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**THE MODERNIST GENERATION OF 1898: FAILURES OF
MODERNITY IN THE HISTORICAL IMAGINATION OF
UNAMUNO, VALLE-INCLAN, AND BAROJA**

A Dissertation in
Spanish
by
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ABSTRACT

This dissertation project begins with a coincidence and a question. The coincidence is the fact that the three greatest writers of the Spanish *fin de siglo* wrote historical narratives on the same event (the second Carlist war of 1872-1876). Moreover, these novels were written in the short time span between 1897, when Unamuno published his first novel, *Paz en la guerra*, and 1909, when Valle-Inclán finished his trilogy of *La guerra carlista* and Pío Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero* appeared in bookstores. Surprisingly, each delved into a past confrontation which, at first sight, might seem completely alien to the tensions and dynamics of the authors' own time. The question, obviously enough, is why.

My thesis contends that Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja's novels on the second Carlist war articulate a critique of their contemporary society through an interpretation of this historical event. This conflict meant for them the problematization of the tensions between tradition and modernity that also plagued them at the turn of the century. In addition, their view on this historical time was mediated by an intense feeling of failure. Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja revisited Carlism because this movement had a metonymical relationship with the failure of the Liberal revolution of 1868 and, consequently, with the failure of Spanish modernity itself. Furthermore, their take on the historical novel was mediated by the parodic use of the epic, thus reinforcing the notion of failure at a structural level. Through the subversion of the epic, these writers related to a past which was constantly mythified by the official historical and political discourse.

In sum, this dissertation opens up the field of *Edad de plata* (1900-1936) through the study of an underanalyzed literary corpus, locating in the historical imagination of the Spanish turn-of-the-century an investigative field to analyze the origins of Spain's conflicted relationship with modernization, and the inherent tensions that the experience of modernity entailed.

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There is an inherent tackiness in all acknowledgements sections. Much like the clichéd and premeditated speeches which are perpetrated every year during the Oscar award ceremony, an acknowledgements section of a doctoral dissertation is always, inevitably, a narcissistic example of that aesthetic aberration Spaniards have labeled with a wonderful word: *cursi*. So, let us infuse this section with *cursilería* and enjoy our two minutes of glory.

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Introduction: Modernity, Modernism, and the Historical Imagination of the *Fin de Siglo* Generation

The noventayochistas gave the historical novel a very special character. Prompted by present upheavals, they center their interest on wars that had ravaged the country several decades before . . . They have lost confidence in any government or political party. Their skepticism extends even beyond their own time: they see the basis for present-day malaise in 19th century's ill-directed liberalism.

Biruté Ciplijauskaitė, "The noventayochistas and the Carlist war." (265)

Carlism has customarily been explained as originating from an obscure dynastic dispute at the end of Fernando VII's reign. According to this interpretation, the Carlist movement was the consequence of the opposition to Isabel II as the heir to the Spanish throne, on the grounds that the traditional agnatic succession prohibited the rule of a woman if there was a male candidate. Carlos María Isidro, Fernando's brother, was such a candidate, and his followers came to be known as "Carlistas" (followers of Carlos, literally). Recent historians, however, reject the assumption that Carlism began in 1833, with the death of the monarch and the start of the first war, and prefer to locate its origins before the actual conflagration took place. Taking 1833 as the starting point of Carlism implies, moreover, the interpretation of this movement as a spontaneous reaction to a dynastic struggle. Rejecting this notion, recent scholars have suggested that the socio-historical origins of Carlism must be located in the opposition to the

liberal government of the *Trienio liberal* (that is, the three democratic years) of 1820-1823. This is the position of, among others, Walther L. Bernecke (39) and Jordi Canal (*Carlismo* 30-31), two prominent historians who have studied this phenomenon. There is, however, another possible starting date for Carlism: the Napoleonic invasion of Spain in 1808.

Following on Javier Herrero's *Los orígenes del pensamiento reaccionario español* (1971), I would argue that, from an ideological standpoint, Carlism originated as an absolutist reaction to the Enlightenment and the French Revolution. More specifically, Carlism was the direct consequence of the radical opposition to the notion of popular sovereignty, as expressed in articles 2 and 3 of the 1812 Constitution, in the context of the *Cortes de Cádiz*. In this sense, traditionalist works like friar Fernando de Zeballos's *La falsa filosofía* (1775-76), against the French *philosophes*, or friar Rafael de Vélez's *Preservativo contra la irreligión* (1812) and *Apología del altar y el trono* (1818), articulate the reactionary equation of religion, nationalism, and anti-liberalism as the ideological foundation of Carlism (Herrero 294).

The French invasion of the Iberian Peninsula in 1808 generated a void of power. The Spanish royal family was in exile in Bayonne, France, where Napoleon forced its members to sign an official rejection to their ruling rights and accept the new monarchy of Joseph Bonaparte, Napoleon's brother, as the legitimate king of Spain. The staunch opposition to Joseph's rule in the country was motivated by two radically opposed positions that converged in the so-called War of Independence of 1808-1814 against the French armies. On the one hand,

absolutist thinkers and the people at large opposed the French rule in the name of the legitimate Spanish monarch, Fernando VII.¹ On the other hand, the liberal opposition to Fernando VII saw, in the fight against the invading army, a golden opportunity to articulate the notion of national sovereignty. In this sense, the liberal elites not only fought against the new French monarchy, but against *Ancien Régime* itself (Bernecker 13).

These two currents were represented in the *Cortes de Cádiz* (1810-1814), the gathering of the Spanish nation's representatives that organized themselves in Provincial Juntas and sent delegates to the town of Cádiz, the southernmost city of Spain, free of French presence due to the control of the Cádiz Gulf and the Strait of Gibraltar by the English navy. The role of these *Cortes* in national history is of a paramount importance: they promulgated the first democratic Spanish Constitution in 1812.² Taking as an example the French Constitution of 1791, the doctrinal bases of the new Constitution were the theory of the Social Contract by Rousseau, and Montesquieu's ideas on the separation of powers. Additionally, the

¹ The nickname of this monarch was "El deseado" (the loved one). Although liberal historians tried to label him as "el rey felon" (the treacherous king), the truth is that the popular classes of the country regarded him as the legitimate monarch, and greeted him enthusiastically at his return to Spain, chanting "Vivan las cadenas!" (Long live the handcuffs!).

² Purely speaking, the 1812 text was not the first Spanish Constitution. The so-called Bayonne Constitution of 1808, written by Spanish enlightened thinkers (*afrancesados*) and Joseph Bonaparte as a political program for the government of Spain, was the first one. Most historians, however, regard it as a "carta otorgada," that is a royal statute, and do not consider it a veritable Constitution.

executive power was greatly limited by a dominant legislative power. In many ways, the 1812 Constitution promoted an advanced society and instituted a veritable Constitutional Monarchy (Bernacker 17-18).

Articles 2 and 3, as mentioned above, elaborate the concept of national sovereignty in clear terms. Article 2 reads as follows: “La nación española es libre e independiente y no puede ser patrimonio de ninguna familia ni persona.” Article 3 states that “[L]a soberanía reside esencialmente en la nación y por lo mismo pertenece a ésta exclusivamente el derecho de establecer sus leyes fundamentales” (qtd. in Junco, *Mater* 132).³ The promulgation of this Constitution infuriated the most reactionary members of the *Cortes*, like friar Rafael de Vélez, for example, who—among others—signed a document known as the *Manifiesto de los Persas*. This text was intended as an open letter to Fernando VII, asking for the immediate prohibition of the new Constitution and the full restoration of Absolutism (Herrero 338-39). The Spanish monarch, who returned to Spain while the last French troops crossed the Pyrenees, did not waste a minute in doing just that. In 1814, Spain turned the clock back to the *Ancien Régime* and a fierce political repression ensued, forcing many Spanish liberals to flee the country or face incarceration and death.⁴

³ The use of the adjective “esencialmente” in this article is absolutely crucial to define popular sovereignty. Absolutist members of the *Cortes* knew that well, and fought to change that article for “originariamente,” which maintained the sovereignty in the hands of the monarch. For a compelling description of these linguistic subtleties consult Junco, *Mater* 131-34.

⁴ One of these exiles was Jose María Blanco-White, a capital figure in the Spanish Enlightenment. Blanco-White left Spain during the Napoleonic invasion, in 1810, never

The spirit of the *Cortes de Cádiz*, nevertheless, never faded away completely. Throughout the nineteenth century several liberal attempts were made to restore the freedoms of the 1812 Constitution. Most failed, but in 1820 a young General by the name of Rafael de Riego launched a *coup d'état* that inaugurated the *Trienio liberal*, promulgating again the Constitution of 1812. The absolutist opposition was relentless; Fernando VII and his followers conspired to end the new regime and, together with the new absolutist European climate, their machinations ended successfully in the invasion of the *Hundred Thousand Sons of Saint Louis* in Spain.⁵ Nevertheless, the liberal transition had proved that a return to the traditional bases of the *Ancien Régime* was counterproductive. Fernando VII steadily initiated a series of political and economic reforms. These reforms disenfranchised many traditionalists who gathered around Fernando's brother, Carlos. The revoking of the Salic Law and the promulgation of Fernando's daughter, Isabel, as the heir to the throne, was the last straw for many absolutists who declared open warfare against the new queen in what was to be known as the first Carlist war (1833-1840).

Although José Carlos Clemente speaks of three Carlist wars throughout the nineteenth century (*Diccionario* 125-26), I prefer to regard only the 1833-1840 initial confrontation, and the 1872-1876 conflict as veritable civil wars. The

to return. For a study on the Absolutist political repression and the forced exile of many enlightened and pre-romantic thinkers, with an emphasis on Blanco-White, see Murphy.

⁵ This name refers to the French military troops that invaded Spain in 1823, following orders of the Holy Alliance. The Holy Alliance was an international diplomatic agreement to keep the balance of power in Europe and prevent any anti-Absolutist revolutions, in the fashion of the French Revolution.

so-called revolt of the *matiners* (i.e., early birds, in Catalan) between 1846 and 1849 has to be interpreted as just that, a local revolt centered in rural Catalonia. Since Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja dealt with the last Carlist episode, I will focus on the 1872-1876 war in the overarching context of the liberal revolution of 1868 and the ensuing *Sexenio democrático*.

Launched in Cádiz, for all its liberal resonance, the revolution of 1868 was a conspiracy against the government of Isabel II carried out by an heterogeneous alliance of politicians under the leadership of General Prim (Wilhelmsen 412). The *gloriosa* or the *septembrina*, as it came to be known, joined progressive politicians, led by Prim himself, and more conservative Liberal Unionists, under General Serrano. As Raymond Carr points out, its goal was to install a liberal constitutional monarchy, following the English model, but the myriad of internicine divisions made it impossible (2). Provisional regimes quickly followed the queen's dethronement: General Serrano's government (1868-1869, 1869 and 1874), two regencies (Serrano, 1869-1870 and Cánovas del Castillo in the winter of 1874-1875), a democratic monarchy (Amadeo I, 1871-1873), an abdication (Amadeo I, 1873), a Federal Republic (1873), a Unitarian Republic (1873), and the monarchic restoration of Isabel II's son, Alfonso XII, in 1875. Within this historical frame, the third and last Carlist war was fought (Wilhelmsen 411-12).

The war started when Carlos María de Borbón y Austria-Este (Carlos VII, in the Carlist genealogy) crossed the French-Spanish border and established his headquarters in the Navarrese town of Estella. Since the first moments, the disconnect between the leaders of this movement and the social and logistical

reality of the campaign was evident. Lacking broader support in urban regions, Carlism was mainly enclosed in the rural areas of the Basque Country and Navarre. That being the case, Carlos VII wanted to take Bilbao (the largest city in the region) for propagandistic and sentimental reasons: controlling an important city in Spain (and one of the largest sea ports in the country) would give the Carlists the international recognition and funds they desperately needed to keep their campaign; moreover, taking Bilbao would boost the confidence of the troops, and seal the war with a sense of messianic completion. Bilbao had suffered another siege during the first war, and the Carlists had been unable to enter the city, which was liberated by General Espartero during the battle of Luchana (23-24 December 1836). Taking it now would send a strong message to the Spanish government, and to the rest of Europe, about the strength and determination of the Carlist army.

This decision, as General Ollo (the Carlist officer in charge of the Bilbao siege) acknowledged in his diaries, was not in accordance with the real capabilities of his troops:

Unicamente la lealtad debida a mi rey y el imperio del deber del viejo soldado pueden hacer que contribuya a un empeño militar de esta índole. Ante la plaza se han estrellado siempre las fuerzas carlistas . . . No alcanzo todavía las grandes ventajas morales y materiales que su conquista nos puede proporcionar . . . Dicen que nuestro reconocimiento por las potencias europeas como beligerantes depende de la toma de Bilbao. Pero, aun suponiendo que los batallones vizcaínos bastasen para resistir las acometidas del ejército liberal, ¿cómo es posible que el resto de nuestras fuerzas fuese bastante para contener a los contrarios y avanzar al interior de España, cual debe ser nuestro primero y principal objetivo? (qtd. in Bullón de Mendoza 134-35)

The siege of Bilbao shows the inconsistencies and shortcomings of Carlism in the second war. Conceived, in many ways, as a re-enactment and a revenge of the first, the war of 1872-1876 lacked the broad support needed to achieve victory. From a literary standpoint, moreover, the siege of Bilbao connects two important historical narratives, and two different ways to relate to the past and the historical novel genre: Benito Pérez Galdós's *Luchana* (one of his *Episodios nacionales*) and Miguel de Unamuno's *Paz en la guerra*. Both Galdós and Unamuno dealt with the topic of the siege of Bilbao in their novels.

In order to appreciate the innovations of the *fin de siglo* writers, it is important to look at the genre of the historical novel and see how it was developed. In *The Historical Novel* (19), Georg Lukács locates its birth at the beginning of the nineteenth-century, at about the time of Napoleon's defeat (Scott's *Waverley* appeared in 1814). This genre was born out of the Gothic romance, a mixture of medieval romance and realist narrative that flourished in England between the 18th and 19th centuries.⁶ The romantic historical novel, as exemplified by Walter Scott, assumes the tradition of chivalry romances and assimilates gothic recourses like the use of nocturnal scenes and frightening settings (solitary castles, labyrinths, dungeons, etc.) (Fernández Prieto 75-76). It was a continental success, and soon afterwards, Scott imitators sprang up across Europe.

⁶ Some of the best gothic romance titles are Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764), Anne Radcliffe's *Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), Joseph Strutt's *Queenhoo-Hall* (1808) and Charles Robert Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820). For the Gothic romance in connection with the historical novel see Fernández Prieto 73 and Alonso 31.

The first Spanish translations of Scott's novels were made by political refugees in London (Fernández Prieto 96). As José-Enrique García González and Fernando Toda point out, the reasons for Scott's popularity in Spain were not different from those elsewhere. He had created a new type of novel that exalted values like chivalry and patriotism, which enjoyed a broad and enthusiastic popularity in Spain, even though sections of his novels were censored for religious reasons (58-59). In spite of the positive reception of Scott's novels in the country, Spanish Romantic historical novels are, to use Ciplijauskaitė terms, "belated and poor" in comparison with their European counterparts (*Los noventayochistas y la historia* 27). This belatedness has been explained as a consequence of Spain's lack of a bourgeois revolution (Ferrerías 31).⁷ Furthermore, not only did Spain lack a bourgeois revolution at this time, but there was an absolutist relapse under the reign of Fernando VII who, amidst a brutal ideological repression, resurrected the corpse of the Spanish Inquisition.

After Scott, the model for the genre was Leon Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869). Lukács points out that this new novel stresses popular life, rather than great heroes and events, as the real base for historical change (86). There is a pervading shift of focus, in which writers tend to emphasize the group, the

⁷ Alonso (37-38) lists some romantic historical novels. Among the most representative are Francisco Martínez de la Rosa's *Doña Isabel de Solís, reina de Granada* (1837), Eugenio de Ochoa's *El auto de fe* (1838), Serafín Estébanez Calderón's *Cristianos y moriscos* (1844), Enrique Gil Carrasco's *El señor de Bembibre* (1846), considered the best of its kind. Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda's *Guatemotzin, último emperador de Méjico* (1846), Antonio Cánovas del Castillo's *La campana de Huesca* (1852), and Francisco Navarro Villoslada's *Doña Blanca de Navarra* (1854).

collectivity, the social and economic background and the characters' psychology (Ciplijauskaitė, "Perspectiva irónica" 139). In other words, the transition from Scott's brand of historical novel to that of Tolstoy corresponds to the change from romanticism to realism in aesthetic taste. In Spain, the historical novel genre will be refashioned during the last third of the century, in the series of *Episodios nacionales* written by the greatest realist author in Spain, Benito Pérez Galdós.

Although some critics have tried to emphasize the similarities in the treatment of the historical novel by Galdós and the modernists (Gogorza Fletcher 2, Regalado 297), I concur with Jon Juaristi when he notes three basic points of divergence: the notion of history, the subject of history, and the use (or lack) of didacticism (214). Galdós's concept of history responds to a fundamental positivist outlook. For him, history is an evolutionary teleology, in which mistakes from the past can be corrected, and humankind can be improved. As a consequence, the subject of his historical narratives is the bourgeoisie. His *Episodios nacionales* are conceived as national chapters that deal with the progressive construction of the nation, in which the bourgeoisie, as the leading class, articulates all social changes. Such an interpretation of the genre clearly implies a didactic stance. Galdós writes so that his ideal reader (a liberal bourgeois male) can understand the nation's recent past, and implement social and political changes accordingly.

Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja's historical narratives, on the contrary, reject these three postulates: their notion of history is not linear, but cyclical; their subject of history is not the bourgeois, but *el pueblo*; and their didacticism, as the

Spanish phrase goes, *brilla por su ausencia*. In effect, the cyclical view of history that the *fin de siglo* generation articulated in its narratives, necessarily implies a return of literary and cultural forms of the past. This point has been studied by Biruté Cipliauskaitė and Ramón Buckley, among others. Cipliauskaitė argues that the new writers “quisieran que la historia que recrean ellos fuera como el poema épico primitivo” (*Los noventayochistas y la historia* 76). Along these lines, Ramón Buckley argues that Unamuno and Baroja did not write novels, but epic romances, because their interpretation of time as cyclical and repetitive is more akin to the temporal construction of the epic than of the novel *per se* (23-55). Agreeing with both scholars, I also wish to emphasize that the *fin de siglo* project of writing epic romances in prose with their historical narratives, hides an inherent seed of failure.

This failure must be understood in both historical and literary terms. From an historical standpoint, the fact that Spain lacked a bourgeois liberal revolution prevented the complete demise of *Ancien Régime*. As many contemporary Spanish thinkers argued, the prevalence of *caciquismo* in the political practices of *fin de siglo* was a consequence of the absence of a democratically mature civil society.⁸ Moreover, from a literary point of view, the project of writing epic romances in prose is also doomed to failure, since, according to both Lukács (*Theory of the Novel* 56-70) and Ortega (136-37), the genre of the novel is born

⁸ For a turn of the century analysis of *caciquismo*, see Joaquín Costa’s *Oligarquía y caciquismo* (1902).

out of the epic.⁹ Since the epic cannot co-exist with the modern world, these writers used the historical narrative of Carlism as a subverted epic in order to demystify the past and denounce the origins of their contemporary society as a failed achievement.

The historical subject of these writers is not, obviously, the bourgeoisie, but the collective, the *pueblo*. As José Alvarez Junco has shown, the construction of the Spanish people as an historical agent dates back to the Napoleonic invasion of the country:

Lo nuevo, a partir de la guerra antinapoleónica, fue un giro retórico: la veneración nominal hacia el pueblo como último baluarte de las libertades y los sentimientos patrios. De ahí la depresión generalizada entre las clases medias cultas en 1898, cuando llegaron las noticias de los hundimientos de las escuadras y comprobaron que el pueblo seguía yendo a los toros, como si nada hubiera ocurrido. Y todavía entonces, cuando todo parecía hundirse, Azorín, Baroja, Marquina y otros intelectuales se sumaron a un homenaje *Al pueblo* por sus sacrificios durante la guerra cubana . . . El resultado de aquella guerra fue, así, un mito autocomplaciente, centrado en un logro ya conseguido . . . Y el mito nacional se desvinculó de los cambios modernizadores, salvo entre élites liberales irreductibles, pero minoritarias y aisladas. (*Mater* 143-47)

As Junco points out, the ideological consequence of the anti-Napoleonic war of 1808-1814 was a mythified past, in which national identity was re-defined in anti-modern terms. As we will see in the following pages, the modernist group of Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja challenged this assumption in several ways.

⁹ Valle-Inclán's trilogy of *La guerra carlista* shows this aspect in very graphic terms: the space of the novels is seen as ruins, thus manifesting the impossibility of epic structures in the modern world, and defining modernity as a state of *fallen* nature. For more on this, I refer the reader to chapter 3.

Fin de siglo, the Spanish turn of the century, was a time of vast transformations and instability, as in several decades the physical and cultural landscape of the country changed dramatically. These years witnessed scientific discoveries, technological innovations, and social phenomena like never before: quantum theory, and X rays; electrification of cities, and the political consciousness of the urban masses. It was the time of the crushing defeat against the United States in the Spanish-American War of 1898, and the consequent loss of the few remnants of a transatlantic empire (Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines). It was also the time of the monarchic restoration and *turno pacífico*, a democratic sham that allowed the Progressive and Conservative parties a controlled alternation in power under the close supervision of the king: first, Alfonso XII, the son of Isabel II—the queen who had been expelled from the country at the start of the 1868 revolution—then María Cristina, as queen regent, and finally Alfonso XIII, who was crowned king in 1902.¹⁰

This dissertation project begins with a coincidence and a question. The coincidence is the fact that the three greatest writers of the Spanish *fin de siglo* wrote historical narratives on the same event (the second Carlist war of 1872-1876). Moreover, these novels were written in the short time span between 1897,

¹⁰ Most scholars date the birth of the Spanish modern novel to 1902, with the publication of Miguel de Unamuno's *Amor y pedagogía*, Pío Baroja's *Camino de perfección*, and (José Martínez Ruiz) Azorín's *La voluntad*. This is the opinion of José-Carlos Mainer, for instance, who begins his cultural analysis of Spanish modernism in that year. See his *La edad de plata (1902-1931): ensayo de interpretación de un proceso cultural* (1975). Interestingly enough, Mainer would expand his analysis until 1939, the end of the Spanish civil war, in later editions of his text.

when Unamuno published his first novel, *Paz en la guerra*, and 1909, when Valle-Inclán finished his trilogy of *La guerra carlista* and Pío Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero* appeared in the bookstores. Surprisingly, each delved into a past confrontation which, at first sight, might seem completely alien to the tensions and dynamics of the authors' own time. The question, obviously enough, is why.

In order to answer this question, we have to understand the historical significance of the monarchic restoration of 1874. To a large extent, this event, and the long era it launched, can be understood as the fossilization of the promises and potential of the Liberal Revolution of 1868. This revolution tried to open up, democratize, and modernize the country (re-actualizing an impulse first felt in the 1812 *Cortes de Cádiz*), but very soon it became apparent that the elites would prevent any real political change. This opposition caused the ultimate demise of this project, which never really came to fruition. After the six years following the revolution (a period known in Spanish historiography as the *Sexenio democrático*), a coup led by General Serrano in 1874 ended the Spanish Republic. Antonio Cánovas, the most able politician of the time, would then create a system to, on the one hand, appease the elites (who had never really lost the grip on the country) and, on the other, prevent any potential social upheaval. This political system, known as the Canovite (after Cánovas) parliamentary system, was defined by the signing of the Treaty of El Pardo, a document that institutionalized the orchestrated transition in the Cabinet between the Progressive party, led by Práxedes Mateo Sagasta, and the Conservative party, led by Antonio Cánovas himself. This change of government was closely supervised by the monarch. In

many ways, the political system of the monarchic restoration used the frame of the Liberal revolution of 1868 (paying lip service to democracy and popular sovereignty) while, at the same time, it maintained and perpetuated the dominance and control of the people by the elites. This historical framework is crucial to understanding Spanish *fin de siglo* generation's conflicted, anxious, and problematic ways of relating to modernity.

This study builds on many *fin de siglo* scholars's analysis of Spanish modernism's historical imagination. Among the many critics whose work has shaped my ideas on the period, three are particularly relevant for this project: Biruté Ciplijauskaitė, Manuel Suárez Cortina, and Jesús Torrecilla.¹¹ Ciplijauskaitė, who in the late seventies became interested in the historical novels of these writers, was the first to analyze the topic of Carlism at the Spanish turn of the century; her research forms the starting point of my dissertation. She argued that turn-of-the-century writers saw in the second Carlist war a reflection of their own historical tensions, and that the historical novel genre allowed them a social critique of Restoration Spain. However, her works on this subject, as insightful as they are, fail to articulate a reason as to why did this somewhat obscure and half-forgotten conflict hold such a sway on *fin de siglo* writers' historical imagination.

¹¹ Their most relevant studies on this topic are Ciplijauskaitė's "The *Noventayochistas* and the Carlist Wars" (1976), "Galdós y los noventayochistas frente a la historia" (1978), and *Los noventayochistas y la historia* (1981); Suárez Cortina's "El sexenio democrático en la literatura de fin de siglo" (2005) and *La sombra del pasado: novela e historia en Galdós, Unamuno y Valle-Inclán* (2006); and Torrecilla's *La imitación colectiva: modernidad vs. autenticidad en la literatura española* (1996), *El tiempo y los márgenes: Europa como utopía y como amenaza en la literatura española* (1996) and *La actualidad de la generación del 98: (algunas reflexiones sobre el concepto de lo moderno)* (2006).

Her research is overly focused on closed readings and stylistic analysis and, in spite of their paramount importance for the development of scholarship on this topic, her critical essays fall short of integrating these historical novels in a larger literary and ideological context.

It is not until another turn of the century, from the twentieth to the twenty-first in this case, that we find another scholar who picks up the conversation where Ciplijauskaitė left off. Manuel Suárez Cortina, a professor of history at the University of Cantabria, has written several works on the uses of history by the *fin de siglo* generation. His ideas are clearly indebted to Ciplijauskaitė's previous work, but Suárez Cortina argues for a more comprehensive approach to the topic of Carlism, framing it in the historical tradition of the country, and offering an overarching interpretation of the uncanny allure that this historical event had over these writers. He suggests that turn-of-the-century writers became obsessed with the historical period known as the *Sexenio democrático* (1868-1874), that is, the years between the Liberal revolution of 1868 and the monarchic restoration. They saw in these six years the origins of their contemporary society, and used the genre of the historical novel to articulate a critique of Restoration Spain through the literary representation of its socio-historical foundation. Suárez Cortina's works, however, present a continuum between proponents of a realist aesthetics, like Pereda or Galdós, to modernist writers like Valle-Inclán or Baroja. This approach, in my opinion, blurs the original contribution of the modernist *fin de siglo* generation to the genre of the historical novel. Moreover, as I will explain in the corresponding chapter, Suárez Cortina's analysis of Baroja's historical novels

in general and of *Zalacaín el aventurero* in particular, could benefit from further study of the text's ideological innuendos.

The reason for the *fin de siglo* obsessive historical revisitation of the second Carlist war is articulated in the work of another scholar who has not studied these novels, in opposition to Ciplijauskaitė and Suárez Cortina, but whose ideas on Spanish modernity shaped my interpretation of turn of the century Spain: Jesús Torrecilla. In his works, Torrecilla studies the uneven structure of Spanish modernity and how it shaped the way Spanish writers and intellectuals responded to it. He argues that the relationship of *fin de siglo* generation with modernity is defined by failure. In other words, the absence of a true modernization, and the lack of structural transformations in the country, led to a problematic tension between tradition and modernity that defined Spanish modernism and contrasted it with other European modernisms:

Es cierto que fueron hombres de su tiempo, muy leídos y enterados de lo que pasaba en el resto de Europa, y es cierto que su producción refleja la crisis de valores del mundo moderno, pero también lo es que no pudieron vivir esa crisis de la misma manera que un francés o un inglés, ya que el problema principal de la sociedad a la que pertenecían no era precisamente el de la modernidad, sino el de la falta de ella. (*La actualidad* 88-89)

This lack of a true national modernization, this failure of the Spanish modernity provides a common denominator for the *fin de siglo* generation's historical imagination. Drawing on Ciplijauskaitė, Suárez Cortina, and Torrecilla, this dissertation argues that Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja's novels on the second Carlist war articulate a critique of their contemporary society through an interpretation of this historical event. This conflict meant, for them, the problematization of the tensions between tradition and modernity that also

plagued them at the turn of the century. Their view on this historical time was, however, mediated by an intense feeling of failure. They revisited Carlism because this movement had an indexical relationship with the failure of the Liberal revolution of 1868 and, consequently, with the failure of Spanish modernity itself. In this sense, the second Carlist war represented a microcosm of the tensions that haunted the *Sexenio democrático*.

The origins of these tensions, however, as the origins of the ideological referents of Carlism, date back earlier than 1868. As Javier Herrero has shown in *Los orígenes del pensamiento reaccionario español*, the origins of Carlism can be traced back to the absolutist reaction to the French revolution. This tension between the Old and the New Regime will be played out in the Peninsula with the Napoleonic invasion of 1808 and the ensuing Independence war (1808-1814).¹² This conflict between the birth of Liberalism and the *Ancien Régime* was later materialized in the *Cortes de Cádiz*, where the very notion of royal sovereignty came into question, and where the first Spanish Constitution was born in 1812. From an historical standpoint, the revolution of 1868 was one of several attempts throughout the nineteenth century to bring back the Liberal spirit of 1812. Most of these attempts did not materialize, but before the 1868 Revolution, the 1820 *pronunciamiento* (i.e., coup) of General Riego led to the period known as *Trienio Liberal* (the three years of Liberalism) between 1820 and 1823. As most

¹² The accuracy of the term “Guerra de independencia” (War of Independence) has been seriously questioned by recent historians like John Lawrence Tone or José Alvarez Junco. See Tone’s *The Fatal Knot: the Guerrilla War in Navarre and the Defeat of Napoleon in Spain* (1994) and Junco’s *Mater dolorosa: la idea de España en el siglo XIX* (2001).

historians agree, it was in these three years that we can locate the origin of Carlism, as an Absolutist conspiracy to overthrow the Liberal government.¹³

Another scholar, Pedro Cerezo Galán, has also defined the crisis of the Spanish turn-of-the-century in terms of the failed Liberal Revolution of 1868:

La clave, pues, del problema político de España [durante el fin de siglo] reside, a mi juicio, en la quiebra de la revolución septembrina [Revolución de 1868], donde aborta la posibilidad de que el “pueblo nuevo” (en este caso, la clase pequeñoburguesa, ideológicamente más activa y radicalizada, y el proletariado) fundara una nueva política realmente nueva, enteramente libre de las hipotecas ideológicas y el lastre reaccionario de la vieja España. (67)

The revolution could not materialize its Liberal program, faced by the staunch conservatism and traditionalism of the elites that prevented any real change in the *status quo*. As a consequence, the *Sexenio revolucionario* is defined as a political stalemate that is finally broken with the *pronunciamiento* of General Serrano in 1874 and the return of the monarchy. The ensuing political system, the Canovite parliamentary system of the restoration, had the indubitable merit of providing a much needed stability to the country. Nevertheless, the orchestrated alternations of the Progressive and Conservative parties in a cabinet effectively controlled by the monarch, were perceived by *fin de siglo* intellectuals as a sham, a continuation with the *Ancien Régime* behind a democratic mask.

