GAZING, READING AND WRITING: POSITIONING THE READER IN LEOPOLDO ALAS'S "UN DOCUMENTO"

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Although the only weapon ever brandished in Leopoldo Alas's short story "Un documento" (1882) is a pair of binoculars, the main characters, the Duchess Cristina and the Naturalist writer, Fernando Flores, engage in an impassioned power struggle through the acts of seeing, reading and writing. While the position of observer/writer is generally the superior one within the story, these roles constantly alternate between Cristina and Fernando. This interchanging of roles has led Carolyn Richmond to conclude that there is no winner to the power struggle between the lovers since, even though Fernando objectifies the Duchess in his novel according to his own Naturalist world view, Fernando is subsequently objectified as a "plebeyo" in Cristina's letter which serves as her response to his novel (372-73). In this sense both characters are ultimately perceived, understood, and objectified in the Other's written document. Although valid, this reading underemphasizes the narrator's and author's attempt to position the reader on the side of Fernando and accept his Naturalist account of events over Cristina's narrative of spiritual and romantic Idealism.

The gaze is fundamental to the power struggle between Fernando and Cristina. It is initially portrayed as a sexual act that carries with it the ability to penetrate and excite the other's body. In a particularly telling scene Fernando metaphorically makes love to Cristina at the circus when she receives his phallic gaze within the lenses of her binoculars: "Cristina, al recoger [la mirada] dentro de sus gemelos, y sentirla pasar por la retina al alma, quedóse como espantada de gozar placer tan intenso en regiones de su ser en que jamás había sentido más que unas ligeras cosquillas" (45). This passage exemplifies Laura Mulvey's assertion that there are also scopophilic pleasures involved in being the object or receiver of the gaze (834). However, in contrast to Mulvey's theory, the story suggests that being the object of the gaze is not only sexually exciting, but can also be a sign of empowerment. Cristina enjoys accepting the gaze of what she perceives to be the insignificant masses. For the Duchess, the fact that all eyes are on her signifies her superiority. The narrator tells us that she enters the theater with the arrogance of a queen or great artist who knows that everyone is looking at her and talking about her (39) and that she imagines that she is the sun and Fernando an insignificant insect who receives pleasure just basking in her glorious rays (43-44). This makes the Duchess view her decision to reciprocate Fernando's gaze as an act of charity.[1] What is important here is that even when Cristina consciously positions herself as desired object of the gaze, she is actually "seeing" the Other see her. This dynamic is clearly exemplified in her interactions with Fernando:

> Cristina no miraba a Fernando cuando sabía que él la miraba; esto ya saben todas las mujeres cómo se hace. Flores no sospechaba nada; creíase a solas en su contemplación y procuraba saciar el apetito de contemplar sin miedo de ser sorprendido. Bien conocía esto la duquesa; veía que el joven del circo la miraba. (43)

Here the Duchess seems to control the gaze since she is watching Fernando watch her. Nevertheless, soon afterwards, Fernando spies her watching him watch her. This *mise en abîme* is also reflected in the binoculars each person uses to look at each other since this visual instrument, a metonymic representation of the eye, both emits and receives the phallic gaze. In accordance with Michel Foucault's analysis of the visual power associated with Jeremy Benthem's Panoptican prison, it is precisely Cristina's ability to see those who observe her that robs the gaze of its power. According to Foucault, the genius of the Panopticon was that the prisoners knew they were being watched but yet could not verify the source of the gaze:

> Bentham laid down the principle that power should be visible and unverifiable. Visible: the inmate will constantly have before his eyes the tall outline of the central tower from which he is spied upon. Unverifiable: the inmate must never know whether he is being looked at any one moment. (201)

Cristina curtails Fernando's ability to control her actions because she knows precisely when he is watching her. Thus, here the phallocentric gaze is ineffectual in that its object (Cristina) knows when she is being seen.

