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# POLITICAL AND GENDER DIALECTICS IN THREE NINETEENTH-CENTURY SPANISH NOVELS OF THE BOURBON RESTORATION (1874-1931)

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BOBBY CLINTON

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A DISSERTATION APPROVED FOR THE

DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND LINGUISTICS

BY THE COMMITTING CONSISTING OF

Dr. A. Robert Lauer, Chair

Dr. Bruce Boggs

Dr. Paulo Moreira

Dr. Raphael Folsom

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Abstract

This investigation aims to show that three of the most iconic Spanish novels of the nineteenth century are connected to each other as a dialogue between their authors about politics and gender in Spain. These novels are *Doña Perfecta* by Benito Pérez Galdós, *Los pazos de Ulloa* by Emilia Pardo Bazán, and *La Regenta* by Clarín. Galdós' novel presents a liberal perspective that is highly misogynistic. Pardo Bazán's novel presents a conservative perspective that is also feminist because it decries the lack of autonomy that women have in nineteenth-century Spain. Clarín's novel shares this feminism, but does so from the leftist perspective of a disillusioned radical.

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# Introduction: A Conspicuous Novel

As an early entry into Benito Pérez Galdós' (1843-1920) literary catalog of novels, *Doña Perfecta* appears as an enigmatic work of art beside his realist novels of the nineteenth century and the mystical or psychological works of his later career. *Doña Perfecta* is not especially mystical, nor does it meaningfully delve into human psychology. It has qualities that defy the realist literary mold. For example, its oddly named characters possess exaggerated qualities that make them seem more like caricatures than like real people. The best example of this is Rosario. She can leave readers puzzled and asking questions like, 'How can she and Pepe Rey fall in love at first sight so completely?' or, 'Why is she so helpless, innocent, beautiful, etc.?' Questions like this can be formulated about all the characters, however. They all seem more like caricatures of different types of people than like real people; that is not generally the objective of the realist narrative. Real people are rarely caricatures.

The novel also has a clearly defined hero/villain relationship between Pepe Rey and his aunt, Perfecta. That is not especially realistic, either. If realism seeks to portray people as they are, with all their nuances and moral ambiguities as they exist, then casting heroes and villains that can be so clearly identified goes against this objective.

This confrontation between hero and villain also takes place amidst an ideologically charged environment that reflects the deep political rift between urban liberals and rural conservatives in Spain in 1876, the year that the novel was first published in a magazine. The conflict between Pepe Rey and Perfecta is more than just set in this environment, though. Their conflict is the same conflict that Spain was fighting at those closing moments of the Third Carlist War. There is a complete lack of personal cause for the two antagonists to be in conflict. By all rights, their economic imperative to preserve the family's prosperity should override any petty political differences. In a normal, realistic family, they would, and the family would not destroy itself so irrationally. Instead, the family destroys itself fighting the same ideological battle that was raging in Spanish society, both politically and militarily.

One explanation for *Doña Perfecta*'s conspicuousness is that as one of Galdós' early novels, it reflects the immaturity of a novice writer whose talents are still developing and who has not fully adapted to the realist mode of writing. This is an unsatisfactory explanation for various reasons, though. Firstly, Galdós in 1876 is not a novice writer. By this point in his career, he had been writing professionally as a journalist and author for over a decade. It seems like the height of critical myopia to call Galdós in 1876 a novice writer.

Secondly, *Doña Perfecta* is one of Galdós' most famous novels. In Spanish language departments at universities, it is one of his canonical works to be studied at advanced levels. It has been the subject of multiple dramatic and cinematographic adaptations from multiple countries. It is one of the most critically analyzed nineteenth-century Spanish novels. A search of any literary academic database for articles about *Doña Perfecta* yields a lot of peer-reviewed research about it spanning the twentieth and twenty-first centuries up to the present day. Surely a novice literary work would not garner such attention from so many people for so long. Calling it a novice literary work directly contradicts the interest that so many have in it.

Finally, it is a well-written work of art, if one is not trying to find a realist novel in its pages. Its characters compel great emotion in the reader. A reader can feel incredible sympathy and pity for Rosario and Pepe Rey as well as raging fury against Perfecta. The ignorant and easily manipulable townsfolk inspire vitriolic contempt against them. The reason for these strong emotions is because that is exactly what Galdós intended to inspire in his audience. As well as being a novel, *Doña Perfecta* is a masterfully crafted work of political propaganda intended to persuade his urban, male audience to support the liberal-constitutionalist cause.

The liberals, which included Galdós at this point in his life, needed all the support they could get. The Sexenio Democrático had come to an end just over a year earlier at the end of 1874. It had been a complete failure. The aborted attempt at a democratic monarchy and the subsequent republic's degeneration into a repressive dictatorship had completely discredited the liberals who started the Sexenio Democrático eight years earlier by overthrowing the queen. Her son was able to march back into Madrid from England and take the throne unopposed except by the Carlists who were too far physically from the capital to stop him.

The liberals had one hope to preserve some of the gains that they had made with the revolution and thus salvage something from the last eight years. That hope was that the new king would rule constitutionally, respecting the rule of law and keeping the hope for further democratization alive for future generations. That hope crashed immediately upon the burning question of the place of religion in Spanish society and government. Article Eleven of the proposed new constitution of the Restoration was an afront to liberal ideas of religious pluralism because it allowed only Catholic worship in public and restricted non-Catholic worship to be practiced only in private. This threatened to drag Spain backward out of the European mainstream that generally allowed free religious practice.

Even more disturbingly to the liberals, opposition to the proposed article also came from ultra conservatives who felt that Article Eleven did not go far enough to preserve Spanish religious unity. They found themselves in the position of having to choose between supporting the new monarchy and its dubious constitution or opposing it and thus potentially weakening it in the presence of even more dangerous enemies. Weakening the new monarchy and possibly causing it to fall came with the danger of leaving an open path for the Carlist pretender, an absolutist, to seize the throne, which would be the worst possible outcome from the liberals' perspective.

They found themselves in a three-sided fight over religious freedom between their desire for full religious freedom, the proposed limited religious freedom of the new constitution, and full-on theocratic repression of all non-Catholic worship proposed by ultra conservatives. The latter was completely unacceptable to them; they would have to resist it. If they pushed too hard against the new constitution, though, they could destabilize the new regime and bring about exactly what they were trying to avoid. They had seen this happen before. Stubborn radicals teamed up with the Carlists to destabilize the nascent democratic monarchy of the Sexenio Democrático back in 1872 causing its failure and nearly allowing the absolutist pretender to seize the country.

*Doña Perfecta* is a work of fictional propaganda that is intimately connected to this exact moment in Spanish political history. The following research is intended to demonstrate this historical connection and its consequences for understanding the novel. Part of these consequences is that its misogynistic quality emerges as a deliberate rather than coincidental act by Galdós meant to discredit conservative Spanish women who liberals thought had too much influence on the Spanish senate. Other researchers have found this misogynistic quality, but none have tried to connect it to the specific historical moment in which it was written or to a defined political program that Galdós espoused in 1876.

Furthermore, this research aims to show that *Doña Perfecta* influenced the formulation of two later novels written by two of Galdós's personal friends, Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) and Leopoldo Alas (Clarín) (1852-1901). Such was the impact that both later authors set two of their most pivotal and studied canonical works, *Los pazos de Ulloa* and *La Regenta*, in the same historical context as *Doña Perfecta*. Both works are set either completely or partially during the Sexenio Democrático. They also both defend women against the misogynistic excesses of nineteenth-century liberalism as well as demonstrate how the shifting class interests of the period occasionally brought together radicals and ultra conservatives against the center.

# Chapter 1: Galdós and the Restoration

The beginning of Galdós' novelistic career coincided chronologically with the most politically formative events of the middle of the Spanish nineteenth century. He published the first two of his *novelas de tesis*, *La fontana de oro* and *La sombra* in 1870, two years after the Glorious Revolution had removed Isabel II (1830-1904) from the throne and after the second Carlist insurrection in as many years; all while the Ten Years' War (1868-1878) raged in Cuba. He published his third novel, *El audaz*, the following year, as Carlist forces prepared to launch yet another insurrection and Amadeo I (1845-1890) began his ill-fated reign. Amadeo I abdicated and the First Spanish Republic was proclaimed in February of 1873, as the third Carlist insurrection of the Sexenio Democrático was well underway and showing some measure of success on the battlefield, which threatened to topple the nascent liberal republic and replace it with an absolutist monarchy under Carlos de Borbón (1848-1909) (Serrano 211). Eighteen seventy-three was also when Galdós published the first four novels of his series of *Episodios nacionales*, or *National Episodes*, which novelize key moments in the Spanish War of Independence (1808-1814) against Napoleonic France (Cardona 13).

Almost twenty-three months after it had been proclaimed, the First Spanish Republic officially fell at the end of 1874

when general Martínez Campos (1831-1900) proclaimed a restored monarchy under Alfonso XII (1857-1885), son if Isabel II (Serrano 214). In truth, the republic had de facto ended just under a year earlier in January of 1874, when general Manuel Pavia (1828-1895) led a coup d'état that resulted in the dictatorship of Francisco Serrano (1810-1885) as an unelected president. This also marked a turning point in the Third Carlist War (1872-1876). First under the republican dictatorship of Serrano, and then under Alfonso XII and his president, Antonio Cánovas del Castillo (1828-1897), the central government in Madrid was able to rebuild and organize the armed forces sufficiently to begin offensives against the territories controlled by the Carlist insurgency in the south and east of the country (211). This military success set a dangerous precedent for the future of Spanish politics by legitimizing and fostering a culture of *golpismo* in a broad cross-section of the Spanish body politic, including liberals who feared a return to absolutism under Carlist rule. Nonetheless, against the might of a fully armed and operational military under the control of a unified central executive authority, the Carlist insurgents did not stand a chance of winning the war.

Also in 1875, Galdós finished the first series of his *Episodios nacionales* and began work on his second series, which he finished in 1879. The second series switched the focus from

the struggle against the external French threat of the first series to the internal ideological confrontations between liberals and absolutists in the aftermath of Napoleon's defeat and the subsequent two-decade reign of Fernando VII (1784-1833) (Cardona 14). The war against the Carlists finally concluded in February of 1876. Between March and May of the same year, Galdós published *Doña Perfecta* as a five-part series in *Revista de España* (Sinnigen 137).

Those three months during which the novel was published serially coincide precisely with the floor debates in the Spanish Cortes on the Spanish Constitution of 1876. On 22 April 1876, the British magazine, *The Saturday Review*, published a brief article updating its readers on the progress of the debates that had been made up to the start of the Easter recess ("Spanish Constitution Making" 508). It shows that the debates were of sufficient importance to receive international press coverage in the spring of 1876. Of course, those debates were rhetorical rather than functional. The constitution itself was drafted by a Comisión de Notables selected by Cánovas, and the debates did not significantly affect the result (Martínez Sospedra 73). Cánovas promulgated the final draft on 30 June 1876 (Seco Serrano 215). With this, the Bourbon restoration officially started. The Constitution of 1876 remained in effect until 1923, making it the longest-lasting constitution in

Spanish history as of 2023. Hopefully, this record will soon be surpassed, signifying that Spain has entered an even longer period of constitutional stability than it enjoyed between 1876 and 1923.

There is little debate that Galdós was deeply moved by the dramatic political events occurring in his country as he began his literary career and that this greatly affected the content of his literary production. Writing for *Confluencia* in 2015, John H. Sinnigen states, "Toda la obra de Benito Pérez Galdós—novelas, periodismo, teatro, cuentos—entra directamente en un diálogo con su tiempo" (136). In her contribution to David Gies' *Cambridge History of Spanish Literature*, Harriet S. Turner concurs, stating, "He sought to depict the impact of current political, social, and economic factors that jaggedly shaped everyday life" (392). In his famous article, "Galdós' *Doña Perfecta*: Fiction, History and Ideology," Anthony N. Zahareas sets out to reappraise the novel in its historical context, justifying his effort by stating:

> Yet any effective reconsideration of the structure or thesis of *Doña Perfecta*, no matter what approach is taken, must consider the novel's historical context because a concentration on Galdós' range as novelist in 1875-1876 helps explain many of the supposed puzzles in the novel. (29)

No understanding of the novel can be complete without considering the remarkable historical events that surrounded its author, its writing, and its content.

In his introduction to *Doña Perfecta*, Rodolfo Cardona defines two theories with which a novel can be read critically, "Una teoría basada en el lector" and "Una teoría basada en el autor" (47). The first is based on an individual reader's unique frame of reference, and as such, can have an infinite number of interpretations as each generation of readers discovers the novel and understands it according to its accumulated experiences, which can include the criticism and understanding of the same work by previous generations of readers. The second is based on an attempt to reconstruct the author's frame of reference to discover the author's original intent. Discrepancies in the latter, according to Cardona, are due to a lack of evidence of that original intent (48).

Both theories work perfectly well for the purpose of critically analyzing a novel. The frame of reference of a new generation of readers can revive and adapt the understanding of a novel into a modern context and make it useful far beyond the original intent of its author. Literary criticism does not have to revolve around piecing together the original intent that drove an author's hand. Art does not require a motive, so one cannot assume that an artistic work has one. In the case of a

work of art that was created for the sake of creating something, or as some might say, art for art's sake, trying to piece together a motive may be an exercise in futility. Some art, though, has a motive. Some art has such a precisely intentional motive that it can be considered as much of a thesis as the words on these pages. To decontextualize such a work and separate it from its author is to strip it of its thesis. Stripped of its thesis, such a work may appear contradictory or incoherent. Some might even accuse it of being a badly written novel, as Sinnigen does in his article about *Doña Perfecta* (145). An analysis of the novel in its historical context with the aim of reconstructing Galdós' motives may restore its thesis and allow modern readers to appreciate the work, dispelling what may appear to be incongruencies in the absence of context.

This research intends to show that Galdós was a hesitant supporter of the Restoration at the time that he wrote *Doña Perfecta*, and that he authored the novel as a political commentary on the concurrent constitutional debates as well as a call to action to liberals to support the new regime in the face of the continuing threats posed by the Carlist movement to the gains that Spain had made in individual freedoms during the Sexenio Democrático. Furthermore, Galdós' support for the Restoration in *Doña Perfecta* is also not a mere pragmatic compromise to secure the ultimate defeat of the Carlist

insurgency, but instead a repudiation of the defeats of the Sexenio Democrático that had discredited republicanism in the eyes of much of the Spanish public. The timing of the novel's publication by a politically active young journalist a month before the promulgation of the new Constitution of 1876 and the novel's ideologically charged content that caricatures and parodies the forces arrayed against the Restoration leave the indelible impression that this is a fundamentally political work. As a political novel, *Doña Perfecta*'s premise and conclusion is that the gains made by the new regime in terms of establishing civil authority, suppressing the entrenched interests responsible for the Carlist insurgencies, and achieving the state centralization necessary to modernize the Spanish countryside are worth the price of seeing a return of the Bourbon dynasty under Alfonso XII.

That does not mean that Galdós' support for the new regime was unconditional or uncritical. Like most liberals, Galdós was deeply troubled by the official Catholicism of the proposed constitution and its lack of protections for religious and secular pluralism. Remedios Sánchez Férriz points out that the religious issue was the most hotly debated topic of the Constitutional debates in the Spring of 1876, stating in her analysis of the debate, "La cuestión religiosa es la más debatida en las Cortes de 1876 y también la más controvertida

desde su planteamiento ya en la Comisión de Notables" (119). *Doña Perfecta* participates directly in the debate that was occurring contemporaneously with the novel's serial release that same Spring. The religious question is the source of the conflict between the two main characters and drives the plot of the novel to its tragic conclusion, serving as a warning to liberals that much work remained to be done under the framework of the new regime.

This interpretation of *Doña Perfecta* as a political work intended to legitimize the Restoration while at the same time calling for its reform runs directly counter to other interpretations found in scholarly research on Galdós and his literary production. In the same article quoted earlier, Sinnigen says of Galdós, "Este continuamente desafió el estatus quo cultural, económico y político de la Restauración" (136). He goes on to describe how this oppositional view of the Restoration is incorporated into the composition of *Doña Perfecta* by citing a line from Cardona's introduction to the novel (137). In his introduction, Cardona states:

> No cabe la menor duda de que Galdós empezó a escribir *Doña Perfecta* como una novela tendenciosa comprometida con el urgente pero explosivo problema de la intolerancia. Cuando Galdós puso manos a la obra había sido testigo del *desastroso* efecto producido cuando las fuerzas de la

> *reacción* empezaron a gobernar de nuevo durante la restauración borbónica. (24; emphasis added)

Both views are based on a binary liberal-conservative paradigm that places liberals and conservatives each in monolithic opposition to each other and which Sinnigen himself calls anachronistic (136). In this schema, the Restoration is a purely conservative political accomplishment to which liberals must naturally be opposed. Since Galdós was undoubtedly a liberal, then by this reasoning he had to oppose the Restoration. This is an oversimplification that does not do justice to the complex political and social forces at play in Spain in 1876. The historical truth is that a whole host of liberals supported the Restoration when it came to power in 1874 and that some of the fiercest opposition to the Restoration came not from liberal circles, but from the most conservative elements of Spanish society.

The Constitution of 1876 that underpinned the Restoration was, according to Manuel Martínez Sospedra, "el producto más brillante del constitucionalismo liberal hispano" (71). Spanish historian Carlos Seco Serrano (1923-2020) described the Constitution of 1876 as "una victoria liberal" for preserving the religious tolerance and almost all the protections of individual liberties of the Constitution of 1869 (215-16). The well-supported thesis of Sospedra's article is that the

Constitution of 1876 demonstrates a clear continuity of constitutional theory stretching back to the liberal constitution of 1837, the moderate constitution of 1845, and the democratic constitution of 1869, with a heavy influence in matters of personal freedom from the latter (95). In fact, Serrano identifies the nucleus of opposition to the Constitution of 1876 as coming from the most reactionary elements of Spanish society; it was opposition which would not lessen until the arrival of Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) to the papacy in 1878 (216). The contemporary article "Spanish Constitution-making" cited earlier supports this assertion, as a sizable portion of its text focuses on the opposition by Leo XIII's predecessor Pius IX (1846-1878) to the tolerance of non-Catholic faiths in the proposed constitution, who the article describes "as intolerant as in the most flourishing days of the Inquisition" (509). The inescapable conclusion is that the binary liberal-conservative paradigm familiar to modern readers is insufficient to describe the politically nuanced reality of Spain in 1876.

In his book, *Galdós and the Art of the European Novel*, Stephen Gilman provides a more nuanced view of Galdós' ideological motives behind writing *Doña Perfecta* that more closely reflects the political reality of the country at the time. In this perspective, the genesis of the novel is the need for liberals like Galdós to scrutinize "the Restoration's

sterile compromise" in the face of the continued threat to their liberal aspirations posed by hostile and potentially violent adversaries who are represented by the fanatical inhabitants of the town of Orbajosa (71). This places Galdós in a more ambivalent position regarding the Restoration. On the one hand, it is a compromise with the country's ancient regime which for liberals like Galdós had caused the nation's stagnation and decline. On the other hand, this compromise presents the only real obstacle to the ambitions of the Restoration's right-wing opponents who would, if given the chance, erase all the social gains made during the Sexenio Democrático and plunge the nation back into the absolutist depths of the past. What Gilman describes is not as much support for the Restoration as much as it is acquiescence. This ambivalent but watchful acquiescence can be characterized as a combination of 'the lesser of two evils' and 'the enemy of my enemy is my friend.'

