale intersectionality. Finally, they speak of articulation as the expression in narrative form of material circulating across imagined or actual borders, with the goal of forming identity. In view of my reading of the *Biografia*, De Cesari and Rigney’s emphasis on the productive dimension of memory practices is especially relevant. The authors underline that memory is not necessarily nor primarily re-imagined for nostalgic purposes. On the contrary, in their view, memory possesses an ‘agentive’, ‘future-oriented’ quality, allowing for new yet unscribed links to be recognized. New approaches to memory moreover favour the identification of cross-cultural trends occurring before nations were formed and that were integrated in them, or of trends which are or were meant to overcome the nation-state. One last point made by De Cesari and Rigney is of special interest to me, and it relates to the role which the family scale has within the process of memory circulation. In this regard, Stephan Feuchtwang’s article ‘Haunting Memory: The Extension of Kinship Beyond the Nation’, published in the same volume edited by De Cesari and Rigney, illustrates the manner in which kinship and transgenerational connectedness are still relevant today, as they provide ‘enduring and crucial memory environments’ and involve ‘individual subjects in intense transpersonal relations that give them the sense of an extended temporality.’ In this respect, Feuchtwang highlights the persistence today of ‘another kind of memory, focusing on families and the intimate sphere, that transgresses or extends across national borders.’ This is what he calls haunting memories, which become part of the experience of the bearer and are often at work in

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personal archives, rituals and commemorations that present an alternative to the ones produced by state apparatuses.

Turning to the *Biografia*, and taking into account the proposals above, I now examine the ways in which the novel represents the circulation and re-invention of memory across borders. As we shall see, in the novel kinship enables the extension of memory beyond the nation, which affords Tiago Veiga and his second wife and fellow artist Ellen Rasmussen a diverse archive which they artistically re-invent in order to articulate a complex and multicultural identity, in a quasi-organic and inherently tense fashion. The latter process markedly contrasts with the constructions produced by the state apparatus of the ‘Estado Novo’, manifested in the 1940 exhibition of the Portuguese world (‘Exposição do Mundo Português’), which Veiga visits and comments on.

The chapter of the novel ‘Regresso ao clã’ depicts a new stage in the life of Tiago Veiga. It begins in London, where Veiga acts as personal secretary to António Ferro at the World Economic Conference, organized by the League of Nations in 1933. Veiga is again uncomfortable with his status of ‘homem-cruzeta’, an individual unable to assert himself and relegated to the role of secondary actor. In this instance, another visit to the National Gallery and an interview with Correggio’s painting ‘The Madonna of the Basket’, as the narrator meaningfully describes it, opens up a new avenue to the poet. Situated again in a limbo, Veiga decides to retrieve his Irish roots as a means to define his future. This decision signals the productivity of memory, but also the fact that, as Clifford argued, roots and routes are not in most cases entirely if at all distinguishable. In line with this, Veiga’s stay in Kilrush is marked both by the nostalgic idealization of a return to his mother’s origins and by ideas of cultural and genetic mixing. In this context, images of the earth, fertility and animality go hand in hand with clearer signifiers of maternity. For example,

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350 See: ‘Encontrava-se na National Gallery sem futuro para onde se dirigisse, e sem passado que alcançasse justificá-lo, na véspera de regressar a Portugal com o seu patrão do momento, o jornalista Ferro, e com a perspectiva de cair numa dessas pensões manhosas da periferia de Lisboa, ou na Casa dos Anjos a que julgara haver desistido de pertencer. A alternativa a semelhante fatalismo só poderia concretizar-se como que num recuo no tempo que o confirmasse num acervo de raizes, dotando-o simultaneamente do direito de singrar até um destino de claridade.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 273.
Veiga at one point states that his trip envisioned the reestablishment of the rhythm of a remote cradle (‘o ritmo do embalo de um berço remoto’), and later, as he marries Ellen Rasmussen, the church is represented as a primal womb (‘útero primacial’). Ellen herself has Irish and Nordic roots and she and her family are involved in the business of breeding horses, which brings to the fore the issue of genetic mixing. The point to retain here though is that, as Tiago Veiga and Ellen move to Venade, they carry with them a more diverse set of cultural references than the ones they previously had, so that the nostalgic idealization of a place of origin (Tiago’s) with which the chapter had begun ends up leading the characters to a situation of added complexity.

Tiago and Ellen’s decision to return to Venade takes place under the sign of complicated personal and cultural references and attachments. In these circumstances, both characters try to establish lines of continuity between Portugal and Ireland, and likewise to balance their adherence to traditions with the exercise of artistic freedom and independence.351

The two projects which Veiga and visual artist Ellen develop in common at this stage in their lives evidence the positive outcomes of their engagement with varied familial and cultural references. The latter is manifested in two artistic creations: Triunfo e Glória do Arcanjo São Miguel de Portugal and A Nave das Órcades. These are both local and transnational projects, since they explore for the most part rural and folkloric references which are the result of the circulation of people and ideas across borders, in the first instance of the artists themselves.

Triunfo e Glória do Arcanjo São Miguel de Portugal is inspired in the movement of the Celtic revival, specifically in the theatre of W. B. Yeats, whom Veiga and Ellen meet in Dublin. The work, which Veiga accepts is the expression of his rural idiosyncrasy, retrieves and re-invents the Portuguese

351 In this respect, Tiago is shown reflecting: ‘Cumprira ele a missão que os avatares, ou os genes, lhe haviam imposto, de regressar ao clã matricial, a fim de executar um solene rito de iniciação. E uma vez concluído o festival, o que se lhe exigia era que voasse pelos seus próprios meios, arredando de si qualquer intento de domesticar-lhe a liberdade. Identificava-se com o irlandismo que procurara, e cabia-lhe então dar testemunho dele, não de forma expressa, mas por via do exercício de uma certa conformação mental, no palco da vida que se lhe fosse revelando.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 281.
medieval hagiographic tradition, harking back to Gil Vicente, which is updated by Veiga both in its content and staging to suit his purposes of presenting a reflection on the human condition, enacted against the backdrop of the war raging in Europe and of a local epidemic of tuberculosis. The *Biografia* moreover explores parallels between Veiga’s work and the neo-romantic aesthetics and philosophy of Teixeira de Pascoaes, which Ellen interprets visually. Indeed, Ellen takes Lúcio, a patient of tuberculosis who appears by chance in Venade, as her model for the character of the archangel and, following roughly the poetic principles of Pascoaes, represents him as an individual characterised by his capacity to unite or suspend opposites. Thus, Lúcio is both human and angelic, good and evil, material and immaterial. This brief description shows us the mesh of references condensed in this work, which effectively corresponds to an excavation of layers of memory complemented by Ellen’s representation of Lúcio. This process is moreover based on the independent use of creativity and on artistic distancing. The latter is in fact a dominant feature of Tiago and Ellen’s engagement with memory and, in the *Biografia*, it is made to contrast markedly with the one characterising Inácio Manuel, the poet’s estranged father.

At the time when Tiago Veiga writes *Triunfo*, Inácio Manuel returns for a brief period to Venade, where he finds Tiago, Ellen and their son Thomas. Inácio’s interests nonetheless lie mostly in the chapel, which he aims to restore to its former condition. He is furthermore obsessed with the tombs of the family members, whose slabs he lifts in order to identify the people there interred:

> Mas não resistiu o torna-viagem a operar aquilo que se manifestava como uma tradição de família, o pontual levantamento das lajes tumulares, a fim de se verificar o estado do que se achava no fundo,

ou ao menos de levar a cabo uma espécie de compulsivo reconhecimento. Trazidas as ossadas à superfície, e não podendo identificá-las, inventou ele para cada carga delas uma personalidade aleatória, um tetravô que andara pelas Índias, ou uma tia afastadíssima que fora camareira da rainha D. Maria Francisca Isabel de Sabóia.\textsuperscript{353}

The restoration of the chapel and Inácio’s compulsive need to exhume and identify the bodies of his ancestors convey his conservative view of the traces of memory and of their relationship with identity. It is true that, given the impossibility of identifying the remains in each of the tombs, Inácio resorts to invention and storytelling, but he does seem to be fulfilling a restorative task, by which he would like concurrently to pay homage to his ancestors, to assert his identity and to ensure the survival of his own memory. For his part, Tiago reacts negatively to what he regards is his father’s imposing presence and endeavour. For Tiago Veiga, memory has to be re-invented creatively and thus made alive in the present. And so it is that the exhumations promoted by his father bring again to Veiga’s mind the figure of the boy Donato, whose bones had by then completely disappeared, and whom the poet proceeds to briefly identify with the character of Michael the Archangel.

\textit{A Nave das Órcades} is the second literary and visual artistic project shared by Tiago and Ellen, and it allows us to further explore the subject of the circulation and uses of memory in the \textit{Biografia}. The work is in the first instance inspired in the \textit{Orkneyinga Saga}, a book which Veiga had received as a present from Edith Sitwell. Additionally, the idea of writing the saga arose as Veiga discovered the pictures Ellen had taken of the bodies of recently deceased patients of tuberculosis being treated at the Sanatorium Marechal Carmona, located in Mozelos, Paredes de Coura. In \textit{A Nave das Órcades}, Veiga recovers the story and voices of the Viking men who had accompanied Count Rognvald to Galicia, whose faces he associates precisely with those of the patients photographed by Ellen. According to the narrator, the text corresponds to the slow pilgrimage of ghosts (‘lenta peregrinação de fantasmas’) to the places they had visited during their lifetimes, places which

\textsuperscript{353} Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, pp. 292-3.
Tiago Veiga knew well from his childhood excursions. Images of bodies coming back to life are recurrently explored at this point in the *Biografia*. This is apparent, for instance, in the process of revelation of pictures by Ellen: ‘E quando regressava ao seu estúdio, via emergir do banho da revelação um rosto mais, ora marcado pelo espanto da morte, ora perplexo perante o enigma da condição humana, ora determinado no limiar do percurso que se lhe abria. Moreover, we are told, the sagas which Veiga had collected presented many examples of dead people emerging from their tombs, images which had caused a great impression on Tiago, who by this time would frequently dream he was being haunted by the ghosts of the characters of the saga he was writing. Additionally, while Tiago Veiga writes *A Nave das Órcades*, he receives news of the passing of Inácio Manuel dos Anjos and Manuel Teixeira Gomes, respectively his biological father and the man who had wanted to take that role, both of whom he integrates into the work. And finally, after her wanderings and artistic experiments with Lúcio and the patients of the sanatorium, Ellen contracts tuberculosis and ultimately dies of that illness. In the last scene of the chapter ‘Vitória da peste branca’, Tiago and Thomas stand before Ellen’s dead body and the poet proceeds to take pictures of her, thus arguably converting his second wife into another of his ghosts.

The ghosts in the *Biografia* correspond to a diverse collection of references, pertaining to distinct folkloric landscapes and to people Tiago and

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354 ‘Principiava assim para Veiga a redacção daquilo que intitularia *A Nave das Órcades*, lenta peregrinação de fantasmas aos territórios que em vida tinham atravessado, e na qual o mítico castelo de Fraião, das excursões escolares da infância do nosso poeta, invadido pelas hordas de Rognvald após a derrocada dos seus muros, em consequência do fogo ateado às pilhas de lenha com que o habiam cingido, quase ridicilmente se decalçava no Sanatório chamado do Marechal Carmona.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 324.

355 ‘Assim prosseguia a escrita de *A Nave das Órcades*, palpitante do sangue que ia gelando nas veias, e da carne que devagar apodrécia. Alguns rostos persistiam por períodos longuíssimos, surgindo de súbito, muito nítidos, e a meio da noite, quando uma tenaz de dedos apertava o braço de Tiago Veiga, sacudindo-o até o largar ali, deitado na cama onde dormia sozinho, desperto e hirto, aguardando que lhe confiassem um recado que jamais se verbalizava. Descia ele então ao ateliar, voltava a enfrentar as *facies* impassíveis, e recolhia-se de novo para abraçar um sono enfim depurado dos espectros que vagueavam.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, pp. 331-2.

356 ‘Devolvido assim ao ramerrão da escrita da sua saga, dispunha Tiago de um novo par de rostos de finados, o do seu pai efectivo, e o daquele que se propusera como suplente, a adicionar à galeria das heróicas almas do outro mundo.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 330.
Ellen knew to different degrees, who are appropriated and re-invented in literary texts. And although Tiago Veiga refers to them as a gallery of heroic souls from another world (‘galeria das heróicas almas do outro mundo’), they are not heroes of the same kind as the ones represented in the ‘Exposição do Mundo Português.’ Indeed, after visiting the exhibition, organized by the ‘Estado Novo’ in 1940 in order to celebrate the regime’s vision of Portuguese history and culture, on the occasion of the coinciding anniversaries of the foundation of the kingdom of Portugal (1140) and of its effective independence from Spain (1640), Veiga comments on the monumentality and lack of depth of the characters portrayed, as well as on the hypocritical and partial perspective which in his view they conveyed. Salazar’s heroes are for Veiga like Salazar himself, hieratic figures who purposely ignored the crimes which they themselves committed, or which were otherwise committed in their name. Tiago’s ghosts, on the contrary, are both individual and collective, organic fusions of diverse references, but mostly they are appropriated and interpreted in the present in varied but not limiting ways.

Phantoms, which are present in other works by Mário Cláudio, such as *Meu Porto* and *Astronomia*, therefore relate to memory and to traces of the past, which are excavated in creative ways by Veiga and Ellen and which, not impeding dreams nor the exercise of individual will, accompany characters in their wanderings. In Cláudio’s work, phantoms are therefore not signifiers of trauma. They do not refer to unstated personal or collective secrets which characters would need to overcome, as is clearly the case in specific works by an author such as António Lobo Antunes, nor do phantoms necessarily

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358 In this respect, before embarking on another trip in 1932, this time to Guiné-Bissau, where Veiga, like many artists of the period, would attempt to no avail to find an idealized and exotic cultural simplicity removed from modern social arrangements, that of the ‘Felupes’, he is shown reflecting: ‘Mas um homem usa os sonhos que quer, e não os adereços que lhe pertencem. É com os seus fantasmas que percorre as sete partidas do mundo, e ainda que se mova descalço, e calhaus e espinhos lhe dilacerem os pés, pela luz de uma galáxia é que vai seguindo, se assim lhe segredar o contrito coração.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 243.

359 In this respect, consider for instance the recurrent and quasi obsessive representation of spectres in *Dicionário da Linguagem das Flores* (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2020), the most recently published novel by António Lobo Antunes.
denote the ruins of lost futures. Indeed, although the figure of Donato in particular may signify the failure constantly looming over Veiga’s work and life, and even though, as would be expected, the representation of phantoms in the *Biografia* comes across as somewhat eerie, phantoms play for the most part a positive role in the novel. Veiga’s ghosts are in fact very close to Jacques Derrida’s definition of spectres. For Derrida, spectres are figures which bridge the past, present and future, life and death, and with whom one enters into a conversation seemingly occurring outside of time. Furthermore, Derrida states, spectres demand responsible actions on the part of subjects and impose on them an obligation of justice. It is hard to determine what these would amount to in actual terms, but what remains clear is that Derrida sees the engagement with the past through spectres as a future-oriented task. In line with this, Joan Kirby maintained precisely that for Derrida morning is a future-oriented and unending conversation with the dead. As we have seen, multiple conversations with spectres are enacted in the *Biografia*, whose presence is both limiting and liberating, if ghosts are adequately understood as signifiers of intellectual and emotional challenges which need to be met creatively in the present. In this sense, Tiago Veiga himself becomes a spectre with whom the biographer Mário Cláudio enters into a somewhat tense but nonetheless fruitful conversation.

Returning to the initial argumentative line of this section, it is clear by now that family connections enable Tiago Veiga and Ellen Rasmussen to create works based on multiple personal and cultural references, pertaining to different time and space coordinates. Their art allows them to articulate their complex identities, which are made up of local, regional and transnational elements, a process which entails the creative exploration of the past. If there is a degree of nostalgia in Tiago and Ellen’s stances, and an implicitly

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assumed debt with respect to the past, both characters assert through their works their distinct visions and appropriate said elements in their own particular manners. Additionally, Tiago and Ellen’s engagement with ruins, ghosts and folklore, arguably constitutes a form of resistance. In the first instance, to the discourse of nationalism and to the propaganda of the ‘Estado Novo’, with its manipulative and monolithic notion of national identity. Moreover, through his artistic options, Tiago Veiga also resists an idea and practice of cosmo-politanism which he explicitly identifies with the provincial cosmo-politan attitude prevalent in Lisbon, ‘o campanário alfacinha’, as Veiga ironically calls it. The latter is characterised in the novel by the rejection of Portuguese culture and by the acritical desire to follow European cultural trends, and although Tiago criticizes this attitude, throughout his life he himself often falls prey to it. Tiago and Ellen’s folkloric and ruralist stance, which leads them to conceive their art as an auscultation of roots (‘auscultação de raízes’), both local and transnational, therefore stands against forms of cosmo-politanism that deny the importance of location, understood in all its complexity. Tiago and Ellen’s cosmo-politan or multicultural ruralism is clearly productive, and Veiga will recurrently follow this tack throughout his career. I delve briefly into these projects below, but for now I would like to stress that Tiago and Ellen’s artistic options, and especially their creative work on memory, also come across as an antidote to a perceived lack of orientation deriving from their condition as migrants. In fact, one notes in Tiago and Ellen’s works of this period an attempt to process the logic of constant mobility and change that characterise their lives. This explains two contrasting imageries present in the chapters of the work we have been considering: on the one hand, that of aimless drifting, and, on the other, of clearly delineated, inexorable and therefore justified trajectories.