Although in the example given above it is Cristina who assumes the traditionally passive/receptive role of object of the gaze usually assigned to the woman, in other instances Cristina consciously takes on the position of active subject when she penetrates the young writer's body by pointing her binoculars in his direction and making him shake with fright: "Cristina, no bien hubo sacado de la caja los gemelos, dirigiólos al humilde escritor, que tembló como si le mirase con dos cañones cargados de abrasadora metralla" (41). Cristina's gaze is not only a way of dominating Fernando, it also proves to be a source of sexual pleasure: "esa noche la consagraba ella, hacía algunas semanas, a un espionaje que le causaba una clase de delicias que tenían la frescura y el encanto fortísimo de las emociones nuevas" (43). Here Cristina experiences sexual delights by openly breaking with convention and actively reciprocating Fernando's gaze. While Fernando initially feels protected by the darkness of the circus theater that he shares with Cristina's other admirers ("sí la miraba tenazmente, sin miedo, creyéndose seguro en la oscuridad de la multitud" [41-42]), this illusion of impenetrability, or what Mulvey terms "illusion of voyeuristic separation" (836) is shattered when he discovers that he has been targeted by Cristina's binoculars. Fernando feels violated when he recognizes that he has been symbolically placed in the role of the woman by allowing himself to be objectified by the gaze of a "don Juan del sexo débil" (38). This understanding of seeing as a form of phallic domination is underscored by the narrator's reference to Cristina's binoculars as guns and canons. Yet, Fernando's initial subordination to Cristina is not just visual. As a duchess married to a wealthy and powerful man, Cristina is of superior social standing. Moreover, being six years Fernando's senior and a veteran of many love affairs, she exceeds Fernando in both age and life experience. Furthermore, because of Fernando's timidity, Cristina is forced to assume the traditionally

masculine role in their relationship by taking the initiative at the beginning: "Él, estaba visto, no había de atreverse sin grandes garantías de buen éxito, y fue ella quien tuvo que arriesgar más de lo justo" (50). But, most importantly, Cristina establishes her authority over Fernando by insisting that the relationship proceed according to her terms. Cristina's superior position vis-à-vis Fernando sets up the principle conflict of the story: Fernando's attempt to reverse this situation and to dominate Cristina by becoming the definitive bearer of the gaze and objectifying her in his text.

Not merely restricted to visual power plays, the gaze in this story is also inextricably linked to each character's claims to knowledge or truth. The rise of science and Positivism in the nineteenth century made the assertion of the existence of a phenomenon increasingly dependent on its materiality and its ability to be observed and studied. Both Auguste Comte, in his *Cours de philosophie positive* (1830-42), and Claude Bernard, in his *Introduction à l'étude de la médecine expérimentale* (1865) hierarchized the various forms of knowledge arguing that positive or experimental knowledge was superior to other forms of knowing since it was based on experimentation and the study of observable phenomena.[2] Although this emphasis on empirical reality did not eliminate other types of intellectual speculation altogether, it effectively subordinated them to science. Insisting on the need to elevate literature to the level of science through the application of the experimental method, Émile Zola argued that the body, both in its healthy and infirm state, should become the primary focus of the novel:

> if the territory of the experimental doctor is the body of man, as shown in the phenomena of his different organs both in their normal and pathological condition, our territory is equally the body of man, as shown by his sensory and cerebral phenomena, both in their normal and pathological condition.[3] ("The Experimental Novel" 32)

This line of reasoning leads Zola to proclaim in the last paragraph of "The Experimental Novel" that "the metaphysical man is dead; our whole territory is transformed by the advent of the physiological man" (54).[4] Leopoldo Alas, while skeptical about attempts to convert literature into science, ultimately supported and defended Zola's principal thesis that the experimental method of observation and experimentation ought to be applied to literature.