However, there is evidence to support the conclusion that Galdós' was more than just acquiescent to the new regime and instead saw in the young new king a figure that could overcome Spain's strife while also maintaining the gains made in individual rights made by the Glorious Revolution of 1868. To demonstrate this will require two foci of analysis: (1) Galdós' ideological background, and (2) the textual evidence found in his literary production. His ideological background will include

the influences, events, and personalities that surrounded him in his early career as an author, journalist, and politician in Revolutionary and Restoration Spain. The textual evidence will come from *Doña Perfecta* as well as his contributions to *Revista de España*. The result will place *Doña Perfecta* in a body of work influenced and guided by Galdós' collaboration with José Luis Albareda y Sezde (1828-1897) in *Revista de España*, where the novel was first published. In his collaboration with Albareda, Galdós demonstrated a faithful adherence to Albareda's party line, be it the Constitutional Party of the Sexenio Democrático or the Liberal Party of the Restoration. This meant accepting the Restoration and defending the constitutional nature of its regime against the same Carlist and republican factions that had caused the abdication of Amadeo I four years earlier and which Galdós roundly condemned in the twelve political articles that he authored between January and August of 1872. Seen within this body of work, the plot of *Doña Perfecta* emerges as a fictional representation of the political program presented by Albareda in the pages of his magazine.

Galdós began contributing to Albareda's publications in 1868, the same year as the revolution that overthrew Isabel II and the beginning of the Sexenio Democrático. He subsequently became editor of Albareda's *Revista de España* in 1872. By this point, he was already an accomplished journalist, having worked

for *La Nación* founded by Pascual Madoz de Ibañez (1806-1870), *La Guirnalda*, *Revista del Movimiento Intelectual de Europa*, *Las Cortes*, *La Ilustración de Madrid*, and *Las Novedades* (Sánchez García 281). Galdós happily welcomed the overthrow of Isabel II in September of 1868 (283). This happiness underscores one of the most consistent aspects of Galdós' politics throughout the entirety of his life; he viscerally disliked the reign of Isabel II for its frivolity, backwardness, and corruption. He would revisit his contempt for her reign throughout his writing career, creating a grotesque parody of her court in *La de Bringas* in 1884, and finally condemning her dynasty forever in *España sin rey* in 1907, when he also entered the Congress of Deputies as a republican (Juaristi 278; Ruiz Mantilla, "Galdós y los Borbones"). This was not his first term in congress, however. In 1886, he was elected to serve as the representative deputy for Guayama, Puerto Rico, as a member of Práxedes Mateo Sagasta's (1825-1903) Liberal Party (Ruiz Mantilla "Galdós, político y republicano"); this is the same party that Albareda supported and served as Minister of Interior between 1887 and 1888. For much of his professional and political career, Galdós was linked to Albareda, who served as a mentor to the younger writer. Even late in life when his views had changed substantially, Galdós paid homage to his old mentor who had

suggested the name "*Episodios nacionales*" and who he portrayed as Tito Liviano in his 1910 novel *Amadeo I* (Caro Cancela 101).

There is a compelling argument for Albareda having a profound ideological impact on Galdós during the time that they worked together, which encompasses the Sexenio Democrático and the Restoration up to Albareda's death in 1897. This impact is even more apparent when one takes into consideration Galdós' ideological evolution before and after working for Albareda as editor of *Revista de España* between February 1872 and November 1873. This more conservative epoch of Galdós' writing career is sandwiched between a youth with republican sympathies and an old age loudly advocating for the Socialist Workers Party. It seems that Albareda had a dampening effect on Galdós' more radical tendencies. During this time, his writing reflected ideological characteristics that can be described as a series of binary dichotomies: (1) deeply monarchist; anti-republican, (2) unionist; anti-federalist, (3) Anglophilic; anti-Vatican, (4) constitutionalist; anti-absolutist/anti-Carlist, and (5) pro-capitalist/free market; antisocialist.

Prior to becoming the editor of *Revista de España* in February 1872, Galdós vacillated between monarchist and republican sympathies. In his study of Galdós' political journalism, Jorge Vilches García notes these subtle changes as he moved through several newspaper jobs in the first years of

the revolution. The September revolution happened while Galdós was on a trip to Paris at a time when he was editor of *La Nación*, the newspaper founded by Pascual Madoz (165). He cut his trip short to return to Madrid in time to see general Serrano enter the city. While most of his articles for *La Nación* since he started working there in 1865 had been cultural in nature, on 13 October 1868, when he returned to Madrid, he wrote a scathing condemnation of the dethroned Bourbon dynasty (168). At this point, his priority was to delegitimize the reign of Isabel II and legitimize the democratic forces that dethroned her.

In his first of a series of political articles for *Las cortes* named "Crónica parlamentaria," published on 23 February 1869, he portrayed the parliamentary majority as capable of building the foundations for a democratic monarchy, while portraying the republican minority faction as being engaged in demagoguery and recrimination. This position would evolve as he continued to write new issues of his "Crónica parlamantaria" for *Las cortes*, however. He progressively sympathized more with the more democratic and even republican forces in the parliament as time passed and he came to see the majority as too conservative. He criticized the government's decision to retain what he saw as conservative figures like Sagasta in the cabinet and agreed with the republicans on economic and military policy. Galdós was preoccupied with ending the system of "quintas" by which

military recruitment and conscription had been handled for most of the nineteenth century. He disapproved of general Juan Prim y Prats' (1814-1870) decision to keep the system of conscription in place. He also defended the future president of the First Republic Emilio Castelar y Ripoll (1832-1899) against criticism from Sagasta during this period. Jorge V. García notes that this shift in attitude closely followed the editorial line of *Las Cortes*, which was linked to republican figures in Spanish politics (169-71). He concludes that Galdós adapted his ideas to those of whoever was paying for his work and speculates that this is the cause of the sharp contrast in his sympathies for republicans expressed in *Las Cortes* in 1869 and the condemnation of republicans found in his work for Albareda after 1871 (185, 175). Jorge V. García's thesis is that in his old age, Galdós intentionally omitted and obscured his more conservative and royalist political commentary from his youth to present a more consistent image of a committed life-long republican (163). To support this, he points to a discovery that Leo J. Hoar made about how Galdós remembered and used his journalistic past to suit his present (165). Hoar found that Galdós practiced "intentionally selective amnesia" when it came to his days as a newspaper man (378).

Moreover, Galdós was able to cement his credentials as a committed republican by obscuring and distancing himself from

his more ideologically diverse background. Later in life he emphasized his more democratic, radical, and republican credentials to suit his present. This is why he is more commonly understood as an opponent of the Restoration than as an early supporter. Those republican credentials were certainly there, especially in his work for *La Nación* and *Las Cortes* in the years before and during the Glorious Revolution of 1868. He was present for the events of 10 April 1865 when the Guardia Civil and the military opened fire on students protesting the dismissal of Juan Manuel Montalbán (1806-1889) from the Central University of Madrid for defending the academic freedom of Emilio Castelar. He wrote about his firsthand experience of the events in *La Nación* (Ruiz Mantilla "Galdós, político y republicano"). Castelar, whose articles condemning Isabel II in his own newspaper, *La Democracia*, triggered the chain of events that led first to his dismissal from the university and then to the fateful response by the monarchy to the resulting student protests on his behalf, subsequently became a cornerstone of Spanish republicanism of the nineteenth century (Rosenblatt 183-84). He even served as the last civilian president of the First Republic.

That historical and physical proximity of Galdós to the seminal events of Spanish republican politics made him a part of the mythos admired by later republicans and socialists of the

twentieth century, and that historical proximity became an ideological proximity as Galdós shed first his royalism and then his support for liberal free market economics in favor of republicanism and socialism after the turn of the century. In the twentieth century, Galdós committed himself to the republican cause, becoming an activist voice for the Republican Party who did not hide his affinity for Pablo Iglesias Posse (1850-1925), the Marxist leader of the Spanish Socialist Workers Party (Carroto). He would even win a seat in the Congress of Deputies on the socialist ticket in 1910 (Liébana Collado). Both positions, his adoption of republicanism and socialism, were repudiations of his earlier political writing in which he vehemently condemned both republicanism and Marxism.

Galdós' ideological shift did not happen in isolation. As Victor Fuentes points out, the governments of Alfonso XIII (1886-1941) took a sharp reactionary turn to the right during the first decade of the twentieth century. The failure of the liberal governments of Segismundo Moret (1833-1913) and Antonio Aguilar y Correa (1824-1908) to tackle the issue of religious tolerance and the passage of the law of Jurisdictions in 1906, which gave the monarchy a militarist character, set the stage for Antonio Maura (1853-1925) to return to power in 1907 with a decidedly authoritarian political program. These setbacks left the republican movement divided in the face of ascendant

conservative power, a fact highlighted by the resignation of Nicolás Salmerón (1838-1908), who Fuentes calls "el último de los patricios republicanos," from the Unión Republicana (121).

In this fractured state of crisis, the Spanish republican movement looked for direction and leadership among the writers, journalists, and intellectuals whose words and ideas challenged the political status quo. It was at this point that Galdós emerged as a cultural linchpin of the Spanish republicanism. He, along with Blasco Ibáñez (1867-1928), Luis Morote (1864-1913), Rafael Urbano (1870-1924), and Pedro González Blanco (1879-1961), formed the editorial committee in charge of the weekly cultural magazine *República de las Letras*, which ran from 6 May 1905 to 9 August 1905. In her description of its editorial committee, Inmaculada Rodríguez-Moranta calls the first two names, Galdós and Ibáñez, "dos escritores consagrados que habían intervenido en los debates regeneracionistas y participaban de la acción política republicana" (395). She goes on to describe Galdós as the "mentor prestigioso" of the group, indicating the intellectual weight that Galdós brought to the committee (396). The stated purpose of the magazine, supported by direct statements by Galdós, was the democratization of literary culture to reach a working- and middle-class audience ignored by the elite literary press of the time, and the magazine set out

to intentionally avoid any "sospecha de elitismo" (396-07). This democratic purpose was of course also implied by its title.

Republican, socialist, and anticlerical ideas mixed freely in the magazine's pages, which included essays from a variety of authors who challenged the status quo in revolutionary terms and offered a "regeneracionista" vision for Spain's future while also describing how a popular literary culture could help achieve that vision through the education of the masses (401-05). Some of the magazine's directors, especially Blasco Ibáñez and Luis Morote, were actively advancing their own political projects and used the magazine as a mouthpiece for political propaganda, limiting its reach and ironically being one of the causes of the magazine's demise, with the other being the lack of support from its founders who became primarily concerned with their political aspirations (410-11).

Despite its short lifespan, *La República de las Letras* placed Galdós not just in the center of republican activism, but also made of him a sort of intellectual guru and leader of a group of the most active political journalists in Madrid. All the other members of the editorial committee and nearly all the magazine's contributors were younger than their now sixty-two-year-old mentor from the Canaries. This was happening concurrently with the political crisis of the republican movement. Thus, it was natural for Galdós to emerge from this

environment as a political leader and galvanizing lightning rod for republicans and socialists. As Fuentes states in his introduction to an anthology of Galdós' works:

> En esta coyuntura histórica, Galdós, por su popularidad y por el mismo significado democrático de su obra, aparece para algunos de los dirigentes republicanos como la posible figura *aglutinante* del movimiento. (121; emphasis added)

Galdós had already become a focal point of republican activism when the Real Academia Española rejected his candidacy to the Nobel Prize for literature in 1905 (Rodríguez-Moranta 396). Republicans persisted in trying to give Galdós official honors for quite a while after this initial controversy, proposing a national homage to the author which was rejected by the government in 1906, and again nominating him for the Nobel Prize in November 1911, provoking a concerted yet ill-fated national campaign in 1912 to convince the academy to accept a candidacy that met with fierce conservative and clerical opposition (Fuentes 121, 135, 137).

Not all criticism of Galdós was politically based. Critics and authors, including Ramón Valle-Inclán (1866-1936), Miguel de Unamuno (1864-1936), Pío Baroja (1872-1956), Antonio Machado (1875-1939), Manuel Azaña (1880-1940), and Ramón Gómez de la Serna (1888-1963), criticized his literary production extensively. Despite being very popular at the time, he was

clobbered by critics belonging to what some modern critics consider the generations of ninety-eight and fourteen (Domínguez Gutiérrez 102, 109). The criticism levelled at Galdós' literary work included accusations of superficiality and puerility from Valle-Inclán, lack of artistry from Machado, imprecision due to over-prolificity from Azaña, and complete disdain from Gómez de la Serna (102-3). The dissonance between Galdós' mass appeal and the harsh criticism that he received from his contemporaries in Spanish literature points to a level of intellectual elitism in those circles of the academy. Galdós' intensely pedagogical approach to narrative was explicitly intended to appeal to the masses to promote literacy and thus participation in the regeneration and modernization of Spanish society. What those critics saw as artistic faults were not accidents or a lack of skill, but instead intentional ideological tools with which the author sought to achieve his aims; they were aims that transcended the artistic or literary qualities of narrative to focus acutely on the rhetorical and revelatory nature of storytelling. Accessibility by youth to literary culture had always been a primary concern of Galdós in his fictional work. He spoke to the youth when he started his literary career, and he was still speaking to the youth when he died.

M. Carmen Domínguez Gutiérrez describes how later generations of authors, especially those that experienced the

calamity of the Spanish Civil War and then exile in Latin America, came to reappraise Galdós more positively. Driven by their own personal sense of abandonment and exclusion, writers like Luis Cernuda (1902-1963), José Bergamín (1895-1983), and Max Aub (1903-1972) defended Galdós's prolific and honest style, the presence of "soul," and the dramatic portrayal of Spain's history in his novels. Describing their defense of Galdós from exile, Domínguez Gutiérrez states:

> En definitiva, para todos estos autores Galdós se presenta como un visionario, como el 'escritor de su siglo', como el novelista que mejor sabe sacar a la luz las miserias y las bondades de su tiempo. (110)

It is worth noting that his exiled defenders were children at the very time that Galdós was being thrashed by literary critics at the start of the twentieth century. They and their generational peers were his intended audience in those years, not his contemporary critics. It was their parents who had purchased Galdós' many published works in Madrid's bookstores, which would have never offered so many if not for his popularity.

They also experienced firsthand their nation's decline into authoritarianism and the political polarization that fractured Spanish society into two directly opposed ideological halves; they saw the Restoration's fragile democratic values

disintegrate before their eyes as factions abandoned the very concept of electoral consent and vied for power by any means, be it dictatorship or revolution. If there is one consistent political thread that one can weave through Galdós' entire body of journalistic and literary production, then it is that he was committed to a democratic Spain. In the post-war world, Galdós' legacy became another part of that lost democratic Spain that existed between 1869 and 1923. Lost in that memory, Galdós became an exile like them, confirming his place in a pantheon of progressive and democratic figures who tried to push Spain along a different path.

# Chapter 2: Pepe Rey and the King

*Doña Perfecta* reveals a Galdós whose work still promoted the specifically liberal middle-class values of individualism and free market economics that define the political project in Albareda's *Revista de España*. These values led liberals like Galdós, Albareda, and Sagasta to form an alliance with the supporters of the Bourbon dynasty to back the Restoration under Alfonso XII, standing together to defeat the opposition to the new regime that was coming from the Carlists on the right of the political spectrum and from the republicans and federalists on the left. A superficial understanding of nineteenth century Spanish politics based on a twentieth century perspective could, at first glance, lead one to be perplexed by this seemingly contradictory alliance. After all, those same liberals played a key role in overthrowing the Bourbon monarchy only seven years prior. Why would they support the return of the same dynasty?

An answer rests in Fredric Jameson's analysis of middle-class philosophy underpinning its rise in the eighteenth century and subsequent expansion followed by crisis in the nineteenth century. In his analysis from *Marxism and Form*, the eighteenth century early middle classes "are both progressive and reactionary, in that they represent the rising fortunes of a class nonetheless in the long run historically doomed" (388). His explanation, which *Doña Perfecta* helps to confirm, is based

on a Marxist understanding of class dynamics that defines a social class according to both its role in history as it moves through time and its relationship with other social classes as that history takes place. He states:

> The Marxist concept of class, in other words, involves a diachronic dimension as well as the synchronic, differential one we have emphasized up to this point: a class is defined no less by its place in the historical process, by its participation in a given and determinate stage in historical evolution, than by its antagonistic relationship to the other classes contemporaneous with it. (385)

In the case of the middle classes of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, they are progressive in their interactions with the older ruling noble classes from whom they must wrestle power during their rise, but they are reactionary in their interactions with the working classes whose attempts at improvement they must fend off in a futile effort to preserve their own hard-fought status and power. The totality of the middle classes' historical presence, its political behavior and its cultural production, reflects this antagonistic relation to competing classes through time.

In Spain of 1868, it was a polity at the cutting edge of revolutionary action, happy to mobilize with the masses against

the crown. The frustration and violence of the next six years, however, changed that. The most archaic parts of the noble class coalesced around the Carlist cause and, most disturbingly to Galdós, teamed up with the most extreme parts of the republican left to derail the middle-class project of constitutional monarchy during the Sexenio Democrático, plunging the country into civil war. Galdós articulates his anger against what he calls "El absurdo convenio" in the pages of *Revista de España*, giving modern readers the author's perspective on the events as they were taking place ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 97 127). Besieged from the right and the left, the liberal middle-class parties quickly took a centrist role during the short-lived reign of Amadeo I and retained that role during the Restoration. Threatened by the same factions that had ended the reign of Amadeo I, the backers of Alfonso XII's claim found themselves in the same centrist role as liberals like Galdós despite being generally more conservative than them and representing aristocratic values. With their backs against each other and threatened by common foes, it was natural for them to form an alliance to safeguard their class interests.

Jameson uses the diachronic dimension of class to evaluate the aristocratic novels of Balzac and find a "reactionary ideology of a dying class" amidst the "realism" that is more formally associated with progressive positivism (*Marxism and*

*Form* 389). With Balzac, that class is the landed aristocracy, to which for all practical purposes the French father of realism belonged. With *Doña Perfecta*, the perspective shifts to that of the urban (specifically Madrid) middle class in the mid-1870s, to which the most prolific writer of Spanish realism belonged. Whereas in Balzac the complication of the plot is the victimization of the landed aristocracy by ambitious urban interests, in *Doña Perfecta* the doomed hero is an ambitious urban interest, and his complication is the web of aristocratic feudal interests that use an exclusivist practice of religion to maintain control of the rural landscape and of the people who reside in it (*Political Unconscious* 227). These are the same interests that propelled previous Carlist insurrections and continue to do so in the novel's plot. These are also the same interests that, in league with the republican faction, made the kingdom ungovernable during Amadeo I's short reign, throwing their votes in with republicans in the Cortes to undermine the king's legitimacy as much as possible in Madrid while launching violent uprisings in the countryside that made much of the country a lawless wasteland.

Galdós hated the Carlists for what they had done to undermine the first Spanish monarch selected by a democratically elected body, and he considered the republican complicity in this effort a great betrayal of their civic duty as citizens of

a constitutional monarchy. Galdós left plenty of commentary on this subject because he was editor of *Revista de España* from February 1872 to November 1873, during the last year of Amadeo I's reign. Starting the month before becoming editor, Galdós authored twelve issues of the editorial column "Revista Política: Interior" that articulated the magazine's political position and tone. He puts the blame for the failure of Amadeo I's reign squarely on the shoulders of the recalcitrant Carlist opposition and their radical and opportunistic republican enablers. In his first issue of the column, he wrote about the two political fringes that made governing impossible, saying:

> Los partidos extremos juzgaron la ocasión oportuna para hacer una propaganda demoledora, y especialmente el carlista creyó cercano el triunfo de su ideal, propio para excitar la imaginación de pueblos visionarios alucinados por un ignorante idealismo. ("Revista Política: Interior no. 93 146)

He notes that the ugly alliance between radical republicans and the Carlists started in the first session of the Cortes under Amadeo I's new dynasty, describing their participation as such:

> Los partidarios de D. Carlos habían traído a las Cortes un grupo fanático, en que se juntaban clérigos belicosos y rudos, como antiguos guerrilleros, y astutos seglares protegidos por el clericalismo y templados al rigor de la

> política militante y batalladora. A estos hombres se unía el bando republicano, en que tenían puesto de honor los hombres del socialismo y algunas fatídicas individualidades comunistas lanzadas a la representación nacional por los talleres de Cataluña y Valencia. (147)

In his first issue of the column as editor the following month in February 1872, he supports the dissolution of the Cortes because the heavy representation of the Carlist and Republican parties makes forming a government impossible ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 95 452). He defends pragmatism and cautions readers not to allow idealism to make them vulnerable to failure, describing the dangerous consequences if Spain's experiment with individual liberty fails and blaming radicals for causing it (457-58). The articles authored by Galdós during the last year of Amadeo I's reign are all similarly concerned with the gridlock caused by obstructionist republicans and Carlists in the Cortes.

