

GALDÓS

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The Early Historical Novels

Brian J. Dendle




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To Mark and Peter

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Introduction



he greatest obstacle to the scholarly investigation of the *episodios nacionales* undoubtedly lies in their sheer number. They total forty-six volumes: the first twenty, ostensibly covering the history of Spain between 1808 and 1834, were written between 1873 and 1879; twenty-six more, continuing the history of Spain to the early years of the Restoration, were composed between 1898 and 1912. Galdós also wrote thirty *novelas de la primera época* and *novelas españolas contemporáneas*, as he banally termed them, as well as dramas, short stories, and numerous journalistic articles. To read and, more importantly, assimilate all of Galdós's works, to digest the relevant bibliography, and to assess the social and political contexts in which Galdós was writing are tasks daunting to all but the most ardent of *galdosistas*. Almost by necessity, approaches to the total work have been cursory, with inadequate attention to the text. On the other hand, studies of individual novels or groups of novels for the most part lack the wider vision necessary to confirm the findings of a narrowly based study. This wider vision is, unfortunately, all too frequently supplied by appeal to the generalizations of earlier critics.

Although some focusing is inevitable if Galdós's novels are to be studied with any precision, our vision of Galdós's work has been distorted by the marked concentration of scholarly studies on the *novelas españolas contemporáneas*, with corresponding neglect of the *episodios nacionales*. Although an earlier prejudice—that Galdós's historical fiction and thesis novels are inferior literature—has seemingly disappeared, the critical imbalance, even after the brief flurry of attention to the *episodios* in the 1960s, continues. Thus, perusal of the volumes of *Anales Galdosianos* establishes that scarcely one article in ten is concerned with the *episodios*, although the *episodios* form over half of Galdós's novelistic production. Jacques Beyrie, in his discussion of the early

work of Galdós, devotes more pages to *La Fontana de Oro* than to the entire second series of *episodios*; indeed, *La Fontana de Oro* has been the subject of twice as many studies as all ten *episodios* of the second series. Discussions of such novels as *Doña Perfecta* (1876) and *Gloria* (1877) frequently ignore the *episodios* written contemporaneously; similarly, treatments of *La desheredada* (1880–1881) often fail to consider the *episodios* that immediately preceded its composition. The neglect is such that any single *episodio* will have received remarkably little critical attention. Of the first two series, indeed, only *Zaragoza* has received adequate scholarly treatment.

The essential literature concerning the *episodios nacionales* has been discussed by Hans Hinterhäuser, *Los "episodios nacionales" de Benito Pérez Galdós* (pp. 9–22), and by J. E. Varey, "Galdós in the Light of Recent Criticism," *Galdós Studies* (pp. 1–35). For the more recent period, Hensley C. Woodbridge provides careful descriptions of often hard to locate items in *Benito Pérez Galdós: A Selective Annotated Bibliography* and *Benito Pérez Galdós: An Annotated Bibliography for 1975–1980*. Therefore, I shall confine myself here to brief comments on works directly relevant to my study, that is, to those concerned with the first two series of *episodios nacionales*, especially in their ideological aspects.

With the two notable exceptions of Jean Sarrailh and Marcel Bataillon, studies of the *episodios nacionales* written before 1940 are of little more than archaeological interest to the present-day scholar. Treatments of Galdós in this period were superficial, offering an outline of the novelistic plot, which is often denounced as implausible, a list of the titles, a brief discussion of the treatment of history and major characters, and a facile characterization of the *episodios* as "realistic," "epic," or "patriotic."¹ The major critical disagreement was between liberals, who found Galdós's treatment of history to be impartial, a view shared by Montesinos as late as the 1960s, and Catholic critics, who ob-

1. The early tradition of criticism long survived. For example, in *España en sus episodios nacionales*, Gaspar Gómez de la Serna stressed the epic nature, realistic historical settings, and implausible intrigue of the first series of *episodios*.

jected to Galdós's biased treatment of Catholics and Carlists. The literary merit of the *episodios* was often denied: they were considered a branch of pedagogy, a means of conveying historical knowledge to the ignorant. L. B. Walton, following Andrés González-Blanco, questioned, indeed, whether the *episodios* could be considered "novels in the strict sense of the term." Qualities that won critical esteem were those of realism, historical accuracy, and patriotic exaltation; it was the attempt to establish the "historical" and therefore "realistic" nature of the *episodios* that led Carlos Vázquez Arjona to his callow demonstrations of the close correspondence between historical scenes described by Galdós and "History." Exemplary, if somewhat limited, scholarship, on the other hand, is revealed in the meticulous studies of sources by Jean Sarrailh (*Cádiz*) and Marcel Bataillon (*Zaragoza*); both scholars, furthermore, acknowledge the literary qualities of the *episodios* in question.

The 1940s saw the beginnings of a more systematic, less dilettante approach to Galdós. Matilde Carranza, in her useful study of the role of the *pueblo* in the first two series of *episodios nacionales*, *El pueblo visto a través de los episodios nacionales*, notes Galdós's humor and Cervantine emphasis on reason and common sense.² Despite its schematic approach and skimpy treatment of the *episodios*, Joaquín Casalduero's *Vida y obra de Galdós (1843–1920)*, first published in 1943, represents a notable contribution, both for its clarity of presentation and for its affirmation that the *episodios* must be considered an integral part of Galdós's work. Rather than viewing the *episodios* as "epic," Casalduero discerns in the first series of *episodios* a marked hostility to war; a more disputable opinion, but one provocative of much future debate, is that, in Gabriel Araceli, Galdós portrays the redemption of the *pícaro*, as Araceli discovers "el honor burgués, racionalista y kantiano, el imperativo del deber" (bourgeois, rationalist, Kantian honor, the imperative of duty).

2. Matilde Carranza was, I believe, the first scholar to note that Patricio Sarmiento, Santiago Fernández, Mariano Álvarez, and Mosén Antón provoke their deaths by irrational behavior. Her summary of the teaching of Cervantes and Galdós—"el salirse de la naturaleza de los cosas es insensato" (to depart from the nature of things is senseless, p. 112)—is confirmed by the observations of Inés in the first series of *episodios*.

The fundamental study of the *episodios* in their entirety remains that of Hans Hinterhäuser, *Los "episodios nacionales" de Benito Pérez Galdós* (German version, 1961; Spanish version, 1963). In his systematic analysis of Galdós's use of the *episodios* as a "means of political education," Hinterhäuser notes Galdós's abhorrence of extremism, his denunciation of such Spanish defects as egoism, demagoguery, and envy, his vision of *patria*, his hostility to the Carlists, and his depiction of liberal ingenuousness. Hinterhäuser also analyzes fictional elements in the *episodios*; his discussion of Galdós's debt to the *novela popular* is especially fruitful. As in any work of ambitious scope, faults may be found. Although Galdós's ideology, as Hinterhäuser suggests, changed remarkably little over the course of his career, Hinterhäuser's topical approach, in which examples drawn from works of the first period (1873–1879) are combined with examples from the *episodios* of the second period (1898–1912), leads to too compressed, even confused, a presentation. Despite his often tart comments about previous critics, Hinterhäuser is nevertheless still affected by their judgments; for example, he too readily accepts Berkowitz's attribution of a premature senility to Galdós. The discussion of Gabriel Araceli, whom Hinterhäuser finds to be without complexity, is weak. But despite these and other cavils, Hinterhäuser's study is a useful initial point of reference, an ordered exposition of Galdós's ideology and of certain of his novelistic procedures.

Pedro Rojas Ferrer's *Valoración histórica de los episodios nacionales de B. Pérez Galdós*, published in 1965, compares Galdós's treatment of history in the first series of *episodios* with that of his historical sources. Although similar to Vázquez Arjona's studies of the 1920s and 1930s, Rojas Ferrer's work usefully reproduces passages from works that Galdós probably consulted.

Antonio Regalado García's *Benito Pérez Galdós y la Novela Histórica Española: 1868–1912*, published in 1966, is less well organized than Hinterhäuser's study and marred by serious bias. Purporting to place Galdós's ideology in historical context, Regalado condemns Galdós for being a man of his class and time. Galdós defended conservative Restoration values of moderation, order, peace at all costs, and was hostile toward all who threatened national unity. Galdós possessed a "cant mentality," failed

to understand the class struggle of 1805 to 1834, did not take Federal Republicans seriously, was blind to economic reality and to the emerging social consciousness of the proletariat, and, by refusing to portray the liberal conspiracies of the Fernandine period, missed the opportunity to present liberals in a favorable light. Despite the energy of his approach and occasional, if not totally original, insights into the conservative nature of Galdós's liberalism, his fear of the mob, and his tendency to caricature, Regalado has little understanding of Galdós; thus, he fails to appreciate the irony of Galdós's portrayals of Gabriel Araceli and Benigno Cordero. Regalado's confident assertions about the nature of Spain's history between 1700 and 1939 startle rather than convince the reader. The digressive presentation and the absence of an index make access to whatever information is contained in the study difficult. Two reviewers, Raymond Carr and Peter B. Goldman,³ have raised strong objections to Regalado's interpretation of history; indeed, Goldman has faulted Regalado's "careless scholarship" and misreading of Galdós.

Alfred Rodríguez, in *An Introduction to the Episodios Nacionales of Galdós* (1967), offers a sequential presentation of each series of *episodios*. Refuting the accusation that the *episodios* are an inferior segment of Galdós's literary production, Rodríguez finds that, in the realism of their characterization, plausibility of plot, humor, and wealth of stylistic devices, the *episodios* form "that segment of his work in which he is least restricted in the conception and use of literary elements" (p. 204). Although Rodríguez relies heavily on earlier critics' opinions to buttress his points and quotes insufficiently from the text, his study is written *con amore* and without pretentiousness. A work on a more limited but related theme, Ward H. Dennis's *Pérez Galdós: A Study in Characterization* (1968), although unsophisticated in its approach, provides reference to numerous characters of the first series of *episodios*.

The last general study of the *episodios* is that of José F. Montesinos. *Galdós I*, published in 1968 but written, according to the author, much earlier, covers the first two series of *episodios*. Al-

3. Raymond Carr, "A New View of Galdós"; Peter B. Goldman, "Historical Perspective and Political Bias: Comments on Recent Galdós Criticism."

though Montesinos shows a cavalier disregard for most previous scholarship and proclaims, rather than demonstrates, his trenchant opinions, he nevertheless conveys a sense of excitement, of active engagement with Galdós, as he debates, approves, and attacks Galdós's ideology and procedures. Montesinos accepts the accuracy of Galdós's treatment of history, stresses the influence of Cervantes, and notes Galdós's strong didactic intent. In the first series Montesinos finds the plot, affected detrimentally by the *folletín*, to be implausible; the second series of *episodios* he finds far superior to the first, being more colorful, dramatic, imaginative, and fast-paced.

Since Montesinos, no scholar has attempted an overall treatment of the *episodios nacionales*. In recent years, however, a number of perceptive studies of individual *episodios* or of aspects of the *episodios* have appeared. A number of scholars have made contributions that I find especially enlightening: Peter B. Goldman meticulously establishes Galdós's political viewpoint for the period 1871 to 1872; Nigel Glendinning, who indicates the psychological and moral motivation rather than the historically representative nature of Galdós's characters, has contributed to a notable shift in our approach to the *episodios*; Ricardo Navas-Ruiz and José M. Ribas have usefully explicated *Zaragoza* and *Gerona*, respectively; Francisco Pérez Gutiérrez carefully demonstrates Galdós's religious perspective; and Peter A. Bly reveals the ambiguities in Galdós's treatment of the War of Independence.

With the advances of Galdós scholarship over the last twenty years, the *episodios* are increasingly treated as works of fiction rather than as means of transmitting elementary historical facts to the ignorant; furthermore, characters' protestations are no longer always taken at face value. However, there is still need for a study that takes as the basis of examination the individual *episodio* rather than a series of ten *episodios*. All previous general studies have treated each series as a single, although obviously unwieldy, novel.⁴ Despite the critical convenience of this approach, such a

4. Thus, Montesinos proclaims that each series must be considered as one novel (*Galdós I*, 76–77). In his discussion of the second series, however, Montesinos refers to “estas novelas” (p. 165). Alfred Rodríguez apparently realized the critical problem involved when he expressed his regret at his inability to make the individual *episodio* “the unit of detailed investigation” (*An Introduction to the “Episodios Nacionales” of Galdós*, 9).

procedure has led, I believe, to distortion and overcompression. As critics concentrate on such overall themes as Galdós's message and the trajectory of leading characters, they neglect the peculiar nature of the individual *episodio*. Scholars have long acknowledged that certain *episodios*—*Zaragoza* and *Gerona*, for example—are barely linked to the intrigue, itself somewhat tenuous, of the first series. Galdós himself, as even Montesinos acknowledges, considered the *episodios* of the first two series as “veinte novelas.”⁵ Galdós wrote the *episodios* with only a vague overall plan based on historical event rather than on the adventures and development of a novelistic character. Readers of Galdós's and also, I suspect, of our own day read the occasional single *episodio* rather than an entire series.⁶

The present volume complements my previous study, *Galdós: The Mature Thought*, in which I examined the twenty-six *episodios* written between 1898 and 1912 in their ideological context. In Chapter 2, I summarize the historical background of the period 1868 to 1875, Galdós's ideology as revealed in his early political journalism, and Galdós's two historical novels, *La Fontana de Oro* and *El audaz*. In Chapter 3, I treat separately each novel of the first series of *episodios*; the discussions of individual novels, limited to some four or five pages, are not intended to be exhaustive, but to provide a starting point—or perhaps a target—for future, more specialized studies. I have preferred to refer the reader to previous criticism in the notes rather than to overburden a general study of this nature with analysis in the text of earlier treatments. In Chapter 4, after a brief introductory account of the historical context (1875–1879), I examine the individual *episodios* of the second series. In Chapter 5, Galdós's ideology and novelistic practice in the *episodios* of the first two series are analyzed. Chapter 6 briefly summarizes certain conclusions of my study.

For the convenience of scholars, the page references to the *episodios nacionales* in this study are to the *Obras completas*

5. Benito Pérez Galdós, Prologue of 1881 to the illustrated edition of the *Episodios Nacionales*, in William H. Shoemaker, *Los prólogos de Galdós*, 52.

6. Jacques Beyrie claims that, as of 31 October 1873, 1,278 copies of *La corte de Carlos IV* had been sold, as opposed to only 295 copies of the preceding *episodio*, *Trafalgar*; see *Galdós et son mythe*, 2:169.

(Madrid: Aguilar, 1971; reprint, 1973). The quotations were in all cases taken from the turn-of-the-century editions supposedly corrected by Galdós. I have preserved the punctuation, above all the italicizations, of the earlier editions, which are of greater reliability than the Aguilar text. The translations of the Spanish are my own; I regret my inability to render into English the full flavor of Galdós's lively prose.

The Historical Setting and Galdós's Ideology, 1868-1875

The Historical Background, September 1868–March 1875



n 19 September 1868, Admiral Topete and leading generals from both *unionista* and *progresista* parties rebelled in Cádiz against the government of Queen Isabel.¹ Their vaguely phrased proclamation protested immorality in high places and appealed for the support of conservative sectors of the population: the wealthy, lovers of order, partisans of individual liberties, the clergy. The rising met with little opposition. Queen Isabel, almost without support in the nation, left Spain on 30 September. Although the September Revolution was a military coup, it was enthusiastically hailed by the middle classes who ingenuously believed that Spain would achieve the political and economic prosperity of Victorian England. The laboring classes, in considerable distress following the failure of the wheat harvest of 1868, also hoped that change would ameliorate their lot. Almost at the same time, in October 1868, a band of Cubans under Céspedes launched a struggle for Cuban independence. It would take Spain ten years to suppress, and then only temporarily, the Cuban revolt.

Of the parties that supported the Revolution of 1868, the *progresistas* alone enjoyed widespread popularity; their support came from the lower middle classes and the army. The leaders of the *progresistas* were Gen. Juan Prim and the politicians Práxedes

1. For further details of the history of this period, see Melchor Fernández Almagro, *Historia política de la España contemporánea*, 1:7–290; C. A. M. Hennessy, *The Federal Republic in Spain*, 305–46. My present account, which makes no pretense at being comprehensive, is above all based on Fernández Almagro's history and on contemporary articles in the *Revista de España* and is primarily concerned with those elements of contemporary history of which Galdós was seemingly conscious when composing the first series of *episodios nacionales*.

Sagasta and Manuel Ruiz Zorrilla. Prim was astute, courageous, and impetuous; Sagasta, an ambitious manipulator; Ruiz Zorrilla, rough-mannered and exceedingly ambitious. Sagasta was rather more conservative than Ruiz Zorrilla. Both courted the support of the army, which, in contemporary liberal mythology, embodied the "national will," and were, like most Spanish politicians of the time, notoriously opportunistic.

The *Unión Liberal* was a monarchical party, headed by a former lover of the queen, Gen. Francisco Serrano, whose considerable diplomatic abilities were accompanied by few scruples. The *unionistas* first favored Queen Isabel's brother-in-law, the Duke of Montpensier, for candidacy to the throne. Later, during the reign of Amadeo, the *unionistas* sought to participate in ministries of "conciliation."

A smaller group, the *demócratas*, had no representation in the provisional government but was powerful in the provincial *juntas*. Their program included radical demands for universal male suffrage and for freedom of the press, of religion, and of association. A *demócrata*, the ambitious Nicolás Rivero, became mayor of Madrid. *Demócratas* had little sympathy for monarchical regimes; many became Federal Republicans in 1873.

The principal achievements of the *Cortes Constituyentes*, which met in early 1869, were to declare Spain a constitutional monarchy and to establish freedom of worship, a measure attacked by some, but certainly not all, Spanish Catholics as persecution of "true religion." Serrano was elected Regent, thus effectively isolating him from power. Prim, as head of government, was the real ruler of Spain. Attempts to find a suitable monarch who would, ideally, be liberal, Catholic, and offensive neither to England nor to France were protracted. (The candidacy of Leopold of Hohenzollern, incidentally, was the immediate cause of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870.) It was only in late 1871 that Amadeo of Savoy accepted the crown of Spain. Just before Amadeo's arrival in Spain, Prim, the strong man of the Revolution, was assassinated; neither the assassins nor their employers were ever identified.²

Amadeo was Spain's king from December 1871 to February

2. For Galdós's treatment of the assassination of Prim, see Brian J. Dendle, "Galdós and the Death of Prim."

1873. Courageous, hard-working, and determined to respect the new constitution, he had, nevertheless, little hope of attaining popularity. Doubly handicapped as a foreigner and as a member of the Italian royal family (the occupiers of Rome and therefore anathema to Catholic traditionalists), the "intruder King" had also to face armed rebellion from Cuban separatists, republicans, and Carlists.³

Deprived of Prim's support, Amadeo endeavored to rule with a series of coalition ministries supported by the *unionista* Serrano and the *progresista* Sagasta. Bitter rivalries between the former *progresistas* Ruiz Zorrilla and Sagasta led to the formation of two new parties, the *partido radical*, headed by Ruiz Zorrilla, and the more conservative *partido constitucional*, under the leadership of Sagasta. The conservative ministry of Serrano and Sagasta, beset by financial scandals, resigned in the summer of 1872, following Amadeo's refusal to suspend constitutional guarantees. Ruiz Zorrilla, appointed, somewhat to his surprise, head of government, packed the civil service with his supporters, promised separation of Church and State in an effort to undercut republican strength, and proposed replacing the unpopular draft with a volunteer army. His success in fixing the elections of August 1872 led to his downfall, for the *demócrata* wing of his party no longer depended on him for its position in the *Cortes*. Ruiz Zorrilla's attempts to force an unpopular general on the elitist Artillery Corps was the immediate occasion for Amadeo's abdication, on 11 February 1873. However, the feuding of Spanish politicians, the insolvency of the Spanish treasury, and the necessity to fight the Cuban separatist and Carlist insurrections had made constitutional rule impossible.⁴

Amadeo's abdication was immediately followed by the proclamation of the Spanish Republic, a Republic that was to last from 11 February 1873 to 3 January 1874. To proclaim the Republic, Rivero, the president of the Congress of Deputies, had to

3. The sailors of *El Ferrol* rose in rebellion in October 1872. The Third Carlist War had broken out in April 1872; a temporary truce, the *Convenio de Amorebieta*, failed, and fighting recommenced in October 1872.

4. Following Amadeo's abdication, Ruiz Zorrilla retired to Portugal. He was to spend the remaining years of his life (he died in 1895) in exile, futilely attempting to organize republican conspiracies inside the army.

override the constitution. On the same day, in a move that was to typify the politics of the new regime, Rivero was forced from office by fellow *demócrata* Cristino Martos's accusations of tyranny. Popular support for a republic existed mainly in Catalonia where there were numerous working-class adherents and in Andalusia and the Levante where rural discontent was combined with urban unemployment. Provincial republicanism tended to be federal and thus hostile to the rule of Madrid. Republican leadership was deeply divided, both by personal rivalries and by ideology, between partisans of unitary and federal republics, between those supporting democratic and those advocating authoritarian rule. Notorious antagonisms existed, for example, between Rivero and Martos, between Figueras and Pi y Margall, and between Salmerón and Castelar.

Republican government lacked widespread support and was racked with internal divisions. Its weakness contributed to the deterioration of Spanish political life into near anarchy. Despite military indiscipline and popular hatred of the draft, the two wars still had to be fought, against Cuban separatists and against the Carlists, who now controlled much of the North and East of Spain. In February, the republican Martos attempted a coup with the help of the Civil Guard. On 23 April, conservatives attempted a military coup. In the summer, the declaration in the *Cortes* that Spain was now a "Federal Democratic Republic" was followed by Federal Republican uprisings in the south of Spain and Catalonia. The Canton of Cartagena, proclaimed in July, resisted the Spanish army until January of 1874. The rebellious Spanish Mediterranean fleet, stationed in Cartagena, bombarded those cities that refused to pay levies to the "independent" canton.

The instability of the governments of the First Republic was marked. Figueras, the first president, depressed by the death of his wife and totally disillusioned by the bickering of republicans, fled to France in June. His successor, the Federal Republican Pi y Margall, lasted only one month in power; his trust in moral persuasion did little to stem national disorder. Salmerón, president from July to September, was more decisive; he vigorously fought the Carlists and declared the Cartagena fleet piratical, thus inviting the intervention of the British and German navies; he refused, however, to sign death sentences for deserters from the army, a measure that military authorities deemed indispensable

to restore discipline. The fourth and final president of the short-lived Republic, Castelar, offered “order, authority, and government”; he assumed full powers and suspended constitutional guarantees and sessions of the *Cortes*. When the *Cortes* was recalled in January 1874 and Castelar lost a vote of confidence, a coup by the captain general of Madrid, General Pavía, expelled the deputies, temporarily bringing any pretense at a Parliamentary regime to an end.

Throughout 1874, Spain was a unitary, authoritarian republic, with executive power in the hands of General Serrano. Conservatives dominated the governments he appointed. Possibly Serrano hoped to follow the example of Marshal MacMahon, who in May 1873 became the powerful president of the newly formed French Republic. Serrano’s principal task, however, was to fight the Carlists, now at their greatest strength. Bilbao was under siege from January to May; the Carlists triumphed at Abárzuza in June but were unable to take any large city. *Guerrillero* bands were active in Catalonia and the center of Spain; their atrocities—the shooting of prisoners, the sack of Cuenca—were well publicized. The Carlists, however, appealed mainly to local interests and, like Spanish republicans, were divided by personal rivalries.

The Republic of 1874 was obviously a makeshift solution to Spain’s constitutional disorder. Increasingly, if unenthusiastically, conservative opinion accepted the idea of a Bourbon Restoration. The policy of “the architect of the Restoration,” the historian-politician Antonio Cánovas del Castillo, was to conciliate, to sweep within his net—“barrer para adentro,” as the satirical novelist Coloma was later to term the procedure—all who were weary of Spanish political instability, whatever their ideological affiliation. The Sandhurst declaration, penned for Prince Alfonso by Cánovas just after the prince’s seventeenth birthday in December 1874, reconciled supposedly antithetical postures, for the prince promised to be a good Spaniard, a good Catholic, and a true liberal. On 29 December 1874, Col. Martínez Campos, apparently to the chagrin of Cánovas, who wished the Restoration to be beholden to no soldier, proclaimed Prince Alfonso King of Spain. Prominent military leaders, including Serrano, offered no opposition to the Restoration.

Cánovas, as chief minister of the new monarchy, continued

his conciliatory policies. Thus, his first cabinet included ministers from the provisional government of 1868 and from Amadeo's reign. He preserved many of the political liberties guaranteed by the Constitution of 1869. While respecting the Concordat, he refused to allow persecution of non-Catholics. The termination of the Carlist War was Cánovas's immediate concern. In January and February 1875, the young Alfonso XII bolstered military morale by visiting the army on the northern front. In March 1875, to the shock of his former *coreligionaries*, the Carlist hero Cabrera accepted the Restoration. Cánovas's political support, in his *partido liberal-conservador*, came mainly from former *unionistas* and *moderados*. Serrano, warmly received by Alfonso in March 1875, would soon form a short-lived party, the *Izquierda dinástica* (Dynastic Left), to function within the monarchical system. Castelar, the authoritarian Republican, offered no opposition to the Restoration. Sagasta, as head of the *partido constitucional*, formed principally of former *progresistas* and *demócratas*, would, by the end of 1875, reach agreement with Cánovas on the division of electoral spoils between Spain's two major political parties.

Throughout the revolutionary period, thinking Spaniards were markedly concerned with Spain's image abroad. Foreign nations were portrayed in the press as examples for Spain: many of the revolutionaries of 1868, such as Galdós's employer Albareda, were strong Anglophiles; the "immorality" of Isabeline Spain was measured against the middle-class virtues and prosperity of Victorian England; slavery in Cuba and Puerto Rico was contrasted with emancipation in the United States (1865) and Brazil (1871). The disorders of the revolutionary period provoked concern for Spain's reputation, even survival. The European power structure was visibly changing: Prussia defeated Austria in 1866 and France in 1870, thereby causing moralists to ponder with gloom the causes of "Latin" racial inferiority; Victor Emmanuel's troops invaded Rome in 1870; the German Empire was proclaimed in 1871; and the Paris Commune of 1871 provided a terrifying example of communistic insurrection. Weak nations, such as Spain, were vulnerable to dismemberment by more powerful neighbors: Mexico had been invaded by the French in the early 1860s;

Denmark lost Schleswig and Holstein to Austria and Prussia; France ceded Alsace and Lorraine to Germany; Russia coveted the ailing Turkish Empire. Both Bismarck and Napoleon III claimed power of veto over the choice of monarch by the Spanish Cortes.

Spain, unable to maintain order within her own borders, above all feared American intervention in Cuba. The United States House of Representatives passed a resolution of sympathy for Cuban aspirations in 1869; President Grant's offer to mediate between Spain and the separatists was refused; Prim, it was reliably rumored, was willing to sell Cuba to the United States. Although the American ambassador, Gen. Daniel Sickles, strongly favored the Spanish Republic, there was risk of war between the United States and Spain in late 1873. The American steamer *Virginius* was captured on the high seas by a Spanish warship; fifty-three crew members and passengers, including American and British citizens, were shot by order of the Spanish commander in Santiago de Cuba. Despite the patriotic war fever of Spanish residents in Cuba, which paralleled a similarly misplaced fervor in the Spain of 1898, Castelar recognized Spain's weakness and negotiated to avoid war. Ultimately, indemnities were paid to the families of the executed Britons and North Americans.

The overriding impression given by the revolutionary period 1868–1875 is one of disorder. Two lengthy and costly rebellions (the Carlist and the Cuban), mob violence, lynchings, political assassinations, numerous Federal Republican risings, and *guerrillero* activities were symptomatic of the refusal to accept centralized authority. The savage reprisals meted out in Cuba, Zugasti's suppression of Andalusian banditry in 1870, and the *partida de la porra* manifested a corresponding governmental violence. Although the blood shed in Spain was insignificant when compared with the lives lost in civil strife in, for example, the United States and France during the previous decade, "respectable citizens" still feared for their safety. In an atmosphere of increasing paranoia, fomented by the demagoguery at which the politicians of this period were so adept, Catholics feared the loss of their privileged religious status as convents were demolished

and republican rhetoric frequently became strongly anticlerical. Although social risings were rare in Spain (the occupation of Alcoy by workers in July 1873 was an exception), property owners were alarmed at the rumored machinations of the International. The dangers of a revolution out of control were exemplified by the supposed horrors of the Paris Commune. With the increasing weakness of the government, the army alone remained a source of order. The collapse of military discipline in 1873 marked the final stage of conservative disenchantment with "reform by revolution."

Corresponding to the fragmentation of political parties during this period was the heavy infusion of politics into Spanish life: journalists and orators alike propounded remedies for national ills and cloaked individual aspirations under the abstractions of morality or universal truth. All too frequently, rhetorical appeals to patriotism, progress, civilization, or tradition concealed personal rivalries, a desperate search for employment, and the most sordid of manipulations.⁵ Republicans, radicals, and Carlists would, when slighted, boycott elections and sessions of the *Cortes*. Few politicians practiced the consistency that they claimed; thus, Carlists, *alfonsinos*, radicals, and Federal Republicans would ally themselves in electoral pacts. Similarly, change of constitution did not mean change of rulers. Perhaps fortunately for the continuity of Spanish governments, many of Amadeo's ministers were also ministers under the Republic and the Restoration.

Despite the violence, disorder, governmental weakness, and heavy politicizing of Spanish life, the revolutionary period 1868–1874 marked, as contemporaries were well aware, a watershed in Spanish history. Spanish capacities for constitutional government and the enjoyment of political liberty were on trial. Although the experience was shattering to Spanish morale and caused a pervasive feeling of failure, many of the problems of Spanish life were openly debated for the first time. Freedom, whether of the press, of speech, of trade, or even of religion, was for most liberals a desirable end; Spanish inability to exercise freedom reflected the

5. Galdós was to remark in *La desheredada* that "en España el despecho es una idea política." Cuban slaveholders financed journals to oppose the emancipation of slaves; these same slaveowners organized republican riots to discredit the government. See Hennessy, *Federal Republic*, 166.

imperfect state of Spanish society, not defective goals. After the overexcitement of the revolutionary period, the Restoration offered a breathing space, a time to consolidate revolutionary achievements. Spanish politicians were now always conscious of the divisive religious question, of provincial pressures for a measure of autonomy, of middle-class intellectuals' demands for guaranteed individual rights, and of the inevitability of the emancipation of Cuban slaves. Disorder was the great fear of the Restoration. There was, however, no thought of return to the authoritarian administrations of Isabeline Spain.

Above all, the Revolution of 1868 saturated Spain with rhetoric. National problems were to be discussed; verbal formulas would precede and often replace practical solutions. Everyday questions of economics or social organization had less weight than appeals to ethics⁶ or to a lachrymose social romanticism.⁷ "Immorality" was the primary charge leveled against Queen Isabel; it was the "immorality" of the death penalty and of slavery and of the disappearance in Sagasta's hands of 2 million pesetas that greatly exercised the political orators of the period. In this and subsequent decades, morality rather than expediency or self-advantage would, at least in theory, provide the starting point for criticism of national life. The abuses and hypocrisies of Spanish political and social life were no longer defended; they might be accepted with regret, but they were now measured against some higher standard.

Galdós's Political Journalism, 1865–1873

From the age of twenty-one, Galdós worked as a journalist. He wrote some one hundred and thirty articles for the *progresista* newspaper *La Nación* between February 1865 and October 1868, was political correspondent for the short-lived *demócrata* journal *Las Cortes* in 1869, became editor of the newspaper *El Debate* in

6. Jover uses the term *humanismo popular* to describe the ethical sense of the revolutionaries of 1868. This humanism was based on sincerity, an evangelical sense of charity and solidarity, and a vulnerability to rhetoric; its adherents came from the lower middle classes, urban artisans, and the proletariat. See José María Jover, *Política, diplomacia y humanismo popular*, 358.

7. See Hennessy, *Federal Republic*, 85–88.

January 1871,⁸ contributed to the influential *Revista de España* between 1870 and 1873, and was its editor from February 1872 to November 1873. As a journalist, Galdós wrote speedily and methodically, revealing a facility that would prove useful in the research and composition of the *episodios*. In his early *costumbrista* articles in *La Nación*, Galdós employed techniques that would later serve Gabriel Araceli for his *memorias*: conversations with the reader, imitation of popular speech, pinpointing of characters by salient external features, abuse of suspense, and ponderous digressions and generalizations. In his political writing, Galdós also acquired skills perhaps detrimental to a future novelist: the facile handling of political jargon, insincerity,⁹ and a polemical approach to national life. Above all, a constant rhetorical overkill dominates Galdós's political articles: he appeals to absolute truth or morality to score temporary political points, depersonalizes and caricatures opponents, pontificates on trivial grounds, and frequently predicts imminent national disaster.

The ideology and attitudes of Galdós's early journalism coincide with those of the first series of *episodios nacionales*.¹⁰ Despite heavy political censorship, Galdós in *La Nación* sneeringly attacks the *Unión Liberal* and pours withering sarcasm on the hypocrisy, lack of true Christianity, and political involvement of

8. For a discussion of Galdós's collaboration in *Las Cortes*, see Jacques Beyrie, *Galdós et son mythe*, 1:257–83. *El Debate* was founded by the Anglophile and former *unionista* José Luis Albareda (1828–1897). Albareda was a fervent partisan of *conciliación* (the coalition of centrist parties). He fled Spain after the attempted Radical coup of 23 April 1873, returned as Civil Governor of Madrid after Pavía's coup, and served as Spanish ambassador to Paris and London under the Restoration. Galdós was later to claim that *El Debate* was financed by Cuban slaveowners. See Benito Pérez Galdós, *Amadeo I, Obras completas*, 4:490–91.

9. Galdós's alter ego, Tito Liviano, would later remark that his pen was for sale to the highest bidder. See Galdós, *Amadeo I*, 4:500.

10. The coincidence has been discussed by Nigel Glendinning, "Psychology and Politics in the First Series of the *Episodios Nacionales*," 58–60; by Brian J. Dendle, "Albareda, Galdós and the *Revista de España* (1868–1873)"; by C. N. Robin, "Une genèse des *Episodios Nacionales*"; by Francisco Pérez Gutiérrez, "Benito Pérez Galdós," 190–96; by Demetrio Estébanez Calderón, "Evolución política de Galdós y su repercusión en la obra literaria." Hans Hinterhäuser, *Los "Episodios Nacionales" de Benito Pérez Galdós*, 137–41; Antonio Regalado García, *Benito Pérez Galdós y la Novela Histórica Española: 1868–1912*, 89–95; and Peter B. Goldman ("Galdós and the Politics of Conciliation") use the *Revista de España* articles to establish Galdós's early political ideology.

neo-Catholics.¹¹ The editorial columns of *El Debate*, unsigned but for the most part written by Galdós, defend Spanish policy in Cuba, the constitutional monarchy of Amadeo, political *conciliación* that is contrasted to the factious spirit that divided the liberals during the *trienio*, and a “liberty” defined as “respeto a las leyes y acatamiento al juego regular de las instituciones” (respect for laws and the normal functioning of institutions), “moderación y templanza en el poder” (moderation and temperance in power).¹²

The values of conservative liberalism were best expressed in another of Albareda’s journals, the intellectual biweekly *Revista de España*. The *Revista de España* championed the English constitutional system of government, freedom of press and of assembly, religious liberty, free trade, ministerial responsibility, and the rights of property. Liberty, the *Revista* stressed, could not prevail at the expense of order.¹³ To the “repugnant crimes” of the French Revolution, Albareda admiringly opposed the conservative English Revolution of 1688 and the Belgian Revolution of 1830.

In 1871 and 1872, Galdós wrote fourteen political articles, the “Revista Política Interior,” for the *Revista de España*. Galdós’s commentaries were polemical rather than factual and, like much contemporary political writing, pompous and high-minded. Galdós stressed “patriotism,” which in the context of the 1870s all too frequently meant support for the Spanish presence in Cuba, and expressed strong fears of disorder, above all that of the mob. He defended Amadeo’s rule and the ministries of *conciliación*; he bewailed the “immorality” of electoral coalitions of Republicans, Carlists, *alfonsinos*, and Ruiz Zorrilla’s Radicals, noted the eco-

11. See William H. Shoemaker, *Los artículos de Galdós en “La Nación,”* 35, 355–59. *La Nación* was suspended by O’Donnell in June 1866, in an attempt to muzzle the uproar created by the execution of sergeants of the San Gil Barracks. The succeeding *moderado* government did not permit publication to resume until January 1868.

12. Anon., “Radicalismo ¿es liberalismo?”

13. For a fuller discussion of Albareda’s views, see Dendle, “Albareda,” 362–77. Galdós’s articles in the *Revista de España* have been reprinted: Benito Pérez Galdós, *Los artículos políticos en la “Revista de España,” 1871–1872*. For a lucid exposition of Galdós’s political articles in the *Revista de España* and of the context in which they were written, see Goldman, “Galdós and the Politics of Conciliation.”

nomic distress caused by the Carlist uprising, and was dismayed by changes in civil service personnel and the restructuring of the army proposed by Ruiz Zorrilla's government in the fall of 1872.

In the *Revista de España*, Galdós stressed conservative moral qualities of prudence, abnegation, conciliation, patriotism, reason, and experience. Emotionalism and dogmatism were to be avoided in politics. Reformers who failed to pay heed to the strength of prejudice and established custom would always fail.¹⁴ Speaking in the apocalyptic terms of the political pamphleteer, Galdós foresaw disaster if the degraded moral attitudes of those who opposed conservative rule prevailed (13 January 1872, p. 150). Belief in Divine Providence—a term that Galdós apparently used as a synonym for the liberal concept of progress—was threatened if Spaniards failed to rule themselves in accordance with “la fuerza incontrastable de la lógica” (13 January 1872, p. 152; 28 May 1872, p. 296). National misfortunes were explained by the impulsive, adolescent romanticism of the Spanish character (13 January 1872, p. 151). Spaniards were overfond of the dramatic (13 June 1872, p. 458). A silent majority of Spaniards was driven, by disgust or moral laziness, from participation in the political life of the nation (28 March 1872, p. 289; 13 April 1872, p. 455).

In his treatment of political opponents, Galdós was abusive. Castelar was an opportunist; Nocedal and Ruiz Zorrilla surrounded themselves with nonentities; Don Carlos possessed “la voluntad antojadiza y quijotesca de un rey de teatro” (the sickly, quixotic will of a stage king; 28 April 1872, p. 615). While the ruling party of former *unionistas* and *progresistas* was sensible, honorable, and practical, its opponents, whether of the right or of the left, were “immoral” and “criminal.” The Radical party was corrupt and blinded by passion and intrigue (13 April 1872, pp. 448–49). The Carlists, composed of “the dregs of the population” (13 May 1872, p. 139), were mercenary and corrupt, “the greatest abomination of modern times” (28 April 1872, pp. 612–13, 615–16). Republicans could not be taken seriously; a Republic, Galdós noted presciently, would be the harbinger of a Bourbon Restoration (13 June 1872, p. 466).

14. *Revista de España*, 28 June 1872, 615. Subsequent references to the *Revista* will be given in the text.

Galdós's contempt for the masses was marked. The Paris Commune was "desvarío" (madness), "bárbara e inmoral insurrección"; the Spanish workers' Mayday procession was unpatriotic (13 May 1871, pp. 132, 135). Galdós treated with loathing the mobs who attacked Catholic dwellings: "Ninguna idea les impelía, ni el deseo de ruin y baja venganza les estimulaba; moviales tan sólo ese secreto impulso a hacer daño que existe en la más baja esfera social, envilecida por el vicio y atrofiada por la ignorancia" (No idea inspired them, nor did the desire for a low, base vengeance stimulate them; they were moved only by that secret impulse to cause harm that exists in the lowest social sphere, rendered vile by vice and atrophied by ignorance; 28 June, pp. 632–33). Similarly, communists were motivated by ignorance, thirst for blood, and envy (28 April 1872, p. 613).

By June 1872, the army was for Galdós the only element of order left to Spain, the only institution that could allow Spain to survive as a recognizable nation (28 June 1872, p. 614). Throughout 1873, under Galdós's editorship, the *Revista de España* continued to extol the army as the guardian of Spanish liberties and order. At the same time, the journal opposed granting concessions to Cuban rebels and warned of the grave risks that would accompany any premature emancipation of the slaves.

La Fontana de Oro and *El audaz*

Before *Trafalgar*, Galdós wrote two historical novels: *La Fontana de Oro* (written in 1868, published in 1870) and *El audaz* (1871). In both works, he sees in Spain's past those same disorders that he believed afflicted the Spain of the 1870s. He examines the psychology of ideologues, condemns the Church's control of consciences, and portrays with anger and contempt the actions of the mob.

In *La Fontana de Oro*, Galdós treats the Spain of September 1821, in which revolutionary violence is preached by demagogues in the pay of agents of Fernando VII, who is intent on discrediting the constitutional regime. Although Fernando VII is grotesquely caricatured, fictional characters, whether of the right or of the left, are presented plausibly in terms of psychological

motivation and individual history.¹⁵ The political setting, in which the absolutists mischievously promote an anarchy of the left, manifestly resembles that of the Spain of Galdós's day. Indeed, in the December 1870 preamble to the novel, Galdós draws attention to the similarity of situation.

Galdós's teaching in *La Fontana de Oro* is anticlerical and also, in its strong opposition to demagoguery and disorder, reveals a conservative liberalism akin to that expounded by Albareda in the *Revista de España*. Galdós's attack on the abuse of religion is crudely propagandistic: a priest attempts to seduce Clara; the Porreño sisters, the defenders of Catholic values, are vengeful, hypocritical, frustrated spinsters, totally lacking in charity; mysticism is connected with catalepsy; religious mania results from thwarted sexuality. In his assault on ideologues, Galdós scornfully reproduces the cant phrases of demagogues, a jargon that, whether Catholic, absolutist, or revolutionary, represents the absence of thought. Disliking both the fanaticism of the absolutists and the equally fanatical, although more ingenuous, liberalism of the *exaltados*, Galdós praises the maintenance of order by responsible authority. Thus, he approvingly cites the example of the army in putting to flight a cowardly mob; he blames much of the disorder of the period on the *indecisiones* of the minister Felú.

15. For the background to *La Fontana de Oro*, see José Pérez Vidal, "Acercamiento a *La Fontana de Oro*"; Stephen Gilman, *Galdós and the Art of the European Novel: 1867-1887*, 3-48; Jacques Beyrie, *Galdós et son mythe*, 1:73-122. For the treatment of the "hero" Lázaro, see Monroe Z. Hafter, "The Hero in Galdós' *La Fontana de Oro*," and Marie A. Wellington, "The Awakening of Galdós' Lázaro." Carroll B. Johnson perceptively discusses the connections among character, setting, and action ("The Café in Galdós' *La Fontana de Oro*"); Chad Wright discusses the creation of the Porreño household ("Artifacts and Effigies: The Porreño Household Revisited"). Clark M. Zlotchew examines Galdós's treatment of mass psychology ("Galdós and Mass Psychology"). Joaquín Gimeno Casalduero traces the subsequent fortunes of the Porreños and Coletilla in "Galdós y la reaparición de personajes: Las Porreño, Garrote y Coletilla." Juan López-Morillas, who accepts Galdós's declarations of intent at face value, surveys Galdós's treatment of history ("Historia y novela en el Galdós primerizo: En torno a *La Fontana de Oro*"). Albert Dérozier usefully elucidates Galdós's avoidance of social problems and stress on political and moral solutions ("El 'pueblo' de Pérez Galdós en *La Fontana de Oro*"). Clara, as a precursor in the role of "victim" of Inés and Solita in the *episodios*, is discussed by Marie-Claire Petit, *Les Personnages féminins dans les romans de Benito Pérez Galdós*, 449-57. For a concise but penetrating analysis of the novel, including treatment of its relationship with the *episodios nacionales* and with Balzac's *Pierrette*, see Marie-Claire Petit, *Galdós et La Fontana de Oro. Genèse de l'oeuvre d'un romancier*, 1-105.

