

*LAS DOS ESPAÑAS:*  
TWO APPROACHES IN THE NOVEL OF THE 1840's

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The philosophic novel and the tendentious novel

The Spanish novel, which began showing signs of revival after 1833, was reborn during a time of great social and political upheaval. Romantic writers, seeing themselves on the threshold of a new age, reacted in one of two ways: they either took refuge in nature and in the exoticism of passed eras or faced the issues realistically. This duality is found in the novel: romantic fiction reflected a desire for escapism in historical romances and adventure novels while realistic fiction showed an interest in novels based on contemporary customs. The more liberal climate which prevailed after the death of Ferdinand VII and the long neglected problems which required immediate attention made these early Realists morally and socially conscious. In spite of the Romantic mood of the times, the intellectual elite of Isabeline Spain were rationalists who believed in the perfectibility of man and in the role of literature to achieve this end. The literary criticism between 1833 and 1850 stresses the utilitarian function of the novel and its transcendental value.<sup>1</sup> Novels of this type were known as *novelas filosóficas* or *transcendentales*, and their aim was to paint an objective picture of contemporary Spanish society.

The historical situation also served to crystalize the political outlook of many writers, and their works began to reflect the ideological battle between traditional and modern Spain. Novelists declared themselves in favor of a particular faction and used the genre to expound their political theses. These novels were known as *novelas tendenciosas*. In 1848 Antonio Neira de Mosquera, one of the period's most perceptive critics, wrote that the modern Spanish novelist should depict the growing dichotomy between the two Spains by either taking sides or trying to reconcile the differences.<sup>2</sup> Neira seems to be referring to the opposing trends in Spanish prose fiction: the tendentious novel which engages in debate and the philosophic novel which scrutinizes contemporary mores. Spanish fiction before Galdós is characterized by the preponderance of the former and the scarceness of the latter. Nevertheless, some writers of the 1840's were less contentious, and they cultivated a novel of analysis and thus laid the foundation for modern Spanish fiction.

### The philosophic novelists: Ros de Olano, La Avellaneda, and Salas y Quiroga

Antonio Ros de Olano was among the first to treat the matter of "las dos Españas" in his short novel *El diablo las carga* (1840).<sup>3</sup> Although Ros subtitled the work a "cuadro de costumbres" and in the dedication called it a "cuento," the work has obvious novelistic features. Ros' confusion stems from the lack of a clear concept of the novel in Spain — a problem which certainly contributed to the late flowering of the genre in the Peninsula. By definition, the *cuadro* is almost anti-novelistic since it has limited action, concentrates on the commonplace and the stereotype, and is based almost exclusively on description and observation. These techniques served as barriers to the development of the novel, which required imaginative plots, well-developed characters, and penetrating analyses<sup>4</sup> — characteristics all found in Ros de Olano's work. During the Romantic period the term *cuento* was used to refer to a story based on an anecdote or legendary and fantastic material.<sup>5</sup> A novel, during the same period, was beginning to be used only for prose fiction concerned with real, contemporary topics.<sup>6</sup> Realism was becoming the distinguishing note of the novel. *El diablo las carga*, therefore, is a novel (or novelette) because the author treats contemporary social and moral issues, and uses *costumbrismo*, not as an end in itself, but as a means of analysing the mores of Spanish society.

Fernando, a young liberal politician, is in love with the young and beautiful Teresa. But Teresa's mother, Luisa, forces her to marry an old, rich Count. While Fernando is in mental agony over the loss of Teresa, Gustavo, who claims to be an old friend, offers to help him win Teresa's love. Gustavo poses as a go-between and succeeds in having Fernando meet her during the Count's absence. But Gustavo also plots the Count's revenge by arranging for the old man to return home early one evening while the lovers are together. Gustavo has even previously loaded the Count's pistol. When the latter discovers that he has been dishonored, he shoots Teresa and flees.