In his book *Body Works: Objects of Desire in Modern Narrative*, Peter Brooks analyzes the way in which the body is manifested in modern narratives where readers, narrators and characters alike gaze at and unveil the body, usually the female body, in order to make it signify and thereby satiate both scopophilic and epistemophilic desires:

> What presides at the inscription and imprinting of bodies is, in the broadest sense, a set of desires: a desire that the body not be lost to meaning—that it be brought into the realm of the semiotic and the significant—and, underneath this, a desire for the body itself, an erotic longing to have or to be the body. (22)

This connection between visual, sexual and intellectual drives is clearly seen in Alas's short story where both characters see, consume and attempt to derive and inscribe meaning on/from the other's body. However, as we will see, it is Fernando's critically acclaimed novel that will most effectively make the body signify by using the experimental method of observation and experimentation in the creation of a *documento humano*.[6]

The characters' interpretation of what they see is informed by what they read. From the very outset of the story the narrator makes a point of commenting on Cristina's current reading preferences: Schleiermacher and Spanish mysticism. Friedrich Ernst Schleiermacher was a German philosopher and theologian who, in his *On Religion: Speeches to its Cultured Despisers* (1799, revised ed. 1821), attempted to defend religion against reasoned critique by arguing that religion was "feeling and intuition of the universe" (qtd. in Mautner 506). This grounding on feeling and intuition breaks with the scientific method and provides a basis upon which to justify adherence to spiritual Idealism. While the narrator never mentions what particular aspects of Schleiermacher's work Cristina is interested in, he does make it clear that the lessons Cristina has taken from her reading have not been particularly edifying or instructive. For example, the narrator ridicules the changes Cristina has implemented in her life because of her reading choices ("los místicos españoles y Schleiermacher han conseguido que la duquesa introduzca en su tocado reformas radicales; y ahora [...] gasta apenas una hora en su tocado, pero bien aprovechada" [36-37]) as well as her resulting inability to see reality for what it is. When Fernando is concerned that Cristina may have read *Madame Bovary* because she might associate their vulgar meeting place, a carriage, with the scene from Gustave Flaubert's famous novel, the narrator responds directly to Fernando's fears by proclaiming: "No, infeliz, no ha leído tal cosa; Cristina lee a Schleiermacher y a fray Luis de Granada, no temas" (50).[7] The implication is clear: Cristina's unfamiliarity with anything other than Idealist literature prevents her from recognizing that her relationship and secret meetings with Fernando are not only more sexual than spiritual, but actually quite prosaic.

Similarly, the narrator makes light of Cristina's interest in mysticism by showing how she eroticizes the experience to create what the narrator later refers to as her "romanticismo místico-erótico" (51). This becomes particularly clear in the narrator's reference to Cristina's reading of San Juan de la Cruz's "Cántico espiritual":

> Cristina, que un mes antes estaba enamorada de San Juan de la Cruz, y hubiera dado cualquier cosa por ser ella la iglesia de Cristo, la esposa mística a quien el santo requiebra tan finamente, había cambiado de ídolo y se había dicho: 'Lo que yo necesito es un amor humano; pero verdadero, espiritual, desinteresado.' (42)[8]

Cristina's literal interpretation of the conjugal metaphors of the San Juan de la Cruz's famous poem leads her to believe that she can reach new spiritual heights through a chaste love affair. While Cristina insists that her union with Fernando is "spiritual" and therefore completely different from any of her past adulterous relationships, it is clear to the reader

(as well as to Fernando and the narrator) that their relationship, whether consummated or not, is still sexual in nature. It is Cristina's reading preferences that lead her to view her relationship with Fernando as a spiritual romance, a privileged experience of select individuals. She writes her "text" by establishing a list of conditions for the relationship: 1) Fernando must acknowledge that their love affair is superior to others, 2) although she cannot offer him the virginity of her body, she can offer him the virginity of her soul since she has never truly loved before, 3) Fernando himself is of a superior nature, even though only a woman like herself is able to recognize it and 4) their relationship, although not completely devoid of physicality, shall not be consummated (50-51).