For Galdós, ideologues combine intellectual narrowness and rigidity with an energy that draws its strength from such unacknowledged selfish drives as greed or lust; ideology, indeed, always conceals a personal motivation.¹⁶ Intellectualism and a passionate temperament explain Elías Orejón's maniacal royalism; Paulita Porreño's denial of her womanhood is linked to her narrow intellectualism and religious fanaticism; Claudio Bozmediano, the rescuer of maidens in distress, is motivated by lust as he converts the world into a sentimental novel; Lázaro's idealism and patriotism are based on *egoísmo* and the desire for personal glory. A similar self-centeredness exists in those who believe they are favored by destiny; those so deluded fear reality and consequently shirk the effort needed to achieve their aims: "Los jóvenes como aquél no gustan de concretar las cosas porque temen la realidad; creen demasiado en la predestinación, y engañados por la brillantez del sueño piensan que los sucesos han de venir a buscarlos, en vez de buscar ellos a los sucesos" (Young men such as he do not like to be too specific because they fear reality; they believe excessively in predestination, and, deceived by the brilliance of their dreams, think that success will seek them, rather than themselves seeking success).¹⁷

Contrasted to rhetorical and selfish values are the virtues of the orphan Clara: trust, patience, and wifely devotion. Lázaro learns the lesson of experience. Renouncing political ambition, he finds happiness in matrimonial joy and the humble tasks of his native village.¹⁸

El audaz, the "historia de un radical de antaño" (history of a radical of yesteryear), was published as the *folletín* in the *Revista de España* between June and November 1871. The novel is set in

16. Note Galdós's similar claim when treating Santiago Ibero and Juan Santuste in the fourth and fifth series of *episodios*.

17. Benito Pérez Galdós, *La Fontana de Oro*, *Obras completas*, 4:41.

18. *Ibid.*, 4:185. For the text of the alternative ending, in which Lázaro is murdered by Coletilla and Clara dies, insane, four days later, and for a sensitive discussion of the artistic superiority of the present-day ending, see Florian Smieja, "An Alternative Ending of *La Fontana de Oro*." Joaquín Gimeno Casalduero argues that the alternative ending belongs to the second edition and was inspired by Galdós's despair at the assassination of Prim ("Los dos enlaces de *La Fontana de Oro*: origen y significado"). Walter T. Pattison, however, in his refutation of Gimeno Casalduero's thesis, convincingly establishes that the tragic ending is indeed that of the first edition ("*La Fontana de Oro*: Its Early History").

the year 1804 and describes a fictitious conspiracy, organized in part by the protagonist of the novel, Martín Muriel, to overthrow the Bourbons and abolish feudal privilege. Throughout the novel, Galdós exposes the corruption and legal and social injustices of the *Antiguo Régimen*; he denounces the aristocracy as frivolous and effeminate. As in *La Fontana de Oro*, he attacks the arbitrary power of the Church, presents without sentimentality the *pueblo* as venal, envious, and bullying, and portrays the horrors of mob action. Despite the obvious desirability of the reforms advocated by Muriel, Galdós cautions against precipitate action. Muriel is only a precursor, out of place in his age. Vested interests will not cede their favored positions overnight, for change will only come slowly and at the cost of much blood.¹⁹

As in *La Fontana de Oro*, Galdós explores in *El audaz* the psychology of revolutionaries. Muriel, isolated from others, of superior intellect and energy, is a romantic man of action, stirred by strong passions and unable to compromise. His "patriotism," however, is self-proclaimed and masks *egoísmo*; his lofty rhetoric has little contact with reality. Overexcitable and dominated by hatred, he is insane by the end of the novel. The proud aristocrat Susana, also unable to compromise with the mediocre society in which she lives, is likewise doomed to suicide. Muriel's ideological belief that national reform will emerge from destruction is based not on analysis of the situation but on an inner need to destroy. Muriel has enough lucidity to despise the means at his disposal and to recognize that his "ideals" have no possibility of realization. His thought, however, is narrow and inflexible. For psychological survival, he must believe himself the incarnation of the designs of Providence.

In his portrayals of Susana and Muriel, Galdós creates for the first time in his historical fiction strong inner-directed characters. Muriel is a precursor of the revolutionaries of the *episodios*: of Luis Santorcaz in his isolation, ingenuousness, and rancor and of Salvador Monsalud in his strong personal reaction against the

19. *El audaz*, 4:239. *El audaz* has received markedly less critical treatment than *La Fontana de Oro*. Its sources have been treated by Francisco Ynduráin, *Galdós entre la novela y el folletín*. The stylistic aspects of the novel have been discussed by Leonel-Antonio de la Cuesta, *El audaz: Análisis integral*. The most perceptive discussion is that of Beyrie in *Galdós et son mythe*, 2:123-49.

abuses of society. Nevertheless, despite the convincing psychological motivation attributed to the rebels Susana and Muriel, and the lively portrayal of aristocratic customs, *El audaz* is a less polished literary work than *La Fontana de Oro*. It smacks too much of the *folletín*: chapters end on notes of suspense, villains expound their schemes at length and in a childishly simplistic manner, conversations are often padded, and behavior is explained by clumsy reference to such an abstract quality as “el orgullo” (pride).

The First Series of Episodios Nacionales, 1873-1875



etween February 1873 and March 1875, Galdós completed ten historical novels, the *episodios nacionales*, treating the history of Spain between 1805 (the Battle of Trafalgar) and 1813 (the Battle of Salamanca); the novels are linked by the common first-person narrator, Gabriel Araceli. According to Galdós's somewhat unreliable *memorias*, he began preparations for the first *episodio nacional*, *Trafalgar*, during his stay in Santander in the summer of 1872;¹ the novel was written during January and February 1873. Galdós's original plan was to compose twenty *episodios nacionales* in the form of the purported *memorias* of Gabriel Araceli. The *memorias* were to cover the history of Spain between 1805 and 1840, that is, up to the end of the First Carlist War.² At the time of composition of *Trafalgar*, Galdós had already decided which historical events he wished to treat in the first series of ten *episodios*; his original plan included treatment of the battles of Talavera and San Marcial. By the summer of 1873, Galdós had completed two *episodios*, *Trafalgar*, a rather clumsy account of a naval engagement, and *La corte de Carlos IV*, a lively treatment of social interaction and of the complex interplay of life and art. At this stage in the composition of the *episodios*, Galdós, perhaps recognizing that his talents did not lie in the re-creation of military actions, modified his original plan, substituting for the two novels that were to relate the battles of Talavera and San Marcial *episodios* that would emphasize

1. See Benito Pérez Galdós, *Memorias*, 56–57. In Santander, Galdós interviewed a survivor from the Battle of Trafalgar, a former cabin-boy from the *Santísima Trinidad*.

2. For a discussion of Galdós's original intentions, see Hans Hinterhäuser, *Los "Episodios Nacionales" de Benito Pérez Galdós*, 25; R. Cardona, "Apostillas a Los 'Episodios Nacionales' de B. P. G., de Hans Hinterhäuser"; and Brian J. Dendle, "A Note on the Genesis of the *Episodios Nacionales*."

social life and literature (*Napoleón en Chamartín*) and character and adventure (*Juan Martín el Empecinado*). Subsequently, in a decision perhaps not made until the composition of the final *episodio* of the first series, *La batalla de los Arapiles*, in February and March 1875, Galdós drastically changed his plan. The first-person account of the adventures of Gabriel Araceli would end with the first series of *episodios*. The second series, written between 1875 and 1879, became a third-person account of the career of Salvador Monsalud and covered Spanish history between 1813 and 1834.

Trafalgar was written in January and February 1873, that is, during the final weeks of Amadeo's reign; the Republic was proclaimed on 11 February 1873. In the novel, Galdós treats a single historical event: the disastrous, if glorious, defeat of the combined French and Spanish fleets in 1805. The sights and emotions of the battle are re-created in the enthusiastic first-person narrative of Gabriel; supplementing his account are eyewitness reports of the heroic deaths of Churruca, Nelson, and Alcalá Galiano.

Premonitions of disaster are omnipresent: two previous Spanish defeats at the hands of the English in 1801 and 1804 are recalled; Spanish subservience to French interests is attacked; allusions to Godoy's incapacity and to England's manifest naval superiority are made. There is, however, little attempt at presenting the naval engagement in a wider historical perspective: references to the Spain of the eighteenth century are scant; the policies of the Spanish government are seen only at a distance, through the eyes of Gabriel's acquaintances in Cádiz. The impact of the defeat on European affairs is dismissed in two paragraphs, with Gabriel's recollection of contemporary French victories at Ulm and Austerlitz and of Napoleon's apparent indifference to the loss of the allied fleets.

Galdós is above all concerned with description of the battle; details of contemporary life are given in passing. Thus, Galdós notes the religiosity of the women of the period, the role of gossip in a society lacking newspapers, and the surprised reaction of provincial Spaniards to foreign dress. The apparently trivial details often indicate the character of the age: Churruca's worn-out uniform symbolizes devotion to duty at a time when the Court

neglects to pay naval salaries; the powdering of officers' wigs and the time-consuming arrangement of sailors' pigtails reflect the concern for ceremony, rather than for utility, of the *Antiguo Régimen*; the spreading of sand to absorb blood brings home the horrors of war at sea.

The colorful re-creation of a historical event was only part of Galdós's task in *Trafalgar*. Writing at a time of apparent national disintegration, Galdós sought examples from the past of those values—patriotism, self-sacrifice, perseverance, rational judgment, faith—that, he believed, would most benefit the confused and strife-ridden nation of early 1873.

The choice of *Trafalgar* as subject for the first *episodio nacional* contains within itself a lesson of optimism. As his readers well knew, the defeat of *Trafalgar* was merely the prelude to the later Spanish triumph in the War of Independence. To a nation surfeited since the Revolution of 1868 with facile rhetorical appeals to patriotism and self-sacrifice, Galdós affirms not cynicism but renewed faith. Idealistic abstractions, as Gabriel comes to realize, are not empty words but are intimately connected with personal and national well-being. Thus, on the morning of the naval combat, Gabriel accepts for the first time a reality greater than that of immediate self-interest: "por primera vez, después que existía, altas concepciones, elevadas imágenes y generosos pensamientos ocuparon mi mente" (for the first time in my existence, noble concepts, elevated images and generous thoughts filled my mind).³

The value exalted above all others in *Trafalgar* is patriotism.⁴ "Amor santo de la patria," Gabriel explains, directed his actions between 1805 and 1834 and, in 1873, can still bring tears to his eyes (1:184). Immediately before the Battle of Trafalgar, Gabriel is illuminated by "la idea de la patria." His vision of fatherland is

3. 1:217. Compare Muriel's disgust in *El audaz* at the lack of idealism shown by his fellow conspirators.

4. The symbol of the nation—the flag—was printed on the cover of the novel, as well as on the covers of subsequent volumes of *episodios nacionales*. References to the flag abound in *Trafalgar*; note that both Churruca and Alcalá Galiano nail the Spanish flag to the mast of their ships, as a sign of their refusal to surrender. For a discussion of the increasing nationalism of European nations following the Franco-Prussian War, see Carlton J. H. Hayes, *A Generation of Materialism, 1871–1900*.

all-embracing. It includes religion, sentimental attachment, self-interest, nature, the past, and a pact for mutual protection. All elements in the nation are joined in loving connection, as a vast projection of the soul (1:218–19).

Love of nation does not, however, imply a blind faith. Galdós justifies defense, but not aggression (1:219), for nations can be mistaken (1:235) and wars are caused by the personal ambitions of the few (1:231). Awareness of one's own nation leads to respect for the nations of others. The English, Gabriel realizes, also have their *patria* and are not the pirates that his earlier immature vision had assumed; they too have their hero (Nelson), treat their prisoners with courtesy, and show respect for Spanish heroes. Transcending a narrow concept of nation, Galdós looks forward to the day when all men will live as brothers. Thus, when faced with a common danger and motivated by the "holy sentiment of humanity and charity" (1:230), English and Spanish sailors assist one another. Similarly, the citizens of Cádiz make no distinction in caring for the wounded from both English and Spanish fleets.

Writing in early 1873, when little semblance of governmental authority remained in Spain, Galdós in *Trafalgar* stressed the importance of leadership. Spain, Don Alonso exclaims, lacks a statesman, who would preserve the dignity of the Crown and not involve the nation in useless wars (1:204). Similarly, on learning of the heroic death of Alcalá Galiano, Gabriel laments that such a leader was not placed in command of the fleet (1:249). The morale of followers depends almost totally on the quality of their leaders. Churruca, exalting his crew with an appeal to religion and to military duty, inspires even the pressed sailors, who are regarded with contempt by Araceli throughout the novel, to heroism (1:234). With Churruca's death the will to resist disappears and his ship surrenders.

Gabriel's idealism includes religious belief. Gabriel has frequent recourse to prayer, and pious expressions abound on his lips; Marcial avows his love of God in his final confession to Gabriel. Religion, as service to a higher ideal, is intimately connected with love of country and is described as "holy" and "divine"; Gabriel's concept of nation includes "la iglesia, sarcófago de sus mayores, habitación de sus santos y arca de sus creencias" (the church, the tomb of their ancestors, the dwelling place of their

saints, and the ark of their beliefs; 1:219). Religion is an essential element in the character of the exemplary leader Churruca (1:233), who promises paradise to those who die in battle and who before death elevates his thoughts to God (1:235).

But besides the calls to exemplary patriotism, leadership, and religious devotion, Galdós also demands that idealism be tempered by common sense, that goals and means be in accord. Galdós gives approbation not to the quixotic Don Alonso, who considers glory and honor to be sufficient ends for war, but to the bad-tempered Doña Francisca, who insistently questions the utility of the war (1:193). The quarrel with England is France's rather than Spain's. Although the Spanish fleet is in no condition to enter combat, Gravina frivolously commits the navy to battle under the goading of Villeneuve. Doña Francisca's acid comment that Gravina's conduct lacks prudence is confirmed by the mature Gabriel (1:253). Sacrifice and loyalty cannot forever be demanded when rulers neglect their followers' needs; the wealth of the State is wasted on the Court, while ships are without supplies and their crews unpaid. Under the circumstances, the sailor whom Gabriel meets on the road to Cádiz is justified in his flight from involvement in national affairs in order to attend to the humble demands of domestic life: "Lo dicho, no quiero servir al Rey. A mi casa voy con mi mujer; pues ya he cumplido" (As I said, I do not wish to serve the King. I'm going home to my wife; since I've already done my duty; 1:248).

The narrative is related by the aged Gabriel—he is without patronymic in the novel—who, writing in 1873, recalls his participation as a fourteen-year-old in the Battle of Trafalgar.⁵ His career—and the lesson was clearly intended as one of inspiration for the depressed Spaniards of 1873—is from the outset conceived as one of success. An orphan of low birth, he nevertheless possesses "cierta cultura o delicadeza ingénita" (a certain culture or innate delicacy; 1:183) that enables him rapidly to free himself from the influence of his ragged childhood companions. Gabriel

5. A perceptive discussion of the dual role of Gabriel Araceli, as aged narrator and participant, is that of Ricardo Gullón, "Los episodios: La primera serie." Despite Gullón's useful warning against identifying the views of the protagonist with those of Galdós, Gullón misses, I believe, the element of irony in Galdós's portrayal of Gabriel.

is deeply religious and capable of the noble sentiments of love, fraternity, and patriotism; he risks his life in a heroic attempt to save Marcial. Above all else, Gabriel possesses a sense of personal worth. He suffers strongly from the slights offered to one of his low social position but realizes that determination will conquer any handicap. At the end of the novel, he refuses to accept further the humiliation of servitude. Individual effort, he much later realizes, will bring its proper reward: “Viendo la recompensa que tenía mi ardiente cariño, comprendí que a nada podría aspirar en el mundo, y sólo más tarde adquirí la firme convicción de que un grande y constante esfuerzo mío me daría quizás todo aquello que no poseía” (Seeing the reward earned by my ardent affection, I realized that I could aspire to nothing in the world, and only much later did I acquire the strong conviction that a great and constant effort on my part would perhaps give me all that I did not possess; 1:197).

Gabriel’s role is not only exemplary, for Galdós attempts, in his portrayal of Gabriel’s sensuality, egotism, and emotional conflicts, to recapture the psychology of an adolescent. Although Gabriel implausibly claims ignorance of the facts of life, Rosita’s physical development, a swim in the Bay of Cádiz, Doña Flora’s abundant if faded charms, all stir Gabriel’s burgeoning sexuality. Further aspects of Gabriel’s adolescent emotions are his lack of resignation to his humble condition, his hatred of his sexual rival Malespina that leads to a momentary perverse joy at the false news of Malespina’s death, his feelings of solitude and egotism, and a self-awareness that seeks an invisible audience for his prowess.⁶

Characters and situations also have a symbolic value. Gabriel, the orphan who in *Trafalgar* has no patronymic, heralds, as his name suggests, the Spain that will constitute itself in the nineteenth century. His adventures parallel those of Spain; thus, his personal disappointment in love and his refusal to despair accompany national defeat (the naval disaster) and later victory (the War of Independence). While the Spain of the future is represented in

6. Note his initially selfish reaction on realizing that he and Marcial are alone on the sinking *Rayo*: “¡Me han dejado! ¡Nos han dejado!” (They have abandoned me! They have abandoned us!; 1:246), and his fatuous contemplation of his own courage in the initial stages of battle (1:220, 223).

an orphan of uncertain parentage, the impotence of the *Antiguo Régimen* is expressed in three characters: the lying boaster Mal-espina, the crippled Marcial, and the quixotic Don Alonso, whose automatic references to past battles are symptomatic of a Spain paralyzed in the attitudes of an earlier era. Despite the idealism and courage of Don Alonso and Marcial, they now serve only to pray. The Spain of the *Antiguo Régimen*, in which decrepit rulers are with difficulty borne by the nation, is fittingly expressed when Gabriel assists the two old men as they tottering set out for adventure: “Parecía aquello una de esas procesiones en que marcha sobre vacilante palanquín, un grupo de santos viejos y apollillados, que amenazan venirse al suelo en cuanto se acelere un poco el paso de los que les llevan” (It seemed like one of those processions in which a tottering palanquin bears a group of aged moth-eaten saints, who threaten to fall to the ground as soon as the pace of the carriers slightly quickens; 1:198).

Although Galdós spent more time on the preparation of *Trafalgar* than on any subsequent *episodio*, *Trafalgar* is nonetheless the weakest of the *episodios* in literary merit. In the historical novels *La Fontana de Oro* and *El audaz*, Galdós relates the experiences of individuals (Lázaro, Muriel) who function in a specific historical context; the stress in these novels is on the individual’s experience. In *Trafalgar*, however, far greater weight is given to the retailing of historical information, and Gabriel’s personal experiences are correspondingly subordinated.

The choice of a first-person narrative created, as Galdós later recognized,⁷ difficulties for the author. While the first-person narrative allows a vivid presentation of the sights and emotions of battle, Galdós’s need to present an overall vision of the combat and its historical background forces him into implausibility—Gabriel serves on no less than three ships during the battle—and into seeking further viewpoints than those of a fourteen-year-old child. Thus, he supplements Gabriel’s eyewitness account with that of three others who relate the deaths of Churruca, Nelson, and Alcalá Galiano. Gabriel also claims the role of a historian whose later studies enable him to give a panoramic vision of the

7. See Chap. 5, n. 10.

combat. In imitation of conventional histories, Gabriel provides a diagram to illustrate the positions of the thirty-four ships of the Franco-Spanish fleet at the commencement of the engagement.

Gabriel's role in the novel lacks coherence. He is at one and the same time an eyewitness to and participant in a great historical event, an adolescent coming to terms with himself and the outside world, the protagonist in what will prove to be an exemplary tale of worldly success, and the aged narrator of *memorias*. Gabriel the narrator is removed in time and attitude from Gabriel the participant. The Gabriel of 1873 is sententious, pompous, and self-gratulatory; the gap between the breathless enthusiasm of the fourteen-year-old and the almost senile self-satisfaction of the eighty-two-year-old is all but unbridgeable. Moreover, Gabriel's conflicting roles of frightened adolescent and of observer of battles lead Galdós into psychological acrobacy, as in the following wooden passage: "El entusiasmo de los primeros momentos se había apagado en mí, y mi corazón se llenó de un terror que me paralizaba, ahogando todas las funciones de mi espíritu, excepto la curiosidad. Esta era tan irresistible, que me obligó a salir a los sitios de mayor peligro" (My enthusiasm of the first moments had died, and my heart filled with a terror that paralyzed me, stifling all the functions of my spirit, except for curiosity. The latter was so irresistible, that it forced me to frequent the positions of greatest danger; 1:222).

A further defect of *Trafalgar* lies in the imperfect assimilation of didactic and overly fictitious elements. Galdós wished both to entertain and to instruct. However, the clumsy attempts at amusing the reader with the portrayal of the implausibly comic and with the adoption of a narrative method that ostentatiously uses the devices of fictional models impede suspension of disbelief. Even within the confines of the novel, the reader is obtrusively presented with fiction rather than with simulated autobiography. Thus, while the ponderous references to the picaresque novel and to the *Quixote* are perhaps in keeping with the character of the aged Gabriel, the naming of a sailor after Pedro Abad, the putative scribe of the *Poema de Mio Cid*, merely carries the reader into a world of deliberate literary mystification. Furthermore, the portrayal of unifaceted comic characters (Marcial, José María Malespina), the attribution of botanical names to characters (Flo-

ra, Rosita, Malespina, Cisniega), the facile punning on such names, and Malespina's anachronistic inventions all contribute to the trivialization of a serious topic.

Galdós's determination to entertain the reader and Gabriel's intrusive consciousness of his role as narrator are most apparent in the almost parodic recourse to the devices of the popular novel of adventures. Suspense is abused: Malespina's death is falsely reported; Gabriel twice loses consciousness; Gabriel makes little attempt at explaining his rescues from near death. Throughout *Trafalgar*, and in imitation of the popular novel, pretentious phrases, self-conscious discussions with the reader of the novelist's task, deliberate banality, and trite sententiousness are designedly employed:

Pretentiousness: Un día mil veces funesto, mil veces lúgubre . . . (One day a thousand times ill-omened, a thousand times gloomy; 1:196.)

Reduction of narrative self-consciousness to trite formulas: El lector extrañará que no conociéramos la suerte de muchos buques de la escuadra combinada. (The reader will be surprised that we did not know the fate of many ships of the combined squadron; 1:226.)

No puedo describir el entusiasmo . . . (I cannot describe the enthusiasm; 1:205.)

Deliberate selection of a banal adjective: (To describe his rescue from death) ¡Qué indecible satisfacción!. (What inexpressible satisfaction! 1:237.)

(To describe the manufacture of coffins) También tuve la indecible satisfacción de ayudar a los carpinteros . . . (I also had the inexpressible satisfaction of assisting the carpenters; 1:221.)

Sententiousness: Desde entonces conocí que el heroísmo es casi siempre una forma del pundonor. (From that moment I knew that heroism is almost always a form of point of honor; 1:223.)

No es impropio el llanto en las grandes almas; antes bien, indica el consorcio fecundo de la delicadeza de sentimientos con la energía de carácter. (Weeping is not improper in great souls; rather, it indicates the fertile combination of delicacy of feeling and energy of character; 1:225.)

Las exequias del mar son más tristes que las de la tierra. (Funeral rites at sea are sadder than those on land; 1:227.)

In the following example, the primitive physiology of the popular novel is incongruously combined with the prosaic statement of time: "Los cabellos blancos que hoy cubren mi cabeza se erizan todavía al recordar aquellas tremendas horas, principal-

mente desde las dos a las cuatro de la tarde” (The white hairs that today cover my head still stand on end when I recall those terrible hours, especially from two to four in the afternoon; 1:220). Frequently, Gabriel as narrator consciously composes “literature”; the following balanced phrases are far indeed from the reactions of a fourteen-year-old boy:

La mar, cada vez más turbulenta, furia aún no aplacada con tanta víctima, bramaba con ira, y su insaciable voracidad pedía mayor número de presas. Los despojos de la más numerosa escuadra que por aquel tiempo había desafiado su furor juntamente con el de los enemigos, no se escapaban a la cólera del elemento, irritado como un dios antiguo, sin compasión hasta el último instante, tan cruel ante la fortuna como ante la desdicha. (1:238)

(The sea, ever more turbulent, a fury still not appeased by so many victims, roared with ire, and its insatiable voracity demanded a greater number of prey. The remains of the largest squadron that had in that period challenged its fury, together with that of its enemies, could not escape the anger of the sea, irritated like an ancient god, without compassion up to the last moment, as cruel in good as in ill fortune.)

Historical events and figures play a much lesser role in *La corte de Carlos IV*, written in April and May 1873. But one event of national importance, the Fernandine conspiracy of late 1807, is treated, and this only indirectly, with the account of the arrest of the conspirators. Leading members of the royal family, the dramatist Moratín,⁸ the bestial Caballero (the Minister of Grace and Justice), and Pedro Collado (the lowborn favorite of Prince Fernando) are briefly portrayed. Godoy’s enlightened reforms and early career are rapidly outlined. The hatred for Godoy, the adulation of Fernando, and the dislike for the King are evoked. In the background, but attracting little Spanish concern, French troops enter Spain, ostensibly to invade Portugal.

8. For a discussion of the role of Moratín in *La corte de Carlos IV* and other *episodios*, see Pablo Cabañas, “Moratín en la obra de Galdós.” For purported inaccuracies in Galdós’s portrayal of the *estreno* of *El sí de las niñas*, see Antonio Regalado García, *Benito Pérez Galdós y la Novela Histórica Española*, 46, n. 58. For Galdós’s cruel caricature of Comella, see Cabañas, “Comella visto por Galdós.” Aristides G. Paradissis’s treatment of the structure of *La corte de Carlos IV* is merely introductory (“Observaciones sobre la estructura y el significado de *La corte de Carlos IV*”). “Literary” elements in the novel are intelligently discussed by Germán Gullón, “Narrativizando la Historia: *La corte de Carlos IV*.”

Whereas events of historic importance receive only indirect treatment, the social worlds of the aristocracy and of the stage are described at length. The first performance of *El sí de las niñas* (January 1806)—a comedy that wins Gabriel's approbation for its naturalness, simplicity, and moral intent—is re-created in a flashback. The actor Isidoro Máiquez, with his vanity, violence, and jealousy, is powerfully portrayed. The fictitious intrigue of the novel hinges on the drama: a disdained actress's stratagem of substituting a letter and a dagger brings the obsessed Máiquez, during a performance of Ducis's *Othello*, to the brink of murdering the aristocrat Lesbia, who has toyed with his passion.

Falsehood exists not only in the theater; it pervades the national life of Spain. Gabriel, who briefly serves in the Palace, discovers that the glittering world of the court is as illusory as that of actors. Ministers appear to rule, but they are puppets manipulated by the hidden intrigues of courtiers. The royal family heads the nation, but the queen herself is the victim of blackmail. As in a bad comedy, rewards and punishments are capriciously granted. While courtiers play their fickle roles, the real power—that of Napoleon, to whose tune all must ultimately dance—lurks offstage. Similarly, "reality," Máiquez's passionate jealousy, bursts through the fiction of the dramatic representation.

The aristocracy of Charles IV's court, Galdós charges, is a parasitic class that has no role to play in the life of the nation. Court life is but an ill-conceived comedy in which traditional Spanish values are forgotten. Prince Fernando lacks any concept of familial honor; the queen behaves like the mother in a lachrymose drama, without dignity. Power to influence national events is granted to lowborn upstarts—a characteristic, Gabriel notes, of the 1870s also (1:305, 311)—and to frivolous women like the Duchess Lesbia and the Countess Amaranta, who, without roots in the past and following the dictates of personal interest and passion, seek only sensation. The corruption of a ruling class can, Gabriel warns with an eye to his own day, occur in republics as well as in monarchies; Amaranta is representative not so much of her historical situation as of abstract vice: "era la granjería, la realidad, el cohecho, la injusticia, la simonía, la arbitrariedad, el libertinaje del mando" (profiteering, realism, bribery, injustice, simony, arbitrariness, licentiousness of power; 1:317).

Symptomatic of the loss of function of the aristocracy is the confusion of classes. The lowborn are admitted into the confidence of princes. Bored aristocrats seek the company of *majos*, unwittingly preparing for the rapidly approaching social revolution (1:275). Gabriel, a humble servant, can dream of sudden social elevation, like that of Godoy. Presumption becomes a national characteristic. Gabriel fatuously imagines that he will, without effort on his part, be placed in charge of the destinies of Spain.⁹

y ya habrá observado el lector que, al suponerme amado por una mujer poderosa, mis primeras ideas versaron sobre mi engrandecimiento personal y el ansia de adquirir honores y destinos. En esto he reconocido después la sangre española. Siempre hemos sido los mismos. (1:287)

(and the reader will have already observed that, upon my supposing myself loved by a powerful woman, my first ideas were of personal aggrandizement and the desire to acquire honors and positions. In this I later recognized my Spanish blood. We have always been the same.)

Similarly, Gabriel's belief that he can abolish poverty and maintain national independence by personal decree (1:287) typifies the half-baked solutions of the ignorant.

More important than the political teaching of *La corte de Carlos IV*, however, is its moral lesson: the necessity to distinguish between illusion (the hypocrisy and amorous games of the aristocracy, the extravagant falsehoods of Comella's drama, the willful blindness of Spaniards) and reality (the common sense of the knife grinder Chinitas, the "naturalness" of Moratín's comedy, the sincerity of Máiquez's passion, the simplicity of Inés). Gabriel, like Spain, dreams of an easy path to fame and wealth, one that will require no effort on his part and one from which he will emerge unsullied. The magical world of the aristocracy, however, dissolves when observed closely; Gabriel experiences revulsion when Amaranta, on whom he has projected his "romantic" illusions, demands that he spy and scheme if he wishes for "success." Similarly, Máiquez is disillusioned when he knows Lesbia as she is rather than as he imagined her. The aristocrats

9. Compare Gabriel's dreams with similar fantasies of miraculous ascents to wealth and power of Isidora Rufete in *La desheredada* and Fernando Calpena in the third series of *episodios*.

also, mistaking art for reality, project their illusions on actors, seeking "an ideal being," a flight from the void of their own existence (1:341). Illusion is in any case fostered by self-interest. The queen believes Napoleon will help her cause; market gossips hold that Napoleon will save Spain and religion; Máiquez and Gabriel seek in others confirmation of their self-infatuation.

In striking contrast to the self-deception of the Spaniards of 1807 stands the good sense of the knife grinder Pacorro Chinitas, who distrusts the good intentions of Napoleon and Prince Fernando and warns against expecting others to do our work for us (1:334). A similar lesson of personal responsibility is taught by the fifteen-year-old seamstress Inés. Serene, practical, and with a clear conscience, she warns Gabriel against his dreams of sudden grandeur. Chance, for her, plays no part in the world; power, she believes, comes from birth, talent, or work (1:297);¹⁰ it is pointless to imagine the world other than as it is: "que en el mundo al fin y al cabo, pasa siempre lo que debe pasar. . . . todas las cosas del mundo concluyen siempre como deben concluir" (when all is said and done what ought to happen in the world does happen. . . . everything in the world ends up as it should; 1:267).

The Gabriel of *La corte de Carlos IV* is a much more complex figure than the one portrayed in *Trafalgar*. Now sixteen years old, the servant of an actress, he yearns for worldly success. Despite his love for Inés, he is as unstable in his affections as he is in his concept of the world. Passionately enamored of the Countess Amaranta, he believes he will enjoy as meteoric a rise to power as did Godoy. Attempting to conform himself to literary models, he is disillusioned by experience. Repelled by Amaranta's proposal that he spy for her, he decides, like the sailor of *Trafalgar*, to retreat into private life (1:318). Renouncing dreams of sudden greatness, affirming the hardly won lesson of personal responsibility, Gabriel announces to the approving Inés his decision to learn a trade: "Voy a aprender un oficio. A ver cual te parece mejor. ¿Platero, ebanista, comerciante? Lo que tú quieras. Todo menos el de criado" (I'm going to learn a trade. Whichever you

10. Compare Inés's belief to the similar moral teaching of *La desheredada*. In *La corte de Carlos IV*, Galdós uses the same simile—that those without wings should not attempt to fly (1:267)—as in the later novel.

prefer. Silversmith, carpenter, merchant? Whatever you want. Anything except a servant; 1:329).

Gabriel declares (1:322) that, just as he had discovered during the Battle of Trafalgar *la idea de la patria*, so also did he discover in the royal palace *la idea del honor*. His frequent and subsequent protestations of his “honor” should not, however, be accepted without reservation. His claims to *honor* always precede the courtier-like behavior that he ostensibly rejects: he is discourteous to an unknown lady (the queen), eavesdrops on others’ conversations, lies to Lesbia, weaves a tissue of falsehood and flattery to escape from Lobo, attempts to steal the purloined letter from his mistress Pepita, and, above all, blackmails Amaranta into returning the letter. Amaranta, indeed, recognizes the consummate hypocrisy of the “reformed” Gabriel: “Veo que sabes manejar la calumnia y las bajas y miserables intrigas. Supongo quien habrá sido tu maestro. Vete, Gabriel; me repugnas” (I see you can handle slander and low and base intrigues. I can guess who your teacher was. Go away, Gabriel; I find you repulsive; 1:351).

Gabriel does not deny the truth of her charges; rather, he affirms that he has learned his lesson well, a lesson that is one of discretion rather than of honor: “Oyendo y viendo se aprende mucho, señora; y yo, desde que entré al servicio de usía hasta hoy, no he desperdiciado el tiempo. Bien haya quien me ha abierto los ojitos que ven y las orejitas que oyen. Para ser discreto es preciso haber sido tonto” (With ears and eyes one learns much, my lady; I have not wasted my time between my entry into your ladyship’s service and today. Certainly someone opened my eyes to see and my ears to hear. To be wise, one must first be foolish; 1:352). With discretion comes self-knowledge as he accepts personal responsibility and the dictates of conscience. He can now choose wisely, preferring the simple but virtuous Inés to the intriguing beauties of the court. Gabriel has also, in losing his naiveté, gained the power to direct events; he is now able to choose the life he wishes to lead and to defend himself against the manipulations of others.

With the exception of the Marqués, a fatuous, boasting diplomat who recalls the Malespina of *Trafalgar*, the characters introduced in *La corte de Carlos IV* are more credible than the unidimensional characters of *Trafalgar*. Máiquez, Lesbia,

Amaranta, and Pepita González are convincing creations living in a complex world of interacting passions and jealousies that lead them to baseness and even, in the case of Máiquez, to the edge of insanity. Inés has little role in the novel, save as a figure of innate wisdom who, despite her extreme youth, can guide the errant Gabriel.

In literary merit, *La corte de Carlos IV* is far superior to *Trafalgar*. The hortatory, patriotic tone of *Trafalgar* has been abandoned, and the techniques of the popular novel are less obtrusive. Gabriel's role as aged commentator is muted: he now lets experiences speak for themselves. It is as much the reader's as the narrator's task to draw lessons. Less historical information is presented than in *Trafalgar*; instead, characters develop and interact in a complex intrigue to which history merely provides the backdrop. Furthermore, life (history) and fiction reflect on each other as in a play of mirrors. Courtiers, lacking connection with the intimate life of Spain, lead lives of fiction in a court that resembles the creation of a dramatist of feeble talent. Life, Galdós suggests, at times follows art, and art, by fomenting illusion, corrupts life. Gabriel learns to penetrate the falsity of the court, and by so doing learns self-reliance. "Life" itself, however, follows a fictional model. Inés, we learn, is of illegitimate birth; Amaranta had had an illegitimate child fifteen years earlier. The mystery, which is no mystery for any reader of novels, is but a paradigm for a further mystery, that surrounding the court of Spain. The reader penetrates one mystery, Gabriel another. In the process, both reader and Gabriel learn to question and interpret, and in consequence to dominate, the world with which they are faced.

In *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, written in July 1873, Galdós re-creates the atmosphere of suspense prevailing in Madrid in early 1808: Madrid is filled with rumor as the French seize Spanish fortresses and Godoy falls from power. Only two events of historical importance are treated: the attack of 19 March 1808 by the Aranjuez mob on the person and possessions of Godoy, and the spontaneous uprising of the people of Madrid against the French invader, with the ensuing horrors of French reprisals on 2–3 May 1808.

Galdós's perspective in the novel is primarily moral. With great indignation, he attacks the behavior of the Aranjuez mob. The mob, composed of the dregs of the population, cowardly and drunken, can attack only inanimate objects or defenseless persons. The riot by the Aranjuez mob is neither spontaneous nor in the national interest; the rioters have been brought from elsewhere and are paid by agents of Prince Fernando. Their motives are self-interest and the indulgence of base passions: the cowardly Lopito is an illiterate who hopes for a position in a changed administration; the ignorant Pujitos fatuously plays at being a soldier; the sacristan Santurrias is a drunken rogue; the lawyer Lobo is a trimmer willing to serve any master who pays him.

In notable contrast to the degraded conspirators of Aranjuez are those who fight Napoleon's forces on 2 May. Whereas the Aranjuez mob persecutes the defenseless, the Madrid populace generously protects isolated French soldiers.¹¹ The Aranjuez mob pursues self-interest; the people of Madrid sacrifice property and lives to fight the invader. The organizers of the disturbances of Aranjuez remain in the background, their motives unknown; the leaders of the Madrid rising are the heroic artillery officers Daóiz and Velarde whose example, like that of the heroic captains portrayed in *Trafalgar*, inspires their followers to bravery (1:440). The Aranjuez rioters come from the lowest social stratum. The *pueblo* of Madrid, on the other hand, is composed of representatives from every social class, age group, and sex, who courageously struggle for the common cause, spontaneously united by an instinctive patriotism, a moral force superior to all material obstacles:

el sentimiento patrio no hace milagros sino cuando es una condensación colosal, una unidad sin discrepancias de ningún género, y, por lo tanto, una fuerza irresistible y superior a cuantos obstáculos pueden

11. Leo J. Hoar, Jr., has described a short story by Galdós of 1870 ("Dos de mayo de 1808, dos de septiembre de 1870") that, in its description of the rising against the French troops, is similar to *El 19 de marzo*; the ending to Galdós's tale, which refers to the Prussian defeat of the French at Sedan and calls for the forgiveness of the French actions in Spain in 1808, is significant; see "Dos de mayo de 1808, dos de septiembre de 1870," por Benito Pérez Galdós, un cuento extraviado y el posible prototipo de sus *Episodios Nacionales*."

oponerle los recursos materiales, el genio militar y la muchedumbre de enemigos. El más poderoso genio de la guerra es la conciencia nacional, y la disciplina que da más cohesión, el patriotismo. (1:432)

(patriotic feeling performs miracles only when it is a colossal condensation, a unity without discrepancy, and thus a force that is irresistible and superior to all the obstacles that material resources, military genius, and swarms of enemies can offer in opposition to it. The most powerful genius of war is national consciousness, and patriotism is the discipline that gives the greatest cohesion.)

Galdós's scornful portrayal of the Aranjuez mob is expressly intended as a lesson for the Spain of his own day. The intervention of the hired mob in affairs of state not only degraded the nation in the eyes of Napoleon but also initiated the series of revolutions that, carried out by the mob at the instigation of ambitious leaders and tolerated by the middle class, disturbed the history of Spain between 1808 and 1873:¹²

Aquél fue el primer motín que he presenciado en mi vida. . . . Después he visto muchos, casi todos puestos en ejecución con los mismos elementos que aquel famosísimo, primera página del libro de nuestros trastornos contemporáneos; y es preciso confesar que sin estos divertimientos periódicos, que cuestan mucha sangre y no poco dinero, la historia de España sería esencialmente fastidiosa.

Pasan años y más años; las revoluciones se suceden, hechas en comandita por los grandes hombres y por el vulgo, sin que todo lo demás que existe en medio de estas dos extremidades se tome el trabajo de hacer sentir su existencia. (1:396)

(That was the first riot that I witnessed in my life Afterward I saw many, almost all carried out with the same elements as that most famous one, the first page in the book of our contemporary disturbances; and one must admit that without these periodic diversions, which cost much blood and not a little money, the history of Spain would be quite boring.

Years and more years pass by; revolutions follow revolutions, carried out in silent partnership by great men and the mob, while those between these two extremes fail to take the trouble to make their existence felt.)

Sudden downfalls from or elevations to power are always the result of manipulation of the mob (1:384). The mob, in its igno-

12. Galdós had made similar attacks on the mob in articles in the *Revista de España*. He had no sympathy for the contemporary lachrymose social romanticism that idealized workers. (See Hennessy, *The Federal Republic in Spain*, 88.)

rance, always demands what is contrary to the national interest (1:396). Mob violence was not the only mannerism introduced into Spanish life in 1808. From this period date the avid search, by the great majority of Spaniards, for employment in the civil service (1:370), the dependency of Spanish leaders on the adulation of the mob (1:409), and the Spanish belief that national problems can be resolved by the noisy worship or vilification of leaders: “entre nosotros es muy común el intento de arreglar las más difíciles cuestiones mandando vivir o morir a quien se nos antoja, y somos tan dados a los gritos, que repetidas veces hemos creído hacer con ellos alguna cosa” (it is very common for us to try to settle the most difficult questions by giving orders of life or death for whomever we please, and we are so fond of shouting that we have repeatedly believed that we were accomplishing something by this means; 1:386).

In his scathing portrait of Pujitos, Galdós openly takes aim at the popular rabble-rousers of his own time. The illiterate Pujitos, a precursor of the exalted revolutionaries of 1820 and of the sympathizers of the International in 1873, resumes in his ignorance, in his fondness for organizing others, in his noisy speech-making, and in his facile assimilation and deformation of ideas a Spanish tendency for revolutionary vacuity:

Setenta años más tarde, Pujitos hubiera sido un zapatero suscrito a dos o tres periódicos, teniente de un batallón de voluntarios, vicepresidente de algún círculo propagandista, elector diestro y activo, vocal de una comisión para la compra de armas, inventor de algún figurín de uniforme; hubiera hablado quizás del *derecho al trabajo* y del *colectivismo*, y en vez de empezar sus discursos así: *Jeñores: Denque los güenos españoles...* los comenzaría de este otro modo: *Ciudadanos: A la raíz de la revolución.* (1:382)

(Seventy years later, Pujitos would have been a shoemaker subscribed to two or three newspapers, a lieutenant in a volunteer battalion, the vice-president of some propagandistic group, a skillful and active elector, a member of a commission to purchase arms, the inventor of some model for a uniform; he would perhaps have spoken of the *right to work* and of *collectivism*, and instead of beginning his speeches: *Gentlemen: Since good Spaniards* [spoken with a heavy Andalusian pronunciation] . . . he would begin them otherwise: *Citizens: Since the revolution.*)

El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo owes much of its force to the burning indignation with which Galdós, through Gabriel, attacks

the mob and to Galdós's use of the past to illuminate the moral failings of his contemporaries. As in later novels, fictional elements often express in allegorical form Galdós's vision of Spanish history.¹³ Inés, for example, represents an "ideal" Spain. She is, like the Spain of 1808, the object of manipulation; she is, like the nation deprived of its natural leaders, an orphan; and, like Spain, she temporarily gains her freedom on 2 May, only to fall into the hands of oppressors on the following day. Inés also represents "feminine" virtue and is thus as both person and symbol a worthy object of Gabriel's aspirations: she is obedient to her good guardian Don Celestino del Malvar, shows common sense, will not—despite threats and bribes—accept an ignoble marriage, is deeply religious and patriotic, and is able to resign herself to death. Whereas Inés represents values of stability, even permanence, in national life, Gabriel represents the active element of change in Spanish history: he dreams of a past Spain, the idyllic days in Aranjuez with Inés and Don Celestino, that must now be recovered. He is, however unconsciously, the liberating element in Spanish life, struggling for the freedom of Inés and of the nation against the French, and for the moment losing both on 3 May when he is "shot" by a French firing squad.