Eduardo Subirats, like Torrecilla and Cerezo Galán, has also noted the notion of failure as a key component in Spanish modernity. In *Metamorfosis de la*

¹³ This is precisely the thesis of Jordi Canal. See his *El Carlismo: dos siglos de contrarrevolución en España* (2000).

cultura moderna (1991), the Catalan scholar argues that the crisis of Spanish modernity at the turn-of-the-century is explained by the fact that the notion of modernity itself had been historically perceived as something radically foreign to the Spanish tradition and, consequently, had been regarded in negative terms (99-100). Elsewhere, Subirats points out that the literary discussion on the socio-historical crisis of the nation (i.e., *el tema de España*) that occupied many *fin de siglo* intellectuals has, as its main tenet, the construction of a narrative subject (*Después de la lluvia* 169-70). It is precisely in this intersection between the consideration of modernity as a failed project, and the literary construction of a narrative subject for Spanish modernity that I locate the paramount importance of the novels I will analyze in this project.

I propose a reading of these novels that regards the Carlist conflagration as the origin of the narrative subject of Spanish modernity. This subject (the Spanish people) is defined as incapable of adaptation to modernity. Such a radical denial of modernity in the context of Spanish modernism is caused by both historical and philosophical reasons. From a historical perspective, the experience of modernity was constantly frustrated throughout the nineteenth-century. The 1812 Constitution, which provided a Liberal framework of national sovereignty and individual freedoms, was immediately rejected by King Fernando VII at his return from France. The experience of the *Trienio Liberal* (1820-1823) was smashed by the invasion of the Absolutist coalition known as *Cien Mil Hijos de San Luis*. Lastly, the promises of the 1868 revolution were left unfulfilled, and the

democratization of the *Sexenio Liberal* was ultimately squandered in the Monarchic Restoration.

From a philosophical standpoint, turn-of-the-century Spain was deeply influenced, as Gonzalo Sobejano has shown in his classic *Nietzsche en España* (1967), by the crisis of positivism and the adoption of the pessimistic and nihilistic ideas of both Arthur Schopenhauer and Friedrich Nietzsche. *Fin de siglo* crisis was, therefore, the result of a local *conciencia de fracaso* (Subirats) or *conciencia de atraso* (Torrecilla), and a European crisis of positivism, reflected in the works of the aforementioned German philosophers, and the scientific and technological innovations that questioned long-established values.¹⁴ The historical novels on the Carlist war examined in this dissertation are a perfect illustration of this problematization of modernity that came to define Spanish *fin de siglo*. They reflect the tensions of this crucial time in a way that, in my opinion, has not been properly acknowledged. Critically underanalyzed, Unamuno's *Paz en la guerra*, Valle-Inclán's trilogy of *La guerra carlista*, and Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero* provide a powerful insight into turn-of-the-century Spain by articulating a critique of modernity through the narrative frame of the historical novel.

The reasons for the lack of critical attention these texts have received, in comparison with other works of the time, must be sought in the traditional interpretations of *fin de siglo*. Until quite recently, Hispanists presented a clear-

¹⁴ For a compelling study on the transformations of this time see Stephen Kern's *The Culture of Time and Space: 1880-1918* (1983).

cut division between “modernismo” and “Generación del 98” that both prevented any real connection with European modernism, and hindered a comprehensive interpretation of late nineteenth-century and early twentieth-century Spanish culture. According to the proponents of this interpretation (who remained uncontested until the late sixties),¹⁵ Spanish *fin de siglo* presented two opposing aesthetics: a foreign-influenced “modernismo,” heir to French symbolism and decadentism and carried to Spain by the Nicaraguan poet Rubén Darío; and a local intellectual movement labelled “Generación del 98” (Generation of 1898), whose main tenet was the concern with national identity (i.e., *el tema de España*), in deep crisis after Spain lost the few last remnants of her transatlantic Empire in the war of 1898 and, hence, the name of the group. Such a localist and nationalist interpretation of Spanish modernism effectively shut off *fin de siglo* writers from their European counterparts, and Spanish culture has faced the consequences of this critical isolation until very recently. In point of fact, one of the best studies on modernism, Astradur Eysteinnsson’s *The Concept of Modernism* (1990) dismisses Spanish modernism with a footnote on the first page that reads as follows:

This book does not concern itself with the “modernismo” of South American and Spanish literature. Despite some parallels, the differences between the two concepts are too many to warrant their critical coalescence. Moreover, the use of the concept in Hispanic criticism, while it was established early in the century, has had

¹⁵ Although I trace the origins of this critical trend to Ricardo Gullón’s “La invención del 98” (1969), we should take into consideration important contributions written before that date. Two of the most influential essays in this regard are Federico de Onís’s *Antología de la poesía española e hispanoamericana (1882-1932)* (1932), and Juan Ramón Jiménez’s *El modernismo: notas de un curso* (1953).

virtually no influence on the formation of the critical paradigms of modernism that I discuss. (1)

What interests me here is not only the apparent belittlement of Spanish contributions to European modernism, but also the justification of Spain's exclusion from the European canon by virtue of a critical paradigm that "has had virtually no influence" on continental modernism at all. This critical paradigm that Eysteinnsson refers to is, undoubtedly, the traditional interpretation of *fin de siglo* carried out by scholars like Pedro Laín Entralgo or Guillermo Díaz-Plaja, among others, during the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁶ Eysteinnsson, after all, draws his comments on a 1966 text by Ned J. Davison, entitled *The Concept of Modernism in Hispanic Criticism*. That being the case, he misses the long critical process that, starting with Ricardo Gullón's seminal essay: "La invención del 98" (1969), changed the twofold division of modernism in Spanish literary history. Other milestones in the definitive debunking of the dichotomy "modernismo /vs/ generación del 98" are José-Carlos Mainer's *La Edad de Plata: Ensayo de interpretación de un proceso cultural* (1975), Lily Litvak's *El modernismo* (1981) or Giovanni Allegra's *El reino interior: Premisas y semblanzas del modernismo en España* (1985). All these essays, and many more, were written well before the publication of Eysteinnsson's book and could have triggered a much more nuanced and balanced treatment of Spanish modernism in his text.

¹⁶ See Pedro Laín Entralgo's *La generación del noventa y ocho* (1948) and Guillermo Díaz-Plaja's *Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho: una introducción a la literatura española del siglo XX* (1951).

In order to propose an integration of Spanish *fin de siglo* in the broader context of modernism, we must first provide a working definition of both modernity and modernism. By modernity I understand, following Habermas, a bundle of historical processes, both cumulative and interdependent, that converged at the turn of the century. Among these historical events are the mobilization of economic resources brought about by the expansion of capitalism, the Industrial Revolution, and the formation of national identities (2). Toward the end of the nineteenth century, moreover, these events joined a cultural demise of realist aesthetics and positivist philosophy that prompted the emergence of movements like symbolism, in the realm of art, and nihilism, in the realm of thought. Nevertheless, it would be erroneous to see in this period a unanimous rejection of previous artistic, political, and philosophical concerns. On the contrary, the very term “modernism,” as Eisteynnsson reminds us, signals an inherent opposition between that which is modern, and that which is not. In this sense, modernism can be understood as a site of tensions, a field of dialectical relationship where the old and the new clash and converge. In this sense, scholars like Arno Mayer or T.J. Jackson Lears have emphasized the return of the pre-modern as one of the defining aspects of turn-of-the-century cultural and political thought.¹⁷

Fin de siglo Spain shares all these tensions in an even stronger way than the rest of Europe. As Roberta Johnson (2-3) has shown, positivism only arrived

¹⁷ It could be argued that this return of the pre-modern functions along the lines of Freudian return of the repressed, as consequences of the anxieties caused by modernization/civilization.

in Spain after the monarchic restoration of 1874, only to be confronted shortly after with its philosophical deconstruction by the works of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. As a consequence, the crisis of positivism and the crisis of the bourgeois system of restoration Spain are juxtaposed phenomena (Nuñez 33, Cerezo Galán 286). Modernism, thus, can be defined as “the negative other of capitalist-bourgeois ideology” (Eysteinnsson 37), the expression of the demise of positivism. Bearing in mind this definition, it makes perfect sense to expand the term “modernism” well beyond the narrow limits of *fin de siglo* and regard it as the artistic articulation of modernity: this is exactly what Anglo-American literary criticism means by the term “modernism.” Hispanists, on the other hand, have traditionally understood the concept “modernismo” in very narrow terms. Although the dichotomic explanation of *fin de siglo* as “modernismo” versus “generación del 98” has been finally overcome, there is still some reticence to adopt the term “modernismo” as an inclusive definition to refer to the post-realist aesthetics of writers that have been, up until now, compartmentalized in the categories of “naturalism,” “symbolism,” or in the more *castizo* tags of “generación del 98,” “generación del 14,” and “generación del 27.” This criticism forms the thesis of Nil Santiáñez's *Investigaciones literarias. Modernidad, historia de la literatura y modernismos* (2002). In this essay, Santiáñez argues for the broad use of the term “modernismo” in the following terms:

Ni los historiadores de la literatura ni los críticos literarios reducen el realismo a los primeros novelistas que se presentaron como tales, es decir, a los escritores realistas del siglo XIX. Al contrario: el realismo suele entenderse como una modalidad literaria que excede el siglo XIX; así, se percibe realismo mucho antes y mucho después de la aparición de las obras maestras de Balzac, Galdós,

Flaubert y Tolstoi . . . De modo parecido hay que estudiar el modernismo: es, en efecto, un grupo de movimientos literarios del cambio de siglo; pero también es una modalidad literaria que excede ese corte temporal de corta duración. Negarlo equivaldría a negar la validez del realismo como categoría suprahistórica, algo que nadie cuestiona. (134)

Even though the term “modernismo” has not been widely accepted by Hispanists (yet), the use of euphemisms has been, on the other hand, very successful. Two of the most widely accepted substitutes for “modernismo,” in the broad sense Santiáñez proposes, are José-Carlos Mainer’s “Edad de plata,” and Germán Gullón’s more conservative notion of “Generación de fin de siglo.” Both terms have been successful because they have co-opted critical categories that Hispanists know and respect. Mainer’s book pays an obvious homage to the notion of *Siglo de oro* (sixteenth and seventeenth centuries), a category where the dramas of Lope de Vega and Calderón de la Barca, the poetry of Góngora and Quevedo, and the prose of Miguel de Cervantes attest the consideration of this period as the golden age of Spanish literature. Gullón’s use of the term “generación,” on the other hand, alludes to the well-known label of *generación del 98*, wisely substituting the contested landmark of 1898 by the more neutral *fin de siglo*.

Before the publication of Nil Santiáñez’s book, another well-known scholar, Domingo Ródenas, also argued for the unapologetic adoption of the term “modernismo”:

En los últimos quince años [since 1983] ha ido ganando terreno la convicción de que las mónadas generacionales que ha consagrado la historiografía literaria española, a saber, Modernismo, Noventa y ocho, Novecentismo o Generación del 14 y Generación

del 27 no son sino manifestaciones sucesivas y diferenciadas de una misma actitud general ante el modelo artístico hegemónico en el siglo XIX, cuyo estribadero fue el de la estética mimético-realista, una actitud que definió una época que conviene ir llamando por su nombre más unánimemente convenido: Modernismo. (46)

Following Ródenas and Santiáñez, I also include the so-called “generacion del 98” in the global definition of “modernismo.” The first part of my dissertation’s title is, therefore, “The modernist generation of 1898.” With this fusion of nomenclatures, I hope to bring down the critical prejudices that have prevented Spanish *fin de siglo* the place it merits in modernist studies. In this sense, I share modern Hispanists’ concern to be heard and included in the global paradigm of European modernism. However, as Torrecilla points out (*La actualidad de la generación* 109), many *fin de siglo* scholars, in their urge to make Spanish literature fit into Continental standards, have overlooked the tensions between tradition and modernity that came to define this cultural period in the country. They have called attention on Unamuno’s early use of the stream of consciousness technique (in his 1914 masterpiece, *Niebla*), on Valle-Inclán’s 1920s *esperpento* as a reflection of European expressionism, and of Baroja’s short dialogues and untidy prose as a forerunner of Hemingway’s novels. All this is true, but we must bear in mind that Spanish modernity is based on an absence, on a failure. This fact contrasts Spanish modernism with that of France or England in definitive ways that must be acknowledged.¹⁸

¹⁸ Certainly, other European modernisms also had a conflicted relation with modernity, as attested by the Arts and Crafts movement in England or the decadent literature in France and Italy, among many other examples. My point, however, is not that Spanish

It is imperative that we recognize the co-existence of two parallel phenomena during the turn-of-the-century. On the one hand, as Mayer and Lears have explained in the case of Europe and America, respectively, and Lily Livak has applied to the Spanish case, there was a global revival of the pre-modern.¹⁹ This is explained as a reaction to the anxieties of modernity, and affected practically all Western countries toward the end of the nineteenth century. In this regard, the poetry of William Morris (1834-1896), the influence of the Arts and Crafts movement, and the *Art Nouveau* attest the importance and scope of this cultural trend. At the same time, and because *fin de siglo* intellectuals experienced national modernity as a failed project, this return of the pre-modern had special characteristics in the Peninsula. Above all, the representation of modernity's failure can be observed in the *fin de siglo* generation's use of traditional genres and motifs in their texts. These traditional motifs, like the use of popular songs and vernacular sociolects, not only imply a pre-modern attraction, in the vein of other Continental modernists, but also (and fundamentally so) reflect the

modernists interpreted modernity as a failure on metaphysical or aesthetic grounds, but that their experience of modernity was mediated by an historical failure, due to the absence of a real bourgeois liberal revolution. According to radical analysis, Spain is yet to experience such a historical stage.

¹⁹ See Arno Mayer's *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (1981) and T.J. Jackson Lears' *No place of grace: antimodernism and the transformation of American culture, 1880-1920* (1981). Lily Litvak, in her seminal *A Dream of Arcadia: Anti-Industrialism in Spanish Literature, 1895-1905* (1975), has studied the turn-of-the-century allure for pre-modern society as a response to the anxieties of a modernization and industrialization regarded as both traumatic and alienating. Spanish *fin de siglo* literature was not an exception: there was a populist return to traditional artistic forms, like *folletín* or *coplas de ciego* (Litvak 119).

manifestation of the *fin de siglo* generation's understanding of modernity as a failed project in Spain.

Drawing on Litvak's study, and taking into consideration Torrecilla, Cerezo Galán, and Subirats' ideas of Spanish modernity as a failed project, I argue that this return of the popular included, in the *fin de siglo* writers I study here, the use of motifs and structures from the chivalric romances and the epic tradition. The novels I will study in this project can be read as failed epics. *Paz en la guerra* confronts the epic memory of the first Carlist war (as articulated by José Antonio's constant re-telling of his bellicose experience) with the mundane reality of the second Carlist war, as experienced by José Antonio's son, Ignacio. Valle-Inclán's novels of *La guerra carlista* begin as an epic fight that is progressively transformed into a caricature, a bloody tale of revenge and violence that leads to the creation of *esperpento*. Finally, *Zalacaín el aventurero* is written as a parody of chivalric romances, where the relationship between Zalacaín and the old Tellagorri mimics that of the young knight and his mentor, and where the chivalric code of honor is transformed into a nihilistic and pessimistic social criticism. Along this line, these novels also present a myriad of traditional aspects, like popular songs or the use of vernacular and dialectic linguistic varieties.

The common denominator of these epic narrations is their failed nature. This failure is explained by the impossibility of the epic in modernity. As Ortega y Gasset points out: "Novela y épica son justamente lo contrario [...] El pasado épico no es nuestro pasado [...] No es, no, el pasado del recuerdo, sino un pasado ideal" (136-37). This prevalence of epic motifs in Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and

Baroja's novels responds, on the one hand, to the pre-modern allure Litvak analyzed but, on the other, to a conscious reflection on the failed nature of Spanish modernity. This last point is, I believe, crucial to understand the significance of these novels in the context of *fin de siglo*, and to perceive the subtle ways they used the historical novel genre to convey their criticism of modern Spain.²⁰

Likewise, this populist turn also shaped the revival of the historical novel. Before the turn-of-the-century, this genre was understood as the fictionalization of great historiographical narratives, according to a positivist outlook that regarded history as the linear development toward the fulfillment of the nation's potential. In this sense, a clear example of such a view are the historical novels written by Antonio Cánovas who, besides being the leader of the Conservative Party and Prime Minister during several terms, was also a renowned historian. Some examples of his works are *Historia de la decadencia de España* (1854) or his collaboration in the multi-volumed *Historia general de España* (1890). According

²⁰ This populist trend in turn-of-the-century culture, this "turno del pueblo" as Carlos Serrano calls it (see his *El turno del pueblo. Crisis nacional, movimientos populares y populismo en España: 1890-1910*, published in 2000), has been primarily interpreted in aesthetic terms, missing the important ideological reasons beneath their rural characters and settings. An example of this is Lily Litvak. In her otherwise superb study, Litvak (*A Dream of Arcadia* 111) groups together novels like Juan Valera's *Juanita la larga* (1895), or Vicente Medina's *Aires murcianos* (1898) with Catalan rural dramas like Ignasi Iglesias' *La mare eterna* (1900) or Àngel Guimerà's *Terra baixa* (première in Spanish in 1896, in Catalan in 1897). All these texts share an aesthetic return to the popular, but do not share the same ideological concerns. Valera's bourgeois fantasy of an Andalusian pre-modern paradise or Medina's *costumbrista* novel do not strike the same chord as Guimerà's *Terra baixa*, for instance, a play that confronts the city with the countryside, revealing the peasants' exploitation.

to Juan López-Morillas, Cánovas' historiography intended to re-establish the historical continuity between the Spanish people and the monarchy, "como si los seis años de vendaval revolucionario [*Sexenio democrático*: 1868-1874] no hubieran sido más que una pesadilla." (163) In many ways, it could be argued that *fin de siglo* obsession with the *Sexenio democrático* was an answer to Cánovas' historical texts, and to the epic (i.e., glorified) interpretation of the national past, at large. As a consequence, the re-appropriation of the Carlist war signals an explicit rejection of Cánovas' historiographic values and interests.

In opposition to the Liberal and positivist historiography of the nineteenth-century, *fin de siglo* writers rejected the two ideological pillars of the previous historical novels: progress and democracy (Cerezo Galán 633). This double rejection, in addition to the consideration of the anonymous people (*el pueblo*) as the true agent of history, made their historical novels radically different from previous models. Their critique of progress was the direct result of their populist turn, as we have seen above, and a staunch opposition to the bourgeois values of positivism, as represented in the social arena by the works of Herbert Spencer or August Comte. On the other hand, their critique of democracy was the consequence of the immense influence that both Schopenhauer and Nietzsche had toward the end of the century. These philosophers articulated a radical individualism and a rejection of traditional values that shaped the intellectual landscape of *fin de siglo*.

The discourse of the modernist group of 1898 on Carlism was, nevertheless, multifarious. One of Unamuno's earliest memories, for instance,

was the bombing of Bilbao by the Carlist troops during the same siege he describes in *Paz en la guerra*. Carlism was, for him, an example of popular rebellion against a modernization regarded as foreign and oppressive. Valle-Inclán, for his part, had a nostalgic view of pre-modern social structures, mediated by the influence of decadentism and conservative Galician regionalism. For Valle-Inclán, Carlism meant both a regenerative program and a nostalgic construction. Lastly, Baroja's use of the Carlist war was both pessimistic and nihilistic. He regarded the tension between tradition and modernity as a futile fight, emphasizing pragmatism and the role of the individual as the only viable solution to this false dichotomy.

In "Community and Resistance: on the Uses of Carlism in Miguel de Unamuno's *Paz en la guerra*," I suggest that Unamuno's take on Carlism, what he labelled "Carlismo popular" is closer to his heterogeneous notion of Socialism, "Socialismo sentimental," than has been previously acknowledged. Drawing on Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics* (1851), which he translated into Spanish in 1894, Unamuno stresses the importance of collective structures of feeling, which he sees as responsible for social change, rather than ideology. This passage of his own translation of Spencer's *Social Statics* presents his main thesis:

Las ideas no gobiernan ni trastornan al mundo; el mundo es gobernado y trastornado por sentimientos, a que las ideas no hacen más que servir de guía . . . Los deseos de los hombres son, sobre todo, lo que se hereda, pero sus opiniones son, sobre todo, adquiridas y dependen de condiciones ambientes. (Qtd. in Ereño Altuna, "La conciliación" 181)

Unamuno applied to Carlism the same ideas he found in the British philosopher. His article "Carlistas y liberales," written on 15 July 1887 in the

Revista de Vizcaya, presents a clear contrast between Carlist political leaders, who ignored the real needs of the people, and Carlism as a collective structure of feeling, motivated not by the intellectual elites of a party, but by the people's natural dynamics:

Muy cómodo es alegar fanatismo, influencias clericales, ignorancia y otros lugares comunes muy socorridos, que sobre no explicar el hecho en cuestión necesitan ser explicados. Los promovedores de la rebelión aprovechan y dirigen un instinto preexistente, no le [sic] crean. (Qtd. In Ereño Altuna, *Escritos bilbaínos* 108)

From this perspective, I argue that Unamuno's use of Carlism in *Paz en la guerra* is defined by his notion of *intrahistoria*, as developed in the earlier collected essays of *En torno al casticismo* (1895). In this sense, I draw on recent works by José Antonio Ereño Altuna, Eugenio Luján Palma, and Jon Juaristi to frame Unamuno's interest in Carlism in the context of the most meaningful influences of his early years: *fueroismo* and ethnopsychology.²¹ Ereño Altuna, in particular, is relevant in this regard. His numerous works on Unamuno's Socialism (he was a member of the Socialist party between 1894 and 1897, and contributed with many articles to the Bilbao Socialist newspaper, *La lucha de clases*) show that the Basque writer's definition of Socialism had a clear

²¹ I will analyze in detail these two concepts in the corresponding chapter; nevertheless I will provide a brief working definition of both terms here. *Fueroismo* was the political movement that followed the abolition of the traditional Basque *fueros* (traditional, customary laws) by Cánovas in 1876. It tried to galvanize the Basque society around tradition and language (euskera), and was to be one of the most important sources of the emerging Basque nationalism. On the other hand, ethnopsychology (*Völkerpsychologie*, in the original German) was an academic subfield of philology that postulated the study of language as a means to understand the spirit of a particular people. Unamuno became interested in ethnopsychology during his college years in Madrid, as his doctoral dissertation (*Crítica del problema sobre el origen y prehistoria de la raza vasca*) attests.

ideological debt to Spencer (“La conciliación” 173). Viewed in this light, Unamuno’s notion of popular Carlism owes much to works such as Achille Loria’s *Analisi della proprietà capitalista* (1889), Henry Georg’s *Progress and Poverty* (1893) or Joaquín Costa’s *Oligarquía y caciquismo* (1902). These texts, as Litvak suggests, denounced capitalist control of the land and ultimately prompted the Basque intellectual to join the Socialist party (*A Dream of Arcadia* 125-25). Agreeing with both Litvak and Ereño Altuna, I contend that these influences also shaped his take on Carlism and explain why he used this traditionalist movement to frame the narrative of his first novel. This study claims that Unamuno understood popular Carlism (as opposed to political, structured Carlism) as the natural reaction of the people against an alienating modernization that challenged their traditional ways of life. Faced with such a challenge, they responded with the recourse of the war.

This last point, the interpretation of the Carlist war as the intrahistorical expression of the people, is clearly articulated in a passage from *El Porvenir de España* (1898), the epistolary exchange between Unamuno and Angel Ganivet that—according to many scholars—inaugurated the literary contributions of the *fin de siglo* generation. Unamuno defines Carlism as the popular and collective articulation of an anxiety over modern social practices:

Se ha perdido la inteligencia [inteligibilidad] del lenguaje propio del pueblo, lenguaje silencioso y elocuente, y se ha querido que hable en los comicios, donde, como dice usted [Ganivet] muy bien, no sabe responder. Pedirle al pueblo que resuelva por el voto la orientación política que le conviene, es pretender que sepa fisiología de la digestión todo el que digiere. Como no se sabe preguntarle, no responde, y como no habla en votos, lenguaje que

le es extraño, cuando quiere algo habla en armas, que es lo que hicieron mis paisanos en la ultima guerra civil. (331-32)

My chapter on *Paz en la guerra* provides a reading of the text through the prism of popular Carlism. In doing so, I hope to contribute to the existing criticism on Unamuno's early years by stressing the unacknowledged importance of Carlism in Unamuno's understanding of key concepts in this stage of his intellectual development, like *intrahistoria* and Socialism. On that note, I also hope to place this novel in the important place it merits, as one of the most important examples of modernist prose, as an articulation of *fin de siglo* anxiety of modernity. "Carlism, Modernity, and Failure in Valle-Inclán's *La guerra carlista*" examines the three novels that the Galician writer devoted to this topic. Drawing on Susan Stewart's definition of nostalgia as a reactionary ideological construction, and on works like Arno Mayer's *The Persistence of the Old Regime: Europe to the Great War* (1981) and T.J. Jackson Lears' *No place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture: 1880-1920* (1981), I argue that Valle-Inclán's treatment of Carlism is mediated by the construction of a nostalgic past. This historical imagination is shaped by two main ideological sources: aesthetic decadentism, best represented by Gabriele D'Annunzio (a well-known influence on the young Valle-Inclán) and the conservative branch of Galician nationalism (i.e., *rexurdimento*), led by Alfredo Brañas.

Both Mayer and Lears have studied the European and American turn of the century, respectively, as mediated by pre-modern structures. Opposed to the general view that turn of the century implied a radical break with pre-modern society and an enthusiastic adoption of modern social practices and technological

innovations, these scholars provide a more nuanced vision of this time. Whereas Lears coins the term “antimodernism,” that is, the ideological return to pre-modern society as a response to the anxiety of modernization (xiii), Mayer speaks of a “dialectic interaction” between tradition and modernity (4-5). Mayer, in particular, studies a group of writers and intellectuals (Maurice Barrès, Paul Bourget, and Gabriele D’Annunzio) who, deeply concerned with the survival of high culture under conditions of popular rule, engaged in what he calls a “politics of nostalgia” (279-94). Interestingly enough, all of these writers, and particularly D’Annunzio, were important and decisive influences on the literary development of Ramón del Valle-Inclán. Along these lines, Susan Stewart, in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (1984), defines nostalgia as the construction of a past that is perceived as a loss by the nostalgic subject (23). This perception articulates the past as a regressive utopia, where the anxieties of modernity are eased in an imagined site of authenticity and social harmony. In the case of Valle-Inclán, I contend that his use of Carlism can be read as such an ideological nostalgia.

Conservative Galician regionalism, furthermore, contributes to Valle-Inclán’s consideration of Carlism as a pre-lapsarian social paradise. As a student at the University of Santiago between 1887 and 1889, the young writer was influenced by the teachings of Alfredo Brañas, a professor of law. Beyond his professional career, Brañas was an important figure in the budding Galician *rexurdimento*, together with Manuel Murguía. The difference between the two leaders of the nationalist movement was, nevertheless, abysmal. Murguía

supported modernization and regarded traditional Galician backwardness (both in ideological and economic terms) as the result of the prevalence of *Ancien Régime* in the region. Brañas, on the other hand, interpreted backwardness as the very definition of *galleguismo*, and considered traditional customary laws and hierarchical society as positive pre-modern practices. Without being a Carlist politician himself, Brañas' conservative *rexurdimento* undoubtedly contributed to the young Valle-Inclán's ideological configuration of Carlism as a nostalgic construct.

As the trilogy progresses, however, the original optimism fades into a pervasive feeling of loss and cynicism. It is in this structure of feeling that I locate the origins of *esperpento*. According to most scholars, Valle-Inclán envisioned this literary technique in his later dramas, particularly *Divinas palabras* (1919) and *Luces de Bohemia* (1920), among other examples. Rodolfo Cardona and Anthony N. Zahareas, in their canonical *Visión del esperpento: teoría y práctica en los esperpentos de Valle-Inclán* (1970), define this technique as “la representación del mundo circundante a través de una distorsión escénica dolorosa y absurda” (225). The late birth that these scholars ascribe to *esperpento* (1920s) has had two important consequences: firstly, it implies an integration of this technique to the expressionist movement and, secondly, it consolidates the traditional division of Valle-Inclán's works in two opposed phases: an early, aesthetic period; and a later one, socially engaged and politically committed.

More recent critics, however, have rejected this artificial division in Valle-Inclán's literary production, arguing that the so-called aesthetic phase constitutes

another form of social critique. Margarita Santos Zas states this argument clearly when she writes: “Hay que entender ese esteticismo evasivista no como una postura meramente gratuita, sino como un mecanismo de protesta” (345). On the other hand, the inclusion of *esperpento* under the umbrella of European expressionism has become something of a commonplace in Valle-Inclán scholarship.²² Opposing this critical trend, Jesús Torrecilla has provided a compelling interpretation of *esperpento* as a stylistic consequence of the failed nature of Spanish modernity. He argues that, in their permanent tension between the blunt imitation of foreign (i.e., European) models and a faithfulness to Spanish cultural tradition, *fin de siglo* intellectuals devised a strategy to combine both forces successfully: the nationalization of European innovations (*La actualidad de la generación* 109-10).