While seemingly in exile in Venade, Tiago Veiga explores the Northwestern region of the Peninsula and detaches himself from what he perceives as being the dominant attitude in Lisbon cultural circles: ‘Das espaçadas excursões à Galiza, e sempre que transitava por Vigo, trazia ele uma resma de volumes recentes, assinados pelos que do lado de lá da fronteira prosseguiam, quase genericamente desprezados pelo campanário alfacinha, num trabalho de auscultação das raízes, bem mais sintonizado com o Norte da Europa do que com quanto na capital, ativamente preocupada em não perder o comboio, se reputava de dernier cri.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 333.
As we have seen abundantly so far, Tiago Veiga’s life is characterised by stages of uncertainty and disorientation, followed by those in which he develops a sense of purpose, in general associated with specific literary projects. The period in which Veiga writes *Triunfo e Glória do Arcanjo São Miguel de Portugal* and *A Nave das Órcades* is particularly productive, so much so that, according to the narrator, Veiga sees the process of writing these works as the translation of pre-written and therefore necessary texts. Shortly after he begins to write *Triunfo*, Veiga is shown reflecting that the way the words flowed from his pen confirmed his belief that all texts are pre-written and that the task of artists is merely to reproduce a pre-existing work: ‘... não há texto que não se encontre pré-escrito, competindo apenas a quem o assinar transplantá-lo de cima para baixo, e de trás para a frente.’ With respect to *A Nave das Órcades*, Veiga further states that the lines of the saga seemed to come to him as if the work had already been written and he were only transcribing it: ‘como que num texto escrito já, e que a ele tão-só competisse transcrever.’\(^{364}\) Alongside this understanding of writing as the unveiling of pre-written texts, the *Biografia* activates at this stage a distinctly Claudian cosmic imagery. It begins with a representation by Veiga of his daughter Judith dos Anjos as a poem he had written, followed by Veiga’s identification of Judith with a shooting star whose slow trajectory through the galaxy he observed.\(^{365}\) These passages lead to the following reflection, occurring after the completion of *Triunfo*:

\(^{364}\) Consider below the full descriptions of the processes of the writing of *Triunfo e Glória do Arcanjo São Miguel de Portugal* and *A Nave das Órcades*, respectively: ‘O nome das personagens, Alísio e Margarida, Macário e Redegunda e Silvestre, logo decorreriam desse mecanismo, confirmando-o na convicção antiga, segundo a qual não há texto que não se encontre pré-escrito, competindo apenas a quem o assinar transplantá-lo de cima para baixo, e de trás para a frente.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 282; ‘Aquele horror que se apoderaria de Tiago, sozinho numa área que raramente frequentava, e transido por um frio nevoeiro onde de longe a longe fulguravam as lâminas das espadas, e as asas que encimavam os chuços, misturou-se-lhe às seguintes linhas, afloradas como que num texto escrito já, e que a ele tão-só competisse transcrever [...]’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 323.

\(^{365}\) ‘O destino da filha surgia-lhe como mais um poema de que fora autor, e que no âmago das noites se lhe revelava. Num céu estrelado e silenciosíssimo desloca-se, igual a uma estrela cadente que houvesse escolhido a lentidão, aquela rapariga, a sua menina, colocando cuidadosamente um pé à frente do outro, e progredindo rumo às galáxias para além das galáxias.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 309.
Suspeitava Tiago Veiga de que se lhe transmitia assim o conhecimento de extensões diversas das da terra que diariamente pisava, e integrava-se como mais um na assembleia das personagens que criara, votado a idêntico destino, e no limiar da descoberta comum do sentido de cada trajectória, descrita pelas esferas celestes.  

Like in other works by Mário Cláudio, such as *O Pórtico da Glória* and *Camilo Broca*, here too we find the desire on the part of a poet to fashion a text that will allow him finally to understand his own life and the life of others, both of which are represented as moving bodies in the skies. This is the true purpose of the medieval mystery play Veiga writes, as war devastates Europe and tuberculosis his own country. The seed of the imagery and concept of *cosmos* is present here. The latter is associated with order, harmony and beauty, and it is opposed to the notion of the galaxy, which is linked to disorder and wandering. As I shall argue, the idea of *cosmos*, which Cláudio only fully develops in *Astronomia*, activates Platonic-Pythagorean concepts in order to construct a proto-religious imagery which subverts propositions that form the very basis of secularism, the first of which corresponds to the separation between the human subject and the world. As we shall later see, the desire to define a meaningful *cosmos*, through poetry and music in particular, is consistently upended in the *Biografia*, a novel in which feelings of disorder and of being adrift always return to and become prevalent in the protagonist’s life.

Further Excavations

As I mentioned above, in his career Tiago Veiga pursues projects that reflect an attempt on the part of the poet to represent the circulation of people and ideas across space and time, and likewise to explore how said process is embedded in the cultural manifestations of specific locations. Veiga therefore engages in what the narrator describes as excavations of layers of culture,

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367 For an example of this, see the following passage: ‘E se a ideia do nosso poeta consistia em radicar-se com o miúdo no chalezito do Caramulo, em acompanhá-lo aos tratamentos do Sanatório Infantil, e em matricular-lo em Outubro na escola primária local, o destino iria contrariar todos esses projectos, deixando logo à chegada o nosso homem incerto quanto ao ritmo dos dias a vir, e o garoto, atulhado numa barafunda de rélicas de aviões bélicos que a Grã-Bretanha produzia, desesperadamente à deriva.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 351.
expressed in customs and in diverse folkloric imagery, pertaining either to a Northern European or to a Mediterranean cultural landscape. By this, Veiga aims to reflect on continuities across space and time, established before and beyond national boundaries, and, more importantly, to think about his own cultural indexation and individual trajectory. Among the texts included in this trend of Veiga’s literary production, we find, by chronological order: Viagem de Brandão Navegador à Ilha do Paraíso; Martírio e Apoteose de Frei Redento da Cruz; Os Deuses do Saibro; and Vida e Obra do Peregrino Famiano.

As Soares argued, although these works activate a religious imagery, they display mainly an interest in folklore and culture, not in religion per se. This does not mean of course that, in spite of Veiga’s characteristic scepticism regarding all manner of beliefs (political, artistic and religious), the poet does not evidence at different stages in his life a specific interest in religious matters. Additionally, one should note a couple of important differences between these and the projects I examined in the earlier section. Firstly, in these works the links between familial, regional and transnational cultural elements become progressively feebler; secondly, there is a clearer insistence here in local and rural cultural references than before, ultimately amounting to an unproductive fetishization of the local. These facts arguably relate to a more static interpretation of material which, coupled with Veiga’s typical indecision, intuitive nature and increasing difficulty in reflecting about his life, may explain the apparently less fortunate results of each of the endeavours. I say apparently because, as is mostly the case with Veiga’s works, I am drawing conclusions on the basis of descriptions of Veiga’s works presented by the narrator, and not on the grounds of the actual texts, which for the most part remained incomplete or were destroyed by the author himself.

Martírio e Apoteose de Frei Redento da Cruz is the project that provides the most interesting reflections afforded in the Biografia on the circulation and layering of cultures, and likewise on the purpose of Veiga’s endeavours. The work is the result of Veiga’s research into the culture of the region of Minho,

by which the poet intended to accomplish an archaeology of the residues of former eras (‘faina de escavação dos resíduos das eras’), in an attempt to unveil the mythical roots of a whole ethnic context (‘raízes míticas de todo um contexto étnico’), which included the consideration of nomadism and its consequences. The narrator describes how, in order to achieve these goals, Veiga would take on the role of amateur anthropologist and study the popular festivals he had formerly despised, in search precisely of the accumulation of diverse layers of culture which in his view they evidenced. The ongoing nature of this process of layering is illustrated by the effort of negotiation of cultural elements shown by people who returned to the region after having stayed away for extended periods, on account of emigration or military service, for instance.

However, in the face of his difficulties in situating himself, as the years go by, Veiga’s tendency is to adopt a more extreme rural outlook. This is evident in Vida e Obra do Peregrino Famiano. The work is described by the narrator as a fantasy that traversed nations and eras and was meant to be an homage to Europe. In the work, Veiga wished to give voice to the phantom of the pilgrim and miracle worker Famiano, whom he conjectured was also the last of the druids. Veiga himself at this stage takes on the role of druid, gathering children in the Casa dos Anjos, telling them stories and again seeking to communicate with nature. On these developments in Veiga’s trajectory, the narrator comments: ‘[…] irritava-me aquilo que eu pressentia como uma deriva da sua personalidade poética, cada vez menos cosmopolita, e cada vez mais banalizada pelas zonas de expressão que se lançara a percorrer e mais arreigado a um misticismo popular.’ So, for the biographer,

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369 In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 507.
370 ‘[…] e deitou-se a concorrer às romarias que até então desprezara, mas que lhe pareciam enfim excelentes amostragem da acumulação de camadas culturais inúmeras. Escrevinhava folhas e folhas de papel de cópia, registando um abundante léxico de serviço à sua arqueologia, e aos territórios a ela limitrofes, utensílios com que se propunha fabricar um extenso texto, comprensivo de si, e da pátria pequena em que se inscrevia.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, pp. 494-5.
371 See: ‘[…] fantasia que atravessava nações e eras desencontradas, conformando aquilo que o nosso homem pomposamente planeava como «uma homenagem à grande Europa».’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 655.
372 See: The recently published Responso de Balbindinha Algebrista de Venade is a clear example of this trend. See: Tiago Veiga, Responso de Balbindinha Algebrista de Venade, ed. by José Vieira (Paredes de Coura: Centro Mário Cláudio, 2019).
instead of representing an opening of horizons, the work reveals Veiga’s limitations and closure to the world. Even if, following De Cesari and Rigney, Veiga is attempting here to find connections across spaces and cultures, unlike what had occurred in the previous stage in his life, in the context of the projects he shared with Ellen Rasmussen, the poet’s efforts are shown to be progressively less fruitful, arguably on account of his conservative and inward looking stance.

*Os Deuses do Saibro*, the final of Veiga’s transnational projects, is developed by the poet as the post-revolutionary period unfolds in Portugal in May 1974. In this instance, Veiga receives news of the discovery of two bronze statues off the coast of Calabria and, after witnessing first-hand the demonstrations sweeping the country, he again decides to turn to the past and create a literary work based on the statues. As the narrator states, this new venture is a manifestation of Veiga’s protean character (‘proteica personalidade’) and with it the poet aimed to accomplish a slow incursion into a European collective unconscious (‘operando uma lenta incursão a uma parte do inconsciente colectivo europeu, ou proto-europeu’), corresponding to an archaeology of European Mediterranean culture.373 What becomes clear as the narrative progresses is that, by reflecting on the passage of the eras and resurrecting ancient European practices and rituals, Veiga is in fact attempting to think about his own and about Portuguese identity in relation to Europe. In fact, *Os Deuses do Saibro* is a tryptic that equates to a revision and justification of the life of Tiago Veiga, and the two statues, which Veiga designates as «Zarolho» and «Vidente», become guides with whom he enters into a conversation.374 Against the backdrop of the Carnation Revolution, whose crowds and painted walls are explicitly referenced in the novel, Veiga again dreams of finding a key that will allow him to understand his trajectory and to situate himself. However, much like what had occurred throughout his life,

374 ‘E mercê de semelhante operação indagava ele do lugar de jazida da «chave cristalina», capaz de conferir salvador sentido ao «registo sísmico na noite do laboratório». «Vidente» orientá-lo-ia para um amanhã de que apenas se lobrigavam os esparsos sinais, percorrendo-se as ruas de uma «cidade que se inventa inventada», e na qual se levantavam entre «orais multidões» «paredes onde a tinta corre».’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 553.
these goals are undermined by Veiga’s erratic behaviour and undecisive nature, in the artistic, social and political spheres.

We saw in this chapter how the representation of memory and of its uses in the *Biografia* is related to the subjects of migration and of the complex processes of identification established by the main characters in relation to multiple references of space and time. We also saw how the reflection on memory proposed in the work intersects with the question of cosmopolitanism. The *Biografia* presents for the most part a positive understanding of memory and its uses; however, this view slowly fades as the novel progresses. The exploration of the processes of circulation of people and cultures across borders helps illustrate the intricate identification processes at work as a consequence of migration; complementarily, the novel works on the idea that all local cultures are inherently multi-layered, and indeed multicultural, further driving the point of the complexity of identity in any given place or time. The positive engagement with the past is moreover linked in the novel with a creative and individual appropriation of memory through art, designed precisely to enable characters to articulate their multicultural attachments. In this context, the imageries of ruins and ghosts relate to individual acts of creative engagement of the past, which concurrently put the simplistic discourse of nationalism and fascism to the test. Nevertheless, as the novel progresses, we witness an important shift in the attitude of the protagonist. Although Veiga still tries to imagine cultural interactions established across wider landscapes, his appropriation of the material at his disposal is increasingly conservative and therefore leads the poet to an extreme ruralist stance, which arguably stresses his social and cultural isolation. *Os Deuses do Saibro*, Veiga’s final transnational project, is somewhat more interesting, in that it fuses memory with current individual and collective concerns. Nonetheless, the statues ultimately prove to be unreliable guides and Veiga is not successful in his quest to situate and understand himself through his final archaeological project.

*Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* addresses important and contentious matters concerning a politics of memory, reflecting on how memory can be used to serve different, and often opposing, views and objectives. On the one
hand, the threat of the manipulation of the past for political purposes, frequently associated with nostalgia and with a limiting logic, is recognised in the novel. Additionally, the *Biografia* highlights the process by which memory can be turned into a fixed and idealized kernel of identity and invested with a backward looking and conservative zeal, making it the basis for deeply unproductive stances. On the other hand though, the *Biografia* also shows how memory can be used in a critical manner, as a means to look for alternatives to the current neo-liberal global order, and indeed as an antidote to reductionist discourses on identity. I would like to suggest therefore that the *Biografia* illustrates vividly De Cesari and Rigney’s analysis of how memory practices, understood within a transnational framework, may allow for the articulation of complex identities via the detection and configuration of lines of continuity and tension across spaces at different scales, a process which has the concurrent effect of subverting the discourse nationalisms and populisms. Nevertheless, the novel also drives the point that even transnational approaches to memory may be more or less productive, depending on whether they are informed by a conservative and limiting stance or, alternatively, favour a critical articulation of identities as a way of tackling current issues and challenges, and ultimately as a means to defining more balanced modes of conviviality at the local, national and global scales.
Chapter 4: Becoming Bartleby (followed by life as art)

In the previous chapters, I argued that *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* is fundamentally concerned with two ideas, those of mobility and change, as well with the effects which these conditions have on the characters of the novel, especially on the protagonist. While highlighting the specific semiperipheral indexation of the reflection on modern subjectivity proposed in the *Biografia*, I identified in Tiago Veiga what I called, following Bhabha, a migrant consciousness. The latter brings with it a reflective stance, which is projected onto and arguably fuels the poet’s artistic endeavours. Furthermore, migration and mobility relate to Veiga’s travels, and are complemented by the acceleration of the pace of change, all of which are inextricably bound to the need expressed by the poet to re-invent himself throughout his life, as well as being mirrored in the broader social and political landscape depicted. In this context, tensions arise between notions of home and not-home, belonging and estrangement, tradition and innovation, facts which lead us to the issue of autonomy and independence versus community and attachment. In this chapter, I take my analysis a step further and I examine how and why Tiago Veiga assumes the role of a man without qualities, being represented as an individual unable to define his voice and to assert himself productively in his life and works. This issue is closely related to Veiga’s transformation into a Bartleby, a process which I examine and interpret here in reference to a general commentary on identity formation and individual action within the social and cultural conditions portrayed in the novel. After this first clarification, I delve into the strategies followed by the protagonist in order to cope with his challenging situation. We have already seen how the re-invention of memory achieved in Veiga’s literary creations constitutes for the poet an important coping mechanism, but there are others I have already alluded to and to which I now give proper attention. Among them, we find: the communion with nature; representations of animality and childhood; the tense exploration by Veiga of his relations with others; explorations of mysticism and of the idea of life as a pilgrimage; and finally, Veiga’s encounters with artistic works and his ultimate desire to have his life transformed into a work of art. These ideas reveal the
Romantic vein characterising Tiago Veiga, which he himself hinted at. In this respect, critics such as Álvaro Manuel Machado and José Vieira have sought, however briefly, to elucidate the Romantic traces emerging in Veiga’s character and poetic practice. Machado, for example, sketched a broad outline of Cláudio’s work, in which he identified the tension between the contrasting notions of hermeticism, of which he finds examples in the Biografia, and those of nature, beauty, and truth, as they are produced by the imagination, emerging for instance in the cosmic imagery of Astronomia. On his part, Vieira connects Veiga with Romanticism through the figure of Álvaro de Campos. In his view, Veiga would express to a more extreme degree than Campos what he calls the crisis of the ‘unity of the subject’, which the romantics would have originally articulated. Although recognising the importance of this line of inquiry, to which I will in fact contribute with my own specific proposals, I would like to consider these matters from a broader perspective. My reading of the novel at this stage is informed for the most part by Hartmut Rosa’s theory of resonance, which the author relates to social acceleration and which provides him with a lens that enables a revision of the history of modern thought and cultural production.