Galdós's basic theme of virtue (the heroic *pueblo*) and vice (the mob) is further reflected in minor characters in the novel. Don Celestino del Malvar, for example, is saintly, treating his enemies with generosity and forgiveness. The bestial instincts of many Spaniards, on the other hand, are apparent in the caricature portraits of Mauro Requejo, "un hombre izquierdo" (a crooked man), and his sister Doña Restituta.¹⁴ They are mean-spirited, avaricious, and hypocritical members of the bourgeoisie, who avidly seek French contracts and attempt to force Inés into marriage.

One character, the "excéntrico" Juan de Dios, comes startlingly to life. For twenty years Requejo's assistant and now the unenthusiastic fiancé of Doña Restituta, Juan de Dios has lived

13. For an illuminating discussion of this practice in later novels, see Peter A. Bly, *Galdós's Novel of the Historical Imagination*.

14. Doña Restituta, in her chatter, false sentimentality, and belief that Inés's silence reveals agreement with Restituta's interested desires, is obviously based on the Doña Irene of *El sí de las niñas*.

an existence of unmitigated gloom. Although the friars had taught him that women were the creation of the devil, he now awakens from his repressions to fall totally in love with Inés. Obsessed, maniacally rambling yet tongue-tied in Inés's presence, neither eating nor sleeping, he is ready to kill for the object of his idolatry.

Apart from his symbolic role as future liberator of Spain and Inés, Gabriel in *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo* reveals that same control over events first manifested in *La corte de Carlos IV*. Unlike Don Celestino, who believes in the good intentions of others, Gabriel has learned the hard lesson of experience, seeking the motives of self-interest behind altruistic proclamations (1:362, 369). Despite occasional insecurity, Gabriel manifests considerable self-confidence. He determines to demand a *destinillo* in the Administration; he boasts of the thousand Englishmen he killed at Trafalgar. Above all, Gabriel now has discretion and can adjust means to ends. He manipulates with great skill Requejo, Doña Restituta, and Juan de Dios, playing on the passion of each; he is a ready liar, even to Inés (1:417); he eavesdrops; and, in ironic replay of the letter scene in *La corte de Carlos IV*, he betrays Juan de Dios by giving Restituta the poor madman's letter to Inés. At times sentimental, as in his pitying the "orphan" Inés (1:404), Gabriel is also capable of violence, drawing his dagger to protect Inés. He is deeply religious and patriotic, fighting bravely for the national cause on 2 May. His devotion is above all, however, to Inés. He thus ignores the procession for Fernando VII, obsessively searches for Inés when she is captured by the French, and actively seeks execution rather than live without her.

As in *La corte de Carlos IV*, Galdós in *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo* is consciously, if playfully, in debt to literary tradition. The narrator, Gabriel, in his descriptions of low life, imitates the ponderous humor and circumlocutions of such *costumbristas* as Mesonero Romanos and Estévez Calderón (1:381, 382, 385); Pujitos is identified with the *majo decente* of the *sainetes* of Ramón de la Cruz (1:381). Above all, as in previous *episodios*, Galdós has recourse to the techniques of the popular novel: characters are portrayed in terms of excessive villainy or saintliness; the sentimentality is at times exaggerated; Gabriel frequently employs an exclamatory style; violence, chance encounters, and

suspense play major roles; the clichés and situations of the popular novel abound.

In *Bailén*, written in October and November 1873, Galdós evokes the Spain of May and June 1808, of a nation in arms against the foreign invader. *Bailén* was written at a time when Spain's territorial integrity was menaced by internal divisions: the Carlists controlled much of the countryside in the north of Spain, Catalonia, and Valencia; the rebels of Cartagena had proclaimed an independent canton; much of Cuba was in the hands of separatists. In *Bailén*, Galdós stresses those values—devotion to nation, self-sacrifice, altruism, enthusiasm—most needed by the Spain of 1873. Furthermore, underlying the quixotic theme of the novel is the paradox that, although Spain cannot be judged by the standards of others, the nation can survive even the most desperate of circumstances.

Spanish resistance to Napoleon is a spontaneous collective effort. Spaniards are as one in their hatred of the French. Patriots flee occupied Madrid to fight the invader; insignificant villages independently declare war on the Napoleonic Empire; the provinces form juntas and raise armies to support the national cause. All social classes are represented in the armies so created; civilian and soldier, peasant and city dweller, aristocrat and revolutionary, old and young, male and female, join in what Galdós terms “the national conspiracy.”

The ferocious nature of the war is vividly re-created by Galdós. French atrocities like the destruction of Valdepeñas and the sack of Córdoba¹⁵ provoke a savage war of extermination. *Guerrillero* bands slaughter French stragglers and isolated detachments; peasants destroy crops and property to prevent their falling into French hands; French soldiers are burnt alive by Spanish villagers. In the culminating episode of the novel, Galdós describes in tedious detail the victory of Bailén, when Spaniards overcome not only Napoleon's legionnaires but also the heat, hunger, and thirst of battle. In an afternote, Galdós briefly refers to the fruit of victory, Joseph Bonaparte's flight from Madrid.

15. Galdós does, however, attempt to balance his portrayal of the French. He describes the sufferings of the defeated soldiers of General Dupont, acknowledges the bravery of General Gobert, and notes that a French general spares the life of the gallant mayor of Montoro.

The struggle is not only against the Napoleonic invader. The Spain of the *Antiguo Régimen* is corrupt. Its traditionalism, based on narrow class privilege, is without relevance to the pressing needs of the nation. Royal neglect has left the Spanish army ill-prepared to meet the French in combat. The gallicized aristocracy believe it impossible to oppose the French. Spain lacks social justice; rights of inheritance are denied to all but the first-born. Already fighting Napoleon without need for monarchical leadership, the nation itself can abolish such abuses as the Inquisition and the *tithe*. In the Spain of the future, Santorcaz proclaims, talent, rather than noble birth, will be rewarded (1:507). The nobility is without *raison d'être*: it takes only a week for the callow Diego de Rumblar to embrace the encyclopedist vision of the sinister Santorcaz. He exchanges the family sword, an heirloom that proves useless in battle, for the more effective saber of a sergeant. A world based on traditional values, Gabriel declares, has disappeared (1:514).

Although Diego de Rumblar, in his childishness and ignorance, is presented in caricature terms, Santorcaz's criticisms, if not his arrogation of spiritual leadership, are justified. Class barriers cannot be breached: Amaranta reacts with disgust to Santorcaz's presumptuous proposal that he marry her, although he had fathered her daughter Inés, and Gabriel as a servant is made strongly aware of his inferior class situation. The aristocracy behaves without scruples to protect reputation and financial interests. The offspring of the aristocracy have even less freedom than those of lower social position: Amaranta kidnaps Inés but will not recognize her as her daughter; Inés will be forced into marriage with Don Diego. An aristocratic upbringing forces children into a tight-fitting mold that ill prepares them for life in the nineteenth century. To obtain any control over his destiny, Don Diego, taught by a pedantic and fatuous tutor and dominated by his mother, must rely on childish manipulation, weeping, and threats to enter a monastery. The fates of his two attractive sisters have been settled from birth: Asunción, who is given no schooling, is destined for matrimony, and Presentación, who receives only a rudimentary education, for the cloister.

The changes sweeping the Spain of 1808 were not only social. Galdós declares that Andalusia was already "romantic" in its sad songs (1:504). Gabriel's imagination is also in part romantic: he

believes a statue of the Virgin signals to him; he takes the creaking of a door for the whisper of his name. Santorcaz suggests to Don Diego a romantic, Don Juanesque exploit, the stealing of the novice Inés from the convent. The difficulties of the venture, rather than the prize, are its motivation: “Si no hubiera obstáculos y peligros, no valía la pena de intentarla” (If there were no obstacles and dangers, there would be no point in attempting the adventure; 1:516).¹⁶

As in previous *episodios*, Galdós in *Bailén* directs a message to his contemporaries. The lesson in *Trafalgar* of the importance of morale is repeated throughout *Bailén*. Rumors of Spanish victories strengthen the courage of the inhabitants of occupied Madrid; blind faith in victory explains the ultimate triumph of the Spanish cause (1:468). Similarly, the presence of Inés gives Gabriel renewed strength of body and soul (1:309).

The overwhelming importance of morale is again indicated when Galdós compares Spanish values to those of the rest of Europe. Santorcaz and the Countess Amaranta, viewing Spain from a European perspective, reason that resistance to Napoleon is impossible and that the attempt will only provoke further suffering. Spanish patriotic faith, on the other hand, is crudely expressed by the ignorant porter Santiago Fernández (“El Gran Capitán”). Fernández, correctly as it turns out, declares that Spain is not like Austria and Prussia, and that Santorcaz, after many years’ residence in France, can no longer understand Spain. The paradox between European “reason” and Spanish “madness” is further developed in the numerous allusions to the *Quixote*. Crossing La Mancha, the “reasonable” Santorcaz relives in his imagination the Battle of Austerlitz; the Germanic names he proclaims are as outlandish as any conceived in a book of chivalry. Santorcaz’s fantasy is parried by the sturdy common sense of Gabriel and Andrés Marijuán, a young Aragonese peasant. When Gabriel sees the figure of Napoleon in the clouds, Marijuán mockingly replies that Napoleon is a quixote who will receive a beating:

16. Note also Galdós’s attack on the romantic preference for obstacle rather than success in such later *episodios* as *La vuelta al mundo en la Numancia*; see Dendle, *Galdós: The Mature Thought*, 133–34.

—Sí, allí lo veo—exclamó Marijuán, riendo a carcajadas. —Es D. Quijote de la Mancha que viene en su caballo, y tras él Sancho Panza en burro. Déjenlo venir, que ahora le aguarda la gran paliza.

Las nubes se movieron, y todo se tornó en caricatura.¹⁷ (1:475)

(—Yes, I can see him there—Marijuán exclaimed, guffawing. —It's Don Quixote de la Mancha on his horse, and behind him Sancho Panza on a donkey. Let him come, for a great beating awaits him.

The clouds shifted, and it all became a caricature.)

What appears as madness to the rest of Europe is sense to Spaniards, and European “reason,” which takes no heed of Spanish perseverance and tenacity, is in Spain insanity. The cloud of dust that Gabriel and his companions see in La Mancha is indeed an army, not a flock of sheep. The French invaders, accustomed to behaving like Don Quixote at Master Pedro's puppet show,¹⁸ meet a reality in Spain that they have not found in Central Europe, that of defeat at the hands of peasants and military.

Religious faith also assists Spaniards' belief in their cause. Santiago Fernández opposes St. James to Napoleon. For Gabriel, the struggle against the invader is a holy war (1:480). The Battle of Bailén was fought in the same area and at the same time of year as the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa, a coincidence that adds religious ardor to Spanish patriotism (1:503–4). Spanish soldiers pray devoutly before battle. Gabriel stresses on several occasions that God was on the side of Spain.¹⁹

Related to morale is the willingness to sacrifice self to cause. Bitterly referring to the present, when a minister of finance is at his wit's end to find money for a nation at war, Galdós calls on his contemporaries to learn from the generosity of the Spaniards of 1808, when all classes, from beggars to impoverished aristocrats, willingly gave to the nation (1:498). Those suffering from *egoísmo*, on the other hand, divorce themselves from and thereby

17. Compare Marijuán's observation with the reference in *Napoleón en Chamartín* to Napoleon as a quixote: “el Don Quixote imperial y real, como algunos de nuestros paisanos le llamaban, no sin fundamento” (the imperial and royal Don Quixote, as some of our countrymen called him, not without reason; 1:589).

18. “Desbaratando imperios, y haciendo con tronos y reyes un juego de títeres” (Overturning empires, and converting thrones and laws into a puppet show; 1:544).

19. See, for example, 1:522, 532, 533.

weaken the collective effort. Thus, possessed by *egoísmo*, Gabriel, absorbed in reading Santorcaz's correspondence, mentally absents himself from the battle on which Spanish hopes depend.

Further forms of selfishness are the refusal to recognize limits imposed by the legitimate interests of others and an over-reliance on the imagination. Thus, La Mancha is a land of chance and fable, of sadness and wonder, lacking the human works that would cut short the madness of a Don Quixote: "necesitaba aquella total ausencia de obras humanas que representan el positivismo, el sentido práctico, cortapisas de la imaginación, que la detendrían en su insensato vuelo" (he needed that total absence of human works represented by materialism and practicality, impediments to the imagination that would halt him on his senseless flight; 1:471). Imagination disfigures: Juan de Dios is a monomaniac; Santorcaz re-creates the Battle of Austerlitz on the plains of La Mancha; coffeehouse pundits dream of easy victory. A sense of reality corrects the errors of the imagination: Marijuán slyly questions what is gained by the Battle of Austerlitz (1:474); the French are homesick, and already foresee the defeat to which their leaders' folly has condemned them (1:515).

Galdós also notes defects in the Spanish character, as evident in 1808 as in 1873. Spanish fondness for ostentation is dismissed in the description of the splendid appearance of General Castaños (1:499). The ignorance and arrogance of coffeehouse experts, who demand immediate victories and claim a greater knowledge of warfare than that of experienced commanders, is scathingly satirized (1:489–90). Aspects of Spanish religion meet with Galdós's contempt: Don Diego superstitiously believes that the scapular will protect him in battle, and the priest-ridden maniac Juan de Dios flagellates himself, believing that God has deprived him of Inés because of his sins. In an obvious dig at the commanders of certain Carlist bands in 1873, Gabriel asks the reader to agree that priests are better engaged in saying mass than in leading troops (1:499). Santorcaz, cynically dismissing Inés's "religious vocation," claims that young Spanish women are high-strung and confuse mysticism and sensual passion (1:516).

Gabriel's character develops in *Bailén* along the lines established in the two previous *episodios*. Capable of patriotic enthusi-

asm, he nevertheless equally pursues his personal affairs. Thus, to find Inés, who also, of course, symbolizes an ideal Spain, he travels from Madrid to Córdoba. Although Gabriel sympathizes with the sufferings of others, he never neglects his own interests. Confident of his own abilities, smarting at his condition of servant, he now asks Inés to wait for him. Gabriel is above all astute: he abets Santorcaz in cheating innkeepers; he encourages, for his own purposes, the cowardice of the Marqués de Leiva; he reads Santorcaz's correspondence; he lies to nuns and to Santorcaz; he admits initial joy at the rumored death of Don Diego with the same egotism he decries in others. On one occasion, overcome with emotion and forgetting tact and prudence, Gabriel confesses his love for Inés to Amaranta (1:489), the first indication of his quest for Amaranta's approval that will be developed in later *episodios*.

Three characters of importance are introduced in the novel. Santorcaz, who in his youth had loved Amaranta passionately and had subsequently spent fifteen years in France, is intelligent, experienced in the ways of the world, courageous, and manipulative. Amaranta questions whether he is motivated by malice or by unhappiness. The Condesa de Rumblar is an aristocrat of the old school; she believes that nobles have duties, and she demands that her son fight bravely. Diego de Rumblar, who is portrayed in too exaggerated a manner to convince the reader, is childish and inane; he is easily manipulated by Santorcaz and is an inebriated fool when captured by the French. In contrast to his mother, he represents an aristocracy that has nothing of value to offer Spain. Ill-educated, he is unable to distinguish good from evil in reformist ideas; he will, in future *episodios*, typify the ingenuous liberal scorned by Galdós.

As narrator, the aged Gabriel reveals a total self-confidence. He frequently addresses the reader in a playful manner, rhetorically questioning his narrative procedure (1:464, 469, 470, 489, 530). His prose is at times self-consciously pompous almost to the point of parody:

Así los granos de arena pesan a veces como montañas en el destino de un ser humano, y lo que es gota de agua en el cauce de la generalidad, es río impetuoso en el de uno solo, o viceversa, según lo que nosotros

llamamos antojos de allá arriba, y no es sino concierto sublime, que no podemos comprender, como no puede una hormiga tragarse el sol. (1:491)

(Thus grains of sand at times weigh as much as mountains in the destiny of a human being, and what is a drop of water in the river of the masses is a raging torrent in that of an individual, and vice versa, depending on what we term the caprices of Heaven, and is naught but a sublime harmony that we cannot understand, just as an ant cannot swallow the sun.)

Suspense is abused: the novel begins not with the “executed” Gabriel but with the conversation of Santorcaz; Gabriel interrupts his reading of Santorcaz’s correspondence to discuss for a page and a half his “egotism”; the letter is snatched from his hand at an important point; the novel ends with an attack on the escort taking Inés to Madrid. Further examples of Gabriel’s control over his narrative are his obvious pride in his role of historian, his lack of concern for plausibility, his sense of humor, and his imitation, often to the point of parody, of the popular novel, as in the following example, when on the battlefield he rhetorically questions the future:

¿Entrará al fin Inés en la familia de su madre? ¿La perderé para siempre? ¿Debo reírme de mi necia y ridícula aspiración? ¿Un hombre como yo puede subir a tanta altura? ¿La misteriosa obscuridad de los tiempos venideros ocultará alguna cosa que destruya este nivel espantoso? ¿Puedo esperar o resignarme desde ahora, bendiciendo la mano de la Providencia que me arroja en el polvo de donde nunca debí intentar salir? (1:532)

(Will Inés finally enter the family of her mother? Shall I lose her forever? Should I laugh at my stupid and ridiculous aspiration? Can a man such as I ascend such great heights? Will the mysterious obscurity of future times conceal something capable of destroying this dreadful inequality? Can I hope, or must I resign myself from this moment, blessing the hand of Providence that casts me in the dust from which I should never have attempted to emerge?)

In *Napoleón en Chamartín*, written in January 1874, Galdós evokes the teeming life of the Madrid of the closing months of 1808. The Spaniards of 1808 reveal the contradictory traits of their compatriots of 1873: patriotism and mature reflection combine with corruption, ignorance, verbosity, and indiscipline. So-

cial behavior has a greater role in the novel than historical event. The *madrileños* restlessly seek distraction. The fatuous flock to masonic meetings, the forerunners, Galdós contemptuously observes, of the clubs of 1820 and the political committees of his own day, and the degraded frequent the brothels and gaming houses where aristocrats and rogues freely mingle. Politics have now become a Spanish obsession: contemporary books have a markedly political content; newspapers are devoured by gullible readers. To convey unchanging elements in Spanish life, Galdós frequently imitates literary models: the *costumbristas* Mesonero Romanos and Estévez Calderón in his rendering of popular speech and customs and in the ponderously jocose narratorial viewpoint; Cervantes in the inspection of contemporary books in chapters 6 and 7 (note that the expurgation scene occurs in chapter 6 of the *Quijote*); the sentimental drama, when Amaranta is compelled to recognize the true moral worth of Gabriel.

The historical background of the novel is Madrid's hurried preparations to defend itself as provincial armies are defeated. People of all social classes, ages, and sexes join in the task; their energies are wasted, however, for they lack leaders. The mob, instigated by *agents provocateurs* in the pay of the French, murders the *regidor* Mañara. The flimsy defenses of Madrid are soon smashed by the French; the occupying forces immediately break the terms of the treaty by which Madrid capitulated.

Spaniards, united in their hatred of Napoleon, are now divided in their vision of the Spain for which they are fighting. For some, the struggle is to conserve Spanish uses against French innovations; for others, Spain herself stands in urgent need of reform. Napoleon imposes summary change: the suppression of the Inquisition, the abolition of feudal privilege and internal customs barriers, the reduction by two-thirds of religious houses and members of religious orders, the attribution of the property of suppressed houses to the secular clergy and to the State. These reforms, the reasonable and intelligent Father Castillo remarks, were long overdue and had in the past been demanded by Spanish reformers.

Galdós's hostility to religious orders is marked in *Napoleón en Chamartín*. The Mercedarian Order, founded to ransom prisoners, has long lost its reason for existence; its members for the

most part relieve their boredom by trivial pursuits such as composing riddles and constructing cricket-cages. Members of religious orders engage in jealous rivalry and have independent political policies; some join the authorities of Madrid in welcoming Napoleon. Representative of the regular clergy is the ignorant Dominican friar who defends the Inquisition and dismisses the abolition of feudal rights as “cosas de los jesuítas.” His recital of the property owned by the orders in Madrid is self-condemnatory:

porque *setenta y dos* conventos para una población de 160,000 almas, me parece que no es mucho. Las casas de religiosos apenas ocupan un poco más de la mitad del perímetro de esta gran villa, lo cual no es nada desmedido, y de todas las casas que se alzan en ella, sólo *cuatro quintas partes* pertenecen a conventos, memorias pías, capellanías y otras fundaciones. (1:630–31)

(because *seventy-two* convents for a city of 160,000 souls does not seem too many to me. The houses of the monks and nuns hardly occupy much more than half of the perimeter of this great town, which is not out of proportion, and of all the houses contained herein, only *four-fifths* belong to monasteries, pious works, chaplaincies, and other foundations.)

Galdós’s attack on the decadence of certain religious orders is furthered in his portrayal of two Mercedarian friars, Father Castillo and Father Salmón, of markedly different temperaments. Father Castillo’s voice is that of tolerance, reason, and study; his reproval of the practices of his fellow monks is therefore all the more telling. Castillo, unlike his fellows, follows the rules of his order; also, rather than flee to the provinces, he will remain in occupied Madrid. Condemning the sanguinary nature of so many friars, he refuses to preach a holy war against the French. Prayer and the practice of charity, not exhortations to kill, are for him the proper role of the servant of religion (1:623–24).

Gabriel observes in the Spain of 1808 a nascent anticlericalism, an anticlericalism with which he markedly allies himself.²⁰

20. Compare Gabriel’s anticlericalism with his far-reaching comment, after he has heard the description of the virtues of the pious and charitable Father Chaves, whom Salmoñ dismisses as “un mentecato” (a blockhead): “—Dios ha puesto de todo en el mundo—pensé yo;—y así como no hay nada perfecto, tampoco hay cosa alguna que sea rematadamente mala” (God has placed all kinds in the world, I thought, and just as there is nothing perfect, neither is there anything totally evil; 1:625).

Thus, in his portrayal of Father Salmón, Gabriel makes no mention of the evidently useful social role played by the jolly friar. Fond of good living and charitable, Father Salmón is popular with the humbler classes yet trusted and consulted by members of the aristocracy. With a mixture of banter and cajolery, Salmón guides and consoles his followers in their daily cares. He is also capable of decisive action: he protects Gabriel from French persecution, and he strongly reproves the dissolute conduct of Diego de Rumblar. Yet Gabriel's distrust of Salmón's popularity is evident; he ironically notes, after a burlesque salute to the good friar, that Salmón would be murdered in 1834 by the very people who had adored him (1:560).

As in previous *episodios*, Galdós attacks the lack of leadership in Spain. The Junta Central and the Consejo de Castilla are more concerned with their rivalries than with supplying Madrid with munitions. Those who enjoy favor, whether of the mob or of their superiors, without possessing virtue or merit, Gabriel sentimentally remarks, will always fall.²¹ Officers are unable to impose their authority on their troops (and Galdós must surely have been thinking of the similar indiscipline in the Spanish army in the summer of 1873), with the result that "allí cada cual hacía lo que le daba la gana y según su propia inspiración" (there everyone did whatever he felt like; 1:604). The timidity and lack of foresight of leaders provoked the soldiers' loss of morale (1:423); Spanish authorities are subservient to Napoleon, and the ruling classes are, if not treasonous, criminally weak (1:627).

Morale comes from motivation. Gabriel is plunged into lethargy when he realizes the social barriers that separate him from Inés (1:563–64); Inés's affirmation of her love for him, however, restores his confidence (1:651). Those who live without an ideal, on the other hand, meet with contempt. Thus the mob, in its profanation of Mañara's corpse, reveals its bestial nature (1:602–3). Furthermore, the mob, always manipulated by hidden interests, decides nothing for itself (1:603).

21. Referring to Mañara's downfall, Gabriel claims, "Todas las privanzas que no tienen por fundamento el mérito o la virtud, suelen acabar lo mismo" (All favor that is not based on merit or virtue normally ends the same way; 1:603). See also the teaching of *La corte de Carlos IV* in regard to Godoy's fall from power, and the similar lesson of *La desheredada*.

Spaniards' defects, such as their contradictory nature (1:590), their fickle enthusiasms (1:612), and their love of parade and noise (1:592–93), are scornfully portrayed. Spaniards refuse to learn from experience. Thus, Pujitos blames defeat not on lack of preparation and absence of leadership but on traitors. Santiago Fernández, although exemplary in his devotion to honor and nation, is a quixote unable to perceive reality. Father Castillo perceives that the debate over war aims is only the first stage of a century-long struggle. Spaniards are easily excitable and rancorous once aroused; the tact and prudence of a healer²² are needed for the national sickness:

esa controversia está en las entrañas de la sociedad española, y que no se aplacará fácilmente, porque los males hondos quieren hondísimos remedios, y no sé yo si tendremos quien sepa aplicar éstos con aquel tacto y prudencia que exige un enfermo por diferentes partes atacado de complicadas dolencias. Los españoles son hasta ahora valientes y honrados; pero muy fogosos en sus pasiones, y si se desatan en rencorosos sentimientos unos contra otros, no sé cómo se van a entender. (1:570)

(that controversy is in the very entrails of Spanish society, and will not easily be settled, since deep ills demand the most fundamental remedies, and I don't know if we shall find anyone to apply these with the tact and prudence needed by a sick person attacked in various places by complicated ailments. Until now Spaniards have been bold and honorable; but very fiery in their passions, and if they cut loose in rancor toward each other, I don't know how they will come to agree.)

Spanish contradictions are evident in the aristocracy. Ladies of the aristocracy sew and wash for soldiers; they form part of the *pueblo* that Gabriel defines as “todos nosotros, altos y bajos, grandes y chicos” (all of us, the high and the low, the great and the small; 1:600). But, for the most part, the aristocracy is depicted scathingly: Mañara seeks the adulation of the mob that will murder him; the fatuous Marqués de Leiva hastens to serve Napoleon; and Diego de Rumblar is totally degraded. Don Diego is without patriotism, insulted by women of the lowest class, in love with an ignorant *verdulera* (marketwoman) who scorns him,

22. For Galdós's call for a leader (akin to Costa's demand for an “iron surgeon”) in the *episodios* written after 1898, see Dendle, *Galdós: The Mature Thought*.

and completely dependent on the opinion of his “mentor” Santorcaz, who can persuade him to any vile deed. Gabriel, reflecting on the “inconmensurable degradación” of Don Diego, blames a defective education that failed to prepare him for the responsibility of freedom:

instruido tan sólo en cosas aparentemente buenas, en el temor excesivo a los superiores, en el desprecio de las novedades, en el aborrecimiento de las cosas mundanas, en el respeto a la tradición, en el encogimiento del espíritu; educado para ser gran señor y representante de todas las virtudes patriarcales. (1:640)

(instructed only in apparently good things, in the excessive fear of superiors, in the scorn of innovation, in the hatred of worldly matters, in respect for tradition, in a shriveling of the spirit; educated to be a great lord and a representative of all the patriarchal virtues.)

Whereas the callow Don Diego sinks into even deeper degradation, Gabriel Araceli behaves with increasing dignity. He accepts the difference in social position between Inés and himself and renounces his aspirations as impossible, the stuff of bad novels (1:573). Exemplifying Galdós’s teaching, he refuses unmerited rewards by rejecting a title and position in Peru. Amaranta now recognizes the nobility of his sentiments. Still defining a person by birth, she stridently demands: “¿Quién eres tú?” (Who are you?). Gabriel is no longer a servant but is a soldier “por puro patriotismo.” He refuses to feign the abominable acts that Amaranta requests to extirpate Inés’s passion; he sacrifices hope of escape from the French to warn Amaranta of the impending kidnapping of Inés; he asserts himself in the presence of Amaranta, affirms Inés’s unhappiness, and refuses to join Santorcaz’s police force. While Diego de Rumblar acts unworthily, Gabriel is now a man of conscience, honor, and dignity. Diego de Rumblar associates with *gentuza*; Gabriel, in disguise, can pass himself off as a duke.

Father Salmón is the only fictional character of importance introduced in *Napoleón en Chamartín*. Santorcaz is ever more sinister, stirring up the mob against the junta, encouraging Diego to selfishness and crime, and finally emerging as the chief of police for the French occupying forces. Inés is unchanged in her love for Gabriel. Amaranta, still with a sly sense of humor and a hasty temper, is trapped in her class situation, unable openly to

acknowledge Inés as her daughter. She is now, however, able to recognize Gabriel's merit.

Save for the increasing dignity of Gabriel and progressive abasement of Don Diego, the novelistic plot scarcely advances. The attack on Inés's coach, introduced at the end of *Bailén*, is explained only in chapter 8. At the end of *Napoleón en Chamartín*, Gabriel, like Spain, is a prisoner of the French.

Zaragoza, written in March and April 1874, is, save for the briefest of references to the first siege of Zaragoza in the summer of 1808, devoted entirely to one historical event: the siege and fall of Zaragoza between December 1808 and February 1809.²³ The atmosphere of the besieged city is vividly re-created: the selfishness and heroism of the citizens, the relentless pressures of epidemic, hunger, and fire that they face, and the diversions with which they seek momentarily to escape from the tensions under which they live. As in previous *episodios*, all social classes unite to fight for the patriotic cause. In *Zaragoza*, Galdós stresses the contribution of women: the timid Manuela Sancho's heroism restores the morale of fleeing soldiers; the ladies of the aristocracy, ostracized if they fail to participate, serve in hospitals. The overwhelming impression is one of claustrophobia: the defense of Zaragoza is presented without reference to outside events; the fighting takes place house by house, floor by floor, even under-

23. Marcel Bataillon, although recognizing Galdós's emphasis on the picturesque, considers that Galdós is interested in history for its own sake, rather than as a backdrop for his characters; see "Les Sources Historiques de *Zaragoza*." Stephen Gilman argues that *Zaragoza* should be seen in terms of the epic. Gilman consequently denies any possibility of irony in the novel, downgrades the importance of the love story, and, seeing Candiola as the "anti-hero" to the "hero" Montoria, fails to discern the reader's increasing sympathy for the miser; see "Realism and the Epic in Galdós' *Zaragoza*," 171–92. The heroic vision is also stressed by Elba M. Larrea, "Epica y novela en *Zaragoza*." Nigel Glendinning, in contrast to Gilman, discerns in the novel an "anti-epic or unheroic" structure, a tension between the egoists and the unselfish, subtle character portrayal, and a depiction of anarchy, violence, and greed relevant to the situation of the 1870s ("Psychology and Politics in the First Series of the *Episodios Nacionales*"). Ricardo Navas-Ruiz perceives not the confrontation of the "heroic" and the "antiheroic" but rather a dramatic clash between two opposed attitudes; thus, Montoria is rigid and brutal, while Candiola increasingly engages our sympathies; *Zaragoza* demonstrates the evils of war and is "una obra . . . irónica" ("*Zaragoza*: Problemas de Estructura," 247–55). My reading of *Zaragoza* confirms the findings of Glendinning and Navas-Ruiz.

ground. All the inhabitants of the city are involved, willingly or unwillingly; the gallows await traitors or cowards; troops are readily sacrificed in order that there be fewer mouths to feed; corpses serve to fill breaches in the walls. At the end, the French have conquered a city of ruin and death. Almost as an afterthought, Galdós notes the French treachery in killing certain Spanish leaders and in stealing the jewels of the Virgen del Pilar.

In its concentration, in its stress on a heroism so inflexible that it becomes inhuman, *Zaragoza* reminds one strongly of Martínez de la Rosa's drama *La viuda de Padilla*, which similarly describes the fall of a besieged city. As in Martínez de la Rosa's play, heroism exists as an end in itself, divorced from the needs of individuals or nations. Toward the end of the siege, the defenders of Zaragoza regard one another with indifference; the atmosphere of the city is now one of paranoia, in which individuals cease to exist as separate entities but are subsumed in an abstraction. Thus, Gabriel's references to the courage of the *zaragozanos* take on the tersity of political exhortation: "Los aragoneses no se alimentan sino de gloria" (The Aragonese feed only on glory; 1:681); "Los aragoneses, despreciando los bienes materiales como desprecian la vida, viven con el espíritu en los infinitos espacios de lo ideal" (The Aragonese, despising material goods as they despise life itself, live with their spirits fixed on the infinite spaces of the ideal; 1:681); "Morir era un accidente, un detalle trivial, un tropiezo del cual no debía hacerse caso" (Death was an accident, a minor detail, a stumble not to be heeded; 1:703).

As in previous novels, Galdós stresses the importance of morale. The defenders are encouraged by false news of Spanish victories published in the *Gaceta*. Palafox possesses the histrionic gift of inspiring his followers to ever greater effort (1:722). Manuela Sancho's example causes fleeing soldiers to return to the defense of a redoubt about to fall (1:683).

Gabriel confesses his inability to explain the soldiers' sudden return of courage, for heroism is a form of contagious madness that has little to do with reason. Indeed, throughout the novel, insidiously undermining the account of Zaragozaan valor, is the insistent questioning of the utility of such sacrifice.²⁴ The collec-

24. Note also Galdós's similar questioning of the utility of war in *Atta Tettauén* (1905); see Dendle, *Galdós: The Mature Thought*, 122–23.

tive heroic madness of the Zaragozans brings no material advantage. From the outset of the novel, farmers destroy productive trees; by the end, the city is in ruins and fifty-three thousand people have died. The fate of the patriotic and virtuous farmer José de Montoria is exemplary: when the city falls, Montoria is impoverished and prematurely aged; his eldest son and grandson are dead; his second son will seek "death" in a monastery; the women of the family are insane. Opposition to the senseless destruction is openly voiced by two characters: Tío Candiola demands, with some justification: "A ver, ¿qué van ganando los que han muerto?" (Let's see, what do those who have died gain? 1:726); Montoria's wife bitterly laments over the corpse of her son: "¿qué me importa a mí la patria? ¡Que me devuelvan a mi hijo!" (What do I care for my country? Give me back my son! 1:728).

Galdós can, of course, offer no consolation for those who have lost possessions, family, or life itself in the struggle. Instead he attempts, albeit tenuously, to relate such sacrifice to the present situation of Spain. Despite the subsequent political degradation and instability of Spain, Spanish tenacity in the War of Independence has sufficiently warned any foreign power against attempting territorial division of Spain:²⁵

Lo que no ha pasado ni pasará es la idea de nacionalidad que España defendía contra el derecho de conquista y la usurpación. Cuando otros pueblos sucumbían, ella mantiene su derecho, lo defiende, y sacrificando su propia sangre y vida, lo consagra, como consagraban los mártires en el circo la idea cristiana. El resultado es que España, despreciada injustamente en el Congreso de Viena, desacreditada con razón por sus continuas guerras civiles, sus malos gobiernos, su desorden, sus bancarrotas más o menos declaradas, sus inmorales partidos, sus extravagancias, sus toros y sus pronunciamientos, no ha visto nunca, después de 1808, puesta en duda la continuación de su nacionalidad; y aun hoy mismo, cuando parece hemos llegado al último grado del envilecimiento, con más motivos que Polonia para ser repartida, nadie se atreve a intentar la conquista de esta casa de locos.

Hombres de poco seso, o sin ninguno en ocasiones, los españoles darán mil caídas hoy como siempre, tropezando y levantándose, en la lucha de sus vicios ingénitos, de las cualidades eminentes que aun

25. Galdós must surely have had in mind not only the division of Poland but also the contemporary German annexation of Alsace and Lorraine. Indeed, he refers to the Franco-Prussian War in alluding to the Frenchmen's error of underestimating their enemies.

conservan, y de las que adquieren lentamente con las ideas que les envía la Europa central. Grandes subidas y bajadas, grandes asombros y sorpresas, aparentes muertes y resurrecciones prodigiosas reserva la Providencia a esta gente, porque su destino es poder vivir en la agitación como la salamandra en el fuego; pero su permanencia nacional está y estará siempre asegurada. (1:748–49)

(What has never disappeared nor will ever disappear is the idea of nationality that Spain defended against the rights of conquest and usurpation. When other peoples succumbed, Spain maintains her rights, defends them, and, sacrificing her own blood and life, consecrates them, as martyrs in the circus consecrated the Christian idea. As a result, Spain, despised unjustly in the Congress of Vienna, discredited rightfully for its continual civil wars, its bad governments, its disorder, its more or less declared bankruptcies, its immoral parties, its extravagancies, its bullfights, and its uprisings, has after 1808 never seen placed in doubt that continuation of its nationality; and even today, when it seems that we have reached the ultimate degree of degradation, with more reason than Poland to be divided, no one dares attempt the conquest of this madhouse.

Men of few or, on occasions, no brains, Spaniards will fall a thousand times now as ever, stumbling and arising again, in the battle of its congenital vices, the eminent qualities that they still conserve, and those that they are slowly acquiring with the ideas sent them by Central Europe. Providence reserves for this people great rises and falls, great astonishments and surprises, apparent deaths and miraculous resurrections, because Spain is destined to live in agitation like the salamander in fire; but its national survival is and will always be assured.)

The marked anticlericalism of *Napoleón en Chamartín* is much less evident in *Zaragoza*. One friar (Luengo) is slanderous, and Agustín Montoria is forced, without vocation, into the priesthood by his father. The priest Mateo del Busto, however, is exemplary: he neither eats nor sleeps as he cares for the sick and wounded; his arm and shoulder shattered, he can nevertheless offer encouragement to Gabriel. The clergy play a prominent role in the defense of the city, inspiring the defenders and assisting in the fighting. Gabriel observes the delirious devotion to the Virgen del Pilar; he is moved by the “spectacle” of the devout who celebrate mass in the open air (1:712).

Four characters of importance are introduced in *Zaragoza*: José de Montoria, his son Agustín, Jerónimo de Candiola, and his daughter Mariquilla. All four, like the people of Zaragoza, are

caught up in a world that is, by its very narrowness, of great intensity. They possess qualities that, in moderation, are praiseworthy. These same qualities, however, when practiced to the exclusion of all else, lead their possessors to madness, a madness stemming both from tendencies within themselves and from the cruel conflicts in which outside circumstances place them. Significantly, all four die, either physically or to the world.

José de Montoria is an exemplary patriot. He sacrifices property, health, and family for nation; he is generous in spirit and shows compassion to the unfortunate. Despite his fundamental decency, he nevertheless lives by abstractions and thus takes no heed of the aspirations of others: he wishes first that Agustín become a bishop and later, after the death of his eldest son, that Agustín renounce the Church; his passion for duty is such that he would willingly lose his remaining son, if national honor could thereby be saved.

Agustín Montoria is caught in the same conflict of love and duty as Mendoza in *La viuda de Padilla*. At the beginning of the novel, Agustín, a seminarian, is serene, in love with Mariquilla Candiola, and grateful for the freedom to pursue his love that the war offers him. But his love is also a torment. In its excessive, all-encompassing nature (1:701) it resembles the obsession of the people of Zaragoza with their cause. As happiness turns to nightmare, Agustín is compelled to watch his father insult Mariquilla's father; ordered to execute Candiola, Agustín, now suicidal, destroys his sword. His mania, like the devotion of the Zaragozans to their struggle, provides his reason for existence; at the end of the novel, as he prepares to seek death in a monastery, he is utterly alone in the universe: "¿Hasta cuándo durará esta noche de mi alma y esta soledad en que me has dejado? La tierra me es insoportable. La desesperación se apodera de mi alma, y en vano llamo a Dios para que la llene toda. Dios no quiere venir, y desde que te has ido, Mariquilla, el universo está vacío" (How long will this night of my soul last and this solitude in which you have left me? The earth is unbearable to me. Despair seizes my soul, and in vain do I call on God to fill it. God refuses to come, and since you have gone, Mariquilla, the universe is empty; 1:748).

Jerónimo de Candiola is a miser and usurer of, it is suggested,

Jewish descent.²⁶ Resentful, obsessed with money to the point of mania, the friendless Candiola is tormented by the neighborhood women and children and despised by the men of Zaragoza. Demented after the loss of his fortune, he curses his daughter and betrays Zaragoza to the French, for which he is executed by the “patriots.” However, the “traitor” Candiola is more vividly portrayed than the “heroes” of Zaragoza. His daughter Mariquilla loves him dearly; she declares him to be a good man, driven to inhumanity by the insults of his fellow citizens. Significantly, it is the “outsider,” Candiola, who questions the purpose of the struggle.

Mariquilla, Candiola’s daughter, is, despite her outward calmness, akin to her father and the Montorias in the strength of her passions. Friendless and isolated like her father, she contains within herself the strengths and weaknesses of the Zaragozans. She threatens José de Montoria with death but tends him when he is wounded. Insanely delirious when her father is condemned as a traitor, she offers to fight the French alone as a token of her father’s innocence. At the end of the novel, she, like Zaragoza, dies, apparently of a broken heart.

Gabriel Araceli has but a small role in the novel. He is the observer of the heroism and insane passions of the Zaragozans. He fights bravely and receives the rank of ensign. Although compassionate to Candiola, Gabriel is a man of “duty,” leading the firing squad that executes the miser.

At the beginning and end of *Gerona*, written in June 1874, Gabriel briefly resumes the events of 1809, a year of defeats for Spain and of a corresponding loss of morale. Spain’s leaders are

26. Although Mariquilla claims that Candiola is of a family of Old Christians, his face is that of the Merchant of Venice and he twice declares his origins to be that of “un mallorquín con sangre de judío” (a Mallorcan with Jewish blood). Regrettably, Sara E. Schyfter does not treat Candiola in *The Jew in the Novels of Benito Pérez Galdós*. Galdós, with his suggestion of compassion for the outcast who is behaving ignobly, was obviously indebted to *The Merchant of Venice*. A further debt was to *Romeo and Juliet*: the thwarting of young lovers through family hatreds, the same initials for the family names (Montague and Capulet, Montoria and Candiola). For a fuller discussion of this point, see Alfredo Rodríguez, “Shakespeare, Galdós y Zaragoza.”

unworthy and divided: the members of the *Junta Central*, “un hormiguero de intriguillas” (an ant-heap of petty intrigues), pursue personal ambitions; the members of the Consejo de Castilla are fatuous and cause discord, attempting to bribe troops into sedition and leveling unfounded accusations of embezzlement of public funds against the *Junta Central*. The Council of Castilla is controlled by what will be the *partido absolutista*; its members are those who planned the mutiny of Aranjuez in 1808. At the close of the novel, Gabriel takes refuge in Cádiz, the last bulwark of Spanish liberty.

The bulk of the novel consists of Gabriel’s version of Andrés Marijuán’s journal and covers the siege of Gerona, from June 1808 to January 1809, the year of the death of Alvarez de Castro. Gerona, with its flimsy fortifications, is defended by only 5,600 men. As in the defense of Zaragoza, all members of society—men, women, children, priests—fight against the French. Spanish courage, as in *Zaragoza*, is awe inspiring; thus, in the defense of Montjuich, Luciano Anció, even after losing a leg in battle, continues to play his drum until death silences him. Hunger afflicts the besieged even more than the bombardments and attacks of the French, and the search for food becomes the haunting obsession of all; the starving inhabitants of Gerona count themselves fortunate if they can find cat, dog, or rat to eat.