In this sense, *esperpento* is not a blind imitation of expressionist models, but the co-option of Spanish grotesque tradition of Quevedo and Goya to modernity (*La actualidad de la generación* 7). As a matter of fact, Valle-Inclán admitted this himself. In a well-known passage of *Luces de Bohemia*, Max Estrella declares:

El esperpentismo lo ha inventado Goya. Los héroes clásicos han ido a pasearse en el callejón del Gato . . . Los héroes clásicos reflejados en los espejos cóncavos dan El Esperpento. El sentido trágico de la vida española sólo puede darse con una estética sistemáticamente deformada . . . España es una deformación grotesca de la civilización europea. (162)

²² Two recent articles on this line are Carlos Jerez-Farrán’s “El carácter expresionista de la obra esperpéntica de Valle-Inclán” (1990) and Dolors Sabaté Planes’ “Locos y marionetas: estudio comparativo de las tipologías expresionista y esperpéntica” (1999).

Drawing on Santos Zas, in her rejection of Valle-Inclán's supposed two phases of aestheticism and political commitment, and on Torrecilla's definition of *esperpento* as a stylistic consequence of *fin de siglo* generation's *conciencia de fracaso*, I propose a reading of Valle-Inclán's Carlist trilogy as a failed epic. The first novel, *Los cruzados de la causa*, constructs the epic in spacial terms (the description of Bradomín's Palace as the locus of pre-modern social relations, and the construction of the Convent as a symbol of *desamortización* are two clear examples), whereas the subsequent novels begin to problematize those pristine spaces and, with them, articulate a spatial deconstruction of epic structures: monuments become ruins, closed spaces become open spaces, heroes become puppets. If Valle-Inclán sees modernity, as Angel G. Loureiro suggests, in terms of ruins (293-303), the spacial deconstruction carried out in *El resplandor de la hoguera* and *Gerifaltes de antaño* is deeply meaningful. It implies a conscious effort to reflect the failure of Carlism and, with it, of Spanish pre-modern regenerationist utopia.

Zalacaín el aventurero (1909) is, together with *El árbol de la ciencia* (1911), and *Camino de perfección* (1902), Pío Baroja's most widely-read novel. Nevertheless, its critical consideration has not been on par with the other two texts. *Zalacaín* has often been regarded as an unpretentious adventure tale, addressed to a teenage audience. As a matter of fact, the novel has been traditionally included in high school literature survey courses across Spain.²³

²³ I do not mean that the inclusion of this novel in the curriculum necessarily prevents a sophisticated critical analysis (*Don Quijote* is also part of the curriculum, for example,

Consequently, the few scholars who have ventured into it have analyzed it with a mixture of apologetic condescension and critical embarrassment. Carlos Longhurst, for instance, in his important study on Pío Baroja's historical novel, centers almost exclusively on the long series of *Memorias de un hombre de acción*, that the Basque writer published between 1913, when the first volume: *El aprendiz de conspirador* appeared, and 1935, when *Desde el principio hasta el fin* concluded the saga. Longhurst establishes a fundamental difference between Baroja's novels of high political content and the historical ones.²⁴ History, he points out, is only used as a source of inspiration for his plots, not as an ideological tool for social criticism (11-14).

The case of Manuel Suárez Cortina is even more paradigmatic in this respect. In his otherwise excellent "El Sexenio democrático en la literatura de fin de siglo," Suárez Cortina states the ideological capital of Sexenio democrático in the *fin de siglo* literature. Commenting on *Zalacaín's* (supposed) lack of political content he writes the following:

A Baroja, la guerra, su carácter ideológico y la confrontación de fondo que desarrollaba, no le interesó ni en su dimensión trágica ni

and it is certainly well regarded). I just point the paradox of a very complex novel that has been reduced to an easy read for high school students. *Zalacaín* is an excellent adventure tale, ideal for young audiences, but also a deep historical and philosophical analysis of the Spanish *fin de siglo*. Perhaps inadvertently, it has been reduced to its most superficial reading level, while its deep social and ideological criticism have been left aside.

²⁴ Purely speaking, Baroja's political novels should be reduced to the trilogy of "La lucha por la vida," composed of *La busca* (1904), *Mala hierba* (1904), and *Aurora roja* (1905), where he develops the topic of social exploitation and *fin de siglo* anarchism. However, in a larger range, all of his texts share some sort of socio-political commentary, excluding (according to professor Longhurst) his historical texts.

como un escenario donde se dilucidaban las tensiones entre modernidad y tradición . . . no pretende escribir historia, sino novela de acción . . . El componente ideológico tan fuerte en Unamuno o en Valle se suaviza en Baroja. (“El Sexenio” 339-40)

On the contrary, Baroja’s use of the adventure romance, the popular genre of the *folletín*, and chivalric motifs like the education of the knight reveal—rather than a lack of interest in the historical period he describes—a conscious effort to engage in an intertextual dialogue with epic and heroic models. *Zalacaín el aventurero*, as I argue in the last chapter of this dissertation, is a sustained parody of epic poetry and chivalric romances, that is to say, of the mythical framework of war narratives. By juxtaposing this mythical substratum to the reality of modern society, the novel results into a pessimistic and nihilistic narration in which the character of Zalacaín, a modern (anti)hero, annihilates social conventions, deconstructs war mystique, and engages in a systematic demolition of political, religious, and economic values.

Many scholars, like Eller or Bretz among others, have defined Zalacaín as an epic hero in a world where epic values are completely useless. Although I agree with the second part of their argument (the world of the novel is clearly not an epic world), I disagree with the first. In my opinion, the character of Zalacaín cannot be regarded as an epic hero, but as a modern (anti)hero.²⁵ I purposely retain the brackets in the term because I wish to stress the duality of this word: certainly not a hero in the epic sense, Zalacaín cannot be considered an antihero

²⁵ For an insightful analysis of the modern (anti)hero in the Spanish modernist novel, see Matthew J. Marr’s “(Anti) heroism in Angel Ganivet’s *Los trabajos del infatigable creador Pío Cid*.”

either. Victor H. Brombert defines “antihero” as a modern construction in the opening pages of his *In Praise of Antiheroes: Figures and Themes in Modern European Literature: 1830-1980* (2001):

Nineteenth-and twentieth-century literature, is moreover crowded with weak, ineffectual, pale, humiliated, self-doubting, inept, occasionally abject characters—often afflicted with self-conscious and paralyzing irony, yet at times capable of unexpected resilience and fortitude. Such characters do not conform to traditional models of heroic figures; they even stand in opposition to them. But there can be great strength in that opposition. Implicitly or explicitly, they cast doubt on values that have been taken for granted, or were assumed to be unshakable. (2)

In this sense, Zalacaín is not an antihero, in the same measure that other Baroja’s characters undoubtedly are, like Fernando Osorio in *Camino de perfección* (1901) or Andrés Hurtado in *El árbol de la ciencia* (1911). Even in the formal level of language, we see how Zalacaín is constructed as a liminal character inhabiting the space of the in-between, crossing borders, in constant motion and instability.

Following the trend of re-appropriation, in national terms, of European innovations that Torrecilla discusses (*La actualidad de la generación* 109-10), I find Baroja’s construction of the modern (anti)hero dependent upon the Spanish literary tradition of *el pícaro*.²⁶ Lily Litvak, studying the philosophical influences

²⁶ The genre of *novela picaresca* flourished during the sixteenth and seventeenth-century in Spain. It involved an ironic commentary on the social hypocrisies of the time, revealing the misery of *hidalgos*, and the bankruptcy (both in economic and moral terms) of a decadent Spanish society. Typical examples include the anonymous (although Rosa Navarro Durán has argued—convincingly, in my opinion—the authorship of Alfonso de Valdés) *El Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), and Francisco de Quevedo’s *El buscón* (1626). For a classic study see Francisco Rico’s *La novela picaresca y el punto de vista* (1969).

of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in Pío Baroja, argued that these authors made him exalt the role of the instincts, and develop a vitalistic concept of life. As a consequence, Litvak points out that this notion of life is best expressed in Baroja's creation of what she calls "golfos," that is misfit individuals that represent the response to an alienating modernity and industrial civilization (*A Dream of Arcadia* 147-89).²⁷ In my opinion, the term "golfo" should be reserved to analyze other characters in Baroja's novels, like the brothers Manuel and Juan Alcázar in *La busca* (1904) and *Aurora Roja* (1905), respectively. On the other hand, Martín Zalacaín or Tellagorri belong to the tradition of *picaresca*. Let me clarify that I do not see Zalacaín or Tellagorri as *pícaros*. They are not. They are (anti)heroes; a literary construction that Baroja draws both from the philosophical influence of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and from the Spanish tradition of *picaresca*.

In opposition with Suárez Cortina and Longhurst, I would aver that Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero* recuperates the Second Carlist war for ideological reasons. In this regard, the Basque writer showed how acutely aware he was of the importance of the *Sexenio democrático* for the socio-political configuration of his own times. Many years later, in the collected essays of

²⁷ There is an interesting article in the monthly journal *La lectura* (Madrid, September 1905), a very important cultural review of the early twentieth-century, entitled "Golfo: origen de esta palabra." It provides an historical account of the term, according to which the word "golfo" originated during the early fourteenth-century to refer to groups of robbers that plagued the roads. Besides this anecdotal fact, I am mostly interested in the author's reference to the modern use of the term: "La palabra *golfo* tomó carta de naturaleza en el vocabulario popular madrileño hace pocos años, á [sic] lo sumo doce ó [sic] catorce [1891, 1893]" (882). According to this, the term "golfo" would refer to the modern criminal, a sociological development deeply connected with the rise of the urban masses.

Divagaciones apasionadas (1924), he clearly stated the historical relevance of that time:

Yo soy uno de tantos españoles que, nacidos en el último tercio del siglo XIX, han vivido en un momento malo, confuso y de transición; en una época en que las pragmáticas de nuestros abuelos se acababan de descomponer, y en la que, al mismo tiempo, el intento de ordenar y modernizar España fracasaba en la restauración borbónica, establecida en 1876, en el reinado de Alfonso XII, y continuada después por la Regencia. (Baroja 5: 492)

As this quotation attests, Baroja's view of the *Sexenio democrático* implies the notion of failure, that *conciencia de fracaso* Torrecilla points out. This historical moment is defined by its transience; positivism and bourgeois values had just been shattered by the impulse of new, vitalistic philosophies in which will and chaos had superseded rationality and purpose. All that was solid (as Karl Marx—and Marshall Berman—would say) was indeed melting into thin air. Furthermore, the political hope of modernization and democratization that the *Sexenio democrático* brought about was aborted in the Restoration system. In such a view of the national past, the Carlist war presented itself as a mosaic where the tensions and anxieties of that time were problematized in the battlefield and, perhaps more importantly, in the minds and actions of the narrative subject of Spanish uneven modernity: the people. As I will show in the last chapter of my dissertation, “A Parody of Epic Proportions: the Subversion of the Heroic in Pío Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero*,” the novel explores all these tensions. Far from being an apolitical adventure tale, a *novela de acción* in which history—like a cardboard backdrop—remains quietly in the background, the novel constitutes an insightful reflection on the socio-political atmosphere of *fin de siglo*. Confronted

with the affected piety of Carlists and the hypocrisy of the Liberals, Zalacaín and his mentor, Tellagorri, present a systematic denunciation of social falacies and articulate an alternative program of action.

This introductory chapter has presented an interpretation of the historical development of the Carlist movement, from 1808 until the Second Carlist war (1872-1876), and a survey of the historical novel genre in Spain, since the Romantic imitations of Walter Scott until the modernist take on the genre by, among others, Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja's Carlist novels. It has also developed the theoretical and critical basis of the project. My dissertation studies historical novels written by three of the most important authors of the first half of twentieth-century Spain. I contend that through the historical novel genre, they critiqued their contemporary society because they interpreted the second Carlist war as the origins of Restoration Spain, and as the microcosm of the historical failure of Spanish modernity. Their take on the historical novel was mediated, however, by the use of the epic. As we have seen, the use of the epic emphasized the notion of failure. It was through the subversion of the epic that these writers related to a past which was constantly mythified by the official historical and political discourse. Restoration Spain and the institutionalized *caciquismo* of the Canovite Parliamentary system were constructed as the best possible outcome of national history. It could be argued that, for the modernist generation of 1898, the use of the epic in their historical narratives presented an ironic response to the official version of the national past (and, consequently, of the national present).

Community and Resistance: On the Uses of Carlism

in Miguel de Unamuno's *Paz en la Guerra*

Pero el suceso verdaderamente nuevo, verdaderamente imprevisto, el suceso que dejó más honda huella en mi memoria, fué el bombardeo de mi Bilbao, en 1874, el año mismo en que entré al Instituto. En él termina propiamente mi niñez y empieza mi juventud con el bachillerato. Diez años escasos tenía yo cuando a los carlistas, que tenían sitiado a Bilbao desde el día de Inocentes de 1873, se les ocurrió bombardearlo.

Miguel de Unamuno, *Recuerdos de niñez y mocedad Obras completas* 8: 129.

Miguel de Unamuno's early works, since the publication of his first article when he was only fifteen until his spiritual crisis of 1897, have traditionally been the least studied portion of his literary production. In recent years, however, Unamuno scholars have contributed to our understanding of this crucial time in the Basque writer's literary and ideological development. These scholars have analyzed Unamuno's relationship with an emerging Basque nationalism, and his collaboration with the Bilbao Socialist newspaper, *La lucha de clases*. As a consequence of their studies, *Paz en la Guerra* (1897), Unamuno's first novel, has received more critical attention than ever before. The novel relates the historical siege of Bilbao by the Carlist troops during the second Carlist war (1872-1876). This event, as we read in *Recuerdos de niñez y mocedad* (1908), was one of Unamuno's strongest memories.

In spite of the critical attention devoted to the novel, and to the ideological milieu of turn-of-the-century Bilbao, there is one aspect of the text that merits further analysis: the relationship of Unamuno with Carlism and, particularly, the uses of Carlism in his first novel. In this chapter, I will argue that Unamuno's take on Carlism, or what he called "Carlismo popular," is closer to his unorthodox notion of Socialism that has been previously acknowledged. Influenced by Herbert Spencer's *Social Statics* (1851), which he translated into Spanish in 1894, Unamuno stresses the importance of collective structures of feeling, which he sees as responsible for social change, rather than ideology. This passage of his own translation of Spencer's *Social Statics* presents his main thesis:

Las ideas no gobiernan ni trastornan al mundo; el mundo es gobernado y trastornado por sentimientos, a que las ideas no hacen más que servir de guía . . . Los deseos de los hombres son, sobre todo, lo que se hereda, pero sus opiniones son, sobre todo, adquiridas y dependen de condiciones ambientes. (Qtd. in Ereño Altuna, "La conciliación" 181)

Unamuno applied to Carlism the same ideas he found in the writings of the British philosopher. His article "Carlistas y liberales," written on 15 July 1887 in the *Revista de Vizcaya*, presents a clear contrast between Carlist political leaders, who ignored the real needs of the people, and Carlism as a collective structure of feeling, motivated not by the intellectual elites of the party, but by the people's natural dynamics:

Muy cómodo es alegar fanatismo, influencias clericales, ignorancia y otros lugares comunes muy socorridos, que sobre no explicar el hecho en cuestión necesitan ser explicados. Los promovedores de la rebelión aprovechan y dirigen un instinto preexistente, no le [sic] crean. (Qtd. In Ereño Altuna, *Escritos bilbaínos* 108)

I draw on recent works by José Antonio Ereño Altuna, Eugenio Luján Palma, and Jon Juaristi to frame Unamuno's interest in Carlism in the context of the most important influences of his early years: *fueros* and ethnopsychology.²⁸ Ereño Altuna, in particular, is relevant for this purpose. His numerous works on Unamuno's Socialism (he was a member of the Socialist party between 1894 and 1897, contributing with many articles to the Bilbao Socialist newspaper, *La lucha de clases*) show that the Basque writer's definition of Socialism had a clear ideological debt with Spencer ("La conciliación" 173). Viewed in this light, Unamuno's notion of popular Carlism owes much to works such as Achille Loria's *Analisi della proprietà capitalista* (1889), Henry George's *Progress and Poverty* (1893) or Joaquín Costa's *Oligarquía y caciquismo* (1902). These texts, as Litvak suggests, denounced the capitalist control of the land and ultimately prompted the Basque intellectual to join the Socialist party (*A Dream of Arcadia* 125). Agreeing with both Litvak and Ereño Altuna, I would aver that these influences also shaped his take on Carlism. These influences explain why he used this traditionalist movement to frame the narrative of his first novel. I argue,

²⁸ I will analyze in detail these two concepts in the following pages; nevertheless I will provide a brief working definition of both terms here. *Fueros* was the political movement that followed the abolition of the traditional Basque *fueros* (traditional, customary laws) by Cánovas in 1876. It tried to galvanize the Basque society around tradition and language (euskera), and was to be one of the most important sources of the emerging Basque nationalism. On the other hand, ethnopsychology (*Völkerpsychologie*, in the original German) was an academic subfield of philology that postulated the study of language as a means to understand the spirit of a particular people. Unamuno became interested in ethnopsychology during his college years in Madrid, as his doctoral dissertation (*Crítica del problema sobre el origen y prehistoria de la raza vasca*) attests.

therefore, that Unamuno understood popular Carlism (as opposed to political, structured Carlism) as the natural expression of a people who, confronted with an alienating modernization that challenged their traditional ways of life, responded with the recourse of the war.

This last point, the interpretation of the Carlist war as the intrahistorical expression of the people, is clearly articulated in a passage from *El Porvenir de Espana* (1898), the epistolary exchange between Unamuno and Angel Ganivet that—according to many scholars—inaugurated the literary contributions of the *fin de siglo* generation. Unamuno writes the following:

Se ha perdido la inteligencia del lenguaje propio del pueblo, lenguaje silencioso y elocuente, y se ha querido que hable en los comicios, donde, como dice usted [Ganivet] muy bien, no sabe responder. Pedirle al pueblo que resuelva por el voto la orientación política que le conviene, es pretender que sepa fisiología de la digestión todo el que digiere. Como no se sabe preguntarle, no responde, y como no habla en votos, lenguaje que le es extraño, cuando quiere algo habla en armas, que es lo que hicieron mis paisanos en la última guerra civil. (331-32)

My analysis provides a reading of the text through the prism of popular Carlism. In doing so, I hope to contribute to the existing criticism on Unamuno's early years by stressing the importance of Carlism in Unamuno's understanding of key concepts in this stage of his intellectual development, like *intrahistoria* and Socialism. Along these lines, I also hope to place *Paz en la guerra* in the place it merits, as one of the most important examples of Spanish modernist prose, and an articulation of *fin de siglo* crisis.

In the aforementioned *Recuerdos de niñez y mocedad* (1908), Unamuno remembers an historical event that would shape his early ideology:

A poco de acabar yo mi primer año de bachillerato, el 21 de julio de 1876, siendo Cánovas del Castillo presidente del Consejo de Ministros, se dictó la ley abolicionista de los Fueros, cesaron las Juntas Generales del Señorío en Guernica, se empezó a echar quintas, se estancó el tabaco, etc. Y en medio de la agitación de espíritus que a esa medida se siguió fue formándose mi espíritu. (8: 167)

In spite of coming from a liberal family (his father, Félix de Unamuno Larraza, had been a liberal councilman in the Bilbao town hall), the adolescent Unamuno steadily veered toward the *Sociedades Euskalerríacas*, defending *fueros* (Luján Palma 24). These civic associations were born after the suppression of the *fueros*, and gathered around the figure of the president of the *Diputación de Vizcaya*, Fermín de Sagarmínaga. They argued for a union between Carlists and Liberals in order to achieve the promulgation of the *fueros*. Infused by this enthusiasm, the young Unamuno (he was just fifteen at the time) wrote his first article, “La unión constituye la fuerza,” in *El noticiero Bilbaíno* on 27 December 1879 (Juaristi, “guerra e intrahistoria” 43). Forty-five years later (in 1924) he publishes “Mi primer artículo” in the same newspaper, where he remembers this first work:

Me sentí obligado a exhortar a mis paisanos, a mis conciudadanos, a la unión, a olvidar las diferencias entre liberales y carlistas— entonces no había más—, a borrar el recuerdo del 2 de mayo de 1874, a formar todos un solo frente bajo la enseñanza de Euskalerría. (Luján Palma 64-91)

However, between 1879 and 1888 Unamuno abandoned his *fueros* principles in what Luján Palma has called his most important crisis (16-24). This crisis, that was fully articulated in Unamuno’s doctoral dissertation (Ereño Altuna, “El Unamuno de la tesis” 52), is explained by two interconnected events: his moving to Madrid to study *Filosofía y Letras* and his return, after having

completed his doctoral studies, to his native Bilbao, a city that had already transformed itself into a booming, industrial center (102). As a matter of fact, the origin of *Paz en la guerra* may very well lay in Unamuno's return to his native hometown of Bilbao after his studies in Madrid.

During his period in the national capital (1880-1884), Unamuno rarely felt at home. Overtly critical of Madrid's metropolitan allure, he constantly idealized his native *bochito*, in a dichotomical reworking of the city-countryside binary.²⁹ In an article written in 1902, "Ciudad y campo: de mis impresiones de Madrid," Unamuno remembers the city he first discovered in 1880: "Cada una de mis estancias—nunca largas—en Madrid, restaura y como que alimenta mis reservas de tristeza y melancolía" (1: 1031), and some pages later "Madrid pulula en vagabundos y atrae al estéril vagabundaje callejero. La mejor defensa es huir, huir al desierto a encontrarse uno consigo mismo en él" (1: 1037). The idealized Bilbao he contraposes to Madrid has become a major industrial center. Industrialization and immigration have turned a middle-sized, provincial town of 32,000 inhabitants in 1877 into an important city of 83,000 at the turn of the century. The stunning growth rate was 154% in just twenty-three years (Rabaté 43-44). By any means, the Bilbao of 1897, when *Paz en la guerra* was published, was not the Bilbao of the 1873-74 siege depicted in the novel.

²⁹ The word "bochito," which Unamuno uses quite frequently in several essays to talk about his native hometown, is a Basque term ("botxo" in Euskera) roughly meaning "hole."

In *La imitación colectiva* (1996), Jesús Torrecilla has explained the mechanics of the dichotomy tradition-modernity in the Spanish culture of the early twentieth century. He argues that the traditionalist vogue must be seen, firstly, as a reaction to the imposition of foreign cultural models and, secondly as a reappropriation of those models as authentically Spanish (40). In other words, Torrecilla observes a strive to naturalize modernity, so that it becomes less traumatic. This process corresponds to what Michael P. Iarocci has called “the symbolic amputation of Spain from modernity” (8). Removed from the place of enunciation, Spain became a European otherness, an image of the past. Under such conditions, it was only natural that it would respond defensively to modern Europe (12). Modernization, thus, arrived late in Spain. Only after the Liberal Revolution of 1868 did democracy, industrialization, urbanization, and social reform fully arrive in the country (Johnson 123). In opposition to the politics of the Restoration (1874-1931), Spanish intellectuals engaged in a task of cultural critique, defined by their rejection of official culture (i.e. history, politics, and nationalism) and their articulation of an assertive space of national identity and collective practices.³⁰

³⁰ I take the dates of Monarchic Restoration in very broad terms. Strictly speaking, the Restoration, as it was devised by Cánovas, entered in a period of deep crisis with his assassination in 1897. After the loss of the war in 1898, the Restoration tried to survive with reforms within the system, under the leadership of Prime Ministers Canalejas and Maura. As this last politician put it, “o revolución desde arriba o revolución desde abajo,” clearly implying the need for social reforms, and the growing tensions of the popular masses. In spite of the obvious attrition of the system, I prefer—for clarity’s sake—to date the end of the Restoration in 1931, with the promulgation of the Second Republic and the consequent expulsion of the king.

The process of modernization brought about an inevitable decay of traditional lifestyles and communal practices. This loss, together with the social anxieties caused by the crisis of 1898, renewed interest in the *Romancero* and the oral traditions (Jurkevich 22). The most important scholar to work in this line was Ramón Menéndez Pidal (1869-1968), with his studies of the epic, ballads and the history of the Spanish language. Other intellectuals investigated alternative areas of influence of national folklore, like Joaquín Costa, who studied the economic and juridical tradition of Spain in several books and even proposed, as Jurkevich has noted, a regenerative program for Spain based on its oral traditions in *Introducción a un tratado de política sacado textualmente de los refranes, romanceros y gestas de la Península* (22).

This trend was mirrored in the field of political theory. As Michael Tratner has argued in *Modernism and Mass Politics* (1995), the surfacing of the masses implied new forms of thinking the nation. In opposition with nineteenth-century liberalism—which emphasized the nation as a contract between the nation-state and its citizens—the twentieth century witnessed the emergence of collectivist political theories (3-4). These conflicts between liberalism and collectivism all pointed to the core problem of the re-definition of nationality at the turn of the century, and the nascent concept of the nation “as an ethnic and social unit, defined by a shared culture, history and (perhaps) biological inheritance” (Lewis 6).

Unamuno would contribute actively to this intellectual debate. He collaborated with Joaquín Costa in *Derecho consuetudinario y economía popular*

de España (1895), where he wrote the Vizcaya section. In the same year, he also published several articles that had appeared before in the press under the title *En torno al casticismo*. In this text, he explains the distinction between *historia* and *intrahistoria* through the image of the sea, where the surface (*historia*) is opposed to the inner currents (*intrahistoria*). Unamuno will elaborate this distinction with oppositional images of islands and oceans, of frozen glaciers and deep waters (Valdés 240-41). All this imagery reveals, as Labanyi suggests, a reconciliation of the contradictory notions of change and continuity through the natural image of the sea (qtd. in Valdés 141). In my analysis of *Paz en la guerra*, I will argue that this image is a constant presence in the text. The myriad of allusions to water, either in the form of sea, rain, or tears, articulate a reflection on historical recurrence and cyclical patterns.

En torno al casticismo fuses two scholarly traditions; on the one hand, it elaborates a positivist/historical analysis of climate and geography as main determinants of the national character, in the vogue of the regeneracionistas.³¹ On the other hand, his text is an ethnopsychological approach that analyzes the

³¹ The literature of European decadence, inaugurated most notably by Max Nordau's *Degeneration* (1892), the growing intellectual criticism of the Canovite parliamentary system, and the crisis of 1898 generated a series of texts that tried to propose practical reforms to the socio-political situation of the country. Beginning with Lucas Mallada's *Los males de la patria* (1890), other titles include Macías Picavea's *El problema nacional* (1899), Damián Isern's *Del desastre nacional y sus causas* (1899), and Luis Morote's *La moral de la derrota* (1900). Joaquín Costa would become the most important *regeneracionista*, deeply influencing the young Unamuno.

national *Volksgeist* (Jurkevich 19). His main theoretical contribution therein is the coinage of a key term in the Spanish intellectual discourse: *intrahistoria*.

This term tries to dismiss grand historical narratives as verbose and false. Unamuno's critical gaze shifts from external historical events to personal reactions to those events, from learned history to lived history. *Intrahistoria* is not a synonym of "tradition"—in the fossilized, folkloric, and localist guise of the *casticistas* (i.e., cultural conservatives)—but rather, it implies what he would later call the *tradición eterna*: the permanent traits that, resistant to change, are kept as cultural constants. *Intrahistoria*, as Morón Arroyo points out, is both a problematic and ambiguous term, because it equates the notion of "humanity" (that is, the ideal of history that the rationalists had created in the eighteenth century and that had to be achieved through culture) with the illiterate masses. In spite of this semantic instability, the term effectively elaborates a historiographic critique, since history books do not reach this deeper level, the door is open for literature to (re)construct the historical experience (Morón Arroyo 163).

In addition to the influence of Costa in Unamuno's *intrahistoria*, some scholars, like Gayana Jurkevich, have stressed its connections with Jung's collective unconscious. Even if Unamuno did not read Jung, as evidence seems to suggest, the connections between both notions might be explained as partaking of the same philosophical outlook (Jurkevich 55). The dichotomy between a real, hidden formation and an artificial, external construct seems to pervade turn-of-the-century thought, from Marxist distinction between structure and superstructure to psychoanalysis's emphasis on repressed desires. In any case,

Unamuno's association of *intrahistoria* with the sea presents an uncanny resemblance with Jung's imagery of the collective unconscious, where the symbol of the sea is prevalent (Jurkevich 50).

Its connection with the Hegelian concept of *Volksgeist* is even clearer. Both terms emphasize the collective historical agency. However, in spite of their obvious similarities, one fundamental difference remains: Unamuno's dialectic does not search for a synthesis (García Mateo 477-78). He opposes, as Ribas has pointed out, *intrahistoria* to history, not to other people's *intrahistoria*. This confrontation contradicts the synthesis of different *Volksgeister* in the universal *Weltgeist*, in other words, whereas Hegel regards history as the place of resolution, Unamuno's *intrahistoria* is ahistorical (i.e., eternal) by definition (Ribas 30).

The notion of *intrahistoria* has been regarded by some critics as subordinate to the Restoration political system (Roberts 70-71). As Roberts argues, Unamuno shares Cánovas's desire to resist extremism of any sort and to install a stagnant *status quo* in Spanish society. Unamuno, he concludes, would be subservient to this goal by eschewing both the *casticistas* and the radical *européistas*, as well as by articulating a middle ground of political feasibility. As captivating as this is, my own reading argues that Unamuno clearly opposed Restoration Spain. The concept of *intrahistoria* implied a Europeization (i.e., modernization) of Spain, but without losing local idiosyncrasies. Moreover, this notion presupposes the overcoming of national frontiers, as Tuñón de Lara

reminds us (148). Unamuno, after all, had expressed this idea clearly in *En torno al casticismo*: “La tradición eterna es tradición universal, cosmopolita” (1: 797).

In order to argue in favor of the fundamental connection between Unamuno and the Canovite system, as Roberts implies, one has to ignore his numerous and harsh criticisms not only of Cánovas, but also of attempts to change the system from within, in the pseudo-regeneration of—among others—Silvela and Polavieja.³² Unamuno can hardly be more explicit than he is in “La crisis actual del patriotismo español,” an article he published in *Nuestro Tiempo*, Madrid, 25 December 1905, where he reveals Restoration parliamentarism as a sham.