The novel takes place during the 1830's after the death of Ferdinand VII when Spain was torn by internal strife and revolutions. Ros realized that he was living during times of change. He points out that revolutions alter not only political structures, but also the traditional mores of society:

Una nación que se revoluciona, y una sociedad que se disuelve, se asemejan. . . . En uno y otro caso los más sagrados vínculos se rompen; domina la ambición; piérdense las creencias; las pasiones imperan; la ley sucumbe; se esconde la virtud, y la osadía triunfa de la razón y la esclaviza. (41)

The main purpose of the novel is to study the shifting moral values taking place in Spain during his time. Almost everyone in the novel is motivated by self-interest. Luisa arranged the marriage of her daughter to the Count for his social position, while the Count marries her for her money. Fernando casts aside his social and moral ideals for selfish motives. When Teresa and the Count are imprisoned on grounds of conspiring against the government, Fernando defends the Count in court, not because he believes that he is innocent, but in order to free the woman he loves. Ros also points out how immorality is hidden beneath a shield of dignity and respect. Teresa has illicit relations with Fernando only after Gustavo has convinced her that it is morally acceptable: "A Teresa no sólo le pareció admisible, sino razonable y hasta moral la proposición de

Gustavo" (62). After Teresa's death, her mother, seeing herself deprived of a title without her daughter, quickly seeks out a Baron and marries him.

Ros also comments on the different political factions which were struggling for supremacy in the 1830's. The three male characters, Fernando, Gustavo, and the Count, each represent a different political ideology. Fernando is a rebel who sides with the liberals since he sees a need for social and political change, but like many young men of his generation, he suffers from the *mal du siècle*. By allowing his emotions and his personal interests to govern him, he sacrifices his social ideals. The Count represents the traditional ruling class which, due to the historical situation, found itself in a precarious and awkward position. When Ferdinand VII died, he named his infant daughter, Isabel II, as his successor, but Ferdinand's brother, Carlos, claimed the crown, invoking the Salic law which prohibited a woman from inheriting the throne. A civil war immediately broke out in which the ultra-conservatives sided with the Carlist faction. The Queen Regent, María Cristina, and the aristocracy, in order to protect themselves and their comfortable, influential positions, joined the liberals against the Carlists. The oligarchy became "liberalized," but they really sympathized with the ideology of the conservative Carlists.<sup>7</sup> Ros understood this ambivalence of the Spanish aristocracy: "Si en el riñón de la monarquía y desde la residencia de la corte hubiese partido el pronunciamiento carlista, yo no sé si todo la parte de la nobleza que se encuentra hoy ligada a los intereses constitucionales, lo estaría" (44). The Count is a member of the "liberal" oligarchy, but he secretly opposes moderation and social change.

Gustavo is also a symbol. From his strange appearance in the novel, the reader senses his satanic qualities. As Fernando is seated at his desk, "con la frente reclinado en la mano derecha, el codo apoyado sobre la mesa," Gustavo appears. This scene was probably inspired by a similar one in Cervantes' prologue to the first part of *Don Quixote* where a "friend" appears to offer advice to the frustrated author. But while Cervantes' friend gives him constructive guidance, Gustavo's appearance only serves to upset Fernando's ideals and moral values. Gustavo represents the devil. He poses as Fernando's friend, but rather than dissuading him from pursuing an impossible love affair with a married woman, he makes it possible for Fernando to have a rendezvous with Teresa. Later, Gustavo turns against his friend to help the Count plot against Fernando. Viewed within the symbolism of the novel, Gustavo, metaphorically a devil, also represents those apathetic and uncommitted individuals who lack ideals and support the party in power. As he tells Teresa: "Soy la víctima y el producto de la embustera sociedad en que vivimos, condenado al indiferentismo" (58).

Once it is established that each character represents a segment of Spanish society, their interaction in the novel takes on a symbolic and allegorical meaning. Teresa may be seen as symbol of Spain. Through religion and moral tradition she is bound to the Count (the traditional, conservative oligarchy), but she secretly desires Fernando (modern, liberal ideas). The power struggle between the two men to possess Teresa represents the continuous conflict between conservatives and liberals which characterizes nineteenth-century Spanish political history. The Count is victorious only through the aid of Gustavo (the uncommitted masses). Ros obviously felt that apathy, disloyalty, and hypocrisy were the most serious problems facing Spain, since Gustavo is the *force majeure* of the novel

who disrupts the values and ideals of the characters. Ironically, Teresa is killed rather than Fernando. Ros implies that Spain will eventually be destroyed by discord and civil war.

As a work of art, *El diablo las carga* is marred by its loose structure and lack of proportion. It seems to have been written hastily and carelessly, judging from the many unclear sentences and sketchy paragraphs. The cryptic nature of the work and its affected style add to its obscurity. But in spite of these shortcomings the work contains original features. As a Romantic, Ros tended to view reality in abstract terms, and he expressed the political conflicts of the times in a symbolic form. However, unlike other Romantic novelists, he did not use the genre to defend his own liberal ideology. Instead he tried to account for the failure of the liberal revolution and prognosticate the future of Spain.