As in previous *episodios*, Galdós stresses morale and leadership. The decisive element in the defense of Gerona is the Spanish leader, Mariano Alvarez de Castro.²⁷ Seemingly indifferent to the sufferings of his followers, Alvarez exacts a perfect discipline, threatening death to all who talk of capitulation and to any defender who retreats a single step from the forward line of defense. More fearful of Alvarez than of the French enemy, a starving handful of Spanish troops beats off the attacks of a much larger and better-equipped army of experienced warriors. The unflinch-

27. An excellent study of *Gerona*, with detailed discussion of the portrayal of Alvarez de Castro, is that of José M. Ribas (“El episodio nacional *Gerona*, visto por un gerundense”). Ribas treats Galdós’s sources, notes the predominance of the novelesque over the historical, the Cervantine reminiscences, the pervasive role of hunger, and the doubling of situation (Alvarez de Castro-Gerona, Nomdedeu-Josefina). Rafael Alberti’s treatment of the novel, on the other hand, is merely an enthusiastic evocation of its meaning to Republican soldiers during the Spanish Civil War (“Un episodio nacional: *Gerona*”).

ing will and courage of Alvarez are alone responsible for the Spanish “victory” (1:775). Even on his deathbed, with the city about to capitulate, Alvarez refuses to countenance surrender. Andrés Marijuán acknowledges, indeed, an element of insanity in the sublime courage of the Spanish leader (1:811).

The French are for the most part portrayed unfavorably in *Gerona*. Apart from their giving bread and wine to the people of Gerona, and the kindness shown to the dying Alvarez by a “Christian” French coachman, the French behave contemptibly, fully meriting the pejorative terms with which they are treated by the Spanish. They violate the conditions of the capitulation, for which Napoleon, “the great rat,” is blamed; they deport the friars, including the aged; they torment and finally murder Alvarez. French rulers believe that they are above moral laws. Napoleon, Gabriel observes, is no more than a bandit, akin to those who have plagued the Spain of the nineteenth century (1:834).

Spaniards have their defects, as evident in the present of 1874 as in 1809. The principal failing is the lack of clearly accepted authority. All, whatever their incapacity, desire to rule (1:753). The *Junta Central* is beset by intriguing politicians and petty generals concerned only with personal advancement; men of merit, whether in the army or civilians, lack the daring and strength of character necessary to supplant Spain’s fatuous rulers (1:753). Seeking strength, Galdós contrasts the power of the central government of the 1870s to suppress insurrections, whether of the right or of the left, with its weakness in 1809 (1:753). Social cohesion is disrupted by both the ruling classes, which are divided (1:754), and by the mob, which, consisting of “la plebe holgazana y chillona” (idle, noisy plebeians) and manipulated by “gentezuela sin ideal” (low people lacking ideals), shows greater hatred for its political enemies than for the foreign invader (1:757). The remedy lies in the intervention in political life of “la mayoría honrada, decente, entendida y patriota” (the honorable, decent, thinking, patriotic majority) that at present maintains a “lamentable political neutrality” (1:757). Until such time as men establish institutions to control evildoers,²⁸ Galdós ironically appeals to the

28. Gabriel looks forward to the day when a “policía de las naciones” (international police; 1:834) will prevent such bandits as Napoleon.

workings of Providence and of the moral law to punish criminals (1:834–35).

As in *Zaragoza*, the courage and abnegation of “heroes” are contrasted with the more “human” values of weaker, but less one-sided, characters. Andrés Marijuán is, despite his bravery as a soldier, interested above all in family life and farming, not in the fate of kingdoms. The orphan Siseta, discreet, religious, and modest, is devoted to the care of her family and to domestic tasks. Josefina, the deaf and sickly child of the doctor Pablo Nomdedeu, lives in a secret world of the imagination, protected from all disturbances by the solicitude of her father. For Galdós, however, noninvolvement in the life of the community is itself a disease. The shock of danger restores Josefina to energy and to health, as her father belatedly realizes.

Throughout *Gerona*, Galdós extols the benefits of service to the collectivity, although the desolation wrought on the city and its inhabitants offers an opposing message of alienation from the massive costs of heroism. Two characters exemplify the dangers of selfishness. Pablo Nomdedeu is initially presented as well liked, generous, and charitable. He is obsessed, however, with preserving his daughter’s morale. Starving, his mind deranged by strain, placing the health of Josefina above the fanaticism of Alvarez de Castro (1:791–94), he loses sight of the common good, becoming, like Gabriel in *Trafalgar* and *Bailén*, an “egoist” (1:787–88, 822–23). Marijuán is also infected by a similar selfishness and refuses to hand over the captured rat (“Napoleon”) and sugar candy to the maniacal Nomdedeu. Like Spain’s quarreling leaders, the two no longer cooperate for the common cause. When, giving way to their most bestial instincts, they fight, the rat Napoleon is able to escape, carrying the sugar candy with him. Cooperation, however, brings success; the mutual effort of Marijuán and Siseta’s brothers had led to the capture of Napoleon in the first place.

As in *Zaragoza*, the atmosphere of a siege—restricted, obsessed, abnormal—is reflected in the narrow world of the novelistic characters who, reduced to a savage, selfish struggle to obtain food, live at an instinctive or bestial level. Social bonds are destroyed under the pressures of the siege; they are reasserted in the

final stages of the novel, when Gabriel arrives in Cádiz. Gabriel is plunged into a world of intrigue as Amaranta breathlessly declares that Inés is to be sent to England. Amaranta now treats Gabriel with confidence and in a manner approaching equality. In stark contrast to the inhuman world of the besieged Gerona, Amaranta can permit herself the luxury of playfulness, inducing her servant to assume the role of the “Duquesa de los Umbrosos Montes” (and the debt to the *Quijote* is again obvious) to mock an unfortunate Portuguese suitor.

In keeping with the tone of the ending of *Gerona*, but in marked contrast to the claustrophobic evocations of the sieges in *Gerona* and *Zaragoza, Cádiz*, written in September and October 1874, presents a Spain passionately awakening to a new life, a nation not merely resisting the onslaught of Napoleon’s legions but also choosing its own destiny. Representatives of all social classes assemble in a city that is the “compendium of Spanish nationality” (1:912). Spain must now come to terms with foreign influences: the pressures of the English ally, the “romantic” and disturbing presence of a Lord Gray, the enlightened philosophy of callow intellectuals. The struggle is also between generations: reformers oppose the rigid petrification represented by “absolutist” values; the children of the Condesa de Rumblar fight the life-denying grip of their authoritarian mother. Gabriel Araceli, like Spain, consciously takes control of his life, choosing to serve social as well as personal interests.

The novel treats the history of the Cádiz of 1810. There is only passing mention of unsuccessful Spanish expeditions and of the victory of the allied forces at La Albuera. The bulk of the novel re-creates the lively atmosphere of the city: the exchange of ideas and information in both philosophically advanced and absolutist *tertulias*, the rancors and petty jealousies of writers, the anti-clericalism of Spain’s first free press, the juvenile enthusiasms of a “club incipiente” in which youths memorize Gallardo’s anticlerical definitions are evoked in detail. Quintana, Martínez de la Rosa, and Arriaza are briefly described; Calomarde appears in the dual role of cynical opportunist and Gabriel’s friend. The lengthiest portraits are caricatures of those who oppose the *Cortes*: the

uncouth Ostalaza and Tenreyro and a fictional creation, the grotesquely ridiculous champion of the archaic, Don Pedro del Congosto.²⁹

Two meetings of the *Cortes* are described at length. In the first assembly, held in an atmosphere of solemnity and enthusiasm, Muñoz Torrero outlines the government program that, Gabriel explains, recalling the occasion with deep feeling, marks the end of the eighteenth century (1:869). Even at this moment, the struggle for power between the partisans of absolute government and the defenders of National Sovereignty is apparent as the Bishop of Orense refuses to swear the oath of loyalty (1:870). The divisions between the two “fanaticisms,” and Galdós is as opposed to liberal fanaticism as he is to absolutist, continues in the street and, Gabriel remarks in 1874, will continue long into the future (1:895).

At the second meeting of the *Cortes*, the abolition of feudal privilege and torture is proposed. Fictional characters interpret change in the light of personal interests. Don Paco defends feudalism for fear that the Condesa de Rumblar will lose income. Presentación’s childish, but far-reaching, demand, on the other hand, is that the *Cortes* promote individual happiness by breaking the joyless stranglehold of the Church and of the past on behavior:

Ordeno y mando que todos los españoles salgan a paseo por las tardes, y vayan una vez al mes al teatro, y se asomen al balcón después de haber hecho sus obligaciones... Prohibo que las familias recen más de un rosario completo al día... Prohibo que se case a nadie contra su voluntad, y que se descase a quien quiere hacerlo... Todo el mundo puede estar alegre, siempre que no ofenda al decoro. (1:903)

(I order and command all Spaniards to promenade in the afternoons and to go to the theater once a month and to appear on their balconies once they have carried out their obligations . . . I forbid families to pray more than one complete rosary per day . . . I forbid anyone to be married against his or her will; let anyone who so wishes get unmarried . . . Everyone can be happy, provided that decorum be not offended.)

29. For the creation of Pedro del Congosto and Galdós’s treatment of his sources, see Jean Sarrailh, “Quelques Sources du *Cádiz* de Galdós.” Don Pedro del Congosto is a composite of three historical characters: the Marqués del Palacio, Jiménez Guazo, and Lord Downie.

Presentación's plea for divorce and Amaranta's similar lament that the Pope does not permit the matrimony of Catholic and Protestant (1:847) are an attack, still valid in 1874, on clerical control of marriage.³⁰ A further attack on the Church occurs in the case of Asunción, destined since childhood for the cloister. Religious practices do not free her from her passion for Lord Gray; instead, the solitude of the convent and the absence of distraction ensure that Gray possess her spirit. Freedom, contact with other people and other ideas, will alone cure her (and also, by extension, the nation) of deathly obsessions:

Lo que me ha de curar es el mundo, amiga querida; es el mundo con todo lo bueno que encierra, la sociedad, la amistad, las artes, el viajar, el mucho ver y el mucho oír; que verdaderamente, aunque mi madre crea lo contrario, la mayor parte de lo que vemos y oímos en el mundo es honrado, lícito y provechoso... Apártenme de la soledad, que es causa de mi perdición; apártenme de las meditaciones, del cavilar, de este perenne volteo y constante rodar sobre el eje de una sola idea. Si he de curarme, no me curarán los conventos. (1:940)

(What will cure me is the world, dear friend; it's the world with all the good things that it contains, society, friendship, the arts, travel, its many spectacles and sounds; for truly, even though my mother believes the contrary, the greater part of what we see and hear in the world is honorable, lawful and beneficial . . . Remove me from solitude, which is the cause of my perdition; remove me from meditations, from racking my mind, from the constant revolving around a single idea. If I am to be healed, it will not be by convents.)

Galdós attacks not religion itself, but rather the form that it has taken in Spain. Thus, Gallardo and his followers are dismissed for their verbose and imbecilic anticlericalism, their belief, which stultified *progresista* youth for many years, that freedom was to be equated with the killing of priests (1:920). Gallardo accomplished nothing useful in his whole lifetime (1:920). His opinions on Christianity, on fanaticism, and on the friars are read at a gathering that Gabriel dismisses as “a labyrinth of stupidity and puerility” (1:921).

30. Later, in *La de los tristes destinos*, written in 1907, Galdós was to make the reluctance of the revolutionaries of 1868 to establish civil matrimony the sign of their lack of commitment to fundamental reform.

As in previous *episodios*, Galdós in *Cádiz* notes in the past harmful attitudes that still prevail in 1874. The Spanish government is weak, fearful of loss of popularity; it thus consents to see the eccentric Don Pedro del Congosto (1:864) and thoughtlessly entrusts an expedition to the ignorant demagogue Renovales, who draws his power from below rather than from above (1:865). Spaniards frequently lack common sense, as is evident in Congosto's quixotic attempt to resurrect the costumes and manners of the past, in the conduct of Renovales's campaign, and in the liberal Beña's bizarre proposal that Spaniards adopt antique dress. As in earlier novels, Galdós treats the lowest classes with contempt: the mob, predecessors of the "hermandad de la porra" (brotherhood of the club) of Galdós's day (1:906), insult and attack popular orators; the partisans of "mococrasia" who frequent Poenco's tavern are ignorant drunkards; the swarms of beggars still to be seen, Gabriel relates, in Aragon and Castilla, invade Cádiz (1:911–12). Gray observes that the Spanish propensity for the imagination produces not only saints and adventurers but above all rogues (1:915).

Through the Rumblar family, Galdós portrays a generational conflict that is a consequence of the introduction of new ideas and values. The Condesa de Rumblar, whose house is appropriately located in the *Calle de la Amargura*, represents the rigidity of the past.³¹ Domineering toward her family, contemptuous of Gabriel and of Inés, holding the rulers of Cádiz to be traitors, she lives by ideology, by abstractions; her system is ironically summarized by Gabriel as "Order, severity, silence, perpetual confinement, and constant slavery" (1:876). The Countess, like many of narrow vision, is readily duped by those who mouth right-wing clichés such as self-seeking clerics and the celestinesque Tía Alacrana, who wheedles her way into the Countess's confidence. Furthermore, her ideology masks self-interest, her avarice, her desire to dominate. A precursor of Doña Perfecta, whom she resembles in rigidity and values, the Countess is presented as a monster, in terms of caricature:

31. Donald F. Brown's suggestion (echoed by Hinterhäuser, *Los "Episodios Nacionales,"* 320) that Galdós is in the Condesa de Rumblar portraying his own mother reflects an outmoded concept of literary creation; see Brown, "More Light on the Mother of Galdós."

distinguí un bulto siniestro, después dos ojos terribles separados por el curvo filo de una nariz aguileña, después un rayo de indignación que partía de aquellos ojos. (1:907)

(I discerned a sinister shape, then two terrible eyes separated by the curved beak of an aquiline nose, then a lightning flash of indignation that came from those eyes.)

Sus ojos fulminaban rayos; su curva nariz, afilándose y tiñéndose de un verde lívido, parecía el cortante pico del águila majestuosa; movióse convulsivamente su barba picuda, reliquia de la antigua casta celtibera a que pertenecía; hizo ademán de querer hablar; mas con gesto majestuoso semejante al de las reinas de la dinastía goda cuando mandaban hacer alguna gran justicia, señaló a la otra Condesa. (1:931)

(Her eyes hurled bolts of lightning; her curved nose, sharpened and stained a livid green, seemed the sharp beak of a majestic eagle; convulsive jerks ran through her pointed chin, the relic of the ancient Celtiberian race to which she belonged; she gestured as if wishing to speak; but with a majestic movement like that of the queens of the Gothic dynasty when they ordered some great act of justice to be carried out, she pointed to the other Countess.)

The consequences of the intolerance and rigidity of the Countess are evident in her children. Don Diego lies to his mother, has no scruples about borrowing from Gabriel, is a drunkard, likes low-life company, and parrots the anticlerical phrases of others. Presentación and Asunción dare not be frank with their domineering mother and lack an outlet for their youthful high spirits. In the absence of the Countess, they sing and dance, play games, and mock their tutor. The ingenuous Presentación longs for freedom; uneducated and naive, she takes refuge in fancy. Asunción, who twice elopes with Lord Gray, is most to be pitied. Raised for the convent, believing in a conventional moral code, she is easy prey to the honeyed words of the seducer who promises to convert to Catholicism and marry her. Abandoned and scorned by her seducer, she longs for suicide.

In contrast to the Countess, Amaranta is bound, despite her failure to recognize the importance of the *Cortes*, neither by ideology nor by class. Patriotic, teasing, lively, on occasion unscrupulous and malicious, she is sure of herself in relation to others. She suffers deeply from the separation from her daughter Inés. In her desperation, she will use Gray as an ally in order that she and Inés may flee to a happier land.

Inés has a more active role than in previous *episodios*. Sure of herself, although still showing on occasions traces of self-pity, surviving by prudence and resourcefulness the treacherous shoals of the Rumblar household, she acts decisively and generously, in a fruitless attempt to save Asunción from dishonor. Deeply religious, Inés also accepts the conventional moral code. Unlike Asunción, Inés has too much sense to affront society by eloping with the man she loves, preferring temporary unhappiness to loss of reputation: “Yo no quiero salir así de mi encierro, sino en pleno día, con las puertas abiertas y a la vista de todos” (I do not wish to leave my prison in this manner, but in full daylight, with the doors open and in the sight of all; 1:927).

Gabriel leads, rather than merely reacts to, events in the novel. He feels no sense of inferiority to those whom he formerly served, chaffing Doña Flora, recognizing Amaranta’s capacity for duplicity, making his way surely, if hypocritically, in the *absolutista tertulia* of the Condesa de Rumblar. Sensitive and spirited, he reacts with romantic exaggeration when informed that Inés had forgotten him: “Cuando me dijeron que me había olvidado, yo no lo quería creer. Salí a la calle, y todo el mundo se reía de mí. ¡Espantosa noche! Escupí al cielo y lo dejé sombrío... Me metí la mano en el pecho, saqué el corazón, lo estrujé como una naranja y se lo arrojé a los perros” (When they told me you had forgotten me, I refused to believe it. I went out in the street, and everybody was making fun of me. Fearsome night! I spat at the heavens and left them black . . . I put my hand in my breast and plucked out my heart, I squeezed it like an orange, and I cast it to the dogs; 1:892). For the most part, however, Gabriel behaves with patience, with discretion, and with humor. He spends months cultivating the friendship of Lord Gray, whom he suspects is Inés’s lover; he even, although he finds the experience depressing, accompanies Lord Gray in frequenting the low life of Cádiz. Gabriel not only knows how to bide his time; he can also show decisiveness and forcefulness. Thus, he compels Inés to go to her mother’s house and, in a burlesque of the popular novel, ostentatiously restores Inés to her mother:

La voz de la Naturaleza antes de ahora, en todas ocasiones, y más que nunca ahora mismo, clamará dentro de ti para declarártelo. Sra. Condesa, abrácela usted, porque nadie vendrá a arrancarla de manos de su

verdadero dueño. Inés, descansa tranquila en ese seno, que no encierra egoísmo ni intrigas contra ti, sino sólo amor. Ella es para ti lo más santo, lo más noble, lo más querido, porque es tu madre.

Diciendo esto callé; descansé, como Dios después de haber hecho el mundo. (1:930)

(The voice of Nature before now, on every occasion, and now more than ever, will clamor inside you to declare it to you. Countess, embrace her, for no one can remove her from the hands of her true mistress. Inés, rest at peace on this breast, which contains neither selfishness nor plots against you, but only love. She is for you what is most holy, most noble, most beloved, for she is your mother.

Having said this, I grew silent; I rested, like God after creating the world.)

From this moment, Gabriel plays a commanding role in Inés's family. He demands that Gray marry Asunción. When Gray refuses, Gabriel challenges Gray to a duel in which the Englishman is killed. The gesture, Gabriel affirms, is not quixotic but is necessary to protect society (1:949–50). The Countess grudgingly admits that his behavior is that of a "caballero."

Lord Gray is one of Galdós's most vivid creations. Obviously modeled on Lord Byron, with his curls, finely chiseled features, and swimming abilities, Gray dazzles the society of Cádiz with his fine manners and easy talk about his wide travels. Although capable of reserve, he is of excessive and changeable moods: when afflicted with *spleen*, he thinks of suicide; when Asunción leaves him, he is angered to the point of incoherence.

At heart, Gray is empty and self-centered. His neatly phrased speeches are literary creations, attempts at covering the void within himself, symptoms of his alienation from others. His apostrophe of the spectacle of a stormy sea in which twenty ships are wrecked provokes Gabriel's sensible comment that Gray is insane (1:853). Gray seeks in Spain what he cannot find in England: a land of primitive passions (1:850–51), a nation of exaltation and disorder that will provide a fitting backdrop for his challenge of society's rules:

Yo debí nacer en España. Si yo hubiera nacido bajo este sol, habría sido guerrillero hoy y mendigo mañana, fraile al amanecer y torero por la tarde, majo y sacristán de conventos y monjas, abate y petimetre, contrabandista y salteador de caminos... España es el país de la Naturaleza desnuda, de las pasiones exaltadas, de los sentimientos enér-

gicos, del bien y el mal sueltos y libres, de los privilegios que traen las luchas, de la guerra continua del nunca descansar... Amo todas esas fortalezas que ha ido levantando la Historia, para tener yo el placer de escalarlas; amo los caracteres tenaces y testarudos, para contrariarlos; amo los peligros, para acometerlos; amo lo imposible, para reírme de la lógica, facilitándolo; amo todo lo que es inaccesible y abrupto en el orden moral, para vencerlo; amo las tempestades todas, para lanzarme en ellas, impelido por la curiosidad de ver si salgo sano y salvo de sus tremendos remolinos; gusto de que me digan: "De aquí no pasarás," para contestar: "Pasaré." (1:891)

(I ought to have been born in Spain. If I had been born beneath this sun, I would have been today a *guerrillero* and tomorrow a beggar, a friar at dawn and a bullfighter in the evening, a braggart and a convent sacristan, an abbot and a dandy, a smuggler and a highwayman . . . Spain is the land of naked Nature, of exalted passions, of energetic sentiments, of good and evil set loose, of privileges born of battle, of the perpetual struggle of no repose . . . I love all those fortresses erected by History for me to have the pleasure of scaling them; I love tenacious, obstinate characters, in order to oppose them; I love dangers, in order to undertake them; I love what is impossible, in order to mock logic, by making it easy; I love everything that is inaccessible and difficult in the moral order, in order to conquer it; I love all tempests, in order to fling myself into them, urged by curiosity to see if I can emerge safe and sound from their tremendous whirlpools; I take pleasure in people saying to me: "Beyond this point you will not pass," in order to answer: "I shall pass.")

As part of Galdós's attack on the fantasy, lack of discipline, and ignorance of many Spaniards, Gray does indeed find the Spain that he seeks: the filthy rogues who surround him when he too dresses as a beggar, the robbers and whores of Poenco's tavern, the celestinesque Tía Alacrana, the quixote ("algo degenerado") Don Pedro del Congosto.

Gray's search is a symptom of a deep inner unhappiness; he confesses to Gabriel that he is "muy desgraciado" (very unhappy; 1:949). He is attracted to Asunción by her piety, by the very barriers that prevent his attaining her.³² His lusts once satisfied, he is left as before, isolated in the face of the human reality that he despises:

32. Similarly, Bartolomé Gracián, in *La revolución de julio* (1904), feels a destructive, "romantic" passion for a woman who must by definition be unattainable.

El hermoso misterio se disipó... La realidad todo lo mata... ¡Ay! Yo buscaba algo extraordinario, profundamente grandioso y sublime en aquella encarnación del principio religioso que caía en mis brazos; yo esperaba encontrar un tesoro de ideales delicias para mi alma, abrasada en sed inextinguible; yo esperaba recibir una impresión celeste que me transportara a la esfera de las más altas concepciones; pero, ¡maldita Naturaleza!, la criatura seráfica que yo soñaba rodeada de nubes y de angelitos en sobrenatural beatitud, se deshizo, se disipó, se descompuso, como una imagen de máquina óptica cuya luz sopla el bárbaro titiritero diciendo: "Buenas noches..." Todo desapareció... Las alas de ángel, agitándose, zumbaban en mi oído; pero yo me desencajaba los ojos mirando y no veía nada, absolutamente nada más que una mujer..., una mujer como otra cualquiera, como la de ayer, como la de anteayer. (1:949)

(The beautiful mystery was dissipated . . . Reality kills everything . . . Alas! I was seeking something extraordinary, profoundly grandiose and sublime in that incarnation of the religious principle that was falling into my arms; I was expecting to find a treasure of delights for my soul, which was burning with inextinguishable thirst; I was hoping to receive a celestial impression that would transport me to the sphere of the highest concepts; but, cursed Nature!, the seraphic creature whom I dreamed surrounded by clouds and cherubs in supernatural blessedness, vanished, was dissipated and decomposed, like an image from a magic lantern when its light is blown out by the barbaric puppet master who says "Good Night . . ." Everything disappeared . . . The wings of the angel, beating, buzzed in my ears; but I strained my eyes looking and saw nothing, absolutely nothing except a woman . . . , a woman like any other, like the one yesterday, like the one the day before yesterday.)

To Gray's "romantic," self-centered attempt to use others to alleviate, if only temporarily, his own emptiness, Gabriel prosaically replies that we must accept our human limitations: "Hay que conformarse con lo que Dios nos ha dado y no aspirar a más" (We must be content with what God has given us and not aspire to more).

Although Gabriel is shocked by Gray's lack of patriotism (a further example of Gray's divorce from social ties), Gray's attack on English foreign policy is, in Spanish eyes, a valid criticism of English attitudes. The English defend their own interests; they therefore should not be allowed to land troops in Cádiz, lest it be converted into another Gibraltar, treacherously occupied to be-

come a warehouse for smugglers (1:850). The English are hypocritical, for despite their talk of freedom, they own millions of slaves in the colonies; “national dignity” (an anachronistic argument in its reference to African markets in 1810) is merely an excuse to impose English products by force on reluctant Asian and African peoples (1:849).

In *Juan Martín el Empecinado*, written in December 1874, Gabriel accompanies the guerrilla campaigns of Juan Martín from September 1811 to January 1812.³³ Guerrilla warfare is brutally savage: villages are sacked by both sides; their few remaining inhabitants starve; the countryside is devastated; prisoners are murdered. There is no idealization of the Spanish irregular forces: many in Juan Martín’s band profit from the war; some treacherously defect to the French; the *guerrilleros* rob their compatriots; Spanish peasants treat French prisoners with cruelty. In the background regular Spanish armies suffer defeat; Valencia falls to the French; the juntas intrigue.

Juan Martín, the *guerrillero* leader, is presented as an exemplary figure. Despite his lack of education and rough manners, he is scrupulously honest, is devoted to the Spanish cause, trusts his men, favors the Constitution, and fights because such is his duty. He has an instinctive ability for warfare. His error, however, lies in trying to make a regular army out of what is no more than a *partida grande* (large gang). As with earlier heroes praised by Galdós, his heroism inspires his followers to “supernatural” effort (1:1009).

Juan Martín, however, is an exceptional figure, for Galdós finds as many defects as virtues in the *guerrilleros*. The *guerrilleros*, with their skills at utilizing the terrain, at rapidly engaging battle and then dispersing, contributed to the expulsion of the French and the subsequent preservation of Spanish independence (1:974). Galdós’s grudging portrayal of the *guerrilleros* is

33. For a penetrating discussion of Galdós’s treatment of the *guerrilleros*, see Peter A. Bly, “For Self or Country? Conflicting Lessons in the First Series of the *Episodios Nacionales*?” Gabriel H. Lovett, discussing Galdós’s reasons for choosing to portray Juan Martín Díez as a representative *guerrillero* leader, sees epic grandeur in the *guerrillero* struggle; see “Some Observations of Galdós’ *Juan Martín el Empecinado*.” Glendinning usefully discusses the moral shortcomings of Mosén Antón and his followers in “Psychology and Politics,” 51–58.

nevertheless heavily colored by his hostility to Carlist bands, again operating at the time of the composition of *Juan Martín el Empecinado*.³⁴ The *guerrilleros*, behaving instinctively, represent a throwback to the “anarquía reglamentada” (controlled anarchy) of primitive times (1:957). They are formed from an unruly element in the Spanish soul, one that needs perpetual war to create a pretense of life: “del genio castizo español, que necesita de la perpetua lucha para apacentar su indomable y díscola inquietud, y ha de vivir disputando de palabra u obra para creer que vive” (the true Spanish genius, which needs perpetual struggle to appease its untamable and wild restlessness, must live fighting in word or in deed in order to believe in its own existence; 1:973).

Three forms of spontaneous leadership, “caudillaje,” exist in Spain: the *guerrillero*, the smuggler, the highway bandit (1:974). The War of Independence is a school of disorder; Spaniards, having learned the art of insurrection, have yet to return home (1:974). The *guerrilleros* are the essence of Spain, its greatness and weakness, its heroism and degradation (1:975). With great indignation, the aged Araceli traces the “leprosy of *caudillaje*” to the present, through the petty absolutist and Carlist “heroes” of the past to the Carlist “leaders” of 1874, whose offspring will provide disorder in the future (1:975).

Vicente Sardina, who, with Juan Martín, is one of the few *guerrillero* leaders whose motives are disinterested, recognizes the ignoble elements that composed a large part of the *guerrillero* army. These fighters soon tire of discipline, and, with their liking for a vagabond, adventurous life, will with difficulty return to their humble, everyday tasks (1:986–87). Apart from Sardina and Juan Martín, the *guerrillero* leaders portrayed by Galdós are unsavory. Santurrias, the demagogic, drunken priest who helped organize the Aranjuez revolt in *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, spies for the *guerrillero* bands. Three former students of Alcalá prefer a roving life to studying; they defect to the French with

34. Cuenca had been sacked in June 1874; Carlist leaders such as the priest Santa Cruz, the ex-convict Sananiego, Savalls, and Cucala were notorious for their savagery. The heads of Carlist *partidas*, like the *guerrilleros* portrayed by Galdós, were mutually antagonistic and totally without discipline. For a general account of the Carlist campaigns of 1873 and 1874, seen from a liberal viewpoint, see Francisco Pi y Margall and Francisco Pi y Arsuaga, *Historia de España en el siglo XIX*, 5:603–738, 788–843.

Mosén Antón and Saturnino Albuín (“El Manco”). Albuín is rancorous and venal, his supporters, villains of repulsive mien (1:995).

Albuín’s rebellion and defection are inspired by greed; Mosén Antón Trijueque’s treachery is caused by jealousy of Juan Martín’s fame. The gigantic priest, a superb strategist, is bloodthirsty and insensitive to human feeling; he is, indeed, compared throughout the novel to savage wild animals. Proud, envious, and, at the same time, courageous, a prey to inner demons, he passes to the French, who then mock him. Bitterly unhappy and still unrepentant, he, like Judas, hangs himself. In his isolation from others, in his betrayal of his social group, he reminds one greatly of Lord Gray. Mosén Antón’s defiant claim to self-sufficiency, a self-sufficiency he is far from possessing, would, indeed, be placed by Galdós in the mouths of similarly alienated characters in later *episodios*: “Yo desprecio a todos: me basto y me sobro” (I despise everyone: I suffice and more than suffice to myself; 1:1047).

Mosén Antón’s treachery and self-punishment are exemplary, as also is the story of Santorcaz’s life. From a family of well-off farmers, Santorcaz as a student had been handsome, boisterous, and glib. Refusing to accept his humble position, the successful lover of Amaranta, he was persecuted and defamed by her noble relatives. Fleeing to France, he applauded the execution of Louis XIV, the declaration of war on Spain, and the reign of terror. Living with Marchena, he insulted God. Abandoning his revolutionary fervor, disdained by his Spanish compatriots, he had joined Napoleon’s forces and was now to kidnap his daughter Inés, a gesture, in Gabriel’s eyes, of “cruel venganza.” Sickened by rancor, he, like Lord Gray and Mosén Antón, admits his unhappiness (1:1012). He is not without favorable features: he intercedes to save Gabriel’s life; his very frankness about his past and his awareness of the horrors of the French Revolution suggest possible redemption. In many respects, his early life resembled that of Gabriel; Gabriel, however, has conformed to his lot and has attacked neither the structure of society nor God.

Gabriel is courageous, highly resourceful, and a consummate diplomat, flattering and deceiving to forward his own interests.

No doubt as part of his attack on contemporary Carlist claims to represent the cause of religion, Galdós portrays Gabriel as constant in his faith in God (1:1012, 1028, 1043–44, chapter 23). Gabriel also stresses the power of the will, forcing his frozen body forward in an effort to reach Inés. Gabriel is patriotic, preferring death to serving the French; his obsession with Inés, however, leads him to abandon a group of Spanish refugees who had aided him. Gabriel is generous, helping to free Mosén Antón from his persecutors, and feels compassion for the French. He also, like Sardina and Juan Martín, longs for an end to the war and a return to civilian life (1:986). Gabriel's ever-increasing moral stature is acknowledged by Amaranta, who promises him Inés's hand; her affirmation of the existence of an "aristocracy of souls" to which Gabriel belongs (1:1044) represents, in the light of her past treatment of Santorcaz, a considerable growth in her moral vision. Undercutting somewhat Gabriel's heroic role, however, are the note of self-advertisement and the tendency to histrionic posture evident on occasion in Gabriel (see 1:1013, 1026–27, 1044).

In the final and lengthiest novel of the first series of *episodios*, *La batalla de los Arapiles*, written in February and March 1875, Galdós initially offers, through the letters of Amaranta,³⁵ a lively account of French-occupied Madrid: starvation and poverty, the excesses of the police recruited by the French from the dregs of society, social changes, and moral decline are portrayed. Amaranta offers summary portraits of prominent figures: Moratín is "sadder and more pusillanimous than ever"; Joseph Bonaparte is "a pleasant, discreet, tolerant person, well behaved, desiring only good" (1:1054); and Marchena is "an insane troublemaker." Later, Galdós relates the scorched-earth policy of the retreating French, the Spanish capture of Salamanca, and, at length, the victory at Los Arapiles of the combined English, Spanish, and Portuguese armies, as seen from the vantage point of the English, with whom Gabriel temporarily serves. The Spanish general Carlos España is portrayed as unbalanced and cruel; Wellesley, on

35. The device of presenting history through the letters of an informed correspondent was used to a much greater extent in the third series of *episodios*; see, for example, *La estafeta romántica* (1899).

the other hand, is a far-sighted military genius. English officers are presented quaintly, but not unsympathetically, as stilted and obsessed with national reputation.

As in *La Fontana de Oro* and *El audaz*, Galdós attacks two forms of ideological insanity: that of the masons³⁶ and that of the religious fanatic. The masons, divided, unpopular with both the Spanish and the French, without contact with reality, mouth the slogans of revolutionary rhetoric that are dismissed contemptuously by Gabriel as “aquel gárrulo estilo revolucionario que tan en boga estaba entonces entre afrancesados y masones” (that garrulous revolutionary style that was so fashionable then among lovers of the French and masons; 1:1106). Through the person of Ciruelo, who wishes to reduce Salamanca to ruins, destroying the university, cathedral, colleges, and major churches (“the most terrible witnesses to tyranny, barbarity, and fanaticism in these ominous times,” 1:1123), Galdós links the masons to the *comunards* of 1871. The eccentric Juan de Dios, on the other hand, twice escaped from a lunatic asylum, living off herbs, wild roots, and water, suffering convulsions and tormented by visions of Inés that he attributes to the devil, suffers from a sickness that is akin to the exaltations of the mystics: “Su expresión era la de las almas exaltadas por una piedad que igualmente hace sus efectos en el espíritu y en el sistema nervioso. Misticismo y enfermedad al mismo tiempo, es una devoción singular que ha llevado hermosísimas figuras al cielo de las grandezas humanas” (His expression was that of souls exalted by a piety that affects equally the spirit and the nervous system. Mysticism and sickness at once, it is a strange devotion that has borne the noblest figures to the heavens of human greatness; 1:1062). Advised by a priest to avoid the contact of friends and to practice mortification, Juan de Dios persists in his dementia. Like the masons and in marked contrast to Gabriel, whose belief that he is favored by Divine Providence is stressed, Juan de Dios is limited to fixed phrases and is unable to respond to changing situations. (An Augustinian, Father Conrado Muiños Sáenz, has, however,

36. Galdós's biased and simplistic portrayal of the *afrancesados*, reduced to evil-doers and *ilusos*, in *La batalla de los Arapiles* is competently explored by Thomas Oliu, “Individuo e historia en la novela histórica: La figura del afrancesado en *La batalla de los Arapiles* de Benito Pérez Galdós.”

strongly protested Galdós's portrayal of Juan de Dios, both for its gross bias and for Galdós's obvious unawareness of the procedures for taking religious orders.)

For Joaquín Casaldüero, the first series of *episodios* represents, in the career of Gabriel Araceli, the "redención del pícaro" (the redemption of the rogue).³⁷ The true redemption, however, is not so much of Gabriel but rather of Luis de Santorcaz.³⁸ Inés, combining "the holiness of angels" with "a certain diplomatic astuteness" (1:1131), cajoles the dying and pathetically dependent Santorcaz to open himself to others and to God. Won over by the patience and love of Inés, Santorcaz abandons the jargon of masons that was a symptom of his isolation, renounces hatred, seeks the pardon of Amaranta, and confesses that pride, desire for vengeance, and anger had motivated him. His self-imposed spiritual torment at an end, he dies a holy death after receiving the last rites of the Church. To complete the scene of penitent father and devoted daughter, Amaranta weeps bitterly as she finally realizes that Santorcaz had sacrificed his reputation to preserve her honor.

In contrast to the pathos of the scenes in which Inés brings Santorcaz to spiritual salvation, much of *La batalla de los Arapiles* is a tale of adventure: Gabriel saves the life of the beautiful, fair-haired, blue-eyed Athanais Fly; he enters Salamanca in disguise as a spy; he is arrested and escapes; he interrupts his military duties to attempt the kidnapping of Inés. Miss Fly, like Lord Gray, whom she hates (he had seduced and driven to suicide her sister and killed her brother), has an exaggerated, "romantic" vision of Spain based on literature rather than experience. Nevertheless, despite her eccentricity, Miss Fly is courageous, forthright, and of compelling personality. She strongly appeals to hidden layers in Gabriel's soul (1:1112, 1116).

Gabriel shows contradictory characteristics in *La batalla de los Arapiles*. Fascinated by Miss Fly, morbidly sensitive to the cool-

37. See Joaquín Casaldüero, *Vida y obra de Galdós*, 50–51. Gaspar Gómez de la Serna, on the other hand, has argued that the picaresque theme, if it exists, is merely a device to allow Gabriel to frequent different social spheres; see *España en sus episodios nacionales*, 47–48.

38. The religious aspects of Santorcaz's conversion are discussed by Francisco Pérez Gutiérrez, *El problema religioso en la generación de 1868*, 210.

ness of Lord Wellesley, he is also capable of humor and common sense, as when he objects to Miss Fly's using him as a "textbook." But, in contrast to the patience and diplomacy that he had revealed in *Cádiz* and the first part of *Juan Martín el Empeinado*, Gabriel's outstanding characteristics are vehemence and impetuosity. He is overbearing in his demands that Inés accompany him and in his insults to her aged father. His pride is such that he uses Mosén Antón's own words to proclaim his self-sufficiency: "Yo no necesito de nadie; me basto y me sobro" (I need no one; I suffice and more than suffice to myself; 1:1112). His rage, when frustrated, approaches mania: "En mi desesperada impotencia me arrojaba al suelo, mordía la tierra, y clamaba al cielo con alaridos que habrían aterrado a los transeuntes, si por aquella desolada llanura hubiese pasado en tal hora alma viviente" (In my desperate impotence, I hurled myself on the ground, bit the earth, and called on heaven with howls that would have terrified the passers-by, if any living soul had crossed that desolate plain at such a time; 1:1125). But, despite his manifestations of egotism, Gabriel, like the Santorcaz whom he so resembles, is forced to acknowledge his dependency on others: on Miss Fly, who helps him to escape from Salamanca and saves him from death on the battlefield; on those who nurse him; on Inés, through whom he realizes the sacred bond between father and daughter.

While Gabriel has adventures, the leading role in the novel belongs to Inés, who has the strength to defy Gabriel's imperious demands and, with patience and love, to lead her father to redemption. Inés is much more than the "ave doméstica" scathingly dismissed by Miss Fly and whose qualities are defended by Gabriel.³⁹ She teases Miss Fly with tales of Gabriel's escapades; she is clear-sighted in her analysis of her father's spiritual ills and is obviously the mouthpiece of Galdós when she places morality before ideology and when she claims that ideology masks self-interest.⁴⁰ She also, like Gabriel, is capable of

39. Gabriel describes Inés as "un animal útil, cariñoso, amable, sensible, que ha nacido y vive para el sacrificio, pues da al hombre sus hijos, sus plumas y, finalmente, su vida" (a useful, affectionate, kind, and sensitive animal, which is born and lives for sacrifice, since it gives to man its children, its feathers, and, finally, its life).

40. "Ni hagas caso de los frailes ni de los nobles, los cuales, padre querido, no se van a suprimir y a aniquilarse porque tú lo desees, ni porque así lo quiera el mal humor del señor Canencia, del Sr. Monsalud y del Sr. Ciruelo. . . . He aquí

emotional extremes, as she reveals when she confesses her attempted suicide (1:1140).

Despite the seriousness of the novelistic theme—the redemption of Santorcaz, the reconciliation of the divided—*La batalla de los Arapiles* is to a large extent an almost jovial work, the consequence, one suspects, of Galdós's relief at terminating the first series of *episodios nacionales* and with it the first-person narrative, which presented increasing problems.⁴¹ Good humor abounds, as in the portrayal of the bizarre Miss Fly with her strange use of the *vos* and in Gabriel's and Inés's mockery of her extravagant thought and diction (1:1176). Furthermore, the constant references to the *Quijote* remind the reader, if reminder were needed, that he is in a world of fiction and that Gabriel's *memorias* bear but a limited connection with historical "reality" and are thus not to be taken too seriously. An extreme, and staggering, example of this distancing of Gabriel and of reader from any illusion that the *episodios* are "fact" occurs when Gabriel, tongue-in-cheek, raises doubts as to the very existence of Miss Fly:

Muchas personas que anteriormente me han oído contar esto sostienen que jamás ha existido miss Fly; que toda esta parte de mi historia es una invención mía para recrearme a mí propio y entretener a los demás; pero ¿no debe creerse ciegamente la palabra de un hombre honrado? (1:1179)

(Many people who have previously heard me relate this maintain that Miss Fly never existed; that all this part of my story is an invention of

tres que hablan mal de los nobles, de los poderosos y de los reyes, porque, hasta ahora ningún rey ni ningún señor han pensado en arrojarles un pedazo de pan para que callen, y otro para que griten en favor suyo" (Do not concern yourself with the friars and the nobles, dear father, for they are not going to be suppressed and annihilated merely because you so wish, nor because the bad temper of Señor Canencia, Señor Monsalud, and Señor Ciruelo so demands. . . . These are three people who speak ill of the nobles, the powerful, and kings because until now no monarch and no lord have thought of throwing them a piece of bread for them to shut up, and another piece for them to demonstrate in their favor; 1:1144). Galdós made a similar claim, that ideology masks self-interest, in *La Fontana de Oro* and *Doña Perfecta*.

41. In an epilogue to the first edition of *La batalla de los Arapiles*, Galdós declared that his major error in the first series of *episodios* was the adoption of the first-person narrative and the consequent difficulty of having Araceli take part in so many different historical events; see Alan E. Smith, "El epílogo a la primera edición de *La batalla de los Arapiles*."

mine for my amusement and for the entertainment of others; but should not the word of an honorable man be blindly believed?)

The novelistic plot of the first series of *episodios* ends with the death of Santorcaz. The final chapter, in which Gabriel summarizes his good fortune in the subsequent sixty years, is almost a conscious parody of a “happy ending.” Gabriel, apparently untouched by a half-century of political upset, has achieved an *aurea mediocritas*, attaining wealth and possessing numerous grand- and great-grandchildren. His success, he observes, was due to his constant effort and is thus exemplary. Ironically undercutting his claims, however, is his acknowledgment of his debt to his mother-in-law, who, by means of her well-placed connections, has him, still in his early twenties, appointed a general in the army. Gabriel’s final message to subsequent generations is comic in its evasiveness: strive constantly, and marry well.

