

CARNEIRO, JOSÉ MANUEL MARTINS, *O Imaginário Romântico da Pena*, Lisboa: Chaves Ferreira Publicações S.A., 2009, 287 pp.

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The publication of *O Imaginário Romântico da Pena*, issued in 2009 under the patronage of the Municipality of Sintra, appeals to the general reader's attention not only because of its contents but also due to its large number of enlightening pictures and nice layout. However, the lettering is difficult to read and we feel the lack of a name's index that would guide the reader through the pages. The study is the result of an academic work presented by its author, José Manuel Martins Carneiro, as an MA dissertation conducted at the Faculty of Letters of the University of Lisbon.

The Palace of Sintra and its Park are considered one of the most important symbols of Portuguese artistic Romanticism but they have been studied and interpreted throughout the times in quite a dispersed way. Instead, the author meant this book to be more than a study of artistic heritage; in fact, he wants it to function as an interdisciplinary work covering the whole subject of the Pena complex.

The author's concept of «romantic imagery» encompasses the three constructions in spite of their distinct values. Supported by extensive documentary sources, the analysis includes the Palace itself; the Park, which consists of a diversified set of buildings and properties that the German duke Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha went on acquiring during the mid-19th century in order to create there the first landscaped garden in Portugal, according to the romantic taste inspired by the knowledge of the various arts, from painting to poetry and opera; and finally, the so-called «Moorish Castle» which he had restored.

The volume is well organized. After an historical and methodological introduction, the author seeks to establish the premises that guided the research at the same time that he introduces the reader to the cultural mindset in which this romantic works were conceived. Indeed, Ferdinand was born in Vienna in 1816 and came to Lisbon in 1836 to become the King consort of Queen Mary of Portugal. His importance justifies the attention dedicated to him as patron of the arts and artists, as well as restorer of many national monuments. He also proved to be a skilled politician and a defender of the Portuguese cultural heritage, putting his enlightened imprint on the culture of the 19th century in Portugal during the long period of consolidation of the constitutional régime.

Throughout the pages we are introduced to the worldview of this German «King-artist», who gave Portugal the idea of nature as a subject of reflection and enjoyment, and not just of aesthetic contemplation and imitation. The book presents the German romantic philosophy in a detailed way in order to show that such philosophy

recognizes sensitivity and feeling as fundamental categories. Therefore, the whole Pena complex is the result of a mentality and a program. It is the Germanic cultural world that is at its origins; a world where music, poetry, singing and opera, but equally botany, mineralogy and geology intersect. It inspires a careful plan developed during several decades. Diversified zones and circuits were built and scenic solutions were found to the different terrain accidents as well as the natural landscape.

Behind the Pena complex is one *Natürphilosophie*, which corresponds to theosophical principles, godly revelations and the discovery of visible and invisible realities. According to the author of the study, it is in this perspective that applied scientific knowledge acquires a religious significance, while the walker's creative imagination expresses itself through the iniciatic pathways to the Park and Palace of Pena. Imagery and representation forms merge with the whole construction of the Palace, where the Baron Von Eschewege, a mining engineer, made his mark as an amateur architect. In addition, the study's author also highlights the history of the restoring of the Hieronimite convent and the Moorish castle, as well as the gardens. Architecture and ornament extended to the landscape following the composition principles of the outside spaces. The author also points out the relationship between Goethe's *Elective Affinities* and the gardens of Pena as well as role played by the French gardener Bonnard after designing the Necessidades Park in Lisbon where he formed a school of gardeners. Scenography and afforestation have created Pena as a poetic of space and time. Among multiple possible readings, the author interprets the garden landscape as a voyage. It is a seductive intertextual reading which connects forms and symbols.