Rosa defined late modern societies as being characterized by an acceleration caused by three elements: technical acceleration (resulting from the introduction of new technologies and from the improvement of existing ones), the acceleration of social change, and the acceleration of the pace of life. According to Rosa, technical acceleration increases the pace of social

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376 In this respect, see: ‘Tiago Veiga é o que vem depois do século XX. É o agudizar da crise da unidade do sujeito, o filho de um tempo caótico e paradoxal. A crise da publicação e do público, em Veiga, advém de um esteio que passa por Campos e remonta aos vates do Romantismo primeiro. Se os românticos e os modernos querem surpreender, Veiga não deixa de o fazer, mas invertendo esses papéis, tornando-se discreto e fugaz, ao jeito de Pessoa. Se os românticos e os modernos pretendiam criar uma nova arte, quebrar a tradição e o passado de modo a atingirem uma nova originalidade, Veiga, por seu turno, habita a substância do tempo e, como um grande mestre, cumpre o designio que George Steiner refere em Presenças Reais: o de «aprendermos a ser de novo humanos». In José Vieira, ‘Do ser heterónimo depois de Pessoa - o caso de Tiago Veiga,’ p. 122.
377 Hartmut Rosa, Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World.
change, which leads to the perceived acceleration of the pace of life and to the perception of scarcity of time, which in turn motivate further technical acceleration. In these circumstances, subjects are confronted with a multiplicity of choices which they are not able to experience in their lifetimes. For Rosa, the alteration of the tempo of social and cultural change is evident in contemporary societies and leads to the erosion of the conditions and institutions that in modern societies helped define ‘a priori substantial identities’, the content of which was determined by one’s place in long-lasting social structures. These are therefore replaced by a posteriori, situational identities, dependent on individual choices.378 Lately, Rosa further researched the effects which the conditions defined above had on individuals and he came up with his theory of alienation and resonance.379

I argue here that Rosa’s interconnected theories of acceleration and resonance provide valuable insights which help elucidate fundamental aspects of the Biografía, a novel whose concern is primarily late modern subjectivity. To be more precise, I maintain that Rosa’s notion of alienation helps explain Veiga’s pervading sense of disorientation, his contradictory view of personal attachments, and his frustrated projects. In addition, all of the strategies implemented by Veiga in order to understand and cope with his complex situation are designed to achieve resonance, as it is defined by Rosa. To be able to adequately present my case, I now sketch out the main elements of Rosa’s theory.

On the basis of a comprehensive array of data originating from different disciplines (biology, neurobiology, psychology, sociology, to name but a few), Rosa proposes the concepts of resonance and alienation as basic and complementary modes of relating to the world (world designates here all things external to subjects, as well as their own bodies),380 which in turn are favoured

380 See: ‘World in this sense may include other people, artifacts, and natural objects, as well as perceived totalities such as nature, the universe, history, God, life, and even one’s own body and emotions.’ In Hartmut Rosa, Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World, p. 195.
or impinged upon by specific social arrangements or formations. Rosa defines resonance as ‘a kind of relationship to the world, formed through affect and emotion, intrinsic interest, and perceived self-efficacy, in which subject and world are mutually affected and transformed.’\textsuperscript{381} Resonance therefore depends on the establishment of responsive relationships, meaning that within resonant relationships there is always a degree of tension and inaccessibility between subjects and the world around them. Consequently, subjects must be sufficiently closed in order to retain their own voice, and sufficiently open to transform and to be transformed by the world. Finally, Rosa stresses that resonance is not a positive or negative emotional state, but a mode of relation leading to transformation. The concept of alienation is harder to define, Rosa argues, in part because it has a long history in Marxist thought and critical theory, but also because it has been so over-used that it became too vague a notion. Alienation is defined by Rosa as a relation of relationlessness, in which the subject and the world ‘confront each other with indifference and hostility (repulsion) and thus without inner connection.’\textsuperscript{382} In the context of relationships of alienation, subjects cannot transform nor can they be transformed by the world, which appears to them as mute. Rosa concludes by stating that resonance and alienation are intimately connected, since resonance presupposes a degree of inaccessibility and contradiction, and since furthermore it ‘is the momentary appearance, the flash of a connection to a strong source of evaluations in a predominantly silent and often repulsive world.’\textsuperscript{383}

Finally, for Rosa, resonant relationships vary ‘according to the segment of the world involved’\textsuperscript{.384} In this respect, he identifies three main axes of resonance, which are interrelated and whose schematic differentiation is, Rosa recognises, admittedly artificial: the horizontal, corresponding to all social relationships, including friendships, as well as familial, romantic, and even political relationships; the diagonal, referring to relationships established with the world of things and within the sphere of work; and finally, the vertical,

\textsuperscript{381} Hartmut Rosa, Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World, p. 174.
\textsuperscript{382} Hartmut Rosa, Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World, p. 184.
\textsuperscript{383} Hartmut Rosa, Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World, p. 185.
\textsuperscript{384} Hartmut Rosa, Resonance. A Sociology of Our Relationship to the World, p. 195.
which includes religion, nature, art, and likewise general and personal history (biography).

The definitions of resonance and alienation proposed by Rosa may contain questionable and even illogical propositions, relating for instance to the role of positive or negative emotions within the transformative dynamics of resonance. Likewise, the idea of spatial mobility seems to be absent from Rosa’s theories of acceleration and, consequently, of resonance and alienation, which is surprising, given the importance that mobility and migration have within any theory of modernity. Nonetheless, the concepts and the dynamics presented are important instruments to analyse social and cultural realities. The same can be said of Rosa’s crucial statement that the current conditions of social acceleration induce in subjects a perception of alienation and elicit in them strategies designed to achieve resonance. Going beyond Bauman’s concept of fluidity, Rosa describes the mode of operation of present post-industrial societies as that of dynamic stabilization, by which individuals and collectives change according to a logic of acceleration and competition for resources (material and symbolic). The subjective consequences of these processes at the individual level are the emphasis on autonomy, authenticity and personal re-invention, which in Rosa’s view favour alienation. Indeed, as individuals are required to engage in processes of re-invention of themselves, they may find it hard to balance rigidity and shapelessness, order and disorder, attachment and isolation, in reference both to their own selves and the world. Likewise, the issue of self-efficacy (the ability to transform and to be transformed by the world) or lack thereof is crucial here.

I now turn to the *Biografia*, which I interpret in reference to Rosa’s framework. I argue that Tiago Veiga’s problems derive precisely from his difficulties in finding the point of balance (or resonance) between order and disorder (of the self and the world), rigidity and shapelessness, and likewise between attachment and isolation, a situation which in turn leads to a perceived lack of self-efficacy and ultimately to Veiga’s suicide. This reflection will bring me to the issue of the crisis of language and the Bartleby. After considering these matters, I focus on the strategies used by Veiga to achieve
a more productive relationship to the world, which as I demonstrate fit perfectly into the axes of resonance (horizontal and vertical) proposed by Rosa.

The Man Without Qualities Becomes Bartleby

Tiago Veiga's life ends with the poet's suicide by hanging. The consecutive descriptions of his death scene, with Tiago’s body dangling next to the blank sheets of paper that had fallen from the desk he had toppled while hanging himself, and of his burial, which is immediately followed by the biographer’s expressed wish to frequent the traces of the recently deceased man, signify both the frustration of Veiga’s artistic projects and likewise prefigure the biographer’s work. After Veiga’s interment, the narrator affords the following commentary on the poet’s life, which arguably constitutes his epitaph:

In the excerpt, a connection is clearly established between the suicide of the poet and his inability to fulfil his literary ambitions. The latter is in turn explained by the constant postponement on the part of Veiga of his potential, which is related to the undefined nature of his character, otherwise manifested in his desire for anonymity. Veiga’s anonymous resting place, his literal non-inscription in an unmarked grave, reveals the root cause of his problems and demise, that is, the poet’s incapacity to situate himself and to tentatively articulate a worldview or stance.

385 ‘Por um insólito apetite de frequentar o rasto do morto que eu amara tão mal, quando se me impunha testemunhar-lhe a afeição que de facto lhe dedicava, demorei-me ali o mais possível.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 705.
386 Ibidem.
387 We can speculate that the year of 1892 inscribed in Veiga’s grave references indirectly the work Só, by António Nobre. Nobre saw his only work published while he was in Paris in that year, and it contains traits that arguably relate it to the aesthetics and worldview tentatively expressed by Tiago
I seek to demonstrate here that the crisis of language evident in Veiga’s life, and his consequent suicide, are the expression of a troubled relationship between the poet and the world he lives in, which affects his identity and which I argue should be understood in reference to his wandering conduct and to the wider social conditions he experienced.

As we saw in the previous chapters, Veiga’s wandering conduct and repeated personal re-invention are understood by the poet as affirmations of his autonomous self in search of authenticity of being and expression. However, they often lead to feelings of loneliness and disorientation, and to the perceived lack of definition of character and of self-efficacy on the part of the protagonist, to adopt Rosa’s vocabulary. Veiga the chameleon will recurrently see himself as a coat hanger (‘homem-cruzeta’) and later as a puppet (‘títere’), that is, as someone lacking free will, understood as control over himself and his actions. In sum, Veiga sees himself intuitively as someone who does not possess the abilities (or qualities) that would enable him to fulfil his main goal of exercising his freedom in order to forge an identity. As I mentioned above, it becomes clear throughout the novel that Veiga’s predicament is related to his incapacity to situate and understand himself in relation to diverse cultural references and attachments, and likewise to the several possibilities afforded by the multiplicity of choices at his disposal. In

Veiga. Indeed, situated between neo-romanticism and modernism, Só shows how the experience of living abroad leads the poetic subject to the idealization of rural and provincial Portugal and especially of his childhood, elements which are filtered through memory. In the work, which is patently melancholic and decadent, the cultivation of traditional forms gives way to innovation, via colloquialism, and confessionalism and biographical identifications are undermined by ironic strategies of self-representation. We can again speculate that, by referencing Nobre, the Biografia is perhaps positing that the poet affords an aesthetic and existential model and inspiration for the creation of the fictional poet Tiago Veiga. In line with this, one can argue that, like Veiga, Nobre is in his own right a Bartleby, in the sense that he wrote only one book, having died of tuberculosis at a very young age. To these reflections one should add that Cláudio’s obsession with António Nobre is well documented, a fact which is attested by the fact that Cláudio edited and prefaced two books of poems by Nobre: António Nobre. Alicerce, seguinte de Livro de Apontamentos (Lisboa: Imprensa Nacional Casa da Moeda, 1983), and Poesia Completa (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2000). The first of these works is especially interesting, since the notes on the poems written by Cláudio, full as they are of biographical details, are somewhat evocative of the ones present in the Biografia. Additionally, Cláudio wrote Nobre’s photobiography: António Nobre, 1867-1900, Fotobiografia – Mário Cláudio (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2001); likewise, two original works by Cláudio are inspired in Nobre’s life and work: the play Noites de Anto. Alegoria em Sete Quadros (Lisboa: Rolim, 1988), and, containing some references to Nobre and to his poetic landscape, the collection of poems Dois Equinóciios (Lisboa: Campo das Letras, 1996).
other words, Veiga finds it impossible to balance rigidity and shapelessness, order and disorder, attachment and isolation, elements which not by chance are essential in the context of Rosa’s theory of alienation and resonance.

Rosa defines fear of and desire for the world as fundamental aspects of individuals’ resonant and alienated relationships to the world. In this context, subjects may fear either the loss of the world or losing themselves in the world. With respect to individuals, both an extremely hardened and closed or, alternatively, an extremely open and fluid stance, create the conditions for alienation. Regarding the world, the perception of too much fixity or, alternatively, of too much fluidity also produce alienation. Rosa further develops his arguments in reference to Franz Riemann’s four basic forms of anxiety and Émile Durkheim’s examination of the social causes of suicide, theories in which he finds parallels.

For Riemann, the four possible forms of anxiety (identified by Rosa as modes of alienation) relate to the two axes of attachment and order. So, a schizoid personality refuses attachments, whilst a depressive personality is uncomfortable with lack of attachments. Complementarily, a hysterical personality fears ‘a fixed, rigid and overly regulated order that makes it difficult to breathe’, whilst a compulsive personality ‘tends to be defined by a fear of chaos or complete disorder arising from erratic change.’

As for Durkheim, Rosa begins with the idea that he conceived suicide as ‘the expression and effect of a disturbance in the balance of social forces with respect to how subjects relate to the world.’ Said disturbance is established within the axes of relation (integration) and order (regulation). In this context, egotistic suicide derives from a lack of social relationships, whilst altruistic suicide is the result of being totally absorbed by and surrendering completely to social ties. Fatalistic suicide, in turn, is the result of a form of ‘radical overregulation and regimentation that leaves the individual no room to breathe,’ and anomic suicide the consequence of a complete lack of social norms and values that might limit human desires and give them a sense of

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389 Ibidem.
direction. According to Rosa, resonance is to be found at a point of equilibrium between the extremes identified by Riemann and Durkheim, in relation both to individuals and social arrangements.

I now look to show how the issue of the negotiation between order and disorder, autonomy and attachment plays out in the *Biografia*, as well as to illustrate its connection with Veiga’s perceived lack of efficacy and with his ultimate demise. Before moving forward though, I should clarify that, more than proposing a psychological assessment of Tiago Veiga, I am interested in demonstrating how Veiga is a means by which Cláudio examines the subjective implications of a specific set of social arrangements, as they are manifested in a semiperipheral site.

The sequence of chapters ‘Esfinge Magra’ and ‘Terramoto 1930’, which narrate the process leading up to Veiga’s first suicide attempt, is exemplary of the dynamics I have just described. In ‘Esfinge Magra’, we find Veiga back in Lisbon, after another failed artistic and professional project. His state of mind is sombre, as he begrudges the fact that he inhabits what in his view is a mediocre capital distanced from the itineraries of Europe. Moreover, he is torn between indecision and the hope instilled by a vague notion of self-discovery. The contrast between Veiga’s concurrent desires for attachment and autonomy, the latter associated precisely with a project of self-discovery or self-fashioning, is condensed in the following passage, in which Veiga is depicted in his rented room of a cheesy boarding house (‘pensão’) located in the avenue Almirante Reis, reflecting on his daughter and life goals:

Tomava-se Veiga do pânico da solidão, metido no quarto inóspito, em cujas vidraças também tamborilava a chuva, e decidia que haveria de ir buscar a rapariga para viverem juntos, quando fosse ela mais crescida, e se bastasse a si mesma. Mas logo se temia da perda daquela ignorância do amanhã em que se lhe transformara a existência, e que simultaneamente conformava um risco e uma vitória.

Veiga’s panicked reaction in the face of solitude gives rise to the evocation of an idealized and peaceful family life with Judith, a desire projected by Veiga

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into the poems he writes at this time, in which he re-invents classical fables, and which he dedicates to his daughter. However, as had occurred in Paris, the poet gives in to the appeal of uncertainty and adventure associated with personal discovery and re-invention.