The Second Series of Episodios Nacionales, 1875-1879



he *episodios nacionales* of the second series were written between June 1875 and December 1879. During this period, Galdós also wrote *Doña Perfecta* (1876), *Gloria* (1877), *Marianela* (1878), and *La familia de León Roch* (1878). Galdós's rhythm of writing, if we take into account the lengthy novels *Gloria* and *La familia de León Roch*, is the same as that of the preceding three years. His production of *episodios*, however, is much slower. *Un voluntario realista* was written in February and March 1878; the next *episodio*, *Los apostólicos*, was written over a year later in May and June 1879; and the final *episodio* of the series, *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, was composed during the last two months of 1879.

The second series was written during the early years of the Restoration. In contrast to the political turmoil that followed the Revolution of 1868, the Restoration represented a calming of passions, a longed-for order and stability. With the almost total discredit of the Republic, few obstacles existed in the consolidation of the monarchical regime. Alfonso, with his easy manners and romantic aura, to which his consumptive lungs and ill-fated love match with his cousin Mercedes largely contributed, proved a popular ruler. Sagasta's *partido constitucional*, which in late 1875 accepted the Alfonsine monarchy, although a few die-hards still favored the constitution of 1869, provided a "loyal opposition" to Cánovas's *partido liberal-conservador* and participated in the *Cortes Constituyentes* of 1876. Republican opposition was negligible: Castelar sat in the *Cortes*; Ruiz Zorrilla, resisting Cánovas's blandishments, unsuccessfully attempted from exile to organize a military *pronunciamiento* in favor of a Republic.

The initial problem of the Restoration regime, the ending of the Carlist insurrection, was solved by a combination of vigorous

military action and conciliatory gesture. Major campaigns in the summer of 1875 crushed Carlist forces in the Maestrazgo and Catalonia. In the north, General Tello defeated the Carlists in July near La Puebla de Arganzón. A policy of destruction of crops, confiscation of property, and exile deprived Carlist guerrilla bands of sources of support. The final assault on the strongholds of the Carlists in the Basque Provinces and in Navarre came in January and February 1876. Alfonso XII, consolidating his prestige, accompanied the victorious troops. Don Carlos fled Spain on 28 February. Many of the Carlist troops, already demoralized and rebelling against their leaders, accepted the governmental offer of pardon. By offering pardon and bribes to the insurgents, the Cuban rising, too, was brought to a temporary close, with the Peace of Zanjón in February 1878.

The Constitution of 1876, which was to survive until Primo de Rivera's coup in 1923, reflected the desire of Cánovas¹ to achieve a compromise solution acceptable both to his more reactionary supporters and to the ideological heirs of the Revolution of 1868. Thus, the key question, that of religion, was settled by the limited toleration of non-Catholic worship. Religious dissidents could grudgingly accept the partial breach in the "religious unity" of Spain; Catholic intransigents, on the other hand, with the increasing collapse of political Carlism, could do little more than fulminate against this "betrayal" of their principles. Furthermore, Cánovas's stress on the constitutional limitation of monarchical power and his wish for two-party representation, although *caciquismo* was entrenched in the Restoration system and elections continued to be "arranged," assimilated the Restoration settlement to British practice rather than to earlier Spanish authoritarian regimes.

Above all, the Restoration represented a reaction to the energies set loose by the Revolution of 1868, a respite from passionate involvement. Sagasta, for example, during the debate on the religious question, noted contemporary national apathy:

Por todas partes se nota una indiferencia que hiela; todo reviste un carácter de frialdad que espanta; fríamente se reciben las disposiciones

1. Cánovas, except for brief ministries by Jovellar in 1875 and Martínez Campos in 1879, remained in power until early 1881.

del Gobierno; con frialdad es acogido el decreto sobre convocatoria de Cortes; en medio de la mayor frialdad se abren los comicios electorales; sin entusiasmo se verifica la apertura del Parlamento; frío es el discurso de la Corona, fría la contestación; fríamente se reciben las noticias de la guerra; y hasta sin el debido entusiasmo se recibe la noticia de la paz.²

(Everywhere one can discern a freezing indifference; everything is taking on a terrifying character of coldness; the dispositions of the Government are received coldly; the decree about the convocation of the Parliament is welcomed with coldness; the elections are beginning amid the greatest coldness; the opening of Parliament takes place without enthusiasm; the speech from the Throne is cold, as also is the reply; the war news is coldly received; and even the news of peace is received without due enthusiasm.)

In *El equipaje del rey José*, written in June and July 1875, Galdós treats the collapse of the French regime in May and June 1813. A “bridge-novel” between the two series of *episodios*, bringing the War of Independence to an end and introducing the political divisions that will, in Galdós’s view, afflict Spaniards for the rest of the century, *El equipaje del rey José* is crammed with historical incident: the hasty change of allegiance and rhetoric of those who had served the French, the bloodthirsty hostility of the *guerrilleros* toward the *afrancesados*, the slow-moving baggage column of the retreating French army accompanied by numerous refugees and overburdened with the fruits of the massive French pillage of occupied territory, the headlong flight of Joseph Bonaparte, the looting and killing after the Battle of Vitoria, and the casual atmosphere that prevailed as sightseers and picnickers inspected the battlefield are all evoked. At times, Galdós impressionistically describes nightmarish scenes of carnage, as gun carriages are driven over hapless refugees and the wounded are crudely operated on.

At the time of composition of *El equipaje del rey José*, the Spanish army was subduing, by overwhelming force, Carlist rebels in the north of Spain; the center of General Tello’s campaign was, indeed, the region of La Puebla de Arganzón, in the province of Alava. Throughout the novel, Galdós scathingly sati-

2. Quoted in Francisco Pi y Margall and Francisco Pi y Arsuaga, *Historia de España en el siglo XIX*, 6:69.

rizes the ancestors of the Carlists, the ignorant and ferocious inhabitants of La Puebla de Arganzón, who believe that "God is Spanish," that heaven is gained by killing Frenchman, *afrancesado*, or liberal, and that supporters of the Constitution are followers of Satan. Continuing an argument begun in *Juan Martín el Empecinado*, Galdós, in the words of the admittedly biased Monsalud, portrays the *guerrilleros* as a source of disorder rather than as national heroes: "plebe inmundada digna del presidio . . . los asesinos, ladrones y contrabandistas de cada lugar, con más los holgazanes, que son casi todos" (a foul populace worthy of prison . . . the murderers, thieves, and smugglers of each village, plus the idlers, who are almost all of them; 1:1239).

The war between absolutist and liberal, the theme of the second series of *episodios*, is symbolized in the antagonism of two half-brothers, Carlos Navarro and Salvador Monsalud, divided by ideology and sexual rivalry. The relevance of the fraternal struggle to the Carlist War of Galdós's day is explicitly stated:

la gente de estos días, la cual, viviendo como vive en el fragor de la guerra civil, ha presenciado en los tiempos presentes todos los desvaríos del odio humano entre seres de una misma sangre y de una misma familia. . . . La actual guerra civil, por sus cruentos horrores, por los terribles casos de lucha entre hermanos, y aun por el fanatismo de las mujeres, que en algunos lugares han afilado sonriendo el puñal de los hombres, presenta cuadros ante cuyas encendidas y cercanas tintas palidecerán, tal vez, los que reproduce el narrador de cosas de antaño. El primer lance de este gran drama español, que todavía se está representando a tiros, es lo que me ha tocado referir en éste, que, más que libro, es el prefacio de un libro. (1:1251)

(the people of these days, who, living in the forge of civil war, have witnessed in present times all the madness of human hatred that can occur among beings of the same blood and the same family. . . . The present civil war, with its cruel horrors, with its terrible cases of struggle among brothers, and even the fanaticism of women, who in some places have smilingly sharpened the daggers of the men, presents pictures besides which the bloodied and close-up colors reproduced by the narrator of the past will perhaps grow pale. The first skirmish of this great Spanish drama, which is still being represented at gunpoint, is what will be related in this, which, rather than a book, is the preface of a book.)

As in *Doña Perfecta*, written in 1876, Galdós refuses any ideological or moral justification to those who use God's name to cover selfish purposes.³ The religious, nationalistic creed, constantly iterated by such fanatics as Fernando Navarro, the priest Aparicio Respaldiza, and the vehement Miguel de Baraona, is absurd when reduced to starkly simplistic terms. "Nosotros somos Dios, Salvador, nosotros los españoles somos Dios, y ellos el Demonio; nosotros el Cielo, y ellos el Infierno" (We are God, Salvador, we Spaniards are God, and they are the Devil; we are Heaven, and they Hell; 1:1214), Jenara de Baraona observes. Not only is the right-wing ideology patently false,⁴ the ideologues are also manifestly inferior human beings. The warlike priest shoots a French soldier in the back, has little interest in hearing confessions, and behaves cravenly when captured. Both Carlos Navarro and the self-proclaimed patriot Miguel de Baraona condemn their enemies to everlasting torment. Jenara de Baraona, who, despite her beautiful exterior, is, Galdós claims, of viperine character, has deep-rooted, narrow ideas, places ideology above love, and urges Carlos Navarro to kill her suitor Monsalud.⁵ Fernando Navarro, or Fernando Garrote, as he appropriately prefers to be known, the father of Carlos Navarro and Salvador Monsalud, is a former bandit, smuggler, and Tenorio. He is violent, hypocritical, as he finally avows, in religion, fanatical in his hatred of French ways and of the Spanish Constitution; his

3. *Doña Perfecta* bears many similarities to *El equipaje del Rey José*. For example: the characters of Doña Perfecta and Jenara ("la Generosa" who is not generous) are much alike. Both have passionate, violent natures that conceal a narrow fanaticism beneath a smiling exterior, and both urge the killing of the young heroes representing the liberal future of Spain. Salvador Monsalud and Pepe Rey (both ironically named) are tactless and naive. Carlos Navarro and Caballuco both have a certain loyalty and are pressed to an extreme position by clergy and women. Both *Doña Perfecta* and *El equipaje del rey José* are structured on the antagonism between the "two Spains"; in both works, the "liberal" is more Christian in his sense of compassion than those who claim to be doing God's work.

4. Respaldiza is "mal sacerdote . . . antes por error y falsas ideas que por maldad" (a bad priest . . . through error and false ideas rather than through evil; 1:1249). Baraona can, with his warped fanaticism, convert Garrote's suicide into Christian martyrdom.

5. Rubén Benítez, in his account of the role of Jenara de Baraona throughout the second series, offers a somewhat more favorable portrayal of this character than my reading would suggest ("Jenara de Baraona, narradora galdosiana").

treatment of Salvador's mother was, he confesses, ignominious. As a prisoner of the French, he is cowardly and commits suicide.

To suggest an appearance of balance, Galdós also satirizes anticlerical rhetoric. Salvador Monsalud, reduced to imbecility by alcohol, mocks religion in terms akin to those with which Suñer y Capdevila scandalized the *Cortes Constituyentes* of 1869 during the debate on religious freedom:

¡Dios! Una palabrota y nada más. Si lo hay, que lo dudo mucho, estará allá arriba acariciándose la barba blanca y sin meterse en nuestros asuntos. . . . ¡La Trinidad! Tres que son uno y uno que viene a ser tres. Bonito lío han armado... Jesucristo no era más que un buen predicador y tan hombre como yo. Y de la llamada Virgen María, ¿qué puedo decir sino que...? . . . ¿Los frailes? . . . ¿Hay casta de cerdos más inmunda en todo el orbe? Yo digo que hasta que no ahorquen al último Papa con las tripas del último fraile no habrá paz en el mundo. (1:1239–40)

(God! A swear word and nothing more. If he exists, which I doubt, he sits up there stroking his beard and taking no part in our affairs. . . . The Trinity! Three who are one and one who is three. A confusing situation they've created . . . Jesus Christ was no more than a good preacher and a man like me. And as for the so-called Virgin Mary, what can I say except . . . ? . . . Friars? . . . Is there a fouler race of pigs in the whole globe? I say that until they hang the last Pope with the guts of the last friar there will be no peace in the world.)

In contrast to the condemnation of right-wing intransigence and facile anticlericalism, Galdós advocates qualities notably absent in the fanatics of La Puebla de Arganzón: compassion, charity, love.⁶ Those who claim in the novel to be doing the work of Christ are vengeful, sanguinary killers, who divide families or who regard with indifference the sufferings of others. Galdós pointedly draws attention to the shortcomings of those in whom higher standards of conduct might be expected: women, who murder prisoners, and clergy, who exhort to war. God, however, rejects those who do not live by Christ's injunctions: Garrote's prayers are answered by even greater suffering (1:1246, 1247, 1251). Examples of compassion, on the other hand, are stressed:

6. For the claim of the liberal novelist to represent true Christianity, see Brian J. Dendle, *The Spanish Novel of Religious Thesis 1876–1936*, and María Pilar Aparici Llanas, *Las novelas de tesis de Benito Pérez Galdós*, 116–40, 180–217.

Carlos Navarro twice spares the life of Monsalud; Monsalud treats the imprisoned Garrote with kindness and attempts to protect the prisoners from drunken French soldiers; Respaldiza becomes “Christian” in death, for he pardons his enemies (1:1249). Galdós himself attempts to understand, rather than condemn, Monsalud’s service with the invader: Monsalud is loyal to those who had befriended him; his impoverishment is due to the neglect with which his “Christian” father had treated him. Seeking a reconciliation based on love rather than the amnesty based on expediency that Cánovas offered the Carlists in the summer of 1875, Galdós reaches beyond the antagonism of the two warring Spains to lament the senseless killing provoked by fanaticism and political rancor (1:1252).

Other teachings in the novel are subordinate to the theme of a Spain divided by hatred. As in earlier *episodios*, Galdós treats with contempt the *populacho*. Spaniards admire boldness, even when manifested in bandits and Tenorios (1:1228). At times charitable, Spanish villagers are also ignorant in their attribution of any difference of opinion or conduct to “heresy.” Drunkenness leads to loss of control over thought and action. Glibness, the divorce between word and deed, is satirized in the speech of the renegade mason Andrés Monsalud, who now parades a “patriotic” fervor and whose harangue Galdós scornfully punctuates with stage directions. Not only Spaniards possess ungenerous and ignoble qualities: the French have looted Spain and are boastful; the English reveal as ready a commercial sense as Spanish peasants in dealing in the spoils of war.

The most vigorously etched characters in *El equipaje del rey José* represent attitudes that Galdós attacks: the fanatical Navarros and Baraonas, the trimmer Juan Bragas. Salvador Monsalud, the protagonist of the second series of *episodios nacionales*, on the other hand, contains mixed characteristics, like the Pepe Rey of *Doña Perfecta* whom he in part resembles. Impractical, politically naive, indecisive (“una equivocación perpetua”), he places feeling (love) above ideology. In his shyness (1:1192), he resembles the young Galdós. Monsalud has positive qualities: devotion to his mother, loyalty to his employers, courage, compassion. On the negative side, he is foolhardy and tactless. As a novelistic character, Salvador Monsalud is a substitute for Gabriel Araceli:

he is the same age, twenty-one, and, like Araceli, is illegitimate, without guidance, and with much to learn. His name, symbolizing the future of Spain, is ironic, for at this stage in the *episodios* Salvador is incapable of saving himself, let alone the nation.

Throughout the novel, Galdós draws the reader's attention to the change in narrative viewpoint, not only from the first to the third person but also in the shift in historical approach. Continuity is preserved in the numerous characters from earlier novels (the *episodios*, *La Fontana de Oro*, *El audaz*). His flight from "official" history is evident in his description of the fate of the baggage train rather than the Battle of Vitoria: "Me mueve a hacerlo así el propósito de variar la materia de estos libros" (My purpose in doing this is to vary the subject of these books; 1:1256). His aim, he claims, is to re-create not the surface deeds of kings and generals but rather the underlying changes in society, the history of *Fulano y Mengano*, a concept that, at least in theory, is remarkably close to Unamuno's *intrahistoria*:

Está en el vivir lento y casi siempre doloroso de la sociedad, en lo que hacen todos y en lo que hace cada uno. En ella nada es indigno de la narración, así como en la Naturaleza no es menos digno de estudio el olvidado insecto que la inconmensurable arquitectura de los mundos. . . . Sabemos por ellos [los libros] las acciones culminantes, que siempre son batallas, carnicerías horribles o empalagosos cuentos de reyes y dinastías que agitan al mundo con sus riñas o con sus casamientos; y entretanto la vida interna permanece oscura, olvidada, sepultada. (1:1205)

(It is in the slow and almost always painful life of society, in what all do and in what each one does. Nothing in it is unworthy of narration, just as in Nature the forgotten insect is no less worthy of study than the immeasurable architecture of the worlds. . . . We learn from them [books] culminating events, which are always battles, horrendous butcheries, or cloying tales of kings and dynasties who disturb the world with their disputes and marriages; and meanwhile internal life goes on, obscure, forgotten, buried.)

A similar appeal for the "democratization" of history appears in Jean-Jean's lament that soldiers' roles are forgotten while generals are commemorated in the empty rhetoric of history books: "Luego viene la Historia con sus palabras retumbantes, y entre tanta farsa caen unos reyes para subir otros, sin que el pueblo sepa

por qué, y los políticos hacen su agosto chupándose la sangre de la nación, que es lo que a la postre resulta de todo” (Then comes History with its high-sounding words, and in this farce some kings fall and others ascend, without the people’s knowing why, and politicians prosper sucking the blood of the nation, which is the final result of everything; 1:1253).

The “inner history” initiated in *El equipaje del rey José* is not that of the “man in the street” but rather that of the war between the “two Spains,” expressed in characters who are both symbolic (Salvador Monsalud, Fernando Garrote, and Carlos Navarro) and, supposedly, representative. Furthermore, Galdós has in the second series of *episodios* freed himself from the self-imposed restrictions of the first series. He is no longer bound to evoke important “historical” events and personages. He can, with the third-person narrative, easily switch from one character to another. Above all, he now has a strong moral and political viewpoint from which to judge Spanish history.

Memorias de un cortesano de 1815, written in October 1875, evokes the grotesque corruption of the court of Fernando VII in 1814 and 1815. While fawning hypocrites “administer” the nation for personal profit, liberal deputies are arrested; false accusations abound; the Inquisition is reestablished; the American possessions slip from Spain’s grasp; honest soldiers and sailors are not paid and immense sums are lavished on the royal guard. The nation is condemned to petrification, as decisions are based on caprice and the selfish interests of the few. A meeting of the Royal Council becomes a farcical squabble over patronage. Members of the *camarilla* are presented in terms of caricature: General Eguía, who overthrew the Constitution, is cowardly; the “agente universal,” Antonio Ugarte, is a former dancing master; the Duque de Alagón is Fernando’s pimp; Prince Antonio is ignorant; Pedro Collado is lowborn. Their master, Fernando, is a whimsical tyrant, toying with his ministers and without interest in the national welfare. Fernando’s court, with its envies, gossip, and constant superficiality, is, like that of *La corte de Carlos IV*, one of falsity, of make-believe. Outside, of course, there is a “real world,” strikingly demonstrated in the closing line of the novel by the news of Napoleon’s escape from Elba. For Gabriel Araceli, who inter-

rupts the narrative to condemn the Fernandine regime, the unjustified persecution of the liberals, whose only crime was naiveté, and the establishment of absolute rule explain the liberal excesses of 1820. Spain needed a moderate, constitutional regime, such as that of the France of Louis XVIII. Instead, Fernando's tyranny rivaled the bloody dictatorships of Paraguay (1:1343).

Religious corruption is an integral part of the Fernandine regime. Church positions are for sale; bishops and inquisitors vie to place their protégés. Religion and politics are inseparable. Bishop Ostolaza, the lascivious confessor of Don Carlos, uses the pulpit to fulminate against liberals and Constitution; Augustinian and Franciscan friars harangue the mob and spread false rumors to discredit liberals. In the reorganized, if unpaid, army, soldiers must pray the rosary daily. Above all, the words of religion are used by hypocrites to cover their selfish interests. Thus, Juan Bragas unctuously appeals to God on numerous occasions; the Porreño sisters, the religious fanatics of *La Fontana de Oro*, scheme to avoid paying their debts.

Memorias de un cortesano de 1815, the shortest of the *episodios*, is a literary tour de force written in the form of the purported *memorias* of Juan Bragas, or Juan de Pipaón, as he now styles himself. Bragas, a sycophantic schemer, condemns himself with every word as he expounds the clichés of absolutist rhetoric and invokes the name of God with almost oriental exaggeration.⁷ The novelistic intrigue is slight and is confined to the final chapters, when Presentación, the daughter of the Countess of Rumblar and the only morally healthy character in the novel, avenges herself on the treacherous Bragas by a practical joke, thus reinforcing the atmosphere of triviality with which Galdós characterizes the court of Fernando. Despite a certain humor, evident in the very exaggeration of the presentation of corruption, *Memorias de un cortesano de 1815* is little more than liberal propaganda. The

7. A similar florid style is evident in El Nasiry's "history" in *Aita Tettauén* (1905). Galdós's facility at reproducing in exaggerated form the speech of his ideological opponents is also exemplified in Tito Liviano in *Amadeo I* (1910). The *memorias* of Juan Bragas are, as Hans Hinterhäuser has observed (*Los "Episodios Nacionales" de Benito Pérez Galdós*, 353), obviously based on the *Lamentos políticos de un pobrecito holgazán* of Sebastián Miñano. The ironic perspective of Bragas's *memorias* is sensitively discussed by Mariano Baquero Goyanes, "Perspectivo irónico en Galdós."

approach is too obviously one-sided; the evocation of the mendacity and self-seeking of Fernando's hangers-on is over-prolonged.

Written in January 1876, *La segunda casaca* treats the atmosphere of Madrid between October 1819 and March 1820. The numerous conspiracies against Fernando's rule, Ugarte's purchase of unseaworthy Russian vessels, the deterioration of the absolutist regime, the candor of the masons, Riego's rising of 1 January 1820, national indifference, and finally the carnivalesque celebrations as the revolution triumphs are all evoked. The overwhelming impression is one of falsity, of sham.⁸ Events are seen at a remove, in the gossip of *madrileños* and in Pipaón's frantic attempts to align himself with the winning side; leading absolutists are members of masonic lodges; the instruments of torture of the Inquisition are converted into children's playthings; all shout and none listen at a masonic meeting. Revolutionary and absolutist mobs behave in an identical manner: "No hay cosa más parecida a un motín absolutista que un motín revolucionario. Se asemejan como una calabaza a otra. No trabajar, cerrar las tiendas, salir chillando, derribar lápidas y letreros, injuriar a los caídos, proclamar nombres nuevos, levantar ídolos, mezclar tal o cual arranque generoso a salvajes actos, esto fue lo que vi en 1814, y lo que se repitió ante mis ojos en 1820" (There is nothing more like an absolutist riot than a revolutionary one. They are as alike as two pumpkins. The abandonment of work, the closing of shops, the rushing around shouting, the knocking over of plaques and signs, insults to the fallen, the proclamation of new names, the exaltation of idols, the mingling of occasional generous gestures with savage acts, this is what I saw in 1814, and what was repeated before my eyes in 1820; 2:91). Spanish institutions are mere theatrical display:

Desengáñate, hijo, los hombres del Gobierno, los jueces, los consejeros, los ministros, forman hoy una especie de retablo, donde mil vistosos personajes accionan y se mueven con las apariencias de la vida. Acércate, mira bien, y verás que todo es cartón puro: cartón el

8. Costa forcefully leveled the same argument, but with reference to the Spain of the Restoration, some twenty years later.

etro del Monarca; cartón la espada de los generales; cartón la vara del alcalde; cartón la cuchilla del verdugo. (2:45)

(Don't be deceived, the men of the Government, the judges, the counselors, the ministers, today form a sort of stage, on which a thousand showy characters perform and move with the appearance of life. Go closer, look hard, and you will see that all is pasteboard: pasteboard the scepter of the Monarch; pasteboard the sword of the generals; pasteboard the staff of the mayor; pasteboard the ax of the executioner.)

Beneath the surface air of farce, however, a more fundamental struggle is taking place. Galdós's satirical vision of the revolutionary "triumph" of 1820 is equally applicable to the Revolution of 1868 and is described in terms of the ingenuousness of the liberals, the childishness of popular enthusiasm, the glibness of Spanish politicians, and the self-interest of those who rush for jobs with the new régime. And as in 1868 and again in 1876, real power lies elsewhere: in the army, which can take away as well as give liberty (2:95), and in the survival of fanatical ideology. Thus, in the closing chapter of the novel, the dying Miguel de Baraona compels Carlos Navarro and his rustic followers to swear continuing hatred for the liberals.

Forcefully and lucidly, Salvador Monsalud analyzes the defects of Spain. His caustic comments, for which Galdós has obviously sought the inspiration of Larra,⁹ are directed as much at the revolutionaries of 1868 as at the liberals of 1820. A fundamental, violent revolution is needed to shake off the tyranny of past institutions:

Si esto ha de seguir llevando el nombre de Nación, es preciso que en ella se vuelva lo de abajo arriba y lo de arriba abajo; que el sentido común ultrajado se vengue, arrastrando y despedazando tanto ídolo

9. Note, besides the caricature depiction of the absolutists, Monsalud's claim that Spain does not yet constitute a society and that thinking Spaniards are few and isolated (see Larra's first review of *Anthony*), his assertion that Spanish liberals are despotic (see "La Nochebuena de 1836"; "La Nochebuena de 1836" also obviously inspired the drunken scene between Monsalud and Fernando Garrote in *El equipaje del rey José*), and the introduction to Zugarramurdi (2:102) in terms that strongly recall "El castellano viejo." For an over-brief discussion of Galdós's debt to Larra, see Martha Heard and Alfred Rodríguez, "La desesperanza de la 'Nochebuena': Larra y Galdós." José Montesinos suggests also, but in general terms, the influence of Larra on the second series of *episodios* (*Galdós I*, 129).

ridículo, tanta necedad y barbarie erigidas en instituciones vivas; es preciso que haya una renovación tal de la patria, que nada de lo antiguo subsista, y se hunda todo con estrépito, aplastando a los estúpidos que se obstinan en sostener sobre sus hombros una fábrica caduca. Y esto se ha de hacer de repente, con violencia, porque no siendo así no se hará nunca. (2:64)

(If this is to go on bearing the name of Nation, everything in it must be turned inside out and upside down; outraged common sense should be avenged, with the pulling down and smashing of so many ridiculous idols, so much stupidity and barbarity presented as living institutions; such a renovation of the nation is needed that nothing of the past remains, that every thing be brought noisily crashing down, crushing those stupid people who persist in carrying on their shoulders an obsolete construction. And this must be done suddenly, violently, for if it is not done in this way it will never be done.)

Spaniards do not yet know how to practice liberty; nevertheless, not knowing how to walk, they must begin by crawling (2:65). The nation, apathetic and degraded after three centuries of absolute rule, sleeps. Only the head of the “enchanted lion,”¹⁰ some few hundred chosen men, isolated from the rest of the nation, is capable of thought:

Tres siglos de absolutismo no podían menos de producir esta modorra intelectual en que el país vive. Duerme; sueña tal vez. Sufre un encantamiento parecido al de aquellos aventureros a quienes un mago convertía en estatuas. Es verdad que este león encantado tiene una cabeza que piensa, la idea que bulle en la flor de la sociedad, en algunos centenares de hombres escogidos... pero éstos pueden poco. La cabeza viva, puesta en un cuerpo inerte, no sabe hacer otra cosa que atormentarse con su propio pensamiento. Eso hacemos nosotros: atormentarnos, discurrir, creer. Tenemos fe, tenemos ideas; pero ¡ay! queremos tener acción, y entonces empieza el desengaño; queremos movernos... ¡Cómo se ha de mover una piedra! (2:83)

(Three centuries of absolutism could only produce this intellectual stupor in which the nation lives. It sleeps; it dreams perchance. It suffers a bewitchment like that of those adventurers turned by a magician into statues. It is true that this enchanted lion possesses a head that thinks, an idea that effervesces in the flower of society, contained in a

10. Galdós similarly used the lion as a symbol of Spain in his message to the *Bloque de las izquierdas*, 28 May 1908. For the text of this message, see Benito Madariaga, *Pérez Galdós: Biografía santanderina*, 318–20, and Víctor Fuentes, *Galdós demócrata y republicano*, 63–64.

few hundred chosen men . . . but these can do little. The living head, placed on an inert body, can do nothing except torment itself with its own thoughts. This is what we do: torture ourselves, prattle on, believe. We have faith, we have ideas; but alas! we try to take action, and then disillusion begins; we want to stir . . . How can a stone stir!

The nation responds only to sentiments of religion and patriotism, not to ideas (2:84). Even when ideas do triumph, they have little relevance to behavior, for only time can change customs (2:84). Like Larra, Monsalud recognizes that Spanish liberals are as despotic as their adversaries: "Aquí no hay más que absolutismo, absolutismo puro, arriba y abajo y en todas partes. La mayoría de los liberales llevan la revolución en la cabeza y en los labios; pero en su corazón, sin saberlo, se desborda el despotismo" (Here there is only absolutism, pure absolutism, on high, below, everywhere. The majority of liberals carry revolution in their heads and on their lips; but in their hearts, without knowing it, despotism overflows; 2:84).

In its fictional elements, *La segunda casaca* is much livelier than *Memorias de un cortesano de 1815*. "Estamos en plena novela" (we are in the middle of a novel), Pipaón exclaims, as Salvador Monsalud leads him through a secret passage to the dungeons of the Inquisition. Mystery abounds: threatening letters are left in Pipaón's residence; Jenara tracks Monsalud from one hiding place to another; the masonic conspiracy stretches its tentacles throughout Madrid; Carlos Navarro seizes a Monsalud who may be his wife's lover. Three characters—Pipaón the turncoat, Carlos Navarro the coarse but honorable absolutist, and Miguel de Baraona—remain unchanged from previous *episodios*. Jenara de Baraona, symbolizing, perhaps, a divided Spain, is now of agitated and labyrinthine soul. She despises her rustic husband and passionately hates Monsalud, whom nevertheless she loves. The naive Salvador Monsalud of *El equipaje del rey José* now possesses the assurance and vitality of a Balzacian hero; his spies, indeed, like those of a Vautrin, penetrate the secrets of the palace itself. Possessed of a romantic aura of mystery and power, he combines intelligence, strength, and nobility. Lucidly aware of national needs and defects, scorning the moral ignominy of his compatriots, he is a leader of revolutionary conspiracies. Like many romantics, he is also easily discouraged, planning, at the moment of triumph, to flee to America. Fascinating to women

and readily enamored, he easily believes he is ill-fated in love. Suspicion of betrayal leads to an insane, romantic desire for vengeance:

Herido en lo más delicado de mi alma, he sentido un furor y deseo de venganza que no puedo expresarte con palabras; me he vuelto loco a fuerza de discurrir, buscando antecedentes e indicios que confirmarán mi sospecha; he vagado como un insensato por las calles, jurando muertes y venganza; he prometido no descansar mientras no aclarase este enigma que me atormenta y me abrasa las entrañas. (2:48)

(Wounded in the most delicate part of my soul, I felt a fury and desire for vengeance that I cannot express to you in words; I became insane, racking my brains, seeking antecedents and clues that would confirm my suspicion; I wandered like someone senseless through the streets, swearing death and vengeance; I promised not to rest until I solved this enigma that torments me and burns my guts.)

La segunda casaca was followed in April 1876 by *Doña Perfecta*, a novel that, set in contemporary Spain, harshly attacks traditionalist beliefs and customs. The liberal hero of *Doña Perfecta* is nonetheless naive, tactless, and out-of-place in provincial Spain. The next *episodio nacional*, *El Grande Oriente*, written in June 1876, deals with the incompetence and corruption of liberal rule during the *trienio*. The novel re-creates the atmosphere of Madrid between February and April 1821, from shortly after the arrest of the royalist conspirator Matías Vinuesa to his murder in prison by the mob. Few historical characters appear directly: members of the government at a meeting of the masonic lodge, the demagogue Romero Alpuente, and the sinister *comunero* Regato, who, as an agent of Fernando VII, provokes disorder.¹¹ Fernando VII is dismissed in passing, as coward and traitor.¹² In the provinces, absolutist *guerrillero* bands already operate.

11. For a caustic dismissal (“puro infantilismo”) of Galdós’s “feline” portrayal of Regato, see Pío Baroja, “Regato, el agente provocador,” 5:1172.

12. “Fernando se distinguía de todos los malvados por un funesto sistema de abandonar cobardemente a cuantos le habían servido, y aun gozarse de un modo inalicable en la desgracia de ellos, como lo prueban, entre otros hechos, las célebres palabras que pronunció ante los guardias fugitivos y vencidos el 7 de Julio” (Fernando could be distinguished from all other evildoers by his lamentable system of cowardly abandoning all who had served him and of even taking unspeakable pleasure in their sufferings, as was proved, among other examples, by the celebrated words that he uttered to the fleeing defeated guards on 7 July; 2:184). Galdós’s characterization of Fernando reflects liberal demonology rather than historical research.

Most of the novel is devoted to a scathing attack on the inanity and venality of the masons and their extremist imitators, the Orden de Padilla. The ritual of masons and *comuneros* is mumbo jumbo, a degraded substitute for religious symbolism; their speech is a jargon that borders on gibberish. The leaders of both sects are self-seeking hypocrites, scheming for personal advantage; their followers are ignorant and fatuous. The Spain of 1815 had been manipulated by a *camarilla del Palacio*; the Spain of 1821 is manipulated by the *camarilla constitucional* (the masons with their pompous professions of patriotism) and the *camarilla del populacho* (the *comuneros*, intransigent, ignorant, violent). The corruption and lack of common sense of Spain's masonic rulers, Galdós declares, prepare for the return of absolutism (2:165). Galdós also bitterly attacks the mob, which he contemptuously dismisses as "canaille" and "a horde of cannibals." The mob ferociously hounds the king and prominent personages, murders the defenseless Vinuesa, and three times flogs the innocent Urbano Gil de la Cuadra. The mob is furthermore double-faced, for its leaders are, at times, in the pay of absolutist agents.

The inane oratory of self-proclaimed "patriots" conceals self-interest, the search for governmental positions. Repeating themes of *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, such as the intervention of the lowest class in politics, the fatuity and mannerism of revolutionary rhetoric, and the desire to live at public expense, Galdós has the illiterate Pujitos, the rabble-rouser of Aranjuez, awarded a position as government accountant. Artisans wish to be civil servants; if dismissed, they conspire rather than return to their trades (2:165). Similarly, hordes of envious position-seekers work to overthrow the government and thus to manufacture a corresponding change in personnel (2:167-68).

The government of early 1821 was, Galdós complains, pusillanimous and negligent. The *comuneros*, in determining to murder Vinuesa, at least were capable of decision (2:193). Anticipating Costa's call for an iron-surgeon, Galdós bewails the lack of willpower, the inability to take forceful action, in Spain's rulers:

Faltábales esa inspiración vigorosa de la voluntad, que es la potente fuerza creadora de los grandes actos. Los que salían, a pesar de su sensato hablar, eran tan niños como los que se quedaban en el *Grande*

Oriente. Entre todos juntos, o fundiéndolos a todos, a pesar de la aptitud versificante y poética de algunos, no se habría podido obtener el brazo izquierdo de un Bonaparte, de un Cisneros, ni un Washington, ni siquiera de un Cromwell o un Robespierre. (2:193)

(They lacked that vigorous inspiration of the will, which is the powerful creative force in all great acts. Those who were leaving, in spite of their sensible remarks, were as childish as those who remained in the Grande Oriente. Out of them all together, or by combining them all, in spite of the versifying and poetic talent of some, one would not have been able to obtain the left arm of a Bonaparte, of a Cisneros, of a Washington, not even of a Cromwell or of a Robespierre.)

In its fictional elements, despite the occasional padding and repetitions characteristic of most of the *episodios nacionales*, *El Grande Oriente* holds the reader's interest. The debt to the *folletín* or novel of adventures is obvious in the recourse to intrigue and blackmail, in the stark contrast between the passionate and willful Andrea and the shy Solita de la Cuadra, in Monsalud's rescue of Urbano de la Cuadra from prison, and in the melodramatic ending in which Monsalud is cursed as seducer by the man he has saved and is almost run down by the wedding coach of Andrea and her aged groom. Characterization is simple but effective in the cases of the scheming postmaster Campos, the pedantic and spiteful schoolteacher Sarmiento, who reduces world history to liberal virtue and absolutist villainy, the excessively fearful Solita, and Andrea Campos, vain, imaginative, erotic, luxury-loving, deprived in her adolescence of necessary guidance, suicidal and fevered in her passion for Monsalud.¹³

As in *La segunda casaca*, Salvador Monsalud is presented as a romantic. A man of action and noble inclination, he generously protects Solita and frees her father from prison. Decisive, energetic, far-seeing, he denounces the hypocrisy of masons and *comuneros*, preferring death to transaction with a corrupt society

13. For a discussion of Andrea's character and her excessive freedom, see 2:146–47. Compare the upbringing of Andrea with that of Rosario (*Doña Perfecta*), who, Galdós claimed, also lacked a guiding hand: "Pero allí faltaba materia para que la persona fuese completa; faltaba cauce, faltaban orillas. El vasto caudal de su espíritu se desbordaba, amenazando devorar las estrechas riberas" (But for the person to be complete matter was lacking. Banks and shores were needed. The great surge of her spirit overflowed, threatening to overwhelm the narrow banks; 4:417).

(2:114). But, despite his lucidity, Monsalud is prey to black humors. His behavior—his extravagant oath to save Gil de la Cuadra, his smashing of a piano, his jealousy of Andrea—is unstable and flamboyant. He is egotistical in his denial of Andrea and in his selfish, condescending attitude to Solita. Overimaginative, tormented by nightmares, distraught by failure in love, he believes that he is ill-fated, that all success will turn to disappointment (2:150). Monsalud bitterly protests his role of “outsider” (2:157). Perpetually dissatisfied, without friends, religion, or stable affection, he embraces love with the desperation of a drowning mariner. The subsequent disillusionment plunges him into suicidal despair:

se abrazaba a ella [una situación lisonjera] con la desesperación del naufrago; y despertando todas las fuerzas de su ser, las dirigía al caro objeto; se apasionaba y exaltaba tanto, como si toda la vida debiera condensarse en una semana, y el universo entero en las sensaciones y los espectáculos de un día. Cuando el desengaño llegaba, natural invierno que con orden incontrovertible sigue al verano de la pasión y del entusiasmo, le sorprendía a tanta altura que sus caídas eran desastrosas. Otros caen de una silla y apenas se hacen daño. El, que siempre se encaramaba a las más altas torres, quedaba como muerto. (2:158)

(he embraced it [a flattering situation] with the despair of someone shipwrecked; summoning all the forces of his being, he directed them at his love object; he grew so impassioned and exalted, as if his whole life were to be condensed into a week, and the entire universe into the sensations and spectacles of a day. When disillusionment arrived, a natural winter that with incontrovertible order follows the summer of passion and enthusiasm, it caught him at such a height that his falls were disastrous. Others fall from a chair and scarcely hurt themselves. He, who always climbed the highest towers, was left as if dead.)

Although Galdós acknowledges the distance between Monsalud’s lowly social position and his superior talents, Monsalud’s lack of balance and his tendency to detect faults in the world surrounding him are the fundamental causes of his constant distress (2:158).

7 de julio, written in October and November 1876, relates events in Madrid between March and July 1822. A year of daily

anarchy has passed; the army is undisciplined; the Milicia Nacional is rebellious; absolutist *guerrillero* bands lay waste to the provinces; the press scurrilously mocks authority. The *Cortes* is grotesque in its theatrical reception of the vain Riego. Satirized in the person of Patricio Sarmiento, who preaches “el rigor y la crueldad” and prefers despotism to constitutional reform, the *exaltados* are intransigent. Fernando VII, “el tirano,” “Tigrekan,” is vicious, calling on the Militia to hunt down his own defeated supporters. Skirmishes between supporters of the Constitution and absolutists precede the major event of the novel, the fighting of 7 July 1822 when militiamen thwart an attempted coup by the Royal Guard.

Galdós treats at length two representative members of a new class, that of the liberal shopkeepers who join the Milicia Nacional. The haberdasher Benigno Cordero,¹⁴ portrayed by Galdós with a mixture of affection and irony, is ingenuous and sentimental, a moderate in politics, “como verdadero patriota, hombre de medida y prudencia” (as a true patriot, a man of measure and prudence). Despite his love of home and comfort, he rises to heroism, leading the charge against the royal guards (2:263). His nephew Primitivo Cordero, an ironmonger, is presented in *costumbrista* terms, as an “especie.” He is a loyal friend, honest in business, a good Catholic, and model parent and husband. He is, however, ignorant; his faith in the Constitution is confused, blind, and sentimental:

Tiene ideas confusas, bebidas en una copla de *El Zurriago*, en un discurso de Argüelles y hasta en una frase inspirada en Pujitos; tiene, más que ideas, un sentimiento muy vivo de la bondad de las Constituciones liberales, y una fe ciega y valerosa, como la fe de los mártires, que desafía las polémicas, que desprecia los argumentos, y se dispone a gritar y morir, jamás quebrantada ni disuadida. (2:232)

(He has confused ideas, derived from a verse in *El Zurriago*, from a speech by Argüelles, and even from a phrase of Pujitos; he has, rather than ideas, a vivid feeling of the goodness of liberal Constitutions, and a blind, courageous faith, like the faith of martyrs, which defies discussion, scorns argument, and is ready to shout and die, never shaken nor dissuaded.)

14. For the origins of Benigno Cordero in Fernán Caballero's *Elia*, see Den-
dle, “The First Cordero: *Elia* and the *Episodios Nacionales*.”

Primitivo Cordero is unable to conceive of any thought other than his own; thus, those who differ are venal, or “farsantes hipócritas y egoístas.” He is submissive to party leaders, tends to moderation, and dislikes bloodshed and excess. His fifth trait—for Galdós numbers his characteristics—is a fondness for form rather than substance:

una gran predilección por la forma, dándole más importancia que al fondo. En la Milicia, por ejemplo, lo principal es el uniforme, en el Gobierno las palabras, en la política general los himnos. Un viva dado a tiempo, un pendón bien tremolado, parécenle de más poder que todas las teorías. El cuenta siempre con un agente de gran valía para resolver todos los conflictos políticos, el entusiasmo; así es que casi siempre está entusiasmado. (2:233)

(a great fondness for form, giving more importance to it than to content. In the Militia, for example, the main thing is the uniform, in Government speeches, in general politics stirring songs. A hurrah given in time, a banner well waved, seem to him to have greater power than theories. To solve all political conflicts, he always relies on a most valuable agent, enthusiasm; thus he is almost always full of enthusiasm.)