He desires constitutional parties to unite to overcome this gridlock caused by the powerful political fringes ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 96 609). Furthermore, he is convinced that there exists a "mayoría callada" that despises politics and its free exercise if it is incapable of providing peace, but also does not wish to return to the system of government from before 1868 and lose the public freedoms won by the revolution,

describing this silent majority as "paciente, razonable, tan enemiga de la perturbación como de la arbitrariedad. . . ." To Galdós, reaching this part of the public is key to establishing political stability and should be the primary goal of the dynastic conservative party (611-12). This may be the earliest use of the term 'silent majority' to refer to a disillusioned polity whose will is underrepresented due to a lack of participation despite being a majority. In its earliest ancient use, it had a religious meaning used to refer to the multitudes of people who have died throughout time (Greenough 302). Its first political use in 1831 was when New York representative Churchill Cambreleng complained that a "silent majority" in Congress rejected proposed legislation without debate, preventing the body from discussing legitimate ideas ("Politics of the Day" 231). However, this has a different meaning than how Galdós used it in 1872. The term would be used with Galdós' meaning again later in 1883 by an anonymous author to refer to the silent majority that supported a republic in the face of French conservatives (A German 185). However, there does not appear to be a use of the term to mean a disillusioned polity that precedes Galdós' use. Remarkably, this could mean that Galdós coined a phrase that would notably be used extensively in the twentieth century by presidents of the United States and in the titles of a great many books about politics. If this was

indeed his wordcraft, then he deserves credit for it in the history of political sloganeering.

In his editorial articles during the last year of Amadeo I's reign, Galdós depicts this silent majority as tired of a constant state of revolution and civil war with the Carlists, who he describes as backwards and violent. In *Doña Perfecta*, Galdós directly connects the townspeople of Orbajosa to the recurring pattern of Carlist violence when the narrative refers to their participation in both the second Carlist war of 1848 as well as the Guerra de los Agraviados in 1827 ("Doña Perfecta" no. 196 523). The earlier war was a brief conflict that resulted from dissatisfaction among "apostólicos o ultrarrealistas con el gobierno absolutista moderado" (Posada Moreiras 168). It was a prelude to the Carlist uprisings, and the same factional division exploded seven years later upon Fernando VII's death and the accession to the throne of his daughter Isabel II in 1833, when ultraroyalist and hyper-religious factions rallied behind the banner of the deceased king's brother and pretender to the throne, Don Carlos María Isidro de Borbón (1788-1855), in the first Carlist war. The novel itself is set either during the Third Carlist War (1872-1876), which ended the month before the first part of the novel was published, or in a hypothetical contemporary flare-up of hostilities.

*Doña Perfecta* is meant as a persuasive text, and it has a hero as well as a villain. The hero is none other than the story's tragic protagonist, Pepe Rey, who as a representative character is an amalgamation of two men who Galdós thought could salvage and legitimize the revolution of 1868 as a lasting step forward in Spanish political rights, Alfonso XII and Práxedes Mateo Sagasta. One was a monarch, and the other a civil engineer. One was a well-travelled, cultured young man with military training, and the other a liberal academic with a reputation for intrigue and activism. Together they form the traits of the novel's hero, Pepe Rey, whose very name vicariously invokes the new king's persona into the protagonist. He is a civil engineer who is so work-oriented that when his father calls to him to read the letter from his aunt Perfecta accepting marriage on behalf of her daughter Rosario, he assumes that it is a communication about a construction project. He is professionally experienced and well-travelled, having completed a study abroad in Germany and England, which also implies an ability to speak multiple languages and an affinity for England and Germany ("Doña Perfecta" no. 194 244-45). He is also a friend of the military with connections to people serving it going back to his youth ("Doña Perfecta" no. 196 524).

His loyalty to the central government in Madrid is resolute, and he is indiscreetly bold about stating his

political allegiance during his first interaction with the man who would later murder him. One gets the impression from Caballuco's outburst in protest of Pepe Rey's loyalties that if it had not been for Pepe's familial relationship with Perfecta, then Caballuco would have murdered him right there just for having the temerity to support the central government's plan to station troops in Orbajosa. Caballuco calms down from his rage to ask Pepe, "Con que usted—añadió, mirando socarronamente al joven caballero,—¿con que Vd. es el sobrino de doña Perfecta?" ("Doña Perfecta" no. 194 240). This naïve indiscretion born of innocence and boldness betrays a character defect that would lead to Pepe Rey's eventual downfall, as his boldness causes him to exaggerate his liberal opinions and escalate his conflict with his aunt without being fully aware of the mortal stakes involved. This boldness and defiance do nothing to dispel the vicious rumors with which his aunt defames him from Orbajosa all the way to the capital.

Like Pepe Rey, Alfonso XII also had to contend with a smear campaign regarding his religious faith. Ángeles Lario notes the event, which resulted in Alfonso XII having to dispel those rumors by participating in a public religious celebration in the Spanish church of London in November of 1874 (21-22). Lario's revelatory analysis of Alfonso XII's genuine desire to reign over a modern constitutional Spain corroborates a lot of the

traits present in *Doña Perfecta*'s Pepe Rey. Like Pepe Rey, Alfonso XII was well-travelled and cultured; he spoke English, French, and German, having been educated in France, Austria, and the United Kingdom prior to becoming king of Spain (17). He had an affinity for England, having attended the Sandhurst Military Academy, from where he and Cánovas issued the Sandhurst Manifesto announcing the return of the Bourbon dynasty to power in Spain (18). He also had an affinity for Germany and even wanted to form an alliance with the new country, a fact which caused considerable friction with France at the time, since it had recently lost several provinces to Germany in the Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) that created Germany; here Alfonso XII found himself at odds with Cánovas, who was a Francophile and opposed the king's desire to ally Spain with Germany (24). According to Lario, he was also the first *regeneracionista* monarch who saw an urgent need to modernize the country (20). Crucially, he sought to bring Spain in line with the religious tolerance expected in the rest of Europe and helped Cánovas fend off efforts from the so-called "moderados" faction to impose an exclusionist and intolerant religious regime on Spanish society (22). He was a supporter of religious and political pluralism, and Spanish liberals widely perceived him as being closer to their position on issues of individual freedoms than to Cánovas and his party, which at this point included reformed Carlists

who formed the core of the *integrista* faction that would arise the following decade. There was a stark political contrast between the young king and his mother, and this would have been evident to Cánovas as well as the liberals who were coalescing behind Sagasta. The historian Carlos Seco Serrano asserts this contrast, stating, "Alfonso XII fue, políticamente, la antítesis de su madre Isabel II" (218).

The first *entrega* of *Doña Perfecta* was included in the first issue of *Revista de España* published after the start of the debate in the Congress of Deputies over the proposed Article Eleven of the new constitution. In that issue's "Revista Política: Interior," the editorial staff of the magazine appeals to the king's authority and public statements in support for full religious and political freedom against encroachment from Cánovas and his proposed article, which codified Catholic supremacy and only allowed limited tolerance for private, domestic practice of non-Catholic faith. The quotation, a mere two pages removed from the end of the first part of Galdós' novel, is introduced as "palabras puestas en los augustos lábios del jóven monarca" and cite the king, who said in his speech, "la obra de pacificación y de reconstitución no exige que renuncie nadie a sus aspiraciones doctrinales" ("Revista Política" no. 194 270). The young king had a reputation for pluralistic ideals and would, to the best of his ability, uphold

it during his short reign. Lario's analysis finds that as early as September of 1875, Alfonso XII communicated to Cánovas his intention to call a liberal government to rule the country (28). Over the next five years, the king would try several times to call a liberal government, with each attempt stopped by the machinations of a conservative faction that used its established position in government to frustrate the king's efforts. Lario describes the situation as, "el gobierno se imponía al rey frente a sus aspiraciones liberales" (29-30). The king would not be able to form a liberal government until 1881, when by royal decree he dismissed Cánovas, citing a "desacuerdo entre el rey y su gobierno," and named Sagasta, the civil engineer turned liberal politician, as the new head of government (32). The king was an ally of the liberals, and the textual evidence shows that the editors of *Revista de España* considered him as such. It is also safe to say that if the king's efforts had not been frustrated and he had been able to form a liberal government in 1875 as he intended, the new constitution would have been radically different and would have included full religious freedom.

The editorial column called "Revista Política: Interior" appeared alongside and immediately following each part of *Doña Perfecta*. This was a long-standing column that had been a part of the magazine since its founding in 1868. In prior years, the

column was frequently authored by individuals whose names appeared at the end and in the index. For example, Galdós authored and signed at least a dozen issues of the column before and during the twenty-two months that he was editor of the magazine in 1872 and 1873. Albareda authored many issues of the column during his long ownership of the magazine. Another frequent contributor was Juan Valera, who also published his popular work *Pepita Jiménez* in *Revista de España* in 1874. However, by 1875 the column was often, but not always, anonymous. It was a bimonthly magazine issued in the middle and end of each month. The legislative session of the constituent Cortes that would debate and vote on a new constitution for the restored monarchy was convened on 15 February. Juan Valera vividly described the event in that month's second issue of "Revista Política: Interior" published ten days after the start of the session, where he laments the lack of popular political participation and warns that apathy does not mean consent (544). This would be the last issue of the column that would have an author's name attached until July, after the Constitution of 1876 had been approved by both chambers of the Cortes in June.

All the intervening issues are anonymous. This is the case for the five issues of "Revista Política: Interior" that accompany *Doña Perfecta*, which are signed with an ellipsis. All five cover the debates and voting on Article Eleven in the

Congress of Deputies, the lower chamber of the Cortes. All but one of them focus on the question of religious freedom and all condemn the terms of the proposed religious constitutional article. Their author or authors are also horrified at the opposition to the proposed article coming from those to Cánovas' right. The critical moment in the debate occurred when the leaders of the parties opposed to Article Eleven were given a chance to speak against it and challenge Cánovas (as well as each other) to respond before the Congress recessed for Easter on 16 April. This was the most contentious of all the constitutional debates that spring in Madrid. It is the part of the debate referenced by *The Saturday Review* in its 22 April issue when its author states, "The religious or ecclesiastical question is much more important than any controversy which can arise on other parts of the Constitution" ("Spanish Constitution Making" 508). The issue of "Revista Política: Interior" that followed this debate included commentary on the speeches given against the proposed constitutional article by Alejandro Pidal y Mon (1846-1913), Ángel Carvajal y Fernández de Córdoba, Marqués of Sardoal (1841-1898), and Emilio Castelar. About the former, the anonymous column calls his school of thought, "el catolicismo ultramontano, que como partido político se ha mostrado siempre hasta hora en estrecha alianza con las ideas más anti-liberales y retrógradas" ("Revista Política: Interior"

no. 195 420). The constitutional article proposed by Cánovas was bad enough, but what the party represented by Pidal wanted was to replace it with a return to a medieval form of enforced religious unity that was utterly unacceptable to liberals and an anachronism in modern Europe. About Castelar and Sardoal, the author of the column heaps praise upon their speeches, saying about Sardoal, "El tono parlamentario de su discurso . . . concurre a que se reconozca en él, no ya solo un buen orador, sino un hombre político de mucha cuenta e importancia. . . ." About Castelar, the author describes his performance as, "estuvo tan grande, tan maravilloso orador como siempre" (421).

The coverage of this crescendo in the legislative debate over religious freedom coincides with the second part of *Doña Perfecta* in the same issue of *Revista de España*. Just a page before "Revista Política: Interior" are Galdós' words closing chapter fifteen of his novel with "¡Ay! ¡Sangre, ruina y desolación! . . . Una gran batalla se preparaba" ("Doña Perfecta" no. 195 415). This was the same *entrega* of the novel in which its hero's intellectual confrontation with his host and her priest gets out of hand and devolves into acrimony. He let Perfecta's priest bait him into an argument over Darwinist evolution despite at no point expressing support for the theory (376). He is attacked for lack of religiosity and piety by Perfecta (377). He criticizes the local church by calling it

"bastante triste" to the priest's face and declares himself not to be an iconoclast despite immediately professing what amounts to iconoclasm (381). He then lets Perfecta's priest provoke him into another huge argument over dinner with false allegations of impropriety with the Troyas, orphan sisters with a bad reputation in town (409-10). This time, the argument results in Pepe Rey declaring his intention to leave Orbajosa (412). He gets into a physical confrontation with Caballuco and changes his mind about leaving when he realizes that he will abandon Rosario in the horrible town of Orbajosa if he leaves, setting up a showdown with Perfecta (414-15). This showdown happens in the final *entrega* of *Doña Perfecta* that follows the vote in the Congress of Deputies to approve Article Eleven of the new constitution on 12 May 1876. The issue of *Revista de España* that contains this final part of Galdós' novel was published on 23 May. The following day, on 24 May, the Congress of Deputies voted to approve the entire new constitution. The editors of the magazine allowed modern readers to date the correlation between events and the magazine's publication by referencing the specific day that they expected the new constitution to be approved by Congress in that issue's "Revista Política: Interior," saying, "Así se ha discutido en el Congreso la nueva Constitución, la cual es probable que quede aprobada mañana, día 24 del corriente" ("Revista política interior" no. 198 276).

This also shows that the editors were aware of the developing events and may have even accelerated the publication of May's second issue to take advantage of the elevated public interest surrounding Congress' passage of the constitution; it does appear to be published earlier than many others that frequently came closer to the end of the month.

Is this an explanation for the odd ending of the serialized version of the novel that Galdós changed for later book versions? In the original serialized version, the novel ends in the epistolary form of a series of letters between Cayetano, Perfecta's brother-in-law, and a friend in Madrid who he tells about Pepe Rey's murder. He tells his friend about Rosario being placed in an asylum where she will be well cared for. He assures his friend that the asylum's director has deemed Rosario's condition as incurable ("Doña Perfecta" no. 198 264). In the final letter, at least in the serialized version, he tells his friend that Jacinto, the nephew of Perfecta's priest, was to marry Perfecta as a replacement for Rosario. However, as everyone gathered to prepare the Easter feast, Jacinto slipped on some chorizo meat and fell straight onto a knife being held by his own mother, María Remedios. The knife pierced his heart and Jacinto died instantly (266). Book versions also close with a series of letters between Cayetano and his friend in Madrid. Jacinto, however, does not suffer the abrupt death in the books

that he does in the magazine version of the story. In the version edited by Rodolfo Cardona, for example, instead of preparing to marry Perfecta, Jacinto is sent to Madrid with recommendations from Cayetano, who speculates on a possible life in politics for the young man. Perfecta, on the other hand, becomes jaundiced and depressed at effectively losing her daughter, consoling herself in religious devotion (Galdós *Doña Perfecta* 294-95). This drastic change in endings could be due to Galdós reconsidering the fates of Jacinto and Perfecta after initially having to finish the work in a hurry due to the time constraints of a magazine whose editors wanted to print early for the coming approval of the Constitution of 1876. It is admittedly a speculative hypothesis, and further analysis could reveal other motives.

# Chapter 3: A Female Villain

What is clear is that *Revista de España* closely followed the nascent reign of Alfonso XII and kept a sometimes hopeful, sometimes dreadful eye on the development of its constitutional structure. *Doña Perfecta* participated in this coverage in tandem with "Revista Política: Interior." The novel's female villain, Perfecta, highlights this intertextual cooperation. The issue of "Revista Política: Interior" that accompanies the first part of *Doña Perfecta*, besides appealing to royal authority to defend religious freedom, also decries an over two-year long propaganda campaign by the "ultramontanos" and the church to influence women in favor of a return to a completely exclusionist religious regime, lamenting the influence that this campaign has had on the Senate, where an amendment to impose forced Catholicism was being discussed ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 194 275). The author warns that conservatives are winning the war for public opinion, saying:

> La reacción, entre tanto, no reposa un instante, y por donde quiera se muestra y hace esfuerzos extraordinarios por ganarse las voluntades y poner de su parte la opinión pública y a las mujeres sobre todo. (277)

The column then closes with an account of events at the Real Academia Española on 25 March, where Carlist intellectual Cándido Nocedal (1821-1885) spoke against Article Eleven, but

from a conservative rather than a liberal perspective. The author's account offers a sarcastic and misogynistic critique of Nocedal's discourse to reinforce the earlier point about how conservatives were making inroads with public opinion among women. He writes:

> El Sr. Nocedal con extremada habilidad y discreta galantería, ha hecho el elogio más ferviente de la piedad de las mujeres; ha probado que para enamorarlas es mejor usar el lenguaje del *Catecismo* del Padre Ripalda que el de la *Metafísica* de Sanz del Rio; ha hecho patente que a las muchachas bonitas les divierten y agradan más los buenos católicos, que hablan claro, que los embrollados krausistas, cuyos tiquis-miquis no entienden; y ha inferido de todo ello que se debe conservar a la fuerza la unidad religiosa, y que nadie está más interesado en ello que las muchachas bonitas. (277-78)

Finally, the column concludes with a lyric from *Zaira*, "El sexo que amenaza / Con su dulzura avasallar el mundo" (278). Notably, the description of Nocedal's presentation at the Real Academia and the closing lyric take the column's argument from criticizing the influence being wielded on women by a propaganda campaign to criticizing the influence of women in society and in politics. First, the response to Nocedal dismisses feminine influence, as limited as it was in Spain in 1876, as something

puerile or even prurient. Secondly, the subject of the lyric, "El sexo," and its compound verb, "amenaza . . . avasallar" points the blame squarely at women for the political troubles that the liberal faction was experiencing over the religious question of Article Eleven.

Here is a liberal author writing in a liberal magazine to say that women exert too much influence. What on the surface seems like an ideological inconsistency is again revealed by applying Fredric Jameson's diachronic and synchronic concept of history to be a function of class antagonism. Male liberals, representing middle class and urban interests, were not really interested in female political empowerment at this point of their historical development. The same author criticizes Cánovas' opposition to universal suffrage (271). "Revista Política: Interior" had advocated for universal suffrage in past issues and would continue to do so in subsequent issues. However, what it advocated for was not true universal suffrage, but universal male suffrage. There is no mention of giving women the right to vote or of women's conditions in general, except to condemn their conservative influence as previously cited. In the author's thesis, female power is a menace to liberal aspirations in the ongoing debate about the relationship between Spain and the Catholic church.

*Doña Perfecta* shares this thesis with the issue of "Revista Política: Interior" that accompanied its first *entrega*. Marilyn D. Rugg found the same thesis in the novel for her article "The Women of Orbajosa: Patriarchy as the Definitive Ideology in Galdós' *Doña Perfecta*," where she sets "to peel back the political and ideological layers of *Doña Perfecta* so as to lay bare the workings of the patriarchal order" (192). She subverts Galdós' thesis to create a feminist version that interprets Perfecta as a heroic character protecting her daughter. Rugg describes forming this subversive thesis to challenge her students to critically analyze and interpret the novel in ways that identify the patriarchal bias of the narrative voice. It is a narrative voice that guides the reader to "hate Perfecta" as "The obvious villain" (193-95). Perfecta is the villain because as Rugg points out later in her article, "all indications in the novel point to Perfecta's absolute domination in Orbajosa, whether it be in her own household or anywhere else in the town" (202). To attain this level of dominance in a society in which women do not possess direct power, Rugg cites Perfecta's mastery of Virginia Wolf's concept of "indirect influence;" she is able to control both the religious and legal authority in the town and is the puppet master "pulling the strings behind all of Pepe Rey's legal, professional, religious, and social difficulties" (199-200). Perfecta's status as a villain is further cemented by

her appropriation of the masculine role of head of a powerful household and leader of the community, which is aberrant in a patriarchal society (219-20). Rugg cites an article by Linda C. Fox to support this aspect of her analysis. In her article, Fox connects Galdós' titular villain to Federico García Lorca's (1898-1936) also titular villain from his play *La casa de Bernarda Alba*. Bernarda Alba and Perfecta together form an archetype of villain whose transgression is the appropriation for evil purposes of patriarchal authority, as Fox states:

> Their unconventional behavior is seen as perversion for two reasons: Perfecta and Bernarda are women exercising power in male domains, and they both exceed the limited power allowed to widows as substitutes of male heads of family in their society. (57)

Both Fox and Rugg place Perfecta's appropriation of patriarchal authority as a vital component of her status as villain of the story. If a central part of what makes Perfecta a negative character is that she is a woman who exercises male authority, then it reveals the patriarchal foundation on which the narrative rests.