In any case, the portrait we have of Veiga during this period is that of an undefined subject, who meaningfully lives in a nondescript boarding house, a non-place to quote Augé, where he carves out a vague and little noticed figure (‘... sem que a sua presença se tornasse amplamente reparada’). If in the boarding house Veiga’s identity is undefined (‘... no prédio da Almirante Reis, no qual arrendara o quarto, a identidade do nosso homem se não recortava com suficiente precisão’), the same occurs in the literary circles of the city, where the poet’s emotional neutrality and his perceived proximity to Pessoa serve as a pretext for Almada Negreiros to dub him ‘Esfinge Magra’. Veiga is characterised for the most part by his muteness, being seen by others as a blank canvas, that is, as an individual who is supposedly able to become anyone’s imitator.

In spite of his decision to exercise his autonomy and to re-invent his personality, or indeed as a consequence of his chameleonic demeanour, Veiga is doubtful about his abilities to fulfil his projects and about what the best course of action might be. This explains the lack of definition of his character, and also why he retreats into the self-effacement, neutrality, and openly sought oblivion noted above, an attitude which, apart from his general behaviour, is manifested in the poet’s decision to ask the recipients of his letters to burn them. Additionally, as we just noted, the option for autonomy, non-attachment and self-recreation competes with the desire for resonance, which often

392 See: ‘O leão, o rato, o elefante, a lebre e a tartaruga amochavam, muito reconciliados, à volta da cama onde o nosso homem se deitava, o sono apropriava-se dele, e ouviam-se ao longe os sinos roucos, das igrejas da Madalena e São Nicolau.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 217.


394 In this respect, see: ‘Falava-se por conseguinte de «um tal Esfinge Magra» que andava a dambular pela Baixa, mas sem se distinguir com exactidão a figura a que deveria afivelar-se título assim.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 219.

corresponds to the delusion of creating a family unit and, in more general terms, to the idealization of childhood.

‘Esfinge Magra’ ends with an important reflection on lack of placedness and likewise on contrasting options regarding the configuration of personal identity. First, we are told, Veiga sees himself somewhere between the generation of the first modernists and that of the ‘Presença’, and therefore fails to find his place in the literary circles of Lisbon. More significantly, Veiga seems divided between two approaches to identity, in his view epitomised by Fernando Pessoa and Florbela Espanca respectively:

Se de uma vez divisara a imagem de Fernando Pessoa, repetindo-se até ao infinito nos espelhos do Montanha, sucederia então o inverso, e patenteava-se-lhe Florbela presa na sua própria figura, incapaz de se projectar nas láminas espelhadas que a rodeavam.

In the passage, the utter fluidity and disorder of Pessoa, a poet multiplied in an endless hall of mirrors, is opposed to Florbela Espanca’s self-centred fixity. Despite his appreciation for both authors and characters, Veiga cannot tread any of the routes proposed by them. What ‘Esfinge Magra’ shows us is that Veiga must find a balance between fixed and fluid models of subjectivity, as well as between an ordered and disordered world, and finally between his desire for and fear of attachment.

The chapter ‘O terramoto de 1930’ is likewise centred around the ideas of attachment and isolation, wandering and disorder. Veiga’s muteness and vague character are replaced at this stage by a new transformation, which is felt by the poet as a resurrection, as he adopts the mask of the man madly in love. Veiga meets his lover Helena in one of the soirées organized by Elisa Pedroso and they begin a wandering love life, roaming the city of Lisbon and travelling to remote parts of the Alentejo. They move according to an improvised itinerary (‘… ao sabor de um itinerário traçado de improviso’) and

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396 ‘Encontrava-se Tiago Veiga uma vez mais sem lugar que lhe coubesse, excluído pelos de Orpheu que o considerariam porventura sucursal dos simbolistas, e de acesso negado pelos presencistas da sua idade que por certo lhe verberariam o embotamento para a reflexão.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 224.
397 In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 225.
398 In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 231.
when, in accordance with this logic, Helena abruptly terminates their relationship, Tiago insists in his wandering ways, nervously and aimlessly visiting the places he had shared with his lover. Non-attachment and aimless wandering produce in Veiga an acute sense of alienation, which leads him to fall into a catatonic state and to develop thoughts of suicide, which in turn are associated with an idea of purification. And so, having sought retreat in his non-descript room, where significantly Veiga eats very little and cannot write, the poet attempts to kill himself by ingesting barbiturate pills. Importantly, his suicide note contains a reference to his daughter and, therefore, if it can be said that Veiga’s suicide is the consequence of a failed search for resonance, signified by the frustration of his relationship with Helena, those which were meant to be his final words referenced his only strong familial (resonant) connection at the time.

Veiga is found and saved by his hosts and neighbours, and subsequently interned in the Miguel Bombarda Hospital. As is customary, the poet regains his bearings and hopes, and, seeing Lisbon as a cell from which he must escape, he decides finally to depart for Guinea-Bissau, not before spending a short period in Venade. The cycle is thus renewed. However, I would like to stress that, as is recurrent the Biografia, Veiga takes his stay in Venade as an opportunity to reflect on his trajectory and to project his future. On this occasion, he expresses his wish to overcome his erratic ways and to build henceforth a more structured life:

A urgência de colocar o Atlântico entre um ontem errático e algo que se esforçava por conceber como um edificante amanhã impelirá-o para uma decisão corajosa, a qual deixava a perder de vista a lembrança da permanência da filha em Paris, e além disso a pulsão de escrita que se lhe afirmava inseparável da Europa.399

Additionally, if it seems that for Veiga this new stage, in which he would ideally attain a state that, as the narrator puts it, although not being firm, would at least allow him to resist contingences,400 depends on the erasure of past

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399 In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 242.
400 See: ‘...um estado que, não sendo firme, nem definitivo, se denunciava como prova da sua capacidade de resistir às contingências.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 242.
attachments and frustrations, a certain ambiguity arises with respect to the possibility of achieving the goal of getting rid of the past and starting anew. To begin with, Veiga is well aware that Venade constitutes a residue of familial emotions from which he had attempted to distance himself (‘...resíduo de emoções familiares de que a sua rota inexoravelmente se alheara’). Moreover, the chapter ends with two crucial images of the remains of the past. First, Veiga is seen carrying in this new voyage the suitcase which only a child he had brought to Venade from Brazil; second, the final image in ‘O terramoto de 1930’ is that of the ghosts that accompany the poet in his travels.

To summarise, ‘Esfinge Magra’ and ‘Terramoto 1930’ portray Veiga as a subject at odds with himself and with the world, undecided between attachment and autonomy, order (fixity, structure) and disorder of the self and society, conditions which elicit in the poet feelings of disorientation, the questioning of his own abilities and a perceived lack of self-efficacy, all of which culminate in Veiga’s decision to commit suicide. Returning to Riemann’s definition of anxiety, which Rosa identifies with alienation, Veiga comes across as both a schizoid subject, who refuses social attachments, and as a depressive subject, who suffers from social isolation; likewise, his is a hysterical persona, fearing rigidity, but at times Veiga also acquires the traits of a compulsive individual, fearing the complete disorder arising from erratic change. Taking into consideration Durkheim’s theory, Veiga’s suicide can be classed as an egotistic suicide, deriving from a lack of social relationships; additionally, although Veiga expresses repeatedly in the Biografia his negative reaction to overregulation, identified at times with the enclosed social and physical space of Venade, with Lisbon and Portugal, as well as with the bourgeois family, we can argue that his suicide is anomic, as it relates for the most part to the perceived absence of direction characterising his life. To conclude, the Biografia can be interpreted in light of Rosa’s analysis of how the social conditions of acceleration of the pace of change, which crucially

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401 Ibidem.
402 ‘É com os fantasmas que percorre as sete partidas do mundo, e ainda que se mova descalço, e calhaus e espinhos lhe dilacerem os pés, pela luz de uma galáxia é que vai seguindo, se assim lhe segredar o coração.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 243.
should also be read in reference to physical and cultural displacement and mobility, are coupled with the stress on autonomy and personal re-definition, all of which contribute to the development on the part of the main character of feelings of alienation, disorder and disconnection. As we shall see, the Biografia very clearly points to the manner in which said conditions and their subjective consequences elicit in individuals the need to find coping mechanisms, designed to achieve a more harmonious and balanced, that is, a more resonant relation between themselves and the world. I return to this fundamental issue momentarily. For now, I would like to delve yet further into the issue of the crisis of language and argue my case in favour of considering Tiago Veiga a particular manifestation of the figure of the Bartleby.

Towards the middle of his life, Tiago Veiga finds himself once more in a depressive state, in which he doubts his abilities and questions the sense of his trajectory, which he fails to understand. In a letter he writes to José Régio but never sends, Veiga reflects on his creative endeavours, claiming to see himself as puppet whose motivations he understands, although not its movements or objectives; likewise, as a creator, he likens himself to a lobster trapped in a fish tank, hopelessly trying to feel its way with its antennae. Nevertheless, this relatively mild reflective stance often gives way to outright despair, which in turn leads Veiga to consider and actually carry out the partial destruction of his work. The first clear instance of this occurs not long after Veiga writes to Régio. On this occasion, the narrator shows us Veiga in Venade, a character completely disoriented, without projects or money, and utterly alone. In these circumstances, an apathetic and depressed Veiga opts for self-effacement and self-destruction, manifested in his exile in Venade, in the way he disregards the care for his body, but mostly in his plan to eliminate his works:

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See: ‘«O títere que sou, movido por fios que identifico com facilidade, obriga-me à execução de umas quantas piruetas que – essas, sim – me surgem como incompreensíveis, no desenho e no objectivo.» E conclui, «Quererá você, que tanto tem reflectido sobre estes mistérios, iluminar-me um pouco?: falo daquilo que se denomina “criação”, fenómeno que, no geral, se me afigura tão digno como a agitação das antenas das lagostas, contra o vidro do aquário, naquele restaurante onde jantámos, há dias.”’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 447.
Divorciado de todo o apetite de publicação dos textos que acumulara, os quais cada vez mais lhe surgiam como testemunho do falhanço completo, eis que o acometia o impulso de os destruir, traçando a partir daí uma última etapa, purificadora do resto do seu percurso.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 528.}

It is interesting to note that the impulse to destroy his texts, deriving as it does from an acute awareness of failure, is understood by Veiga as a purifying task that would enable him to begin a new and better stage in his life. In line with this, later in the novel, Veiga’s texts are represented as bodies which he needs to bury in order to regain a sense of hope.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, pp. 538-9.} We can therefore conclude that, by destroying his works, as later by killing himself, Veiga is not in fact subverting the logic of re-invention he had followed throughout his life, so much as interpreting it in a more extreme way. But I would like now to zoom in on the idea of divorce hinted at in the passage above.

In a later stage in the account, while Veiga is drafting \textit{Vida e Obra do Peregrino Famiano}, the poet decides to spend some time in the Monastery of Santa Maria la Real, in Oseira, Galicia. At this time he is again unable to write. Reflecting on this situation, Veiga attributes it to what he calls the ‘polluting effect of the word being consciously used’, which in his view always produces the ‘divorce between author and world.’\footnote{For the full quotation, see: ‘Mas acontecia que se abismava num imenso horror às letras próprias, e até às alheias, apetecendo-lhe um derivativo para aquilo que pressentia como o efeito poluente da palavra que se usa na consciência de si mesma, e que sempre desencadeia esse divórcio entre autor e mundo, responsável pela especial desumanidade dos letrados.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 685.} Self-consciousness is therefore identified by Veiga himself as one of the causes of his failure to write, since it institutes a divorce between the word and the world, a situation which Veiga himself connects with that of Musil’s \textit{Man without Qualities}.\footnote{See: ‘Uma semana depois, e já na Casa dos Anjos, relataria a Trajano Teles de Menezes o episódio, identificando o estranho mal que de longe a longe o acometia, que não chegaria talvez a constituir uma doença, e que se achava descrito por Robert Musil, declarava ele, no primeiro volume de \textit{O Homem sem Qualidades}. Gastaríamos algum tempo, Teles de Menezes e eu, desaparecido entretanto o nosso amigo comum, a desentranhar as linhas em que o romancista austriaco caracteriza a condição, e a que Tiago Veiga surpreendentemente aludira, considerada a sua relativa indiferença às obras de ficção romanesca.«Tudo o que sentimos e fazemos», afirma Musil, «acontece de algum modo “no sentido da vida”, e o mínimo movimento de desvio torna-se difícil ou assustador». E exemplifica, «É já isso que se passa com o simples acto de andar: erguemos o centro de gravidade, impelimo-lo para diante e deixamo-lo cair». Previne todavia, «Mas basta uma...}
I have argued and I would like to suggest again, Veiga’s problem of expression is the result of a much broader and multifaceted difficulty in dealing with the complexity of the world he experiences, and which from early on induces in Tiago Veiga a self-reflective and questioning stance. Moreover, I contend in this chapter that the coping strategies used by Veiga in moments of crisis ultimately seek to re-instate the bond between word and world, that is, to define a more harmonious relationship between the subject and the world.  

408 mudança ínfima, um ínfimo receio deste deixar-se-cair-no-fundo ou apenas o espanto por isso... e já não conseguimos manter-nos de pé!”. In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, pp. 687-8.  

409 The section of Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia I am now considering evokes passages of Cláudio’s novel Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 1997). In this work, which is structured around the two contrasting figures of Vasco da Gama and Barnabé, the boy and anti-hero who circulates between cultures (Jewish and Christian) and embarks in one of the vessels that reached Calicut in 1498, engaging in the process in a physical and metaphorical voyage of discovery of the world and of himself. At an early stage in the narrative, Barnabé is shown reflecting: ‘Uma tristeza envenena o adolescente, resultante do palpite de que se não dilui no Mundo a identidade, mas de que entre o seu ser e a completa criação um vêu imaterial, posto que intransponível, se levanta, condenando-o a desejarm sem objecto, a querer sem morte e a amar sem presença.’ (49) The excerpt relates the awareness by Barnabé of the barrier that separates him from the world, one which is only tentatively overcome at the end the text, via the activation of a cosmic imagery, clearly evocative of the scene of the ‘máquina do mundo’ in Os Lusíadas, but also of Dante’s Paradise. In my view, the following passage of Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias contains in nuce the notion of cosmos later developed by Cláudio in his works: ‘E achando-se assim Barnabé, eis que um mancebo de grandíssima beleza o acometeu, e tomando-o pelo torso, sobre ele, como pomba inexcedível, se esparriou, envolvendo-o nos mantos que uma aragem de oásis lhe punha a drapar ao redor da figura, e acontecia que com o rapaz se ia diluindo numa poalha, e em homem não se configurava, nem em mulher, nem em criança, nem em velho, porque para os aléns de quejandas dimensões é que se ampliava, e já não se restringia à «São Gabriel» o abraço, nem ao oceano onde vogavam, nem ao globo do Mundo, mas ao Universo que transcende o plano das estrelas, e à luz que em mais luz se difunde, e ficava o moço único com o que o visitava, e nisto se ia cumprindo o trânsito dos dias que lhe cabiam.’ (241-2). Barnabé is guided by an angelic figure who intervenes to enable him to dilute into the universe, and thus to overcome the barrier which self-awareness had erected. The universe appears here seemingly as diffuse matter into which all distinctions, including of time and space, are subsumed. Considering these issues, Maria Alzira Seixo argued that in order to construct this cosmic imagery and its corresponding semantic implications, the novel puts into place an intricate series of strategies, corresponding to what she calls a ‘poetics of non-coincidence’. According to Alzira Seixo, the latter consists of the creation of a rhythm made up of images, cadences and meanings, which promotes the transition of the text from the realm of fictionalized history to the one of mystical experience, in which Barnabé is seen to enter a pre-verbal dimension, otherwise also symbolized by the night and the sea. For more on Seixo’s interpretation of Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias, consider the following excerpts. On the first passage quoted above, she commented: ‘Não se dilui no mundo a identidade – é a lição que fica, e com ela a equacionação do sujeito com o lugar, preenchendo-o mas dele se deslocando, e não se deslocando o apelo inextinguível que existe em si de outra coisa e de outro lugar, feito corpo e feito mundo. Esse apelo e essa deslocação constituem o tempo, que, na «lonjura infinita» de um alcance que tem de se crer possível (para através da escrita efectivar essa possibilidade) é aqui magnificamente figurado pelo canto do pássaro e pela corrente musical (e temporal) que ele produz, na sua «sucessão de inverosímeis acordes».’ (235). On the rhythm of the novel, present in the cosmic imagery quoted above, Seixo states: ‘Predomina, neste caso, a mescla das significações erótica, física, cósmica, metafísica e temporal, mas a diversidade dos sentidos é patente e a atenção ao ritmo também. E é
It is likely not a coincidence that, while examining the crisis of language evidenced by the wave of the ‘Sprachkritik’ in central Europe between the turn of the century and the 1940s, George Steiner starts by describing moments in which, in his view, we witness ‘…seismic shocks and fractures in language, the breaking of the primordial contract between word and world.’