The preference for form rather than substance appears throughout society. Militiamen neglect their trades to parade in ostentatious uniforms and organize celebratory banquets. Oratory is the Spanish substitute for thought and action.¹⁵ Thus, Galdós satirizes the hollow “spontaneous” speech of the Duque del Parque. Pretentious epithets surround the name of Riego; he is called “el caudillo de la libertad, el héroe de las Cabezas, el ídolo de los hombres libres, el hijo más querido de la madre España, el padre de los descamisados” (the leader of freedom, the hero of Las Cabezas, the idol of free men, the most beloved son of Spain, the father of the shirtless ones). Finally, symbolic measures are the *Cortes*’s response to the threat of rebellion: “—Que los jefes políticos despertasen el entusiasmo liberal por medio de himnos patrióticos, músicas, convites y representaciones teatrales de dramas heroicos para enaltecer a los héroes de la libertad.—Que los obispos escribiesen y publicasen pastorales, poniendo por esas

15. Galdós was, of course, to make the same lament throughout the *episodios* of the third, fourth, and fifth series. See Dendle, *Galdós: The Mature Thought*, 68–70, 124–25, 168–69.

nubes la sagrada Constitución” (—Let political leaders awaken liberal enthusiasm with patriotic anthems, bands, banquets, and theatrical performances of heroic dramas to exalt the heroes of liberty.—Let the bishops write and publish pastoral letters, praising the sacred Constitution; 2:230). The appearance in the *Cortes* of officers of the Battalion of Asturias is mere theater. Liberty, for Galdós, lies in the heart and customs and can be neither established nor overthrown by military coup (2:216).

As in the *episodios* of the first series, Galdós stresses the importance of morale and leadership. Superior morale and a deeply rooted belief in the justice of their cause explain the victory of the militiamen over the Royal Guard (2:261). In a nation collapsing into anarchy, two strong men, “dos hombres de acción y energía,” strive to establish the principle of authority: the police chief, Martínez de San Martín, who is later forced to flee following threats of assassination from “patriots,” and General Morillo. Morillo imposes his authority on militiamen and guards alike in an effort to prevent bloodshed; he contemptuously orders the troublemaking “deputy” Riego to return to the *Cortes*. Later, Galdós scornfully comments on the weakness of the members of the junta, unable to make a decision in times of danger (2:266). Similarly, Monsalud prefers strong rule to ideological correctness, declaring of the *exaltado* ministry: “Será como todos: será bueno si le dejan gobernar” (It will be like them all: it will be good if they let it rule; 2:274).

Apart from the Corderos, new novelistic characters in *7 de julio* are of minor importance. Anatolio Gordon, Solita’s fiancé, is a rustic who, after a brief stint in the Royal Guard, sensibly wishes only to return home. Gil de la Cuadra is now senile and blind, plotting in his despair to kill both self and daughter. Salvador Monsalud, although influential as the secretary to the Duque del Parque, is unchanged in character from the previous *episodios*. Obsessed by the woman he loves, blind to the true affection of Solita, he is enslaved by a passion that he recognizes to be demonic. A true romantic, he acknowledges a void within himself. Existing outside the laws of normal men, he restlessly pursues the impossible: “yo siento atracción tan fuerte hacia lo imposible, que me estrella. . . . yo estoy siempre fuera de la ley; yo siempre estoy en revolución; yo siempre vivo en un mundo, pienso en otro y en

otro siento, sin poder jamás hacer de los tres uno solo" (I feel so strongly attracted to the impossible, that I am smashed. . . . I am always outside the law; I am always in revolution; I always live in one world, think in another, and feel in another, without ever being able to combine the three into one; 2:239).

The leading character in *7 de julio* is Solita. Dignified, courageous in misfortune, trusting in God and in her "hermano mayor," Salvador Monsalud, she cheerfully cares for her father. Although obviously in love with Monsalud and hurt by his blindness to her feelings, she accepts her lot in life, even though it is an arranged marriage with the oafish Gordon. Unlike Monsalud, Solita does not rebel against society but rather accepts her dependence on others. Although Galdós presents her as childlike—he refers to her "placer infantil" and "pueril necesidad"—and worthy of pity ("la pobre huérfana"), she is nonetheless of greater emotional fortitude than the compulsive Monsalud.

Written in February 1877, *Los cien mil hijos de San Luis* traces the collapse of the liberal regime in 1822 and 1823. The scene rapidly shifts, as Galdós evokes the scheming of royalist *emigrados* in Bayonne, the marauding of absolutist *guerrilleros*, the short-lived royalist regency of Seo de Urgel, the savage anti-royalist campaigns of Espoz y Mina and Rotten, the French court as Chateaubriand prepares for French intervention, the invasion of Spain, the mob violence in Madrid and Seville, the declaration by the *Cortes* of Fernando's insanity, the French capture of Cádiz, and the beginnings of absolutist vengeance. Mina, Alcalá Galiano, the venomous Calomarde, Don Carlos, Chateaubriand, the oily Víctor Sáez, the Duke of Angoulême, and the cowardly, cunning, and lecherous Fernando VII all briefly appear in the novel.

Galdós focuses on three elements of the struggle: the savagery of Spain's ideological disputes when royalist and liberal *guerrilleros* routinely torture and murder prisoners and raze captured villages; the ferocity of the royalist mob, far more extreme in its ideology than the aristocracy; the incompetence of Spanish liberals, who rely on rhetoric, rather than forceful action, to oppose the French; and the grotesque alliance of clergy and *pueblo*. A monk is the drunken colonel of an absolutist *partida*; the clergy

preach that the French are sent by God to rid Spain of the liberals, the spawn of Satan. The combination of armed priests and ignorant members of the lowest classes is a nightmarish parody of the patriotic rising of 1808 (2:295).

Foreigners, Galdós claims, repeating a theme of the first series of *episodios*, have little understanding of Spain. Like Lord Gray of Cádiz and Miss Fly of *La batalla de los Arapiles*, French aristocrats see Spain as a land of ignorance and savage passions: “tal idea tenían de las españolas, que en cada una de ellas se habían de hallar comprendidas dos personas, a saber: la cantaora de Sevilla y Doña Jimena, la torera que gasta navaja y la dama ideal de los romances moriscos” (they had such an idea of Spanish women, that they believed that each one contained two persons, to wit: the gypsy singer of Seville and Doña Jimena, the bullfighter’s woman who carries a knife and the ideal lady of the Moorish ballads; 2:309). The quixotic Count of Montguyon has a similar romantic vision of Spain: “Parecía un loco hablando de los alcázares de Granada, de los romances moriscos, de las ricas hembras, de las boleras, de frailes que protegían los amores de los grandes, de volcánicas pasiones españolas, y de mujeres enamoradas capaces del martirio o del asesinato” (He seemed a madman when he spoke of the castles of Granada, Moorish ballads, noble ladies of the middle ages, gypsy singers, friars who concealed the loves of grandees, volcanic Spanish passions, and women in love capable of martyrdom or murder; 2:317). Not only do foreigners not understand Spain; the French invade Spain to serve French interests, that is, to end revolutionary contagion and to win glory for the Bourbon Restoration. Nevertheless, foreigners possess a civilized conduct beyond the grasp of many Spaniards; thus, the British and French provide safe conducts to assist liberals in escaping the Fernandine savagery.

The foreign “romantic” vision of Spaniards is in any case fittingly exemplified in the person of Jenara de Baraona, who combines extremes of intellectual clarity and emotional instability. A lucid analyst of foreign misconceptions of Spain, an intelligent go-between for royalist conspirators, she, when not blinded by passion, is capable of leadership. Thus, she penetratingly dissects the moral shortcomings of absolutist leaders, holds her own with Chateaubriand, and manipulates the chivalric Montguyon and

guileless Solita. But Jenara is above all a person of compulsive passions, exemplified in her fear and loathing of her husband, her obsessive love for Monsalud, her controlling jealousy. Her pursuit of Monsalud is unbalanced. Out of spite, she sends Solita on a wild-goose chase to Valencia; she lashes trees when her carriage is delayed; she savors the thought of vengeance on Andrea:

Me deleitaba con aquella copa de amarguras que se convertía en copa llena del delicioso licor de la venganza. Había llegado al extremo de recrearme en el veneno de mi alma, y de hallar delicioso el fuego que respiraba. Seguía teniendo las mismas ganas de morder a alguien, y creo que mi linda boca tan codiciada, habría sido un áspid si en carne humana hubiera posado sus secos labios. (2:355)

(I delighted in that cup of bitterness that became a cup full of the delicious liquor of vengeance. I had reached the extreme of enjoying the poison of my soul, and of finding delicious the fire that I breathed. I continued to want to bite someone, and I believe that my pretty mouth, so longed-for by men, would have become an asp were it to have placed its dry lips on human flesh.)

Her moods change rapidly. A feeling of religious awe inspired by the Cathedral of Seville is immediately followed by a blasphemous anger against God (2:348–49); she invokes Satan as she urges absolutists to hunt down Monsalud, whom she nevertheless soon attempts to save. By separating her from others, her rancor, her obsessions, plunge her into a living hell (2:356).

Apart from Jenara, fictitious characters have little part in the novel. Monsalud appears briefly, consumed by hatred for the royalist *guerrilleros* who have imprisoned and tormented him. The tenderly affectionate and innocent Solita, tricked by the “demonic” Jenara, sets out on the wild-goose chase to Valencia to seek Monsalud. The Marqués de Falfán de los Godos, Andrea’s husband, irritates Jenara with his long-winded pomposity; he heralds, Galdós claims, in his encouragement of religion (in which he does not believe) as a useful social force, the *moderado* party. Apart from the lively vignettes of royalist politicians and evocations of Spanish brutality, *Los cien mil hijos de San Luis* shows signs of hasty composition.¹⁶ The tale of Jenara’s passion is overly prolonged, is markedly padded, especially in the scenes in

16. Galdós was at the same time writing the second part of *Gloria*.

Seville, and, save for the tenuous moral that we, like the Spanish nation, bring our misfortunes upon ourselves, is barely connected to the historical events described.

El terror de 1824, written in October 1877, treats the royalist persecution of liberals in Madrid between the arrest of Riego in October 1823 and early 1824. Only one event of importance is described, and this briefly: the execution of the abject and groveling Riego, the most ignominious day in Spanish history, Galdós indignantly exclaims. Two historical characters receive treatment: the *guerrillero* friar, El Trapense, and the Chief of the Military Commission, Francisco Chaperón. Above all, the novel evokes a grotesque Spain, with its mob howling for blood, arbitrary arrests, mistreatment of prisoners, foul jails, absence of legal procedure, death penalties for trivial offenses, and constant pressure from the *voluntarios realistas* for more executions.

The absolutists and their acolytes are presented in a savagely distorted manner. As in a Balzacian novel, men are assimilated to objects and lose their human qualities: Francisco Romo is “el hombre cárcel,” Chaperón “el hombre-horca,” Lobo and his scribes the diabolical inhabitants of an inferno; and El Trapense’s face is that of a gargoyle spewing water. Objects, such as the buildings in the Plazuela de la Cebada, are given human characteristics. Grotesque metaphors, divorced, like the Fernandine persecutions, from their origins, take on an exaggerated life of their own. Thus, the moth-eaten portrait of Fernando VII becomes “un gran cefalópodo que estaba contemplando a su víctima antes de chupársela” (a great cephalopod that contemplates its victim before sucking it in; 2:433), and the hatred in Romo’s eyes illuminates the infernal chamber in which the Military Tribunal meets (2:441).

The autonomous, emotionally charged nature of Galdós’s evocations is most evident at the beginning of the novel, when a ferocious, drunken, mud-bespattered mob hurls itself on arriving prisoners. The savagery, degradation, and bestiality of these dregs of society who wallow in mud to lick deliberately spilt wine, the sheer confusion of the senses, the howling of the mob and the noise of animals, the atmosphere of bacchanalia coupled with the suffering of prisoners, the constant movement and fitful illumina-

tion, the mingling of objects—blood, alcohol, rain, mud—colors, and debased passions combine to form a nightmarish *cuadro* worthy of a Goya.¹⁷

Y a la luz de las hachas de viento y de las linternas, las caras aumentaban en ferocidad, dibujándose más claramente en ellas la risa entre carnavalesca y fúnebre que formaba el sentido, digámoslo así, de tan extraño cuadro. Como no había cesado de llover, el piso, inundado, era como un turbio espejo de lodo y basura, en cuyo cristal se reflejaban los hombres rojos, las rojas teas, los rostros ensangrentados, las bayonetas bruñidas, las ruedas cubiertas de tierra, los carros, las flacas mulas, las haraposas mujeres, el movimiento, el ir y venir, la oscilación de las linternas y hasta el barullo, los relinchos de brutos y hombres, la embriaguez inmunda, y por último, aquella atmósfera encendida, espesa, suciamente brumosa, formada por los alientos de la venganza, de la rusticidad y de la miseria. (2:374)

(And by the light of the torches and the lanterns, the faces increased in ferocity, standing out most clearly in them the half-carnavalesque, half-funereal laughter that was the meaning, if we may use such a word, of such a strange picture. As it had not ceased raining, the floor, flooded, was like a filthy mirror of mud and garbage, in which were reflected the red men, the red torches, the bloodied faces, the polished bayonets, the wheels covered with dirt, the tumbrels, the thin mules, the ragged women, the movement, the coming and going, the waving of the lanterns, and even the noise, the neighing of beasts and men, the foul drunkenness, and finally, that burning, thick, foully befogged atmosphere, formed by the breath of vengeance, rusticity, and wretchedness.)

The “religion” of absolutist Spain is equally grotesque. Using the words and trappings of the Church, the royalists, Galdós sarcastically suggests, serve Satan. El Trapense, who parades with crucifix, saber, pistols, and whip, is “el Demonio metido a evangelista,” “bestial fraile, retrato fiel de Satanás ecuestre” (2:385–86). Chaperón, compared to Christ’s executioners, swears by the “vida del Santísimo Sacramento.” The crucifix appears throughout the prisons and offices of the “diabolical” Military Commission. Members of the Commission attend mass before passing their bloody sentences; they labor, Galdós repeatedly stresses, for monarch and “la Fe Católica.” Not only its unworthy “followers” but also the Church itself, as political power, comes

17. For a useful study of Galdós’s emotionally charged descriptions in *El terror de 1824* and subsequent *episodios*, see Javier Herrero, “La ‘ominosa década’ en los *Episodios Nacionales*.”

under attack: purchasers of clerical lands are punished by many years in prison; a bishop shows no charity to the condemned; Church ceremonials are empty trivialities.

In contrast to the sanguinary, vengeful absolutists, perfect Christian charity is exemplified in Solita Gil de la Cuadra. Following Christ's commands, she returns good for evil by taking in the starving lunatic Patricio Sarmiento, who had scorned her father in his hour of need. Solita not only gives life, by feeding Sarmiento physically and emotionally; she also rejects the nonsense of politics as irrelevant, for "La Libertad no necesita víctimas, sino hombres que la sepan entender" (Liberty needs not victims but men who can understand it; 2:393). Solita also, like Christ, offers her life for others, confessing her correspondence with an *emigrado* to save Benigno Cordero and his daughter from the scaffold. Solita is loving, trusts in God, is without ostentation, remains cheerful even under sentence of death, and—unlike Monsalud, Andrea, and Jenara, with their consuming romantic passions—has patience, "that heroism that is more sublime than all the exaltations of courage" (2:432). Furthermore, Solita practices her humble, but noble, virtues within the Church: she persuades Sarmiento to attend mass; in prison, she makes a general confession to Father Alelí, who is touched by her Christian devotion, and receives the sacraments; she alone prays in Sarmiento's death chapel.

The leading character in *El terror de 1824* is Patricio Sarmiento, the *exaltado* schoolmaster of the two previous *episodios*. Agitated, heedless of surrounding "reality," manifestly insane,¹⁸ he longs for liberal martyrdom and the consequent glory. He expresses himself, like Tomás Rufete of *La desheredada*, whom he greatly resembles, in lengthy political monologues. He is temporarily cured of his mania by the patient kindness of Solita, who induces him to abandon political slogans and to deal directly with the matters of daily life; her treatment of Sarmiento is identical to that used by Inés to cure Santorcaz in *La batalla de los Arapiles*.

18. The narrator remarks: "había en la máquina del cerebro Sarmientil una clavija roto que no podía y quizás no debía componerse nunca" (there was in the machinery of Sarmiento's brain a broken pin that could not and perhaps ought not to be repaired; 2d ed. [Madrid: Guirnalda, 1884], p. 84). The revised version is slightly modified to read "una clavija rota de difícil o quizás imposible arreglo" (a broken pin of difficult or perhaps impossible repair; 2:397).

The essential feature of Sarmiento's madness is his colossal egotism, in which he is akin to another of Galdós's madmen, Nazarín.¹⁹ Thus, in his self-centeredness, he betrays both Solita and those to whom she had delivered letters, and confidently "volunteers" Solita as a companion in "martyrdom." Such is his pride—he even uses the very term "Yo me basto y me sobro" (2:456) with which Mosén Antón in *Juan Martín el Empecinado* and Araceli in *La batalla de los Arapiles* had proclaimed their self-sufficiency—that he declares himself the chosen of God:

Allá nos entenderemos Dios y yo: Dios, que llena mi conciencia y me ha dictado este acto sublime, que será ejemplo de las generaciones. (2:458)

(There God and I will come to an understanding: God, who fills my conscience and has dictated this sublime deed to me, which will be an example for future generations.)

Las cosas terrestres también me ocupan, porque de la tierra salí, y en ella he de dejar las preciosas enseñanzas que se desprenden de mi martirio. El género humano merece mi mayor interés. . . . No: yo miro a la tierra y la miraré siempre. Le dejo un don precioso; mi vida, mi historia, mi ejemplo, hija mía, ¿sabes tú lo que vale un buen ejemplo para esta mísera chusma rutinaria? Sí, mi historia será pronto una de las más enérgicas lecciones que tendrá el rebaño humano para implantar la libertad que ha de conducirlo a su mejoramiento moral. (2:461)

(Earthly matters also concern me, because I was born of earth, and on it I shall leave the precious teachings to be derived from my martyrdom. Mankind merits my greatest interest. . . . No: I now and will ever watch over earth. To it I bequeath a precious gift: my life, my history, my example. Daughter, do you know how valuable a good example is to this wretched, mediocre rabble? Yes, my story will soon be one of the most energetic lessons that the human flock will possess, in order to implant liberty, which will lead to its moral improvement.)

Javier Herrero has claimed, to my mind erroneously, that Sarmiento represents, in his death, Galdós's idealization of the liberal spirit: "la encarnación del verdadero espíritu cristiano, aquél en que la razón, la moral y la libertad se unen" (the incarnation of

19. For a discussion of Nazarín's self-centeredness and madness, so reminiscent of Sarmiento's extravagance, see Dendle, "Point of View in *Nazarín*: An Appendix to Goldman."

the true Christian spirit, that in which reason, morality, and freedom unite); “cristiano-liberal por su abnegación personal, que le lleva a dar su vida por los otros, y por la noble exaltación de su idealismo” (liberal-Christian because of his personal abnegation, which leads him to give his life for others, and because of the noble exaltation of his idealism).²⁰ Sarmiento is, however, as all about him know, quite obviously mad. His attribution to himself of the words of Christ, his pride, his association of “la idea política” and God, whose existence he denies to the bewildered priests who attempt to bring him to consciousness of his situation, are symptoms of alienation. In Sarmiento, as in Don Quixote and in so many of Galdós’s heroes, sense and insanity are inseparably fused, as Galdós explains: “¡Cuan difícil era señalar la misteriosa línea donde los desvaríos de Sarmiento se trocaban en ingeniosas observaciones, o, por el contrario, sus admirables vuelos en lastimoso rastrear por el polvo de la necesidad!” (How difficult it was to perceive the mysterious line at which the madness of Sarmiento became ingenious observations, or, on the contrary, his admirable flights of fancy became a pitiful crawling in the mire of foolishness!; 2:461–62). Sarmiento’s death represents, indeed, Galdós’s contempt for the liberals of 1824. Sarmiento, like the liberals whose incompetence Galdós bewailed, is egocentric, histrionic, and wordy. With the assembled crowds and Sarmiento’s noble speech and gestures, his execution becomes pure theater, a fictitious reply to liberal “reality,” the cowardice of Riego.²¹

Un voluntario realista, written in February and March 1878, treats the curious royalist rising in Catalonia in 1827 known to historians, although the term is not used by Galdós, as *la guerra de los agraviados*. Few historical persons and events are presented in the novel. There are brief appearances of Josefina Comerford, the go-between for the conspirators, and of the brutal *guerrilleros*

20. Herrero, “La ‘ominosa década,’” 112–15.

21. Gil Novales, referring to early nineteenth-century accounts in which Riego bravely meets his death, notes Galdós’s marked hostility to Riego. Galdós’s description is for Gil Novales “la narración tópica, estereotipada,” in which Riego and the mob are blamed for not having carried out the liberal revolution. See Alberto Gil Novales, *Rafael del Riego. La revolución de 1820, día a día*, 204–5. The deaths of Riego and Sarmiento in *El terror de 1824* have been explicated by Ricardo Gullón, “*El terror de 1824*, de Galdós.”

Pixala, a former butcher, and Jep dels Estanys, smuggler, ex-convict, prey to a psychological need for warfare. The cruel, insane Carlos de España is portrayed only by reference. Manresa is captured by intrigue; the rebels pillage their way across Catalonia; liberals are maltreated by both the *agraviados* and the forces of Fernando. The causes of this “most repugnant” of all Spanish risings, Galdós notes with contempt, are obscure:

Desde que los cocheros de palacio, los marmitones, los lacayos y algunos soldados vendidos a los cortesanos inauguraron el 19 de marzo de 1808 en Aranjuez la serie de bajas rapsodias revolucionarias que componen nuestra epopeya motinesca, el más repugnante movimiento ha sido la sublevación apostólica de 1827. Es además de repugnante, oscuro, porque su origen, como el de los monstruos que degradan con su fealdad a la raza humana, no tuvo nunca explicación cabal y satisfactoria. (2:542)

(Since the coachmen of the palace, the scullions, the lackeys, and a few soldiers corrupted by courtiers set in motion on 19 March 1808 in Aranjuez the series of low revolutionary rhapsodies of which our riotous epic is composed, the most repulsive movement has been the apostolic rising of 1827. Besides being repulsive, it is obscure, for its origin, like that of the monsters who degrade by their ugliness the human race, has never had a complete and satisfactory explanation.)

The rebellion draws its force from petty ambitions, rancor, and clerical machinations; it is a throwback to the bloody disorders of the Middle Ages.²² Throughout the novel, Galdós connects low social class, disorder, and religious hypocrisy. Nuns and priests encourage the rising; the absolutist “hero” Jep dels Estanys, as also his fictional counterpart Pepet Armengol, blasphemes; the brutal revolt has as aim the establishment of “el verdadero gobierno cristiano”; the sanguinary Conde de España, who imprisons all who do not carry rosaries, is described as of exceeding piety.

Un voluntario realista is the most anticlerical of Galdós’s novels. From the opening, in which Galdós portrays with the deepest of sarcasm the city of Solsona and the Dominican convent of San Salomó, Galdós attacks convent life, as well as clerical and politi-

22. Note Galdós’s identical characterization of Cabrera’s campaigns in *La Campaña del Maestrazgo* (1899). In the same novel, Galdós in Nelet makes the same association of religion, right-wing politics, romantic passion, and demented violence as he does for *Tilín* in *Un voluntario real*.

cal intervention. Solsona has a cathedral and four convents for its 2,056 inhabitants. The twenty-two nuns of San Salomó are of aristocratic birth. Their Christian decorum would therefore be offended had they to associate with nuns of a lower social class: “Todas eran nobles, pues no podía convenir al decoro del reino de Dios que mancomunadamente con las hijas de marqueses y condes vivieran mujeres de baja estofa” (All were nobles, since it could not suit the decorum of the kingdom of God for women of low extraction to live in common with the daughters of marquesses and counts; 2:470). The nuns are divided by bitter personal disputes, are venomous and hypocritical, and spy on each other. They also preserve habits of luxury, possessing servants, private incomes, individual living quarters and cuisine. Their love of comfort is such that, to avoid the rule that they not sleep on beds, they use three-foot-high mattresses, a practice, Galdós mischievously observes, that is still prevalent (2:511).

The “unnatural” nature of convent life is exemplified in Sor Teodora de Aransis. Sor Teodora had entered the convent at the age of eighteen, knowing nothing of the world.²³ Significantly, her taking of the vows, with the clipping of her hair, had inspired the child Armengol with instinctive horror. Now thirty-two, she is vain, luxury-loving, and totally bored. To relieve the monotony of existence, she dabbles in political intrigue and foments the bellic ardor of Armengol. Deeply manipulative, she persuades the suicidal Armengol to replace Jaime Servet, with whom she has become almost instantaneously enamored, before the firing squad. Her unholy conduct is the direct consequence of “re-

23. Compare Sor Teodora with the portrayals of Asunción in *Cádiz* and of Domiciana, neurotic to the point of insanity while confined to the convent, in *Los duendes de la camarilla* (1903). A similar contrast between the sterility of convent life and the health of marriage exists in Armando Palacio Valdés's *Marta y María* (1883). For an excellent discussion of the sources and characterization of *Un voluntario realista* and of the nature of Galdós's fiction, see James Whiston, “Historia y proceso creativo en el *Episodio Nacional*, *Un voluntario realista*.” Whiston discusses points of convergence and divergence between Galdós and Azcárate in “*Un voluntario realista*: The First Part of a Reply to Azcárate's *Minuta de un Testamento*?” Whiston also details changes between the manuscript and final versions of the novel in “The Manuscript of Galdós' *Episodio Nacional*, *Un voluntario realista*.” Pierre Jourdan has intelligently discussed Galdós's portrayal of Salvador Monsalud as romantic hero in *Un voluntario realista* and other *episodios* of the second series in “Galdós entre Goethe et Giner de los Ríos: du romantisme exorcisé vers les ‘romans pédagogiques.’”

ligious" life. A ghost, her own conscience, accuses her of deceit and murder; Galdós does not, however, make her guilty of sexual immorality. Her isolation, the frustration of the natural instinct to be wife and mother, had led to the loss of her soul: "En el trabajo de esta tela invisible transcurren lentas y tristes muchas vidas bajo una máscara de mortecina santidad. ¡Ay pobre de ti! En el siglo hubieras sido una doncella honesta, una esposa amante, una madre ejemplar; enclaustrada sin vocación has podido perder tu alma en un instante" (In the weaving of this invisible cloth many slow, sad lives are spent under a mask of deathly sanctity. Oh, woe is you! In worldly life, you would have been an honest maid, a loving wife, an exemplary mother; cloistered without a vocation, you lost your soul in an instant; 2:563–64).

In *Pepet Armengol* (*Tilín*), Galdós continues the attack, initiated in *Juan Martín el empecinado*, on the national disorder that results from the instinctive Spanish gift for irregular warfare. Armengol, the sacristan-*guerrillero*, interested from an early age in history and matters military, believing that his warrior skills come from God, the willing dupe of the manipulation of Sor Teodora, rapidly improvises a successful *partida*. An energetic and decisive leader who shoots all who do not immediately obey, he also, like Mosén Antón, is jealous, resentful, and ill-disciplined. Furthermore, Galdós characterizes Armengol as mentally unbalanced. Credulous, sacrilegious, vengeful, obsessed with Sor Teodora, he will stop at nothing—threats of suicide, the incineration of the convent, the kidnapping of Sor Teodora, death itself—to possess the object of his distorted fantasy.

The liberal "hero," Jaime Servet (Salvador Monsalud) the agent of the *emigrados* of London, reminds one greatly of Baroja's Aviraneta. Resourceful, courageous, an *aventurero*, skilled at handling others, disillusioned, he trusts in improvised solutions (2:525). No longer racked by the violent passions of earlier novels, obviously identified with the author,²⁴ he possesses qualities that Galdós would wish to claim for himself (see p. 156).

Servet-Monsalud's analysis of Spain's political situation is bit-

24. Compare Galdós's association of Servet and "us" in Servet's nightmare flight from Navarro (2:524). Cadalso has a similar dream of pursuit down an unending gallery in *Miau*.

ter but lucid. The *emigrados* dream of a Spain that will rebel to obtain freedom; the Spanish insurgents, however, demand not liberty but “aún más esclavitud, más cadenas, más miseria, más golpes, más abyección” (even more slavery, more chains, more misery, more blows, more abjection; 2:494). The struggle, as in *Doña Perfecta*, is between the city and rural barbarity (2:495). Galdós’s liberal scorn for the supposed backwardness of the Spanish peasantry is further exemplified in his contemptuous dismissal of the Basque tongue, which he compares to the noise of a saw (2:522).²⁵

Un voluntario realista is one of the best focused of the *episodios*. History is reduced to the minimum necessary to provide the backdrop for the intrigue. The novel concentrates on Sor Teodora, *Tilín*, and Monsalud, whose portrayals are psychologically plausible, in contrast to the tendency to caricature frequently prevalent in Galdós’s portrayal of absolutists. The tale is one of high adventure, fast-moving and without the padded conversations of previous *episodios*. Above all, the novel has a unity and intensity akin to that of *Doña Perfecta*, as Galdós focuses his hatred on a clearly defined enemy, the nuns of Solsona (a Catalan Orbajosa), who abuse religion for warped psychological and political purposes.

Los apóstólicos, written in May and June 1879, despite its hasty composition,²⁶ is much more densely packed with historical references than previous *episodios*. The novel treats the period between December 1829, when Fernando’s young bride, María Cristina, arrived, and September 1832, when absolutists attempted to obtain revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction and Carlota flamboyantly humiliated Calomarde. Liberals ceaselessly conspire against the repressive absolutist regime; suspected dissidents are tortured and executed; Mina attempts an invasion in the Pyrenees; Carlists plot to take power on Fernando’s death. Two

25. Later, Galdós was to berate the novelist Narciso Oller for writing in Catalan. See W. H. Shoemaker, “Una amistad literaria: La correspondencia epistolar entre Galdós y Narciso Oller,” 27–28.

26. Galdós wrote on 18 May 1879 to Mesonero Romanos, claiming that the novel was already half-completed and published as a *folletín* in *El Océano* before the information requested from Mesonero had been received. See Eulogio Varela Hervías, *Cartas de Pérez Galdós a Mesonero Romanos*, 45–47.

historical events are narrated: Salustiano Olózaga's imprisonment and escape from jail, and the revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction. Numerous historical figures are evoked, if only briefly: Olózaga, the incarnation of youthful liberal idealism; Calomarde, "poderoso ídolo asiático"; Don Carlos, a loving family man, but a nullity as leader, "monstruo de candor y de fanatismo, de honradez y de ineptitud"; María Cristina, who treats her grotesque spouse with tenderness; the forceful Carlota; Fernando, contemptible, as always; and the scheming Bishop of León and Princess of Beira.

Los apóstolicos contains many more allusions than earlier *episodios* to social life. Fashions in clothing and furniture, the names of merchants, the different types of *tertulia*, snippets of news from the *Gaceta* and *Diario*,²⁷ the gardens of La Granja (a fitting symbol, in their geometrical arrangement, of Enlightened Despotism), bull-fighters, the bandit Candelas, the performance of Rossini's *Stabat Mater*, and the state of the theater receive at least passing mention. Galdós also evokes the writers and the literature of the period: the liberal Gallego, Moratín's passion for the young Doña Paquita, the cliché-ridden verses that celebrate the royal marriage. Galdós treats the nascent romantic literary movement with enthusiasm. *Hernani*, performed in Paris in early 1830, is praised for its great vitality; Spain's young romantics are hailed in superlative terms (2:584). The youthful escapades of Ventura de la Vega, Espronceda, who is incorrectly assumed to have visited Madrid in 1831, Escosura, Bretón, Hartzenbusch, and Larra are summarized.²⁸ Mesonero Romanos, who had protested Galdós's inclusion of the romantics as anachronistic and competing with his own *Memorias de un setentón*,²⁹ is flatteringly portrayed (2:657).

In his teaching, Galdós reiterates lessons of previous *episodios*.

27. Galdós claimed to have used the *Diario de Avisos* ("una mina inagotable para sacar noticias del vestir, del comer, de las pequeñas industrias, de las grandes tonterías, de los placeres y diversiones" [an inexhaustible goldmine for details of dress, food, minor trades, great foolishnesses, pleasures, amusements]) as a source of information for the *episodios*. See Shoemaker, *Los Prólogos de Galdós*, 58.

28. For a discussion of Galdós's portrayal of the romantics, see Emily Letemendía, "Galdós and the Spanish Romantics: *Los apóstolicos*."

29. See Varela Hervías, *Cartas*, 42–43.

The French take advantage of Spanish discord (2:588). Popular adoration of idols who will later be overthrown is a mannerism of Spanish history (2:577). The attack on the abuse of religion begun in *Un voluntario realista* continues. Fernando's confessor is the "imagen exacta de la hipocresía"; Abarca, the Bishop of León, is a manipulator; Don Carlos is a fool. Don Carlos's religious justification of his claim to the throne is resumed with the heaviest of sarcasm (2:666). The absolutist system, Monsalud declares, draws its force from the clergy and the taverns to produce a vulgar tyranny that no region of Africa would envy (2:643).

Galdós treats his compatriots with considerable bitterness. The attempt to revoke the Pragmatic Sanction and thus to prevent Isabel from succeeding to the throne is merely a prelude to a civil war, still not ended, that pits reform against custom, thought against faith, freedom against tradition. Throughout the century, Spain will be a battlefield. Government, commerce, and agriculture consequently fail to flourish (2:587). Spaniards, the disillusioned Monsalud recognizes, have no concept of freedom. Liberty, they believe, is merely individual license (2:644). Despotism lies in the heart of every Spaniard (2:644).³⁰ Even Spanish austerity is merely an idleness of the body and spirit, a symptom of Spaniards' fundamentally absolutist mentality (2:644).

For Galdós's alter ego, Monsalud, the remedy lies in a total change of heart of the Spaniard. Spaniards must learn mutual respect, obedience to law, and love of work (2:643–44). Spain will pass through a century of terrible convulsions before joining the march of civilization, which for Monsalud is "trabajo, industria, investigación, igualdad, derechos" (work, industry, research, equality, laws; 2:644). In the meantime, Monsalud will serve María Cristina, the symbol of "la monarquía templada que celebra alianzas de amistad con el pueblo" (the temperate monarchy that celebrates alliances of friendship with the people; 2:669), and will fight the forces of despotism represented in Don Carlos.

30. Compare Galdós's observation of Spaniards' contempt for law with Larra's comment in "La Nochebuena de 1836": "Te llamas liberal y despreocupado, el día que te apoderes del látigo azotarás como te han azotado" (You call yourself a liberal and without prejudice; the day you seize the whip, you will lash as you have been lashed). Felicísimo Carnicero's derivation of "cumplimiento" from "cumplio" and "miento" (2:620) is obviously based on that given in "El castellano viejo."

Solita Gil de la Cuadra, the *hormiguita* (little ant), represents an exemplary type of Spanish womanhood. Hard-working, calm-tempered, dutiful, she has spent her youth caring for the sick: her father, Monsalud's mother, Sarmiento. She now establishes an atmosphere of order and affection in the Cordero household. Although still in love with Monsalud, she recognizes the passing of her youth. Heeding the voice of reason, she will abandon the sterile world of fantasy to make a sensible marriage with the quinquagenarian Cordero (2:605). Her new life would afford her ample opportunity to serve others, to cultivate such qualities as "la abnegación, la constancia, la fidelidad, el trabajo" (2:605).

Benigno Cordero is portrayed with a mixture of irony and affection. He is at times pompous, is timid, and views life at second hand, through his readings in Rousseau. He is nevertheless praiseworthy for his industriousness, honesty, religious tolerance, domestic virtue, and simple happiness and love of nature. In his devotion to regularity of work and in his dislike of extremes, he reminds one of Galdós; he is presented as a representative figure of the Spanish middle class:

Hombre laborioso, de sentimientos dulces y prácticas sencillas; aborrecedor de las impresiones fuertes y de las mudanzas bruscas, D. Benigno amaba la vida monótona y regular, que es la verdaderamente fecunda. . . . sabiendo conciliar el decoro con la modestia y conociendo el justo medio entre lo distinguido y lo popular, era acabado tipo del *burgués* español, que se formaba del antiguo pechero fundido con el hijodalgo, y que más tarde había de tomar gran vuelo con las compras de bienes nacionales y la creación de las carreras facultativas hasta llegar al punto culminante en que ahora se encuentra. (2:575)

(A hardworking man, of kindly feelings and simple practices; a hater of strong impressions and sudden changes, Don Benigno liked a monotonous, regular life, which is the truly fertile one. . . . knowing how to conciliate modesty and decorum and aware of the proper mean between the distinguished and the popular, he was a perfect example of the Spanish *bourgeois*, formed from the commoner of old mingled with the squire, who later would achieve importance with the purchase of church property and the creation of professional careers, until reaching his present pinnacle of success.)

Monsalud appears only toward the end of the novel, with his too-late marriage proposal to Solita. Now graying and approaching forty, disillusioned with Spanish liberals, he seeks to enjoy the

happiness of domestic life. Disappointed in this new ambition, he will again return to a life of agitation, as a partisan of María Cristina.

Los apóstolicos, with its portrayal of the innocent happiness of domestic life and Moratinian theme of a girl's consent, offers a marked contrast to the "romantic" adventures of *Un voluntario realista*. Symbolism plays a heavy role in the novel: Cordero's happy household has a picture of the Garden of Eden; Carnicero and the absolutist conspirators meet in a room with a painting of Purgatory; Don Carlos stares at a portrait of the Immaculate Conception, the symbol, one must assume, for Galdós of nothingness. Light also is symbolic: the lights fail in Carnicero's decrepit house; the absolutists, ironically, are forced to call for illumination; María Cristina provides the "única luz" in the royal chamber. The absolutist conspirator and usurer Felicísimo Carnicero is not only grotesquely named but is also presented in terms of caricature, as *hombre fósil*; the description of his fingers suggests the distorted vision of a Quevedo rather than any form of "realistic" art: "hagamos que de las bocas de estos manguitos salgan, como vomitadas, unas manos, de las cuales no se ven sino diez taponcillos de corcho que parecen dedos" (let us propose that from the mouths of these sleeves emerge, as if vomited, hands, of which one can see only ten tiny corks that apparently are fingers; 2:615). Some attempt is made by Galdós to link public and private life: Cordero's marriage is delayed because a liberal priest destroyed the parish records; at the end of the novel, Don Carlos, Benigno Cordero, and Salvador Monsalud are all awaiting a signature essential to the conduct of their affairs.

The concluding, and lengthiest, *episodio* of the second series, *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, written in November and December 1879, takes Spanish history from the autumn of 1832 to July 1834, treating the death of Fernando VII ("aquel vicioso"), the Zea ministry, Carlist and liberal conspiracies, the outbreak of the Carlist War, Zumalacárregui's early campaigns, the cholera epidemic, and the massacre of the friars by the Madrid mob. Few important personages are evoked: don Carlos, as in *Los apóstolicos*, a nonentity; Zumalacárregui, whose energy and enforcement of an iron discipline are admired, despite his devotion to an unworthy cause; and the arch-intriguer Aviraneta. The absence

of any portrayal of Martínez de la Rosa or of leading liberals is noteworthy. Above all, Galdós depicts an atmosphere of conspiracy and deceit: Aviraneta is paid to foment divisions among the liberals; the police abet conspirators of all parties; former Jacobins join the Carlists; trimmers such as the fictional Pipaón change allegiance and denounce former allies; liberal ideologues, such as the army officer Rufete, connive at the killing of the clergy; unknown sources finance Aviraneta and the loutish Tablas, plant vicious rumors, and plan the murder of the friars. The portrayal of Spain is starkly pessimistic. The liberals and the army are divided; the *pueblo* is ignorant, manipulated by mysterious intriguers; the countryside of Navarre is impoverished, the menfolk at war, the women remaining to bury the dead. Symbolic of Spain are the four travelers on the road from Pamplona: a Monsalud nauseated by liberal politics, his insane half-brother Carlos Navarro, the would-be-*guerrillero* priest Zorriquín, and the widow Doña Hermenegilda, who has lost six sons in Spain's wars and a seventh to emigration.

As in previous *episodios*, Galdós treats the Carlist movement with contempt. Carlist religious claims mask an un-Christ-like warrior spirit: the Bishop of León places the *voluntarios realistas* under the command of the Immaculate Conception; Carlists crusade in the name of "religion" against masonic liberalism; Don Carlos's faith in his right to the throne is based on "false piety" (2:730). The Carlist army, Galdós sarcastically observes, resembles the hosts of Islam: "Por la desigualdad, por la irregularidad, por el valor ciego y salvaje, por la fe estúpida y la sobriedad casi inverosímil, a ningún ejército conocido podrían compararse, como no fuera a los ejércitos de Mahoma" (In their unevenness, irregularity, blind and savage courage, stupid faith, and soberness almost beyond belief, they could be compared to no known army, save for the armies of Mohammed; 2:760).

Galdós's Carlists have neither intellectual ability nor spirituality. Don Carlos is insultingly described as weak and unintelligent (2:761). The Carlist priest Zorriquín finds his true vocation as a *guerrillero* and lacks the patience to hear Carlos Navarro's confession. Navarro is an insane misanthrope. Felicísimo Carnicero, who dies, symbolically, on the same day as Fernando VII, is a miser and usurer. The bloodshed, the devastated countryside, the spectacle of armed priests, the fruitless

Carlist cause, place in question the Christianity of Spain and civilization itself (2:765).

Galdós's scornful portrayal of the Carlists is manifestly directed at their descendants of the 1870s. A similar contemporary political point is made in Galdós's attack on *moderado* rule in the years preceding their downfall in 1868, the year in which, significantly, Genara, the symbol of the *moderados*, dies. González Bravo, the *moderado* prime minister at the time of Isabel II's expulsion, is dismissed as "un mozo terrorista, más listo que Cardona y con más veneno que un áspid" (a terrorist youth, cleverer than Cardona and more venomous than an asp; 2:700); the *moderados* of today are "un vejete decrepito con lastimosas pretensiones de andar derecho, de alzar la voz y aun de infundir algo de miedo" (a decrepit little old man with pitiful pretensions to walking upright, raising his voice and even to causing fear; 2:773). The *moderados* were without principles, authoritarian, and hypocritical in their private lives and abuse of a religion in which they do not believe (2:773–74). Despite their alliance with the clergy, the *moderados* had no scruples in purchasing Church lands cheaply; similarly, *moderados* in the military readily seized power. The *moderados* cloaked their use of force in empty rhetorical formulas; their long rule, Galdós cuttingly observes, is to be explained by their having a greater sense of style than the ill-educated *progresistas* (2:774).

Galdós has an equal contempt for the *progresistas*. Coffee-house pundits settle the fate of the nation (2:697); Primitivo Cordero, ingenuous, envious, mouthing ill-understood platitudes, believes himself qualified to decide questions of state (2:772). The Spanish propensity for rhetoric provokes Galdós's scorn: Aviraneta, like so many Spaniards, bases his career on verbal facility (2:697); infantile speechmaking precedes political activity (2:72). Spanish politicians are motivated by envy (2:699).³¹ Whereas the candid *progresista* Benigno Cordero optimistically believes in the conciliation of Throne and Altar, progress, and the Milicia Nacional, Monsalud considers Spain's ills to run too deep for easy change. Spain's future, that is, to Galdós's day, will include fitful and sterile attempts to introduce new structures:

31. Galdós makes a similar claim in *La desheredada*: "en España el despecho es una idea política" (in Spain, spite is a political idea; Benito Pérez Galdós, *La desheredada* [Madrid, Alianza Editorial, 1967], 255).

Declarando todo su pensamiento, aseguró que no esperaba ver en toda su vida más que desaciertos, errores, luchas estériles, ensayos, tentativas, saltos atrás y adelante, corrupciones de los nuevos sistemas, que aumentarían los partidarios del antiguo, nobles ideas bastardeadas por la mala fe, y el progreso casi siempre vencido en su lucha con la ignorancia. (2:785)

(Declaring all of his thought, he asserted that he expected to see throughout his lifetime only blunders, errors, sterile struggles, essays, attempts, plunges to the rear and forward, corruptions of the new systems, which would be magnified by the partisans of the old one, noble ideas bastardized by bad faith, and progress almost always defeated in its struggle with ignorance.)