Rugg avoids ascribing intentionality to Galdós' patriarchal narrative, saying, "I do not infer that Galdós consciously intended this gender analysis . . ." (192). However, considering the novel's positioning amid *Revista de España*'s coverage of the

constitutional debates, its charged political content, and the deliberate exposition of Perfecta's malignant influence, there is reason to consider it intentional. Take for example the final reveal of Perfecta's true character, which occurs in the final *entrega* of the novel in the chapter that bears her name. The narrator invites the reader to see beyond Perfecta's respectable façade by looking into her bedroom, saying, "Penetrad en su cuarto . . ." ("Doña Perfecta" no. 198 255). The voyeuristic invitation to investigate focuses on two entities in Perfecta's room, Perfecta herself and her desk. About the former, the narrator describes her aged beauty, her ability to modulate her language to dominate any situation, her impeccable reputation for discipline, her diplomatic skills that have garnered her much respect in her community, and the powerful relationships that she maintains through postal correspondence with ladies of Madrid's high society (255-56). About the latter, the desk becomes the scene of the crime. The narrator accusingly describes Perfecta and her desk:

> Allí escribió las cartas que trimestralmente recibía su hermano; allí redactaba las esquelitas para incitar al juez y escribano a que embrollaran los pleitos de Pepe Rey, allí armó el lazo en que éste perdió la confianza del Gobierno; allí conferenciaba largamente con D. Inocencio. (256)

What the narrator deliberately condemns here is precisely Perfecta's indirect influence with which she dominates Orbajosa and has frustrated every effort by Pepe Rey to establish himself in the town. The attack on feminine indirect influence is not collateral damage in a liberal strike against religious dogmatism, but instead a targeted volley aimed at the conservative influence of wealthy women in Spanish society. Women, at least the influential ones that have the ear of Spanish senators, are for liberal Galdós part of the opposition in a three-sided battle for religious pluralism between liberals like him, Carlist remnants, and Cánovas' attempt to forge a middle ground with Article Eleven.

Perfecta's domination of public life in Orbajosa through her indirect influence is evident throughout the novel, with its subtlety matching its power. The reader confronts this power early when, as mentioned earlier, Caballuco's fury against Pepe Rey is only tempered by his knowledge that he is Perfecta's nephew. Later, after Pepe Rey meets Rosario, the reader glimpses the scope of Perfecta's influence when his cousin reveals that the local judge, the prosecutor, the dean of the cathedral, the bishop's secretary, the mayor, and the local tax collector frequently meet at Perfecta's house to dine and socialize ("Doña Perfecta" no. 194 263). This encompasses the entire legal, political, and religious authority of the community, and

Perfecta's house serves as their meeting place; she is a ruler convening court in her palace.

Caballuco, or the centaur as the narrator calls him, is one of the main tools that Galdós uses to demonstrate the depth of Perfecta's influence. In the second chapter, the narrative establishes him as the local tough guy whose fearsome reputation makes him a "cacique tremendo" upon whom even the provincial governor depends for electoral support (239). He comes from a long line of Caballucos who have participated in previous Carlist insurrections, and he himself has fought against the central government's army (240). However, he is ready to settle down for a peaceful life, having sworn as such to the new provincial governor. In fact, the narrative establishes that until Perfecta's intervention, there was no insurrectionist activity in Orbajosa, and the military commander had decided to move the troops out of the town to where they were more needed. Perfecta provokes Caballuco into acting against Pepe Rey and the army she perceives as supporting Pepe Rey's effort to steal away Rosario, saying, "¡Parece mentira que se hable tanto de un hombre de tan poco valer! Dime, Caballuco, ¡es cierto que te han dado de bofetadas unos soldados esta mañana!;" he proclaims his loyalty to her, calling her "mi madre, más que mi madre, mi señora, mi reina . . ." ("Doña Perfecta" no. 197 54-55). The priest, Inocencio, tries to defuse the situation, but Perfecta

overrules him by provoking Caballuco to break his oath, which he does, yelling, "¡Viva Orbajosa, muera Madrid!" (57-66). Perfecta thus asserts her dominance over the most fearsome man in town who commands a following of violent fighters ready to kill for her. At the same time, she asserts her dominance over the priest, who sees his efforts to defuse the situation rebuffed and quickly falls in line with Perfecta's command. Marilyn D. Rudd uses this incident to support the conclusion that Perfecta is the intended mastermind of the story and not the unwitting victim of Inocencio's manipulations to secure marriage with Rosario for his nephew Jacinto, as some interpretations of the text have suggested (201-02). With all religious, legal, and extralegal authority in her grasp and a fighting force at her command, Perfecta effectively becomes Orbajosa's warlord when she orders Caballuco into action. In a society that is recovering from years of a civil war that ended just a month earlier, this is a serious accusation and a strong condemnation of Perfecta and the influence of rich conservative women on public life that she represents for Galdós, for *Revista de España*, and for the anonymous author or authors of "Revista Política: Interior."

Furthermore, Galdós's thesis is not just a bitter critique of feminine influence in public life, but also an appraisal of fatherhood that means to show the crisis that its absence

provokes. All the young people in *Doña Perfecta* except Pepe Rey grew up without fathers; the Troya sisters, Pinzón, Rosario, and Jacinto all share this trait. All are fundamentally dysfunctional in some way. The Troya sisters lost their father, a military man, to street fighting in Madrid during the Revolution of 1854. Without their father to provide economic security, they are forced to survive by whatever means they can, provoking vicious rumors about them in town ("Doña Perfecta" no. 195 400). Carlists from Orbajosa killed Pinzón's father in the Second Carlist War (1846-1849), again reminding the reader of the town's violent roots ("Doña Perfecta" no. 196 525). His indiscretion needlessly escalates the conflict when he provokes Perfecta and Inocencio against Pepe Rey ("Doña Perfecta" no. 197 51). Rosario's father was a philandering gambler that squandered the family's wealth and succumbed to his vices at an early age, leaving the family in debt. Pepe Rey's father rescued his sister Perfecta's household from ruin, sending her to Orbajosa to manage her properties directly while he settled her debts in Madrid ("Doña Perfecta" no. 194 243). Had it not been for this assistance from her brother, Perfecta and Rosario could have ended up destitute and socially marginalized like the Troyas.

The narrative does not explain how Jacinto lost his father, but coming from a lower economic class than Perfecta, he was fortunate that his uncle was able to attain a status as priest

and protect Jacinto and his mother María Remedios from the fate that befell the Troyas. There was a time when María worked as a washerwoman for Perfecta, meaning that she was little removed from the socioeconomic status of the Troyas. Her boundless love for her son causes her to spoil him, even to the point of committing moral transgressions to protect him ("Doña Perfecta" no. 198 234). He is the most well-adjusted and prepared of the fatherless young people in *Doña Perfecta*, having earned a legal doctorate. The narrative gives the credit for this to Inocencio, who serves as a paternal figure that instills in the young man the discipline necessary to excel in school. However, the uncle is overprotective of his nephew, readily abandoning his senses when it comes to Jacinto. The narrator blames priestly celibacy, arguing, "Si el Concilio de Trento les prohíbe tener hijos, Dios, no el demonio, les da sobrinos para que conozcan los dulces afanes de la paternidad" ("Doña Perfecta" no. 195 374-75). Furthermore, Jacinto's defect stems from being overpraised by Inocencio. The narrator states:

> pocos jóvenes . . . están libres de una pedantería fastidiosa que, si les da gran prestigio junto al sillón de sus mamás, es muy risible entre hombres hechos y formales. Jacinto tenía este defecto, muy disculpable, no sólo por sus pocos años, sino porque el buen tío fomentaba aquella vanidad pueril con imprudentes aplausos. (375)

Spoiled, overprotected, and overpraised by his mother and uncle, Jacinto looks like the Carlist political class that Galdós described when he complained four years earlier about the gridlock that brought an end to Amadeo I's reign, calling them "seglares protegidos por el clericalismo y templados al rigor de la política militante y batalladora" ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 93 147). Galdós gives Jacinto the same kind of respect that he gave his ideological adversaries when he wrote editorial columns in *Revista de España* four years earlier; he credits their formidable abilities while fundamentally disagreeing with them and their attitudes. With Jacinto, Galdós combines two points into one character, stressing the importance of real fatherhood while condemning the superficiality of the Carlist political class that he blames for Spain's legislative dysfunction. Galdós reinforces this second point by alluding to Jacinto's political destiny when he is introduced to Pepe Rey, referring to his potential to become a "*distinguido patricio ó un eminente hombre público* . . ." ("Doña Perfecta" no. 195 375). In the book versions of the novel, the ending also alludes to a political destiny for the young man. Cayetano's letter to his friend in Madrid to whom he recommends Jacinto mentions María's desire that Jacinto become a government minister, and Cayetano agrees (*Doña Perfecta* 294). Thus, Jacinto represents the problem with Spanish politics and why, incredibly to urban liberals like

Galdós, the question of religious freedom is still being debated in the Cortes while the rest of Europe has moved past it; entrenched rural interests are overrepresented.

If Jacinto had had a father to teach him humility, then perhaps he would have turned out a better man who truly deserved the honor of serving the solemn role as representative in a constitutional monarchy. The narrator describes Jacinto's natural inclination towards honor and nobility, saying, "Su carácter era por lo común inclinado a la honradez y acciones nobles despertaban franca admiración en su alma" ("Doña Perfecta" no. 195 375). As he is, though, he is a part of the two-pronged Carlist menace to constitutional monarchy, with the rural warlords causing havoc in the countryside on one hand and their elected representatives making the central government dysfunctional on the other. He is also a caricature. Galdós wrote with an urban reader in mind and depicted in *Doña Perfecta* a caricature of the rural communities that form the base of Carlist political and military power. All the characters in *Doña Perfecta* are caricatures. Some are positive albeit flawed, like Pepe Rey and Pinzón; these two also happen to not be from the town. Except for Rosario, the long-term inhabitants of the town are negative, and their depiction points an accusatory finger at communities like Orbajosa for fostering so many terrible problems.

Wifredo de Ràfols agrees that the characters in *Doña Perfecta* are caricatures, although "at the service of parody and satire for their own sake" and concludes that the novel's discourses "ridicule both sides of the ideological spectrum . . ." (486). Ràfols finds that Pepe Rey parodies *Don Quijote* in the first chapter of the novel, when he rides into Orbajosa across a desolate landscape accompanied by Licurgo as his squire (476). This is true, but Galdós only ascribes malice to one side of the ideological and cultural confrontation at the heart of the novel's plot. Yes, Pepe Rey is ridiculed for his matter of fact engineer attitude, his blunt lack of social graces, his naivete about the dangerous stakes in Orbajosa, and his overconfident idea to rescue his cousin, but those things do not make Pepe Rey a negative character. It makes him at worst a fool and at best a quixotic hero at whom the reader laughs when he awkwardly interacts with the inhabitants of Orbajosa and for whom the reader feels sorrow when his quest ultimately fails. That is because the intended reader, most likely a resident of Madrid, naturally identifies with Pepe Rey. The negative characters are the inhabitants of the town, who are as alien to the reader as they are to Pepe Rey; the reader and hero share a bond as interlopers in this strange little town run by his fanatical scheming aunt. The way that the people of Orbajosa treat Pepe Rey is the way they would treat the reader.

Even Rosario, the only sympathetic inhabitant of Orbajosa, is a caricature. She is an idealized portrait of virginal innocence and pure love, which are qualities exaggerated enough to warrant the label of caricature. She is also a prisoner, unable to choose her own destiny. This depiction of imprisoned virginal beauty coincides with a frequent motif in nineteenth century Spanish political cartoons that depicted Spain as a captive woman. Such cartoons appeared in publications like *El Loro*, *La Araña*, and *Don Quijote* in the decades after the Restoration, and depict a woman covered by the Spanish flag being carried away or assaulted by captors. These depictions of Spain as feminine and vulnerable also coincide with nineteenth century characterizations of Spain's international decline. Nineteenth-century attitudes considered weak countries as "subservient and effeminate" (Cuzovic-Severn 180). Spain as a helpless woman was a common trope from which to criticize the nation's decline.

In the 1880 two-page spread from *El Loro* likely titled "Luz y sombra," a woman wearing the colors of the Spanish flag is dragged by a deranged military officer wearing an Austrian pickelhaube into a page depicting a scene of war. A tattered flag flies overhead with the words, "oscurantismo retroceso." On the other page are a group of women wearing dresses with the colors of the flags of France, Italy, the United States, the

United Kingdom, and Belgium carrying a flag that reads, "civilización progreso." They look at the woman wearing Spain's colors, who holds her hand out pleading for rescue as she is dragged into the hellish scene of the first page (2-3). In the 1885 cartoon from *La Araña*, a woman who represents Spain lies on a beach barely covered by the tatters of a Spanish flag that is being pulled apart by figures such as Cánovas, Sagasta, Moret, and Carlos de Borbón. Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla (1833-1895) gestures angrily from the distance. Ominously, German chancellor Otto Von Bismark (1815-1898), French president Jules Grévy (1807-1891), Umberto I of Italy (1844-1900), a British officer, and some others look on, amused by the spectacle and implying the danger that Spain faced internationally. Bismark holds a tatter of the Spanish flag in reference to the Carolinas Islands that Germany forced Spain to cede ("Como es tan hermosa" 2-3). The 1894 cartoon from *Don Quijote* displays several vignettes, central and most prominent is a woman who is barely covered by a lace garment bearing the Spanish flag and shield. She looks terrified as Sagasta and Cánovas stand at either side, each clutching some of her hair. Cánovas is dressed as a clown. The caption reads, "yo la cojo: me la quitas-tu la sueltas, y la agarro. —Pacto de tomarla en pelo-según el pacto del Pardo" (Sojo 2-3). Rosario is as helpless as the women in the political cartoons; she is the victim of others' schemes to attain power.




Fig. 1. "Luz y sombra," *El Loro*, 1880.

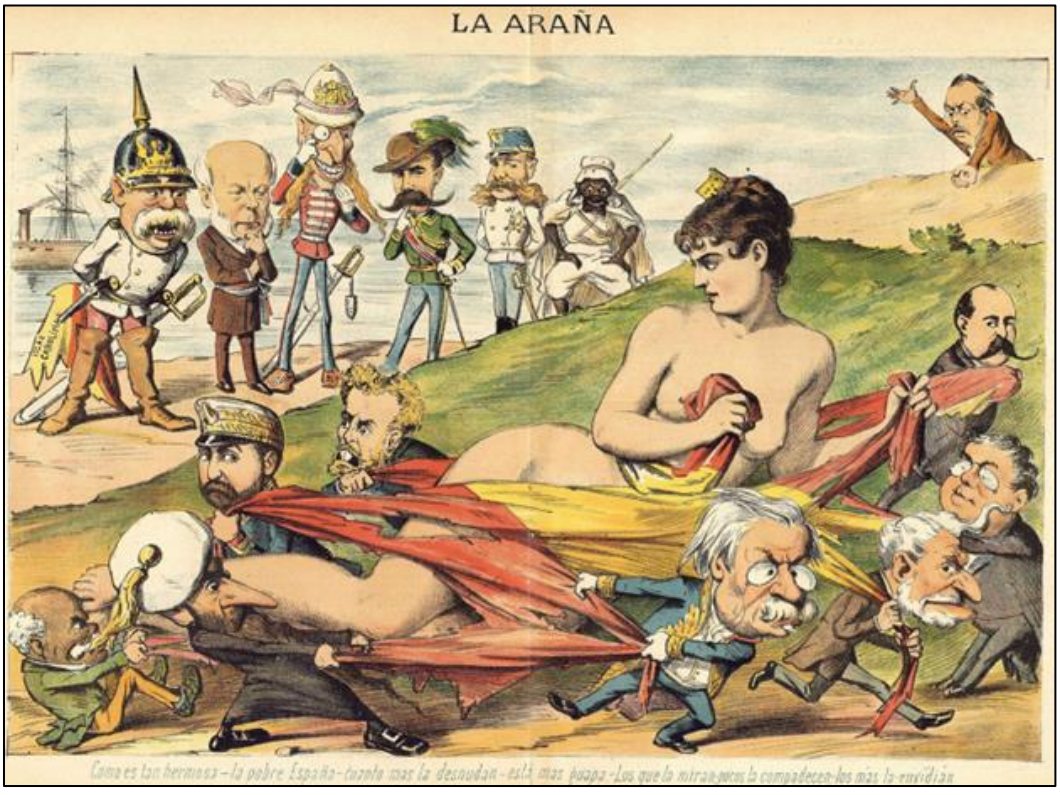



Fig. 2. "Como es tan hermosa," *La Araña*, 1885.




Fig. 3. Eduardo Sojo, *Don Quijote*, 1894.

The person that is supposed to protect her family, Perfecta, instead chooses a violent path that ends in the destruction of her own family. Moreover, Perfecta chooses this path against all reason, throwing it all away in the name of religious dogmatism and personal power without considering the fatal consequences for the family. Marriage between Rosario and Pepe Rey was the only outcome that would have protected the family and held together its estate for posterity, providing social and economic security for generations. It is no wonder that Rosario breaks down completely and ends up in an asylum. Perfecta has failed not only in her maternal duty to care for her daughter, but also in her paternal duty to lead the family

that she inherited as a widow. To place religious feeling and personal power above the well-being of the family is unforgivable in the economically minded ethic of the nineteenth century Spanish middle class. Perfecta has nothing to profit from having Pepe Rey killed and preventing his marriage to Rosario, other than she gets to stay in charge of her little fiefdom that she has constructed but which will inevitably end with her. She prevents Pepe Rey from taking his place at the head of the family and gains temporary power for the price of sacrificing the family's future. A responsible parent would not have made this mistake. Despite all her formidable qualities like her intelligence, her business acumen, her diligence, and her industriousness, Perfecta is the biggest fool of the story because she allows hubris to doom her own family to extinction. In the book versions, she tries to redeem her catastrophic decision-making and give her family sacrifice meaning and purpose through religious practice and lavish donations to the church (*Doña Perfecta* 295). Despite her futile efforts, she cannot salvage anything other than a nihilistic victory over Pepe Rey, ruling over the ruins of her and her brother's family.

This outcome is like an accusation that Galdós made against the Carlists four years earlier as they formed a coalition with the republicans and socialists in the month leading up to the start of the Third Carlist War in April 1872. In the first issue

of March's *Revista de España*, Galdós expresses his sense of vindication for having predicted that the radicals and Carlists would form a coalition to destabilize Amadeo I's government, chastising those who had doubted that such a coalition would form for being too generous to their opponents ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 97 127). He goes on to warn that the Carlists are opportunists looking for any way to take control of the country, saying:

> El ofrecimiento que los radicales hacían de sus sagrados compromisos políticos, a cambio de votos antidinásticos, no podía ser rechazado por gentes como las que componen el partido absolutista, hombres que todo lo fían a los errores de los demás, y que verían con gusto la dominación de La Internacional con la esperanza de fundar su trono sobre las cenizas y los escombros que ésta dejara tras sí. (130)

Here, Galdós accuses the Carlists of seeking a nihilistic victory like the one he would depict four years later in *Doña Perfecta*. In the novel, Rosario serves as the allegorical stand-in for Spain. Perfecta wins the battle for control over her daughter, who ends up imprisoned in an asylum without any realistic chance for a normal, prosperous future, just as Spain would end up in the hands of the Carlists according to Galdós. This allegorical understanding of Rosario helps to explain one of the perplexing issues of her character: how suddenly she and

Pepe Rey fall in love upon meeting each other. If Pepe Rey represents Alfonso XII, and Rosario represents Spain, then their meeting represents Alfonso XII's triumphant entry into Madrid on 14 January 1875, when the city's expectant sense of relief expressed itself in adulating crowds that filled the streets to welcome the young monarch after a long period of instability.