Steiner describes how said questioning of the ability of language to name the world, which he recognised had previously emerged in the so-called Western cultural tradition (for instance, in the philosophy of the Sceptics or in Dante’s *Paradise*), attained new heights at the turn of the twentieth century. According to Steiner, this trend was evidenced in the first instance in Hofmannsthal’s ‘Lord Chandos Letter’, in which Chandos expresses his frustration about the limitations of language, a realization which plummets him into depression and feelings of emptiness. Chandos of course dreams of ‘a tongue in which the mute presence of the world can address him truthfully’, but he has only brief intimations of it through the epiphanies he experiences in his dreams. The critique of language, Steiner concludes, leads ultimately to a mystique of silence and disappearance.

In a different way from Chandos, Tiago Veiga also displays throughout his life a polarization between the belief and disbelief in the power of language, in moments which correspond alternatively to affirmative and depressive stages, the latter being connected almost invariably to the desire for self-effacement, annulment and death. Furthermore, as we shall see, much like for

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409 George Steiner, *Grammars of Creation* (London: faber and faber, 2001), p. 219. On a biographical level, it is interesting to note that it is well-known Cláudio is an avid reader of Steiner. Indeed several interviews to diverse media outlets (television, newspapers), Cláudio has referred to his appreciation of George Steiner’s thought. See, for instance: ‘Episódio 11’, *Mil Palavras Não Fazem Uma Árvore*, online television programme, RTP Play, 12 September 2019, <https://www.rtp.pt/programa/tv/p37411/e11> [accessed 26 July 2021]. I would like to suggest that the manner in which the question of the critique of language is addressed in the *Biografia* is implicitly influenced by Steiner’s thought.

410 George Steiner, *Grammars of Creation*, p. 219.

411 George Steiner, *Grammars of Creation*, p. 225.
Chandos, dreams do play a role in Veiga’s desire to articulate a vision that would enable him to understand his trajectory.

Steiner attributes the crisis of language felt in the period considered to a diverse array of reasons. Among these, he highlights the collapse of an ideal of civilization brought about by the violence of the First World War, but also, and more generally, he mentions the artificiality of bureaucratic language, and of the language of mass consumption and communication, which in many ways contributed to the conflict. Finally, in a fashion typical of his, Steiner reads the divorce between language and the world along religious (Judeo-Christian) lines, and relates it to the concurrent trends pertaining, on the one hand, to the advances in science and technology, and, on the other, to the erosion of religious belief. As I mentioned above, the reasons for Tiago Veiga’s crisis of language are somewhat different, and the latter should be understood in reference mostly to the contradictions deriving from transnational and transcultural migration, as well as from the contrasting desires to form a strong but fluid identity, and to maintain social bonds while remaining a radically autonomous individual.

If there is a figure who incarnates the contradictions of the crisis of language, that figure is the Bartleby. The name of Herman Melville’s character became the title given to all of those artists (empirical and fictional) who chose not to or simply could not express themselves. In its original version, Bartleby the scrivener decides not to act, and, therefore, his inaction, physical deterioration and ultimate death can be construed as a radical form of passive resistance to the capitalist bureaucratic system. This is in general terms Gilles Deleuze’s interpretation, for whom Bartleby’s statement, ‘I would prefer not to,’ constitutes a formula that eliminates referentiality, making it possible to contest dominant discourses and to reach meaningful expression. That is, for Deleuze, Bartleby stands for the possibility of literature as resistance and precarious totality. Further elaborating on Deleuze’s stance, Giorgio Agamben analyses Bartleby’s statement on the basis of Aristotle’s notion of potentiality, which leads him to posit that the creative act involves internal resistance (grounded

on the simultaneousness of the potential to act and not to act) and to the conclusion that Bartleby’s statement does indeed amount to an act resistance and of désœuvrement which opens the possibility of constructing new meanings.\footnote{Giorgio Agamben, ‘Bartleby, or On Contingency’, in \textit{Potentialities. Collected Essays in Philosophy}, ed. by Werner Hamacher and David Wellbery, trans. by Daniel Heller-Roazen (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999), pp. 243-271.}

Tiago Veiga, I would like to suggest, is a particular type of Bartleby, one whose refusal to act and impulse for self-destruction unite both cowardice and resistance. Let us consider one example. Towards the end of his life, Veiga is confronted with the news of the passing of his son Thomas. His first reaction is to refuse facing reality and to enter an oblivion inducing slumber, which is read in the novel as the sign of lack of courage.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, pp. 637-8.} But the slumber Veiga slips into also reveals his renewed attempt to understand the death of his second born, as well as the trajectory of his daughter and implicitly his own. This is first indicated by the reference to the mandala Veiga suddenly perceives in a rug he had never paid attention to, but it is furthermore evident in the dream sequence that follows, in which Thomas and Judith appear to the poet against the backdrop of war and destruction. After this scene, arguably an epiphany, we witness one of Veiga’s recurrent resurrections, a by now feeble affirmation of the poet’s will to live. So, whilst there is cowardice in Veiga’s refusal of the world, manifested in his inaction and desire for self-effacement, these attitudes conceal Veiga’s resilience, indeed his hope of making sense of the labyrinth of his life.

Finally, I would like to return to Veiga’s death scene. In the very final moments of his life, Veiga remembers once more the boy Donato, under whose sign of unfulfilled potential he had lived.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, p. 702.} In any case, although Veiga’s death can be interpreted as a final admission of defeat to a world he was never able to understand or experience productively, it also comes across as a masterful act of subversive cunning and, thus, as a form of resistance leading to a final victory by the failed poet. Indeed, by committing suicide, Veiga is in some sense tricking the biographer and the world, as by then he was sure that...
the character of Cláudio had been lured into writing his life, that is, into providing order to his trajectory, romantically transforming it into a perfectly accomplished work of art. With this in mind, I now turn to the strategies used by Veiga in order to attain a semblance of resonance, as they are manifested in what Rosa calls the horizontal and vertical axes, which include precisely the arts and specifically the writing of the biography.

**Resonance and Alienation: The Horizontal Axis**

As I noted above, in Rosa’s theory, alienation and resonance are intimately connected, so much so that one cannot be understood without the other. This dynamics is particularly evident in the *Biografia*, in which the protagonist’s concomitant desire for and fear of resonance are expressed around two main axes: the horizontal, corresponding to relationships, which may be familial, amorous, relating to friendship and to masters versus disciples; and the vertical, concerning nature, religion, the arts, biography, history and memory. As we shall see, the elements within each axis are often interrelated and, moreover, the exploration of these elements is enacted primarily in the poet’s artistic projects.

The depiction of Veiga’s relationships in the *Biografia* tells us that the only consistent bonds he has during his lifetime relate to the friendships he maintains with António Bernardo Sequeira, Trajano Teles de Menezes, Fernando Taborda Linhares, and Mário Cláudio. As we have seen abundantly, Veiga’s amorous relations, with his first wife Jeanne Chazot, Helena, Ellen Rasmussen and, in his later life, with a young woman nicknamed Toby, are all fraught with frustration, either because Veiga’s passion is not corresponded (Helena and Toby), or because he feels constrained by long term relationships and systematically chooses to abandon his wives. I would like to focus here on two other types of relationships: first, the ones occurring within the family, that safe harbour of the modern individual so well documented in *A Quinta das Virtudes*; and second, I would like to delve into the master/disciple power dynamics, which includes Veiga’s relationship with the character of the biographer. The analysis of these elements will allow me to show the ways in
which the *Biografia* proposes a fictional reflection on issues pertaining to individual freedom and autonomy, to community and belonging. Furthermore, I argue that what is a stake here is the reconsideration of the very notion of freedom, and that in this sense the novel engages with broader contemporary discussions on this subject. After a first analysis of the work in relation to these matters, I propose a reading of the *Biografia* in reference to Roberto Esposito’s biopolitics, namely to his concepts of community, immunity, auto-immunity and freedom.416

From the very beginning of the account of Veiga’s life, the character’s experience of family life is marked by ambiguity: if, on the one hand, there is trauma, abandonment and distance, externally imposed or deliberately sought by the poet, on the other, Veiga clings to his complex heritage, as well as to the bond with Ellen and his children. Veiga’s option for individualism and autonomy is perhaps better evidenced in the self-reflective passages occurring in Paris when the poet finally took the decision to abandon his first family. However, in moments of crisis, Veiga repeatedly summons the image of his children, and at times he attempts to re-establish a meaningful relationship with them. An example of this is found in the chapter ‘A tentação do lume’,417 which ends with Veiga burning part of his manuscripts, but which in fact contrasts the poet’s depressive self-absorption with his desire to engage with the world, in this case with his uprooted son. This contradictory inclination on the part of Veiga to both hide away from and yet encounter the world is in fact signified in the title of the third volume of the biography, ‘O Sono e o Mundo’, as well as in Eugenio Montale’s poem quoted in the epigraph.418 In the face of frustration, Veiga thus attempts to establish significant connections with his family; nevertheless, communication is always flawed, which to a great degree is due to Veiga’s hesitancy. Take for instance the case of the visit Veiga receives in Venade from his daughter-in-law, his grandson Timothy and his pregnant wife Jessica Perruchi (by then Veiga’s son Thomas had died).

418 Il sonno tarda a venire/poi mi raggiungerà senza preavviso./Fuori deve accaderere qualche cosa/per dimostrarmi che il mond esiste e che/i sedecenti vivi non sono tutti morti.
Here again we see Veiga anxious to establish a bridge with the people who would succeed him (‘A ânsia de firmar uma ponte com os vindouros’), but at the same time displaying his hesitation in doing so (‘…hesitante em estabelecer com os do seu sangue o relacionamento que o salvasse do vácuo’). The subsequent scene in which Veiga tells the story of the family while touching the belly of the pregnant Jessica comes across as a brief ritualistic moment of communication and transmission of memory, without substantial consequences for the poet. But perhaps the contradictory dynamics of attachment versus autonomy characterising Veiga’s demeanour is best illustrated in a sequence that occurred early on in the novel, in the chapter ‘Vitória da peste branca’. After Ellen’s internment in a sanatorium in Oporto, Veiga’s son Thomas was also diagnosed with tuberculosis. In these circumstances, Veiga decides to travel with Thomas to England, notwithstanding the fact that the Second World War was raging. He then returns to Portugal, leaving his son behind, in order to take care of Ellen. Nevertheless, there is another twist to the story, and, during this period, Veiga begins to frequent a brothel in Oporto, where he meets Luísa Fernanda, a prostitute, and her son, with whom for a while he ends up forming a family of sorts.

Veiga is therefore unable to unravel the conundrum that opposes individualism and autonomy to attachment, a fact which to a great degree explains his demise. This tension is also apparent in Veiga’s relationship with his friends and guides. Veiga’s rapport with Manuel Teixeira Gomes arguably depicts the power struggle that emerges between a master and his disciple. In this regard, Veiga seeks to distance himself from someone he values as a means to assert his individual worldview. The model recovered in the Biografia is quite evidently that of the Pygmalion, including in the case of the combo Veiga/Teixeira Gomes clear sexual undertones. Veiga’s relationship with the character of Cláudio is modelled along similar lines. Here we find the power struggle between an older and a younger individual, both trying to assert

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419 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 683.
420 As is well-known, the myth of Pygmalion and the dynamics it summons are the main object of Cláudio’s trilogy: Boa Noite, Sr. Soares (Lisboa: Dom Quixote, 2008), Retrato de Rapaz (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2014), and O Fotógrafo e a Rapariga (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2015).
themselves and to teach the other a lesson, while at the same time recognising the value in the other’s presence and views (more Cláudio than Veiga, admittedly). Cláudio first adamantly refuses to write Veiga’s biography, which he feels is an intrusion into his artistic freedom, but in the end he cannot resist taking on this task, and indeed he avidly appropriates the poet’s documents and his life. The final scene in the Miramare, which I examined in reference to the notion of the mask, is however deeply ambiguous. Cláudio sees Veiga in the distance, only to realise that he had ultimately become the poet. By taking Tiago Veiga as his mask, Cláudio had therefore taken hold of the character, but at the same time he had been in a sense possessed by him, that is, he had been forced to interpret Veiga. Finally, I would like to stress that the theory of coincidences and non-coincidences established between Veiga and Cláudio does favour an ambiguous self-explanation on the part of Mário Cláudio, occurring within the context of a complex game of projections. This mechanism of differential identification has recently been compounded by the latest addition to the bibliography associated with Tiago Veiga: Embora Eu Seja Um Velho Errante. The work is divided into three parts, corresponding to a monologue by Tiago Veiga, a diary written by Ellen Rasmussen, and a testimonial by Mário Cláudio himself. In this testimonial, Cláudio reflects on his relationship with the region of Minho and explains his fascination with the story of Veiga. In spite of the evident proximity of both authors to the region, which they express artistically, the striking feature of Cláudio’s statements is the affirmative tone they strike. Indeed, here the potency of the word is associated with the sentiment of harmonious belonging to a specific geographical and cultural landscape, which does not preclude an awareness of the wider world, signified in the figure of wandering or errancy, both physical and spiritual. The strength of artistic imagination and action (arguably with Romantic undertones) is also expressed by Cláudio’s recovery of a ruined house (Casa da Ramada), his home to be, in what amounts to a future-oriented recreation, parallel to the fictional invention of the ‘Casa dos Anjos’. Needless to say, this attitude greatly contrasts with Veiga’s frequently tentative artistic and

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existential stances, marked by ambiguity and contradictions, which derive in large part from his social and cultural non-inscription.\(^{422}\)

I would like now to turn to the very ending of the *Biografia*. The coda of the novel curiously corresponds to two letters: one written by Veiga’s friend Sacheverell Sitwell and the other by Luísa Fernanda, a prostitute from Oporto and former lover of the poet. This is an unexpected twist and, while evidently the letters depict two of the contrasting social and cultural worlds experienced by Veiga, the respectively understated and raw expressions of appreciation and care for the poet which they convey underline the importance of relationships in Veiga’s life. Likewise, they stress the missed opportunities in terms of maintaining meaningful ties based on mutual care which were a dominant feature in the poet’s biography.