In *Dos mujeres* (1842-43)<sup>8</sup> Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda compares the lives of two women in the life of Carlos de Silva: his wife, Luisa, and his mistress, Catalina. Luisa is destined from childhood to marry her cousin Carlos, and their union is happy in its innocence and simplicity. But Carlos is forced to leave his wife to attend to legal matters in Madrid. There he is thrust into Madrid society, and in spite of his attempts to avoid its temptations, he falls under the spell of the vivacious Countess Catalina. Their love has all of the passion and excitement missing in his marriage. His stay in Madrid is prolonged and finally Luisa follows Carlos to the capital. She immediately senses her husband's indifference toward her and soon learns of his love affair. Her love for Carlos is so great that in order to see him happy she tolerates his illicit relationship with Catalina. The latter, moved by such a humble act, realizes that it is she who must yield and commit suicide. Luisa remains with Carlos but she is deeply hurt and disillusioned by his infidelity.

In his review of the novel, Neira de Mosquera noted that La Avellaneda had brought the two Spains face to face by contrasting the worlds of Luisa and Catalina.<sup>9</sup> Luisa is a product of the traditional beliefs of Leonor, her overpowering mother. With her rigid morality and austerity, Leonor represents conservative Spain. Her whole life has been dedicated to upholding the principles of the Spanish church and state and to resisting the permissiveness of French morality. She is a woman of tremendous power and determination who is capable of maneuvering others to her way of thinking. She is responsible for setting the novel in motion by prohibiting Carlos from going to Madrid to gain worldly experience before his marriage. Consequently, he is easily tempted later in life. Unlike her callous mother, Luisa possesses a keen sensibility which makes her highly impressionable. Since she has been taught that a woman's place is to obey, she lacks self-confidence. For these reasons she is a pathetic figure; she is the victim both of circumstances and of a rigid, moral education which did not prepare her to handle the problems of life.

Before we actually meet Catalina we hear of her liberal French attitudes and lax morals. Only later do we discover that she is a sincere and generous woman who refuses to be subjected to the rigid moral laws of the 1840's. La Avellaneda places Carlos between the permissive world of Catalina and the restrained world of Luisa. He vacillates between his duty to his wife and his passion for his mistress. On another level, Carlos is torn between tradition and revolution. La Avellaneda was careful not to manifest her own liberal inclinations by representing one world more attractively than the other. Both

women possess strong sensibilities, and both commit mortal sins: Luisa condones adultery and Catalina commits suicide. The reader's sympathies remain divided; we feel that the love between Catalina and Carlos should have triumphed because it is sincere and spontaneous, yet we accept that, legally, Carlos should remain with his wife.

La Avellaneda uses the conflict between the two Spains to analyse the relationship between ethics and religion. She appears to question a moral code based on religious doctrine:

No es vivir la eterna lucha de la naturaleza con las leyes humanas. Carlos, amigo mío, no hay, no puede haber crimen para el corazón sino en la falsedad y en la perfidia; no puede ser virtud la hipocresía. Arrojemos su máscara cobarde, y pues no hemos podido ser ángeles, sepamos al menos ser hombres. Amarnos es una desgracia; pero engañar sería una infamia. (V, 149)

These ideas expressed by Catalina are not revolutionary; they are frequently found in sentimental fiction. Avellaneda's originality lies in the way she develops a simple love problem; by solving it rationally she exposes the fallacy of the moral code. Furthermore, the author does not resolve the problem; Catalina's suicide raises more questions than it answers. It is left to the reader to probe further.