Galdós's greatest indignation is reserved for Spain's lumpen, plebeian class. Popular ignorance and brutality are represented in the couple Tablas and Nazaria. Tablas is a violent drunkard, Nazaria an ill-tempered, superstitious glutton and spendthrift. Without compassion, they exploit the crippled child Romualda. In their violent passions and incapacity for thought, they typify Spain's most numerous social class: "Así procede siempre, pasando de salvajes cóleras y vergonzosas condescendencias, toda esa gente desalmada, ignorante y tan incapaz de calcular sus intereses como de refrenar sus pasiones" (This soulless people, ignorant and as incapable of calculating its interests as of controlling its passions, always behaves in this manner, passing from savage angers and shameful condescensions; 2:721). The absence of domestic affection and the inability to save money render prosperity impossible:

En casa donde no existen ni los vínculos ni los afectos que constituyen la familia, donde la paz deja su puesto a la discordia y los vicios ocupan el lugar de la economía y la sobriedad, no pueden de modo alguno afincar las prosperidades. (2:766)

(In a house where neither the bonds nor the affections that constitute the family exist, where discord takes the place of peace and vices that of economy and soberness, prosperity can in no manner take root.)

The *pueblo*, "bestial y grosero en todo," believes that Fernando's mummified corpse appears in parades; it explains the cholera epidemic by *malos quererres*, random killing by envious individuals. For Galdós, the plebeian mind is incapable of reason (2:769)

and, in its ignorance, is easily manipulated into a monster of violence (2:775).

In *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, Galdós concludes the adventures of the leading characters of the second series of *episodes*. The trimmer Pipaón marries Felicísimo Carnicero's granddaughter and will enjoy a favored career during the reign of Isabel; the marriage, however, is based on neither respect nor love and promises discord. Sola continues the quietly virtuous, almost passive role of previous novels, caring for Cordero and his household and willing to complete her promise to marry him. Her abnegation is, however, rewarded, for Cordero arranges for her to marry the man she loves, Salvador Monsalud. Benigno Cordero, now ailing and unable to find consolation even in Rousseau, renounces the hand of Sola, allowing common sense to triumph. Galdós's, and Monsalud's, attitude to Cordero is affectionate. Cordero, despite his longwindedness and love of theory, is generous and kindly, a liberal who befriends the friars.

In contrast to the kindly Cordero is Carlos Navarro, the symbolic representative of the Carlist movement. Unable to forgive Genara and Monsalud for dishonoring his marriage, he is vengeful and full of hatred. Later, consumed by melancholia and a bilious irritability, he becomes obsessed with war and, in his insanity and envy, identifies himself with Zumalacárregui.³² Alternating, like Don Quixote, between madness and sense, he recovers sufficiently at the point of death to confess his sins and accept the will of God; his final words, however, are defiant, and he refuses to pardon his half-brother and errant wife. His role, indeed, exemplifies Galdós's teaching that we are controlled by our pasts and that ideology, or religious belief, has little effect on conduct.

Father Gracián, who had first appeared in *Napoleón en Chamartín*, is a kindly, intelligent Jesuit who devotes himself to healing domestic disputes and to denouncing vice and superstition. However, despite his many virtues, Gracián is singularly ineffective. He is unable to reconcile Navarro and Genara; his admonitions to Nazaria and Tablas only increase their disputes; his distribution of soil from Saint Ignatius's grotto encourages superstition. He also corresponds with Carlists. Although prepared to

32. José Fago, the protagonist of *Zumalacárregui*, possesses a similar mania.

die with serenity and courage, at the moment of death he angrily resists the brute Tablas.

Salvador Monsalud's principal concern in the novel is with establishing a loving relationship with his half-brother, Carlos Navarro. Patiently working to extinguish Navarro's hatred, Monsalud frees Navarro from prison and tenderly cares for the madman. Nevertheless, Monsalud's attempt to take possession of Navarro's soul is a form of domination. Monsalud's constant proclamations of his own virtue smack, like Pepe Rey's, of smugness and perhaps account in large measure for his and the liberals' lack of success (see 2:753).

Monsalud also has within him an embittered, savage force born of frustration. He is at times imprudent to the point of cruelty, informing the sick Cordero that he would willingly marry Solita, and proclaiming himself a mason to shock the absolutist Salomé Porreño. For much of the novel, he is misanthropic, bored, and envious of the happiness of others. Only when he is disgusted with Spanish politics, which he terms "una mala comedia," does he take refuge in domestic life. Pessimistic, believing neither in persons nor in theories, he will regard with indifference a nation markedly inferior to the one that in exile he had constructed in his imagination (2:704). With the lucidity and self-hatred of a romantic adventurer, Monsalud acknowledges that he suffers from the national vices that he condemns:

¿Cómo habían de crearme y hacer caso de mí, si yo también he sido alborotador, cabecilla, intrigante, aventurero y hasta un poco charlatán? ¿Si he sido todo lo que condeno, cómo han de fijarse en mí viéndome condenar lo que he sido? ¿Si exploté la industria del pobre en este país, que es la conspiración, cómo han de ver en mí lo que realmente soy? No, yo he quedado inútil en esta refriega espantosa con la necesidad. He salido vivo, sí; pero sin autoridad, sin crédito para tomar en mis labios ese ideal noble, por donde van las vías rectas y francas del progreso de los pueblos. Mi destino es callar y arrinconarme, so pena de que me tengan por un Aviraneta, cuando no por un Rufete. (2:705)

(How could they believe and heed me, if I too have been a troublemaker, a petty leader, an intriguer, an adventurer, and even something of a charlatan? If I have been everything that I condemn, how can they trust my condemnation of what I have been? If I exploited the poor man's trade of this nation, conspiracy, how are they to see in me what I


really am? No, I have become useless in this terrible battle with necessity. I have emerged alive, yes; but without authority, without credit to expound that noble ideal, to which the straight and open roads of the progress of peoples lead. My destiny is to be silent and to remain in a corner, lest I be taken for an Aviraneta, if not for a Rufete.)

In concluding the *episodios nacionales* of the second series, Galdós links the *episodios* to a wider novelistic universe. The pretentious Porreños (*La Fontana de Oro*) are now reduced to poverty, forced to take in lodgers and dependent on the charity of Solita. Pedro Rey (*Doña Perfecta*) marries the sister of Teodora de Aransis (*Un voluntario realista*). Above all, Galdós prepares the way for *La desheredada*, which he had been planning since early 1879:³³ the garrulous *progresista* Rufete is obviously related to Isidora Rufete, who will claim to belong to the Aransis family; the lower classes are portrayed as ignorant, degraded; the moral lesson to be drawn from the decline of Nazaria's and Tablas's household is that of *La desheredada*, that without family accord and a sense of economic reality prosperity is impossible. In the closing lines of *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, as he "forever" renounces composition of further *episodios* on the flimsy grounds that the years following 1834 are too close to the present and thus too sensitive for treatment, Galdós reserves his fictitious characters for future contemporary novels (2:786).

33. "Ahora tengo un gran proyecto. Hace tiempo que me está bullendo en la imaginación una novela que yo guardaba para más adelante, con objeto de hacerlo detenido y juiciosamente. Pero visto el poco éxito de la última (mostrado para la tercera parte), quiero acometerlo ahora. Necesito un año y medio. Este asunto es bueno en parte político pero no tiene ningún roce con la religión" (I now have a great project. For some time there has been boiling up in my imagination a novel that I was keeping for later, in order to write it slowly and carefully. But seeing the lack of success of the last one [revealed for the third part], I wish to tackle it now. I need a year and a half. The subject is certainly partly political, but it has nothing to do with religion). See the letter of 4 March 1879, published by Carmen Bravo Villasante, "Veintiocho cartas de Galdós a Pereda," 31–32. For a discussion of the connection between the second series of *episodios* and *La desheredada*, see Dendle, "On the Supposed 'Naturalism' of Galdós: *La desheredada*."

The Episodios, 1873-1879: Ideology and Novelistic Practice

The First Series of *Episodios Nacionales*, 1873–1875

rom the outset, Galdós conceived the *episodios* as a means of instructing his contemporaries.¹ His task was in part informational, the provision, in colorful and dramatic manner, of a simplified version of scenes from Spanish history. He offers moral and political lessons seemingly drawn from the consideration of Spain's past. Galdós's conclusions are, however, not derived from the study of Spanish history; rather, he superimposes on the past reactions born from his experience of the social and political turmoil of the early 1870s. The assumptions and message of the *episodios* repeat those of the political articles of the *Revista de España*: an emphasis on Spanish shortcomings, a great fear of disorder, and a reliance on moral, rather than political, solutions to Spain's problems.

Only in *Trafalgar* is the message one of overt optimism and elevated patriotism, a strained attempt, in a context of impending national disintegration, to affirm national solidarity. In later novels, the portrayal of Spain's heroic struggle against Napoleon is less a model to emulate than the measure of a corresponding absence of patriotic fervor in the 1870s. Galdós stresses above all

1. Note his remark to the journalists Luis Antón del Olmet and Arturo García Carraffa in 1912: "Creo que la literatura debe ser enseñanza, ejemplo. Yo escribí siempre, excepto en algunos momentos de lirismo, con el propósito de marcar huella. *Doña Perfecta*, *Electra*, *La loca de la casa*, son buena prueba de ello. Mis *Episodios Nacionales* indican un prurito histórico de enseñanza. En pocas obras me he dejado arrastrar por la inspiración frívola" (I believe that literature should be teaching, example. I always wrote, save in a few lyrical moments, with the purpose of causing an effect. *Doña Perfecta*, *Electra*, and *La loca de la casa* are good proof of this. My *episodios nacionales* reveal a historical urge to teach. In few works have I been led by a frivolous impulse). Luis Antón del Olmet and Arturo García Carraffa, *Galdós*, 93.

the defects, rather than the virtues, of the Spanish character: social indiscipline, divisiveness, idleness, preference for shadow rather than substance, religious fanaticism, and that same *egoísmo* that he had already denounced in *La Fontana de Oro* and *El audaz*. To cure the nation of its ills, Galdós proposes conservative values of order and authority: leadership, duty, preservation of morale, avoidance of exaltation and sentimentality, perseverance, rational judgment. However, the occasional note of irony and the excessive self-consciousness on the part of the narrator, Gabriel Araceli, attest to Galdós's doubts as to the feasibility of the moral reform he advocates.

The Criticism of Spain

Galdós portrays without sentimentality, even with hostility, the lowest classes of the people. From the contemptuous reference in *Trafalgar* to the pressed sailors to the depiction in *Juan Martín el Empecinado* of the unsavory followers of Albuín, Galdós treats with disgust a class that is venal and incapable of elevated ideals. The mob is drunken, cowardly, ungrateful, gullible, and capable only of destroying the works of civilization (*El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*). The mob's intervention in history—the rising of Aranjuez in *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, the murder of Mañara in *Napoleón en Chamartín*, its attacks on members of the *Junta Central* in *Gerona*—is inspired by the secret manipulations of others. Its political role is always deplorable. In *Cádiz*, the mob attacks unpopular orators in the *Cortes*; the fervent partisans of “mocraticrasia” in Poenco's tavern are ignorant drunkards. Pujitos, with his jargon and vanity, is a forerunner of the left-wing demagogues of Galdós's day; the social and political climate of 1808 was, however, less favorable to the diffusion of the “ideas” of illiterate trouble-makers:

Pero entonces no se había hablado de los derechos del hombre, y lo poco que de la Soberanía Nacional dijeron algunos no llegó a las tapiadas orejas de aquel personaje; ni entonces había asociaciones de obreros, ni derecho al trabajo, ni batallones de milicias, ni gorros encarnados; ni había periódicos, ni más discursos que los de la Academia, por cuyas razones Pujitos no era más que Pujitos. (*El 19 de marzo*, 1:382)

(But at that time people had not spoken of the rights of man, and the few things that some said about National Sovereignty failed to reach the covered-up ears of that personage; neither at that time were there workers' associations, nor right to work, nor militia battalions, nor red bonnets; nor were there newspapers, nor any more speeches than those of the Academy, for which reasons Pujitos was only Pujitos.)

The Spanish mob and its self-appointed leaders can only destroy; they have nothing to contribute to society. Spain's traditional leaders, on the other hand, have neither the ability nor the desire to exercise responsible authority. Lack of statesmanship pushes Spain into wars that do not serve her true interests (*Trafalgar*, 1:204). The king, in *La corte de Carlos IV*, is reduced to "un buen almacenista de ultramarinos" (a good grocer); his son Fernando is a monster of ingratitude. Affairs of state are administered on the lines of the *Arabian Nights*, for intrigue, blackmail, and caprice control national destinies. In 1805 as in the 1870s, "los tontos y ruines y ordinarios" (the stupid, vile, and lowly) are elevated to high position (*La corte de Carlos IV*, 1:305). The aristocracy has lost its function and is basically powerless. Bored aristocrats commit class suicide as they ape the manners of *majos* and seek empty amorous adventures (*La corte de Carlos IV*). The rigid, traditional values of the Rumblars are irrelevant to the Spain of the nineteenth century (*Bailén*). The offspring of the aristocracy are ill prepared for change (*Bailén, Cádiz*); they are puppets, forced into arranged marriages or the convent, the victims of manipulation and avarice. Furthermore, aristocrats fail to provide a moral example. They are frequently dissolute (the historical Mañara, the fictional Diego de Rumblar). A ruling class obsessed with rank and privilege either serves Napoleon (*Napoleón en Chamartín*) or wastes its energies in petty discords (*Gerona*).

The Spaniards of the past possess the disagreeable traits of the Spaniards of the present: an overgreat facility in assimilating the ideas of others, the idolizing of heroes of the moment, the avid search for jobs in the civil service, the coffeehouse punditry that knows better than generals how to win wars, the wish of all, however ignorant and inexperienced, to command, the desire for glory without effort, the love of parade, the volatile enthusiasms,

the fatuous and rancorous politics, the belief that words alone are sufficient to settle national problems.

Spanish vices do not change from generation to generation. Characters based on literary figures reflect the persistence of national traits: the *pícaros* and *majos* who haunt the pages of *Napoleón en Chamartín* and *Cádiz*, the Celestinesque Tía Alacrana of *Cádiz*, the half-mystic, half-madman Juan de Dios, and the quixotically insane Santiago Fernández. The beggars of the past survive today (*Cádiz*, 1:912). Spain is a topsy-turvey land, where all is antithesis. Beneath the mask of glory and fiesta, Galdós laments, misery is always present:

Todo al revés. Ayer barriendo a los franceses, y hoy dejándonos barrer; ayer poderosos y temibles, y hoy impotentes y desbandados. Contrastes y antítesis propias de la tierra, como el paño pardo, los garbanzos, el buen vino y el buen humor. ¡Oh, España, cómo se te reconoce en cualquier parte de tu historia, a donde se fije la vista! Y no hay disimulo que te encubra, ni máscara que te oculte, ni afeite que te desfigure, porque a donde quiera que aparezcas, allí se te conoce desde cien leguas con tu media cara de fiesta, y la otra media de miseria; con la una mano empuñando laureles, y con la otra rascándote tu lepra. (*Napoleón en Chamartín*, 1:590)

(Everything reversed. Yesterday sweeping out the French and today being swept aside ourselves; yesterday powerful and feared, and today impotent and scattered. The contrasts and antitheses typical of this land, like brown cloth, chickpeas, good wine, and good humor. Oh Spain, how easy it is to recognize you at any period of your history, wherever one looks! No deceit can cover you, nor mask conceal you, nor cosmetic disguise you, for wherever you appear, you can be known for a hundred leagues around by your face, which is half festival, half wretchedness; one hand bearing laurels, the other scratching your leprous sores.)

Again and again, Galdós returns to the theme of the disorder of Spanish life, the refusal to follow, or even to establish, authority. Spaniards need conflict in order to confirm their very existence. The *guerrilleros* constitute the essence of the national character, with all its contradictions, “la dignidad dispuesta al heroísmo, la crueldad inclinada al pillaje” (dignity disposed to heroism, cruelty inclined to pillage; *Juan Martín el Empecinado*, 1:975). Spaniards, attracted by the wandering life and lack of discipline,

learned during the War of Independence “la ciencia de la insurrección,” a lesson that, unfortunately, the nation still has not forgotten, for the *guerrilleros* survive in the Carlists of Galdós’s day and will, Galdós laments, have their offspring in the future.

Despite his acceptance of religion as an “elevated idea”² and the occasional portrayal of exemplary priests, Galdós attacks clerical intervention in secular affairs. The participation of Spanish priests in the War of Independence is criticized; the role of the priest should be to say mass, not command troops as in *Bailén* and *Napoleón en Chamartín*. The association of religious leaders with political reaction is condemned (*Cádiz*). Galdós’s strongest hostility is toward religious orders. Monks are ignorant, lazy, quarrelsome, and without function; few religious follow the rules of their orders; religious orders have immense wealth; Napoleon is justified in his reduction of the number of religious and of religious houses and in his abolition of the Inquisition in *Napoleón en Chamartín*.

The effect of religion on lay people is often harmful. The young Agustín Montoria and Asunción are forced into a religious life for which they have no vocation. Religion encourages superstition. For example, Diego de Rumblar believes that the scapulary will protect him against enemy bullets. Above all, religion promotes hypocrisy, as in the Rumblar household, and a joylessness that leads, in the case of Asunción, to morbid obsessions and self-destruction. Religious exaltation often accompanies sexual crisis. Santorcaz cynically remarks on the association between puberty and religious vocation in Spanish women (*Bailén*, 1:516). Priestly teaching that women are the creation of the devil (*El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*) and clerical encouragement of isolation and mortification (*La batalla de los Arapiles*) accentuate the religious dementia of the sexually and emotionally obsessed Juan de Dios.

2. For a sensitive and intelligent discussion of Galdós’s treatment of religion in the first two series of *episodios*, see Francisco Pérez Gutiérrez, “Benito Pérez Galdós.” Pérez Gutiérrez observes that, from our present-day perspective, Galdós is deeply religious (183); his fundamental values are those of “la intimidad y la libertad” (197); his attacks, both in his early journalism and in the *episodios*, are on religious inauthenticity. See also José Agustín Balseiro, “Anticlericalismo y religiosidad en Benito Pérez Galdós (desde los primeros *Episodios Nacionales*).”

Galdós, however, equally opposes an unthinking anticlericalism. The juvenile Santorcaz's and Marchena's mockery of God is contemptible (*Juan Martín el Empecinado*, 1:821). The fatuous anticlericalism of Gallardo and of later generations of *progresistas* is rejected out of hand (*Cádiz*, 1:920).

Spaniards' vices—indiscipline, lack of responsibility, self-seeking, intoxication with words, thoughtlessness, violence—are rooted in selfishness, in the divorce of the individual from the collective enterprise. The sickness, which is not confined to Spaniards, was later to be defined by Galdós as “romantic” in nature.³ The self-centered individual isolates himself in order to pursue a personal passion; the restriction to an inner-directed world prevents acknowledgment of the needs, or even existence, of others. The result is always unhappiness, madness, and self-destruction. Monomaniacs who exemplify extreme forms of a common Spanish illness abound in the first series of *episodios*: Máiquez, Candiola, Nomdedeu, Juan de Dios, Lord Gray, the Gabriel who in *Cádiz* sees himself as the center of the universe, and Mosén Antón. Any excess that leads to disorder harms both individual and society. The desire to transcend limits, the pursuit of illusion, is evasion, a futile projection onto the outside world of a fundamental emptiness of the soul.

The Cure

Galdós's remedies for Spain's ills reflect his abhorrence of contemporary turmoil. He affirms, especially in the early *episodios*, qualities of leadership, obedience, and service to the common cause. However, throughout the *episodios* runs a counter-current of critical detachment. Galdós asserts the need for common sense and prudence, questions the utility of the sacrifices demanded in the patriotic struggle, and suggests humbler, more limited goals. Despite Gabriel's occasional outbursts of patriotic enthusiasm, Galdós demands that Spaniards be controlled rather than impetuous. Galdós rejects political extremism but offers no idealization of the liberals; furthermore, he sees no solution to Spain's problems in the aping of foreigners. Although Galdós emphasizes

3. For a discussion of Galdós's attacks on “romantic” attitudes in the third and fourth series of *episodios*, see Brian J. Dendle, *Galdós: The Mature Thought*.

Spaniards' defects, he believes change to be possible. The overcoming of *egoísmo*, steadfastness of purpose, reliance on merit and work, the rejection of miraculous solutions, and the avoidance of bitterness will lead to individual and, by extension, to national well-being.

A healthy national morale demands the acceptance of roles by both leaders and led. Churruca and Alcalá Galiano (*Trafalgar*), Palafox and Manuela Sancho (*Zaragoza*), Alvarez de Castro (*Gerona*), and Juan Martín (*Juan Martín el Empeinado*) are exemplary leaders, inspiring their followers to great deeds. Morale also comes from within, as a form of faith. Faith in Inés gives Gabriel confidence; faith in their cause inspires Spaniards to victory (*Bailén*, 1:468). Patriotism, "amor santo de la patria," Gabriel claims in *Trafalgar*, inspired him throughout his career. Patriotism is an irresistible force, representing the *condensación colosal* of the energies of the nation (*El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, 1:432). To resist foreign aggression, men, women, children, priests, the young, the old, and members of all social classes spontaneously join together (*El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, *Bailén*, *Zaragoza*, *Gerona*).

Whereas selfishness is the cause of Spanish misfortunes, altruism, the sacrifice of self for the good of the collectivity, will restore the health of individual and nation. *Egoísmo* profits no one. When Nomdedeu and Marijuán fight, they lose the very food for which they are battling (*Gerona*). When English and Spanish sailors, motivated by the "holy sentiment of humanity and charity," assist each other, on the other hand, the benefits of cooperation and idealism are established (*Trafalgar*). Gabriel's idealism is, at times, exemplary: his mind is before the Battle of Trafalgar filled with "altas concepciones, elevadas imágenes y generosos pensamientos" (high concepts, elevated images and generous thoughts; *Trafalgar*, 1:218); he insists that man needs an ideal to guide his life (*Napoleón en Chamartín*, 1:564); he practices self-discipline, in refraining from seeing Inés, and risks his life to protect society (*Cádiz*). Religious feeling is also the mark of idealism. Inés is religious; Gabriel frequently has recourse to prayer; superior men, as Gabriel remarks of Churruca, are by definition religious.

However, counteracting the idealism advocated at times by Gabriel, another stronger message runs through the *episodios*, one of common sense, of opposition to excessive exaltation. In *Trafalgar*, the utility to Spain of the war with England is insistently questioned; in *Zaragoza*, heroic sacrifice is of no advantage to those who lose property and lives. The message of common sense is pervasive: Chinitas proclaims that we cannot expect others to do our work for us (*La corte de Carlos IV*); Marijuán mocks the quixotry of Napoleon (*Bailén*); Gabriel rejects the false vision of Spain possessed by foreign romantics. Inés, to cure her father's madness, demands that he abandon his quixotic and impractical desire to reform the world. The world, she sensibly remarks, will not change just because he so desires it (*La batalla de los Arapiles*, 1:1144).

In their disillusionment, many of Galdós's characters, like the Lázaro of *La Fontana de Oro*, flee national affairs to take refuge in personal life: the sailor of *Trafalgar* who, having done his duty, returns home; the Gabriel of *La corte de Carlos IV* who abandons the court to learn a trade; the Andrés Marijuán of *Gerona* who, declining any interest in the fate of kingdoms, wishes only to found a family. Heroism itself becomes suspect in Galdós's world: the fanaticism of the defenders of *Zaragoza* and *Gerona* takes little heed of the demands of the living. Even patriotism is downplayed as the *episodios* progress. Gabriel, in the later novels, stresses responsibility and duty rather than sentiment; he protests against "la gente entusiasta y patriotera" (*Cádiz*, 1:865). Similarly, political extremists, whether reactionaries or revolutionaries, are merely deluded manipulators of others; their "ideas" are abstractions that allow no place for reality, forms of monomania couched in a jargon incapable of expressing thought.

Galdós's solution for Spain's political and social problems in part lies in the reform of obvious abuses. He attacks class barriers, such as the privileges of primogeniture and aristocratic hostility to those of a lower class. He approves Napoleon's reduction of the role of religious orders and suppression of vestiges of the feudal system. However, Galdós notes the defects of Spanish liberals: masons are little more than madmen; the *Cortes* is influenced by the mob; Spain's early political parties are of "condición

sainetesca y un tanto arlequinada" (farcical, somewhat harlequin-esque nature; *Cádiz*, 1:864). Liberals, Amaranta perceptively observes, take the word for the deed (*Cádiz*, 1:870). Significantly, the fatuous Diego de Rumblar is a convert to liberalism, a ready prey to the poisonous theories of Santorcaz and Gallardo.

Reform will in any case be gradual. Customs, Quintana wisely explains, are not to be changed by ideological fiat.⁴ The struggle between "los dos fanatismos," the absolutists and the anticlericals, will continue, Galdós pessimistically believes, until the honorable majority of Spaniards abandon their political neutrality (*El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, 1:396; *Gerona*, 1:757).

Spain's salvation does not lie in the imitation of other nations. The French commit atrocities during their occupation of Spain; Spaniards better resisted foreign aggression during the War of Independence than did the French in the Franco-Prussian War.⁵ The English look after their own, not Spanish, interests; they had treacherously occupied Gibraltar to convert it into a warehouse for smugglers (*Cádiz*, 1:850); they hypocritically conceal commercial greed beneath the mask of national pride (*Cádiz*, 1:849). The English, in *La batalla de los Arapiles*, show little understanding of Gabriel; the romantic vision of Spain held by Lord Gray and Miss Fly is false. Gabriel, although tempted by foreign ways, affirms his loyalty to Spanish values by choosing to marry Inés.

The most important lesson, however, for both nation and individual, lies in acceptance of the fundamental moral law that

4. "—Si las costumbres se han modificado, ellas sabrán por qué lo han hecho. Se lucha y se puede luchar contra un ejército, por grande que sea; pero contra las costumbres, hijas del tiempo, no es posible alzar las manos" (If customs change, they alone will know why. One struggles and can struggle against an army, however large; but it is impossible to raise one's hand against customs, the daughters of time; *Cádiz*, 1:857).

5. There are references to French atrocities in *Bailén*, *Napoleón en Chamartín*, *Zaragoza*, and *Gerona*. Galdós nevertheless recognizes the homesickness of French conscripts (*Bailén*, *Juan Martín el Empecinado*) and portrays a French coachman's charitable treatment of the dying Alvarez (*Gerona*). The allusions to the Franco-Prussian War are to French inability to take their enemies seriously (*Zaragoza*, 1:671) and to their incapacity to defend fortified places (*Juan Martín el Empecinado*, 1:987).

success can only be based on merit and virtue.⁶ Acceptance of the moral law means recognition of limitations; it does not mean withdrawal from the world. Isolation, whether imposed from without, as in the case of Asunción, or from within, as in the case of the madmen petrified in their manias, leads to sterile rebellion and death. Despite Galdós's caustic portrayal of Spanish defects, the teaching of the first series of *episodios* is optimistic: Galdós holds no situation to be beyond hope of change. Gabriel and Inés both win the rewards of patience and self-discipline; even Santorcaz finally learns to overcome the hatred that is strangling him, and with it his closed attitude to the world.

Galdós's Approach to History

At the time of publication of *Trafalgar*, in early 1873, Galdós had little plan, beyond a tentative list of titles, for the subsequent development of the first series of *episodios nacionales*.⁷ The *episodios* were to be organized around historical events and characters. From the outset, Galdós appealed to the readers' nationalism: the national colors were flamboyantly displayed on the covers of the *episodios*; Gabriel in *Trafalgar* affirms his patriotism at length. Galdós's intent, he later declared, was to convey "in agreeable manner" information about Spain's past.⁸

In its concentration on a single military action, *Trafalgar* is atypical. In the second *episodio*, *La corte de Carlos IV*, Galdós gives greater weight to the imagination—plot, psychology, the intrigues of court and theater, the interaction of characters, the

6. See *La corte de Carlos IV*; *Napoleón en Chamartín*, 1:603; *Gerona*, 1:835; *Cádiz*, 1:949; *La batalla de los Arapiles*, 1:1184. The teaching of *La desheredada* (1881) is, of course, identical.

7. See Dendle, "A Note on the Genesis of the *Episodios Nacionales*," 138. Galdós's originally intended titles were *Trafalgar*, *Isidoro Máiquez* (published as *La corte de Carlos IV*), *El motín de Aranjuez* (published as *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*), *Bailén*, *Zaragoza*, *Talavera*, *Gerona*, *Cádiz en 1809* (published as *Cádiz* and covering the events of 1810), *Arapiles* (published as *La batalla de los Arapiles*), and *San Marcial*.

8. "Presentar en forma agradable los principales hechos militares y políticos del período más dramático del siglo" (To present in agreeable form the principal military and political deeds of the most dramatic period of the century). Benito Pérez Galdós, "Prólogo Segundo a los *Episodios Nacionales*," in William H. Shoemaker, *Los prólogos de Galdós*, 56.

interplay of life and art. In later novels, Galdós increasingly emphasizes fiction rather than conventional history.⁹ Nonetheless, until he abruptly terminated Gabriel's *memorias* at the end of the first series of *episodios*, Galdós was unable to free himself from certain approaches established in *Trafalgar*: the focusing on events divorced from context, the first-person narrative, the linking of the *episodios* by the contrived exigencies of Gabriel's career,¹⁰ Gabriel's optimism.

Galdós, through the septuagenarian narrator Gabriel Araceli, views history from afar. He sees history as drama, as a series of "key" turning points;¹¹ he treats historical figures externally; there is little attempt at understanding the social forces involved in the national struggle against Napoleon and in Spanish efforts to establish a constitution. Social history for Galdós is little more than occasional descriptions of costume and pastiches of contemporary literature. Although Galdós assumed that structural changes were taking place in Spanish society,¹² economic forces receive no mention, save for passing strictures against primogeniture and acknowledgment of the economic power of the religious orders. All too often, history is a colorful event or example of Spanish courage and perseverance. Increasingly also, in such later novels as *Cádiz*, *Juan Martín el Empecinado*, and *La batalla de los*

9. Note his decision to replace two projected *episodios* dealing with battles (*Talavera*, *San Marcial*) with novels of customs (*Napoléon en Chamartín*) and of psychology (*Juan Martín el Empecinado*). Note also his recognition that the second series of *episodios* contains "más novela": "la acción pasa de los campos de batalla y de las plazas sitiadas a los palenques políticos y al gran teatro de la vida común, resulta más movimiento, más novela, y por tanto, un interés mayor" (the action passes from the battlefields and besieged fortresses to the political arena and the great theater of common life, which results in more movement, more novel, and consequently greater interest; Shoemaker, *Prólogos*, 58).

10. Galdós was later to complain of the difficulties of placing his narrator-protagonist at scenes of historical importance: "porque el autor no puede, las más de las veces, escoger a su albedrío ni el lugar de la escena ni los móviles de la acción" (because the author can, most times, choose of his own free will neither the scene nor the motives of the action; *ibid.*).

11. Compare, for example, the breaking of the Rumblar sword in *Bailén*, the opening of the *Cortes* in *Cádiz*, and the youthful Gabriel's frequent flashes of insight into his motives.

12. Hence the mention of key moments of change in *Bailén* and *Cádiz*, and the cautionary career of Santorcaz, who is in many respects a Gabriel born twenty years too early.

Arapiles, history becomes little more than the backdrop to tales of adventure and intrigue.

In keeping with the narrow focus of his vision of the past, Galdós's presentation of history is fragmented, "episodic." Except in *Trafalgar* where there are brief references to Spain's wars of the eighteenth century and to Napoleon's European strategy, Galdós makes little attempt at establishing a historical context. In later novels, the war against Napoleon is conceived as a fundamentally Spanish concern.¹³ The claustrophobic accounts of the sieges of Zaragoza and Gerona further exemplify Galdós's preference for a restricted framework. Political changes, moreover, are barely explored. The *Cortes* presented in *Cádiz* is above all spectacle; liberals and absolutists posture in a vacuum. Despite his claim that he has studied the period, Gabriel's worm's-eye view allows little awareness of events and policies beyond his immediate experience. Even his visits to seats of power trivialize, rather than reveal, authority.¹⁴ Gabriel's concept of historical motivation as expounded in *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*—secret manipulation and occasional spontaneous outbursts of patriotic feeling—is, furthermore, childishly simplistic.

The contradictions of Galdós's initial vision—the concept of history as both spectacle and moral example, the criticism of Spanish defects and simultaneous exaltation of Spanish patriotism—are apparent in the portrayal of Gabriel Araceli. Gabriel's moral growth, his rejection of misplaced ambition, hypocrisy, and romantic posturing, takes place outside of history. Gabriel, unlike Spain, is without inner conflict, without aims (save for a belief in himself), without political passion, without vision of a reformed society. Furthermore, the aged Gabriel's attempts at evoking the enthusiasms of his youth ring false; his effusive, senti-

13. Thus, in *Bailén*, Santorcaz's references to Napoleon's victories over Austria are merely the prelude to the demonstration that Spaniards are not as other Europeans; the English presented in *Cádiz* and *La batalla de los Arapiles*, unlike those of *Trafalgar*, are grotesque intruders on the Spanish soil.

14. Thus, the royal family is seen from the palace kitchens (*La corte de Carlos IV*); Napoleon is an angry gesticulating shadow (*Napoleón en Chamartín*); and Wellington and his officers are obsessed with Gabriel's suspected moral transgressions (*La batalla de los Arapiles*).

mental patriotism ill accords with the values of judgment, prudence, and self-discipline that he constantly advocates.

Like the rhetoric of the revolutionaries of 1868, Gabriel's moral lessons are often divorced from context: Gabriel teaches the dangers of the imagination yet increasingly relies on fiction as the source of his *memorias*; he emphasizes the importance of participating in the life of the nation from which, nevertheless, he distances himself to castigate Spanish defects. Gabriel stresses the virtues of patriotism, although he frequently gives priority to personal affairs; he proclaims the need for personal integrity, though examples of hypocrisy, including Gabriel's own, abound. Most suspect of all, however, is Gabriel's optimism, an optimism that can be asserted only by dissociation from the collectivity. Consideration neither of the Spain of Gabriel's youth—the rogues, madmen, incompetents, and egotists portrayed in the *episodios*—nor of the 1870s—the lack of patriotism of which Gabriel bewails—will support his optimistic viewpoint.

Gabriel's sense of humor, his irony, the constant reminders that we are reading fiction, warn against too ready an acceptance of his views on history or morality. Gabriel's *memorias* are self-conscious literary creation; the reader is therefore, like the narrator Gabriel, held at a distance from the events described. Examples of this dissociation abound. Gabriel discusses the process of creation with his readers-auditors; he draws attention to the fictional nature of certain characters; he casts doubt on the existence of a central character, Miss Fly (*La batalla de los Arapiles*, 1:1179). References to and pastiches of literature,¹⁵ caricature portraits, autonomous images,¹⁶ the attribution of botanical names to characters (*Trafalgar*), consciously literary descrip-

15. The picaresque in *Trafalgar*; the *Quijote* in *Napoleón en Chamartín*, *Gerona*, and *Cádiz*; the drama in *La corte de Carlos IV*; romanticism in the obsessions and fantasies of Lord Gray and Miss Fly; *costumbrismo* in *Napoleón en Chamartín*.

16. Thus, Requejo's coffers are "Bastilla de las alhajas y Argel de las ropas finas" (Bastille of jewels and Algiers of fine clothing; *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, 1:399); Amaranta's eyes are "los Bonapartes de la mirada humana" (Bonapartes of human looks; *Bailén*, 1:484); marriage is "genealógico y utilitario ayuntamiento" (genealogical and utilitarian juncture; *Napoleón en Chamartín*, 1:547). Such metaphors divert the reader's attention from Gabriel's story and hence from history.

tions,¹⁷ and the deliberate adoption of the techniques and psychology of the popular novel draw us into a world of mirrors, of fiction within fiction. "History," and Gabriel's reaction to this "history," then becomes but one further element of a universe forged in the mind of Gabriel, as liable to distortion and manipulation as any other part of the "reality" purportedly related in the *memorias*.

Despite the great vigor and color with which Galdós presents scenes from history, the reader is left with an impression of confusion, of lack of an overall plan, of a shifting and ill-defined perspective, in which Gabriel is either too close to or too distant from the events he re-creates. Gabriel, frequently divorced from historical circumstances and observing history as spectacle, lacks the passionate involvement of Salvador Monsalud. All too often, Galdós flees history to enter a world of fantasy (the popular novel) and fairy tale (the unconvincing final harmony of Gabriel's union with Inés and of Amaranta's reconciliation with the penitent Santorcaz). Gabriel's personal "success" stands in ironic contrast with his corrosive vision of a divided Spain. His final happiness, consisting of marriage with Inés and a Fernandine generalship, is evasive and of an almost comical irrelevance to the national history so strikingly portrayed in the abruptly truncated *memorias*.

The Fictitious Characters

The narrator and leading character of the first series of *episodes*, Gabriel Araceli, in part symbolizes an orphaned nineteenth-century Spain obliged to constitute itself without guidance from the past; the symbolism, however, is hardly developed.¹⁸ Gabriel is above all an exemplary figure. His *memorias* are a tale of success, a demonstration, to the Spaniards of the 1870s, of the rewards of optimism and perseverance. In the course of the *episodes*, Gabriel achieves self-knowledge, learns to behave with integrity toward himself and with responsibility toward the collec-

17. For example, his description of the fury of the sea (*Trafalgar*, 1:238).

18. Further examples of symbolism are the representation of the enfeebled *Antiguo Régimen* by the aged and crippled Marcial and Don Alonso (*Trafalgar*), the kidnapping of Inés (the symbol of Spanish aspirations) on 2 May 1808, and Gabriel's quest for Inés, which parallels Spain's striving for freedom.

tivity, and develops self-confidence as he gains control of both self and surroundings.

Gabriel's increasing knowledge of himself and of the world is demonstrated in each novel. In *Trafalgar*, Gabriel overcomes *egoísmo* by an effort of the will and, in a first step toward self-determination, refuses the humiliations of servitude. In *La corte de Carlos IV*, Gabriel discovers that selfishly motivated actions bear within themselves the seeds of their own punishment. Gabriel does not learn honor; he uses, indeed, the very methods—lying, stealing, eavesdropping, blackmail—that he professes to condemn. Instead, he learns to control events and not to serve the selfish interests of others. In *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, Gabriel demonstrates his new-found mastery of himself and of those around him, as he slyly manipulates the members of the Requejo household; he also fights bravely for the patriotic cause and will risk his life to seek Inés.

In *Bailén*, Gabriel shows compassion in his treatment of Juan de Dios, perseverance in his love for Inés, cunning in the cheating of innkeepers with Santorcaz, resentment at his situation as servant, and independent judgment in his assessments of Santorcaz and Diego de Rumblar. In *Napoleón en Chamartín*, Gabriel, in strong contrast to the degraded Don Diego, conducts himself with courage and dignity. Refusing unmerited advancement and renouncing any claim on the affections of Inés, he now earns the respect of Amaranta. In *Zaragoza* and *Gerona*, Gabriel's roles are minor; his merit and courage win him promotion to commissioned rank in the army.

In *Cádiz*, Gabriel has by now all but completed his moral development. He is patient, self-controlled in his ability to cultivate Gray's friendship and to penetrate the Rumblar *tertulia*, and, unlike Lord Gray, capable of overcoming the temptation of a selfish, romantic passion. Imposing his will, which corresponds, nevertheless, to societal norms, he flamboyantly restores Inés to her mother and kills the socially disruptive Gray. He now merits the grudging acknowledgment of the Condesa de Rumblar that his conduct is that of a *caballero*; his challenge of Gray was not a selfish, quixotic deed, but a measure to protect society.

In *Juan Martín el Empecinado*, Gabriel is a consummate diplomat, manipulating treacherous *guerrilleros* and French soldiers

alike. Deeply religious, resourceful, concerned for others, he reveals great strength of will as he struggles through cold and enemy territory in an effort to save Inés. In the final novel, *La batalla de los Arapiles*, Gabriel must again conquer his egotism and the passions that plunge him into childish rage when frustrated. As a result of experience, Gabriel now has mature judgment: he prefers Inés, with her domestic virtues, to the exotic Miss Fly; he recognizes that Santorcaz is a parent as well as a criminal.

At the end of the first series of *episodios*, Gabriel, at the age of twenty-one, has won bride, wealth, and social position. His success, which is contrasted with the failure of Santorcaz in similar circumstances, is ostensibly the result of his superior moral conduct. Gabriel has learned, in his contacts with society, to be prudent, to be self-controlled, and to rely on himself rather than on others. His ostensible final message, addressed to the youth of the 1870s, is that persistence, common sense, ethical standards, and the ability to profit from experience lead to success (see *La batalla de los Arapiles*, 1:1185).

Gabriel's moral teachings, however admirable, are nevertheless asserted rather than demonstrated. Gabriel remains a shadowy, elusive figure, in part because the first-person narrative allows no clear-cut perspective of the narrator, in part because Gabriel contains within himself the contradictions of the revolutionaries of 1868. He is resolutely idealistic but is also manipulative and self-seeking; he teaches altruism but heeds his own interest; he professes optimism but is aware of the defects of his compatriots. Throughout the *memorias* runs a current of irony that undercuts any facile solution for national or personal problems. Chance, as well as right thinking and behavior, plays a role in his "success," which, as he acknowledges in the closing chapter of *La batalla de los Arapiles*, is in large measure due to the influence of his mother-in-law. Above all, Gabriel's playfulness, his flamboyance, and his marked self-consciousness both as protagonist and as narrator inspire in the reader thought and detachment rather than optimism. Behind Gabriel's exhortations lurks a critical stance that places in question those very goals and methods that Gabriel so ardently advocates.

Luis de Santorcaz's career serves, as Nigel Glendinning has remarked,¹⁹ as a parallel and contrast to that of Gabriel. Like Gabriel, he is resourceful, intelligent, and manipulative. He also resembles Gabriel in his love for an aristocrat. Although, in the light of the relentless persecution and false accusations that he had suffered, his bitterness seems justified, his thirst for vengeance bears within itself the seeds of his deep unhappiness. For Galdós, hatred, isolation from others, and insanity are synonymous. Santorcaz's renunciation of revenge and of a maniacal revolutionary jargon, his acceptance of the consoling virtues of forgiveness and charity, mark his reconciliation with humanity. Although Santorcaz is portrayed in extreme terms—he is either excessively villainous or pathetically dependent on his daughter—Santorcaz merits the reader's sympathy more than do his aristocratic persecutors. That Santorcaz has to die represents Galdós's realization that, for Santorcaz's generation, class barriers could not be overcome. Despite Galdós's scorn for Santorcaz's revolutionary excesses, the shattering of the rigid values of the *Antiguo Régimen* allows Amaranta to accept Gabriel as prospective son-in-law.