Finally, it is important to take a step back and determine in which way the *Biografia* engages in a wider discussion and commentary on individualism, communitarianism, and the exercise of freedom in late modern societies. Roberto Esposito framed these matters in terms that are both original and relevant to our reading not only of the *Biografia* but of Cláudio’s work in

\(^{422}\) For some illustrative quotes, see: ‘Embora eu seja um velho errante, e mal me entenda comigo mesmo, levo a densa consciência do meu poder. Cheguei à clareira da verdade maior, a que existe porque a adivinho, quando me afeito a fechar os livros. Se perguntarem por mim, já passei, e se quiserem saber até onde, nunca lá haverão de me encontrar. Sou da névoa como dos ossos cansados, da chuva como das mãos que tremem, e da brisa como da frouxa respiração. / Subo o monte verdejante do Noroeste do meu país, coroado pela Capela de Nossa Senhora da Pena, patrona zelosa, e sucessora de Vênus ou Diana, deusas supremas. A paisagem vai resultando de mim, e o imenso Sanatório, embrenhado na vegetação, outrora estáncia antituberculosa, e depois hospital psiquiátrico, sai assim da minha magia, casarão esquecido, e hoje um dos mais reputados lugares de «actividade paranormal». Atravesso o succinto planalto de rochas ciclópicas sobre tojos e giestas, área de caça de coelhos, perdizes e lebres, e após uma curva desço para o lugarejo a fundar. / Crio a meu talante o aglomerado serrano, repartido por dois planos de casario, o de cima, e o de baixo, delimitados entre si por sinuosa estrada florestal. Abasteço-o de medievais habitações de granito escuro, grande parte delas em escombros, ou sem vidraças nas janelas de guilhotina, e de caixilhos de madeira podre. […] / Como um cego vetusto, guiado pelo seu bordão, arrasto-me a esmiuçar as ruínas que decido adquirir, a fim de as transmudar em morada da alma. […] / Cada ruína hiberna, aguardando o toque do olhar que por instantes a desperte, e propõe-nos na imagem do passado a ilusão do futuro.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Embora Eu Seja Um Velho Errante* (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2021), pp. 133-4. One is reminded here of João Pinto’s meandering reflections about the ‘Quinta’ in *A Quinta das Virtudes*, however the excerpt strikes a much more affirmative tone regarding the potential for the recreation and transferral of the past (represented by ruins) into the future.
general. Esposito defines community as that into which individuals are born, imposing on them an obligation to belong, which is both a necessity and an impossibility, for a community is always different from what it claims to be. In any case, because communal identifications sweep away individual life, Esposito identified the apparatus of immunization as that which allows individuals to counterbalance the threat of undifferentiation posed by community. Immunization therefore protects individual life from the demands of the communal life. However, according to Esposito, what often occurs is that immunitary devices, such as that of subjective rights, are undermined by the instruments designed to ensure their protection. So, for instance, in order to protect individual freedom and property, one needs to relinquish freedom to a given liberal political system, usually organised in the form of a state. In this context, Esposito argues, the violence of community does not disappear, but is integrated into the very system which is supposed to uphold individual liberty. This is where the notion of auto-immunity comes into play. Esposito contends that immunitary devices often give way to auto-immunitary responses, corresponding to moments in which the preservation of individual life (the life of a given ‘race’ or ‘people’) is regarded as being dependent on the elimination of the life of the other, a process that includes the suspension of the instruments designed to preserve life. This is a form of politics of death which Esposito identifies with Nazism. The solution to this conundrum, Esposito suggests, is to configure a biopolitics whose main goal is to protect life in its effective historical and practical, inherently complex and diverse manifestations. This would entail reconceptualizing community and immunity, that is, conceiving immunity as a function of relation (contagion), not closure, and community as a function of difference, of coincidence of opposites. Against the mechanisms of immunization, Vanessa Lemm tells us, Esposito proposes ‘first, a conception of the norm that is immanent to bodies; second, a break with the closed and organic idea of a political body in favor of the

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423 Roberto Esposito, Terms of the Political: Community, Immunity, Biopolitics.
424 In this respect, Esposito’s thought is likely influenced by Foucault’s notion of biopolitics, and even more directly by Achille Mbembe’s definition of necropolitics, first developed in: Achille Mbembe, ‘Necropolitics’, Public Culture, 15.1, (2003), 11-40, in <https://doi.org/10.1215/08992236-15-1-11> [accessed 1 July 2021].
multiplicity of the flesh of the world; and, third, a politics of birth intended as a continual production of difference with respect to only practice of identity. In this context, the notion of freedom too is reconsidered. As Lemm points out, Esposito advocates ‘a return to the double meaning of freedom as love and friendship, according to which freedom exists in and as a relationship, and not as an individual possession to be conquered and defended.’ By recovering the original Indo-European root of freedom, not as absence of interference, but as common growth that brings different individuals together ‘it restores the meaning of freedom to the horizon of a common life.’ Lemm concludes that for Esposito ‘freedom designates the singular dimension of community: the part of community that resists immunization, that is not identical to itself, and that remains open to difference. Thus in the experience of freedom, community refers to difference and immunity to relation/contagion.’

As we have seen, in the Biografia, the issue of immunity is key. Likewise, the mechanisms leading to auto-immunity are examined, namely in the depiction and assessment of the politics of fascism. It becomes clear in the novel how challenging the articulation of immunity and community is, with both being desired and feared by the protagonist. In the novel, there seems to be no solution to this puzzle, or at least Veiga does not find it. However, the letters at the end of the novel point to a productive avenue, which lies in reconceiving freedom along Esposito’s lines, as including love and friendship, that is, entailing the consideration of others, in their diverse fullness.

Veiga’s is a story of missed opportunities and misunderstandings, and therefore one could hardly expect a positive ending to the fiction of his life. However, another work by Cláudio, Memórias Secretas, offers a more positive outlook. This is a collection of three accounts and the first one, ‘Corto’, inspired in Hugo Pratt’s Corto Maltese, is of special interest for this discussion. The character of Corto bears many similarities with Veiga. Both are orphans and both travel the world, repeatedly returning to their places of origin, to which

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427 Ibidem.
they feel concurrently connected and detached. Corto too has trouble finding his way and defining his character, a process which he experiences in deeply self-conscious manner. Torn between travel and dwelling, past and future, Corto is an eccentric and marginal subject, who establishes only brief relations with the extremely diverse people he encounters. Finally, like Veiga, in moments of crisis, Corto also may retreat to mysticism. There is a lot to be said about this truly intricate gem of the Claudian corpus, but I would like to focus at this moment only on the final section of the narrative, titled ‘Todos os Homens São Paisagem.’

In the chapter we find Corto in the island of Burano, off the coast of Venice, in 1941. Here he meets Tarao, a Māori sailor, whom Corto adopts as part of his family, and soon they move in together into a rented house. Venice is described as a cosmopolitan city, enemy to chauvinism, and a haunt for vagabonds and refuges. Soon Corto and Tarao are joined by Pandora Groovesnore, an American refugee, who is accompanied by two children, Abel and Sephora, clearly of Jewish origin. About these circumstances Corto reflects: ‘Será necessário acrescentar que este arranjo me encantava, pai que já era de um maori, e depois dessa altura companheiro de uma americana, e avô de um par de garotos que por certo se tornariam cidadãos planetários?’

For Corto, this group of people is a family, as diverse as they come, united against all odds, and against the backdrop of the war. And so the island acquires the dimension of a refuge. It is a completely ordered and peaceful place, a cosmos, in which the children are educated to enjoy the arts (signified by the music played in the gramophone) and history, which is told in the pieces of ceramics which the characters find as they walk along the shore, traces of past civilizations. Corto, unlike Veiga, finds his family, his place and his home, but only because he is willing to open himself to otherness and to build a community of affect, based on respect and acceptance of difference.

428 Mário Cláudio, Memórias Secretas, pp. 105-9.
429 Mário Cláudio, Memórias Secretas, p. 109.
In this section, I propose to examine the emergence in the *Biografia* of strategies that are included in what Rosa called the vertical axis of resonance. I focus here on two main issues: first, I deal with the representations of nature and animality in the novel, which are explicitly connected with the representation of childhood; second, I analyse how Tiago Veiga engages with religion or religious sentiment. As I argue and illustrate, religious sentiment is manifested in the *Biografia* in diverse ways; more importantly, religion should be understood here in a broad, often heterodox sense, as referring to the relation which the subject establishes with his own life and the world.

I mentioned in the previous chapter two instances in which, in moments of existential crisis rooted in doubts about the path he had undertook or should follow, Tiago Veiga engages with nature, which seems to afford the poet solace and a responsive mode of relationship with his surroundings. The following excerpt is a clear illustration of this:

> A folhagem mais alta dos carvalhos agitava-se à volta dele num aceno de tranquilo reconhecimento, e era como se todo o mundo vegetal de repente o escutasse, respondendo-lhe por murmurios indizíveis, e a eternidade se lhe postasse ao alcance da mão. Mas não durava o fenómeno mais do que escassos segundos.\(^{430}\)

While Veiga roams the countryside of Venade, he experiences here a brief moment, an intimation of responsiveness, which he translates into poetry. Importantly, this experience connects him with his childhood, which he idealizes as having been detached from the complexities of the social arrangements he needs to cope with. Later, already an old man in search for the meaning of his trajectory, Veiga again returns to Venade, to the landscapes of his childhood, where, as Teles de Menezes reports to the biographer, he takes on the role of a druid, a healer who listens to the rhythms of the earth (‘…auscultando os ritmos da terra…’). The fact that Veiga reproduces at this stage the routes he had completed with Felício, and that he

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\(^{430}\) In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 141.
gathers the village children to tell them stories, once more makes the case for
the connection between nature and childhood.

In these passages, the novel quite evidently retrieves ideas about
nature which were developed in the late eighteenth century and were explored
by the romantics. These included the return to nature and the valuing of
country walks, of the rustic, non-civilized space, which was opposed to the city
and to instrumental, utilitarian reason. According to Taylor:

This new orientation to nature was not concerned directly with the
virtues of simplicity or rusticity, but rather with the sentiments which
nature awakens in us. We return to nature because it brings out strong
and noble feelings in us: feelings of awe before the greatness of
creation, of peace before a pastoral scene, of sublimity before storms
and deserted fastnesses, of melancholy in some lonely woodland
spot.\textsuperscript{431}

According to this view, subjects should therefore be attuned with nature
because it elicits in them noble feelings. This connection with nature should
however not be mediated by reason, nor was it intended to lead to the
recognition of a neo-platonic ontic hierarchy (like in Deism). On the contrary,
the experience of nature should be emotional, requiring participation in and,
most importantly, subjective articulation of an original vision of the \textit{cosmos}.
This is what in my view Veiga was trying to achieve. Likewise, as the passages
also show, the \textit{Biografia} retrieves Romantic notions of childhood, conceived
as a stage in which human beings were supposedly more innocent, less
conditioned by social mores, and therefore more attuned with nature.\textsuperscript{432}

The idea of nature is also explored in the \textit{Biografia} in relation to the
notion of the animality in the human, which in turn is connected with the
imagery of childhood. This is evident in the manner in which Veiga addresses
the subject of Tarzan, whose story serves as the inspiration for one of his

\textsuperscript{432} For examinations of Romantic representations of childhood, see: Judith Plotz, \textit{Romanticism and
the Vocation of Childhood} (New York: Palgrave, 2001); Roni Natov, \textit{The Poetics of Childhood} (London:
Routledge, 2003); Almut Amberg, \textit{Romanticism and the Child. Depictions of Children in the Poems
“We are Seven” and “Anecdote for Fathers”} by William Wordsworth (Munich: GRIN Verlag, 2018); for
a study on how in the Modern cultural landscape the child became a medium for the search of
selfhood, see: Carolyn Steedman, \textit{Strange Dislocations: Childhood and the Idea of Human Interiority
literary projects, ironically titled *Tarzan, ou a Derrota*. Veiga thinks of Tarzan on two occasions in which he feels lost and apathetic: first, just before he returns to Portugal to take care of Ellen, having left Thomas in England convalescing from tuberculosis; second, in his visit to New York, which occurs not long after Ellen’s death. On the first occasion, Veiga is literally unable to make a decision on whether to return to Portugal, when by chance he finds a Tarzan comic book in a random bookstore. In this instance, Tarzan affords Veiga the possibility of regressing to his childhood, but also and more importantly to attain a more general pre-civilized state, immune to the constrictions of civilization he acutely felt at that time.\(^{433}\) For Veiga, Tarzan is therefore the symbol of the animality and energy which in his view had always failed him, and which he would like to possess in order to fulfil his projects.\(^{434}\) Like Tarzan, Veiga would like to be attuned with nature and detached from cosmopolitan citizenship, to which he attributes his weakness. In this respect, while in New York, the poet is shown reflecting: ‘Também ao nosso poeta assaltaria o asco do cosmopolitismo, e a tentação de sobrepor, conforme aos métodos de Tarzan, a harmonia da natureza, ao desconchavo da cidadania.’\(^{435}\)

As we can conclude from the brief analysis above, Veiga repeatedly returns to the idealization of childhood as a means to combat his awareness of being disoriented, ineffective, and profoundly alone, an attitude that becomes more prevalent the older the poet gets. Veiga’s fascination with childhood and with children’s literature is thus a manifestation of real and metaphorical nostalgia, that is, of the desire on the part of the poet to find a home and a comforting social environment. This is clearly expressed in his

\(^{433}\) For the complete passage, see: ‘Erguia-se-lhe no horizonte a probabilidade de a breve trecho subir para libertar o miúdo da sua branca prisão, retomando com ele a encantadora existência no reino de surpresas e traquinices, do qual directamente se acedia à floresta luxuriante onde Tarzan, a saltar de ramo em ramo com a macaca Cheetah ao ombro, exercia o seu poderio de semideus imune às constricções da civilização. Mas no instante de desembarcar do avião pousado no Tejo a realidade abraçá-lo-ia, escavando os sinais de uma regressão definitivamente encerrada’. In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 344.

\(^{434}\) For the complete passage, see: ‘E por tudo isto aferrava-se ao Tarzan que tinha entre mãos, e que o dotava do animalismo que constantemente lhe fugia. No trato que o herói da selva andava a estabelecer com os seus bichos acompanhantes ia Tiago inserindo o quanto lhe restava de energia.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 356.

\(^{435}\) In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 462.
poem ‘Valentine’, but likewise in the manner in which Veiga appropriates the story of Hansel and Gretel.

Veiga’s exploration of the story occurs as he is in a convent, recovering from one of his bouts of depression. On this occasion, the poet initiates a mystical cycle, of Franciscan inspiration, which leads him again to roam the countryside:

Lançou-se em intermináveis percurso pedestres que lhe serviam para testar as energias readquiridas, mas sobretudo para exercer sobre a paisagem uma acção de partilha morigeradora. E atafulhando os bolsos de sobras de pão, lá ia ele, a atirar pedacinhos de miolo aos pardais engeridos de frio, e se não desempenhava por aí o papel de frade enamorado das simplicidades da Criação, eis que ajustava à face a máscara do pequeno Hansel da história, despedido da sua mana, a sinalizar com migalhinhas o tortuoso caminho de regresso a casa.

Recurring elements in Veiga’s conduct emerge in the excerpt. For instance, his adoption of a mask in order to enact his desire to connect with nature, whose effects are regarded as moralizing. However, the aspect I would like to highlight is that by taking on Hansel’s mask, Veiga is in fact attempting to signal a route home, and that this occurs within the context of a mystical, religiously inspired stage in his life. This brings us finally to the more or less conventional expressions of religious sentiment in the Biografia and to their corresponding implications.

Religious sentiment arises in the life and art of Tiago Veiga in response to the perception on the part of the character that his biography is marked by chaos, disorder, and by lack of self-understanding, that is, by the experience of living in a labyrinth. Two main aspects characterise Veiga’s approach to these matters: his desire to understand his trajectory, which should ideally be

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436 ‘Não me deixes sozinho, Little Nemo, quando o inverno / descer a Portugal, nem me abandones no escuro, delicado / amiguinho, quando chover no casarão, por entre as sarças, / e a meus pés ofegar o cão negro do afecto. / Ao pescoço chegarei, Little Nemo, o édredon, e se alguém em / meu ombro achar seu poleiro, gentilmente pedirei que vá / embora, para que fique para ti o lugar vago. / Não te esqueças, Little Nemo, dos castelos tão azuis, e das / fadas emplumadas, e das bolas amarelas, nem dos gordos / palhaços de collans, com estrelinhas cintilantes. / Por ti choro, Little Nemo, no escuro, e as lágrimas de ametista / caem no lago, Little Nemo, do dragão que transporta o / pirilampo. ’In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, pp. 459-60.

437 In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 526.
invested with meaning, and his goal of finding a home, a final place or destination. In this context, Veiga can take a route which is more conventionally religious, although arguably heterodox due to its gnostic undertones, but we see him also activating a cosmic, neo-platonic and Pythagorean imagery. Although the latter is not fully developed in the *Biografia*, it is designed ultimately to construct the idea of a meaningful path enacted in a meaningful cosmos, and ultimately to allow for a harmonious, porous and resonant relationship to be established between the subject and the world. I would like to suggest here that at the heart of the religious reflection proposed in the *Biografia* is the notion of pilgrimage, which in fact condenses the idea of a meaningful journey comprehended at an ultimate point of arrival.

Veiga’s mysticism is expressed in clearer fashion in his engagement with the figure of Saint Jerome and in his project of translation of the psalms. On a given occasion, Veiga visits the National Museum of Ancient Art, in Lisbon, where an encounter with Albrecht Dürer’s painting of St. Jerome inspires the poet to reflect on the passage of time and to seek to discover a path of certainty. Upon returning to Venade, he begins his arduous task of translating the psalms, which bears other fruits, such as a poem by Veiga, in which he expresses his desire to find a firm path through his work: ‘Que meus caminhos sejam firmes, ó sombra, marca do carvão / da página sem lua, incerta voz de preceito grego, / contemplação da verdade.’ As the energy of his mystical endeavour begins to wane, Veiga decides to travel to Italy, where his mysticism acquires new vigour, in this instance being fuelled by the poet’s experience of Baroque art. At this stage, Veiga adopts the role of an anchoret, a period which is again short-lived, and he completes his understanding of Baroque. Indeed, Veiga discovers in Mattia Preti’s painting of Saint Sebastian the counterpoint of liveliness to the consciousness of death signified in the skull in the painting of St. Jerome. On his trip by boat back to Portugal, Veiga returns to St. Jerome and to the translation of the psalms. The boat trip becomes a clear metaphor for Veiga’s life and importantly, in this instance, Veiga is shown translating Psalm 67, which depicts the endpoint of all pilgrimages. Meaningfully, the verse highlighted and quoted in the novel is:

> Que meus caminhos sejam firmes, ó sombra, marca do carvão / da página sem lua, incerta voz de preceito grego, / contemplação da verdade.

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«Deus, dá um lar aos solitários».