While La Avellaneda examines the moral values of the two Spains, Jacinto Salas y Quiroga compares the ethical standards between materialists and idealists. In *El Dios del siglo* (1848)<sup>10</sup> he contrasts the character of two men: the capitalist and miser Don Sisebuto de Soto, and the journalist and lawyer Don Félix de Montelirio. The two men are brought together accidentally; both fall in love with the beautiful Otelina, daughter of Don Carlos de Zúñiga. They also confront one another on a professional level. Montelirio has a client, Angustias, who has inherited some money from her deceased uncle, Sardina. The will states that Soto is to pay Angustias some money which he owed her uncle. Angustias, who knows of Soto's disreputable character, realizes that he will never pay her, and she seeks Montelirio's legal help. Montelirio investigates the business relations between Soto and Sardina and suspects certain shady operations. When Soto finds out that Montelirio may turn up some information which might point to his complicity with Sardina, he uses his money and power, together with the help of the scheming Condesa de Florseca, to have Montelirio imprisoned for conspiring against the government. While Montelirio is in solitary confinement, his probe is pursued by Zúñiga and Angustias. Angustias finally discovers that Sardina is still alive and is, in fact, a prisoner in the same jail where Montelirio is confined. Sardina possesses the necessary documents to disclose Soto's criminal and illegal operations.

The conflict between Soto and Montelirio symbolizes the opposing forces of good and evil, virtue and vice, spirituality and materialism, but not specifically the dichotomy between liberalism and conservatism. Montelirio, however, represents the liberal, not radical, cause, yet his battle cuts across party lines. As Salas states, Montelirio "quería la regeneración de España; pero al mismo tiempo apetecía el imperio del orden y de la libertad, no para el vencedor, sino para el vencido también" (212). He is a pacifist who believes in non-violent social revolution organized by the people: "La revolución, para ser santa. . . debe ser hecho por la voluntad y con la cooperación de todos" (215).

Unlike most young Romantic rebels, Montelirio does not suffer from *mal du siècle*. He is always able to think clearly, and he is governed by reason rather than by his emotions. Although he falls in love with Otelina, he does not allow his personal feelings to conflict with his social and moral commitments. His willingness to help Angustias recover her money is symbolic of his struggle against vice, bigotry, and corruption. However, Montelirio can not fight the forces of evil alone, and he appears to be losing the battle when he is unjustly imprisoned. While in confinement, he goes through periods of extreme disillusionment, but he is steadfast in his belief that good will eventually triumph over evil.

Soto, on the other hand, believes only in the power of money, which he feels is the "dios del siglo." He is unscrupulous and utilizes base and cruel tactics to acquire wealth. He makes most of his money illegally from speculation and counterfeiting, but he also exploits the poor and the innocent. Soto is confident in the power of money. But when he discovers that Montelirio is delving into his business operations, he becomes uneasy, and his self-assuredness begins to waver. He realizes that his money can not buy everything. Zúñiga will not give him Otelina's hand in marriage, in spite of the high price he is willing to pay for her. He even offers Angustias the money which he owed her uncle if Montelirio will drop his charges, but the virtuous *manola* does not accept. Soto realizes that talent is as important as money, and he asks the clever Condesa de Florseca to help: "Instintivamente buscaba a un auxiliar en el talento, descubriendo que el oro no es suficiente elemento de guerra en una sociedad de organización tan complicada, donde tantas son las armas de ataque, y por consiguiente, tantas necesitan ser las armas de defensa" (289).

With money and ingenuity he succeeds in imprisoning Montelirio but he is unable to prevent other virtuous people from working to uncover his illegal operations. Soto's only remaining recourse is to kill Montelirio, and he arranges for a jug of poisoned wine to be placed in his cell. At this point in the novel, a supernatural force begins to operate upon the characters. Montelirio, seeing himself helpless, turns his fate over to the will of God: "Convencido de la pequeñez del hombre, de la insuficiencia de la razón, de la necesidad de la fe en un poder desconocido. . . . Entregóse en manos de Dios, cerró los ojos antes las mil dudas" (240-41). As a result, Montelirio does not drink the wine and instead gives it to Sardina. Before dying, Sardina reveals Soto's complicity in Zúñiga's murder. The intervention of a supernatural force is not merely a device used by the author to bring the novel to a happy conclusion. Salas' intention is to show that the "god of the century" is not money or talent: Soto's money is unable to stop Montelirio, and the latter's talent is incapable of controlling Soto. The true "Dios del siglo" is faith and virtue. Only if one has faith in God will vice and corruption finally succumb.