An anonymous edition of "Revista Política: Interior" in *Revista de España* covered the event that January, noting the celebratory atmosphere but also mentioning that such events are not new for the inhabitants of the capital, where multiple generations have witnessed "las pompas regias de sucesivas entradas de príncipes y princesas." The article compares Alfonso XII's entry into the city with the four triumphant entries made by Fernando VII into the city, which divided his reign into four periods that the author describes as "igualmente funestos" ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 166 256-57). By referencing the notorious figure of Fernando VII, the anonymous author is making a negative connection that conveys skepticism about the celebration. The author explains that this skepticism is based on the collective experience of the city's inhabitants. However, after communicating a healthy skepticism, the author pivots to a more hopeful stance about the king, saying:

> Su persona inspira verdadero y cordial interés en todas las clases de la sociedad, y generalmente se considera la

> inauguración de su reinado como anuncio de mejores días, de esos días que ha tiempo esperamos todos, y que por desgracia han tardado tanto que muchos bajan al frio sepulcro sin verlos, aunque los han aguardado hasta el último momento. Esta desgracia de nuestra patria hace que se vuelvan con amor los ojos hacia el joven príncipe que viene en la flor de su edad, sin odios ni prevenciones, con una inteligencia y un corazón preparados indudablemente para las grandes cosas, para las grandes ideas, para las grandes acciones, y cuya suerte depende sin duda de las primeras semillas que se arrojen en el terreno virginal preparado por una buena educación. (257)

The author welcomes the constitutionalist rhetoric that the new monarch employs and waits to see if it is implemented in practice. Despite the praise, the author expresses skepticism about the new king's ability to live up to the constitutional promises, at one point describing the king as seemingly "lisonjero" and warning that the success or failure of this constitutional project will depend on how the first days of the new regime proceed, which will not be decided by the young monarch but instead by the factions vying for power (258). Remarkably, here the author predicts the circumstances that will frustrate the young king's liberal aspirations over the next six years. These are the circumstances that Ángeles Lario describes

in his article; Cánovas outmaneuvered the king, putting off the formation of a liberal government under Sagasta until 1881 (30). The factional divisions that frustrated the reign of Alfonso XII were the same factional divisions that had frustrated the reign of Amadeo I. Liberals like Galdós had reason to fear that Spain under Alfonso XII might be as ungovernable or worse, that he might abdicate like Amadeo I and give an opportunity to the Carlist pretender to plunge the country into absolutism. To avoid this, Spain needed Alfonso XII to succeed and fulfill his promise to rule constitutionally so that the gains in political and civil rights made since 1868 may solidify into Spanish political culture in a lasting way.

Likewise, Rosario needs Pepe Rey to fulfill his promise to marry her to secure her future. The parallels between the story and the political situation in Spain are too numerous and circumscribed to dismiss as coincidental or passing in nature. *Doña Perfecta* perfectly reflects the fears of Galdós and liberals like him at the start of the Restoration. The experience of Amadeo I's brief reign left a deep scar in the memory of a polity that considered itself reasonable, centrist, conciliatory, and therefore the legitimate guardians of the majority's interests. Their inability to govern by their own principles during the Sexenio Democrático was a shock that produced a deep sense of consternation and betrayal that can be

read in Galdós' contemporary political articles in *Revista de España*. He places the blame on the political fringes that teamed up against the center to sabotage Spain's experiment with democratic monarchy and plunge the country into civil war, calling them, "la coalición entre los enemigos de la monarquía, los enemigos de la religión, los enemigos de la libertad y los enemigos de la propiedad" ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 97 131). Four years later, the same political divisions still threatened the kingdom's stability. The anonymous author whose issue of "Revista Política: Interior" accompanied the second *entrega* of the novel echoes Galdós' accusation, saying:

> Si en España no hubiese dos partidos extremos, el carlista y el ultra-demócrata, engrosados, cuando llega la ocasión, por gente levantisca, aficionada a echarse a los caminos y al vivir heroico-bárbaro, medrando, prosperando y garbeando en las guerras civiles, es evidente, que . . . no nos conviene, ni estamos llamados a tener un ejército numeroso, empobreciéndonos y arruinándonos por sostenerle. ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 195 423-24)

Only great military force had suppressed the Carlist rebellions that arose to take advantage of Spain's political instability during the reign of Amadeo I, and only that force continued to hold it at bay in 1876. The constitutional debates that spring raised the political temperature. Provoked by a Papal brief

against religious tolerance, Carlist agitation surrounding Article Eleven gained strength as the Cortes prepared to debate the subject and the first *entrega* of *Doña Perfecta* appeared in *Revista de España* ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 194 274-75). The novel reflects this tense atmosphere and points an accusing finger at conservative women for fueling this agitation, which threatened to cause the same instability that ended the reign of Amadeo I and plunged the country into a bloody civil war that only ended a month earlier. Perfecta, who agitates all of Orbajosa's notable citizens against Pepe Rey with her slander against him, is a caricature of those women.

Her nihilistic victory over Pepe Rey serves as a warning of the consequences if the Bourbonic experiment with democratic, constitutional, and limited government fails. This time, there was no other claimant to the throne to fall back on like there was fortuitously when Alfonso XII stepped in to fill the void left by Amadeo I's abdication and the subsequent failure of the First Republic. If the experiment fails and Alfonso XII were dethroned, then the only possibility left at that point would be the ascension of Carlos VII, presenting an impossible situation for liberal monarchists who cannot abide that possibility. Juan Valera described the limited options for a Spanish monarchy ten months before general Campos' coup that restored the Bourbon dynasty. In a February 1874 issue of *Revista de España*, he

explains the impossibility of returning to that moment before the election of Amadeo I and asserts that there are only two candidates left for the Spanish throne: Carlos VII and Alfonso XII. He further explains that Carlos VII is unpalatable for liberals due to his absolutism and that if they want a monarchy, then they have no choice but to support Alfonso XII's claim to the throne. However, that would also require those liberals who participated in the 1868 revolution to swallow their pride and admit that they were wrong to overthrow the government in the first place. Those that do not wish to admit that they were wrong, Valera concludes, have no other logical choice but to become republicans ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 143 409-10). Advance four years to the spring of 1876 with Alfonso XII de facto on the throne and the republican option is no longer viable either, because for republicans to agitate against the sitting dynasty in 1876 means repeating the same mistake that republicans committed in 1872-1873, when their activism against Amadeo I merely enabled the Carlists to nearly seize control of the country. That is not an acceptable solution, so liberals were stuck with Alfonso XII whether they liked it or not. He was their only path to attain the *regeneracionista* goals they envisioned for Spain when they launched the revolution in 1868. All other paths led to Carlos VII, who from their perspective

would be happy to burn the country down to rule over the remaining ash heap.

Thus, the new constitutional monarchy was in a precarious position before it even officially started. The religious question of Article Eleven drove a wedge between Alfonso XII's conservative supporters and the liberals whose aspirations depended on the new monarchy's success, weakening Alfonso XII's political position and empowering the ideological fringes that would, if given the chance, depose him. In this environment, the propaganda campaign to influence women against religious tolerance and the Carlist agitation surrounding the issue was a severe threat to liberal aspirations and the political program espoused by *Revista de España*. The editors and contributors to the magazine during the constitutional debate in the spring of 1876 saw feminine influence as a threat and responded to this threat with an outburst of blatant liberal misogyny against conservative women. *Doña Perfecta* is a part of this outburst.

# Chapter 4: The Countess Replies

Thirty-six years after the initial publication of *Doña Perfecta*, Spain's most accomplished female author of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Emilia Pardo Bazán, wrote a review of a play based on Galdós' novel that she saw in the Español theater in Madrid. She wrote this review for the Argentine newspaper, *La Nación*, to which she had been a regular contributor since inheriting José Nogales' (1860-1908) role with the newspaper in 1909. Prior to this she contributed twenty articles to *La Nación* between 1889 and 1909 (DeCoster 10). In her review, she heaps praise on Galdós as one of the best dramatic authors of his time and laments that the Spanish public does not appreciate his dramatic talents, regrettably confining him to the novel. She compares him to French dramatist Francisco de Curel who she thinks was similarly underappreciated. According to Pardo Bazán, the public is to blame for its poor taste for preferring to entertain itself "con farsas indecorosas y con dramas en que se refieren las hazañas de Arseno Lupin o *El misterio del cuarto amarillo*." She continues criticizing the public for Galdós' lack of theatrical success, saying, "Cuando las obras teatrales van más altas que el nivel general de los espectadores, no es habitual que se llene muchas noches el teatro" (*Crónicas* 126).

At this time, she was one of very few critical voices who defended Galdós' artistic merits in a country whose literary high society was dominated by elitest men that snidely derided him and his work. It is clear from her public praise of his work and the affection in her private letters to Galdós that she cared deeply for him and thought that he and she deserved more recognition for their literary accomplishments than they received from the elite circles of Spanish academia. Nineteen-twelve was the same year in which Galdós' bid to join the Real Academia was rejected in an environment of acrid partisanship, as mentioned in the first chapter. It was the same year when the academy headed by Alejandro Pidal y Mon rejected Pardo Bazán's bid to join (Simón Palmer 627). This was the same Pidal y Mon whose discourse at the constitutional debates of 1876 the anonymous author of that April's "Revista Política: Interior" described as "el catolicismo ultramontano . . . en estrecha alianza con las ideas más inti-liberales y retrogradas" (no. 195 420). In a letter that Pardo Bazán wrote to Galdós in August 1912, a few months after her review of the *Doña Perfecta* play in *La Nación*, she commiserates their shared sense of unjust rejection, stating:

> Ya ve V. para qué sirve aquí la fama, el trabajo, cuanto se hace; ni las puertas de una Academia, untadas esmeradamente de aceite para los políticos, se abrirían, aunque llevase

> una mujer más carga de méritos que St. Teresa. Y para el hombre que haya logrado salir de la volgare schiera e inmortalizarse, tampoco dejarán de rechinar las consabidas puertas. (*Miquiño Mío* Carta n° 92)

She greatly admired Galdós and was an avid reader of his work. This personal and literary relationship went back decades to the 1880s, when they began to exchange correspondence regularly. They maintained this bond as each evolved artistically, ideologically, and professionally into the twentieth century, with Galdós undergoing the political transformation already described in the first chapter and Pardo Bazán undergoing her own break with the past even earlier.

Their mutual respect and support never wavered throughout these changes. Pardo Bazán lists Galdós among her prominent supporters in an article that same April addressing her Argentine readers on her prospects for successfully joining the Real Academia. In that piece, she expresses a healthy skepticism about her chances, but reckons that by all rights she should win the prestigious position because of the support that she has received from prominent personalities representing a broad swath of Spain's artistic and ideological spectrums. This support includes José Canalejas (1854-1912), leader of the liberal party, Antonio Maura (1853-1925), leader of the conservative party, and Vázquez de Mella (1861-1928), leader of the Carlist

party. She lists Galdós first among her supporters and calls him "el genial novelista." She goes on to describe him with the statement, "Pérez Galdós es un radical, designado en España para presidir la república, el día en que sus ideales triunfen" (*Crónicas* 121). Some might consider this a critical statement but considering that she wrote for one of the most popular newspapers in Latin America, describing Galdós in such terms was more of an attempt to promote him to her readership than to denigrate him.

That Pardo Bazán was familiar with *Doña Perfecta* should be no surprise considering she was a vigorous consumer of culture who admired Galdós' work. Again, she promotes her friend, noting that *Elektra*, his most universally disliked theatrical work, is an exception and that his other dramatic works have a lot to offer artistically to audiences, urging theater owners to take a chance on them (127). The production of *Doña Perfecta* that she reviewed for *La Nación* was new to her, but she expresses a strong familiarity with the source novel, using the adjective "mucho" to describe how well she knows it (126). She calls it a political novel that is so connected to the specific historical context in which Galdós wrote it that some of its meaning has been obscured by the passage of time, leaving only the novel's basic protest of hypocrisy to resonate with modern audiences. She compares it to Moliére's *Tartufo* and notes that the

characters "están dibujados magistralmente, y por la fidelidad y vida de la transcripción, el cabecilla Caballuco nos es tan simpático como el ingeniero, al cabo víctima suya." She says the story perfectly reflects the polarized Spanish society of 1869 and 1870, when:

> se discurría exactamente así; cada momento, las ideas batallaban enconadamente. Los unos renegando de la tradición sólo porque lo era; los otros maldiciendo de la libertad, y aun del progreso, sin tomarse el trabajo de estudiarlo, de discernir hasta qué punto había que abrirle paso, y dónde comenzaba el sacrilegio, al empeñarse en que España continuase distanciada de Europa; el fuego de la guerra entre hermanos, devorando nuestra cosecha mental y moral, antes de que granase; tantas y tantas luchas fatales, simiente de cizaña, cómo iban a germinar ahogando el trigo . . . todo creaba en los ánimos esa efervescencia que late en la obra de Galdós, los que entonces vivíamos en un pueblo de provincia pudimos comprobarlo. . . . (127)

Pardo Bazán was not only familiar with the novel, but also a firsthand witness to the national historical context in which it was written and which it reflected.

With *Los pazos de Ulloa*, Pardo Bazán created her own story set in the same tumultuous era of revolution and restoration as *Doña Perfecta*. She sought to create a story as faithful to what

it was like to live through that era as Galdós did. However, she also sought to write it from her own perspective and had different goals for her work than Galdós did. Unlike Galdós, she was not trying to persuade her readers to accept a defined political program. Instead, her goals were more artistic and the persuasive elements in the text are of a socially and personally defensive nature, rather than an explicitly political one. She defends femininity in this story because it is set in a time that she views as a great leap backwards in women's rights relative to that of men. The political program espoused by liberals and dramatized in *Doña Perfecta* was to Pardo Bazán oppressive to women. It oppressed her gender and her religiosity by advancing the rights of men while leaving women behind and secularizing society away from the only institution that gave a semblance of intellectual parity to women, the church. The Sexenio Democrático was an exclusively male-dominated political event during which women were essentially unwitting passengers on a ship of state captained by urban middle-class male interests that believed the ideal role for women is that of *ángel del hogar*. When women did speak up at the outset of the Restoration, motivated by the church to influence the Senate during the constitutional debates over Article Eleven in 1876, liberals tried to shut them down with an outburst of misogyny that Galdós participated in with *Doña Perfecta*. *Los pazos de*

*Ulloa* responds to the antifeminist and patriarchal perspective that Galdós brilliantly presented in his novel with Pardo Bazán's own brilliantly presented feminine perspective to balance how the tumultuous era of the Sexenio Democrático was depicted in Spanish fiction. As her personal letters to Galdós demonstrate, she was aware, and probably had been since an early age, of the personal weight that each of them had and would have on Spanish literary culture long after they had passed. She had to show another side to the story for posterity's sake. To do this, she takes the patriarchal plot of *Doña Perfecta* in which a man seeks to marry his angel and instead of obstructing it with a complication, subverts it by asking what is to become of said angel after they marry. In Nucha's case in *Los pazos de Ulloa*, she is to be neglected and abused by her husband and ultimately left to die essentially alone. Once Pedro Moscoso expels Julián from the estate, she is left with only her husband, his unwanted infant daughter, his illegitimate son, and his mistress for company; this is why Julián is almost relieved to hear of her passing, considering it her final escape to freedom (297-300).

Pardo Bazán truly was a feminist in that she understood women's struggle as a class interest. Because of this, she saw through liberal and republican arguments to find in their success a deterioration of women's place in society. Chita Espino Bravo says in her book about Pardo Bazán's and Carmen de

Burgos' resistance to the role of the *ángel del hogar* during the the Restoration, "Pardo Bazán veía claramente que la política liberal de los republicanos no traía ninguna ventaja para los derechos de las mujeres . . ." (129). As a feminist author she had to navigate a complex cultural landscape in which allies on an issue like artistic freedom, which was also important to her, became adversaries on women's rights, or in reverse, allies in terms of women's rights became adversaries on artistic freedom. The juxtaposition of these two issues helps to highlight the complex cultural landscape in which Pardo Bazán sought to participate as an author and critic.

Furthermore, it highlights the contradictory and heterogenous nature of the Krausist philosophical movement that thrived among academics and authors of late nineteenth century Spain. Adapted by Julián Sanz del Río (1814-1869) to fit his *regeneracionista* goals after studying in Germany, this metaphysical philosophy originally articulated by Karl Christian Friedrich Krause (1781-1832) became in Spain a movement to modernize the country and bring it in line with the social, scientific, and industrial advancements that were being made in the rest of Europe (Rubio 6, xix). According to José Luis Gómez-Martínez, the Krausist movement reflects more than the philosophy adapted by Sanz del Río, responding also to the spirit of the 1868 revolution that overthrew Isabell II, which

in turn reflected Krausim's values by enacting freedom of religion, civil marriage, and protections for academic freedom (56). In many ways, the Sexenio Democrático was an experiment of Spanish Krausism, one that failed miserably because its proponents could not overcome their divisions to form a cohesive front against the Carlists and the supporters of Isabel II. Recall from the first chapter that republicans teamed up with the Carlists to make the country ungovernable and force Amadeo I to abdicate. In hindsight, the divisions that drove this betrayal had always been there and could have been predicted. As already mentioned in the second chapter, Galdós did predict the betrayal and pointed it out in one of his articles for *Revista de España*.

In his book about the impact of Krausism on the Spanish avant-garde of the twentieth century, Christian Rubio points out that Krausism had at its core always been a compromise which "aimed to be a middle point between antagonistic forces." The movement therefore "attracted numerous people from both conservative and liberal spheres" (28). The initial phase of the Sexenio Democrático reflects this diversity, with *amadeistas* like Galdós being the conservatives and republicans being the liberals. Spanish Krausism was thus a broad movement that propelled an ideologically diverse and sometimes even contradictory set of values. This included the movement's

attitude towards women's rights. Rubio points out that Giner de los Ríos (1839-1915), founder of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza and one of the primary disciples of Sanz del Río, advocated for women's education and made changes to his school that "served as a springboard for some of the major advances for women at the turn of the century" (134). Additionally, Gómez-Martínez points out in his article that Krause's book, *Ideal de la Humanidad*, calls for women's equality with men (58). Naturally this would have attracted Pardo Bazán.

However, Spanish Krausism also had a strong patriarchal component that as a part of its compromise between conflicting sets of values, generally opposed giving political rights to women. Rubio points out the lack of progress made in women's rights during the period when Krausism was influential in Spain (132). Jo Labanyi goes into more detail in her book about gender and modernity in the Spanish realist novel. Labanyi asserts that the Spanish Krausists did not fundamentally see women as truly equal to men, instead seeing women as a compliment to men who are, as she puts it, "iguales pero diferentes" (112). As a complement to men, Krausists generally thought women were thus represented politically and legally by their husbands, who would exercise such rights on their behalf (491). As Labanyi says:

> opinaban que las mujeres que afirmaban su independencia cometían un abuso de la representación política no muy

> distinto al de los caciques que amenazaban el dominio de una minoría ilustrada. (492)

Pardo Bazán was opposed to this opinion and expressed how the liberal's revolution had been unfair to women in an article for *La Ilustración Artística* in 1901, saying:

> En efecto, la burguesía, que hizo las revoluciones políticas, no las hizo sino para el varón: a la mujer se puede afirmar que en vez de aprovecharla, la perjudicaron; antes de ellas no era tan inferior al hombre. Un marido del siglo XVIII, sin derechos políticos, se encontraba más cerca de su esposa que el burgués elector y elegible del siglo XIX. Hoy, él ha andado, ella no se ha movido; distancia incalculable los separa. Los derechos políticos influyen en los derechos civiles; en nuestra organización presente, la política ejerce coacción sobre todo. La condición de la mujer contemporánea se resiente – hasta qué punto, lo han dicho con lógica inflexible Stuart Mill y tantos otros – de la anomalía creada por los acontecimientos que engrandecieron al hombre y dejaron a la mujer en su reducida esfera de acción, en su rincón de Cenicienta. (*La Vida* 186)

She considered women's position in Spanish society to have reached a trough in the nineteenth century. In an article for *La Nación* addressing her American readers about her efforts to join

the Real Academia from April 1912, she explains her opinion that the late fifteenth century and all the sixteenth century were for Spain:

> las épocas gloriosas de la sólida y fuerte cultura femenina; y, al decaer nuestro poderío, se inicia el retroceso en este y tantos respectos, y surge la idea inconcebible de la incapacidad femenina, a cada paso más acentuada, y llevada a sus últimos límites y extremos en el curso del siglo XIX. (*Crónicas* 119)

Her feminist criticism of the nineteenth century liberal project thus comes from a traditionalist perspective that sees old, imperial Spain as a more dynamic and well-functioning society in which women enjoyed a better standing than in modern Spain. This sets her apart from Galdós, who saw in the same old, imperial Spain a dead history of past glories with little to offer modern Spanish society. The two authors saw Spain's past quite differently.