Las únicas uniones fecundas son las que se hacen sobre un fondo, no ya de diferencia, sino de oposición. Un parlamento sólo es fecundo cuando luchan de veras entre sí los partidos que lo componen, y el nuestro es infecundo porque en él no hay semejante lucha, sino que todos se entienden entre bastidores y salen a tablas a representar la ridícula comedia de la oposición. (1: 1290)

This emphasis on opposition will be revisited obsessively in his first novel. We know that Unamuno worked for approximately ten years on his first novel. In his letters to Pedro de Múgica—an old acquaintance from Bilbao, then living in Germany as a professor of Philology at the University of Berlin—he

³² Francisco Silvela (1843-1905) was an important figure in the Restoration political system. *Ministro de gobernación* (the equivalent of Secretary of State) in the last Cánovas government, he criticized the latter openly and, after his assassination in 1897, published the article “Sin pulso” in the newspaper *El Tiempo* (1898). This article assumed a *regeneracionista* tone and proposed several governmental reforms. General Camilo Polavieja (1838-1914) was a member of the Silvela administration (1899) and proposed a series of reforms in a manifesto backed, for the most part, by the Catalan bourgeoisie.

often comments on the painstaking process of gathering information and planning out his future *Paz en la guerra*.³³ The fact that his first novel was being drafted during the same time of *En torno al casticismo*, helps to explain why they share so many points of contact. Both are motivated by an intrahistoric analysis, and the novel can be read as a fictionalization of the theoretical postulates in his articles.

Critics of *Paz en la guerra* have noted the shift from the individual to the multiple subject, in that regard, the novel articulates a collective protagonist, a *Pueblo*, in a time of conflict and re-definition of social, economic and national categories. In a letter to Múgica, dated 26 July 1890, Unamuno summarized *Paz en la guerra* as “una novela en que se hace la psicología de un individuo y de un pueblo y una raza” (qtd. in Fernández Larrain 122). But what did Unamuno understand by *Pueblo*? The answer, I propose, has to be sought in a contemporary theory that provided him the theoretical framework to develop his own concepts: ethnopsychology or *Völkerpsychologie*.

Francisco LaRubia-Prado has studied in detail the influence of this discipline in the young Unamuno. In *Una encrucijada española: Ensayos críticos sobre Miguel de Unamuno y José Ortega y Gasset* (2005), he argues that the Basque writer was not interested in the notion of State—the focus of the social contract that Enlightenment philosophers articulated—but in that of *Pueblo* (LaRubia-Prado 35). Unamuno would express this interest very clearly in *En torno al casticismo*:

³³ For his correspondence with Pedro de Múgica see Fernández Larrain (1965).

La doctrina del pacto . . . es la que, después de todo, presenta la razón intra-histórica de la patria, su verdadera fuerza creadora, en acción siempre . . . Porque hay en formación, tal vez inacabable, un pacto inmanente, un verdadero pacto social intra-histórico, no formulado, que es efectiva constitución interna de cada pueblo. (qtd. in LaRubia-Prado 34)

In other words, this intrahistoric contract is based on both tradition and continuity (LaRubia-Prado 34-35). *Völkerpsychologie* began to gain critical agency with the works of Heymann Steinthal and Moritz Lazarus, particularly through the journal *Zeitschrift für Völkerpsychologie und Sprachwissenschaft*, founded by them in 1860.³⁴ Some years later, Wilhelm Wundt will become the leading expert in the field, with the publication of his essay *Ziele und Wege der Völkerpsychologie* in 1886 (LaRubia-Prado 28-29).³⁵ The impact of ethnopsychology in the Spanish intellectual arena was soon recognized by Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, who defined the new field in the following terms:

Al estudio abstracto e ideológico del hombre se ha añadido el estudio concreto de los hombres, no solo según sus semejanzas, sino también según sus diferencias. Así ha nacido la psicología étnica, la *Völkerpsychologie*, tan fecunda ya en resultados para la crítica literaria y para la lingüística. (qtd. in LaRubia-Prado 2005: 28-29)

The observation of the fundamental utility of this discipline to the study of language and literature was exemplified by works of Menéndez Pidal like *La epopeya castellana a través de la literatura española* (1910) and *Orígenes del español* (1926). In this regard, the young Unamuno was deeply influenced by

³⁴ *Journal for the Study of Ethnopsychology and Language*

³⁵ *Goals and Directions of Ethnopsychology*

Moritz and Lazarus during the formative years of his doctoral studies in Madrid. His dissertation, *Crítica del problema sobre el origen y prehistoria de la raza vasca*, demonstrates this intellectual interest (LaRubia-Prado 29). Likewise, in his letters to Pedro de Múgica, Unamuno acknowledges his intellectual debt to ethnopsychology:

Como el lenguaje es la expresión del pensamiento espontáneo del pueblo [,] es el reflejo más fiel de la psicología del pueblo, y la evolución del pensamiento en ninguna parte se estudia mejor que en el pueblo. Este sentido, el más hondo, fecundo y profundo de la filología, es el que ahí [Alemania] le dieron Lazarus y Steintal, los creadores de la *Völkerpsychologie*, así como el gran antropólogo Waitz. Mis estudios filológicos me han servido de mucho para inducciones psicológicas y son el gran contrapeso . . . Saber permutaciones de sonidos y cambios de forma de poco vale si no se aplica algún día a algo este saber. La enorme eflorescencia de los estudios filológicos formará una ciencia robusta y sólida que servirá de base para nuevos estudios que aclaren la psicología humana y hagan que el hombre se conozca mejor cada día. (Qtd. in Fernandez Larrain 100-101)

This quotation shows Unamuno's growing dissatisfaction with philological studies per se. The theory of ethnopsychology allowed him to study society through language. This concentration on the *Pueblo* as the keeper of the national cultural genome bears the obvious stamp of Hegelian *Volksgeist*. However, beyond the genealogy of the term, I am primarily interested in its significance in the contemporary debate between tradition and modernity, and the role it plays (narratologically disguised as Carlism) in the construction of *Paz en la guerra*.

Carlism must be understood, as Olson (23) and Canal (10-11) have suggested, as the Spanish version of nineteenth-century counter revolutionary practices. The reactionary ideology of French royalists (*Chouans*), Portuguese

miguelismo, or the Napolitan legitimism of Francesco II—opposed to the downfall of *Ancien Régime* and the social structure it entailed—share the same rejection of the incipient bourgeois hegemony, and the same staunch defense of traditional values and privileges.³⁶ One of the most important aspects of these reactionary movements was their vindication of traditional, customary laws against the legal codification that Liberal regimes asserted throughout the nineteenth century. In this regard, Carlism galvanized popular support of local *fueros*, in stark opposition to the legal unification of the country finally crystallized in the civil legal code of 1889, but initiated in the 1834 Royal Statute, and the centralizing policies of the Liberal Constitution of 1837, which abolished the *fueros* and organized an alternative system of provincial delegations (García de Cortázar and Montero 17-18).

Throughout the articles of his earlier period, and even later, Unamuno equates Carlism with collectivism. In his article “La crisis actual del patriotismo español” (1905) we read the following: “El carlismo fue en lo que le dio honda vitalidad una protesta contra el liberalismo absolutista y huero...contra la manía uniformadora y centralista, contra todo lo que fue hacer una nación categorial y a la francesa” (1: 1290). Carlism was, thus, a site of resistance against an imposed

³⁶ *Miguelistas* were the supporters of the king Miguel I, that opposed the reign of his niece, María II, in the context of the Portuguese Civil War (1828-1834). The parallelism of this Portuguese war with the first Carlist war in Spain is apparent. On the other hand, supporters of the Napolitan king Francesco II fought and lost against the troops of Garibaldi during the battle of Volturmo (1 October 1860).

modernization. This modernization was seen, furthermore, as unjust and foreign, completely alien from traditional social practices and customs.

It is important to note, however, that the notion of Carlism he defended here was not the political party, but popular (i.e., intrahistorical) Carlism. The latter was seen “con su fondo *socialista* y federal y hasta anárquico,” as one of the “íntimas expresiones del pueblo español.”³⁷ Political Carlism, on the other hand, was sharply criticized as “ese tumor escolástico, esa miseria de bachilleres, canónigos, curas y barberos ergotistas y racionadores” (1:1291).

Unamuno’s studies of popular economy and history had convinced him, as Pérez de la Dehesa notes, of the existence of a popular agrarian collectivism, representing a spontaneous economic organization (Pérez de la Dehesa 95). In this regard, he criticized the political decisions of liberalism that attacked this pre-modern organization, chiefly via *desamortización*.³⁸ He also criticized the imposition of a unified civil code upon a people that had ruled themselves theretofore through custom and tradition:

¿Puede vivir sano un pueblo en que se promulga un código civil sin haber apenas tenido en cuenta sus costumbres jurídicas y su derecho consuetudinario? No se le pregunta al pueblo más que por el sufragio, en una lengua que no entiende. El, por su parte, calla y sufre, y cuando el exceso de su malestar le impulsa a quejarse, lo hace tomando las armas y yéndose al monte. ¿Quién se preocupa aquí de llegar al alma del carlismo y ponerla a la luz? (“De regeneración en lo justo” 3: 701)

³⁷ The link between Carlism and Socialism is explicit here. My emphasis.

³⁸ *Desamortización* refers to a series of policies meant to redistribute Church land properties, in an effort to bolster bourgeois control of these lands and promote productivity. For a thorough analysis of this process of land redistribution see Bahamonde and Martínez.

Gonzalo Navajas, in his *Unamuno desde la post-modernidad* (1992), has explained this aspect of Unamuno's thought with clarity and eloquence:

A la nación abstracta e incomprensible se opone la patria chica asequible; la complejidad del país es desplazada por la facilidad y simplificación de la vida de la ciudad de provincias, el pueblo, el terruño de la infancia . . . En el redescubrimiento de la comunidad social y cultural mínima, Unamuno se ve movido por un impulso regresivo hacia un Ur-cronos único, un punto privilegiado en el tiempo del pasado, en el que el hombre era dichoso sin cuestionarse a sí mismo y su medio (Navajas 103-4).

For Unamuno, Carlism meant an instance of intrahistoria, an example of the collective organization that interested him so much. He defined Carlism as “un irrumpir de lo intrahistórico en la historia” (“En torno al casticismo” 1: 868) and as “el representante, con todo lo bueno, pero también con todo lo malo, de la vieja y castiza democracia rural española” (“Sobre la tumba de Costa.” Qtd. in Tuñón de Lara 224-25). Elsewhere, he highlighted the “fondo grande de socialismo rural” in the last Carlist war (Carta de Unamuno a Joaquín Costa. 31 de octubre de 1895. Qtd. in Pérez de la Dehesa, *Política y Sociedad* 120). He saw in this movement an economic, social, and ideological network of resistance to modernity. It is important to note, however, that when we speak of Unamuno's opposition to modernity, we do not mean opposition to any and all modernization, but rather, to the sort promulgated by the Restoration political system. This model, Unamuno believed, contradicted the soul of the Spanish people, imposing alien forms of economic and legal organization. His own model implied a national modernization, not the blind mimicry of imported solutions. “Tenemos que

européizarnos y chapuzarnos de pueblo,” he wrote in *En torno al casticismo* (1: 867).

Jean-Claude Rabaté has studied Unamuno’s understanding of Socialism during his first years as Professor in Salamanca. In a series of articles written for the local newspaper *La Democracia*, Unamuno explains the meaning of Socialism through, first, a rejection of orthodox Marxist formalism and, second, an emphasis on its collective and popular undertones:

El movimiento [socialista] surge de más hondo. Socialistas ha habido siempre, y el socialismo ha cobrado fuerzas y se ha hecho una aspiración consciente para las masas . . . El socialismo es una aspiración más que una doctrina, se nutre de los ricos y poderosos fondos subconscientes del pueblo, deriva de sentimientos vagos, libres de la atadura de la idea, lo sienten más que lo comprenden. (“El movimiento socialista VI.” 27 marzo 1892. Qtd. in Rabaté 51)

This quotation reveals salient connections with Carlism.³⁹ His interest in both is to be explained, following Rabaté, as authentic and spontaneous manifestations of the collective spirit of the people, with regard to the rigid and hierarchical organizational principles of Restoration political parties (Rabaté 117).

Intrinsically linked with his notion of Carlism, the concept of war is fundamental in Unamuno’s early thought. War is seen as the basic mechanism of progress, advancement is only possible through confrontation and struggle. This constant conflict, clearly drawn from Darwin’s evolutionary theory and Hegel’s

³⁹ Unamuno avoided explicitly speaking about both Socialism and Carlism in terms of political parties. In the series of articles entitled “El movimiento socialista” that he wrote in *La Democracia*, he talked of Socialism as a “movimiento” and of Carlism as a “comunión.” In doing so, he emphasized the popular and collective components of both ideologies.

dialectics, is epitomized in Christianity. During his speech on the Juegos Florales of Almería (1903) he develops this concept clearly:

“El que no naciere de nuevo no verá el reino de Dios,” decía el Cristo, y nacer de nuevo es nacer a diario, es convertir la vida en un nacer continuo, en un continuo cambiar. Y cabe así lograr reposo; no el del estéril lago helado, sino el del río corriente . . . Olvidamos que el Cristo, mensajero de paz eterna, dijo que no venía a la tierra a traer paz, paz temporal y aparente, sino disensión, y que por él estarían en adelante cinco divididos en cada casa, tres contra dos y dos contra tres. (9: 118-20)

Along these lines, Unamuno also advocated for a national civil war, defined by a fruitful debate of ideas in order to overcome the sclerotic nature of national culture: “Porque España está muy necesitada de una nueva Guerra civil, pero civil de veras, no con armas de fuego ni de filo, sino con armas de ardiente palabra, que es la espada del espíritu” (9: 116).

The originality of such a system, as Jon Juaristi points out, lies in being constructed on the impossibility of reconciling the contradictions. The civil war is seen as the very essence of the nation (“guerra e intrahistoria” 36-37). This institutionalization of the civil war may be explained by the enormous influence that *fuerrista* literature had on the young Unamuno. In this sense, Juaristi argues that the historical *folletín* of that time had created a literary institutionalization of civil war (46).⁴⁰ The historical exploration of the last Carlist civil war (1872-

⁴⁰ *Fuerrista* literature flourished during Unamuno’s youth, following the prohibition of Basque custom laws by the Cánovas government. Jon Juaristi has pointed out the importance of Francisco Navarro Villoslada’s *Amaya o los vascos en el siglo VIII* (1879) as an intertext of *Paz en la guerra*. The origin of the Basque nation lies not in a fight against an external enemy, but in a civil war. In this sense, the war between Christian and pagan Basques depicted in Navarro Villoslada’s novel was a clear metaphor of the conflict between Carlists and Liberals (Juaristi, “Guerra e intrahistoria” 60).

1876) was an attractive endeavor. Such an historical novel implied, on the one hand, a systematic analysis of the clash between traditionalism and modernization. On the other hand, this genre allowed Unamuno to address the roots of an uneven Spanish modernity. In other words, the Carlist civil wars were for Unamuno the foundation of the deep dissatisfaction with the modernizing policies of the Restoration.

Paz en la guerra articulates a rhetoric of remembrance, a dialogical relation between history and memory. All the characters tell their version of the past, either to themselves, in a brilliant example of stream of consciousness—most notably in the case of Pedro Antonio—or to other characters.⁴¹ The novel constantly problematizes the writing of history; trapped in an eternal recurrence of atavistic hatred and violence, the characters repeat behavioral patterns set up well before their births. However, they increasingly question them. They develop a critical awareness that leads them to confront the official rhetoric of grand historical narratives with their own experience.

The novel opposes two Basque families in the Bilbao of the last Carlist war: the Iturriondo's and the Arana's. The Iturriondo's were Carlists. Pedro Antonio, the father, fought in the first confrontation (1833-1840), while the Arana's supported the Liberals. Furthermore, the geographical and economic backgrounds of the families reinforce this ideological division: the Iturriondo's had rural origins in the Vizcaya province, while the Arana were urban *bilbaínos*.

⁴¹ Franco Moretti has talked about stream of consciousness as the linguistic representation of turn-of-the-century ideological crisis (183-95).

Likewise, although both Ignacio (Pedro Antonio's son) and Juan (the elder of the Arana's) spoke Spanish as their first language, Euskera was the vernacular among the Iturriondo. The novel shows the experience of the war as seen through the eyes of Ignacio, and the hardships of the Bilbao siege through the everyday life of both families.

Francisco Caudet has argued that the second Carlist war was, to a large extent, an act of revenge by those who fought (and lost) the first one (Caudet 258). In that regard, the memory of the lost war is ever present in the novel and falls over the younger generation, who carries the sacred duty to avenge their elders. There is a sort of remembrance obsession throughout the text, as the burden of the past mediates all the experiences of the younger generation. Past and present are thus constantly juxtaposed in the novel through the use of language, of words and (perhaps more importantly) of silences and veiled allusions.

Pedro Antonio and his generational comrades dialectically re-fight their lost war in the *tertulias*. The image of the old veteran stirring the half-consumed logs at the fireplace is a graphic reminder of the urge to remember, to keep the fire of the traditionalist cause still burning (Caudet 403). Some years later, Unamuno will reflect on this burden of rage passed from generation to generation:

Las noticias que de la guerra oigan nuestros hijos pequeños, los grabados que de ella vean los olvidarán de seguro; pero lo que no olvidarán, y aunque lo olviden palpitará viviente en su oído, serán las expresiones de odio, de rencor, de desprecio que sobre unos u otros de los que luchan nos oigan a nosotros, los padres. (8: 346)

Words are given a prevalent status in the configuration of this intergenerational chain of hate. The youth inherit a lexicon, a vocabulary that conveys all the

frustrations of their elders. The members of this lively debate are Pedro Antonio, his brother the priest Don Pascual, don José María—who will later play an important role as a collector of funds for the Carlist cause—don Braulio, Gambelu (a close friend from the times of the first war) and the elderly Carlist officer don Eustaquio.

I propose a threefold division of the tertulia's gatherings as those before the Liberal Revolution, during it, and after 1868. Within these sub-groups, the participants argue about the most important historical events of the time. Before the revolution, the meetings are defined by a melancholic remembrance of the old war, and a lament for its loss. The debates taking place during the Liberal Revolution are given special attention by Unamuno (who devotes ten pages to this *tertulia*), and where issues like universal suffrage, freedom of the press and religion, and the abolition of the death penalty are discussed with the utmost horror by the participants. All these matters were part of the revolutionary program, and undoubtedly triggered a strong traditionalist reaction. Finally, the international events of 1870 (the Parisian commune and the anti-liberal backlash of Pope Pius IX) are juxtaposed with the growing local tensions that would result in the outbreak of the war.

The war Unamuno deals with in the text is the last Carlist confrontation (1872-1876) but, at a deeper level, the war he talks about is not the outer, historical conflict but the inner experience of historical change. The war he describes is the clash, felt by every character in the text, between their traditional ways and the violent and catastrophic irruption of modernity in their lives. This

irruption of modernity is signalled in several images: the juxtaposition urban-rural, the written word of newspapers and historical documents, as opposed to the spoken word of traditional songs and friendly conversations (such as the tertulias held at Pedro Antonio's house) or the war itself, experienced by the soldiers as a long, dull, and tedious walk from nowhere to nowhere.

Urban and rural spaces are constantly structured as opposing realities in the novel, two different worlds. Whereas nature is depicted as “calmosos campos verdes que reposan al cariño desigual del cielo libre, bajo las eternas montañas de silencio” (273-74), the modern world is seen as constant destruction: “¡Qué mundo el de las ciudades, donde solo piensa el hombre en deshacer lo hecho y en cambiar el perdurable curso de las cosas!” (273-74). This dichotomy between the city of Bilbao and the surrounding countryside is also articulated as a series of oppositions between the written word and the oral word: “Metieron a Ignacio en el escritorio . . . El odio al escritorio fuéese convirtiéndose en odio a Bilbao, a todo poblado” (165). In Pedro Antonio's gatherings, don Braulio, speaking with his friend Gambelu, expresses his dismay at the degenerative changes in traditional society that seem to forebode the end of times: “Usted lo sabrá, pero esto va mal...Las aldeanas gastan zapatito bajo y camisa de lienzo de pasiega...¡Estos ferrocarriles y las dichas fábricas!” (204).

We have seen above how the rural space was expressed in terms of silence. This image is also used by Unamuno to describe the liberal revolution of 1868, playing with a famous motto used by General Prim to summarize his

revolutionary ideals: “destruir, en medio del estruendo, los obstáculos.”⁴² In a passage in the novel we read this brief outline of the Revolution:

Novaliches fue vencido por los insurrectos, y al saberlo se levantó Madrid, dimitió el Ministerio, le sustituyó la Junta Revolucionaria y al grito de “¡Abajo los Borbones!” se derribaron los escudos de la dinastía, se asaltó el ministerio de gobernación y, *en medio del estruendo, quedó en pie lo existente.*⁴³ (183)

In another passage, Unamuno brilliantly links the notion of silence, sweat, and salt to emphasize the failure of the 1868 liberal Revolution: “El día de la Gloriosa había sido para ellos como los demás días, como los demás sudaron sobre la tierra viva que engendra y devora hombres y civilizaciones. Eran los silenciosos la sal de la tierra, los que no gritan en la historia” (220).

From the vantage point of the industrialized city, Unamuno’s gaze is fixated on an earlier Bilbao, one where the tensions between the liberal bourgeoisie and traditional sectors (peasantry, clergy, shop owners) are clearly displayed in the context of the last Carlist war. This dichotomy is further elaborated through the use of two modern literary techniques: an innovative use of time and the multiplicity of viewpoints. As Banfield explains, modernist time-thinking marked an inherent disconnection between public/objective time and private/subjective time (48). In *Paz en la guerra*, time is expressed through the

⁴² General Juan Prim (1814-1870) was the leading figure in the Liberal Revolution of 1868.

⁴³ My emphasis.

characters' subjectivity. Pedro Antonio's remembrance of the first Carlist war, for example, effectively breaks away from a linear chronology. The order of the chapters further reinforces the subjective experience of time, since they are not progressive. Additionally, the novel elaborates a polyphonic structure, where the characters' voices overlap (quite literally, in the tertulia scenes) with one another.

Not without irony, Unamuno describes Pedro Antonio's telling of his experiences in the first war:

¡Cómo recordaba Pedro Antonio los siete años épicos! Era de oírle narrar, con voz quebrada al fin, la muerte de don Tomás, que es como siempre llamaba a Zumalacárregui, el caudillo coronado por la muerte. Narraba otras veces el sitio de Bilbao “de este mismo Bilbao donde vivimos”, o la noche de Luchana, o la victoria de Oriamendi, y era, sobre todo, de oírle referir el convenio de Vergara, cuando Maroto y Espartero se abrazaron en medio de los sembrados y entre los viejos ejércitos que pedían a voces una paz tan dulce tras tanto y tan duro guerrar. ¡Cuánto polvo habían tragado! (129-30)

On the first hand, Unamuno uses the term “épico” to describe a war that clearly was not (except in Pedro Antonio's memories of it). On the other hand, and articulating a debasing comment on the epic quality of the war, Pedro Antonio remembers the dusty roads and the long walks that his belicose experience entailed. In another instance of structural parallelism, the leitmotif of the neverending road will be later refashioned by his son, Ignacio, during the next war.

This subjectivization of the historical narration is further emphasized by the fragmentary nature of individual experience. In a key passage, Ignacio tries to remember his first skirmish and is only able to retrieve shreds of a battle, bits and pieces of an elusive and abstract whole:

¿Había sido aquello combate guerrero? Empezó a creerlo al ver heridos, y que lo decían sus compañeros, comentando la acción, y regateando a los castellanos el mérito de haber tomado la ermita. Cada cual contaba una hazaña o un detalle, e Ignacio sentía la clara conciencia de haberlo presenciado. Y poco a poco iba construyendo la imagen de la acción, incorporando en sus vaguísmas impresiones los detalles oídos, evocando gritos, posturas de combatientes que caen, gestos supremos . . . El sólo recordaba, como de recuerdo vivo y propio, la marcha por los argomales, el estorbo de la maleza al andar, y aquellos soldados que se retiraban apuntando. (282)

In a clear contrast with the grand historiographical narratives of war, where all the actions fall into a well-defined categorical scheme of causes and consequences, Ignacio can only experience fragments. Thus his disappointment when the reality of “gritos, posturas de combatientes que caen, gestos supremos . . .” does not amount to much of an epic.

Later in the novel, Pedro Antonio visits Guernica, where don Carlos would endorse the Basque fueros.⁴⁴ Everything he sees and hears triggers a sudden memory in the old soldier: “Aquí, en esta tienda, me compró mi padre unos zapatos; la tendera era tuerta . . . Allí, allí mismo, allí fue donde estuvimos detenidos con la vaca, cuando me trajo mi padre el día en que vino a venderla . . .” (477). Personal memory links past and present, don Carlos’s bombastic speech contrasts with the mundane—and very real—experience of buying a pair of shoes or selling a cow. Moreover, the lofty words of the Carlist pretender to the throne only bring personal memories to the old veteran. When don Carlos speaks of sacrifice to the Carlist cause, Pedro Antonio can only feel the absence of his son, the pain of his loss.

⁴⁴ The exact historical date for this event was 3 July 1875.

Repetition and cyclical motifs are constantly articulated in the novel. One of the most significant ways to express the circularity of time and action is Ignacio's experience of the war as an unremitting journey: "¿Y era aquello? ¿Era aquello la guerra? ¿Para aquello había salido de casa? Continuaron de pueblo en pueblo, y de monte en monte, sin descanso, ya por carretera polvorienta y adormecedera, ya por viejas calzadas pedregosas . . ." (260). Even in the midst of the siege, the customary errands and petty rituals of everyday life are preserved, like any other day: "Iba y venía gente con sus preocupaciones cotidianas, a la hora de siempre pasaba el mismo de siempre por la calle, con su mismo paso, como si nada extraordinario ocurriese, a ganarse la mantención, viviendo vida de paz en el seno de la guerra" (339). Another variety of cyclical motif is historical recurrence: "¡Guerra! Las cenizas de sus mayores iban a pelear a su lado ¡a las armas!" (249). This notion of historical recurrence is further reinforced with the description of one of the main leaders of Carlist guerrilla, el cura Santa Cruz: "Aquel hombre de otros tiempos, con su hueste medieval, le revolvió a Ignacio el fondo, también de otros tiempos, del alma, el fondo en que domina el espíritu de los abuelos de sus abuelos" (265).

The most powerful and consistent metaphor throughout the novel is that of the water, an image that takes on different forms, be it running water (rain, rivers, fountains) or still water (lakes). I propose to read this recurring image as the symbol of *intrahistoria*. Although water is in constant flux and movement, in permanent transformation throughout the novel (from tears to sweat, from steam to mist, from river to sea) it remains always the same. In this sense, water remains

a powerful image of the collective spirit of the community. War—as the never-ending journey to nowhere, the infinite circle of hatred and emptiness—and peace, as the calm stillness of nature, are joined in this prevalent metaphor. Water accounts for movement and quietness, conflict and reconciliation, traditional communal practices and modern disruptions of them. Although some critics—chiefly Blanco Aguinaga (223)—have studied this metaphor, they have done so focusing on the whole of Unamuno’s novelistic production, and reducing it to an expression of Unamuno’s yearning for spiritual peace. This interpretation, I believe, takes the use of water in later Unamuno’s texts (particularly in his masterpiece from 1930—*San Manuel Bueno, mártir*—where the metaphor of the lake is pervasive) and extrapolates it to the rest of his novels. The use of this image has special characteristics in *Paz en la guerra*. One of the most interesting examples of the use of the water metaphor takes place in Pedro Antonio’s house, where the warmth of the fireplace and the lively conversation of his tertulia mark a sharp contrast with the cold, rainy weather outside:

Y porque le hacían querer más el íntimo recogimiento de su tienda, amaba los días grises y de lluvia lenta . . . ¡Qué encanto, por el contrario, el de ver en los días grises caer el agua pertinaz y fina, hilo a hilo, lentamente, sintiéndose él en tanto a cubierto y al abrigo! (133)

This quotation can be read in ideological terms, Pedro Antonio’s house is structured as a private sphere, defined by the rutinary actions of the everyday. Furthermore, Pedro Antonio’s house includes his shop in the lower floor. The shop is not a separate and distinct place of the house, but still very much a part of

the private sphere from where he witnesses—with a sort of condescending pleasure—the violent spectacle of rain and wind.

Throughout the novel, Unamuno employs the water metaphor to describe the war, or—more precisely—the experience of the war and its effects on people’s consciousness. The narrator makes this observation about Ignacio: “Porque desde que empezara la campaña estaba lloviendo en su espíritu, lluvia terca, fina, constante, que le calaba poco a poco de frío y le difuminaba los paisajes interiores, lluvia de monotonía” (300). What was, in Pedro Antonio’s observation of the rain, a clear-cut division between an inner and an outer world, becomes an interconnectedness and a reality defined by the erasure of borders. The rain takes place within his soul, permeates his consciousness and renders him a natural element facing the effects of erosion by the rain.

Moreover, the image of a running river is also used in several instances to define the impetuosity of the Carlist troops. Later in the novel, this image is metamorphosed in the aftermath of a storm and the gloomy remains of a shipwreck. More importantly, the soldiers’ dead bodies are left for the rain to rot. This action is doubly relevant; it defines the war in natural terms and proves that death and life, war and peace are inherently connected:

Por la noche, vuelta a los vendavales; chubascos torrenciales, destrozando las casetas, dejaban al raso a los muchachos; oíase bramar el mar contra las montañas, y al amanecer del día 12 parecía el campamento restos de un naufragio. El agua del cielo, colándose gota a gota, iba a activar la descomposición de los muertos; llegaban bandadas de moscas de primavera; graznaban cuervos en las crestas de los montes, y se esparcían por el valle miasmas de pestilencia, secuaces de la batalla. (427-28)

Pedro Antonio, after the death in battle of his son, would visit a particular corner in the house orchard, where there was a little creek “donde gozaba de íntima distracción, viendo correr el agua, oyendo su cháchara sin sentido, contemplándola encrespase contra los pedruscos que se le oponían al paso, y espumajearlos” (451). This rivulet takes on the meaning of the running water that flows unceasingly towards the sea “que es el morir,” as Jorge Manrique would say. Pedro Antonio would throw a fallen leaf to the brook, in a clear metaphor of his son’s life: “Alguna vez echaba una hoja a la corriente para seguirla con la mirada, hasta que se perdiese en la verdura” (451).