The psalm has clear gnostic implications and one can argue that Veiga is represented here as a gnostic hero desirous of finding a metaphorical home, a way out of the labyrinth of his life. At the same time, it should be noted that the project is in part undermined by the description of poet’s impotence at manipulating the words of the text and their meaning, which he only briefly overcomes.

Whilst Veiga’s mystical experimentations convey the poet’s desire to find a firm path and a home, articulated in the face of the awareness of human frailty conveyed by the art of the Baroque and by the *topos* of the sea voyage, said desire is also expressed via the activation of a cosmic imagery. I noted in the previous chapter how, while writing *Triunfo e Glória do Arcanjo São Miguel de Portugal*, Veiga dreamt he was on the threshold of discovering the sense of the trajectories of his characters and, more importantly, of his family, as they were described by the celestial spheres. A similar idea is explored in a later passage, in which Tiago is briefly reunited with his great passion, Helena. Here, after a traumatic experience of senseless partying, the poet is shown trying to read the course of his life in the sky, an action which is compounded with the project of translation of the psalms: ‘Desceu à praia, e na Ursa Maior, avistada sobre o mar sem ondas, recuperou a tranquilidade bastante para a leitura de um rumo, ou para a descoberta das primeiras sílabas de um versículo mais de A Tradução dos Salmos.’ Finally, as I mentioned earlier, the periods of sleep and slumber which Veiga increasingly slips into

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440 See: ‘Mas ao cabo de numerosas tentativas, e rasuradas as linhas que acumulavam vocábulos que se atropelavam, se substituíam entre si, ou se engastavam uns nos outros, apenas quedava à frente de Veiga aquele rol de esplendores, e na retaguarda dele a impotência para o manipular. Despontaram das águas as torres de Lisboa ao cair da tarde de 21 de Setembro de 1953. E o clamor do salmista foi ganhando o seu definitivo sentido, quando a trovoada do equinócio deflagrava sobre a cidade, e os que seguiam a Arca instigavam, «Reinos da Terra, cantai a Deus, salmodiai o Senhor Selá, que anda de carro sobre o céu, o céu antiquíssimo! Escuta! Ele levanta a voz, sua voz poderosa! Dai glória a Deus! Sua majestade está sobre Israel, e seu poder sobre as nuvens!».’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 409.
441 See: ‘Suspeitava Tiago Veiga de que se lhe transmitia assim o conhecimento de extensões diversas das da terra que diariamente pisava, e integra-va-se como mais um na assembleia das personagens que criara, votado a idêntico destino, e no limiar da descoberta comum do sentido de cada trajectória, descrita pelas esferas celestes.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 310.
throughout his life should be interpreted as manifesting the Tiago’s implicit belief that in his dreams he will be able find the key that would allow him to decipher the charade and to determine the way out of the maze of his life.\textsuperscript{443}

The fact is that Veiga never discovers the meaning of his life, that he is never able to articulate an artistic vision that would allow him to accomplish his greatest aspiration of understanding his biography, of finding his place, and ultimately of being in harmony with himself and with the world. Veiga always remains on the threshold of imaginative fulfilment, a realization that once more takes us to the issue of the crisis of language and its relationship with the social arrangements that limit the possibilities of achieving said articulation. But I would like now to turn to the subject of pilgrimage, which I alluded to above. This will enable me to make a detour and to more effectively explain the workings and implications of the cosmic imagery present in Cláudio’s work.

On the occasion of the burial of Yeats, the following summary of Veiga’s life is presented:

\textit{Mármore nenhum, consoante pedira, nem qualquer frase convencional, haveria de marcar o lugar do seu perpétuo repouso. Tão-só o epitáfio que redigira, gravado no calcário, convidava aos curiosos, ‘Cast a cold eye / on life, on death. / Horseman, pass by.’ E também ele, o nosso biografado, transitava por ali, cavaleiro vagueante na jornada sem bússula, e tal e qual como saíra do Brasil para Coura, e deambulara depois por Braga, e por Lisboa, pela Itália, e por Paris, por Londres, e pela Guiné, pelo Porto, pelo Caramulo, por Dublin. De semelhante maneira se encantara de uma mulher, se apaixonara por outra, e se inclinara para uma terceira, e lhe nasceria uma filha, e um filho, e dialogara com este, e mais com aquele, e lera isto, e mais aquilo, e teimara em escrever a sua poesia, sempre motivado por sugestões vagas, e por pequenos achados, tangenciais à vida, tudo como se prosseguísse em busca da alma infinita que o habitava e cujo murmurio tragicamente desentendia. Aproveitando uma aberta nas persistentes chuvadas irlandesas, despediu-se Veiga em silêncio do cemiteriozinho de névoas de Drumcliff, e um par de dias mais tarde embarcava em Rosslare, rumando de volta a Portugal.\textsuperscript{444}}

In the passage, Veiga is depicted as a knight-errant, who roams the world without a compass, in search for an elusive idea himself, leaving and returning

\textsuperscript{443} In Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, p. 637.
\textsuperscript{444} In Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, pp. 373-4.
to Portugal with nothing to show for it. If the knight-errant can be identified with the figure of the pilgrim, then Veiga is a failed pilgrim, whose life stages he does not comprehend and who reaches no enlightenment at a putative point of arrival. He is a cosmic outlaw, an alienated subject unable to discern or confer onto his trajectory a semblance of order. As occurred with our analysis of the horizontal axis, one needs to look to other texts in order to find a complete formulation of resonance fitting the model of the pilgrim. Although said formulation is arguably present in the third and final account of Memórias Secretas (2018), titled ‘Valente,’ which re-invents Hal Foster’s Prince Valiant, it is most clearly evident in O Pórtico da Glória, a novel that proposes an interpretation of human life according to the model of the pilgrimage.

O Pórtico da Glória presents a fictional account of the family unit formed initially by Diego Hernández Bueno Munoz de la Pena and Hermínia de Azevedo Mavigné, one of daughters of João Pinto de Azevedo Meirelles and Joana Maria Mavigné, portrayed in A Quinta das Virtudes. Centred mainly on the character of Diego, the narrative elaborates on ideas of mobility (geographic and cultural) and sedentarism, autonomy and individualism tempered by family life. Like A Quinta das Virtudes, it too focuses on the evolution of the family depicted, seen through the prism of continuity and variation, which the novel elaborates on via the image of the loom (a clear reference to the entrepreneurial activities of the protagonist, as well as possibly to Greek mythology), and moreover through references to plants and to the ‘ria’ or estuary. If in O Pórtico da Glória life is read as a pilgrimage, which explains the reference to the Portico of the Cathedral of Santiago, the novel stresses the importance of narrative as a means to construct an individually meaningful narrative of life. Indeed, at the end of his life, Diego is portrayed ordering his life through fiction, a strategy that allows him to attain peace and to become harmonized with both the organic workings of life

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(signified by the tree) and with the universe, represented by the music of the spheres:

Despertarei o meu bisavô da abulia em que soçobrou, a fim de lhe conceder o direito de emitir o último lampejo da determinação que o caracteriza, estabelecendo um certo anel com o próprio passado, e transformando a existência naquilo que toda a existência deverá ser, uma forma redonda e perfeita. 446

E estavam enfim em lugar certo as pedras do xadrez da sua vida, e já nem se curava de vitória ou de derrota, mas de uma desistência de lances, a qual se diria coincidir com a harmonia incomensurável das esferas. Da concha das montanhas que a alojavam, e através de um mosaico de luzes entenebradas, sobrevinha-lhe a essência de Béjar, resultado de uma longa destilação, a confirmá-lo em raízes que justificam os dias, e que prevêem a ramagem da árvore que se há-de expandir debaixo do sol. 447

All of the elements in the excerpt are essential components of the notion of cosmos, which acquires its most complete expression in Astronomia. The novel, Cláudio’s fictional autobiography, is divided into three parts: ‘Nebulosa’, which designates the undefinition and undifferentiation found in the potential filled period of childhood; ‘Galáxia’, which relates to the process of wandering discovery conducted in adulthood; and ‘Cosmos’, which refers to the harmony attained in old age.

In Ancient Greek culture, Cosmos stood for order, and it was closely associated with the ideas of harmony and beauty. In Pythagorean-Platonic philosophy, the order and beauty of the world consisted of mathematical ratios and proportions, which were expressed in the music of the spheres. The cosmos was thus conceived as an ontological logos which the rational subject should strive to perceive via contemplation. If in the end one achieved this, then order would rule the soul, and desire and chaos would be replaced by inner order, concord and harmony, all of which equated to the good. In Platonic philosophy the subject is therefore not conceived as opposed to the world; on the contrary, human beings must strive to be in tune with the cosmos so as to

446 In Mário Cláudio, O Pórtico da Glória, Location number 1504.
447 In Mário Cláudio, O Pórtico da Glória, Location number 1529.
achieve a state of inner harmony. Although such notions enjoyed under different guises a long life in Western cultures, modernity brought an entirely different conception of the world and of subjectivity, which would decisively contribute to the development of a secular culture.

Descartes proposed the idea of the subject as a disengaged rational being who constructed and manipulated the world. According to Descartes, the subject is himself the source of morals and ethics, his reason ultimately constituting the only evidence of the existence of God. From this perspective therefore, the autonomous rational subject, disengaged from his body and the cosmos, perceives and constructs the mechanism of the world from an ideally distanced standpoint. As Taylor argued, the neutralization of cosmos as meaning and the separation of the subject from an external world manipulable by instrumental reason are crucial elements in the process of “disenchanting” of the world identified by Weber. Moreover, he argues, these are the two basic conditions for the emergence of an ethics of human dignity alien to a theistic primal cause, and they arguably constitute the structural foundation of the process of secularization itself. By the nineteenth century, as Taylor pointed out, the notion of cosmos was eventually replaced by the idea of the universe: an infinite, timeless, anonymous space, effectively inapprehensible and ultimately devoid of meaning. From this point onwards, the indexation of

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448 See: ‘Disengagement from the cosmic order meant that the human agent was no longer to be understood as an element in the larger, meaningful order. His paradigm purposes are to be discovered within. He is on his own. What goes for the larger cosmic order will eventually be applied also to political society. And this yields a picture of the sovereign individual, who is ‘by nature’ not bound to any authority. The condition of being under authority is something which has to be recreated.’ In Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, pp. 193-4.

449 On the affirmation of a non-theistic understanding of moral sources, based on the notions of the disengaged subject and of an external manipulable world, Taylor argues the following: ‘What arises in each case is a conception which stands ready for a mutation, which will carry it outside Christian faith altogether. But being ready isn’t sufficient to produce the mutation. That seems to have required an additional stimulus. The mutation became necessary when and to the extent that it seemed to people that these moral sources could only be properly acknowledged, could only thus fully empower us, in their non-theistic form. The dignity of free, rational control came to seem genuine only free of submission to God; the goodness of nature, and/or our unreserved immersion in it, seemed to require its independence, and a negation of any divine vocation.’ In Charles Taylor, Sources of the Self, pp. 315-316.
human beings to larger notions of space and time became deeply problematic.450

Returning to *Astronomia*, in ‘Cosmos’ the aged author writes in the awareness of death: ‘Escorrem-se-lhe as horas enfim por entre os dedos, e a caveira assoma além da vidraça embaciada pelo bafo do que existe.’451 He finds support in the memory of the family home and in the objects reclaimed from it, which help placate his revolt against time. In this context, writing is a hard task, entailing a long process of revision, which is described in detail, in order to configure ‘uma escrita fluente, posto que não correcta, e poderosa bastante para que ele pressinta a recôndita harmonia que resulta da coincidência do arrazoado que debita com esse que platonicamente corresponde a uma ideia guardada na mente dos deuses.’452 For the author-character, writing should therefore exist in accordance with the rhythm of the world, it should arguably be in tune with the music of the Pythagorean spheres and give access to a life pre-existing words (‘no princípio não era o verbo’, says the cover of the book). And at last, we reach cosmos. In the final passage of the novel, the aged author (referred to as ‘o menino’) prepares to go to bed, every detail of his routine and condition being described in order to underline his human frailty. Not unlike Virgil in Hermann Broch’s famous novel, it is in a state of limbo between vigil and sleep that the character imagines himself drifting into the cosmos, the separation between the self and the world collapsing, as do the oppositions between outside and inside, past and future, beginning and ending:

E rompem-se num relâmpago as fronteiras do espaço, absorvido pela cristalina amplidão de um firmamento que não se estrutura em norte e

450 See: ‘Reality in all directions plunges its roots into the unknown and as yet impalpable. It is this sense which defines the grasp of the world as ‘universe’ and not ‘cosmos’; and this is what I mean when I say that the universe outlook was ‘deep’ in a way the cosmos picture was not.’ In Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age*, p. 326. One should note however that the idea of the separation between the subject and the world was always contentious. Examples of this are to be found for instance in the retrieval of the Pythagorean-Platonic archetype during the Renaissance, or much later by the Romantics. Additionally, the concept of an interlocking order of being proposed by seventeenth-century Deism, and elements in the philosophy of thinkers such as Leibnitz or even Spinoza, can be said to be attempts at making the notion of the universe as a mechanism compatible with the idea of a meaningful order, accessible to subjects via the exercise of their reason and/or emotion.


sul, nem em este e oeste, e onde não se aponta um cima, nem um em baixo, um aqui, nem um além, um ontem, nem um amanhã. No seu solitário trajeto, limpo de ponto de partida, e liberto de lugar de chegada, o menino estende os dedos para os corpos celestes que se lhe disseminam à volta, ele próprio transformado em corpo astral, e atado por um imperceptível cordão à substância do mundo, mas lançado no voo em que o nada se agrega à totalidade, e em que a luz se desenvolve em luz, a energia se multiplica em energia, e a vaga imensa se derrama na escuridão. [...] A respiração do menino identifica-se com a do cão, e ambas com a incomensurável entidade que compõem, numa núvem omnipresente, crescendo até à absoluta brancura. [...] E assim, transcendendo toda a dimensão, o matinal torpor converte-se-lhe num estatuto de vida. Na desmesura do firmamento não há espaço que não coincida com ele, nem hemisfério que lhe restrinja a amplitude da cúpula em que se dissolve. 

The text retrieves the Pythagorean-Platonic imagery in order to construct a religious experience of transcendence in immanence, thus also re-imagining the modern relation of the subject with the world, of opposition and manipulation, which as we saw constituted one of the structural conditions for the process of ‘disenchantment’ of the world and of secularization. Thus order is constructed out of chaos, and the universe, with which a porous subject is harmonized, is again invested with meaning. One can argue that implicit in the passage are references to the luminous imagery of Dante’s ‘Paradise’, which in turn contains gnostic undertones, so that this process of attunement to the universe may be interpreted as the return of the subject to a metaphorical home. Additionally, it seems clear that the excerpt further elaborates on the mystical theme of the coincidencia oppositorum, the coincidence of opposites, which indeed emerges in other works by Cláudio. And finally, the passage can be read as presenting an epiphanic vision, by which notions of time and space are suspended, which is the product of the exercise of subjective imagination, a poetic procedure evocative of the romantics.

454 I think here especially of Retrato de Rapaz (Alfragide: Dom Quixote, 2013).
455 For a classic account of the workings of the romantic epiphanic imagery, see: Frank Kermode, Romantic Image (London and New York: Routledge, 2002). The passages of Astronomia considered here allow us to better understand Mário Cláudio’s statements in a recent interview, in which he very platonically reflected on the notion of death and on the persistence of truth and beauty: ‘Eu não tenho expectativas quanto ao futuro, tudo morre. Pode levar mais ou menos tempo até morrer, mas tudo morre. [...] Estas coisas – as artes, as letras, as músicas, o que quer que seja – foram gritos
Like other texts by Mário Cláudio in which the concept and image of *cosmos* emerges, such as *O Pórtico da Glória* and *Memórias Secretas*, or the earlier novels *Peregrinação de Barnabé das Índias*, *Orión*, and *Camilo Broca*, *Astronomia* proposes through the cosmic imagery a resonant mode of relationship between the subject and the universe. As we saw, although Tiago Veiga intuitively attempts to articulate a similar vision, he is ultimately unable to do so. The poet is therefore left with only one avenue, which is to demand that the biographer transform his life into a work of art, a perfect narrative, an island of sense, which in my view is another manifestation of the idea of *cosmos*. In the next section, I briefly address the role of the arts in Veiga’s life and explain in more detail the process leading up to the shaping of his biography.

The Art of Life

Hartmut Rosa identifies the arts and personal and collective history as privileged spheres of resonance within the modern cultural landscape. Whilst following Rosa, my examination of these matters in relation to the *Biografia* will be guided by a hermeneutic approach. In fact, as I mentioned above, I partake the view that in the novel resonance cannot be dissociated from self and alter interpretation and sense making.