Xosé R. Barreiro Fernández concludes that Pardo Bazán was a traditionalist who was heavily influenced by French Catholic traditionalism (66). One of the things he uses to support this conclusion is her aborted attempt in 1877 to create an absolutist political theory to give a philosophical grounding to the Carlist cause (41-42). In her book about female mysticism in late nineteenth century Spain, Jennifer Smith describes Pardo

Bazán as, "sympathetic to Carlism" (150). There are even allegations that in her youth she helped to traffic arms from Britain to the Carlist armies during the Third Carlist War (Gallardo 212). This does remain an allegation though, with no definitive substantiation other than that she may have accompanied her husband on such a trip (Fell 3). She would have been in her mid-twenties during the Third Carlist War, and it stretches the imagination to have the pretender to the Spanish throne ask a young woman and her husband to take on the role of arms traffickers, especially since the allegation itself implies that it happened early during the war, when Carlos de Borbón was gathering his army in 1872 or 1873. She would have been twenty-one or twenty-two years old. Surely Carlos de Borbón would find someone more appropriate to fetch his army's rifles. Pardo Bazán did not really like Britain, anyways, so why would she be the one to go?

Allegations aside, Pardo Bazán did have ideological and personal links to the Carlist movement early in her adult life. However, in the late 1880s, she broke with the most hard-nosed and recalcitrant Carlist remnants, or more precisely, they broke with her. This break was not an ideological transformation, however, since her position on social issues did not change. Rebecca Fell describes this break in an article about the secret narrative in the short story, "Morrión y Boina" that Pardo Bazán

published in 1889. Fell suggests that the short story is a response to the criticism that she received from staunch Carlists for an article that covered her meeting with Carlos de Borbón during a visit to Italy. Far right Carlists considered her description of Carlos de Borbón to be too moderate (4). Fell describes the circumstances that led to Pardo Bazán writing a short story that ridicules the staunch Carlists of the *integrista* faction led by Ramón Nocedal (1842-1907). The newspaper for which Pardo Bazán wrote the article that the extremists disliked, *El Imparcial*, refused to publish it, although a more moderate Carlist newspaper, *La Fe*, did. This provoked Nocedal to condemn *La Fe* for publishing Pardo Bazán's controversial article. Carlos de Borbón had to intervene himself, writing an article for *El Siglo Futuro* in which he admonishes Nocedal to avoid infighting within the Carlist camp. Fell quotes the admonishment, where the pretender dismisses Pardo Bazán as "una escritora liberal" and says that she lacks political authority no matter how many literary accomplishments she has (19). A year later Pardo Bazán published "Morrión y Boina," in which "Carlism's attempts at success are ridiculed." Fell suggests a possible connection between this short story critical of Carlism and Carlos de Borbón's commentary, asking if Pardo Bazán would have published such a story if not for Carlos the Borbón's negative public treatment of Pardo Bazán (24).

Ideologically, Pardo Bazán was a realist. She did not see the world in black and white or even shades of grey, but in its full polychromatic splendor. In fact, relative to the people of her community of A Coruña where she grew up, she considered herself a free thinker, saying in her review of the play *Doña Perfecta* for *La Nación* that Galdós accurately depicted the closed-minded attitudes of rural people. She says, "yo que soy un espíritu tan abierto, tan curioso, tan ávido de saber, para los fanáticos era ya una libre pensadora . . ." (*Crónicas* 127). She also placed an immense value on artistic and academic freedom. Such was her support for intellectual freedom that she even defended pornographic literature and freely spoke of reading it without a sense of embarrassment as some might expect of a traditionalist. In an article for the 19 May issue of *La Nación*, she tackles the issue frontally, citing Juan Valera to argue that all life is subject to artistic depiction and saying, "Excluir del arte la pintura y estudio de lances amorosos equivaldría a cruel, inhumana mutilación" (*Crónicas* 102-03). Pardo Bazán was no Phyllis Schlafly (1924-2016) despite her traditionalism.

In her book about Pardo Bazán's Catholic ideals, Denise Dupont finds that Pardo Bazán "did not envision art as subordinate to a religious or ethical message" (2). Pardo Bazán's statements in *La Nación* support this. In her defense of

pornographic literature, she makes her distaste for moralizing stories evident by saying:

> al lado de la literatura licenciosa, surge la literatura de moral, la literatura azul, rosa y blanca, y confieso que ni la primera ni la segunda son predilectas para mí. La vida no es ni continuo desfile de cuadros sicalípticos, ni cándido sueño de niña inocente. (*Crónicas* 101)

By placing both forms of literature at the same aesthetic value, she defends the former while attacking the latter. Her rhetorical technique takes the subject of scorn and shock, pornographic literature, and equates it with the type of literature that those who are most shocked by pornography find wholesome and acceptable. In one move, she makes her point while disarming the counterargument, asserting her realist principles without contradicting her traditionalist ones.

Consequently, *Los pazos de Ulloa* is not a moralizing story. It has no true villains or heroes. It has only victims with varying degrees of culpability in causing their circumstances. Even the story's most detestable character, Pedro Moscoso, is as much a victim of the degradation in his own family as he is its perpetrator. *Los pazos de Ulloa* tells a story about a rotting family and a priest whose attempts to regenerate it back to health result in disastrous consequences. The family's head, Pedro Moscoso, is an ignorant brute who is simultaneously weak,

manipulatable, and ineffective as the patriarch of a noble estate. However, he is the natural product of his ancestry coupled with childhood neglect. It is important to note that the opposite of nurture is to neglect. In the ongoing debate between nature versus nurture, or determinism versus free will, Pardo Bazán opted for a concept of partial determinism that allowed for both the arbitrary material reality and the intangible human will to influence the outcomes of people's lives. Dupont notes that the rigid determinism of Émile Zola (1840-1902) is what Pardo Bazán diagnoses as the error of his naturalism in her critical essay, *La cuestión palpitante* (10). All the characters of *Los pazos de Ulloa* serve as showcases for partial determinism and how people are the sum of the influences in their lives, both natural as well as artificial, and their own inner personalities and choices.

Nature and nurture both play a part in creating the personal disaster that is Pedro Moscoso. Pardo Bazán's narrator reveals Pedro's upbringing when Julián gets a vague premonition of ruin and decay from the Moscoso family's archive, which Julián has been tasked with organizing. The narrator jokes that if Julián knew the family's history, then this premonition would become a conviction (*Los pazos* 129). The narrative that follows reveals Pedro's personal history. Pedro lost his father at an early age and was raised by his maternal uncle, who was mainly

interested in taking advantage of his widowed sister's financial ignorance for his own benefit. The uncle educated Pedro after himself, exposing him to all manners of country living, both innocent and not. More importantly for the story, the uncle taught Pedro contempt for humanity and to use violence to get what he wants (129-31). Pedro had a terrible upbringing devoid of formal education or positive experiences that might have imparted a semblance of wisdom in him. He grew up feral, and when his affair with Sabel, daughter of his estate's overseer, produced an illegitimate son, he raised Perucho after himself, feral. When Julián first encounters the boy, he finds him lurking in the shadows among Pedro's baying hunting hounds, like a fourth dog. When one of the dogs lashes out at the boy and attempts to bite him, only Julián shows concern while Pedro blames the boy for challenging the dog, who is apparently a higher-ranking member of the family than the boy (106-07). Thus, neglect begets neglect, and the cycle of degradation is passed from one generation of the Moscoso family to the next.

Pardo Bazán alludes to the primal cause of the rot in the Moscoso family being their Francophile predecessor's consumption of the eighteenth-century liberal philosophies of Voltaire (1694-1778) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Julián encounters their works in the family archive and recoils from them instinctively as he arranges them in their place they had

in the family's library since 1816 (126-27). This tracks perfectly with Pardo Bazán's conception that the liberal convulsions of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries had caused Spain's decline. Voltaire and Rousseau poisoned the Moscoso family just as they poisoned Spain, leading to Spain's decline and the degeneration of Spanish society just like the Moscoso family declined and degenerated parallelly. Women bore the brunt of the consequences of this social degeneration, and that is exactly what Pardo Bazán demonstrates in *Los pazos de Ulloa*. The women of the story, Sabel, Nucha, and Manolita, all suffer the degradations of the corrupted social and family order, and none of them can do anything to free themselves from it on their own because they lack the legal and economic agency to do so. Unlike Perfecta in Galdós' *Doña Perfecta*, this subordination is the reality that most women would have found themselves in during the nineteenth century in Spain. Taken as a deeply sociological novel as Pardo Bazán intended, *Los pazos de Ulloa* refutes the female villain archetype identified by Linda C. Fox as an exception, rather than the rule in nineteenth century Spain. This is why the novel is Pardo Bazán's answer to *Doña Perfecta*. On behalf of women, Pardo Bazán needed to set the record straight about that era of Spain's history.

Pardo Bazán associated her realism with her femininity. Dupont cites an epistolary debate between Pardo Bazán and

Ecuadorian writer Juan Montalvo (1832-1889) to show that she considered her "syncretistic realism" to be a part of her femininity. After Montalvo chastised her for smoking and not wasting away her time in idle domesticity waiting for a man to sweep her away, Pardo Bazán argues in her reply that it is men who are the idealistic and poetic sex and women who are realistic and practical. Furthermore, the argument with Montalvo reveals that Pardo Bazán had a fluid understanding of gender characteristics. When Montalvo pointed out idealistic elements in her writing, Pardo Bazán agreed, "but insisted that these characteristics came from the manly part of her nature" (8). Her realism led her to see life as complex and impossible to reduce to simplistic dichotomies. She viewed the ongoing social debates between nature versus nurture, determinism versus free will, or inheritance versus choice in a similar fashion. Just like a person's behavior and outlook lay on a scale between the two extremes of totally female or totally male, the outcomes of people's lives lay somewhere between the arbitrary randomness of material existence and the power of human intervention to change the path of events for an immaterial purpose. Dupont cites a 1957 article from Donald Fowler Brown about Pardo Bazán to show that her partial determinism allowed her to reconcile her literary naturalism with her Catholic faith (10). It also gave her writing a deep and realistic complexity that resonates with

readers because it depicts relatable characters whose personal histories and actions touch the core of human nature that all people share.

This is why she liked Caballuco in *Doña Perfecta* as a character so much. Despite being the instrument of the hero's demise, Galdós gives him humanity by describing his violent family history and his honest desire to live in peace. His loyal nature recalls Castilian medieval ideals harkening back to El Cid (1043-1099), which Pardo Bazán would have probably found especially appealing. It is this loyalty that Perfecta nakedly exploits to get him to do her bidding, once again showing that she is the villain and mastermind of Galdós' novel. This makes Caballuco morally ambiguous and realistic, with motivations that reflect the conundrums that people encounter and must deal with in life. His role, as stated in the previous chapter, is to show the extent of Perfecta's influence over the men around her by having her turn an otherwise honorable man who wants to live in peace into an oath breaking rebel and a murderer. His character development has the right combination of nature and nurture to make him especially intriguing to a partial determinist like Pardo Bazán.

Likewise, the protagonist of *Los pazos de Ulloa*, Julián, possesses a complexity that Pardo Bazán uses to represent and defend femininity and the church, the two things most negatively

portrayed by Galdós in *Doña Perfecta*. Julián defends femininity because he is a feminine character despite being a man. Pardo Bazán applies the same fluid concept of gender to Julián that she applied to herself in her debate with Juan Montalvo. She does not leave it up to the reader to interpret this, explicitly describing Julián's feminine nature on multiple occasions. From the very beginning of the story, she describes him as lymphatic, clean shaven, and with delicate fingers. He struggles to control the steed on which he is riding when the story begins. To the narrator he even seems childlike (*Los pazos* 94). Later, Pardo Bazán clarifies this more explicitly, saying he has "un corazón afeminado y virgen" (286). His feminine nature clashes with the rustic life of the Moscoso estate, where the primary activity seems to be hunting. As the narrator says, he is "bisoño en materia de sobremesas de cazadores" (109). The abbot, who Julián is replacing at the Moscoso house, treats him with contempt, calling him "mariquita." The abbot considered that drinking water and washing oneself with soap are the worst degradations a man could fall into, saying "Afeminaciones, afeminaciones . . ." (145). This underscores how unprepared Julián is for the role he takes in the story and shows how alone he will be during its tragic course. He does not even have the support of his fellow clergy in the community. Describing how his temperament helped

him to achieve the self-restraint necessary to faithfully serve as a member of the clergy, Pardo Bazán says of Julián:

> A Julián le ayudaba en su triunfo, amén de la gracia de Dios, que él solicitaba muy de veras, la endeblez de su temperamento linfático-nervioso, puramente femenino, sin ardores ni rebeldías, propenso a la ternura, dulce y benigno como las propias malvas. . . . (115)

Thus, his femininity is a central part of his nature and why he is a priest. He is not just a priest, however. He is a good priest. Pardo Bazán makes a point of distinguishing him from his predecessor at the Moscoso estate, who is every bit as much of a disgusting brute as Pedro is and who has obviously served as an enabler of the scandalous behavior happening in the family.

Julián is wise, patient, just, sober, and generous. If Pepe Rey is the idealized modern man according to Galdós, then Julián is the combination of all the good traits that modern man loses in the process of his modernization according to Pardo Bazán. In sum, he is the opposite of Inocencio in *Doña Perfecta*. In his analysis of *Gulliver's Travels*, Michael McKeon identifies sympathetic conservative protagonists as "victims of the modern world—either comically ingenuous innocents, or sacrifices to its corrupt inhumanity" (395). Despite coming nearly two centuries after Jonathan Swift's work and originating from across the Bay of Biscay, Julián fits this characterization aptly. He is

innocent, which is both a source of strength and vulnerability, and he must confront the corrupt inhumanity of Pedro and his cohorts in a battle of wills that he and Nucha ultimately lose.

As a conservative protagonist, Julián defends femininity and the church from modernity. More specifically, Pardo Bazán uses Julián to defend them against the pernicious developments of the middle of the nineteenth century that left women and the Catholic church in a debilitated state while empowering materialistic men to advance their interests at the expense of the former. This might not be so bad if that means that families are led by an idealized portrait of the modern man like Galdós's Pepe Rey, but Pardo Bazán builds her characters to tell a different, more realistic version of social history. Instead of a Pepe Rey, an ambitious, hardworking, intelligent, rational, and altruistic man, Pardo Bazán's reader gets Pedro Moscoso, a drunken brute who abuses his wife, cheats on her, neglects his children, and is only interested in hunting. Men having a propensity to be drunken brutes is nothing new to the human condition, but modernity, especially the political modernity ushered in by the liberal revolutions of the middle of the century, cast away the social restraints that governed and regulated the excesses that men could impose on their own families through a combination of public shame and the influence of real religious authority in the community. Authority is what

Julián is missing in the story. Without real authority, he cannot ultimately save the Moscoso family from its degradation or protect Nucha. Furthermore, his efforts to use soft influence instead of authority blew up in his face, condemning poor Nucha to a short, miserable life and her daughter to abandonment.

Official authority is what the Catholic church lost during the revolutions of the nineteenth century. The revolutions in Spain and Italy in the middle of the century broke the Concordat of 1851 and stripped Piux IX of his sovereign control of the Papal States, respectively. Despite asserting that the Catholic religion is the religion of the Spanish nation in Article Twenty-one, the Constitution of 1869 states in Article Thirty-two that sovereignty resides in the nation (*Constitución de 1869* Article 21, Article 32). In an article about the role of sainthood in the formation of Spanish national identity in the nineteenth century, Joseba Louzao Villar describes it as a transformative era in which religion had to recompose itself to adapt to the process of nationalization (277). He also says that the "feminization of religion" and the conflicts over the position of the church in society were two of the main factors affecting this transformation (281). Consequently, he notes that canonizations increased exponentially during the nineteenth century under Pius IX and Leo XIII (280). His article focuses on the canonization of a series of Spanish saints during this

period as a part of the Church's response to the changing sociopolitical environment. Villar concludes:

> We cannot conclude this succinct approach to the Spanish canonizations during the pontificates of Pius IX and Leo XIII without stressing the crucial role played by the devotional politicization of Spanish Catholicism in operation under their reign. (289)

One of the examples that Villar provides to show how the increased canonization of Spanish saints responded to the political situation is the canonization in 1862 by Pius IX of a group of Spanish martyrs that had perished attempting to spread Christianity in Japan in the sixteenth century (282). Through these canonizations, the church tried "to assimilate the situation of the Church and the Pope with that lived by the missionaries in Japan: martyrdom" (282). Villar determines that the church came out of this era reinforced rather than weakened (277). However, he reaches that determination with the benefit of hindsight. At the time, the loss of official power constituted a crisis for Pius IX and Leo XIII, who would not have connected their present situation with the martyred saints of the past as directly if not for a sense of crisis due to the upheavals that were affecting the church.

The revolution of 1868 and the ensuing Sexenio Democrático pushed the church out of official power and imposed a secular

order that would last until the Restoration allowed the church to return to its official status in 1876. In an article about church-state relations as a stabilizing factor during the Restoration, Sergio Cañas Díez describes the stark contrast in church-state relations between the Sexenio Democrático and the Restoration. The Sexenio Democrático was a disaster for the church (170). In its politically polarized environment, the church under Pius IX opposed and condemned liberalism in all its forms. There was no hint of a liberal democratic Catholicism and instead the church defended "principios ultramontanos" (165-66). In contrast, the Restoration ushered in an era of conciliation that cooled tensions during the last two years of Pius IX's papacy. This allowed his successor, Leo XIII, to forge a pact between the church hierarchy and the Spanish bourgeois elite that allowed church-state relations to carry on in a climate of normalcy for the duration of his papacy (154). During the Sexenio Democrático, though, the church had no official status as the source of governmental authority, at least in areas controlled by the central government and not by the Carlists. The Cortes in its secular capacity as representative of the people held sovereignty, not the church or the noble bloodlines that the church ordained were the will of God. This shift in the source of sovereignty was a radical change for Spanish society. The Celts, Carthaginian, Romans, Visigoths, and Moors had all

based their sovereign power on some understanding of divine authority, be it the pagan gods of antiquity or the singular God of Christian and Islamic faith. The national sovereignty of the Sexenio Democrático was a completely new development in Spanish history and a profound break from previous practices across the board.

Again, the antagonistic class dynamics described by Fredric Jameson help to explain the transformation of constitutional sovereignty during the Sexenio Democrático. Despite the participation of many members of the nobility in the revolution that led to this transformation, the event was essentially a middle-class venture that represented the mindset of male urban dwellers and professionals who were interested in economic development to achieve the material modernization of the nation. It was a class revolution that needed to switch the source of sovereignty to itself to subvert the previous source of sovereign authority that was so intimately intertwined between the church and the nobility. That is why the Constitution of 1869, while preserving the monarchy, excluded it from the source of sovereignty in Article 32, which placed sovereignty on the nation and asserted that all powers emanate from it. In practical terms, this meant parliamentary sovereignty since the Cortes was the representative of the people's will.