In contrast, Fernando, like the narrator and author, is a reader and writer of Naturalist fiction, a genre that dismisses romantic and spiritual idealism as *a priori* forms of knowledge, if not pure fantasy, in order to study and portray reality as it is seen and experienced. Zola explains the difference between Naturalism and Idealism in the following way:

> We naturalistic novelists submit each fact to the test of observation and experiment, while the idealistic writers admit mysterious elements which escape analysis, and therefore remain in the unknown, outside of the influence of the laws governing nature. [...] I dub as idealists those who take refuge in the unknown for the pleasure of being there, who have a taste but for the most risky hypotheses, who disdain to submit them to the test of experiment under the pretext that the truth is in themselves and not in the things.[9] (36-37)

Alas echoes this idea in "Del naturalismo" asserting that Naturalism, unlike Idealism, seeks to present reality as it is seen and experienced (122).[10] Fernando's adherence to Naturalism leads him initially to reproach himself for his own feelings and behaviors and to compare himself with the most famous parodied romantic of Spanish literature, Don Quijote: "Apagó la luz y se quedó pensando: 'Allá va don Quijote; ésta es la segunda salida...', y se despreciaba y se burlaba de sí propio de todo corazón" (47). Unlike Cristina who revels in the idea of her new spiritual romance, Fernando has much more difficulty accepting that the experience is spiritually enriching and that he is not simply being dragged into a vulgar adulterous affair by his lower instincts. Yet, due to the strength of Fernando's initial attraction to the Duchess, he comes to abandon his own worldview temporarily:

> Fernando estuvo alucinado algún tiempo. Llegó a creer en la verdad de los sentimientos de Cristina y a sí propio se juzgó enamorado; así que, de buena fe, buscó y rebuscó en su imaginación, y hasta en su memoria, alimento para aquellos amores en que tan gran papel desempeñaban la retórica y la metafísica. Días enteros hubo en que no pensó, siquiera una vez, que todo aquello era ridículo. (51)

Thus, at the beginning of their relationship Cristina clearly has the upper hand as Fernando agrees to accept her conditions and repress his own desires and interpretation of events. While the narrator disapproves of Fernando's initial submission to Cristina, he presents Fernando in a compassionate manner by showing how the young writer tries to

resist the Duchess's seduction. Cristina, on the other hand, never questions her own behavior. In this way, the narrator's sympathetic portrayal of Fernando contrasts sharply with his ironic presentation of Cristina, whose ideals are ridiculed and who is portrayed as arrogant, frivolous and disposed to romanticizing and celebrating her immoral conduct.

Fernando, however, is ultimately drawn back into the Naturalist tradition when he recognizes himself in a story his friend tells him at a café about a man who allows himself to be strung along by a woman without ever getting what he "really" wants out of the relationship:

> Una noche, Fernando oyó en el café a un amigo una historia de amores que, aunque no lo era, se le antojó parecida a la suya. En ella había un amante que jamás llegaba al natural objeto del amor, al fin apetecido (tomando lo de fin, no por lo último, sino por lo mejor). Flores se puso colorado; casi creyó que hablaban de él, y volvió al tormento de verse en ridículo. (51)

Fernando immediately sees that he has allowed himself to be dominated and manipulated by Cristina. He now believes that as both a man, and as a Naturalist writer, he must recognize the "natural objeto" of his physical attraction and cease to subject himself to Cristina's fanciful fiction which, from a Naturalist perspective, merely serves as a romantic disguise for instinctual reproductive drives. Shamed by the awareness that he has been made to play to the fool, Fernando decides to initiate a sexual relationship with Cristina who, not surprisingly, quickly submits to her lover's newfound aggression (51).[11]