Another important leitmotif of the novel has to do with the subjective relationship of the present war with the epic of chivalric romances and popular fictions of *folletines*, *pliegos de cordel* and other forms of massively (and cheaply) produced recreational literature. The last Carlist war is imagined by the young Ignacio as a re-enactment of the fictitious adventures he so avidly reads. Furthermore, the concept of crusade, the fight between the Christians and the quintessential national Other, the Moor, is also emphasized in Ignacio’s imagination in a sort of heroic pantheon composed by Charlemagne, el Cid, and two of the best Carlist generals of the past confrontations—Zumalacárregui and Cabrera—among many others:

Aquella noche apenas durmió Ignacio. Ahora, ahora era verdadero voluntario de la cruzada; ahora sentía el coronamiento de su vida, y que se le abría un mundo. Soñó extraños sucesos en que andaban mezclados Carlomagno, Oliveros de Castilla, Artús de Algarbe, el Cid, Zumalacárregui y Cabrera, bajando todos por espesas helgueras de la montaña. (251)

This atavistic and perpetual confrontation is emphasized by the fact that war itself has been engraved in children's imagination since their seemingly innocent games: "¡Qué de pedreas entre las partidas, que formadas por calles, celebraban alianzas ofensivas y defensivas entre sí!" (152). Additionally, the children's vision of the war is linked to the intrahistoric experience of the conflict, particularly to Ignacio's mythical interpretation of the war: "Formábanse [los niños] una fresca y poética visión de la guerra, una visión enteramente homérica, zurciendo con detalles de lo que veían, sueños y retazos de cosas entreoídas y vislumbradas" (379).

We have seen above how Carlism is regarded by Unamuno as a collective form of social identity. In this regard, custom law (i.e., *fueros*) is the legal articulation of traditional communities. This aspect was of particular interest to Unamuno, as shown in his collaboration with Costa's *Derecho consuetudinario y economía popular de España* (1895). The defense of traditional *fueros* was, in addition, one of the most important demands of the Basque emergent nationalism, who developed and organized within Carlism. During one of the lively conversations in Pedro Antonio's *tertulia*, Gambelu exclaims, infuriated with the promulgation of the 1869 Constitution: "¡Tanta ley, tanta Constitución, tanto reglamento! . . . Aquí vivimos hace siglos con nuestros buenos usos y costumbres . . . Para los buenos bastan los mandamientos de la ley de Dios, para los demás, hecha la ley, hecha la trampa . . ." (227). This radical opposition to the new Constitution brought forth by the Liberal Revolution (1868) is quite understandable: it promulgated universal male suffrage and recognized the right

of religious freedom. Gambelu—the old war veteran—and the rest of the *tertulia* felt increasingly alienated and marginalized in this new social frame.

In another conversation, the priest Don Pascual elucidates the meaning of liberalism and freedom to Don Eustaquio: “He perdido la cuenta de las Constituciones que he conocido—dijo Don Eustaquio. Eso es importación francesa—observó el cura—; el liberalismo es revolucionario y extranjero, la libertad, católica y española . . .” (204). Just as the Moor is the quintessential Other in the national epic imagination, the French (i.e., Europe) was the traditionalists’ archetypal enemy. Don Pascual uncovers the social reality of Carlism: it is a counterrevolutionary movement, frontally opposed to parliamentarism and democracy—those French imports of the *philosophes* and the French Revolution. True freedom, he argues, comes from religion and fidelity to traditional ways of life.

The end of the novel corresponds to Pachico’s climbing of one of the mountains surrounding Bilbao and his ecstatic contemplation of the city from above. As Jean-Claude Rabaté has pointed out, these pages are a reworking of the 1893 article “En Pagazarri,” published by Unamuno in *El Eco de Bilbao* (Rabaté 53). In this article we can read the following description: “Todo se presenta entonces en un plano inmenso, y esta fusión de términos y perspectivas del espacio, nos lleva poco a poco, en el silencio que allí arriba reina, a un estado en que se funden los términos y perspectivas del tiempo” (1: 510-11). The last page of *Paz en la guerra* rephrases this sentence like this: “Todo se presenta entonces en plano inmenso, y tal fusión de términos y perspectivas del espacio, llévale

poco a poco, en el silencio allí reinante, a un estado en que se le funden los términos y perspectivas del tiempo” (508-9). Unamuno clearly emphasizes the blending of spaces that the vision from above allows. From his vantage point, he fuses together time and space in a single gaze.

The climbing of the mountains had been used before in the novel to mark the distance between the oppressive space of the city and the liberating space of nature. Ignacio would spend his weekends as far away from the *escritorio* as he possibly could. Climbing some of the mountains around Bilbao was a joyful activity he would frequently share with friends. Pachico, in contrast with Ignacio’s energetic enthusiasm, did not enjoy these expeditions; he would soon get tired and lose his breath. At the end of the novel, however, Pachico becomes (in a very real sense) another person. He is finally able to see with Ignacio’s eyes, to feel the pleasure of heights. And it is in this merging of Pachico and Ignacio—in this new, fuller self—that Unamuno’s contradiction of finding peace in the war is finally materialized.

In “Unamuno: guerra e intrahistoria,” Jon Juaristi has explained the symbology of Pachico and Ignacio in the last chapter of the novel vis-à-vis Unamuno’s doctoral dissertation. Juaristi argues that the key to understand their meaning is located in a particular passage of his dissertation that reads as follows: “Es el pueblo vasco un pueblo que se va . . . pero que se va, no a anonadarse, sino a asimilarse, a perderse como el arroyo en las grandes corrientes del anchuroso río” (60). Since, according to Juaristi, “Iturriondo” can be translated as “next to the fountain,” he argues that his death can be understood as the death of

traditional society. Pachico Zabalbide, on the other hand, can be interpreted as the future of the Basque race. “Zabalbide,” Juaristi points out, can be translated as “wide riverbed.” Therefore, Pachico becomes the symbol of a people that flows to the wide sea of humankind (“guerra e intrahistoria” 60-61). The last pages of the novel suggest, therefore, the blending of opposites. Much in the vein of his first article, “La unión constituye la fuerza,” Unamuno proposes a synthesis of Carlism and Liberalism in an overarching stance.

As we have seen, the process of modernization inherent in the Spanish turn-of-the-century implied a necessary re-evaluation of the political theory of the time. On the one hand, collective social practices that had defined the organization and the identity of the people for centuries entered a period of inevitable decay. On the other hand, Spanish intellectuals (Pidal, Costa, Unamuno, etc.) felt the urgent need to articulate a space of resistance to that obtrusive modernity. They did so by preserving these collective practices, and implementing an alternative modernization based on those traditional practices (as seen in Costa’s works on customary laws or Unamuno’s notion of *intrahistoria*). In that regard, Unamuno’s use of Carlism was deeply imbued with intrahistorical attributes. Defined as an expression of the collective spirit of the people, Unamuno’s interest did not lie in the political organization of Carlism (or of Socialism, for that matter) but in their free manifestation as a recurrent, eternal aspiration.

This intellectual interest in notions of collective identity prompted Unamuno to coin the concept of *intrahistoria* in the articles of *En torno al*

casticismo (1895). His subsequent novel, *Paz en la guerra* (1897) is a literary exposition of intrahistoria through the topic of Carlism. In that regard, Carlism becomes an intrahistoric manifestation, a consequence of popular resistance to modernity. Articulated as a rhetoric of remembrance, *Paz en la guerra* must be read as a response to the current Restoration establishment. Witnessing a political system where elections were systematically rigged, and parliamentary debates were little more than political performances, Unamuno sought the real, authentic manifestation of the people. The last civil war (1872-76) became the perfect model for an exposition of concepts like “war of ideas,” intrahistoria and “community,” that revealed a preoccupation with the conservation of social practices against an unnatural modernization.

Carlism, Modernity, and Failure in Valle-Inclán's *La Guerra Carlista*

Erem el record que tenim ara

Gabriel Ferrater

Historians and cultural critics have defined an important social phenomenon toward the end of the nineteenth-century: the pervasive sense of loss and alienation implied by the very experience of modernity. Richard Drake's study on Umbertian Italy, César Graña's classic account of French *fin-de-siècle*, or William J. McGrath's essay on politics and society in turn-of-the-century Vienna are some examples of this critical interest. The pioneering work of Lily Litvak, *A Dream of Arcadia: Anti-Industrialism in Spanish Literature, 1895-1905* (1975), analyzes this phenomenon in the Peninsular context. This perceived sense of loss manifests itself as a response to the disappearance of the patronage system, caused by the inclusion of arts in the modern capitalist market place (Drake 224, Graña 87), and to the crisis of positivism and rational discourse.

The American historian T.J. Jackson Lears has coined a useful term to define this experience of modernity: "Antimodernism." He defines the term as "the recoil from an 'overcivilized' modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual experience supposedly embodied in medieval or Oriental cultures" (xiii). Lears himself, however, notes that what he calls "antimodernism" can also be understood as "modernism," as he argues in the following passage:

What [literary] critics call modernism and what I call antimodernism share common roots in the *fin-de-siècle* yearning for authentic experience—physical, emotional, or spiritual. The quickest way to characterize this terminological muddle is to point out that modernity has one meaning for historians, a very different one for literary critics; in large measure, literary "modernism" has

been a reaction against the constraints and evasions of historical modernity—the stodgy moralism of bourgeois society. . . . Superficially at odds, [they] have often been brothers under the skin. (xvii)

Lears’s historiographical concept has been fruitfully used in other fields. Lynda Jessup and Kim Sawchuck, for instance, have applied “antimodernism” to the cultural critique of modernity, with promising results. Jessup has defined this *fin-de-siècle* structure of feeling as a nostalgia for imagined pasts (3),⁴⁵ while Sawchuck has stressed its ideological component, as seen in the politics of the day:

Many of these artists [Modernists] and artistic movements [Modernism] were connected to agendas of socialism, anarchism or republicanism—ideologies that called upon a particular remembrance of the past to justify the inevitability and righteousness of their vision of the future. (Sawchuck162)

Drawing on these theories, I wish to argue for the inclusion of Ramón del Valle-Inclán’s trilogy of “La guerra carlista” as a literary articulation of this *fin-de-siècle* nostalgia. Valle-Inclán, whose *Sonata de invierno* (1905) had already explored the aestheticism of the Carlist conflagration, returned to the last Carlist war of 1872-1876 with this trilogy. First published between November 1908 and November 1909 as a *folletín* in the newspaper *El Mundo*, the trilogy of “La guerra carlista,” composed of *Los cruzados de la causa* (1908), *El resplandor de la hoguera* (1909), and *Gerifaltes de antaño* (1909), articulates a longing for cultural integration with the past, reflecting the “antimodern” drive that authors like Lears, Jessup, and Sawchuck discuss.

⁴⁵ I take the expression “structure of feeling” from Raymond Williams’ *Marxism and Literature* (1977). I use it in the sense of collective experience.

From the first pages of the trilogy, the author stresses the temporal setting of his text. Valle-Inclán describes an old world, a vanished social setting:

“Caballeros en mulas y a su buen paso de andadura, iban dos hombres por aquel *camino viejo* que, atravesando el monte, remataba en Viana del Prior” (3).

Likewise, the author refers to that land as “toda aquella *tierra antigua*” (4).⁴⁶

Furthermore, the use of language by the women who come out from church and see the riders pass along is defined by its archaism and its allusions to the historical past. The following sentence, where the common syntax of modern Spanish is inverted to archaicize, is illustrative of this trend: “Esperaban, días hace, al señor mi Marqués” (4). The inverted syntax of “días hace,” instead of the customary “hace días” denotes an antiquated feeling in the women’s speech.

Additionally, the expression “señor mi Marqués” is doubly interesting: it also reverts the logical syntactic order, while pointing to a well-known formula used in the Castilian epic of the *Cantar de mio Cid*.⁴⁷ In the title of this medieval poem, besides a myriad of examples in the text itself, we see the use of the possessive pronoun before the honorific designation. This effectively links *El Cid* with one of the main characters in the first book of the trilogy, the Marquis of Bradomín. Yet, the longing for the past goes well beyond the linguistic level throughout these novels. As I will show, Valle-Inclán’s nostalgia must be read as a co-option of an historical fetish, recuperated and used as both a defense of tradition, and a rejection of contemporary industrialization.

⁴⁶ My italics. Note how Valle-Inclán emphasizes terms implying the passage of time.

⁴⁷ It is worth noting that “Cid” means “Mister” (Sp. “Señor”) in Arabic.

This definition of nostalgia is influenced by Susan Stewart's seminal work on the subject: *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (1984). According to Stewart, nostalgia is a sadness produced by a longing for an object that never existed. It is an ideological construct that turns the past into a perceived loss. Faced by the challenges of modernization, of a protean world engaged in a continuing process of social and economic re-definition, the national upper classes idealized pre-capitalist social culture. They did this because this culture represented, for them, the pre-lapsarian paradise of a more stable time, where nature and culture were unproblematically united (Stewart 23). This critic stresses the strong ideological component of such a "social disease" (ix) in the following passage:

Nostalgia, like any form of narrative, is always ideological: the past it seeks has never existed except as narrative, and hence, always absent, that past continually threatens to reproduce itself as a felt lack . . . Nostalgia wears a distinctly utopian face, a face that turns toward a future-past, a past which has only ideological reality. (Stewart 23)

It is in this sense that I believe Valle-Inclán's use of Carlism in his trilogy is defined as both nostalgic and ideological. The "antimodern" thrust, that prevalent *fin-de-siècle* structure of feeling, has—like Janus—two faces. One is aestheticism, the other ideology. This simultaneous expression of nostalgia has not been acknowledged by Valle-Inclán scholars. On the contrary, extant criticism on the Galician writer tends to split up his works in two separate phases—an early aestheticism, and a later ideological commitment.

Valle-Inclán's early works in general, and his Carlist trilogy in particular, have been traditionally interpreted in aesthetic terms. Texts like Ortega y Gasset's

“La *Sonata de estío*, de don Ramón del Valle-Inclán” (1904) or Pedro Salinas’s “98 frente a modernismo” (1935) contributed decisively to his critical categorization as an aesthetic modernist, removed from the intellectualism of the members of the 1898 generation, led by Unamuno, and effectively divided his texts in two clearly defined periods: an early, aesthetic one (before the *esperpentos*) and a second, political one (after the *esperpentos*). In this regard, the most important work of his aesthetic phase would be the series of the “Sonatas” (*Sonata de estío*, 1902; *Sonata de otoño*, 1903; *Sonata de primavera*, 1904; and *Sonata de invierno*, 1905), consistently defined by the critics as the best example of Spanish *modernista* prose (Alonso Seoane 20).

Guillermo Díaz-Plaja explained in very clear terms what he perceived as a self-evident truth: the anti-intellectualism of Valle-Inclán’s early texts. In a canonical study on the Galician writer, *Las estéticas de Valle-Inclán*, he states the following:

La confrontación Unamuno-Valle Inclán sirve admirablemente para confirmar la radical divergencia de las actitudes del modernismo y del noventa y ocho. Anotar la honda disconformidad de Unamuno con la estética de los modernistas es incidir en un lugar tan común como fácil de documentar. (271)

The split—or rather, the schism—between a purely aesthetic Modernism and an intellectual “Generación del 98” could not be deeper. Valle-Inclán’s early works would be considered purely aesthetic elaborations, *Modernismo* in the narrowest sense.

Such an interpretation—as criticized by Juan Bautista A Valle-Arce (266) and, more recently, by Manuel Suárez Cortina (242) and Margarita Santos Zas

(“Estéticas” 10), among others—is unsatisfactory for two reasons. Firstly, it marginalizes the author’s works written between the *Sonatas* and the *esperpentos*. Secondly, it imposes an arbitrary and false division in Valle-Inclán’s texts, ignoring his prevalent critical attitude of contemporary society. This attitude of rejection, constant throughout his literary production, may take the form of aesthetic escapism in the *Sonatas* and his early stories, historical nostalgia in the case of “La guerra carlista” series, or a systematic deformation of reality through his *esperpento* technique in *Luces de Bohemia* and the unfinished series of *El Ruedo Ibérico*. Modern scholars, instead of advocating for a clear-cut division and compartmentalization of his works, tend to see all his texts as motivated by the same desire to resist modernity and industrialization.

Yet the question remains, why was Valle-Inclán’s historical imagination fixated on the Carlist conflagration? Why not some other historical period? After all, the *Ancien Régime* values he idealizes in this trilogy may be better seen in the context of a medieval or early modern period. Why Carlism? The answer, I believe, is twofold. On the one hand, this particular event in Spanish history represented, for Valle-Inclán as well as for Unamuno and Baroja, the confrontation between tradition and modernity and, therefore, it was constructed by their historical imagination as the locus of crisis, where contemporary Spain (and its critical relationship with modernity) was born. On the other, Valle-Inclán saw in the Carlist movement a nostalgic “antimodernism” that appealed to both his aesthetic tastes and his ideological interests. The Galician writer imagined

Carlism as the only option for national regeneration, the only alternative to a Spanish modernity he regarded as alienating and oppressing.

The Carlist alternative, however, was already a failed project. This movement had real chances of winning during the first conflict (1833-1840), but never had the upper hand during the second confrontation (1872-1876). Moreover, the practical viability of the Carlist option in the context of turn-of-the-century Spain was virtually impossible. In this sense, Valle-Inclán articulated Carlism as a rhetoric of defeat. The antimodern impulse of Carlism was ultimately a failure, an already exhausted project, yet—ironically— it was still viewed as the only possible regeneration for the country. This paradox has been analyzed by Angel G. Loureiro in an important article on the subject: “Valle-Inclán: la modernidad como ruina” (1999).

In his article, Loureiro attempts a political reading of Valle-Inclán’s aestheticism. “Y digámoslo sin ambages: Valle-Inclán fue, políticamente, un reaccionario durante toda su vida” (294). He then relates aestheticism and ideology in Valle’s work:

El arte de Valle-Inclán tiene su fundamentación epistemológica, estética e ideológica en su forma de negociar una experiencia de la modernidad que él concibe fundamentalmente como una forma de temporalidad portadora de decadencia y ruina. (296-97)

Loureiro’s insightful analysis defines Valle-Inclán’s critique of modernity as a degradation of a utopian ideal located in the past. He labels his notion of modernity as a perceived “pérdida” (loss) of an Arcadic historical paradise. Though in agreement with Loureiro’s study, I wish to take the second meaning of the word “pérdida” as the building block for my interpretation of Valle’s use of

Carlism. Besides its first meaning, the Spanish word “pérdida” can denote “defeat.” In this sense, Valle-Inclán’s critique of modernity confronts the ruins of contemporary degradation with the failure of the only regenerative project of the nation: Carlism’s antimodern aspirations.

We have seen the relevance of Carlism for Valle-Inclán’s ideological critique of modernity, yet the reason why the Galician writer became interested in this political project remains unanswered. I concur with María José Alonso Seoane when she suggests that Valle-Inclán’s interest in Carlism evolved from the intellectual atmosphere of his college years in Santiago. The reasons for this attraction can be explained by the mediocre political atmosphere, where the Canovite Parliamentary system would push a young idealist like the Galician writer to embrace positions characterized by grand ideals and a certain heroic appeal (xxx-xxx). I believe his interest in Carlism was shaped by the influence, during his college years, of Galician regionalist *rexurdimento* and, in particular, by the ideas of Alfredo Brañas, a law professor at the University of Santiago.

Valle-Inclán attended the University of Santiago between 1887 and 1889.⁴⁸ Although he never graduated, he took Alfredo Brañas’ course on political economy as part of his (unfinished) training as a lawyer. The influence of Brañas on the young Valle-Inclán is decisive. Santiago was, during these years, the epicenter of Galician regionalism (*rexurdimento*), a nationalist movement that,

⁴⁸ The Carlist atmosphere at the Santiago University is also perceived in the case of the most brilliant Carlist politician of the time, the Asturian congressman Juan Vázquez de Mella (1861-1928). Five years older than Valle-Inclán, Vázquez de Mella’s influence on the young writer during his college years cannot be ignored.

together with its Basque and Catalan counterparts, would shape Spanish identity through the contemporary period. There were two main branches in the budding Galician regionalism of this time: a liberal ascription—represented by the works of Manuel Murguía—and a traditional, Catholic movement led by Alfredo Brañas. Murguía and Brañas epitomized two opposing ways of making *galleguismo*. While Murguía saw Galician backwardness and impoverished condition as the result of an agrarian society, and supported enthusiastically the emergent industrialization, Brañas saw this backwardness as the very essence of the region. As Santos Zas points out, Brañas postulated—in his university lectures, newspaper articles, conferences, and books—the defense of Galicia from the attacks of modernity, of the ravages of capitalism and industrialism, and the recuperation of a precapitalist Galician social structure defined by traditional custom laws (*fueros*) (*Tradicionalismo* 65).

Murguía was a close friend of Valle-Inclán's father and always showed respect and admiration for the young writer. As a matter of fact, Murguía even accepted an invitation to write the prologue of Valle-Inclán's first book, *Femeninas* (1895). However, I believe Brañas's conservative *galleguismo* was instrumental in shaping Valle-Inclán's notion of Carlism. The professor's regionalism was not far from the Carlists' staunch defense of traditionalism, customary law, anti-capitalism, and anti-industrialism. Moreover, even though Brañas was never a Carlist, his death in 1900 was met by laudatory chronicles in the Carlist press, both locally (*El pensamiento galaico*) and nationally (*El correo español*) (Santos Zas, *Tradicionalismo* 66). In 1887, Valle-Inclán moved to

Madrid and, with the exception of several brief periods at his house in Puebla de Caramiñal (La Coruña) he would never return to Galicia. This fact, in addition to the election of Spanish over Galician as his language of publication would distance Valle from Galician nationalist writers and intellectuals. In fact, he would maintain cold relations with them from then on.⁴⁹

In this regard, it is interesting to read Valle-Inclán's answer to a poll proposed by the newspaper *El Mundo* (8 February 1909) with the title "El nacionalismo, ¿es contrario a la unión de España?," where the Galician author wrote that: "El único nacionalismo salvador será el informado por la tradición, entendido como los carlistas lo entienden" (Santos Zas, *Tradicionalismo* 93). The only brand of nationalism Valle-Inclán defended was that of the Carlists: that is, the nostalgic articulation of a long-lost society, a nationalism based on *fueros* and *Ancien Régime* structures.

From a class perspective, it is important to note that Valle descended, through his mother, from a family of *hidalgos* (rural aristocracy). This class was particularly damaged by liberalism and the modernization process of the second half of the nineteenth century, and constituted a deep reservoir of Carlism and traditionalism (Alberca and González 125-26). Valle-Inclán feels an intrinsic identification with this social class, deprived of its sense of honor and patrimony

⁴⁹ Valle only published one poem in his native Galician language, "Cantiga de vellas" (Old women's song) in the La Coruña newspaper, *El Noroeste* (5 April 1910). See Eliane and Jean-Marie Lavaud (128).

by *desamortización* (disentailment).⁵⁰ This agrarian reform started as early as 1766, with a royal decree on the cultivation and distribution of new land, but it was in the context of the War of Independence (1808-1813), that the *Cortes* of Cádiz pushed a series of reforms in order to alleviate the strains of a bankrupt economy. The political upheavals of the first half of the nineteenth century prevented their implementation. Only during the Liberal regime of 1820-1823, and—in full force—after the promulgation of the 1837 Constitution and the measures of Mendizábal, did these reforms take political agency.⁵¹ Following the French model, the reforms were envisioned as a progressive transfer of lands from the aristocracy and the Church to the peasants in order to create a medium-sized agrarian property, yet *desamortización* resulted in a latifundism that proved to be very ineffective. The beneficiaries of the agrarian reform were the newly rich bourgeoisie, who surpassed the middle and lower nobility (*hidalgos*) in their possession of rural lands (Vicens Vives 625-28).

The idealization of the rural nobility of the *hidalgos* in opposition to the bourgeois class is a constant in Valle's early work. One of the clearest examples is a conversation between Don Juan Manuel Montenegro—the quintessential *hidalgo*—and the Marquis of Bradomín in *Los cruzados de la causa* (1908), where Montenegro reveals his hatred for the bourgeoisie:

...[T]oda esa punta de curiales, alguaciles, indianos y compradores de bienes nacionales. ¡Esa ralea de criados que llegan a amos! Yo

⁵⁰ For a complete study of Valle-Inclán's society see Maravall.

⁵¹ Juan Alvarez Mendizábal (1790-1853) was minister of economy (1835-1836) and promulgated disentailment laws in February and March of 1836.

levantaría una partida para hacer justicia en ellos, y quemarles las casas, y colgarlos a todos en mi robledo de Lantañón. [...] Esa justicia que deseamos los que nacimos nobles, y también los villanos que aún no pasaron de villanos, la hará por todo el reino Carlos VII. (76)

In this passage there is a very clear allusion to the process of *desamortización*: the sale of land and properties owned by the Church and the rural nobility during the nineteenth century. In this regard, it is important to note the sharp distinction between the rural nobility and the urban one, closer to the Court, to the Center of the State and, therefore, to the site of political decisions. I see that distinction in the use of the archaic word “curiales” (courtiers) to refer to the urban nobility, now occupying positions as ministers and generals.

The topic of Carlism appears in many of Valle’s works before the series of *La guerra carlista*. In certain short stories like “El rey de la máscara,” published in the newspaper *El Globo* (20 November 1892), he describes a Carlist priest (Lloris 40), while in other texts, like “Beatriz” or “Rosario” the author made obvious references to the Galician *fueros* (Santos Zas, “Valle y la prensa gallega” 69). Still other works, like the plays *Aguila de blasón* (1907) and *Romance de lobos* (1908) are set in an undefined, yet clearly pre-industrialized time. Nevertheless, the texts where Carlism is given an unmistakable preeminence are *Sonata de invierno* (1905) and *Voces de Gesta* (1912).

Sonata de Invierno closes the memoirs of the Marquis of Bradomín. In this text, the Marquis’s role is changed from a decadent Don Juan to a Carlist soldier. Many critics have quoted the same excerpt to ascribe Bradomín’s aesthetic pose to that of Valle-Inclán. The Marquis words are well-known: “Yo hallé siempre más bella la majestad caída que sentada en el trono, y fui defensor

de la tradición por estética” (237). There is, in spite of this bombastic declaration, an apparent tension throughout the text between aestheticism and ideological commitment. The last Sonata, as Santos Zas has noted, foreshadows *La guerra carlista* series, offering a sort of thematic bridge between the decadent *donjuanismo* of the first Sonatas and the Carlist focus of later texts (*Tradicionalismo* 115).

Similarly, Avalor-Arce has studied the topic of Carlism in *Voces de gesta* (266-69), defining this text as a lyrical expression of Carlism. The play, first performed on 26 May 1912, is set in an undefined time and place, but Valle-Inclán offers some clues to clarify that he is talking about Navarra, the traditional realm of Carlism. In the opening “Ofrenda,” a short acknowledgement section before the dramatic text, Valle-Inclán makes a reference to Mount Araal, a name that masks the real Mount Aralar, on top of which is located the shrine of San Miguel in Excelsis, patron saint of Navarra (Avalor-Arce 266). The play starts with a dialogue between the old Tibaldo and the young shepherdess Ginebra where they allude to the Carlist leader:

-¡Del rey Carlo Magno de barba florida, / del otro rey Carlos de
barba bellida / se acabó la raza!
-¿Pues el rey Carlino?
-Tanto le persigue su negro destino que vive en el monte como otro
cabrero. (22)

Here, there is an obvious wordplay with Carlo Magno (Charlemagne) and Carlino (“Chuck,” but also Carlist). Avalor-Arce takes this term as a degrading abbreviation and interprets it as a reflection on national decadence (267-69). Although there is, undoubtedly, an obvious degradation from “Carlo Magno” to

“Carlino,” I think the latter term is used to underscore the Carlist nature of the monarch. Along these lines, there is another reference to the Carlist war in the last sentence that A Valle-Arce fails to mention. At first sight, the expression “negro destino” is to be understood as dark, or “doomed,” destiny. However, if we remember that “negros” was the way Carlist soldiers nicknamed their enemies, the Carlist reference of the passage is clearly revealed.⁵²

The novels of “La guerra carlista” appeared as a *folletín*, between November 1908 and November 1909, in the Madrid newspaper *El Mundo*. They were later published as *Los cruzados de la causa* (1908), *El resplandor de la hoguera* (1909) and *Gerifaltes de antaño* (1909). This novelistic series was logically considered a trilogy until the French Hispanist Jacques Fressard published his article “Un episodio olvidado de *La guerra carlista*” in 1966. In this article, Fressard argued that an isolated narrative fragment (“La Corte de Estella”) published by Valle-Inclán in the magazine *Por esos mundos* (Madrid, January 1910) had to be considered part of the trilogy. Moreover, since this narrative fragment could not be easily assigned to any of the published books, Fressard concluded that it had to be part of a fourth book, thus transforming the Carlist trilogy into a tetralogy, like the *Sonatas*. Other critics, like Gil (133-35), prefer to integrate “La Corte de Estella” in one of the published novels of the trilogy.

It is practically impossible to determine if the novelistic series of “La guerra carlista” is a trilogy, a tetralogy, or even a longer project that—for lack of

⁵² For a detailed account of the expression “negro” to refer to the Liberal troops during the Carlist conflict, see José Carlos Clemente’s *Diccionario histórico del carlismo* (2006).

interest, economic incentives or some other cause—was limited to the three published novels we know. The fact is that Valle-Inclán, in an interview published in the Carlist newspaper *El correo español* (4 November 1911), speaks about the Carlist novels in enthusiastic terms, and reveals new projects: “En prensa tengo *Las banderas del rey*; se pondrá muy pronto a la venta; después publicaré *La guerra en las montañas*, y más tarde otros tomos vendrán a continuar esta serie” (qtd. in Dougherty 35). These novels, as Dougherty points out, were never published, although the existence of a manuscript of, at least, one of them is certainly possible. In this regard, the narrative fragment of “La Corte de Estella” would correspond to one of these projects about which Valle-Inclán speaks (35).