Pardo Bazán despised electoral and parliamentary politics. This may even be an understatement. Whether it is in *Los pazos de Ulloa* or *La Tribuna* or any other of her works, she always framed the practice of electoral or parliamentary politics negatively as a frivolous nuisance at best, and at worst as a vehicle for corruption and social degradation. She had no admiration or even respect for so-called democracy that left women behind while elevating all manner of unworthy men to the status of elector. This much is clear from her storytelling and, more directly, from her occasional articles where she opined on politics and political philosophy. In one article from 1912 she takes down Rousseau, using biting sarcasm and satire to ridicule the idea of a social contract and mock the alleged innocence of man in the natural state that Rousseau imagined. John Locke (1632-1704), Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679), and Voltaire also take collateral damage in this article; she refers to the latter as "el veneno corruptor" (*Crónicas* 137-38). This parallels the reference to Voltaire in *Los pazos de Ulloa* mentioned earlier. She rejects the ideas underpinning the liberal revolutions of the eighteenth century.

In another article from May 1919, she apparently confuses the United States with France and mistakenly reacts to French women getting the right to vote. This would not actually happen until 1944. The amendment to give women the right to vote in the

United States did, however, pass Congress in June 1919 and its coming passage may be what she reacted to in her article the previous month. Mistaken country aside, one can see her distaste for electoral politics when after dismissing the notion that women are any less capable at politics than men, she says:

> Aquí tropezamos con otra faz del problema: el descrédito del sistema parlamentario. Al comprobarlo dondequiera, al verlo tan claro como se ve la luz del día, nos preguntamos si vale la pena de desvivirse por obtener, para las mujeres, lo que quisiéramos ver suprimido para el hombre. (251)

This late in life, only two years before her death in 1921, she still believed that the right form of government for Spain was that which ruled during the reigns of the Catholic Monarchs and their Hapsburg descendants in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. She remained ideologically consistent throughout at least her adult life going back to her twenties when she tried to formulate a political theory of absolutism. Representative democratic government and the philosophical principles upon which it is based, the social contract and popular sovereignty, were anathema to her. *Los pazos de Ulloa* reflects the same antidemocratic and antiparliamentarian perspective that she held throughout her life. However, despite her perspective, this did not always put Pardo Bazán in direct opposition to her friend

Galdós, whose democratic intentions have already been established. Pardo Bazán was especially critical of rural politics. One can see this in *Los pazos de Ulloa*, *La tribuna*, and "Morrion y Boina," where rural and provincial politicians are made to look ridiculous and dangerous. In this, she and he coincided. Galdós did not like rural politicians, and neither did Pardo Bazán. They just had different reasons.

Rural politics makes an explosive entrance into the plot of *Los pazos de Ulloa*. Its entrance marks a turning point in the plot development that leads to Nucha's ultimate demise. In chapter twenty-three she is in a condition of relative security in which Sabel is engaging in a more class appropriate relationship with the bagpipe player instead of with Pedro (324-25). The politics surrounding the revolution and its first election shatter the relative calm in chapter twenty-four. By chapter twenty-seven, when the Carlist faction that Pedro has aligned himself with has lost the election, Nucha asks Julián to help her escape the estate because conditions have deteriorated so gravely (371). The intervening chapters are dominated by an electoral campaign that turns into a war between two powerful *caciques* that use the political backdrop of the revolution to vie for personal power. The narrator describes the situation as:

> Las ideas no entran en juego, sino solamente las personas, y en el terreno más mezquino: rencores, odios, rencillas,

> lucro miserable, vanidad microbiológica. Un combate naval en una charca. (327)

Neither of the two party bosses who control the region have any real political ideas, and only ascribe to one party or another "por necesidad estratégica. . . ." The Carlist boss, Barbacana, was a "moderado" under the previous regime, but had become a Carlist during the revolution of 1869. The liberal boss, Trampeta, had been a unionist under Leopoldo O'Donnell (1809-1867), but was now a part of the ascendant liberal movement (330-31). That means that they were both a part of the dynastic party system that existed before the revolution, but then adapted themselves to the new political reality out of necessity to continue challenging each other for political power. Pedro Moscoso, who Barbacana selects as his candidate in the election, had previously fluctuated in allegiance between the two local caciques (334). Pedro's participation and failure in the election unravels the plot and leads to Nucha's desperate condition from which she will not recover.

Pardo Bazán is saying something profoundly critical about political party dynamics here. In her theory, electoral factions do not arise from genuine intellectual or philosophical disagreements over public policy but are instead purely the result of personal ambitions and the oppositional nature of political parties. These two factors cause people to gravitate

into whatever faction gives them the best advantage against their enemies, who likewise gravitate into their own oppositional poles from which to attack and defend. The result is a needless fight that inevitably plays out in the electoral process and has disastrous effects on individuals and the whole community. Electoral politics is entirely cynical and destructive to her.

## Chapter 5: *La Regenta*, a Radical's Response to Galdós

A couple of years before Pardo Bazán defended women against the misogyny of mainstream Spanish liberalism that Galdós' *Doña Perfecta* exemplified and novelized, a young writer with a penchant for biting satire and sarcasm wrote a novel that took up the defense of women's intellectual freedom against attitudes that left Spanish women cornered into the role of *ángel del hogar*. His novel also challenged a two-party political system that did not offer any chance for meaningful change or even represent a broad swath of the Spanish public, excluding women and the lower classes. This writer used a pseudonym and approached the issue from a very different ideological perspective than Pardo Bazán. His name was Leopoldo Alas, his pseudonym was Clarín, and ideologically, he was a radical. His novel, *La Regenta*, is a two-part work that was published in 1884 and 1885 and is today known as his masterpiece contribution to the literary canon. In her article about Clarín's Francophilia and irony in *La Regenta*, Marina Cuzovic-Severn describes him as a teenage participant in the 1868 revolution, motivated by progressive republican ideas "to which he would remain faithful for the rest of his life" (183). *La Regenta* reflects these radical values while simultaneously making common cause with Pardo Bazán's *Los pazos de Ulloa* both in terms of defending women's intellectual rights and exposing the hypocritical and

superficial false dichotomy of the two-party system that ruled Spain before and after the Sexenio Democrático.

At first glance, the former Carlist countess and the radical young journalist known for offending important people may seem like odd allies, but that is not the case in the Spanish political reality of the late nineteenth century. Recall that it was a coalition of Carlist and radical republicans that had caused the liberal experiment of an elected monarchy to fail during the Sexenio Democrático. Carlists and republicans could and did work together to frustrate liberals when it suited them. This cooperation was the subject of Galdós' editorial ire during most of 1872 in *Revista de España*. These nineteenth-century Spanish party dynamics that frustrated Galdós also reinforce a long-debated concept in political science called Duverger's Law.

Duverger's Law is an idea attributed to French political scientist Maurice Duverger (1917-2014) which holds that, as Duverger states in *Political Parties*, "the simple-majority single-ballot system favors the two-party system" (217). It is a simple idea that Duverger humbly presents more as a tendency than a law, cautiously and repeatedly couching his language to make space for the great many variables that ultimately determine political outcomes. Again, first impressions can be deceiving. The fact that Carlists and Republicans could team up to frustrate and defeat the two centrist parties may seem like a

contradiction of Duverger's Law. However, this is not the case, as a closer inspection of events in 1871 and 1872 reveals.

In 1871 the liberals under Francisco Serrano Dominguez and the conservatives, a brand-new party under Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, ran on separate tickets. Despite this distinction, these were the two constitutionalist parties that anglophile liberals like Galdós hoped would become the basis of a long-lasting and stable two-party system that would mimic British success. The liberals intended to capture the left with a focus on urban middle class voters. The conservatives under Cánovas certainly intended to capture the conservative and the rural parts of the electorate, hoping to draw in *alfonsinos* and Carlists alike. However, neither the Carlists nor the republicans allowed themselves to be absorbed into controlled opposition parties. Cánovas' party failed to penetrate Carlist strongholds or attract enough *alfonsinos* while republican losses were made up for in gains by the Carlists, who were happy to throw their votes in with republicans to cause chaos in the following session of the Cortes. The two constitutionalist parties that were committed to supporting the new regime under Amadeo I failed to move the needle meaningfully in their favor during the 1871 elections. Gaspar Nuñez de Arce (1834-1903) records this electoral failure in that month's second issue of "Revista Política: Interior" in *Revista de España*, where he

laments the Carlist and republican fringes' ability to hold on to so many seats in the Cortes, saying:

> La sociedad española oscila entre dos barbaries que desgraciadamente comparten el imperio de las muchedumbres; la barbarie que las precipita hacia lo desconocido y la que las empuja hacia lo pasado. (283)

This grave analysis of the situation contrasts sharply with the hopeful outlook presented just a couple of weeks earlier by José Luis Albareda y Sezde in April's first issue of *Revista de España*. In that issue, published as the votes were still being certified, Albareda says in his opening paragraph:

> Por primera vez desde 1810 hasta acá presencia el país el espectáculo grandioso de unas elecciones en que todas las ideas, todas las escuelas, todos los intereses pueden tener legítima representación. (120)

The contrast in tone indicates that the results were clearly a defeat of the constitutionalist agenda and a sobering disappointment to liberals.

In the 1872 elections, the liberals, now under the leadership of Sagasta, and conservatives had to give up all pretense of opposition to each other and form a national unity party to contest the April elections. By that point the Carlists were preparing a war against the central government while the liberal-conservative coalition faced an electoral revolt of

disaffected and radicalized liberals led by Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla. By this point, Galdós was editor of *Revista de España*, where he condemned Ruiz Zorrilla and those following him ("Revista Política: Interior" no. 97 131, 136). Despite running as a single party, the liberal-conservative coalition lost ground in April elections, just before the Carlist rebellion erupted. The congressional diary of the April 1872 session captures the tense situation within the liberal-conservative party by documenting one resignation during the session, that of Ruiz Zorrilla ("Indice del diario de las sesiones de Cortes" 78). The following August elections demonstrated the complete loss of credibility that liberals suffered in the wake of a rapidly changing political and military crisis.

The reason that these elections reinforce Duverger's Law is that by trying to artificially create a controlled two-party system, the liberal-conservative coalition in fact assured that the two artificial poles they were trying to create merged into one opposed by the remaining factions that were excluded from the pact. Thus, as Duverger's Law predicts, the electoral system used in the Sexenio Democrático did favor the polarization of political power around a set of binary poles; they just were not the set of poles that Sagasta and Cánovas intended. Instead, their efforts brought the ends of binary left/right political spectrum together, a process backed by horseshoe theory, another

debated concept in political science. In a paper on Duverger's Law and strategic voting, Ronald Peeters, Rene Saran, and Ayşe Müge Yüksel summarize horseshoe theory by writing that it "stipulates that parties usually depicted as far-left and far-right are more similar to each other in essentials than either are to the political center" (730).

With the knowledge of some political theory, this outcome could have been and was predicted by Galdós, who as mentioned in an earlier chapter reminded fellow liberals who doubted his prediction that a coalition of Carlists and republicans would form to obstruct the new monarchy. Peeters, et al go on in their paper to describe the political spectrum as a circle on which to play out game theory to test Duverger's Law, justifying this choice by referencing horseshoe theory and citing studies in political psychology that show a similarity in cognitive styles between left- and right-wing extremists (731). In the April 1872 elections, the Spanish political spectrum became the kind of circle described by Peeters, et al. It had two poles, not at the left and right, but on the top and bottom, pitting the centrist parties against the fringe ones. A significant portion of Spanish voters in 1872 rejected the dichotomy of the centrist parties, shifting the political polarity as shown in the following figures.

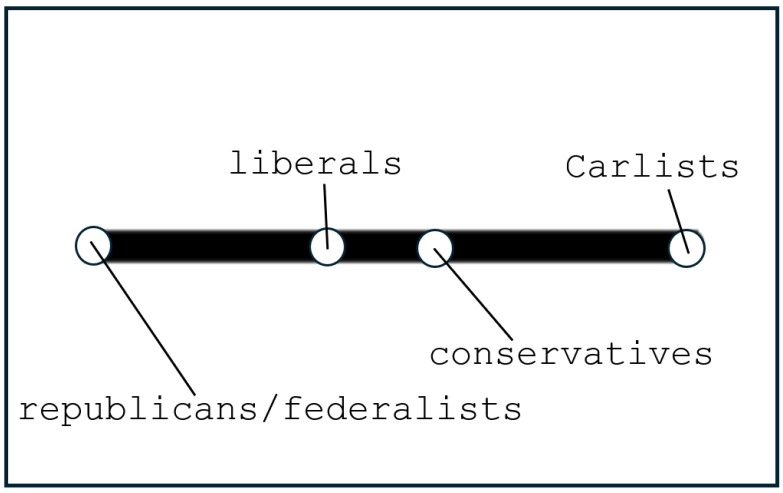



*Figure 4, 1871 parties on a line*

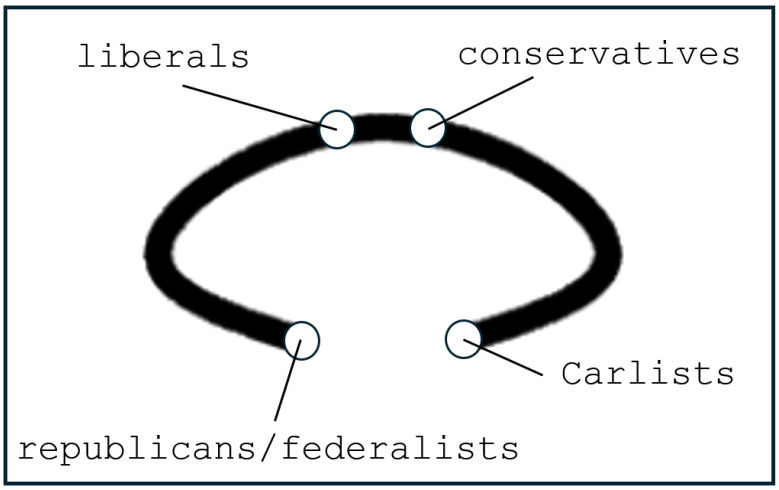



*Figure 5, 1871 parties on a horseshoe*

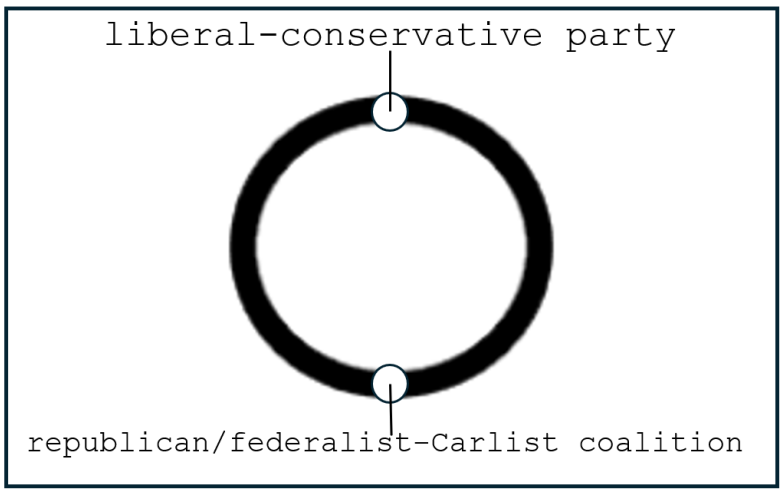



*Figure 6, April 1872 coalitions on a circle*

*Los pazos de Ulloa* and *La Regenta* provide a glimpse into the nineteenth-century Spanish public's awareness of the party dynamics driving Spanish politics. The perspectives of Pardo Bazán and Clarín are especially revelatory because they each spring from separate ideological backgrounds that are nonetheless both predisposed to criticize the power-sharing compromise of centrist parties that the Restoration was based on. The reason that the events of 1871 and 1872 still matter in the mid-1880s when Pardo Bazán and Clarín wrote their respective novels is that the Restoration's power-sharing compromise between the liberals under Sagasta and the conservatives under Cánovas is the same one that was attempted by the same leaders under Amadeo I.

*Doña Perfecta* aligns easily with the Restoration for the same reason that *La Regenta* and *Los pazos de Ulloa* align against it. It was crafted by the same hand that wrote many articles in defense of Amadeo I and the idea of a democratic monarchy. The liberal-conservative party of 1872 was a last-ditch effort by the self-denoted constitutionalist center to give Amadeo I a government that he could work with under the framework of the 1869 constitution. That effort failed, but the Restoration gave the same parties an opportunity to resurrect the long sought after centrist two-party system, this time under the auspices of a new monarchy and a new constitution that restricted suffrage

enough to temporarily neutralize republicanism and provided enough official recognition of Catholicism to placate the Carlists into apathy.

Clarín, like Pardo Bazán, however, was critical of the Restoration's compromise. He was especially critical of the Restoration's chief architect, Cánovas. In 1887, Clarín published a satirical takedown of Cánovas titled, *Cánovas y su tiempo*. It is not a novel, as it has no plot. It is one hundred pages of ridicule and contempt for Cánovas and every intellectual pursuit that he ever had. It even includes a helpful index so that a reader can quickly reference the many ways Cánovas is ridiculous. Clarín communicates to the reader that he has no ill intent towards the statesman, saying, "Yo nunca le he querido mal ni bien, de ninguna manera. . . ." However, he concludes the same sentence by saying, "es un hombre *encombrant* en francés, y en español insoportable" (14). This calls up a pattern in Clarín's writing that also appeared in *La Regenta*.

On occasion, he sarcastically claims the intent to not do something and then does it. Like for example in *Cánovas y su tiempo*, he says that he would never make fun of the poetry that someone wrote in their youth, but then proceeds to do just that to Cánovas, justifying himself by saying it is necessary "para el estudio psicológico de nuestro personaje" (16-18). Clarín did

this as well in a letter to Galdós about *La Regenta* that Carme Riera cited in a lecture in 2014, saying:

> No me reconozco más condiciones que un poco de juicio y alguna observación para cierta clase de fenómenos sociales y psicológicos, algún que otro rasgo pasable en lo cómico, un poco de escrúpulo en la gramática . . . y nada más. (2)

*Psicológico* does a lot of heavy lifting in both quotes, covering the ridicule that Clarín was about to hurl upon Cánovas in the first and his novel's political inclinations in the second.

Like Galdós and Pardo Bazán in their respective works, Clarín portrayed provincial elites and their cynical politics negatively in *La Regenta*. In the narrative they seem ridiculous, vestigial, and even parasitic. They are disconnected from the role that elites are supposed to serve in a civilization, which is to lead. They are supposed to lead Spain out of its precipitous decline that defines the Spanish nineteenth century. Instead, the elites in *La Regenta* do not lead; they are in the way while following self-serving, frivolous pursuits and engaged in petty personal conflicts with each other. Cuzovic-Severn describes Clarín as "an imperialist at heart," citing a quote by Clarín saying that he considered all Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking America as well as Iberia "es España" (179). For an imperialist, Spain's decline from great power in the eighteenth century to periphery state in the nineteenth century would

likely be a source of both nostalgia for past glory and shame for present weakness. Cuzovic-Severn finds in *La Regenta* that Clarín criticizes a Spanish identity "based on a superficial imitation of the progressive French model" (180). The people fostering this identity are the elite depicted in the novel. Instead of taking positive lessons from France and the rest of Europe about how to modernize the country politically, economically, and scientifically, Clarín depicts a culture that is only interested in copying French fashions while rejecting "French intellectual and feminist influences" (188). To delve more deeply into how Clarín depicted this cultural identity shared by the elites of Vetusta, a brief review of *La Regenta*'s plot would be helpful.