After having satiated his sexual desires, Fernando abandons Cristina in order to pursue the epistemophilic project of making her body signify by turning her into the *materia prima* of a Naturalist novel. Thus, in accordance with Brooks's paradigm, Fernando, having taken pleasure in the observation of Cristina's body (scopophilia), now yearns for the knowledge he believes the body can be made to reveal (epistemophilia).[12] Fernando satiates the former urge physically and the latter professionally by inscribing Cristina's body with meaning in his text. In this way, Fernando overcomes the anxieties aroused by initially being penetrated and objectified by the gaze and the narrative of a woman. This process is also in accordance with the Naturalist project as outlined by Alas who claims that the Naturalist writer must first systematically observe his subject (scopophilia) and then perform his "experiment" by placing his subject in the controlled environment of the novel, from which the lesson (meaning) is derived (epistomophilia). While the author must restrict his characters' actions to expected behaviors based on his previous observation, the author ultimately creates/controls his subject as he moves from passive observer to active creator: "el experimentador viene a ser el creador del objeto que observa" (Alas, "Del naturalismo" 131). Thus, Fernando overcomes his initial subjugation to Cristina by moving from observer to creator of the *document humain* (Cristina).

While Fernando puts into practice Zola's and Alas's theories on Naturalism, Richmond argues that Fernando's attempt to convert Cristina into a *documento humano* is a detail that actually disassociates Fernando from the author since Clarín, in his essay "Del

naturalismo," criticizes authors who make the *documento humano* the exclusive focus of their novels (382-83). This, however, slightly misrepresents Alas's argument. Alas's objection is to restricting the topic of the Naturalist novel exclusively to character studies or *documentos humanos* ("Yo no estoy conforme con que el principal objeto de la novela naturalista sea el estudio del *documento humano*. ¿Por qué este límite? Toda vida ofrece asunto al arte ["Del naturalismo" 142, emphasis mine]) and to creating character studies that do not go beyond an "análisis psicológico, en que se prescinde de todo lo que esté fuera del carácter estudiado" ("Del naturalismo" 143). Alas, then, did not disapprove of character studies, but rather felt it was necessary to examine a character in relation to larger, external, social forces. On this point, Alas actually agrees with Zola who also insisted that the Naturalist writer study "the reciprocal effect of society on the individual and the individual on society" ("The Experimental Novel" 20).[13] In fact, both authors praise Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* as one of the best novels of all time; for Alas in particular it is a perfect example of a *document humain* that appropriately studies a character in relation to her environment: "*En Madame Bovary*, por ejemplo, tenemos la obra maestra de la novela en que se estudia un carácter, no en análisis abstracto, sino casi siempre en las luchas exteriores, en sus relaciones con el mundo que solicita sus pasiones" ("Del naturalismo" 144).[14] Since there is nothing in the text to indicate that Fernando did not appropriately study his subject in relation to her environment, his conversion of Cristina into a *documento humano* is in accordance with Alas's views on Naturalism and actually serves to strengthen the intellectual alliance between the character of Fernando, the narrator and the author.

Cristina's reaction to Fernando's novel is not completely favorable. While she claims to recognize herself in his portrayal of her ("¡Cuánta verdad! Era ella misma" [54].) she feels betrayed when she discovers that during the course of their short love affair, Fernando, rather than loving her, was actually studying her. Appropriately comparing Fernando, the Naturalist writer, to a doctor/scientist, Cristina relates her experience of reading Fernando's novel to witnessing her own vivisection: "Aquel hombre implacable, artista, sin entrañas, observador frío, como un escalpelo, la ha hecho la autopsia en vida, y le ha hecho asistir a ella. ¡Una vivisección de la mujer que se creyó amada" (54). Her indignation leads her to write Fernando a letter in which she calls him "un plebeyo miserable" (54), thereby re-objectifying him as one of her insignificant admirers who is not even worthy of contemplating her superiority. While Alas argues that the Naturalist writer should never let his personal fantasies or desires influence the way he portrays reality in his text, Cristina openly violates this rule since, even though she recognizes the accuracy of Fernando's account of her, she refuses to accept it because it does not conform to her ideals of how things should be.[15] By consciously attempting to rewrite what she recognizes as accurate, Cristina rejects Naturalism in favor of Idealism.