In spite of its brevity, “La Corte de Estella” is relevant to the understanding of the Carlist trilogy. The main character is Pedro Soulinake, a Polish count who came to Spain to fight with the Liberal troops and decides to change sides. After speaking with his comrades, he travels to the Carlist headquarters at Estella, where he meets Cara de Plata. The last section comprises a conversation between the two and the fragment is suddenly interrupted in the middle of a dialogue between the Marquis of Bradomín and the Carlist pretender, Carlos VII. We do not know if Valle wrote a fourth novel to the trilogy. I suspect that the fragment of “La Corte de Estella” was part of *Las banderas del rey* and that, for one reason or another, this novel never was published, perhaps because Valle-Inclán lost interest in the whole project. Be that as it may, we are forced to work with what we have.

In the series of *La guerra carlista*, it is not the war per se that is highlighted, but rather the struggle of a traditional society to keep its social and cultural traits alive. In this sense, Carlism is seen as an act of defense against liberalism, “destructor de toda la tradición española” (*Cruzados de la causa* 176). The following passage from *Sonata de invierno* (1905) is illustrative of this nostalgic construct:

Terminada la misa, un fraile subió al púlpito y predicó la guerra santa, en su lengua vascongada, ante los tercios vizcaínos que, acabados de llegar, daban por primera vez escolta al Rey. Yo sentíame conmovido. Aquellas palabras ásperas, firmes, llenas de aristas, como las armas de la edad de piedra, me causaban impresión indefinible: Tenían una sonoridad antigua. Eran primitivas y augustas como los surcos del arado en la tierra cuando cae en ellos la simiente del trigo y del maíz. Sin comprenderlas, yo las sentía leales, veraces, adustas, severas. (182)

This quotation reveals the idealization of a cultural artifact, a mass in the Basque language, of which—as the Marquis of Brandomín naïvely admits—he does not understand a single word. Valle-Inclán ascribes meaning to an indecipherable speech; words are not relevant for their meaning, but rather for their meaninglessness. In this sense, Stewart’s concept of nostalgia helps us understand the significance of the passage:

[T]he crisis of the sign, emerging between signifier and signified, between the material nature of the former and the abstract and historical nature of the latter . . . is denied by the nostalgic’s utopia, a utopia where authenticity suffuses both word and world. (23)

The author’s historical utopia transcends the modern instability of the linguistic sign: meaning is substituted by performance and ritual. Furthermore, this instability of the sign, fully articulated by Saussure in his *Course in General Linguistics* (1916), is one of the basic components of modernity. Confronted with

this division of the sign in a signifier (which he does not understand) and a signified (which he imagines), Brandomín rebuilds the broken link of the linguistic sign with constructed memories. In this regard, Valle-Inclán imposes a nostalgic, pre-modern meaning on the Basque mass.

Valle-Inclán's modernity functions both as the ruins of a collapsed monument, and as the failure of a social project. The uses of space in the text reveal a clear degradation. In the first novel, *Los cruzados de la causa*, spaces are characterized by the monumentality of the palace of the Marquis, and the convent where the weapons are concealed. As the narrative progresses, the characters are unable to find complete buildings, but rather, pieces of spaces, fragments of homes: a straw loft, a mantelpiece, a kitchen, a stable. In the last novel, *Gerifaltes de antaño*, the space is the road, the forests and the caves where the soldiers gather together to eat and sleep. This spatial degradation corresponds to the progressive *esperpento* technique:

Miquelo Egoscué capitaneaba una tropa de cien boinas rojas, gente valerosa y sufrida.⁵³ Aquellos mutiles parecían hermanos entre sí, hijos de algún viejo patriarca que todavía repartiese justicia bajo el roble de Astigar. Miquelo Egoscué se juntó con ellos en la cueva del monte, donde tenían su cuartel: Hizo matar las siete cabras que llevaba el pastor. (*El Resplandor de la hoguera* 59)

This bucolic scene, with Biblical resonance, is swiftly metamorphosed into a violent, almost satanic image: “Y entre el tumulto dorado de las llamas se destacó la figura de un hombre, con el torso desnudo y los brazos ensangrentados

⁵³ Valle-Inclán mistakenly calls the real Carlist guerilla fighter Juan Egozcue (or Egoscué) with the name of “Miquelo.” Egozcue, as the novel shows, was later executed by *Cura Santa Cruz*.

hasta el codo, que desollaba una cabra, atada por la cuerna a un saliente de la roca” (61). The allusions to witchcraft and sorcery are further developed so as to underline the satanic undertones of the passage: “El molinero de Arguña comenzó a cantar, y puso en hilera las cabezas degolladas de las siete cabras: Eran de aspecto brujesco bajo el resplandor de la hoguera, con sus ojos lívidos, y sus barbas sangrientas, y sus cuernos infernales” (62).

Time is the great protagonist in the trilogy. As we have seen, Valle-Inclán uses several ways to denote the temporality of the action throughout the novels, like linguistic archaisms or epic allusions. Intrinsically connected with it, there is another fundamental way the author uses to talk about the passage of time, which is space. In effect, one of the most productive ways Valle-Inclán articulates his historical imagination is the description of space. In fact, space becomes so important in certain passages of these texts that it becomes another character.

Manuel García-Pelayo was the first in stressing the importance of space for the construction of time in the works of Valle-Inclán’s texts (260-62). Drawing on García-Pelayo’s analysis, and using Bakhtin’s narrativist theory of the time-space cluster, I propose to read the series of *La guerra carlista* as a set of chronotopes that articulate a vision of the past as both foundational and recurrent. The notion of chronotope (literally, time-space) was introduced by the Russian critic Mikhail Bakhtin in “Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel,” an essay included in his classic work *The Dialogic Imagination*, first published in 1975. Bakhtin defines the term as an “(i)ntrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships” (84), as the transformation of time into something “palpable,

and visible” (250), as “materialized history” (247). In other words, the chronotope can be understood as the use of space to feel time.

With this definition in mind, I will deal with two chronotopes that have a significant meaning in the trilogy: the convent in Viana del Prior, and the Marquis’s palace. Both appear in the first novel of the trilogy, *Los cruzados de la causa* (1908), a text that sets the tone for the rest of the trilogy and that articulates the overarching uses of space in the series. Although we can see other chronotopes in *El Resplandor de la hoguera* (1909) and *Gerifaltes de antaño* (1909), the convent and the palace are, by far, the most important in the trilogy.⁵⁴ The fact that both appear in the first book is in keeping with the more descriptive tone of this novel, in contrast with the vivid action of the later texts.

Isabel Montenegro, one of Brandomín’s cousins, is the abbess of the convent at the imaginary Galician village of Viana del Prior. At the beginning of the novel, Isabel reveals to Brandomín a well-kept secret: the convent hides rifles and ammunition to support an imminent Carlist rebellion: “¡Xavier, estoy pisando sobre fusiles!” (20). This smuggling is soon discovered by the Liberal troops, who storm into the convent to search for the weapons. Valle-Inclán, as seen in the following excerpt, constructs this passage as a re-enactment of the past *desamortización* and, consequently, as a moral justification for the war: “El comandante, un viejo liberal que alardeaba de impío, recorría el claustro y la iglesia, seguido de cuatro marineros con linternas que hacían cateo bajo los

⁵⁴ Among these examples of chronotopes we can locate the caves where the troops of Miquelo Egoscué are hidden (*Gerifaltes de antaño*), or the country house where Roquito suffers a grotesque martyrdom (*El resplandor de la hoguera*).

altares, como en la bodega de un barco contrabandista” (42). The ensuing confrontation between the abbess and the Liberal commander illustrates the clash between religion and anticlericalism:

El comandante quiso registrar las *celdas*, y salió a recibirle en el coro, sola y con el velo caído, la Madre Abadesa:
 -Señor comandante, quien rompa la clausura incurre en pena de excomunión.
 Seguía oyéndose el canto latino de las monjas, medido y guiado por la voz del órgano como por el rugido de un león que fuese pastor. El comandante erguía adusto tras la reja del locutorio:
 -Señora monja, yo sólo conozco las penas en que incurren los que hacen contrabando de armas. (42-43, my emphasis)

The palace of the Marquis of Bradomín, on the other hand, symbolizes the cultural capital of the *hidalgos*. Bradomín’s intentions to sell his palace to fund the Carlist rebellion is symptomatic of the economic decline of this social class, forced to sell their properties to the rising bourgeoisie. The ensuing dialogue between Isabel Montenegro and the Marquis reveals this socio-economic tension:

- . . . ¿Dime, y tú qué traes a esta tierra?
 -Vender mi palacio y todas mis rentas...
 -No lo hagas...Sobre todo el palacio...Esas *pedras*, aun cuando sean vejece, deben conservarse siempre.
 -Lo vendo para comprar fusiles
 -De todos modos es triste. ¡A qué manos irá! (18, my emphasis)

Note how these spaces are expressed as ruins through the use of metonyms (“*pedras*” for “palace,” “*celdas*” for “convent”).

Another key aspect denoting the importance of time in the series is the prevalent use of epic motifs. Scholars like Avalor-Arce (269) and Gil (11, 59) have emphasized the use of epic elements in the construction of these novels. Avalor-Arce notes the profusion of epic epithets, like “barba florida,” and “barba bellida,” or “el viejo dandy,” and “el caballero legitimista,” all applied,

respectively, to the Carlist pretender—Carlos VII—and the Marquis of Bradomín. The epic, on the other hand, is not limited to the use of certain rhetorical formulae, but rather, permeates these novels from beginning to end. At the beginning of *Los Cruzados de la Causa*, a conversation between two peasants sets the epic tone and forges a comparison between the Carlist pretender and the Liberal system: “Son reyes de distinta ley. Uno, buen cristiano, que anda en la campaña y se sienta a comer el pan con sus soldados: El otro, como moro, con más de cien mujeres, nunca pone el pie fuera de su gran palacio de la Castilla” (5). It is interesting to see the description of the Liberal king (Alfonso XII) as the quintessential Other in the Spanish epic (the Moor). Moreover, he is reinforced as a foreigner by the fact that he never goes beyond the limits of his castle in Castile, whereas the other monarch shares his bread with his soldiers. The Carlist pretender, for his part, eats with his soldiers, becomes one of them, in stark opposition with Alfonso’s aloofness.⁵⁵

As Lukács points out, the epic is always collective. In other words, the epic hero is not an individual, with a clear separation between his soul and the world, but rather his soul and the world form a fixed unity, a necessary continuum (56-70). Along these lines, José Ortega y Gasset, in his *Meditaciones del Quijote*, stresses the immanent difference between the epic and the novel in terms of their relationship with the past. The epic past is an idealized, mythical sphere,

⁵⁵ Note the subtle allusion to the communion ritual in the act of sharing the bread with his troops. This has the effect of constructing Carlos VII as a Christ-like figure throughout the series. Interestingly enough, the Carlist movement is also known as “comunidad tradicionalista.”

completely detached from the historical time we call yesterday (135-44). “Novela y épica”—writes Ortega—“son justamente lo contrario” (136). “El pasado épico no es *nuestro* pasado . . . No es, no, el pasado del recuerdo, sino un pasado ideal” (136-37).

It is in this antagonism between epic and novel that I find Valle-Inclán’s notion of the failure of Carlism and, consequently, the origins of his *esperpento* technique. The rationale for this failure can be seen in Bakhtin’s articulation of the fundamental pastness of the epic:

Everything incorporated into this past was simultaneously incorporated into a condition of authentic essence and significance, but therefore also took on conclusiveness and finality, depriving itself, so to speak, of all rights and potential for a real continuation. (326)

Valle-Inclán’s failure is rooted in a wish to continue such a closed past into the present. As a consequence, *esperpento* is born out of this urge to make the epic present again, the clash between epic and novel makes all the more real the failure of Carlism in modernity. The epic belongs to a closed past, therefore Valle-Inclán’s efforts to re-actualize epic structures and motifs are condemned to failure and, eventually, to a grotesque deformation. This tension, this paradox of having a failed project for an already failed reality (modernity) ultimately leads to *esperpento*. Critics agree in the demythifying function of *esperpento*. As Weingarten (30-31) explains, its purpose is to articulate a critique of the Spanish past in the Restoration period (as in the unfinished series of *El ruedo ibérico*) or to elaborate a contemporary critique of the socio-political turmoils that would lead to the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera (as in *Luces de Bohemia*).

Although I agree with this explanation of the uses of the *esperpento*, I find it lacking on several levels. To begin with, the origin of the *esperpento* technique, as seen in the Carlist trilogy, does not fit well in this explanatory scheme.

Esperpento, as I see it, is the result of the inevitable failure of epic structures in the modern world. Its critical element derives from the inadequacy of reading the modern world through an epic lens. This analytic myopia, so to speak, reveals the contradictions, the shortcomings, and the miseries of modern society in ways that the realist aesthetics could not express.

As we have seen, we cannot speak of an epic text, but rather of a progressive subversion of the epic. The first novel of the series, *Los cruzados de la causa*, is set in Galicia, where a group of supporters try to raise funds to help the Carlist troops. At the beginning the tone is clearly heroic. A group of priests visit the Marquis to ask for funds. One of them says: “¿Y no habrá algún judío que nos preste? Sin oro no hay fusiles y sin fusiles no hay soldados” (8-9). The use of the word “judío,” immediately reminds the reader of the passage in *Cantar de mio Cid*, where the Jews Raquel and Vidas fund the military expedition of the Cid.⁵⁶ Soon afterwards, the priests refer to Mendizábal, the promoter of

⁵⁶ We must note the anti-semitism in this passage. Probably influenced by French decadentism, Valle-Inclán took the motif of anti-semitism in a society, like turn-of-the-century Spain, in which the Jewish minority was practically nonexistent. In this sense, the writer joins here the figure of the Jew as the epic paradigm of Otherness, and the *fin de siècle* notion of the Jew as a purveyor of racial decadence and national treachery. Writers like Maurice Barrès or Charles Maurras were crucial influences in the literary development of the young Valle-Inclán. For a study on the Dreyfus affaire and late nineteenth-century anti-semitism in France see Stephen Wilson’s *Ideology and Experience: Antisemitism in France at the Time of the Dreyfus affair* (1982).

desamortización as “un nuevo Atila” (10). The configuration of Mendizábal as Atila implies the global definition of the Liberal troops as barbarians, as the Other, deprived of any civilized trait.

Besides these references, the heroic tone in *Los cruzados de la causa* is largely manifest in the temporal connection with a grandiose past. This conversation between Bradomín and the priests shows this trend clearly:

-¡Resucitan las antiguas virtudes cristianas en estos tiempos de persecuciones contra la Iglesia de Dios!
 El Maestro-Escuela comentó con espíritu menos beato:
 -¡Quien heredó grandeza, grandeza muestra! ... ¡Y es ascendencia de reyes la de nuestro querido Marqués!
 El viejo dandy repuso con una sonrisa de amable ironía:
 -De reyes y de papas...En lo antiguo, mi familia tuvo enlace con la del cardenal Rodrigo de Borgia. (9-10)

From that moment on, social reality starts to percolate into the epic. The Marquis, in dire need of money, contacts a lender, one señor Ginero, to sell his Palace. Unimpressed by the Marquis’s nobility, señor Ginero only speaks one language, that of economic profit and sheer usury. Reminding *Cara de plata* of a pending debt, he threatens him with a trial if he refuses to pay:

Pero usted no sabe que hay un perro para los desmemoriados...Un perro del juzgado...El Alguacil...¡Este Don Miguelito (*Cara de Plata*) es gracioso!...Hijo mío, la deuda espera un año y otro año, pero los réditos hay que satisfacerlos puntualmente. (*Los cruzados de la causa* 37)

The Marquis is forced to accept señor Ginero’s abusive conditions of sale, and *Cara de plata* tells the Marquis: “Ese hombre también será el heredero de nuestra casa! ¡Se acaban los mayorazgos! ¡Desaparecen los viejos linajes!” (38).

This clash between the epic of Carlism and the harsh reality of a capitalist society mediated by economic profit is emphasized by the criticism used to

describe the Liberal troops in comparison with the positive outlook of the Carlist troops and Carlism in general:

Aquellos rapacines aldeanos, vestidos con capotes azules y pantalones rojos, que un destino cruel y humilde robaba a las feligresías llenas de paz y de candor antiguo, iban a la guerra por servidumbre, como podían ir a segar espigas en el campo del rico. ¡Qué diferentes con aquellos otros soldados del Rey don Carlos! ¡Verdaderos Cruzados! (el resplandor 105)

The negative description of the Liberal troops is reinforced by the grotesque deformation of their speech, an example of *esperpento* technique. In this sense, the lofty rhetoric of the Carlist idealists is confronted with the barbarism and vulgarisms uttered by the Liberal troops, like: “Mi comandante, ¿quiere usía que la afusilemos a la gachí?” (*Los cruzados* 43), where the formal address “usía” is contraposed to the vulgarism “gachí” (i.e., woman), and the incorrect use of the verb “afusilar” (i.e., fusilar) is further reinforced by the redundant use of the direct object pronoun “la.” A similar example can be found some pages later, where a Liberal sergeant says: “A vista de esa mujer, yo digo que, como cristianos, no podemos darle mulé” (*El resplandor* 89), where the promises of gallantry displayed in the first part of the sentence are brutally rebuffed by the vulgar “darle mulé” (i.e., kill him). A similar use of *esperpento* corresponds to the description of Roquito, a sexton who joins the Carlist troops, in *El resplandor de la hoguera*: “El antiguo sacristán, las manos atadas, la cabeza erguida, la expresión demente, era bajo sus trapos mojados un heroico y resplandeciente fantoche” (el resplandor 87).

We see how *esperpento* is the result of a linguistic *non sequitur*. Roquito is described as a heroic and shining “fantoche” (literally, “puppet,” but with a

strong pejorative connotation in Spanish). In all these examples we see that the *esperpento* technique starts at the level of language, as a deformation of the epic rhetoric. What begins as an epic text becomes a grotesque deformation of heroism. This trend appears in the first book of the trilogy and becomes pervasive in the last book of the series, as Speratti Piñero (329) and Weingarten (29) suggest.⁵⁷

All the worlds of Valle-Inclán, writes Loureiro (301), appear as ruins or as a degraded form of a modelic life already vanished or about to disappear. In the case of the Carlist novels, Valle-Inclán's use of Carlism corresponds to such a ruin/failure. Carlism is the nostalgic recuperation of an unfeasible social structure for the modern society. The world of *hidalgos* and shepherds, of honor and faith is in shambles; taking these ruins as the blueprint of the social structure has both aesthetic and ideological repercussions. Aesthetically, the impossibility of describing the present in epic terms leads to the birth of *esperpento*. Ideologically, the nostalgic view of the past articulates a reactionary position, where the criticism of modern society does not yield any alternative proposal, but stagnates in barren inaction.

⁵⁷ See Barry E. Weingarten's "Valle-Inclán's *novelas de la guerra carlista*: pre-*esperpentos*" (1981), and Emma Susana Speratti Piñero's "De 'La guerra carlista' a 'El ruedo ibérico'," included in the sixth volume of Francisco Rico's *Historia y crítica de la literatura española* (1980). Both scholars locate the origins of *esperpento* in the novels of *La guerra carlista*.

As I have shown in this chapter, Valle-Inclán's use of Carlism goes well beyond an aesthetic fad, a sort of neo-romantic decadentism that influenced his earlier texts. On the contrary, I would assert that Valle-Inclán's Carlism is an articulation of antimodern nostalgia. This nostalgia, as Stewart and others have argued, is an ideological construction. Spanish *fin de siglo* cannot be reduced to, as traditional critics lead us to believe, a confrontation between a foreign *modernismo* (largely reduced to a series of linguistic experimentations and exotic imageries) and a national crisis of identity first felt in 1898, with the (supposedly) traumatic loss of the last remnants of the transatlantic empire. It was, rather, a locus of deep tensions between modernity and its discontents.⁵⁸ In this regard, Spanish writers, artists, and intellectuals related to modernity in ways analogous to their French, Italian, British or American counterparts: namely, by problematizing the tensions between tradition and modernity. Out of the many forms this cultural problematization took, what Jackson Lears has called "antimodernism" was one of the most prevalent. This structure of feeling was defined by a nostalgic use of the past, and the idealization of traditional social structures. Far from being a purely aesthetic revival, antimodernism was a reactionary critique of contemporary society, largely motivated by the fear of the "masses."

⁵⁸ I consciously play with the title of César Graña's essay *Modernity and its Discontents: French Society and the French Man of Letters in the Nineteenth Century*. Graña's book, in its turn, is an obvious reference to Sigmund Freud's *Civilization and its Discontents*.

Valle-Inclán's Carlist trilogy must be read in this context. To date, the importance of these novels in the Spanish *fin de siglo* has not been properly acknowledged. The novels of "La guerra carlista" are not only the expression of an antimodernist utopia but, at a deeper level, they constitute the realization of its impossibility. There is a progressive realization of the inherent failure associated with the politico-aesthetic project of this narrative. From the opening pages of *Los cruzados de la causa*—where the past is constructed in a series of chronotopes, and the traditional society of *Ancien Régime* and Carlism is depicted with enthusiasm—the tone progressively changes to the more realist experience of war itself in *El resplandor de la hoguera*, where Abbess Isabel confesses to herself that:

La guerra comenzaba a parecerle una agonía larga y triste, una mueca epiléptica y dolorosa . . . Había imaginado la guerra gloriosa y luminosa, llena con el trueno de los tambores y el claro canto de las cornetas. Una guerra animosa como un himno, donde las espadas fueran lenguas de fuego, y el cañón la voz de los montes. Deseaba legar a la hoguera para quemarse en ella, y no sabía dónde estaba. (77)

This disillusionment is translated, at a stylistic level, into the steady use of *esperpento* starting in *El resplandor de la hoguera*, where the Carlist and Liberal troops are associated with animal-like characteristics: "A los carlistas la oscuridad no les da miedo. Son lobos que conocen las madrigueras del monte, y lo corren de noche con toda seguridad" . . . Ahora ya se acuestan (the Liberals) con el sol, como las gallinas" (78-9). This technique grows in intensity with the real protagonist of the second novel, the sexton Roquito, who develops into a nexus that links the two sides of the war together.

Roquito is a spy and a religious figure who flees his church to join the Carlists at the beginning of the trilogy. The women, like a chorus in a Greek tragedy, whisper: “¡Y el sacristán de las monjas desapareció! . . . El sacristán no fue solo, que con él se partieron cuatro mozos de la aldea de Bealo. A todos los andan persiguiendo” (*Cruzados* 4). Valle-Inclán plays with the dramatic tradition of tragedy in the use of these women, as a chorus that locates the action *in media res*. We know from them of the upcoming war, and the growing tension narrows down to Bradomín’s Palace, where fire is lit and a conspiracy is born. This Greek chorus, however, points toward *esperpento*: the women are illiterate and mispronounce many words: “espareció” (desapareció), “afusilan” (fusilan), etc. This clash between the expectation of a dramatic chorus and the reality of a group of illiterate women marks the beginning of *esperpento* and, with it, the beginning of the deconstruction of the war epic one expects to read in the trilogy; it signals the acknowledgement of failure.

The image of the bonfire, which the Abess relates to the meaning of the war in the quotation above, is used again toward the end of *El resplandor de la hoguera*. Roquito, fleeing the Liberals, hides in the chimney of a country house. Unaware of his location, the soldiers light a fire. Roquito becomes a modern Saint Lawrence, a living bonfire, a martyr of the Carlist cause—but a grotesque one at that—where crying and laughter are joined together in madness:

Roquito empezó a reír y a llorar en lo alto:
 -¡Viva Carlos VII!...¡Calla tu lengua de escorpión!...¡Moriré
 abrasado! ¡Quiero el martirio de un santo bendito!...¡Viva Carlos
 VII! . . . El sacristán reía con una risa loca, enorme y resonante en
 el hueco de la chimenea. (*El resplandor* 131-32)

The third novel of the trilogy, *Gerifaltes de antaño*, materializes the *esperpento* technique and, with it, shapes the failure of the Carlist project. At the beginning of the novel, the Carlist volunteers of *Cura Santa Cruz*⁵⁹ are depicted in a brutal, yet fascinated fashion, like pre-civilized savages in a tribal celebration:

. . . [G]ente sencilla y fiera como una tribu primitiva, cruel con los enemigos y devota del jefe. Aldeanos que sonreían con los ojos llenos de lágrimas oyendo cuentos pueriles de princesas emparedadas, y que degollaban a los enemigos con la alegría santa y bárbara, llena de bailes y de cantos, que tenían los sacrificios sangrientos, ante los altares de piedra, en los cultos antiguos. (*Gerifaltes* 136)

Further in the text a conversation among Liberal commanders reveals the plan to capture *Cura Santa Cruz*, Carlists and Liberals are united against him:

-Le tenemos ya cazado. Hay cartas de los mismos generales carlistas proponiendo una suspensión de hostilidades para perseguirle. Lizárraga [Carlist General] le cerrará el paso a la frontera, y nosotros lo estrecharemos por el frente. Es seguro que cae. Esta noche a las dos tocamos diana. (*Gerifaltes* 212)

This plan to capture Santa Cruz reveals the inherent hypocrisy of war. Valle-Inclán reveres the popular rebellion, but criticizes the Carlist leaders, blaming them for the loss. This position, however, reveals the nostalgic attitude of the Galician writer. Not in vain, the last novel of the trilogy is entitled *Gerifaltes de antaño* (bygone leaders). Those leaders Valle-Inclán idolizes are not the Carlist

⁵⁹ Manuel Ignacio Santa Cruz Loidi (1842-1926), parish priest of Hernialde, near San Sebastián (Guipúzcoa). He was the leading guerilla fighter in the last Carlist conflagration. Opposed to the Carlist generals, he was persecuted both by Liberals and Carlists, who regarded him as a dangerous and bloodthirsty rebel. Whereas Valle-Inclán describes him in idealized terms, Pío Baroja—as we will see in the following chapter—criticized him sharply. He fled to France and ended his days as a Jesuit missionary in Jamaica and Colombia.

generals, like Lizárraga, but what he views as the popular, collective defense of traditional society. The past Valle-Inclán writes about is, to a large extent, a created one. The nostalgic past he seeks, as Stewart puts it, “has never existed except as narrative, and hence, always absent, that past continually threatens to reproduce itself as a felt lack” (23). Modernity is, thus, for Valle-Inclán, both the ruins of the past and the failure of its promises.

The disenchantment with the nostalgic view of the past, articulated in Valle-Inclán’s use of Carlism, will mark the difference between nostalgia and *esperpento* in his treatment of the national past. In that regard, the unfinished series of *El Ruedo Ibérico*, published late in the 1920s, will be a very different sort of historical novel, where humor and satire will construct a brutal criticism of the Spain of Queen Isabel II. This shift from nostalgia to *esperpento* must not be read as a transition from an aestheticist phase to a politically-committed one. On the contrary, Valle-Inclán’s literary production reflects his ideological evolution in the context of that turbulent and fascinating period between the turn of the century and the start of the civil war of 1936-39 that José-Carlos Mainer has called *Edad de Plata* (silver age) of Spanish culture.

A Parody of Epic Proportions: Subverting the Heroic in Pío Baroja's

Zalacaín el aventurero

“I know, I know. Parody. It might be fun, if it were not so melancholy in its aristocratic nihilism.”

Thomas Mann, *Doctor Faustus*

Zalacaín el aventurero (1909) is customarily regarded as “una novelita de aventuras.” As such, it is frequently included in literature courses in secondary schools throughout Spain but, in spite of its popularity, the critical consideration of the novel is not on par with other Baroja's texts, such as *Camino de perfección* (1901), *La busca* (1904), or *El árbol de la ciencia* (1911), to name just a few. Whereas these novels still attract much scholarly attention, the bibliography on *Zalacaín el aventurero* is for the most part limited and outdated. Several critics, however, have examined this novel in connection with the rest of Pío Baroja's literary production, but they still perpetuate the critical prejudice of considering this text as somewhat less valuable than other novels of the period. Two examples of such an interpretation are Carlos Longhurst's *Las novelas históricas de Pío Baroja* (1974), and Manuel Suárez Cortina's “El Sexenio democrático en la literatura de fin de siglo” (2002). In spite of their undeniable quality and worth, both critical studies place *Zalacaín el aventurero* one step below the rest of Baroja's texts.

Longhurst, the author of the most important study on Baroja's historical novels, observes an intrinsic difference between the latter's (supposedly) apolitical historical novels (*Zalacaín* and the vast series of *Memorias de un*

hombre de acción) and the highly ideological content of the rest of his texts (11). History, says Longhurst, only serves as a source of inspiration for Baroja's adventurous plots (14). More recently, Manuel Suárez Cortina has stressed the paramount importance of the years between 1868 and 1874 in the historical imagination of *fin de siglo* writers. According to Suárez Cortina, turn-of-the-century Spanish intellectuals became interested in the historical novel because it allowed them to address literary, political, and ideological concerns. Analyzing works by Pereda, Galdós, Unamuno, and Valle-Inclán, he observes a clear ideological interest in their treatment of the *Sexenio democrático*. This analysis, however, is sharply contrasted with the lack of political content he attributes to Pío Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero*.

Suárez Cortina defines Baroja's novel as "simply" a *novela de aventuras* (335), further elaborating this apparent inadequacy in more explicit terms:

A Baroja, la guerra, su carácter ideológico y la confrontación de fondo que desarrollaba, no le interesó ni en su dimensión trágica ni como un escenario donde se dilucidaban las tensiones entre modernidad y tradición . . . no pretende escribir historia, sino novela de acción . . . El componente ideológico tan fuerte en Unamuno o en Valle se suaviza en Baroja. (339-40)

This chapter will argue precisely the contrary. I will contend that Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero* partakes of the same historico-ideological concerns that affected, among others, Unamuno and Valle-Inclán. His use of the adventurous romance, and the popular genre of *folletín* reveals—rather than a lack of interest in the historical period he describes—a conscious effort to engage in an intertextual dialogue with epic and heroic models. His novel, I will argue, is a sustained parody of epic poetry and chivalric romances, that is to say, of the

mythical framework of war narratives. *Zalacaín el aventurero* juxtaposes this mythical substratum to the reality of modern society. The result is a pessimistic, at times deeply nihilistic narration, in which Zalacaín, a modern (anti)hero, annihilates social conventions, deconstructs war mystique, and engages in a systematic demolition of political, religious, and economic values.