Salas does not offer solutions to remedy the sad state of affairs, but he does blame the moral imbalance in Spanish society on the conflict among social classes:

El pobre sin moralidad se erige pronto en señor del pobre honrado, y el desnivel engendra en aquél soberbia, en éste rabia. De aquí esa sorda y constante lucha entre las clases todas de que se compone el pueblo: impotencia de parte de la víctima y jactancia de parte de aquellos que hallan abrigo entre los que debieron rechazarlo con desprecio. (315)

He protests against a class system based on wealth and titles. The author would prefer one based on ethical values:

La educación social, repartido a los hombres en grupos de casta distinta, sofoca todos gérmenes de dignidad en el corazón, y nos rebaja hasta el punto de oscurecer a nuestros ojos la verdad santa de la igualdad en la pequeñez humana. (197)

The tragic consequences of Angustias' love for Montelirio stem from class differences. She understands the educational and cultural differences between her and Montelirio and feels that for this reason they could never be happy. Unfortunately, she does not realize that they are ethically and spiritually equal.

The characters of *El Dios del siglo* are directly affected by the political and social climate of contemporary Spain. Zúñiga becomes a *cesante*, in spite of his successful record as an ambassador, because of petty political intrigues. Meanwhile, *pretendientes* who are unqualified for the positions which they seek are given employment out of obligation for previous favors. Corruption is rampant. Soto is able to have Montelirio imprisoned by bribing the police officials. The judicial system seems to work against the individual since a suspect is considered guilty until he is found innocent. The courts are not under the direct supervision of the government and have fallen into the hands of corrupt judges and jurors who can be bribed. Salas shows the bureaucratic system of the Spanish government at work. While Soto waits two hours to see an official in the Department of the Treasury, the receptionists are reading the newspapers, smoking, and talking. In order to convict Soto, Montelirio had to consult notaries, solicitors, attorneys, prosecutors, constables, and judges — "cadena interminable que suele empezar en la verdad y acabar en la mentira" (405). Journalism, which Salas believes to be the most effective way to bring about social and political change, has unfortunately become "una mera especulación, nacida de un deseo ambicioso y que termina por el desánimo o el triunfo." Journalists must please those who finance the newspapers, "y si por un tiempo logran conservar su sagrada independencia, más tarde. . . se postran como esclavos" (148). Other social problems are also exposed in the novel. Antonio, who works as a page boy in a government office, does not receive his pay on time; his fellow employees inform him that the payrolls are often six months late. The *Cárcel de Corte* is old, dirty, and run-down. The prisoners are all kept together without regard to the nature of their crimes. The better, private quarters are reserved for those who can pay. The description of the monotonous and culturally sterile life of the workers in *Hermenengildo's* import shop may constitute the first portrayal of working conditions in the Spanish novel.

Salas sees a divided Spain and attributes it to the conflict between idealists and materialists. The latter, whose only aim was self-interest, were destroying the moral fiber of the country. He suggests a return to spirituality — the only force capable of overcoming the perverted ethics of a scientific age. The author sympathizes with Montelirio's moderate ideology, which represents the eclectic ideal so typical of Spanish politics and letters of the 1840's and 1850's, a system that all Spaniards could agree to, at least in theory. The evil in *El Dios del siglo* is not tied to a particular political faction; instead it represents a negative force which perverts the ethical standards of liberals and conservatives alike.

### The tendentious novelists: the feuilletonists and Fernán Caballero

Ros de Olano, La Avellaneda, and Salas y Quiroga strove to explore the causes of contention in Spain. Although they hinted at solutions, they maintained a certain objectivity and thus kept the novel from becoming polemic. But their novels, which were early attempts at Realism, were not destined to serve as models for the next generation of Spanish novelists. In the early 1840's the social radicalism of Eugène Sue, expressed in lengthy, declamatory feuilletons, caught on in Spain like wildfire.<sup>11</sup> Their popularity can be easily understood. The feuilleton, with its complicated, melodramatic plots and strong social thesis satisfied both the committed and escapist sides of the Romantic temperament.

Following Sue's example, the feuilletons of Ayguales de Izco, Martínez Villegas, and Ramón de Navarrete used the novel as a pulpit to disseminate their sometimes radical social ideas.<sup>12</sup> Navarrete, for example, preferred the novels of Sue to those of Balzac because of their social utility, that could "facilitar la misión grande y santa de los legisladores y de los filántropos; así puede coayudar a la obra de la regeneración moral necesaria en nuestros días."<sup>13</sup>