Gabriel's most significant relationship, in liveliness of interchange and recognition of the other, is not with Inés but with her mother, the Countess Amaranta.²⁰ Gabriel's social advancement is measured in the increasing esteem that he enjoys in Amaranta's eyes. Amaranta is lively, capricious, self-assured, teasing, and of penetrating intelligence. She, more than any other character, is caught up in her changing class situation and historical context. Shunned by her relatives and recognizing Gabriel's qualities, she acknowledges, as she increasingly abandons her class pretensions, "an aristocracy of souls" (*Juan Martín el Empeinado*, 1:1044). In a note of gratuitous hostility, Galdós has Amaranta starkly con-

19. See Nigel Glendinning, "Psychology and Politics in the First Series of the *Episodios Nacionales*," 54. Glendinning's discussion of character and motivation is an excellent introduction to the topic. Santorcaz's role has also been intelligently discussed by Thomas Oliu, "Individuo e historia en la novela histórica: La figura del afrancesado en *La batalla de los Arapiles* de Benito Pérez Galdós."

20. Compare the similar relationship between Calpena and *La desconocida* in the third series of *episodios*. See also Jacques Beyrie's convincing psychological portrait of Galdós's visceral attachment to his mother (*Galdós et son mythe*, 1:45–50, 366).

front her wasted life, when she abruptly realizes that Santorcaz had sacrificed his reputation to protect hers (*La batalla de los Arapiles*, 1:1185).

Gabriel, Santorcaz, and Amaranta live in history, modifying their behavior and attitudes in the light of experience. Furthermore, two women who live freely, meeting men on more or less equal terms in a world of activity—Amaranta and Miss Fly—are attractively presented. Galdós's esteem, however, is above all for those women—Inés, Mariquilla Candiola, Siseta—who devote their lives to the service of others and who preserve, rather than challenge, the social order. Such women have an instinctive knowledge that men must, in their restless agitation, attain by experience and can only admire. Inés, for example, grasps from the outset that the universe is governed by a moral law unaffected by our desires or ambitions (*La corte de Carlos IV*, 1:267). Serene, deeply religious, conscious of her own dignity, Inés possesses an inner strength,²¹ wavering neither in her love for Gabriel nor in her determination to impose harmony on her surroundings. Unlike Asunción, she refuses to infringe the social code by eloping with the man she loves; she skillfully manipulates her parents into reconciliation; she later, as "ave doméstica," establishes order in Gabriel's household. Inés's faults, an occasional trace of self-pity and jealousy of Gabriel's relations with Miss Fly, are trivial; her moral virtues, on the other hand, resist all temptation.

The Second Series of *Episodios Nacionales*, 1875–1879

For Galdós, the past is seen in terms of the present. The struggle of absolutist and liberal between 1813 and 1834 is merely the prelude to a battle that will continue throughout the century. The two political parties that vied for power in the Spain preceding the Revolution of 1868 are scathingly portrayed in their Ferdinandine ancestors: the *moderados* are Machiavellian hypocrites; the *progresistas* are naive enthusiasts. Revolutions themselves, the skeptical Galdós declares, are no more than a mannerism of

21. For further remarks on the strength of Inés see Oliu, "Individuo e historia." Marie-Claire Petit's characterization of Inés and Solita in the second series as "victim" is clearly superficial (*Les Personnages féminins dans les romans de Benito Pérez Galdós*, 452, 456).

Spanish life, temporary changes of form while the substance remains unaltered.

Three major contemporary problems—the religious question, the Carlist threats, and the search for an explanation of the liberal failure following the Revolution of 1868—dominate the second series of *episodios*. Throughout the novels runs a profound disillusionment, a disbelief in the national capacity for self-government. The nation lacks energetic, decisive leaders; the *populacho* is violent and cowardly; liberals are envious job-seekers who mistake rhetoric for reality and who are as despotic as the absolutists whom they seek to replace. The cure for Spain's ills will come not from foreigners, who have a false vision of Spain and use Spain for their own purposes, but from a total change of heart in the Spaniard. Customs, however, will change only with the passage of time, not by ideological or military fiat. Progress toward civilization, which Galdós defines as “trabajo, industria, investigación, igualdad, derecho” (*Los apostólicos*, 2:644), remains for the distant future. Significantly, Galdós concentrates on negative elements in Spanish life; his alter ego, Salvador Monsalud, manifestly dissociates himself from the collectivity, whether liberal or reactionary.

Religion and Carlism

Throughout the *episodios* of the second series, Galdós associates religious fanaticism, aggressive nationalism, and political absolutism. The claims of religious ideologues are treated with sarcasm and contempt; they are deluded hypocrites, using the words of religion to sanction personal ambitions or to justify giving full rein to unruly temperaments. Thus, in *El equipaje del rey José*, the priest Aparicio Respaldiza has little interest in religious duties, and he joyfully sets out to kill the French and their collaborators “para gloria de la Nación y triunfo de la Fe” (1:1226). Throughout the novel, “religious” people claim that God is Spanish, that a special hell exists for *afrancesados*, that advocates of a constitution are the instruments of Satan. The defenders of “religion” use the name of God to sanction barbaric and uncompassionate behavior; they are self-centered, intransigent, and express themselves with egotistical simplicity (1:1214). In *Los cien mil hijos de San Luis*, friars preach that the French are

sent by God to rid Spain of liberals, the spawn of Satan; the alliance of clergy and mob is, Galdós remarks, of immense force in Spain. In *El terror de 1824*, the *guerrillero* leader El Trapense is harshly dismissed as “a bestial friar, the faithful image of Satan on horseback.” In *Un voluntario realista*, the clergy foment rebellion in order to establish “Christian government,” and Sor Teodora, like Doña Perfecta, incites her ignorant follower to take part in a Holy War.

The connection between the Spanish Church, absolutism, and corruption is constantly indicated. In *Memorias de un cortesano de 1815*, Church positions are for sale; Ostolaza, the lascivious royal confessor, fulminates against liberals and constitution; soldiers are compelled to pray the rosary; Augustinian and Franciscan friars harangue against liberalism; hypocrites proclaim the name of God while feathering their nests.

Galdós's hatred is manifestly inspired by the Carlists of his own day. Don Carlos is portrayed as a sanctimonious nullity, ridden by women and priests; the Carlist belief that God favors their cause is dismissed with heavy sarcasm in *Los apostólicos* (2:66). In *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, the Carlist movement is scathingly condemned; a bishop places the Purísima Concepción in command of the *voluntarios realistas*; a priest prefers to be a *guerrillero* rather than attend his clerical duties; the Carlist army, in its blind fanaticism, is like that of Islam (2:760). The devastation wrought by the savage struggle causes Galdós to doubt civilization itself:

ríos de sangre derramados diariamente entre hombres de una misma raza; clérigos que esgrimen espadas; moribundos que se confiesan con capitanes; villas pobladas por mujeres y chiquillos; cerros erizados de frailes y poblados de soldados feroces, que deliran con la matanza y el pillaje, son incongruencias que repetidas y condensadas en un solo día y lugar pueden hacer perder el juicio a la mejor templada cabeza, y hacer dudar de que habitamos un país cristiano y de que el Rey de la civilización es el hombre. (2:765)

(rivers of blood shed daily among men of the same race; priests who wield swords; dying men who make their confessions to captains; towns populated by women and children; hills bristling with friars and inhabited by fierce soldiers who grow delirious with killing and pillage, are incongruencies that, when repeated and condensed into a single day and place, can make the most balanced mind lose its wits and lead us

to doubt that we inhabit a Christian country and that the King of civilization is man.)

Not only the politicization of religion comes under attack. In *Un voluntario realista*, Galdós attacks the luxurious life and spiteful hypocrisies of nuns. Sor Teodora is a bored and frustrated neurotic who manipulates *Tilín* into a form of suicide. Her behavior, like that of Asunción in *Cádiz* and Domiciana in *Los duendes de la camarilla* (1903), is the consequence of the idleness and sterility of convent life. Convent life, the thwarting of the natural instinct to be wife and mother, causes Sor Teodora to waste her life and lose her soul (2:563–64).

Galdós is not, however, opposed to all aspects of the Spanish Church. Monsalud's scurrilous attack on Catholic belief and demand that the friars be slaughtered (*El equipaje del rey José*, 1:1239–40) are symptoms of drunkenness and therefore to be despised. Two priests—Father Gracián and Father Alelí—are at first sight favorably portrayed; they are, nevertheless, ineffectual. Gracián, indeed, despite his intelligence, affability, learning, and good intentions, fails in his self-appointed task of healing marital discord; his distribution of samples of earth from the grotto of Saint Ignatius encourages the very superstition that he denounces.

True Christianity for Galdós is to be found in compassion, in concern for those who suffer. Those “Christian” Spaniards, whether clergy or lay, who attack the defeated supporters of the French, singularly lack charity. Liberals are not necessarily more compassionate than absolutists: the liberal Sarmiento behaves with cruelty toward the arrested Urbano Gil de la Cuadra. Compassion, or charity, is not necessarily to be found among the poor: the mob treats the imprisoned Riego with bestial rage and slaughters harmless members of religious orders; the brutish employers of Romualda are without consideration for the crippled child.

Compassion is positively exemplified in Solita, who cares tenderly for her “enemy,” who is without partisan political beliefs, and who in prison, after a general confession, calmly resigns herself to the divine will (*El terror de 1824*, 2:430). Monsalud also, in his sacrifice of self to care for his insane brother and in his unceasing efforts at reconciliation, demonstrates an active form of Christianity.

Spanish Defects

As in the *episodios* of the first series, Galdós treats with contempt the behavior of the *populacho*. The mob in its cowardice attacks the helpless—the *afrancesados* in 1813, the fallen liberals in 1823, the friars in 1834. Members of the *pueblo*, whatever their ideology, are ignorant and violent: absolutist peasants attack Monsalud in *El equipaje del rey José* and ravage Catalonia in *Un voluntario realista*; an anticlerical proletariat believes that the friars poison the water of Madrid. The *pueblo*, for Galdós, is incapable of reasoned thought (*Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, 2:769). In the first series of *episodios*, lower-class figures like Chinitas and Andrés Marijuán were capable of common sense and patriotism; in the second series, no member of the *pueblo* is treated with approbation. Indeed, in *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, a novel that, in its unfavorable treatment of proletarian manners, prepares the way for *La desheredada*, the ignorant, violent Tablas and his slovenly concubine Nazaria typify a whole social class (2:721).

Spanish liberals share the defects of their compatriots. Revolutionary and absolutist riots are identical in their inane violence (*La segunda casaca*, 2:91). Absolutists and liberals share a fondness for procession and appearance; all appeal to grandiose abstractions, whether of religion or patriotism; liberal proclamations are as vacuous as those of absolutists. Echoing the ideas of Larra, Monsalud diagnoses the despotism that lies in the hearts of Spanish liberals (*La segunda casaca*, 2:84; *Los apostólicos*, 2:644); the liberal concept of liberty is no more than personal license. Liberal “ideals” are empty phrases; beneath liberal enthusiasm and candor lurks a sordid search for employment; liberal governments are characterized by rhetoric, irresolution, and anarchy; liberal politicians are motivated not by ideas but by envy. The moral and intellectual shortcomings of Spanish liberals are many: the Corderos are ingenuous and ignorant; Aviraneta is duplicitous; Sarmiento is fanatical; Riego is cowardly and vain; the masons and *comuneros* of *El Grande Oriente* mouth gibberish.

Above all, Galdós inveighs against the verbal facility of Spaniards. Primitivo Cordero, with his half-baked, second-hand ideas, believes himself qualified to settle affairs of state. Spanish orators easily sway mobs; their glib expositions, however, bear little rela-

tion to truth. Galdós, with heavy sarcasm, punctuates with stage directions the “patriotic” speeches of the mason Andrés Monsalud (*El equipaje del rey José*) and the turncoat Juan Bragas (*La segunda casaca*). *Un voluntario realista* exemplifies both the power of verbal manipulation in Spain and the Spaniard’s willingness to be duped: words of religion are used to incite to war; Jaime Servet manipulates Sor Teodora into protecting him; Sor Teodora, with promises of heavenly love, persuades *Tilín* to sacrifice his life.

Related to the readiness with words is the Spanish preference for form rather than substance. Anticipating Costa, Galdós denounces the institutions of absolutism (and the attack could equally be leveled at liberal institutions, had they existed at the time) as sham, as mere theatrical display (*La segunda casaca*, 2:45). Riego’s professions of disinterest are sufficient to touch the hearts of the demagogues of the *Cortes* (7 de julio); the *Cortes* takes only rhetorical action to deal with the menace of the Royal Guard (7 de julio) and the French invasion (*Los cien mil hijos de San Luis*). Spaniards are not only hypocrites like the liberals who proclaim their patriotism while seeking employment, and the absolutists who use religion to justify their violent inclinations; they are also blind to their own natures, that is, ideology and behavior have little in common. Thus, Fernando Garrote, who believes that Heaven is on his side, begs for mercy when facing death; Father Gracián is unable to preserve his serenity when attacked by the brute Tablas; and Carlos Navarro is unable at death to renounce his obsessions. Similarly, Benigno Cordero’s attempt to make life conform to the literary model of Rousseau proves vain in times of stress.

The Cure for Spain’s Ills

In the second series of *episodios*, Galdós, writing after the failure of the liberal Revolution of 1868 to produce fundamental change in Spain, stresses above all the defects of Spaniards: popular violence and ignorance, religious fanaticism, intoxication with verbal formulas, blindness to reality. At considerably less length, Galdós, or his mouthpiece Salvador Monsalud, details positive steps that will assist in the reform of national life: authority in government, patience, the acceptance of personal responsibility.

Galdós admires strong leaders. He complains—and his thought resembles Costa's later demand for an "iron surgeon"—that the rulers of 1821 lack the force and energy of such great statesmen-dictators as Bonaparte, Cisneros, Washington, Cromwell, Robespierre, and Isabel la Católica (*El Grande Oriente*, 2:193). In *7 de julio*, he praises highly "dos hombres de acción y energía," Martínez de San Martín and General Morillo, for affirming the principle of authority; by way of contrast, the "deputy" Riego, who undermines authority, is treated with contempt. In the same novel, the triumph of the Milicia Nacional over the Royal Guard exemplifies a further source of power, that of faith in one's cause.

At times, Monsalud expresses anger at national apathy, at a Spain that responds not to ideas but only to the primitive sentiments of nationality and God. However, although recognizing the need for a fundamental revolution, he accepts the need for the passage of time rather than an ill-conceived *pronunciamento* before customs can change. In the meantime, to break the vicious circle of a nation unable to achieve liberty until liberty is already practiced, a start, however humble, must be made (*La segunda casaca*, 2:64–65, 84).

A further lesson is one of personal responsibility. Liberty is to be based on respect for others, law, and work; Spaniards must therefore abandon sterile disputes and their desire to live at the expense of others (*Los apostólicos*, 2:644). Goals are to be chosen with prudence; Monsalud, for example, unlike his exalted compatriots, prefers deeds and facts to persons and untested theories (*Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, 2:785). Private life is not to be neglected. Sarmiento's school is ruined by his obsession with politics; the Duque del Parque is rendered ridiculous by his political pretensions; militiamen neglect their trades. Discord and the absence of family bonds—exemplified in the ill-assorted ménage of Tablas and Nazaria—make prosperity impossible. Solita, Anatolio Gordon, and Salvador Monsalud, on the other hand, find domestic life more rewarding than empty national disputes; the happiness of the hard-working and sober Benigno Cordero, who prospers even under Fernando's rule, is exemplary. Cultivation of private life does not, however, imply selfishness; Salvador Monsalud and Solita willingly risk their lives to care for the less fortunate.

Galdós's Approach to History

In the second series of *episodios*, Galdós treats the history of Spain between 1813, when the French fled Spain, and July 1834, when the friars were murdered and the Carlist War broke out. Far fewer historical events and characters are presented than in the first series. Furthermore, history for Galdós in the second series is above all politics. Galdós traces, from a markedly liberal viewpoint, the formation of the absolutist creed, the beginning of the fratricidal struggle between the "two Spains," the corrupt rule of Fernando (1814–1820), mob action and governmental incompetence during the *trienio*, the savagery of the absolutist reaction of 1824, the absolutist conspiracies from 1827 onward, the conflict surrounding the revocation of the Pragmatic Sanction, and the opening skirmishes of the Carlist War. Historical figures are presented in terms of political caricature: Fernando VII is a cowardly hypocrite; his brother Carlos is a simpleton; Riego is a poltroon.

In an attempt to justify the diminished role of historically important figures in the second series, Galdós declares that "history" is not only to be sought in battles and the deeds of great men but also in "la vida interna," in the slow movement of society, in the actions of those who have left no memory behind them (*El equipaje del rey José*, 1:1205). Galdós in the second series focuses on representative, rather than on "historical," figures: Salvador Monsalud, who develops from naive soldier of the French occupying forces to romantic, liberal conspirator, the arch-trimmer Juan Bragas (Pipaón), the simple-minded liberal shopkeeper Benigno Cordero, and Soledad Gil de la Cuadra, the model of feminine abnegation and compassion. All are affected by national turmoil. Spanish ideological divisions lead to Monsalud's exile, his estrangement from his half-brother Carlos Navarro, the deaths of Urbano Gil de la Cuadra and Patricio Sarmiento, the imprisonment of Benigno Cordero, the delay in the marriage of Cordero and Solita. Novelistic characters also contribute to "history," either by reacting to situations or by attempting to control events.

The representational quality of characters is reinforced by symbolic names. Felicísimo Carnicero, Carlos Navarro, and Fernando Garrote are Carlist conspirators; the self-centered *Generosa* is the soul of the *moderado* party; the pedestrian and vulgar Juan Bragas is throughout the century a successful bureaucrat; the

Corderos represent the rising commercial classes, enthusiastically, if ingenuously, devoted to the *progresista* cause; and the ironically named Salvador Monsalud represents the always delayed hope of national redemption. The plight of Spain is symbolized in Monsalud's situation: illegitimate and deprived of paternal guidance, Monsalud, like Gabriel Araceli before him, must make his way without help from the past; alienated from his half-brother by sexual rivalry and by political ideology, he attempts unsuccessfully to heal fratricidal, and hence national, divisions. (It is, of course, a mark of Galdós's bias that Carlos Navarro alone bears responsibility for the continuance of the enmity.)

The flight from "history" into "novel" is apparent in the at times deliberate mystification of the reader,²² in the tendency to caricature and nightmare, and in the melodramatic abuse of symbolism and coincidence. Above all, the constant recourse to the situations and characterization of the adventure novel reduces "history" to chance, to an uncertain struggle between the heroic and the craven. Monsalud, indeed, afflicted with romantic spleen, favors chance rather than planning. (See *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, 2:705.) On one occasion, Galdós, preferring to describe the exemplary death of the fictional Sarmiento rather than the ignominious end of the coward Riego, claims, anticipating the fantastic histories of *Confusio* in the fourth series of *episodios*, that "fiction" offers a more useful and patriotic example to humanity than "history" itself.²³ Furthermore, the suggestion of literature, and thus of fiction within fiction, is everywhere apparent: Monsalud not only behaves as a romantic but also owes much of his ideology to Larra; Cordero's courtship of Solita has overtones of Moratín's *El sí de las niñas*; Carlos Navarro's madness resembles that of Don Quixote and thus suggests national, as well as individual, sickness.

22. For example, the refusal to identify the woman for whom Monsalud abandons the *Cortes* in *7 de julio* and the delay in naming the *numantinos* in *Los apostólicos*.

23. "La ficción verosímil ajustada a la realidad documentada puede ser, en ciertos casos, más histórica y, seguramente, es más patriótica que la Historia misma" (Plausible fiction, adjusted to documented reality, can in certain cases be more historical, and is surely more patriotic, than History itself; *El terror de 1824*, 2:390). The claim, if we discount the need for propaganda, is patently nonsensical.

The abandonment of the first-person narrative, which had limited the narratorial range of the first series of *episodios*, also brings the second series closer to the appearance of “fiction” than was possible in the purported *memorias* of Gabriel Araceli. The omniscient third-person narrator follows the adventures and thoughts of a variety of characters and can judge both fictional and historical characters without necessity of defining narratorial perspective. The first-person narrative is in any case not entirely abandoned: much of *Memorias de un cortesano de 1815* and of *La segunda casaca* are the supposed *memorias* of the self-seeking Bragas; much of *Los cien mil hijos de San Luis* are the *memorias* of Jenara.

Galdós’s second prologue to the illustrated edition of the *episodios nacionales* (1885) throws some light on his historical preparation for the novels. Galdós defines the *episodios*, not as the narration of campaigns and the deeds of royalty, but rather as the reproduction of “el vivir, el sentir y hasta el respirar de la gente” (the life, the feeling, and even the breath of the people).²⁴ Acknowledging the difficulty of documenting private life in the past, Galdós observes that Spaniards have changed little; their traits—as also their errors—are to be observed in Spaniards of today.²⁵ Galdós’s correspondence with Mesonero Romanos between 1876 and 1879 further indicates the somewhat cursory nature of his research into the historical matter of the *episodios*. Galdós sought details of “la persona y carácter y fisonomía” of various historical figures,²⁶ that is, information that would assist novelistic presentation rather than historical understanding. Discussing the composition of *Los apóstolicos*, Galdós confesses the part of the

24. Shoemaker, *Prólogos*, 57.

25. “Todos los disparates que hacemos hoy los hemos hecho antes en mayor grado” (All the absurdities that we perform today, we have committed before in greater degree; *ibid.*, 56). “En los tipos presentados en las dos series y que pasaron de quinientos, traté de buscar la configuración, los rasgos y aun los mohines de la fisonomía nacional, mirando mucho los semblantes de hoy para aprender en ellos la verdad de los pasados. Y la diferencia entre unos y otros, o no existe o es muy débil” (In the types presented in the two series and that exceed 500, I tried to seek the configuration, traits, and even the grimaces of the national physiognomy, looking at the faces of today to discover in them the truth of earlier ones. And the difference between them either does not exist or is very feeble; *ibid.*, 58-59).

26. Eulogio Varela Hervías, *Cartas de Pérez Galdós a Mesonero Romanos*, 22

imagination in remedying the lack of historical fact: "En lo restante, la falta casi absoluta de datos y noticias ha sido causa de que el libro esté bastante desmedrado en punto a hechos históricos. He tenido que suplir esta falta con la invención, la cual sabe Dios cómo habrá salido. . . sin adquirir noticia alguna de lo de la Granja, de modo que esta parte del libro la he desempeñado a ciegas, sólo ayudado de la imaginación y de lo poquísimo que la historia dice" (As for the rest, the almost complete absence of facts and information explains why this book is somewhat lacking in historical events. I have tried to fill this gap with invention, God alone knows with what success . . . since I had no information on the La Granja affair, I wrote this part of the book blindly, aided only by my imagination and by the tiny amount of detail provided by history).²⁷

Even if we discount Galdós's need to placate Mesonero Romanos, whose marked annoyance at the inclusion of treatment of the romantics in *Los apostólicos* would be reason enough for Galdós to downplay the importance of historical matter in the *episodios*, Galdós's historical research was nevertheless both hasty and superficial. Galdós's claim to present "la vida interna" is hardly accomplished. The *episodios* still concentrate on "official history" but—given the skimpiness of Galdós's research and his corresponding vulnerability to attack from historians—at a remove. He thus treats the looting of the baggage train after the Battle of Vitoria and not the battle itself, the scheming of the masons of Madrid rather than Riego's rising, and the postmaster Campos about whom, as he wrote to Mesonero, nothing is known. The result is fiction masquerading as history, a narrative that is highly colored, dramatic, impressionistic, and politicized, and that focuses on a few scenes, or "episodes," from Spain's past.

Salvador Monsalud

The characters of the second series of *episodios* are conceived above all as moral entities, as exemplifying the sickness of the Spanish soul. Whereas in the first series such egotists as Lord Gray, Candiola, Nomdedeu, and Mosén Antón selfishly divorce themselves from the national enterprise, in the second series both

27. *Ibid.*, 51.

individual and collectivity are diseased. Fernando Garrote, Carlos Navarro, Andrea Campos, Jenara de Baraona, Urbano Gil de la Cuadra, *Tilín*, and Salvador Monsalud suffer from a “romantic” sickness. Totally self-centered, emotionally unbalanced to the point of madness, undisciplined, in love with death, they are creatures of disorder; their unbridled passions destroy both individual and society. Solita Gil de la Cuadra, on the other hand, exemplifies selfless devotion, optimism, dignity, the acceptance of reality; it is she who will gently guide Monsalud to tranquillity and the happiness of domestic life.

Salvador Monsalud is a complex, even incoherent, figure. Certain of his features are those of Galdós; he is “algo tímido y muy circunspecto” and, Galdós bitterly adds, “lo cual no resultaba útil en este siglo, ni aun cuando principiaba” (which was of no use in this century, even at the beginning; *El equipaje del rey José*, 2:1192). He is greatly interested in women, impractical, and poetic. Later, he is given traits that would befit the historical novelist: “El tenía de historiógrafo el discernimiento que clasifica y juzga los hechos, y del poeta la fantasía que los agranda y embellece; también tenía la vista larga y penetrante del profeta” (He had of the historian the discernment that classifies and judges deeds, and of the poet the fantasy that magnifies and embellishes them; he also had the far, penetrating vision of the prophet; *Un voluntario realista*, 2:565).

Above all, Monsalud is a hero, rising—despite his lowly social position—above the mediocrities who surround him. He passes rapidly from the timid, naive soldier of the French of 1813 to the powerful conspirator of 1819, whose spies penetrate all Madrid; by 1820, he is a controlling figure in the masonic lodges. An adventurer, Monsalud rescues from prison Urbano Gil de la Cuadra; in *Un voluntario realista*, charged with an important reconnaissance mission by the liberal *emigrados*, he is a man of resources, curiously akin, indeed, to Baroja’s Aviraneta. Fascinating to women, he possesses qualities of intelligence, strength, superiority, and power (*La segunda casaca*, 2:47). Far-sighted and lucid, he despises liberal hypocrisy and incompetence, hates absolutism, and foresees the need for a total revolution, for which Spain is not yet ready.

There is also, however, a dark “romantic” side to Monsalud’s

character. Tormented by jealousy, conscious of his own superiority, perpetually dissatisfied, he bitterly laments his role of “outsider”: “Quiero ser como los demás y no puedo. En todas partes soy una excepción” (I wish to be like the rest and I cannot. Everywhere I am an exception; *El Grande Oriente*, 2:157). Violent, desperately unhappy, compulsively attaching himself to unworthy women, extravagant in language and actions, he reveals a monstrous and destructive egotism. He finds within himself, indeed, the defects of his compatriots: “alborotador, cabecilla, intrigante, aventurero y hasta un poco charlatán” (troublemaker, petty leader, intriguer, adventurer, and even something of a charlatan; *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos*, 2:705).

It is only by transcending self and renouncing romantic excess that Monsalud, and by analogy Spain, can take the first steps to emotional health. Monsalud now serves others: he generously protects Solita and her father; he strives to bring his half-brother to reconciliation; he chooses the happiness of marriage, rather than the degradation of romantic passion.

Chapter 6

Conclusion



In the first two series of *episodios nacionales*, Galdós offers a starkly pessimistic vision of a nation teeming with beggars, rogues, religious fanatics, bestial mobs, degenerate aristocrats, political opportunists, corrupt clerics, undisciplined soldiers, demented revolutionaries, hypocritical *moderados*, naive *progresistas*, and *guerrilleros* who represent a throwback to more primitive times. Galdós seeks in the past, not so much the chain of cause and effect leading to Spain's present state, but rather examples of the same moral failings and erroneous behavior that he finds in his contemporaries: "Todos los disparates que hacemos hoy los hemos hecho antes en mayor grado" (All the absurdities that we commit today, we have done before to a greater degree).¹ Dominating Galdós's thought is the inability of the Revolution of 1868 to establish in Spain stable liberal institutions; he thus inveighs time and time again against those elements in Spanish life that he considers most responsible for past and present disorder: the violence of an ignorant mob, the savagery of the Carlists, and the ingenuousness and self-seeking of Spain's liberals. Above all, Galdós attacks the moral and intellectual defects of his compatriots: demagoguery, indiscipline, fatuousness, irrationality, idleness, despotism, envy, theatricality, and the taking of form for substance. Spaniards suffer from selfishness (*egoísmo*) and an inability to perceive reality: thus, ideology and behavior are separate; there is no connection between Christianity and officially proclaimed "religion," nor between liberal pretensions and the petty envies and attempts at self-aggrandizement of Spanish reformers.

The vivid presentation of Spanish shortcomings at times obscures the positive elements of Galdós's teaching. For Galdós, the solution to Spain's ills is to be sought neither in abrupt change

1. William H. Shoemaker, *Los Prólogos de Galdós*, 56.

nor in ideology, which, he claims, always conceals a personal motivation. His remedies are a mixture of those of classical nineteenth-century liberalism (careful thought, the acceptance of personal responsibility, the preservation and strengthening of social order) and a compassionate form of Christianity. No true revolution is possible until Spaniards learn mutual respect, perseverance, the avoidance of excess, industriousness, self-control, and individual duty.

An important component of Galdós's teaching in the *episodios* is the call to reason, to critical thought. The members of a mob, the masonic conspirators, the Carlist *guerrilleros*, and the proletarian household of *Un faccioso más y unos frailes menos* can, with their lack of rationality, only destroy. Throughout the *episodios*, Araceli, Monsalud, Inés, the knife grinder Pacorro Chinitas, Amaranta, the mature Jenara, and others assume at times the exemplary role of *raisonneurs*, as they discuss and judge—rather than merely react to—the course of individual and national history. Gabriel Araceli, with his constant ironic undercutting of his own statements, obliges the reader to distance himself, to discriminate between the truth and falsehood of his claims. Similarly, the divorce between Spanish reality and Spanish political rhetoric, whether absolutist or liberal, forces the reader to adopt an independent, critical position. Even two novels that ostensibly demonstrate Spanish heroism—*Trafalgar* and *Zaragoza*—have as undercurrent the insistent questioning of the utility of Spanish sacrifice.

Thought must also be accompanied by effort. The freedom of the liberal state, like the maturity of an individual, is not given but must be achieved. Instant, that is, revolutionary, solutions to national and personal problems are rejected. As Inés and Solita teach, there are no shortcuts to happiness and prosperity; we must accept our human limitations and, like the nation, merit our independence by unceasing endeavor. Much time is needed, both Araceli and Monsalud recognize, before national customs and habits of mind will change. Nevertheless, constant effort will bring success, as Araceli and Monsalud demonstrate as they learn to take responsibility for themselves and others. Even Benigno Cordero, a man of mediocre intellect, with perseverance attains prosperity and domestic happiness. A correct attitude is essential:

thus, Santorcaz, who gives way to despair and resentment, accomplishes nothing; Araceli, Inés, Solita, and Benigno Cordero, on the other hand, despite occasional backslidings, have a basic cheerfulness and optimism that serve them well.

The social order, essential for the development of the individual and preservation of the nation, must be defended. Throughout the *episodios*, Galdós approvingly presents examples of forceful leadership, scorns weak rulers, and attacks elements of disorder such as the mob and Carlist *guerrilleros*. Those who disturb the social order, like Lord Gray, Mosén Antón, Santorcaz, the revolutionaries with their bizarre speech, are to be pitied, not emulated; they are suffering from a form of madness and must be healed or destroyed. Inés and Solita preserve the values of society; thus, Inés refuses to elope with Araceli, knowing that defiance of societal rules will lead only to future unhappiness. Araceli, accepting responsibility not only for himself but also for others, defends society by challenging and killing Lord Gray. Nation and individuals are not inherently strong; they often need protection if they are to be guided to self-reliance. Thus, Spain needs leaders to prevent anarchy; Santorcaz depends on Inés to achieve sanity and peace; Monsalud, in his weakness, implores his mother and Solita to prevent his elopement with Jenara. In his defense of the fundamental values of society, however, Galdós is no supporter of the status quo. Numerous barriers that prevent the development of individual or nation must be removed: the rights of primogeniture, aristocratic privilege, repressive education, whether in the home or convent, the stranglehold of the Church on marriage, arbitrary or ineffective government, the ignorance and random violence that pervade the lower and rural classes of Spain.

As Francisco Pérez Gutiérrez has indicated, Galdós's moral teaching is Christian in its concern for others. The Spanish Church is condemned for its lack of spirituality and compassion, its encouragement of superstition, its repressive attitudes that lead to mania or sterile revolt, its venality, its meddling in politics, its warrior priests, the squabbling of religious orders. The other deviation from the norm of Christian love, the imbecilic anticlericalism of Gallardo and the masonic conspirators, is equally condemned. Throughout the *episodios*, there is reference to a higher moral law, expressed in the teaching and behavior of Inés and Solita and based on a compassion and a sacrifice of self that

involve a heightening, and not a loss, of personality. Examples of the concern for others are many: Araceli and Inés protect Asunción; Solita cares for Sarmiento; Monsalud attempts to save his brother. Exemplary also is Inés's guidance of Santorcaz to a holy death, which demands his acceptance of reason and thus renunciation of revolutionary gibberish, abandonment of hatred and pride, and reconciliation with those he has offended. By way of contrast, those who give way to selfish passion—Lord Gray, Mosén Antón, Jenara de Baraona, Pepet Armengol, the Monsalud of romantic despair—bring only ruin on themselves and others.

An earlier generation of critics praised the *episodios* above all for their accurate or "realistic" rendering of history. Galdós's presentation of historical events and characters is, however, superficial and heavily biased. The history is simplified, narrowly focused, presented at a high emotional level, and designed to appeal to the imagination rather than to give any understanding of the complexity of events or issues involved; no serious historian would, I suspect, consult the first two series of *episodios* for insights into Spanish history of the period 1805 to 1834. Galdós's preparation for the *episodios* was cursory: he read a limited number of historical works; although he frequently did not wait for a reply, he appealed to Mesonero and others for details of physiognomy and dress sufficient to provide local color and the appearance of historical accuracy. Despite Galdós's theoretical defense of "la vida interna," the history of the *episodios* is linked to that of conventional nineteenth-century histories: battles, revolutions, the debates in the *Cortes*, the deeds of monarchs. Galdós's treatment of history is colorful, impressionistic, episodic, and markedly politicized. The caricature portraits of Riego, Fernando VII, the absolutists, and the masons would strain the credulity of even the most partisan of readers; similarly, the vision of a Spain divided between the forces of madness and those of enlightenment is dramatic and literary, rather than a "realistic" evocation of a historical moment. Furthermore, the characters of the *episodios* are placed in a moral, rather than historical, universe; for this reason, Araceli and Monsalud often seem strangely detached from the Spain in which they live.

Rather than as novels of historical *vulgarización*, the *episodios*

should be treated above all as highly creative works of the imagination. Galdós's range in the *episodios* is considerable. There are frequent changes of scene: both geographical (Cádiz, Madrid, Zaragoza, Gerona, Sevilla, Salamanca, the Carlist North, France, Catalonia) and social (the courts of France and Spain, bourgeois households, a convent, aristocratic salons, rogues' taverns, the stage, teeming cities, a medieval countryside). Characters are drawn from widely different social classes and origins: actors, peasants, countesses, *pícaros*, monarchs, politicians, sailors, army officers, clerics, nuns, farmers, Frenchmen, Englishmen, prostitutes, shopkeepers, the dregs of the proletariat. The mood varies greatly from one *episodio* to another: there are novels of historical re-creation (*Trafalgar*), of claustrophobic narrowness (*Zaragoza* and *Gerona*), of intrigue (*La corte de Carlos IV*), of rogues (*Napoleón en Chamartín*, *Cádiz*), of thwarted lovers (*Zaragoza*), of high adventure and romance (*Juan Martín el empecinado*, *La batalla de los Arapiles*, *Un voluntario realista*), of farce (*Memorias de un cortesano de 1815*), of savagery (*El Terror de 1824*), of conspiracy (*La segunda casaca*).

The characters of the *episodios* vary enormously in temperament. There are those who can to a large extent control their situations: the reasonable, like Padre Gracián, Araceli, and, on occasions, Monsalud and Jenara; the virtuous, like Inés, Solita, and Benigno Cordero; Araceli as the good-humored narrator; Bragas the opportunistic trimmer; the aristocratic intriguers of *La corte de Carlos IV*; and the rogues of *Napoleón en Chamartín* and *Cádiz*. But Galdós is above all drawn to those who are enslaved by a passion or mania: the obsessed defenders of Zaragoza and Gerona, the repressed religious fanatic Juan de Dios, the rancorous Santorcaz, the quixotic Santiago Fernández, the dangerous romantic Lord Gray, the envious Mosén Antón, the misers Mauro Requejo and Doña Restituta, the demented Sarmiento and Carlos Navarro, the suicidal Pepet Armengol, the passionate Andrea Campos. Even apparently "balanced" characters pass with ease into insanity: Gabriel Araceli spits at the heavens (*Cádiz*) and maniacally bites the earth and howls (*La batalla de los Arapiles*); Inés has attempted suicide; Jenara lashes trees and is murderously vengeful in her thwarted passion (*Los cien mil hijos de San Luis*); the "outsider" Monsalud is cruel and violent, the prey to nightmares and suicidal despair (*El Grande Oriente*).

Although Galdós etches with considerable skill scenes of social interaction—the intrigues of aristocrats and actors in *La corte de Carlos IV*, the meeting of the *Cortes* in *Cádiz*, the farcical plotting of the absolutists in *Memorias de un cortesano de 1815*—he is above all attracted to situations of narrow focus, even nightmare: the sieges that produce paranoia, the frequent scenes of imprisonment and escape, the headlong journey to rescue Inés (*Juan Martín el empecinado*), the savagery of the mob and inquisitors (*El terror de 1824*), the violent and lonely passions of Jenara, Andrea Campos, and Monsalud, the insane medieval world of the Carlists, the dark conspiracies of the absolutists (*Los apóstólicos*), and the melodramatic struggle between Monsalud and his half-brother. Characters also are often seriously distorted, at least if viewed in terms of a hypothetical “realism”: the caricature portrayals of those for whom Galdós feels political aversion (Fernando VII, Riego, the Carlists), the grotesque assimilation of people to objects (*El terror de 1824*), the symbolism of names and events that prevents any illusion of “reality,” and the constant overloading of character and situation. Thus, Carlos Navarro and Salvador Monsalud are not only psychologically motivated characters but also are symbols of a national fratricidal struggle; both Benigno Cordero and the nation await a signature in *Los apóstólicos*.

The overloading of events and characters, the caricatures, the symbolic names, and the quite obviously biased vision of history immediately indicate that we are reading fiction, not historical recreation. As much as to the history of nineteenth-century Spain, the *episodios* refer us to a world of literature: the drama within a drama and the *Arabian Nights* in *La corte de Carlos IV*; Martínez de la Rosa and Shakespeare in *Zaragoza*; the picaresque, Ramón de la Cruz, and the *costumbristas* in *Napoleón en Chamartín* and *Cádiz*; the *folletín* throughout the first series; exotic romanticism in *Cádiz* and *La batalla de los Arapiles*; the melodrama, in the fratricidal conflict of the second series; Larra in *El equipaje del rey José*; Miñano in *Memorias de un cortesano de 1815*; Moratín in the courtship of Benigno Cordero, who patterns his life on the works of Rousseau and who is himself named, ironically, after a character in Fernán Caballero's *Elia*; romantic rebellion in the all-devouring passions of Jenara, Andrea Campos, and Monsalud, who, at times, takes on the characteristics of a Balzacian

hero. Throughout there is the all-pervasive influence of Cervantes in the humor and shifting perspective of the "narrator" Gabriel Araceli, in the quixotic Santiago Fernández, in the expurgation scene in *Napoleón en Chamartín*, in the Conde de Montguyon with his false, chivalric vision of Spain, and in the combination of madness and sanity in Sarmiento and Carlos Navarro.

The literary nature of the *episodios* extends beyond our recognition of situations and characters from other fictional works. There is, for example, an ironic aspect to the first series that has escaped the attention of previous critics. In *La corte de Carlos IV* we enter a world of mirrors, as "life" (the play within the play, the court worthy of Haroun-al-Raschid), itself a fiction created by Galdós, interacts with "literature" to create a mystery that we must penetrate to reach a "reality" that, nevertheless, is also born of Galdós's imagination. Throughout the first series, there is a raveling and unraveling, a series of ironic juxtapositions that serve to alert the reader against a too uncritical acceptance of what is presented to him. Thus, Gabriel's protestations of honor in *La corte de Carlos IV* are followed by examples of his manipulations; the letter substitution device of this novel is repeated in *El 19 de marzo y el 2 de mayo*, as Araceli gives Juan de Dios's letter to Doña Restituta. The attack on romantic attitudes in *Cádiz* is accompanied by Gabriel's extravagant posturing; Mosén Antón's proud "Me basto y me sobro" becomes Araceli's own affirmation in *La batalla de los Arapiles*. Throughout, the narrator, Gabriel Araceli, draws our attention to the act of narration, and thus away from "history," through his discussions with the reader, through the obvious pastiches of the styles of the *costumbristas* and the *folletín*, through the constant Cervantine overtones, through the deliberate overwriting, through the curious attribution of botanical names to characters (*Trafalgar*), and through the casting of doubt on the existence of a character (Miss Fly), a procedure that destroys all possibility of verisimilitude in supposedly "historical" *memorias* but that transports us instead into a realm of the imagination.² The ending to the first series is also ironic, belonging to

2. A similar play of mirrors occurs in *El terror de 1824*, when Galdós declares his preference for the description of the "fictional"—and markedly theatrical—execution of Sarmiento to that of the cowardly "historical" Riego, who nevertheless is equally a creation of Galdós.

“romance” rather than to “history,” as Gabriel, who supposedly has established his moral worth, obtains a tongue-in-cheek “reward” in marriage to the long-lost daughter of the very nobility that he had earlier castigated for its futility. The play of mirrors, the reference to an outside world that is nonetheless fiction, is again evident in the introduction in the *episodios* of characters from the nonepisodic works of Galdós (*La Fontana de Oro*, *El audaz*, *La desheredada*, *Doña Perfecta*).

In his moral teaching and in his analysis of Spanish shortcomings, Galdós is consistent throughout his career; his ideology—liberal, authoritarian, pessimistic about the Spanish present—is the same in the articles in the *Revista de España*, in the first two series of *episodios nacionales*, in the political articles of *Cronicón* (1883–1890), and in the *episodios* written in 1898 and later years. The darker tones of the second series of *episodios* do not, I believe, represent any change in Galdós’s vision of Spain, but merely Galdós’s desire to treat a different type of protagonist, the brooding Monsalud rather than the jaunty Araceli. With a pessimism no doubt born of Spanish political failures following the Revolution of 1868, Galdós portrays Spanish defects with somewhat more force than possible remedies. At times, the teaching of the *episodios* is paradoxical. Thus, work is extolled, but we never see Araceli at his trade of army officer; heroism is enthusiastically presented, but Galdós prefers prudence. Curious also is Galdós’s nostalgia for simple values, his attribution of wisdom to the young and inexperienced like Inés and Solita, while more forceful women like Miss Fly, Andrea Campos, and Jenara de Baraona are dismissed as eccentric, neurotic, or immoral.

The defects—the repetitious nature of the teaching, Gabriel’s ubiquity, the somewhat implausible changes of character in Monsalud and Jenara, the confusion that results from reading too many *episodios* at once—noted by those critics who have taken as their basis of study an entire series of *episodios* are less apparent if the unit of investigation is the individual novel. Galdós impresses with his versatility, his creative energy, his sense of irony, his ability to switch from scenes of humor to those of the blackest horror, his constant slipping from one layer to another, whether of literature (the play of mirrors) or of character (the obsessed worlds of the insane). The same speculative conclusions that I

proposed in my earlier study of the later *episodios* could, I venture to suggest, be applied to the earlier *episodios*. There is in Galdós a creative tension between two forces: the madness, corruption, nightmare, and melodrama that he so frequently evokes in his novels; and the rationality, compassion, and good humor with which he struggles against the demons existing within himself and his compatriots.

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