The Carlist war of 1872-1876 serves as much more than the narrative landscape of the novel, as Longhurst and Suárez Cortina both suggest. It is, instead, the site of interaction among the characters and, therefore, the site of Baroja's deconstruction of long-held ideological assumptions. Furthermore, the election of such a war is far from coincidental. The Carlist war is not the Troy of Hector and Achilles, nor the Crusades of Roland, but rather, the trifling confrontations of neighbors in a restricted and enclosed locus. In this sense, the Carlist war becomes, in itself, a parody of epic struggles. This parody will be sustained by the systematic use of chivalric and epic intertexts, as I will show in the following pages.

My own reading of *Zalacaín* rejects the notion of Baroja's historical approach as merely anecdotal (i.e., critically inconsequential) and focuses, instead, on the reasons, motivations, and implications of his historical imagination. The Basque novelist chooses to locate the action of this novel during the Carlist war because this conflict reflects, better than any other, the failure of Spanish modernization. In this regard, the importance that Baroja bestows on history, particularly on the transitional phase known as the *Sexenio democrático*, is self-evident:

Yo soy uno de tantos españoles que, nacidos en el último tercio del siglo XIX, han vivido en un momento malo, confuso y de transición; en una época en que las pragmáticas de nuestros abuelos se acababan de descomponer, y en la que, al mismo tiempo, el intento de ordenar y modernizar España fracasaba en la restauración borbónica, establecida en 1876, en el reinado de Alfonso XII, y continuada después por la Regencia. (Baroja 5: 492)

Baroja regards the Carlist war as a transitional phase between two failures: the modernizing effort of the *Sexenio democrático* (1868-1874) and the monarchic Restoration of 1876. The war is interpreted as the battlefield, quite literally, of two opposing forces that were ultimately equally unable to improve the country. Both Carlists and Liberals, representing the forces of tradition and modernity, are revealed as flawed and hypocritical. Additionally, Baroja criticizes everything and everyone: not only the Carlists, but also the Liberals; not only the religious backwardness and superstitious mindset of peasants and shepherds, but also the greed and depravity of bourgeoisie and merchants. The Carlist war is the perfect illustration of the clash between those two failed projects: the traditions of our forefathers, and the attempts to modernize and revitalize the nation. In the midst of such opposition, the character of Zalacaín becomes a heroic figure.

The novel's protagonist effectively mixes traditional notions of heroism (those belonging to the epic and the adventurous *folletín*) with modern notions of heroism that can be traced back to, among others, Carlyle, Nietzsche, and Schopenhauer. Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881) was a Scottish writer and historian, quite influential in his time, that Baroja admired deeply. Maravall was among the first to point to Carlyle as the reason for Baroja's interest in heroism:

Baroja profesa un liberalismo del tipo que inspiró la doctrina de la competencia o de la lucha natural de Darwin. Y sobre esa base

descansan las otras influencias que en él se dan de aquellas doctrinas que en el siglo XIX europeo hicieron la apología del heroísmo, y entre ellas, las de Carlyle, citado siempre con gusto por nuestro autor y cuyo pensamiento repercutió en este último mucho más de lo que se puede creer. (*Historia y novela* 439)

Baroja quotes Carlyle often throughout his works, mentioning the Scottish historian as one of his favorite authors, and even compares him with writers like Dickens, or Dostoievski:

También se asegura que el autor no debe hablar nunca por su voz, sino por la de sus personajes. Esto se da como indiscutible; ¿pero no hablaron con su propia voz, interrumpiendo sus textos, Cervantes y Fielding, Dickens y Dostoievsky? ¿No interrumpía Carlyle la historia con sus magníficos sermones? (4: 324)

Elsewhere Baroja praises Carlyle for his perfect blend of history and fiction:

No hay gran diferencia entre la historia y la novela, y así como un Chateaubriand o un Flaubert han podido convertir la novela en una obra seria de construcción y de técnica, Carlyle ha podido hacer de la historia una novela fantástica y caprichosa. (5: 473)

The works of Thomas Carlyle were enthusiastically received in Spain during the last decades of the nineteenth-century. Menéndez Pelayo, in his *Historia de las ideas estéticas en España* (1882-1891) commented upon the Scottish historian in detail. The first Spanish translation of his works (*On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History*), with a prologue by Leopoldo Alas “Clarín,” appeared in 1841 (Santiáñez, “Carlyle and Ganivet” 329). This essay, first published in 1840, postulates the historical importance of great men, claiming that history “is at bottom the History of the Great Men who have worked here” (Carlyle 1). Baroja speaks in detail about the notion of heroism in “El culto del heroísmo,” an article belonging to *Pequeños ensayos* (1943). The importance

of this article lies in the fact that Baroja links the Renaissance concept of heroism with the Nietzschean nihilist hero: “El héroe, para el florentino [Machiavelli], es el hombre de acción . . . En Maquiavelo la ética se evapora, se desvanece” (Baroja, *Pequeños ensayos* 109). This “evaporation” of ethics is, more precisely, the trademark of Nietzsche’s *Übermensch*. The modern hero becomes a “man of action,” beyond good and evil.⁶⁰ Baroja acknowledges the importance of the German philosopher in the development of heroism when he points out that “a la tesis de Carlyle se unieron con el tiempo Emerson con sus hombres representativos y Nietzsche con su superhombre” (*Pequeños ensayos* 112).

The philosophical hero meets the epic hero in the character of Zalacaín, thus producing the novel as a rich mixture of the old and the new, a reflection on the (im)possibility of heroism in the modern world, and a devastating critique of modern values through the nihilistic voice (and actions) of Zalacaín. In my opinion, *Zalacaín el aventurero* is structured through a series of innuendos, allusions, and intertextual dialogues that have not been heretofore sufficiently explained. The great value of the text consists in the systematic parody of epic and chivalric models to reveal the inadequacy of traditional heroic patterns in the modern world. Zalacaín is a nihilist hero, a man of will and action who confronts his free individuality within the social constraints of his time.

In this sense, the division between an ideologically-committed novelistic production (i.e., the so-called *novelas filosóficas*), and the ostensibly

⁶⁰ Interestingly enough, the long novelistic series of historical novels written by Baroja on Eugenio de Aviraneta carry the title of *Memorias de un hombre de acción* (1912-1934).

inconsequential *novelas de aventuras* (i.e., *Zalacaín el aventurero* and the series of *Memorias de un hombre de acción*) is exposed as overtly artificial. The main topics of Baroja's "more serious" texts can also be perceived in "minor" texts, such as *Zalacaín*. These discourses, noted by all Baroja scholars, include the tension between the self and society, and his ubiquitous pessimism. The clash between an individual and the society in which he lives is evident in *Zalacaín*. From the start of the novel, the protagonist stands in opposition to the rest of the village: "Los Zalacaín vivían a pocos pasos de Urbía; pero ni Martín ni su familia eran ciudadanos: faltaban a su casa unos metros para formar parte de la villa" (49). This physical separation progressively becomes an acute psychological distance: "Nadie se ocupaba de él, no compartía con los demás chicos la escuela y huroneaba por todas partes. Su abandono le obligaba a formarse sus ideas espontáneamente y a templar la osadía con la prudencia" (51).

Some critics have analyzed typical *folletín* traits in the novel, but have not shown the relevance of this popular genre in *Zalacaín*, nor the ideological motivation for its prevalent use in the text. López-Marrón, for example, explains the function of the travel motif in the novel as an illustration of the free and active personality of the protagonist, and the fact that—through his travels, his constant movement—*Zalacaín* effectively links the two sides of the war (Carlists and Liberals) together (81). José Extramiana, from a Marxist critical stance, appears bothered by Baroja's stress on an individual character: "Baroja confiere una importancia desmesurada al protagonista" (353), while at the same time despising his apparent lack of social insight and analysis, "el campesinado brilla por su

ausencia y se descuidan totalmente las relaciones de producción y los conflictos internos” (354). He concludes—with a disappointed tone—that Baroja’s interest on anti-social characters, like Tellagorri, Bautista, and Zalacaín himself, both implies a negative consideration of society, and prevents a thorough social analysis (355). His criticism is symptomatic of the critical prejudices that have often tainted the reading of *Zalacaín*.

Biruté Ciplijauskaitė (*Baroja, un estilo* 94) and Mary Lee Bretz (49) were the first scholars to note the structural debt of Zalacaín to the *folletín*.

Nevertheless, their analysis centers on a marginal aspect of this influence: the structure and disposition of chapters in *Zalacaín el aventurero* which, according to these scholars, mimics those of the *folletín*. Acknowledging this connection, I believe the influence of the *folletín* in Baroja’s novel has to be sought out in the development of the plot and in the construction of dialogues. The dialogues are short, lively, and form the very core of the novel. More importantly, Zalacaín shows his lack of social manners and disdain for courteous formalisms. A short example will illustrate the tone of the dialogues in the novel. In the following passage Zalacaín meets Linda:

-¡Ah! ¿Pero tú eres de aquí?

-Sí

-¿Y no sabes pasar?

-Si no dices a nadie nada, ya te pasaré.

-Yo también te traeré cerezas.

-¿De dónde?

-Yo sé dónde las hay.

-¿Cómo te llamas?

-Martín. ¿Y tú?

-Yo, Linda.

-Así se llamaba la perra del médico—dijo, poco galantemente, Martín. (79)

The plot is convoluted and full of twists and turns. The action is set in Urbía—an imaginary Basque village close to the French border—during the years preceding the last Carlist war. Martín Zalacaín is a young rascal that lives in the shabby outskirts of the town. Urbía is dominated by the Ohando's, a rich family. The rivalry between Martín and Carlos (the Ohando's firstborn) is soon evident, as it runs deep in the history of the village: the Zalacaín's and the Ohando's have been rivals since as far as history records show. Popular sympathy supports Zalacaín, considered by all as bold and smart. Carlos, on the other hand, suffers from jealousy. This enmity is further developed and exasperated by the romantic interest of Zalacaín in Carlos' sister, Catalina.

An old relative, Tellagorri, takes Martín under his protection and mentors him. When the old man dies, the war breaks out, and Zalacaín—together with Bautista, his brother-in-law and best friend—becomes a smuggler, selling weapons to both sides of the conflict, and crossing the French border regularly. Carlos, on the other hand, has become a fervent Carlist, and a sworn enemy of Martín. Both Martín and Bautista are captured by the troops of the *Cura Santa Cruz* and, after a time with them, are able to escape. They later accept a dangerous mission that takes them to the Carlist headquarters in Estella, where they discover Catalina in a convent. They rescue her and Zalacaín marries Catalina. Carlos and his friend, Cacho, take revenge on Zalacaín and kill him in the village of Valcarlos, where tradition has it that Charlemagne's rearguard, led by Roland, was ambushed and killed in 778.⁶¹

The novel's intricate plot and rugged dialogues denote an overwhelming influence of the *folletín*. The genre of *folletín*, or *roman feuilleton* in the original French, refers to a phenomenon in popular readership and mass production.⁶² The great distribution of newspapers in the nineteenth-century allowed novelists a new venue for their works. They would include their works in a serialized form, in two or three pages of the newspaper. If the sales were high, the author could publish the novel after it had appeared as a *folletín*. This term came to define a whole genre of popular romance defined by intricate plots and the use of narrative clichés often criticized for enslaving the readers' imagination. This genre had the peak of its popularity between the second half of the nineteenth century and the first decades of the twentieth. On several occasions, Baroja acknowledged its influence in his writing: “[S]e nota sí, la [influencia] de las novelas de aventuras, porque yo he sido en mi juventud gran lector de folletines de evasiones célebres, de relatos de viajeros y espectador de melodramas truculentos” (5: 499). *Folletines* were his favorite reading material: “De chico yo compraba libros viejos, folletines y novelones que devoraba en casa. En conocimientos sobre literatura folletinesca soy una especialidad” (5: 233).

Salvador Plans proposes a threefold division of the *folletín*: 1) Social novel, 2) Adventure novel, and 3) Sentimental novel. The first subgroup includes

⁶¹ Thus the name of the village, “Valcarlos” is an abbreviation of “Valle de Carlos (Magno),” the Spanish translation of Charlemagne. The official name of the village is Luzaide-Valcarlos (Navarra), located just a few miles from the French border.

⁶² For a study on the topic in Spain see Fernando Eguidazu's *Del folletín al bolsillo: 50 años de novela popular española, 1900-1950* (2008).

best-sellers like Eugène Sue's *The Mysteries of Paris* in France and Wenceslao Ayguals de Izco's *María, la hija de un jornalero* in Spain. It is typically defined by a democratic ideology, linked with the progressive thought brought about by the 1848 French Revolution. The most important representatives of the second group are Alexandre Dumas's *The Three Musketeers* in France, and Fernández y Gonzalez's *El cocinero de su majestad*, for whom Baroja always felt a deep admiration. As a matter of fact, in 1904, he wrote an enthusiastic article on him ("Don Manuel Fernández y González"). The last group includes *folletines* by Emile Richebourg, like *The crime of Grandvale*, and by Enrique Pérez Escrich, such as *La mujer adúltera* (16-18). The preeminence of the *folletín* genre covers a long period, roughly between 1830 and 1914. Long disregarded by literary critics, the popular novel has recently experienced new critical interest, primarily because of its social impact and popularity, and because it formed the thematic mold of many great nineteenth-century writers, like Balzac, Dickens, or Dostoievski. These writers used the forms, the topics, and the general settings and atmosphere of the popular novels to frame many of their works (González Mas 166).

Notwithstanding the intertextual traces of *folletín* found in Baroja's novel, I wish to point out an even stronger connection with the epic tradition. This overwhelming influence shapes the structure and the argument of the text, articulating the novel as a sustained parody of epic tropes and motifs. Several critics, like Bretz, Eller or Adrados, have noted this aspect in *Zalacaín el aventurero*. Bretz stresses the debt of *Zalacaín* to the epic model, to such a degree that he labels *Zalacaín* "an epic hero in a non-epic world" (51). Although I agree

with the importance of the epic in the general configuration of the novel and, more to the point, in the character of Zalacaín, I am not convinced that the protagonist can be understood as a paradigmatically epic hero, but rather—as I will show—as the parody of an epic hero. Bretz rightly notes the uselessness of epic values in the novel’s world. The lofty ideals of the epic have no room in the social reality of Zalacaín (a world mediated by economic and political interest, greed and ambition, rivalries and revenges), but he still considers Zalacaín a pure, conventional epic hero in a base and devalued context. However, I am inclined to believe that Zalacaín partakes of this selfish atmosphere, being sometimes cruel, sometimes foolish, and sometimes utterly unfair, as his disdainful comments in the novel’s dialogues attest.

Eller, for his part, focuses on the heroic intertexts of the novel. He sees links with Zalacaín and Lancelot, El Cid, Ulysses or even Don Quijote (405). This last comparison reveals, in my opinion, the same critical prejudice evinced by Bretz. Don Quijote is the paramount example of a pristine hero, a staunch idealist who refuses to debase himself in the low, mediocre and cruel world he inhabits. By comparison, Zalacaín is seen as an epic hero in an all too mundane world. In this sense, Adrados also hits the same note, clearly establishing a contrasting relationship between an unheroic world, and the epic hero that confronts it: “Zalacaín, frente al ambiente vulgar y trivial en que vive, representa un ramalazo de heroísmo” (Adrados 206).

Instead of considering Zalacaín as the last hero in a degraded reality, this chapter proposes to read the protagonist as the parody of an epic hero. Even those

scholars who propose the consideration of Zalacaín as a heroic figure reveal the contradictions of this classification. Eller admits that, in spite of the novel's intertextual dialogue with epic sources, Zalacaín's thought and actions are quite unconventional, to the point of being "anti-heroic" (409). Other critics acknowledge the pervasive irony in Baroja's treatment of Zalacaín, and the consequent demise of the traditional concept of heroism (Collins 71) but they do not reject the notion of Zalacaín as a hero altogether. I wish to go one step further, proposing that Baroja created a modern, nihilist anti-hero through the very conscious and systematic parody of heroic models in epic poetry and chivalry romances.

Parody, according to its Greek etymology, is composed by the terms *para*, meaning "against," and *odos*, meaning "song." As a consequence, it is customarily understood as a rhetorical practice where one text is contrasted with another for humorous purposes. This is the view of, among many others, Gerard Genette who defines parody as "[a] textual transformation with playful intent" (39). Opposed to this interpretation, Linda Hutcheon points out that the Greek term *para* has the additional meaning of "besides," and that this consideration opens the meaning of parody to more neutral intertextual practices, not exclusively understood in terms of mockery (22-37). In this sense, Hutcheon's interpretation is more inclusive than Genette's. The French philosopher is forced to present a radical division between parody, as a humorous intertextual practice, and pastiche, as a non-humorous one (Genette 24), whereas the Canadian scholar

regards parody as a form of textual dialogism, in Bakhtin's terms, that is, a structural relation between two texts (Hutcheon 22).

For my analysis of Pio Baroja's novel, I will draw on Hutcheon's definition of parody. *Zalacain el aventurero* (1909) engages in the sort of textual conversation she studies. It takes important structural elements from chivalric romances and the epic tradition, confronting them with nihilist observations and a prevalent critical outlook of modern society. If I were to follow Genette's classification, I would point out immediately that *Zalacain el aventurero* is clearly not a parody, but a pastiche. Humor, although certainly present in some passages of the novel, is not the main objective of Baroja's intertext. On the contrary, the tone of the novel is quite somber and pessimistic. I prefer to follow Hutcheon's definition of parody, however, because it avoids unnecessary formalistic categorizations and presents a straightforward interpretation of this cultural practice.

From a literary standpoint, the Homeric poems are, undoubtedly, the main subtext of *Zalacain*. In a metatextual passage located towards the end of the novel, Baroja playfully comments on *Zalacain*'s similarities with the *Odyssey*: "De conocer Martín la *Odisea*, es posible que hubiese tenido la pretensión de comparar a Linda con la hechicera Circe, y a sí mismo con Ulises; pero como no había leído el poema de Homero, no se le ocurrió tal comparación" (212).⁶³

⁶³ The parody of the *Odyssey* immediately brings to mind James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922). *Las comparaciones son odiosas*, but we should note that Baroja's modern deconstruction of the hero precedes Joyce's masterpiece by thirteen years. It is also worth mentioning a previous modernist hero: Angel Ganivet's *Pío Cid*. See Ganivet's *La conquista del reino*

Francisco Adrados, in an excellent article, has traced connections between Baroja's text and the *Iliad*. He shows a connection between the farewell scene in Canto 6 with the third chapter in the third book of *Zalacaín*, where Martín and Catalina's dialogue is taken from the same scene between Hector and Andromache (202). Furthermore, Adrados reaches the conclusion that *Zalacaín el aventurero* shares a fundamental motif with the Homeric poem: the death of the hero by treachery. Death by treachery, he explains, is the only possible death for the hero, because he is—by definition—the best fighter, and a death by natural causes, instead of in the battlefield, would be undignified (201). In spite of the importance of Adrados analysis, and the manifest debts to the *Iliad*, I concur with Eller in reading *Zalacaín*'s death as a nod to Roland's death in the French epic *La chanson de Roland* (Eller 406). The sound of the bugle signals the death of the hero in both cases. Furthermore, Roland dies by a Navarrese (in the text, by a Moor) ambush near the French border, thus creating a geographical parallelism (the pass of Roncesvalles) that did not escape Baroja's attention.

Zalacaín el aventurero is also rife with intertextual allusions to other epic poems and chivalric romances. Among the first group, the influence of the *Cantar de Mio Cid* is, not surprisingly, prevalent. At the beginning of the third canto, *el Cid* subdues a wild lion that had frightened to death the *infantes* of Carrión. In a similar fashion, *Zalacaín* kills two wild boars with only a club (Book 1, chapter

de Maya por el ultimo conquistador español, Pío Cid (1896), and *Los trabajos del infatigable creador Pío Cid* (1898). For a detailed study on the Andalusian writer consult Nil Santiáñez's *Angel Ganivet, escritor modernista: teoría y novela en el fin de siglo español* (1994). In my opinion, Ganivet's influence on Baroja can be better seen in the latter's *Paradox, rey* (1906), where he refashions the topic of Ganivet's *La conquista*.

7), and, upon his return to the village, is greeted as a hero by the populace. The killing or the taming of a wild beast is, moreover, reminiscent of one of Hercules's tasks, and—importantly enough—marks the end of Zalacaín's infancy in a classic rite of passage. This transitional phase in Zalacaín's life (signaled by the killing of the boars) is framed by two events: the death of Tellagorri and the breakout of the war.

As mentioned above, another intertext of the novel are the chivalric romances. The comparison with the romance is suggested by Bretz when he notes that, even though the action of the novel takes place some forty years ago, the general tone and atmosphere of the text seem to date back to much earlier (50-51). *Zalacaín* seems to be an atemporal narration, located in the hazy time of folktales. I contend that the reason for this perceived atemporality is because the novel also uses the chivalric romance as a parodic model. Baroja effectively mixes in his novel the popular literature of the romance, the philosophical pessimism he drew from Schopenhauer, and the ever-present topic of the tension between the individual and the society. LaRubia, for example, notes the tension between what he calls "intellectualism," and the more adventurous elements in his texts. He argues that Baroja sets the tone for the development of a typical hero only to confront him with an alienating reality (LaRubia 107). However, critics who have seen romance elements in *Zalacaín* do not explain the extent of this influence in specific terms. LaRubia speaks of the use of irony in this confrontation of the hero with the social reality, but what is the extent of this irony and what does it specifically address? I will propose a specific answer to that question: Baroja

constructs the character of Zalacaín through the parody of the chivalric romance hero, and of one of the most important and definitory tenets of the chivalric romance: the education of the young hero by an older knight.

Madeleine Pelner Cosman, in her classic study on the subject—*The Education of the Hero in Arthurian Romance* (1966)—explains how the hero of the chivalric romance always show an early promise of extraordinary abilities. Consequently, great importance is placed on the hero's childhood. This childhood is broadly understood to be located between the hero's birth and the ceremony of his knighting (xiii). In the case of a typical hero, the knighting ceremony is self-evident, it occurs after the completion of a rite of passage, immediately before a time of conflict and distress, when the community needs the values and worth that only a hero is able to give. In the case of *Zalacaín* this rite of passage, this knighting ceremony is exemplified in the episode of the wild boars. From that point on, Zalacaín's heroic status is collectively confirmed. The text is very clear in this regard: "Cuando Martín volvió triunfante, muerto de fatiga y con sus dos jabalíes, el pueblo entero le consideró como un héroe" (86). Conveniently enough, right after this episode Tellagorri, who had served as mentor of the young hero, dies. It could not have been otherwise: his mission was over. The time of distress that looms over the community and that justifies the need for a hero in the first place is, obviously, the Carlist war.

Furthermore, Tellagorri's cynicism devalues and demysticizes the gloriousness of the war. His last words of advice to Zalacaín constitute a parody of the chivalric code of conduct:

[T]e voy a decir una cosa, y es que antes de poco habrá guerra. Tú eres valiente, Martín; tú no tendrás miedo de las balas. Vete a la guerra, pero no vayas de soldado. Ni con los blancos ni con los negros.⁶⁴ ¡Al comercio, Martín! ¡Al comercio! Venderás a los liberales y a los carlistas, harás tu pacotilla⁶⁵ y te casarás con la chica de Ohando. Si tenéis un chico, llamadle como yo: Miguel o José Miguel. (87)

Baroja's parody of the heroic education goes even further. Tellagorri, as the mentoring older "knight," takes Zalacaín under his tutelage and provides him with a complete (although extremely cynical and nihilistic) education. In conventional chivalric romances, the young hero's curriculum can be divided into "liberal content" (reading, music, law, hunting, and sports) and "chivalric content" (philosophical precepts of knighthood) (Pelner Cosman 198). Tellagorri instructs his pupil in exactly the same areas although, naturally, with a much more cynical slant. In terms of what Cosman calls "liberal content," the education of the young Zalacaín is explained in the following passage:

Tellagorri le curtía a Martín, le hacía andar, correr, subirse a los arboles, meterse en los agujeros como un hurón; le educaba a su manera, por el sistema pedagógico de los Tellagorris, que se parecía bastante al salvajismo. Mientras los demás chicos estudiaban la doctrina y el Catón, él contemplaba los espectáculos de la naturaleza, entraba en la cueva de Erroitza, en donde hay salones inmensos llenos de grandes murciélagos que se cuelgan de las paredes por las uñas de sus alas membranosas; se bañaba en Ocín beltz, a pesar de que todo el pueblo consideraba este remanso peligrosísimo; cazaba y daba grandes viajatas. (59-60)

⁶⁴ The term "negro" clearly means Liberal combatant, as explained by José Carlos Clemente in his *Diccionario histórico del carlismo* (2006). Blanco, by opposition, indicates Carlist soldier. In addition, the reference to "blancos" and "negros" recalls Dante's portrayal of the white and black Guelphs in the *Divine Comedy*.

⁶⁵ The expression *hacer uno su pacotilla* means to make some fortune (Senabre 87).

In terms of the “chivalric education” (philosophical precepts of knighthood), there are a pair of allusions in the text to the development of philosophical attitudes in the young Zalacaín. We read how private property instills in the young Zalacaín the yearning for stealing and philosophy: “El ver las huertas y las casas ajenas desde lo alto de la muralla, y el contemplar los trabajos de los demas, iba dando a Martín cierta inclinación a la filosofía y al robo” (58), but the most clear example of a parody of chivalric education comes from Tellagorri:

Tellagorri era un individualista convencido; tenía el individualismo del vasco reforzado y calafateado por el individualismo de los Tellagorri.
-Cada cual que conserve lo que tenga y que robe lo que pueda—decía.
Esta era la mas social de sus teorías; las más insociables se las callaba. (55)

We observe two key points in this quotation: the deep individuality of Tellagorri, opposed to the collective solidarity of knighthood, and the assumption of theft as a way of life. Theft is deeply connected with private property, as seen in the former quotation. This notion implies a social critique based on the bourgeois values of private property and commerce. These bourgeois values, as we will see, will always be despised by Zalacaín, who will equate them constantly to theft and injustice. Furthermore, the space of action of the hero will be the Carlist war. The participation of Zalacaín in this conflict and his philosophical demise may be explained by a systematic deconstruction of traditional tenets. In this regard, Zalacaín’s adventures are defined by his pessimism, and his criticism of grand ideologies (exemplified in the two sides of the war) and the grand heroic

figures of the Carlist confrontation (evinced in the real-life character of *El cura Santa Cruz*).

The Basque writer's pessimism has been a commonplace in Baroja studies. Some critics have argued that Baroja's deep social skepticism prevented him, by and large, from attempting any regenerative stance (Shaw 118). By all accounts, Baroja did not believe in political action to achieve social change. His disdain made him an anti-utopian in the strictest sense: He did not believe in social improvement. In an article published in the journal *Juventud* (8 March 1902), Baroja admits it unapologetically:

Yo digo que no soy anarquista, y no lo digo porque tenga miedo a la palabra, sino porque siento demasiado la fuerza de mis instintos egoístas para llamarme de esta manera. Soy un individualista rabioso, soy un rebelde; la sociedad me parece defectuosa porque no me permite desarrollar mis energías, nada más que por eso. (qtd. in Longares 271)

In spite of this disregard for political action, I believe one must take Baroja's pessimism as a political program unto itself. The lack of regenerative measures in his writings does not imply necessarily—as Shaw seems to suggest—that he did not have any political motivation, but rather that he did not believe in the feasibility of social reform in the political context of his time.

Baroja was deeply influenced by Schopenhauer, as he often mentioned. Critics have also noted the prevalent pessimism in *Zalacaín el aventurero*. De Nora, in his canonical survey of contemporary Spanish literature, acknowledges the pessimistic tone of the novel, but sees it mostly in connection with the hero's untimely and unjust death (*La novela española* 143). My interpretation is different, as I understand Zalacaín's death to be a heroic reference, and not an

example of pessimism. Pessimism is to be found elsewhere in the novel, mostly in the hero's disdain of bourgeois social values, and in his idea of life as permanent strife. This last notion, based on the assumption that violence is the very definition of biological and historical progress, clearly resonates with Darwin's theory of evolution and all the philosophical implications derived by it (Maravall 439).

Speaking about the political views of his youth, Baroja states:

No fui nunca simpatizante de las doctrinas comunistas. El dogma cerrado del socialismo no me agradaba. Tampoco cogí del anarquismo su pretendida parte constructiva. Me bastaba su espíritu crítico, medio literario, medio cristiano. Después reaccioné contra estas tendencias, y me sentí darwinista, y consideré, como espontáneamente consideraba en la infancia, que la lucha, la guerra y la aventura eran la sal de la vida. (5: 883)

We find here, in this quotation, the interpretation of the adventure story as the fictional genre par excellence of modernity. The Darwinist sense of life (the permanent strife for survival as the very definition of society) becomes perfectly illustrated in the adventurous genre (*el folletín de aventuras*).⁶⁶ Furthermore, the parody of heroic elements, much more than a merely formalist and literary game of allusions and intertexts, becomes—in fact—a very deep and conscious social criticism, a systematic deconstruction of all ideologies. This deconstructive drive is hinted at by de Nora when he considers Baroja's atheism as proof of his anti-utopian stance; in other words, being a pessimist, Baroja's political views cannot

⁶⁶ What I have called “Darwinist sense of life” should be clarified as “social darwinism.” In this sense, the application of Darwin's evolutionary theory to the social realm corresponds to the English philosopher Herbert Spencer (1820-1903). Baroja had read Spencer and was familiar with his ideas.

be revolutionary, because he does not believe in human redemption by any means, not religious, not social, not political (“La concepción” 5). Although I certainly agree with De Nora on this point, I believe it must be noted that Baroja’s radical pessimism constitutes, in and of itself, a revolutionary stance. Not in the collective sense that both anarchism and communism imply, but rather in the individual sense of (Darwinian) liberalism.