While Fernando is clearly affected by Cristina's letter which attempts to reconfigure him as a "plebeyo" ("por algo la miraba yo con miedo" [55]), he is able to elude this objectification by assuming the last words in the text in order to dismiss her accusation as a feeble attempt at self-defense. While it is true that Cristina never gives up the empowered

positions of seeing and writing, the narrator and author attempt to position the reader to reject her version of events over Fernando's since she rejects Naturalism (reality) in favor of Idealism (fantasy). Thus, with his return to a Naturalist worldview, Fernando not only overcomes his initial subjugation by dominating Cristina sexually and textually, but also by allying himself with the literary critics of his time, who, within the text, receive his novel favorably, and with the author, whose short story shares much of the plot of Fernando's novel. Thus, although Cristina tries to resist objectification, she is ultimately converted into a *documento humano* and her body is inscribed with meaning both inside the story (in Fernando's novel) and within the literary canon (in Alas's short story).

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NOTES

[1] "¡Qué delicadeza de sentimiento, qué divina voluptuosidad, qué caridad sublime, qué distinción, en suma había en preferir bajarse a contemplar el mísero gusano y despreciar a las estrellas de su corte interplanetaria!" (44).

[2] For an explanation of Comte's theory of the three phases of knowledge or the "Law of Three States" see Mautner (102-03) and Standley (31). For an explanation of Claude Bernard's views on the evolution of forms of knowledge see Zola, "The Experimental Novel" (33-34) or "Le roman expérimental" (32).

[3] "Si le terrain du médecin expérimentateur est le corps de l'homme dans le phénomènes de ses organes, à l'état normal et à l'état pathologique, notre terrain à nous est également le corps de l'homme dans ses phénomènes cérébraux et sensuels, à l'état sain et à l'état morbide ("Le roman expérimental" 30).

[4] "L'homme métaphysique est mort, tout notre terrain se transforme avec l'homme physiologique" ("Le roman expérimental" 52).

[5] While Alas claims that Naturalism does not aim to convert art into science ("Se verá que el naturalismo no quiere convertir en ciencia el arte, por más que esta aspiración extraña parezca seducir al crítico y novelista, que he de nombrar tantas veces, al citado Zola" ["Del naturalismo" 116]), he supports the application of the experimental method to literature: "Hoy, el hecho, el dato de la observación, el resultado de la experiencia tienen una importancia superior a la que lograron en otros tiempos; y los mismos que se oponen a que el análisis de los datos del sentido sea el único método reconocen que por las condiciones generales de la vida presente, del grado de cultura y su modo peculiar debe predominar ese método. [...] Este desconfiar de la idealización, este prurito de recoger y estudiar los datos sensibles, esta tendencia general a ocuparse en la vida real, con sus pormenores, que tienen más interés del que supone un idealismo sin valor, toda esta tendencia general la representa en el arte el naturalismo, y por esto es el modo artístico propio de nuestros días" (126).

[6] Zola uses the term *documents humains* to speak both of the data collected from the observation of real human subjects ("You are either an observer who gathers together *human data* or you are a poet who tells me your dreams" ["The Novel" 265, emphasis mine]; "Ou vous êtes un observateur qui rassemblez des *documents humains*, ou vous êtes un poète qui me contez vos rêves" ["Du roman" 261, emphasis mine]); and to what the naturalist writer creates from his observation of *human data* ("On the contrary, take facts, facts that you have seen around you, classify them according to a logical order, fill up the gaps by intuition, obtain the marvelous result of giving life to *human data*" ["The Novel" 263, emphasis mine]; "Prenez au contrarie des faits vrais que vous avez observés autour de vous, classés les d'après un ordre logique, comblez les trous par l'intuition, obtenez ce merveilleux résultat de donner la vie à des *documents humains*" ["Du roman" 259, emphasis mine]). What is most important to understand about this term, which serves as the title of Alas's short story, is that Zola agreed with M. de Goncourt that all great books were character studies, or human documents: "[M. de Goncourt] adds that *human data* alone make good books—'books which set mankind, as it truly is, standing squarely on its legs'—an opinion which I have defended for years past" ("The Novel" 270, emphasis mine); "[M. de Goncourt] ajoute que les *documents humains* font seuls les bons livres, 'les livres où il y a de la vraie humanité sur ses jambes'; opinion que je défends depuis des années" ("Du roman" 266, emphasis mine). This, as we shall see, is one of Zola's ideas that Alas explores in his own essay "Del naturalismo" and that will be of central importance in his story.