In the *Biografia*, narration and interpretation are intricately linked. The interpretive vein present in the work is manifested in the first instance in the constant summaries and assessments of the trajectory of Tiago Veiga, produced by the narrator and by the poet himself. Moreover, as a subject engaged in a process of continuous self-fashioning and self-discovery, Veiga reads the world in relation to himself, seeking either to distance himself from...
or, in most cases, to identify with the realities he encounters. Put differently, Veiga seeks to find himself in others. The arts play a crucial role in this process of self-revelation. As I clarified above, through his own creations, but also through the artistic works he engages with, Veiga ultimately looks to decipher and understand his life. This occurs with literature, mostly poetry, but likewise, as I showed earlier, with painting. In fact, Veiga’s encounters with paintings, with which the poet often initiates productive exchanges, have important hermeneutic implications. The same can be said of music, which the poet can also read in reference to his life.\footnote{The clearest example of this arises when Veiga draws a parallel between his biography and the unpredictability of a composition by Ravel. See: Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, p. 623.} Finally, in the \textit{Biografia} art can not only help assess the past and the present, but even predict the future. This is what happens when, at the time of the poet’s internment in the Miguel Bombarda Hospital, José Porto produces a sketch of a future, much older Veiga.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, p. 238.} What the facts described here reveal is that the \textit{Biografia} seems to illustrate Gadamer’s view that art can open a space of encounter, of recognition and understanding, of individuals and of the world they live in. Nevertheless, if there is a common denominator to Veiga’s trajectory is his ultimate inability to understand himself, a fact that becomes increasingly evident as the poet ages. The most obvious example of this is found in the chapter of the novel titled ‘O guarda-vento do Waldorf-Astoria.’\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, pp. 582-601.}

In this chapter, Veiga joins the characters of Cláudio and Michael Lloyd in England. Although the biographer reluctantly accepts Veiga’s intrusion, he takes this opportunity to test hypotheses about the poet’s identity and to favour his understanding of himself. So, the biographer uses a quotation of Virginia Woolf about the value of the rural world and a subsequent trip to the countryside to try to elicit a recognition on the part of Veiga of his distinctively ruralist inclinations.\footnote{Mário Cláudio, \textit{Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia}, pp. 584-5.} However, in this instance, Veiga is not interested in such reflections so much as in trying to arrange a meeting with Toby, a young woman he had had a brief fling with. Later, and in order to fulfil similar goals, Cláudio promotes an encounter between Veiga and Hilda Bluhm, in the
Waldorf-Astoria hotel. The idea would be to sound out if Veiga would be able to comprehend his life better by establishing a link with a Jewish émigré writer, who, like Veiga, had remained unpublished. Needless to say, in spite of the affinity established between the two writers, the encounter is unproductive and Veiga returns home, alone and unchanged. The ending of the chapter is in any case meaningful. Here we see the biographer attempting to make sense of one of Veiga’s manuscripts, after which he relates how he had dreamt that Veiga, David Mourão-Ferreira and himself had found themselves trapped in the glass entrance of the Waldorf-Astoria hotel. In a reversal of roles, it was Tiago who had managed to find a way out and the biographer who had remained lost and trapped in this glass prison, a great fish tank of sorts.  

Tiago of course does not find the way out of the maze of his life, and that is precisely why he charges the character of Cláudio with the task of writing his biography. Refusing the offer by Vasco Graça Moura to publish his complete works, Veiga instead tells the biographer:

«Vou desiludir o Graça Moura porque não me interessa nada a obra completa». Olhando-me depois fixamente nos olhos, acentuaria com firmeza, «O que se impõe, meu caro, é a tarefa que irás executar, a escrita da vida deste velho que mal se pode mexer, e que conta contigo como único responsável pelo registo que largar da sua passagem pelo mundo».  

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460 See: ‘Mantinha ainda Tiago de facto o integral domínio do verbo escrito, não se mostravam raras as afirmações do seu velho humor, e fortalecia-se nele o a-proposito da condenação acerba dos desconchavos do mundo. Uns quantos desses relatórios, não saberia eu determinar se por distração, se intencionalmente, chegavam-me no verso dos rascunhos de Os Deuses de Saibro, o que me possibilitava a tentativa de reconstituição do extenso poema que se tornaria mítico, tarefa que eu muito arduamente empreendia a partir daquela floresta de rasuras, de chamadas, de interpelações, e de nódoas de toda a casa. A marca da circunferência do fundo dos copos, aí a apostar, como que na confissão de um pecado que se ia inventando, transportava-me em espírito às noites da Casa dos Anjos, e às manhãs do Hotel Borges, quando através das brumas da arrastada bebedeira pastoreava Veiga a sua existência. Visitar-me-ia por essa época um sonho que, transindo-me de pânico, me designava como protagonista de uma comédia macabra. Estávamos no Waldorf-Astoria, rodando às cegas no terrível guarda-vento, Mourão-Ferreira, Tiago Veiga e eu, cada qual em seu espaço hermético, delimitado pelos vidros daquela gaiola de transparências. E só Tiago, o que menos se queria orientado, conseguia descobrir enfim o caminho de saída.’ In Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 601.

461 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, pp. 674-5.
Veiga’s new project, it should be noted, arose after Cláudio had published *Amadeo*, and indeed the manner in which Veiga explains to Cláudio the terms of his intended biography coincide roughly with Cláudio’s own understanding and practice of the genre, first evidenced in *Amadeo*. In his veritable monologue with the biographer, Veiga delves into the blurred borders between fact and fiction and partakes of Cláudio’s idea that each biographer invents his subject.  

But the point I would like to make here is that, by wishing to have his life turned into a biography, Veiga is in fact implicitly reproducing a romantic ideal, according to which an artist’s true work of art is his own life, which should be as original and individual as possible. Additionally, the writing of the biography would mean that even a trajectory marked by apparent randomness, and which ended in frustration, would be given shape and meaning, and thus could become exemplary.

The character of the biographer first rejects the possibility of acceding to Veiga’s request, which he feels as an imposition, even an order. However, he later describes the process of configuration of the *Biografia*. He explains his motivations, his interest in the poet’s life, but also in the contexts he experienced and mostly in the intellectual significance which in his view Veiga’s life had. More importantly, though, is the contrast that emerges in the biographer’s statements between the equivocal nature of Veiga’s trajectory, which he finally decides to respect, and his desire to formulate a

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464 “À semelhança do que me ocorreria em anteriores ocasiões, nem sequer seria a peregrinação de Veiga por este mundo que sobremaneira me importava, mas o cenário de atmosferas em que a mesma se desenrolara, a acrescer aos inegáveis factores de relevância intelectual, o seu assumidíssimo anonimato, e as múltiplas facetas de uma obra que, estilhaçada embora, se imprimia com tamanha originalidade no contexto da nossa literatura.’ In Mário Cláudio, *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*, p. 692.
‘thesis’ about the author, to research his life in order to present a complete portrait of Tiago Veiga: ‘Não era tarde, nem era cedo, impunha-se-me remontar à Casa dos Anjos, e pesquisar a mal, ou a bem, o que por ali houvesse de susceptível de me oferecer o retrato de corpo inteiro do nosso poeta, e como eu jamais o vislumbrara.’

We can arguably interpret the way in which the Biografia engages with fictional representation along the lines of hermeneutics. Paul Ricoeur, for instance, stressed that the best way to understand the world is to read it as a text. Moreover, if narrative imitates life, he claimed, producing and reading stories is a privileged means to learn about human life. By telling or configuring stories (emplotment), human beings interpret others, themselves, and more broadly historical developments. And finally, for Ricoeur, narrative allows subjects to acquire a defined identity and character, or narrative self. By narrating the life of Tiago Veiga, the biographer is giving shape and interpreting a given subject, and thus conferring onto him a more defined character. The constant assessments of Veiga’s life by himself and the narrator illustrate this. Furthermore, through the mask of Veiga and of the character of the biographer, Cláudio is also arguably interpreting and explaining himself (his artistic and cultural stances), although of course said interpretation occurs within the context of a complex representational game, which creates an effect of ambiguity, even undecidability. Thus, the very notion of narrative self is problematized, highlighting its continuously constructed and therefore fluid nature. Lastly, the Biografia quite evidently presents an interpretation of the history of Portugal and to an extent of Europe, centred mainly in political and cultural movements, and likewise affords a broader reflection on late modern social arrangements and their effects on individual subjectivity.

465 Mário Cláudio, Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia, p. 711.
Conclusion

*A Quinta das Virtudes* and *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* represent and assess the subjective consequences of modern social, cultural and economic arrangements. These are in appearance very different works, in the first instance in terms of their narrative structures and of the historical periods they portray, but they are united by common themes and concerns, which they approach in different but complementary manner.

National and transnational mobility is a key element in both novels, although evidently it is represented in a more extreme fashion in the *Biografia*. As I argued, spatial and cultural mobility are directly linked with the emergence in the main characters of what I called (following Bhabha) a migrant consciousness. The latter is characterized by the anxiety of accommodation to a new setting, which in turn is accompanied by a sense of loss and disorientation brought about by processes of social transition and cultural translation, leading to the questioning of notions of home and belonging. It is in this context that a reflection on the individual interpretations of cosmopolitanism comes into play, a subject which acquires special relevance in the *Biografia*.

Another element that is crucial in both works relates to the tensions between individualism, independence and personal autonomy, on the one hand, and the desire to belong to a community (familial, regional, national, transnational), on the other. In the novels, autonomy is associated with self-discovery, personal re-invention and assertion, and as such it is regarded in positive terms; however, it is also connected with disorder, lack of orientation and ultimately with a prevailing sense of alienation. As I noted in this study, in the novels the process of re-invention of the subject is linked with the general workings of modernity, evidenced for instance in historical developments in the fields of politics and culture, a parallel which is made especially clear in the *Biografia*.

These conditions pose challenges to the characters portrayed in both works. They are represented as being torn between feelings of belonging and alienation, and likewise between the competing desires for independence and
attachment, disorder and order, the yearning for personal re-invention and for a more stable identity. We therefore find no acritical celebration of cultural hybridity in Cláudio’s works. Similarly, there is no promotion of an utterly fluid mode of construction of identity, in the fashion of Pessoa or of the contemporary theories advocating radically de-territorialized practices of identity.

Finally, as we have seen, Cláudio is clearly wary of the easy escape routes to the complications of the modern and late modern sociocultural landscape, represented by simplistic nationalist discourses and affiliations. What Cláudio’s texts convey is for the most part an understanding of the complexity and contradictory nature of the situation in which characters find themselves, as well as the exploration of tentative ways of dealing productively with said circumstances.

One of the main ideas advanced in the works by Mário Cláudio considered in this study relates therefore to the acceptance of the reflective condition of the modern and late modern individual, forced to navigate the tensions between travel and dwelling, belonging and not belonging, the local and transnational, the past and the present, instantaneous time and extended forms of temporality. In the face of this complicated situation, Cláudio’s fiction

\[467\] I refer here to radically de-territorialised perspectives on identity proposed by a wide range of thinkers, from the ranks of feminism, post-materialism, and deconstructionism. Although presenting vastly different approaches to human subjectivity and relationality, the authors bellow share a similar structural perspective regarding individuals and their relationship. Departing from traditional ideas about subjectivity and community, they understand relationality as corresponding to the fluid interactions between agents whose identities are themselves always in the process of being redefined. In this context, the ethical imperatives orienting interactions derive in most cases from the recognition of the body as the common ground of vulnerability and emotion, and as such as the locus of subjectivity constructed in relation to the other. Communities are thus understood as open, flexible, and fleeting constructions, a view which contrasts with the conventional notion of community as a structure which, although not precluding creativity, is based on stable elements, which bind its members, and provide them with a sense of common identity: Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1991); Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Disavowed Community* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2016); Giorgio Agamben, *The Coming Community* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993); Judith Butler, *Giving an Account of Oneself* (New York, NY: Fordham University Press, 2005); Rosine Kelz, *The Non-Sovereign Self, Responsibility, and Otherness: Hannah Arendt, Judith Butler, and Stanley Cavell on Moral Philosophy and Political Agency* (Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire : Palgrave Macmillan, 2016); Karen Barad, *Meeting the Universe Halfway: Quantum Physics and the Entanglement of Matter and Meaning* (Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2007); Luce Irigaray, *The Way of Love* (London: Continuum, 2006), Luce Irigaray, *To Be Born: Genesis of a New Human Being* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017).
proposes what I would like to call forms of care, in the first instance for the past and for others.

Memory plays a crucial role in both *A Quinta das Virtudes* and *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia*. This is evident in the brand of reflective nostalgia that emerges in the first novel, which as we saw is brought about by the perception of radical social change. But care for the past is also related in *A Quinta das Virtudes* with the desire to retrieve and retell stories, pertaining to the family, to the city and the country. In the *Biografia*, transnational memory (personal and cultural) is creatively reformulated by Tiago Veiga and Ellen Rasmussen in their art. This amounts to an attempt on the part of the couple to articulate a situated form of cosmopolitanism, that is, a constructive mode of conviviality established within the context of the global circulation of people, goods and ideas. Although displaying a degree of ambiguity in this respect, the novels posit that, if critically surveyed and updated in relation to present concerns, the activation and re-configuration of memory may favour a process of precarious inscription in time and space, which are thus granted personal meaning.

The subject of personal autonomy versus attachment is also addressed in the two novels examined in this study. In *A Quinta das Virtudes*, emphasis is put on the bourgeois family unit, represented as a safe harbour in a hostile environment. At the same time however, the family and the family home are represented as being under constant threat of dissolution. In the *Biografia*, an even more problematic view of the tension between personal attachments and autonomy is depicted, and the inability shown by Tiago Veiga to reconcile these two elements partly explains his demise. As I argued, it is in the account titled ‘Corto’, included in *Memórias Secretas*, that we find the representation of a harmonious familial relationship, enacted in an island, a space which I identified as a self-contained universe or cosmos. The similarities between the profiles of Corto and Veiga, and the fact that the family portrayed in the text is, like Veiga’s, distinctly multicultural, favour the associations between the accounts of the lives of both characters, and likewise validate the interpretation of the family in the island as affording a possible solution to Veiga’s predicament.
Complementing the reflections on memory and on personal relationships, in the two novels the arts, storytelling and writing are represented as means to understand and order the apparent chaos of life. Storytelling and especially writing are viewed as ways to confer meaning onto individual trajectories, relating and inscribing them in social and historical developments pertaining to a larger community. Moreover, texts are not only represented in themselves as a cosmos, a universe of precarious production of meaning, but can also allow for the articulation of the imagined harmonization between the subject and the world. In *A Quinta das Virtudes* and the *Biografia*, this is achieved through the retrieval of romantic ideas regarding the integration of the human being into the natural world. However, it is through the establishment of a cosmic imagery, whose formulation is also arguably influenced by the romantics, that the desired harmonization between self and world is ultimately realised. As I demonstrated through the analysis of passages from the *Biografia*, *O Pórtico da Glória* and *Astronomia*, the Claudian imagery of cosmos recovers a Platonic-Pythagorean conception of the universe in order to subvert the modern opposition between the human being and world, which Taylor argued is one of the pillars of the process of secularization. Hence my argument that in the Claudian corpus the imagery of cosmos has a proto-religious dimension and that it is used to attain a general inscription of the human being into more abstract notions of time and space.

*A Quinta das Virtudes* and *Tiago Veiga - Uma Biografia* reveal Cláudio’s understanding of the history of modernity and of Portugal’s semiperipheral position in the world-system. More importantly, they engage with current issues and challenges, pertaining for instance to patterns of mobility, social acceleration, and to the configuration of individual and collective identities in the current circumstances. In the context of an increasingly globalized world, the definition of heathier multi-scale models of conviviality is especially relevant, and, in this regard, the subject of memory acquires special relevance. So too does the denunciation of nationalisms, and of their customary manipulation of the past. In this regard, we should note Cláudio’s inventive and subversive use of a novelistic form inherited from the core of the world system in order to think about the possibility of a new more
balanced late modern landscape. In this respect also, one can argue that Cláudio’s fiction signals the worldmaking potential of the arts, dependent in large part on the creative use of memory,\textsuperscript{468} as a means to neutralize the sense of disorder caused by mobility and social disembedding, and more generally by the perception of the loss of world brought about by the destructive logic of modernity operating at a global scale.\textsuperscript{469}

This study affords a new perspective on the Claudian corpus, examining the manner in which it engages in a multifaceted and considered reflection on modern social, cultural and economic arrangements, as well as on their effects on individuals and communities alike. It moreover underlines the quality of expression and the artistic ingenuity that enable said reflection. Ultimately, this dissertation aims to contribute to highlighting the significance and originality of Mário Cláudio’s contribution to contemporary Portuguese and World literature.


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