I will propose a threefold division of Baroja’s criticism in Zalacaín: of society, of the war, and of the great protagonists of history. In terms of social criticism, the following dialogue with Capistun, a merchant, can hardly be more explicit of Zalacaín’s contempt for bourgeois values:

-¡Barbarie! ¡Barbarie!—replicaba a todo esto el gascón.
 -¡Qué barbarie!—exclamó Martín—¿Se ha de estar siempre hecho un esclavo, sembrando patatas o cuidando cerdos? Prefiero la guerra.
 -¿Y por qué prefieres la guerra? Para robar
 -No hables, Capistun, que eres comerciante.
 -¿Y qué?
 -Que tu y yo robamos con el libro de cuentas. Entre robar en el camino o robar con el libro de cuentas, prefiero a los que roban en el camino.
 -Si el comercio fuera un robo no habría sociedad—repuso el gascón
 -¿Y qué?—dijo Martín
 -Que acabarían las ciudades
 -Para mí las ciudades están hechas por miserables y sirven para que las saqueen los hombres fuertes—dijo Martín con violencia
 -Eso es ser enemigo de la Humanidad
 Martín se encogió de hombros. (113-14)

There are two philosophical allusions in this passage that are worth mentioning. Firstly, Zalacaín speaks about the slave mentality brought forth by bourgeois values, and implies that all of it will be destroyed by the strong man, clearly reminiscent of the Nietzschean notion of the *übermensch*. Secondly, there

is an obvious contempt for the city, as the place of corruption and degeneration. This notion of the city as the space of degeneration, however, is not as influenced by Nordau as Ciplijauskaitė suggests (“El desencanto” 16), as it is by Nietzsche. Nordau’s criticism of the city was formulated in terms of moral, intellectual, and physical corruption and backwardness.⁶⁷ Nietzsche’s criticism of the city, on the other hand, was based on the consideration of the city as the space of the slaves, of commerce, of bourgeois values, of the Judeo-Christian mentality. All in all, this passage reveals the influence of the philosophy of pessimism in Baroja’s thought, a philosophy upheld by Nietzsche, as shown in the earlier passage, but also by Schopenhauer, as well as by Nordau and other *fin de siècle* thinkers. In any case, more importantly than pinpointing the specific philosopher that may have influenced a particular passage of the text, the critic must understand that this philosophical ferment influenced the novelist in the social criticism projected in *Zalacaín el aventurero*.

The second main point of criticism in the novel is that of the war. From the beginning, Baroja’s contempt for lofty war ideals and rhetoric is obvious. Zalacaín, following Tellagorri’s advice, gets involved in the confrontation as a smuggler, not as a soldier (Eller 407). This attitude reveals a cynical vision of the war, not just of one side over the other, but of the leaders on both sides (Gil 111).

⁶⁷ In this regard, the influence of the Italian physician Cesare Lombroso in the consideration of urban masses as potentially criminal is also relevant.

In a conversation between Zalacaín and a foreign press correspondent,⁶⁸ the hero's disbelief in nationalist rhetoric is made apparent:

-Juego, campanas, carlismo y jota. ¡Qué español es esto, mi querido Martín!—dijo el extranjero.

-Pues yo también soy español, y todo eso me es muy antipático—contestó Martín.

-Sin embargo, son los caracteres que constituyen la tradición de su país—dijo el extranjero.

-Mi país es el monte—contestó Zalacaín. (174)⁶⁹

Interestingly enough, it is the foreigner who defines what constitutes the national traditions. This paradox will later be reworked in the criticism of the Carlist pretender, the so-called Carlos VII, a foreigner who also claimed to define what was traditionally Spanish. In spite of the obvious criticism of Carlist leaders (Carlos VII, Cura Santa Cruz, etc.) and the fact that Zalacaín's archenemy, Carlos Ohando, was a Carlist official during the war, Baroja also censures the opportunistic and cynical attitude of the Liberals:

⁶⁸ The character of the war correspondent might be influenced by real life events. Pío Baroja's father, Serafín, was a journalist and wrote chronicles on the second Carlist war in the newspaper *El Tiempo* under the title "Crónica de la guerra carlista" (January and February of 1876). Julio Caro Baroja, Pío's nephew, kept the manuscript—which was profusely annotated on the margins by Pío's handwriting—and considered it a source of inspiration for *Zalacaín el aventurero*. For more information see Alberich (277). There is a modern edition of these chronicles published in 1986 with the title *Crónica de la guerra carlista, enero y febrero de 1876*.

⁶⁹ The image of the "monte" (i.e., mountain) is relevant. The mountains played an important role in Unamuno's *Paz en la Guerra*, where they served as a sort of *locus amoenus*, a distanced vantage point and a site of spiritual illumination. In Baroja's case, the mountains stand in stark contrast with the city. In this sense they reinforce the binary city-countryside, which pervades Baroja's nihilist reflections on barbarism and civilization. On that note, I also find a veiled allusion to Nietzsche's *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1885), in which the philosopher descends from the mountains to address the inhabitants of the city below.

Con la proclamación de Sagunto la desconfianza cundió por todas partes . . . ⁷⁰ Los ambiciosos de los pueblos veían que todas las clases ricas se inclinaban a favor de la monarquía liberal. Los generales alfonsinos, después de hecho su agosto y ascendido en su carrera todo lo posible, encontraban que era una estupidez continuar la guerra durante más tiempo; habían matado la república, que, ciertamente, por estólida, merecía la muerte; el nuevo gobierno les miraba como vencedores, pacificadores y héroes. ¿Qué más podían desear? (226)

At the end, the utmost criticism is reserved for the merchants, who take advantage of the losing side (the Carlists) when they cross the French border: “Una porción de comerciantes se había descolgado por allí, como cuervos al olor de la carne muerta, y compraban hermosos caballos por doce o diez duros, espadas, fusiles y ropas a precios ínfimos” (239).

Together with the criticism of the two sides of the war, Zalacaín abounds in criticism of the main protagonists of the Carlist confrontations. In particular, three aspects are totally debased and demythified: *cura Santa Cruz*, the Carlist pretender himself, and the town of Estella. In this regard, the difference between Baroja and Valle-Inclán is striking. Whereas Valle-Inclán idolizes both *cura Santa Cruz* and Carlos VII, Baroja’s use of irony and sarcasm turns them into pathetic figures. Julio Caro Baroja, nephew of Pío and prolific author of a series of anthropological studies on the Basque Country, notes the differences in opinion between his uncle and Valle-Inclán regarding Carlism in his “Recuerdos valleinclanescos-barojianos.” He defines Valle-Inclán’s treatment of the Carlist

⁷⁰ 29 December 1874. General Martínez Campos proclaimed in Sagunto (Valencia) the end of the Republic and inaugurated the historical period known as *Restauración borbónica* (the return of the Borbonic dynasty to the throne). This period would last until 1931, with the promulgation of the Second Republic.

war as “llena de lances caballerescos, en escenarios medievales; sus actores habían sido donjuanes religiosos y satánicos, damas exquisitas, aldeanos fabulosos” (241). Compared with this notion, Pío Baroja’s vision was more realist, more down-to-earth, less idealistic: “Don Pío veía patrullas mandadas por clérigos de aldea, jaboneros y cereros de callejuela” (Julio Caro Baroja 242).

In this sense, Baroja explicitly states the realism of his descriptions:

Los detalles históricos (de *Zalacaín*) no están tomados de los libros, sino de viva voz. Algunos los oí de labios de mi padre, que estuvo en la guerra carlista de voluntario liberal; otros los escuché de sus amigos. Los tipos, paisajes y costumbres están vistos en la realidad durante mis caminatas y paseos por el País vasco y en el pueblo guipuzcoano en donde estuve de médico.⁷¹ (5: 501)

The terms of Cura Santa Cruz’s description in the novel are harsh and unforgiving. Baroja writes:

Aquel hombre tenía algo de esa personalidad enigmática de los seres sanguinarios, de los asesinos y de los verdugos; su fama de cruel y de bárbaro se extendía por toda España. El lo sabía y, probablemente, estaba orgulloso del terror que causaba su nombre. En el fondo era un pobre diablo histérico, enfermo, convencido de su misión providencial. (123)

The words reserved for the Carlist pretender are even harsher. *Cura Santa Cruz* was a fanatic, a “theocrat,” as Baroja labeled him in 1924 in his *Divagaciones apasionadas* (5: 541), but there is still some sense of strength and awe in his figure. On the other hand, Carlos VII appears in the novel as a complete idiot. Upon his arrival to Estella, the Carlist headquarters, Zalacaín has an audience with Carlos VII. This scene vividly depicts the individuality of the

⁷¹ Zestoa (Cestona).

hero, his lack of concern for pompous formalities, and his utter contempt for the pretender and the Carlist cause:

-Ahí esta el rey. Tiene usted que arrodillarse y besarle la mano—
dijo el oficial.
Zalacaín no replicó.
-Y darle el título de majestad.
Zalacaín no hizo caso . . .
-El señor (Carlos VII) está con dos reverendos padres—le advirtió
un oficial.
-Vayan al diablo el señor y los reverendos padres—refunfuñó
Zalacaín—. La verdad es que este rey es un rey ridículo. (184)

Lastly, the town of Estella is also degraded. Whereas Valle-Inclán wrote many pages to “la ciudad santa del carlismo” in the most enthusiastic and idolizing terms (in *Sonata de invierno*, *Gerifaltes de antaño*, and the fragment of “La corte de Estella”), Baroja reveals the town to be an apathic rural community. The ensuing conversation on the artistic merits (or lack thereof) of a local church is revealing of Zalacaín’s scorn.

-¿De veras?—preguntó Martín.
-¡Oh! ¡Ya lo creo!
-¿Y la habrá hecho la gente de aquí?—preguntó Martín.
-¿Le parece a usted imposible que los de Estella hagan cosa buena?—preguntó riendo el extranjero.
-¡Qué sé yo! No me parece que en este pueblo se haya inventado la pólvora.(176-77)

As different as Valle-Inclán and Baroja are, and as divergent as their critical stances on the topic of Carlism are, we can see certain connections worth mentioning. The most important similarity is their common interest in worlds on the brink of destruction. This is seen in *Zalacaín*, in the notion that Urbía is progressively crumbling, literally disappearing from sight. An example of this is

the description of the house of Zalacaín's family, depicted (from the point of view of the present) as an absence and a memory:

A la izquierda del camino, antes de la muralla, había hace años un caserío viejo, medio derruido, con el tejado terrero lleno de pedruscos y la piedra arenisca de sus paredes desgastada por la acción de la humedad y del aire. En el frente de la decrepita y pobre casa, un agujero indicaba dónde estuvo en otro tiempo el escudo, y debajo de él se adivinaban, más bien que se leían, varias letras que componían una frase latina: *Post funera virtus vivit*.⁷²
(49)

We see how this house is already absent (“había hace años”), and that even when it existed, it was a disheveled, crumbling edifice. The family shield is absent, the motto is mostly gone, but the words remark that death is not victorious, that virtue will always win. Deeply connected with this is the use that Baroja makes of popular songs. Valle-Inclán also used songs in his texts, but his interpretation is more arcane and esoteric. Baroja, on the other hand, uses popular songs as a way to define and contextualize his characters. This is mostly the case with Tellagorri, whose very name comes from a song the villagers of Urbía invented for him: “Tellagorri / Galchagorri / Ongi etorri / Onera. / Ostutzale / Erantzale / Nescatzale / Zu cera”, Baroja—as he always does—provides the Spanish translation for the original Basque: “Tellagorri, Galchagorri,⁷³ bien venido seas aquí. Aficionado a robar, aficionado a beber, aficionado a las muchachas, eres tú” (55).

⁷² “Virtue outlives death”

⁷³ The term “Galchagorri” was the family nickname of Tellagorri. It means “red pants” (54).

Tellagorri liked singing, particularly after drinking a glass or two, and some of his songs reveal interesting political connotations. This one (oddly bilingual) reveals an appalling contradiction, it praises General Espartero, the leader of the Liberal troops that defeated the Carlists during the first Carlist war (1833-1840), and Queen Isabel II, but insults her mother, the Queen Regent María Cristina, who ruled the country precisely during the period of the first Carlist confrontation: “¡Viva Espartero! ¡Viva erreguiña! / ¡Ojalá de repente ilcobalizaque / Bere ama ciquiña!”. The Spanish version is “¡Viva Espartero! ¡Viva la reina! ¡Ojalá de repente se muriese su sucia madre!” (65). It is not an easy task to interpret Tellagorri’s ambivalence to the Queen, but I would suggest that, although a staunch Liberal, Tellagorri ascribes the Queen Regent to the first Carlist war, and consequently, to the destruction and misery that entailed in the Basque Country.

Zalacaín el aventurero has been regarded as an adventurous romance, a piece of popular literature, a text addressed to young audiences. For that reason, critics have rarely attributed to this short and lively novel the credit and relevance it certainly deserves. Modernism, as Suárez Cortina has pointed out, is not an aesthetic school but a particular attitude toward modernity. This new attitude—that in the Spanish case is best reflected by Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja—can be seen as a new relationship with history. In a time of radical changes, of social, political, and economic transformations that redefined to the core what it meant to be Spanish, these intellectuals looked back to the past and wrote obsessively about it. The period they contemplated and revisited in fiction was

that transitional time where the *Ancien Régime* became the shadow, the void gesture of a Liberal society (Suárez Cortina, *La sombra* 32-39).

This time, in specific terms, comprises the moment between the 1868 Liberal Revolution and the 1876 Monarchic Restoration, in other words, the *Sexenio democrático*. This was the historical seed of their present, the root of the Canovite Parliamentary system, the origins of what they perceived as a failed attempt to modernize the country. Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja revisited the last Carlist war (1872-1876) because it exemplified, in graphic terms, the clash of the *Ancien Régime* and Liberalism. It was the bellicose microcosm of the *Sexenio democrático*.

From a critical perspective, both *Paz en la guerra* (1897) and the trilogy of *La guerra carlista* (1908-9) have been progressively regarded as ideological texts, novels where the historical imagination of their authors plays a fundamental role in debunking the origins of Spanish modernity. Critics like Gonzalo Navajas or Jesús Torrecilla, for Unamuno, and Margarita Santos Zas or Angel Loureiro, for Valle-Inclán, have changed long-held convictions about these novels and refashioned them as critical constructs of Spanish modernity.⁷⁴ Pío Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero* (1909), nevertheless, has not been affected by this much needed rethinking of *fin de siglo* historical texts.

⁷⁴ See Gonzalo Navajas's *Unamuno desde la posmodernidad* (1992), Jesús Torrecilla's *La imitación colectiva* (1996), Margarita Santos Zas's *Tradicionalismo y literatura en Valle-Inclán, 1890-1910* (1993), and Angel Loureiro's "Valle-Inclán: La modernidad como ruina" (1999).

Yet Baroja's novel is on par with those of Unamuno and Valle-Inclán, because *Zalacaín el aventurero* furnishes the same criticism, the same ideological drive of the preceding novels. As I have shown in this chapter, Baroja's novel articulates a critique of modernity through the parody of heroic models. The ideological component in Baroja's text, the use of the historical novel to reveal the shortcomings and injustices of contemporary society are present in his text. There are, however, numerous and important differences among these three writers in their approach to the *Sexenio democrático*, and to the Carlist war in particular. Whereas Unamuno and Valle-Inclán create a bucolic, traditional rural landscape as a point of comparison with the modern urban life of the city; Baroja's criticism is aimed at everything and everyone.

Religion is an important component of traditional social values and the permanent object of scorn in the novel. One of the most comically memorable parodies of religion takes place when *Marqués*, Tellagorri's dog, enters in the local church:

Marqués . . . era como él: ladrón, astuto, vagabundo, viejo, cínico, insociable e independiente. Además, participaba del odio de Tellagorri por los ricos, cosa rara en un perro. Si *Marqués* entraba alguna vez en la iglesia, era para ver si los chicos habían dejado en el suelo de los bancos donde se sentaban algún mendrugo de pan, no por otra cosa. No tenía veleidades místicas. (54)

The villagers' bigotry is also laughed at, when Tellagorri's nihilistic anticlericalism is expressed in the bluntest of terms:

-“Yo le saludo con más respeto a un perro de aguas que al señor párroco.”
La tal frase escandalizó al pueblo.
Había gente que comenzaba a creer que Tellagorri y Voltaire eran los causantes de la impiedad moderna. (57)

This scornful depiction of traditional values marks a sharp contrast between Baroja and the other writers. His critique of modernity goes well beyond fixed dichotomies of rural and urban spheres. Urbía represents the whole society, the blurring of divisions between rustic communities and the space of the city. As a matter of fact, the name of the village itself denotes its universality: Urbía conceals the latin name for city, *urbs*.⁷⁵

Within this framework, the Carlist war is also structured as the parody of an epic confrontation. This sustained parody demythifies war, commerce, urban and rural life, and society as a whole. Even though Baroja shows a certain love for traditional rural life, there is an immediate response to it, an immediate demythification of it. The novel's prologue seems to build an arcadic space of innocence and harmony:

Hace cuarenta años la vida en Urbía era pacífica y sencilla; los domingos había el acontecimiento de la misa mayor, y por la tarde, el acontecimiento de las vísperas. Después, en un prado anejo a la ciudadela, y del cual se había apoderado la villa, iba el tamborilero, y la gente bailaba alegremente al son del pito y del tamboril, hasta que el toque del *Angelus* terminaba con la zambra, y los campesinos volvían a sus casas después de hacer una estación en la taberna. (46)

⁷⁵ Baroja could have chosen the name of his imaginary village as an intertextual allusion to the Orbajosa of Galdós's *Doña Perfecta* (1876), which also carries the same latin word in its name. No critic, to my knowledge, has established any connection between these two texts. Written at the beginning of the monarchic restoration, Galdós's novel provides a sharp criticism of *caciquismo* and social backwardness.

Yet this adamic world of social brotherhood is quickly revealed to be a modern construct, an artificial landscape where the old house of the Ohando's has metamorphosed into a hotel:

En verano cruzan la carretera un sinfín de automóviles, y casi todos se paran un momento en la casa de Ohando, convertido en Gran Hotel de Urbía. Algunas señoritas, apasionadas de lo pintoresco, mientras el grueso papá escribe postales en el hotel, suben las escaleras del portal de la Antigua, recorren las dos calles principales de la ciudad y sacan fotografías de los rincones que les parecen románticos y de los grupos de alpargateros que se dejan retratar, *sonriendo burlonamente*. (45-46) My italics.

It is this sardonic smile of the cobblers that reveals Baroja's criticism.

There is nothing romantic or picturesque in Urbía; there is no epic, no official, monumentalized heroism. The Carlist war is parodied as an epic conflict where the fight between tradition and modernity is revealed as the collision of two hypocrisies. Tradition is depicted as a romantic construction of the bourgeoisie, as a false and dated *costumbrismo*. Analogously, Baroja criticizes a superficial modernization that seeks only to perpetuate the socio-economic structures of power and control. In spite of its obvious ideological component, *Zalacaín el aventurero* has been lost in the critical debate of the *fin de siglo*. Dismissed as an adventure tale, the novel has progressively faded into the required reading of high schools syllabus across Spain. Paradoxically, this status of the novel has tended to preclude its interpretation as an ideological critique of the turn-of-the-century crisis.

Generations of Spaniards have been taught to read it as a *folletín*, to regard Zalacaín as a heroic figure, and to enjoy the text for its adventures. No wonder its critical interpretation in the context of the Spanish turn-of-the-century is

problematic. In the few instances where *Zalacaín* is grouped together with other texts by Unamuno or Valle-Inclán, scholars are forced to highlight the diluted nature of Baroja's ideological concerns in the novel. Manuel Suárez Cortina, for example, whose excellent work has been fundamental in my understanding of this cultural period, admits—almost ashamed to include *Zalacaín el aventurero* in his article—that “[e]l componente ideológico tan fuerte en Unamuno o en Valle se suaviza en Baroja” (“El Sexenio” 339-40). I beg to differ. Baroja's novel is even more adamant in its criticism. Unamuno and Valle-Inclán problematize the confrontation between tradition and modernity with an obvious attraction toward rural communities. Baroja's Urbía, on the other hand, is far from being a pastoral arcadia. Maybe that is why the cobblers smile in the photographs: they mock the tourists' naiveté, they know better.

Conclusion

This dissertation has studied a corpus of historical novels dealing with the topic of the second Carlist war (1872-1876) written by Miguel de Unamuno, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, and Pío Baroja at the turn of the century. Spurred by previous scholarly work on the subject, particularly the seminal essays of Biruté Ciplijauskaitė on the relationship of the so-called “Generation of 1898” with history, and by the more recent works by Manuel Suárez Cortina on the historical allure of the *Sexenio democrático* (1868-1874) in turn-of-the-century Spanish literature, I have provided an interpretation of the paradoxical prevalence of this historical event in the Spanish *fin de siglo*.

My analysis shows that these writers revisited the Second Carlist War in order to articulate a critique of the contemporary Restoration political system (1876-1931), and to provide an overarching reflection on the uneven process of Spanish modernization. Starting from this initial premise, and drawing on literary critics like Jesús Torrecilla and Pedro Cerezo Galán, and philosophers such as Eduardo Subirats, I contend that the historical imagination of the Spanish *fin de siglo* partakes of a pervading feeling of inadequacy and failure: a “conciencia de fracaso,” as Torrecilla has put it. This project offers a fresh insight on turn-of-the-century Spain by analyzing this “conciencia de fracaso” through a group of historical novels which had, up until now, not been studied collectively as an illustration of this cultural attitude. The texts I have studied are Unamuno’s first novel, *Paz en la guerra* (1897), Valle-Inclán’s trilogy on the Carlist war, *La guerra carlista* (1908-9), and Pío Baroja’s *Zalacaín el aventurero* (1909).

The chapter on *Paz en la guerra* has examined the use(s) of Carlism in Unamuno's text. Relying on several studies on the young Unamuno, I have contended that Unamuno's notion and use of Carlism relies on two ideological notions that shaped his early intellectual formation: *fuerosismo* and ethnopsychology. In this regard, Carlism expresses the popular resistance to modernization. Moreover, the tension between tradition and modernity depicted in the novel is constructed in a recurrent binary pair: memory / reality. Defined by this permanent tension, Carlism is articulated as the *fin de siglo* anxiety over changing cultural practices.

Such a tension is also perceived in Valle-Inclán's trilogy, but in a more antimodern and nostalgic fashion. These two notions, "antimodernism" and nostalgia, define—as I have claimed—Valle-Inclán's Carlist novels. The historian T.J. Jackson Lears coined the term "antimodernism" as an analytical tool for the recoil of pre-modern social and aesthetic values in early twentieth-century America. Far from being only an American idiosyncrasy, "antimodernism" can be seen in a myriad of turn-of-the-century cultural expressions, from William Morris's Arts and Crafts Movement until the Art Nouveau. Spain, as Lily Litvak pointed out decades ago, was deeply affected by this trend. On the other hand, Susan Stewart's definition of nostalgia as a reactionary cultural construct has been crucial in my analysis. Drawing on these two scholars, I have argued that Carlism works as an anti-modern nostalgia in Valle-Inclán's trilogy. In this sense, I have opposed those scholars who consider Valle's trilogy as part of an "aesthetic phase." Taking his use of Carlism as ideologically-motivated, I have contended

the texts's inclusion in the overall picture of *fin de siglo*'s "conciencia de fracaso."

The last chapter, "A Parody of Epic Proportions: Subverting Heroic in Pío Baroja's *Zalacaín el aventurero*," studies that novel as a sustained parody of epic structures and motifs. Drawing on Linda Hutcheon's intertextual definition of parody, I have argued that Baroja constructed his novel as a modernist social critique, in which the Carlist war functions as a socio-historical microcosm of the whole nation. Opposing those scholars who judge *Zalacaín* as a mere adventure tale, I have claimed the ideological relevance of this text. In this regard, the parodic use of epic elements, like the education of the knight or the death of the epic hero, provides a critical denunciation of Restoration Spain by juxtaposing this mythical substratum to the reality of modern society.

The relevance of my project stands, as I see it, on four considerations: First, it is inserted in the scholarly dialogue within Hispanism on the status of the so-called "Generation of 1898." Arguing for the critical adoption of the term "modernism" for this literary group, my dissertation contributes to the ascription of these writers into the European modernist canon, and to the understanding of post-realist aesthetics into a unified group, thus eschewing the redundant and confusing critical labels that traditional Hispanism has devoted to the time between 1900 and 1931: *modernismo*, *generación del 98*, *generación del 14*, *generación del 27*, and *vanguardia*. In doing this, I am clearly indebted to Jose-Carlos Mainer's seminal work: *La edad de plata: ensayo de interpretacion de un proceso cultural* (1975). Disagreeing with Mainer's use of the euphemism "edad

de plata,” my project follows Nil Santiáñez and Domingo Ródenas in advocating the use of the broader term “modernism” to study this cultural period.

Second, it provides an analysis of *fin de siglo* through the analytical notion of “failure,” presenting a reading of the uneven Spanish modernization in terms of a “conciencia de fracaso” (Torrecilla). I am aware that the turn-of-the-century fostered feelings of insufficiency among many Western intellectuals of various national backgrounds, but Spanish intellectuals—in particular—interpreted modernity as failure because, in opposition to the more metaphysical failure of Continental modernism, Spanish *fracaso* had a very real origin: the absence of a bourgeois liberal revolution. This lack has been instrumental in the (under)development of Spanish modernity, and has shaped—as I have contended throughout my dissertation—Spanish modernist literature.

Third, it offers a reading of a literary corpus that has not been extensively studied. Notwithstanding the enormous critical consideration of Unamuno, Valle-Inclán, and Baroja, their historical texts on the second Carlist war have been, up until now, almost neglected. This trend has started to be challenged by new editions and studies on *Paz en la guerra* (Francisco Caudet) and Valle-Inclán’s Carlist trilogy (Maria José Alonso Seoane), but these texts still remain in the shadows of other works, like Unamuno’s *Niebla* (1914), Valle-Inclán’s *Sonatas* (1902-5) or Baroja’s *El árbol de la ciencia* (1911), to name just a few.

Fourth, my project offers a study of the historical allure of Carlism in turn-of-the-century Spain, providing an analysis of this conflict as a microcosm of the *fin de siglo* tensions. The scrutiny of these writers’s historical imagination

suggests, as we have seen, that they saw in this particular period the origins of their own socio-political realities. Furthermore, it contributes, from the realm of literary criticism, to the growing scholarly attention devoted to Carlism in other academic disciplines, most notably in the field of History (Jordi Canal, Manuel Suárez Cortina).

Having stated the scope of my dissertation, it is a matter of academic honesty to note its limitations, too. Reflecting on the project, it is apparent that by choosing these texts I have ruled out two broad groups: writers who—dealing with the topic of the second Carlist war—are not included in the modernist group of 1898, and writers who created historical novels beyond the limitations of the Carlist confrontation or the *Sexenio democrático* at large. The most conspicuous example of the first case is the last series of *Episodios nacionales*, by Benito Pérez Galdós. Within the second group, perhaps Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's *Sónnica la cortesana* (1901) is the most notorious. Nevertheless, the absence of these authors has both streamlined and clarified my thesis. The historical project of Pérez Galdós, in spite of obvious connections with that of the modernist group, differs in two basic aspects: it presents the bourgeoisie as both the ideal reader and the protagonist of his series, and it shows a clear pedagogical intention. Blasco Ibáñez's historical novel, on the other hand, belongs to the tradition of the so-called "archaeological novels." These type of historical novels depicted ancient history and exotic settings, following the late nineteenth-century Orientalist trend. Gustave Flaubert's *Salammbô* (1862) and Anatole France *Thaïs* (1890) were the

models after which Blasco Ibáñez's novel was crafted.⁷⁶ The inclusion of these two authors would certainly have expanded my research, but at the same time it would also have blurred the coherence of the corpus of texts studied and, ultimately, the coherence of my dissertation's thesis at large.

During the first stages of this project, I could not foresee the broader implications of this study. At first my intention was, quite simply, to analyze a group of *fin de siglo* historical narratives to see their ideological reasons for choosing that particular event (the Second Carlist War) at that particular time (turn-of-the-century Spain). Toward the completion of this dissertation, during these last months, I have come to realize that this project has wider ramifications than originally anticipated. The historical narratives on the second Carlist war studied here constitute one phase of a longer cultural period that, starting at the end of the nineteenth century, reaches out to the literary production of the Spanish republican exile. Taking the key notion of "failure", one can establish a line of continuity between the *regeneracionistas*, the modernist group of 1898, the intellectuals of the second Republic, and the writers of the Spanish exile after the end of the civil war (1936-1939).

In other words, the research agenda that comes out of this dissertation implies the study of the Spanish intellectuals of the so-called *Edad de plata* (1900-1939), and the inclusion of the exile voices to the cultural framework of

⁷⁶ Perhaps the most popular archaeological novel for the modern reader is Henryk Sienkiewicz's *Quo Vadis* (1896), a monumental best-seller of the time, which granted his now forgotten author the Nobel Prize in 1905. Hollywood adapted the novel in 1951, making of it a tremendous success.

that time. Rejecting the pedagogical optimism of the krausists, there was a growing sense of despair among the intellectuals on both the social reality of Spain and the lack of confidence on their regenerative role, as cultural leaders of the nation. Starting with Joaquín Costa's increasing disillusionment with the regenerative capabilities of the country, one can see a progression that leads to the political criticism of Jose Ortega y Gasset's *El tema de nuestro tiempo* (1923), the disappointment with the populist turn of the second Republic in Salvador de Madariaga's autobiography, *Amanecer sin mediodía* (published posthumously in 1973), or Manuel Azaña's *La velada en Benicarló* (1937). Analogously, after the Francoist victory, the exiled intellectuals engaged in a systematic articulation of *fracaso* that can be perceived, among other examples, in Segundo Serrano Poncela's *Habitación para hombre solo* (1963) or Max Aub's *Campo de los almendros* (1967). In this regard, the last point of this trend can be identified in Juan Goytisolo's trilogy of Alvaro Mendiola and, more specifically, in the systematic deconstruction of Spanishness carried out in his *Señas de identidad* (1966).

In conclusion, this dissertation opens up the field of *Edad de plata* through the study of an underanalyzed literary corpus, locating in the historical imagination of the Spanish turn-of-the-century a productive scholarly endeavor to investigate the origins of Spain's conflicted relationship with modernization, and the inherent tensions that the experience of modernity entailed.

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