*La Regenta* is the story of an extramarital affair set in the 1870s. Clarín dates the plot to that decade explicitly in chapter twenty-three when the narrative describes the intense religious feeling overcoming the novel's titular protagonist during Christmas mass, saying, "Y todo esto era porque hacía mil ochocientos setenta y tantos años había nacido en el portal de Belén el Niño Jesús . . ." (511). A more precise dating to the early part of the 1870s also appears in reference to conversations that clients of the local casino have about the upcoming Franco-Prussian War (1870-1871) being reported in the press (114). Just in case there are still doubts, at one point

the narrative refers to the king as Amadeo, placing at least part of the story during Amadeo I's brief reign (57). The affair depicted in the novel is not a simple love triangle due to the powerful influence of the unfaithful wife's confessor. In his prologue to the 1991 edition of *La Regenta*, Ricardo Gullón describes the confessor as a second husband who forms a fourth angle to the love triangle "en franca discrepancia con la geometría" (viii-ix). Ana Ozores, the wife who has the affair, is married to a much older man named Víctor Quintanar who cannot satisfy her needs, which express themselves in continuing night terrors that Ana has suffered since childhood. She seeks a spiritual solution to her distress with her confessor, Fermín de Pas, who in conflict with his vows falls in love with her. Religion does not solve the night terrors, which have more of a psychological cause based on her relationship first with her father and then her elderly husband. Eventually, she falls into the arms of the local 'don Juan' and political boss, Álvaro Mesía, who intentionally sets out to seduce her as another of many sexual conquests. When Ana's husband discovers the affair, he challenges Mesía to a duel and loses, dying excruciatingly from a gunshot wound. Afterwards, Ana seeks out her confessor as her last refuge, but even he turns his back on her, concluding Ana's tragic fate as a social pariah due to her infidelity and the resulting duel that turned the affair into a public

spectacle. Along the way, the reader is treated to a parade of characters and side stories that bring the city of Vetusta to life as a complex setting. Vetusta is a fictional representation of the actual city of Oviedo, Asturias, where Clarín was born.

The political criticism of *La Regenta* is not directly centered on the novel's female titular character, but instead revolves around the men who effectively ruin her life through abandonment. She, despite being the story's adulteress, is a blameless victim. She is blameless because despite being an adult, she lives her entire life as a child. She is a member of the upper class with no responsibility and a husband who will not fulfill his own duty of fathering her children. She has no duty to occupy her mind and time. She is a songbird in a cage, untouched and trapped with nothing to do. In such a state, it is no wonder that she allows herself to be caught by the first hand that reaches into the cage. The affair and its subsequent violent end are not the result of her own faults, but instead the faults of a culture that provides no outlet for her to fulfill her psychological and biological needs.

Her troubles begin before she is even born. Her parents' marriage scandalizes the community of Vetusta due to the difference in socioeconomic class between her father and mother. The Ozores family is one of the oldest and most distinguished noble families of the community (Clarín 65). In contrast, her

mother was an "humilde modista italiana." Ana's aunts were very unhappy with the situation and helped drive the scandal despite her father's generosity towards them in letting them freely occupy the family mansion. Such is the disapproval of the community that when Ana's mother died giving birth to her, the city's nobility considered it "un castigo de Dios." Her family ostracism continued during her childhood due to her father's political inclinations. He was reputed to be "masón, republicano y por consiguiente ateo" (66). This makes Ana's father an outcast to the Vetusta community in a similar fashion to how Pepe Rey is an outcast to the Orbajosa community in *Doña Perfecta*.

When her father, Carlos, dies suddenly, Ana is still an adolescent. This is when she begins to experience crippling night terrors that continue into her adult life. The narrative explains that the night terrors are the result of natural biological changes that emerge from reaching sexual maturity, explaining:

> Doña Anuncia y don Cayetano encontraron a la joven en peligro de muerte. Era una fiebre nerviosa; una crisis terrible, había dicho el médico; la enfermedad había coincidido con ciertas transformaciones propias de la edad; propias sí, pero delante de señoritas no debían explicarse con la claridad y los pormenores que empleaba el doctor.

> Don Cayetano podía oírlo todo, pero doña Anuncia hubiera preferido metáforas y perífrasis. «El desarrollo contenido», «la crítica y misteriosa metamorfosis», «la crisálida que se rompe», todo eso estaba bien; pero el médico añadía unos detalles que doña Anuncia no vacilaba en calificar de groseros. (83-84)

Ana's desire to overcome these terrors becomes one of the primary motivations for seeking spiritual relief from her confessor, Fermín de Pas. Their temporary abatement while she is courted by Álvaro Mesía also becomes one of the reasons that she falls for his seduction, triggering the unfolding of the tragedy.

Ana's aunts, led by Anuncia, urgently set out to find a husband for her after her father's death, eventually helping to arrange Ana's marriage to Víctor Quintanar, a wealthy man old enough to be her father. Ostensibly, this is a benevolent act that should provide Ana with economic and social security for the rest of her life. However, this unequal marriage sets up the novel's tragic plot. Furthermore, the self-serving motivations of Ana's aunts are plainly evident. The aunts, themselves unmarried and uncourted, wish to ensure that Ana does not become the primary benefactor of the family's estate so that they can continue residing in the mansion. Anuncia herself dreams of taking a lover on a trip to Venice, but first she must find a

husband for her niece (89). Marrying Ana off to a rich, old man assures that she will move into his household as opposed to claiming her own part of her father's inheritance. If she, for example, married a younger man of more modest means, then it is likely that the young couple would claim their part of the family estate as they naturally pursue their own well-being. Marrying Ana in this way conveniently removed her from the way of her aunts' economic interests.

Unfortunately for Ana, her marriage to Víctor is a sham because Víctor is either unable or unwilling to perform his husbandly duties to her. Her husband treats her like a daughter, not a wife, thus leaving her in a child-like state that is incongruent with her status as a married woman. One of the most glaring examples of this is the way Víctor kisses Ana on the forehead when she goes to bed like a father wishing his daughter good night. The narrative explains:

> ella le buscaba los besos en la boca; le remordía la conciencia de no quererle como marido, de no desear sus caricias; y además tenía miedo a los sentidos excitados en vano. De todo aquello resultaba una gran injusticia no sabía de quién, un dolor irremediable que ni siquiera tenía el atractivo de los dolores poéticos; era un dolor vergonzoso, como las enfermedades que ella había visto en Madrid anunciadas en faroles verdes y encarnados. (195)

The narrative implies that their marriage has never been consummated. At one early point in the story, Ana manages to steal a kiss on the lips from her husband as he moves to kiss her on the forehead as usual. For a moment, Víctor feels excitement from the event and considers letting it overcome him, but then decides against it because "antes de tres horas debía estar camino del Montico con la escopeta al hombro. Si se quedaba con su mujer, adiós cacería" (60). As a natural consequence, their marriage does not produce any children and, even worse for Ana, the night terrors that began with adolescence continue due to her unmet sexual and emotional needs.

Other female characters may not be as blameless as Ana, but the narrative does take the time to explain their behavior as the result of the limits that culture and tradition place on them. For example, because of their circumstances, Ana's aunts are unmarriable and must struggle to maintain their place in society as "solteronas." The narrative explains this when it describes the difficulty that Ana's aunts had in finding a husband for her, saying:

> Lo sabían ellas por una dolorosa experiencia. Los chicos innobles, que pudiera decirse, de Vetusta, no eran grandes proporciones; pero aunque se quisiera apencar —apencar decía doña Águeda en el seno de la confianza— con algún

> abogadete, ninguno de aquellos bobalicones se atrevería a enamorar a una Ozores, aunque se muriese por ella. (89)

This is why they latch on to Ana's father to survive and why finding a husband for her is so important to them. Yes, they are presented as mean and selfish, but they are also dependent on their brother and must scheme to maintain their social status after his death. Almost no one wants to lower their standard of living and drop to a lower socioeconomic class.

Another example is the mother of Ana's confessor, Paula. She comes across as an overbearing mother who pushes her son very severely. However, Clarín creates a backstory for her and her son that makes her seem if not sympathetic then at least heroic. She raises her son by herself while operating a tavern frequented by crude and often violent coal miners. She endures their vices, their violence, and their sexual advances to provide her son Fermín the education and opportunity to rise out of the working class through joining the priesthood. The narrative explains her mindset, saying, "Todo por su hijo; por ganar para pagarle la carrera; lo quería teólogo, nada de misa y olla" (319-20). In her chapter about parental presence in *La Regenta* for *Culture and Gender in Nineteenth-Century Spain*, Alison Sinclair states that "Paula is presented not only as terrible and omnipotent, but as a symbol of death." However, Sinclair also explains that her connection to death "is not so

much the death-bringer as the one who has herself been the victim" (184). She sacrifices everything, including her body, for her son to get an education because her identity as a woman constrains her options for social advancement. She does this because, as Sinclair states, "she can only fulfill ambition vicariously through her son" (187). Again, the female character's behavior in *La Regenta* is the direct result of her dependency on a male character.

Clarín makes the novel's discussion of women's lack of agency explicit during a discussion between Fermín and the main doctor for Vetusta's nobility, Robustiano Somoza. According to the narrative, Robustiano is a reactionary in political matters, but a secularist in religious ones (229). He is quite upset that two of his young female cousins are entering the convent to prepare to become nuns. In response, Fermín tells him that nuns freely choose their conventual lives, which triggers a diatribe from the doctor against this so-called freedom, exclaiming:

> —¡Libremente!, ¡libremente! Ríase usted, señor Magistral, ríase usted, que es una persona tan ilustrada, de esa pretendida libertad. ¿Cabe libertad donde no hay elección? ¿Cabe elección donde no se conoce más que uno de los términos en que ha de consistir?" (231-32)

He then goes on to explain how girls are indoctrinated and manipulated into choosing conventual life as the lesser of two

evils that at least allows them slightly more freedom than life outside of the convent. He concludes his diatribe by saying that the girls "resuelven *libremente* meterse monjas, para gozar un poco de . . . autonomía [. . .]" (233).

Through the exposition of its female characters, *La Regenta* presents a feminist discourse by Clarín. This discourse directly contradicts the anti-feminist discourse in Galdós' *Doña Perfecta* and partially complements the feminist one in *Los Pazos de Ulloa*. Clarín saw women trapped in the same "rincón de Cenicienta" that Pardo Bazán described in *La vida contemporánea* and depicted his female characters accordingly to reflect this aspect of Spanish culture. The notable difference between Clarín and Pardo Bazán is that the latter would probably have a more positive view of monastic and conventual life.

The novel's male characters, on the other hand, expose Clarín's disdain for the power-sharing compromise between the centrist dynastic parties that ran the government during the Restoration. It is interesting that Clarín voices the feminist argument through the mouth of Vetusta's politically reactionary doctor, Robustiano. This complements the horseshoe party dynamics that are evident in late-nineteenth century Spanish politics. It is telling that a radical like Clarín creates more common ground with a reactionary character than with the liberals and ruling elites who he depicts quite negatively in *La*

*Regenta*. The liberals that Ana encountered in Madrid while living with her father there are a complementary counter-example. Rhetorically, it is also an excellent choice for highlighting their abject hypocrisy in accepting the benefits of modern science while rejecting the underlying scientific theories from which those benefits emerge. He may be a reactionary, but Robustiano is also a man of science who is more intellectually connected to the mainstream of European thought than his noble peers in Vetusta who are more interested in fashion than knowledge. This recalls the point that Marina Cuzovic-Severn makes about the elites depicted in *La Regenta* only being interested in frivolously importing French fashions while rejecting feminist and modern ideas.

There is no more frivolous man in the story than Ana's seducer, Álvaro Mesía. He is a charming yet quarrelsome man that dresses in the latest fashions and frequently travels to Paris to take measurements for them. Accustomed to getting what he wants, he engages in petty feuds against those that he fails to intimidate or charm into submission. He is self-indulgent vanity and arrogance personified as the story's villain. The narrative describes his confidence and self-esteem as such:

> Ningún vetustense le parecía superior al hijo de su madre ni por el valor, ni por la elegancia, ni por la fortuna con

> las damas, ni por el prestigio político, si se exceptuaba a don Álvaro. (127)

He fits the mold as a 'don Juan' archetype villain perfectly.

Álvaro takes on the challenge of seducing Ana more as an act of defiance towards his rivals than a sexual desire for Ana. The word 'challenge' here is used loosely, though, since Ana practically seduces herself and falls into his bed due to her delirious state of marital abandonment. Rumors that Álvaro plans to make Ana his next sexual conquest infuriate one of Álvaro's rivals, the former conservative mayor of Vetusta Pepe Ronzal, also known as "Trabuco" (120-22). Trabuco is not a hero, though, as he is driven by a sense of jealousy and secret admiration towards Álvaro rather than by a sense of justice. This leads to a public confrontation between the two in the casino that Álvaro presides over. During the confrontation, Ronzal directly calls Álvaro, "don Juan Tenorio" (126-27). The confrontation over the matter emboldens Álvaro to pursue Ana, since it turns seducing Ana into a contest, and he cannot be seen losing in front of his peers and thus lose their respect.

His rivalry with Fermín, Ana's confessor, for her attention is the final push towards consummating the affair. When Fermín's efforts to help Ana with her night terrors bear fruit, resulting in both her feeling better as well as rejecting Álvaro's advances, the 'don Juan' doubles down his efforts, because of

course he cannot be seen to lose to the priest (435). Álvaro thinks to himself, "Dirían que un cura le había derrotado. ¡Aquello pedía sangre! Sí, pero ésta era otra" (436). The personal enmity between Álvaro and his rivals is the driving factor in his behavior, not love or even lust. Conquering women comes easy to him, and he has no special need for Ana other than as a show of dominance over his peers.

That Álvaro is the local political boss is no coincidence. Álvaro controls both the liberal and conservative dynastic parties in Vestusta. He is directly the leader of the liberal party, while his close friend Vegallana is his figurehead in charge of the conservative one. The political system is thus completely rigged. There is no ideological difference in how political power is exercised. Álvaro managed his authority transactionally. The narrative explains how "el turno pacífico" works in Vetusta, saying:

> Pero este no abusaba de su poder secreto. Como un jugador de ajedrez que juega solo y lo mismo se interesa por los blancos que por los negros, don Álvaro cuidaba de los negocios conservadores lo mismo que de los liberales. Eran panes prestados. Si mandaban los del marqués, don Álvaro repartía estanquillos, comisiones y licencias de caza, y a menudo algo más suculento, como si fueran gobierno los suyos; pero cuando venían los liberales, el marqués de

> Vegallana seguía siendo árbitro en las elecciones, gracias a Mesía, y daba estanquillos, empleos y hasta prebendas. (143)

Clarín is saying something critical about the cynical politics of the Restoration. Government is just a game to these elites just like taking advantage of Ana's vulnerability to seduce her is a game to Álvaro. It is all a contest of power and dominance over other men to him, and that is in reference to both politics and Ana. These centrist politicians have no genuine convictions other than personal vanity and ambition. The message is clear; the dynastic parties are meaningless.

Vetusta's casino serves as the central meeting place for the elites comprising the dynastic political structure. This is fitting since the *amadeista* regime was an urban liberal project devoted to advancing the commercial interests of private capital. There is no place more representative of these interests than a casino. It is the temple of liberal capitalism, or the temple of greed, if one prefers, and Álvaro is its high priest. It is where the elites within Álvaro's power structure wheel and deal with each other to make decisions. It is also where, as mentioned earlier, Ana's seduction is turned into a cruel contest. In essence, it is representative of everything wrong with the nineteenth-century liberal project as seen by Clarín. This depiction also anticipates the antagonistic class

dynamics described by Fredric Jameson in *Marxism and Form*. In *La Regenta*, Clarín depicts a liberal-conservative faction that very much comports itself in accordance with Jameson's Marxist theory; its self-interested behavior opposes both the ancient regime's attempts to hold power and the lower classes' attempts to gain power.

On the other hand, republicans and Carlists are subject to a somewhat kinder portrayal. Republicans are barely acknowledged; Ana's father was accused of being a republican as mentioned earlier, and one of the men sitting in the casino dining room with Álvaro is described as "desterrado por republicano" (439). Their brief appearances depict them as social pariahs, shunned by the wider community for their radical political beliefs. The Carlists do not fare much better in this environment. They are politically marginalized, existing outside of the community's power structures controlled by Álvaro and his cronies. The novel is set during a time when the Carlists try to set up their own parallel government to oppose the liberal-dominated one of Amadeo I. The story reflects this in "la Junta Carlista" that is a sort-of parallel government led by Francisco de Asís Carraspique. The narrative treats him as the only honest political leader in the community, saying about him:

> Era el mayor contribuyente que tenía en la provincia la soberanía subrepticia de don Carlos VII. Su religiosidad

> (la de Carraspique) sincera, profunda, ciega, era en él toda una virtud; pero la debilidad de su carácter, sus pocas luces naturales y la mala intención de los que le rodeaban convertían su piedad en fuente de disgustos para el mismo don Francisco de Asís, para los suyos y para muchos de fuera. (228)

*La Regenta* shows a Clarín that was disillusioned with the regime that he personally helped to usher into power as a teenager when he participated in the revolution two decades earlier. More importantly for the historical moment in which the novel was published, he was disillusioned with the power-sharing regime that was the source of the Restoration's political stability. They were, from his radical perspective, the same regime.

Furthermore, by 1885 Alfonso XII was very ill and rumors of his impending death brought with them the prospects of a long regency under the auspices of the queen consort, the daughter of the Austrian emperor who was pregnant carrying Alfonso XII's son. It is difficult to avoid the scandalous comparison between the character of Ana, known as "la regenta," and María Cristina de Austria (1858-1929). As far as anyone knows, María Cristina was a faithful wife, and the only person cheating in her marriage was her husband. However, a disillusioned radical like Clarín would not sweat the details as he cast the relationship between the dynasty and the liberal leader Sagasta negatively.

# Conclusion: Revolutionary Novels

Pardo Bazán and Clarín both were personal acquaintances of Galdós and were familiar with his works. They both wrote impressive, two-volume novels that were set in the same revolutionary era of the Sexenio Democrático as Galdós's *Doña Perfecta*. Published only about a year apart from each other, *La Regenta* and *Los pazos de Ulloa* each represent monumental intellectual efforts on the part of their respective authors to create realist novels that dealt with the sociological, psychological, and spiritual ills afflicting Spain in the nineteenth century. They shared with Galdós a sense that their country had fallen behind the rest of Europe in some way and was badly in need of rejuvenation. They differed in exactly what was wrong and how it could be fixed, of course, but they all shared a sense of knowing that something was fundamentally wrong.

Pardo Bazán thought that the liberal ideas of Voltaire, Locke, and Russeau had poisoned Spanish society. She was an exceptionalist that thought Spain should find its path by seeking answers in its glorious imperial past when Spain was not the imitator but the imitated. To Pardo Bazán, democracy was an anathema to the natural inclinations of Spanish society and produced an allergic reaction in a country more suited to its own traditions and institutions rather than imported ones. She was a nationalist.

At the time that he wrote *Doña Perfecta*, Galdós wanted to discard that dead past and looked for inspiration in England and Germany, enemies of the French who exerted tremendous cultural influence on Spain in the nineteenth century. A capitalist economy nurtured by the stability of a constitutional monarchy with a two-party centrist political system was the path forward for him and the urban liberals whose interests he shared. As such, they were inclined to support the Restoration despite all its compromises in terms of religious freedom. The Restoration's project was closer to their own than any of the alternative options.

Clarín saw in France an inspiration for a republican future. By the time that he wrote *La Regenta*, France was well into its third republic. The *Pacto de Pardo* between Sagasta and Cánovas to divide political power in Spain was in full force, giving rise to a *toque de turnos* not unlike Spain had experienced under Isabel II. Alfonso XII was on his deathbed and the prospect of a long regency loomed over the country. As far as radicals like Clarín, the revolution of 1868 in which he had personally participated had accomplished nothing. He was disillusioned with the status quo in 1885.

It is entirely possible that by 1885, Galdós was in the process of becoming disillusioned with the Spanish political system as well. He certainly evolved over the coming decades

into a radical as he adopted republican and socialist ideas. However, in 1886, he still accepted a seat in the Cortes on behalf of Sagasta's liberal party. It is also possible that his friends like Clarín and Pardo Bazán influenced his ideological evolution.

It would be odd to suppose that these three friends would not discuss and debate the politics of their day with each other or engage in vigorous debate about the very topics that they included in their respective novels. In this context, their literary works can be understood to include elements that comprise an ongoing conversation between them about politics and gender in Spanish society. *Los pazos de Ulloa* and *La Regenta* directly refute misogynistic undertones of *Doña Perfecta* and the liberal premise of its liberal hero, Pepe Rey. Moreover, they do this in the form of genuinely realist novels that have entered the literary canon as perfect examples of the style as practiced by Spanish authors of the nineteenth century. They countered Galdós' propagandistic work in *Doña Perfecta* with their best examples of realist writing.

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