[7] In this scene from *Madame Bovary* Emma and her lover, León, ride around the city all day in a carriage with the curtains drawn. While the reader is not privy to what is going on inside, this restriction of information is very suggestive. According to Gérard Genette this scene is an example of a use of "external focalization" for "the reason of propriety (or the roguish play with impropriety)" (190).

[8] In San Juan de la Cruz's "Cántico espiritual" the bride (representing the soul, and sometimes the Church) goes in search of the bridegroom (representing Jesus Christ). Once they are united and married, the soul feels protected and complete.

[9] "Nous, écrivains naturalistes, nous soumettons chaque fait à l'observation et à l'expérience; tandis que les écrivains idéalistes admettent des influences mystérieuse échappant à l'analyse, et restent dès lors dans l'inconnu, en dehors des lois de la nature. [...] j'appelle idéalistes ceux qui se réfugient dans l'inconnu pour le plaisir d'y être, qui n'ont de goût que pour les hypothèses les plus risqués, que dédaignent de les soumettre au contrôle de l'expérience, sous prétexte que la vérité est en eux et non dans les choses" ("Le roman expérimental" 34-35).

[10] "Finalidad [del naturalismo]: la verdad de lo real tal como es. Medios: la observación de los datos minuciosa, atenta, sistemáticamente estudiados; y después en la composición la experimentación, que es la que da

la enseñaza, el resultado, que es la obra del arte después de la gestación y de todos los trabajos preparatorios. El idealismo niega ese propósito: la verdad tal como es; y niega los medios, que nunca en él son como deben: la observación y la experimentación" ("Del naturalismo" 125-26).

[11] Among the many clues in the text to indicate that Cristina herself may not actually believe in the spiritual romance she has created is her revelation that she was somewhat surprised and disappointed that Fernando actually agreed to have a non-physical relationship with her: "La duquesa había agradecido a Fernando su delicadeza, aquel respeto a la base 4ª, pero no dejaba de parecerle extraño, quizá un poco humillante, acaso algo sospechoso ese firme cumplimiento de convenciones que, al fin, no eran absolutas, según el mismo texto de la ley; repito que ella agradecía esta conducta tan conforme con su ideal, pero no la hubiera esperado" (51).

[12] According to Alas, "La experimentación es la observación preparada en que el observador coloca los hechos, los datos adquiridos, en tal disposición, que les hace dar alguna enseñanza acerca del punto que él pretende dilucidar" ("Del naturalismo" 130-31).

[13] "le travail réciproque de la société sur l'individu et de l'individu sur la société" ("Le roman expérimental" 18)

[14] Zola cites Flaubert's *Madame Bovary* as an example of a work that appropriately uses description with moderation because it enhances, rather than submerges, the character ("The Novel" 235; "Du roman" 231). He concludes by saying: "I would counsel anyone to study Gustave Flaubert, for description or for the necessary painting of surroundings, each time they complete or explain a character" ("The Novel" 235); "C'est dans Gustave Flaubert que je conseille d'étudier la description, la peinture nécessaire du milieu, chaque fois qu'il complète ou qu'il explique le personnage" ("Du roman" 231).

[15] According to Alas, "No ha de intervenir la voluntad del autor para determinar la acción del carácter en tal o cual sentido, porque esto sería volver al idealismo" ("Del naturalismo" 131).

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