Ayguales' *María o la hija de un jornalero* (1845)<sup>14</sup> is a good example of this type of tendentious novel. Ayguales sees the conflict between the two Spains as a battle between the rich and powerful against the poor and deprived. The novel's main theme is the oppression of the lower classes by the aristocracy, the church, and the government. Fray Patricio, as a member of the clergy, carries weight with those in power who bend to his will. Ayguales would enact laws which could give social equality to everyone: "Lo que deseamos es igualdad ante la ley; castigo contra el delincuente, no contra el pobre, justicia en pro de la inocencia, y no consideraciones al rico; derechos sociales para todos los españoles; voto en todas las cuestiones para los pobres honrados" (I, 93). Ayguales calls for the establishment of unions which will help and protect the working man like Anselmo, who is able and willing to work but cannot find employment. Ayguales does not advocate a proletarian revolution to achieving social harmony, not by erasing the barriers between the rich and the poor, but by granting the lower classes all the rights and opportunities afforded the rich. He sees poverty as the root of all social evils. The poor man, unable to find work, succumbs to crime and vice when faced with hunger. The government has no programs of rehabilitation and treats the victim as a criminal, putting him in prison, which dehumanizes him even more. The remedy for this never-ending cycle is to insure equal opportunity and to educate the low classes to utilize their resources and understand their civil rights.

Ayguales' most bitter attacks were reserved for the clergy. Fray Patricio is portrayed as perfidious and licentious. He stops at nothing to satiate his sexual desire for María and uses his political power to manipulate people for his selfish motives. According to Ayguales, Fray Patricio was not an isolated example but a symbol of all the clergy and their traditional historical influence in Spain: "Su carácter, sus crímenes, su ambición, su hipocresía, forman el tipo histórico de la mayor parte de los enemigos de nuestra prosperidad" (II, 340). He also condemns the tyrannical monarchs for oppressing the people: "Los sacrificios de los reyes seméjanse a los de los frailes, que al abandonarse a



toda suerte de placeres en medio del lujo, de la opulencia, de los tesoros y de las comodidades, solían exclamar compungidos: 'Todo sea por el amor de Dios' " (I, 224).

Ayguals supports divorce, equal rights for women, and free medical service for all; he opposes capital punishment, imprisonment without trial, and the celibacy of the clergy. He calls for prison reforms, better hospitals, and more efficient philanthropic institutions; he condemns the public officials, users, and businessmen who exploit the poor. *María* could serve as a reference book on mid-nineteenth-century Spanish liberalism.

The Spanish public of the time was more attracted by the melodrama, adventure, and sensationalism of the feuilleton than by its social message. As the genre developed into the 1850's and 1860's these elements eventually over-shadowed the original social motives of Ayguals and his followers. Ayguals' works, nonetheless, were extremely popular in its day and they posed a serious threat to traditional Spain. The novels of Fernán Caballero represent an ideological and technical reaction to the feuilleton.<sup>15</sup> If Fernán Caballero artistically surpassed Ayguals, their intentions were identical; both saw the novel as a vehicle for ideas.

Fernán Caballero's works are firmly grounded in French and Spanish traditionalism, which was a doctrinal philosophic system and not merely a political stance. Traditionalists like De Bonald, De Maistre, Lamennais, and Chateaubriand had opposed the liberal ideas of the French Revolution, and they sought to prove the inefficacy of reason, since rationalism had led the French to conceive of political freedom and equality. The traditionalists made God, not the individual, the point of departure for their epistemological studies, since they claimed that revelation is transmitted directly from God to man and from ancestors to descendants. Truth, therefore, depends on authority and tradition rather than on reason. Laws are promulgated by God, not by man-made political systems. They insisted on the authority of the Catholic church and the monarchy, both of which formulate the guidelines for social, moral, and political conduct. These ideas also form the ideological basis of the thought of Jaime Balmes and Donoso Cortés.

Fernán Caballero learned of French conservatism from her parents. Her mother had been a friend of Chateaubriand and had shared his respect for the Catholic church and the monarchy.<sup>16</sup> Doña Cecilia's correspondence is filled with praise for French traditionalists, and she regretted that they were not better known in Spain:

Esto es mi sempiterna desesperación, que no hay en España hombre que lea que no conozca a Voltaire, Rousseau, y los enciclopedistas y sus sucesores, y que estos mismos no conozcan a Bonald, de Maistre, Lamartine, y aún a Chateaubriand completo.<sup>17</sup>

Several of Fernán Caballero's major novels written before 1850<sup>18</sup> contrast liberal and traditional ideas, always showing the superiority of the latter. In *La familia de Alvareda*, Rosita's lack of respect for authority, morality, and tradition causes the novel to end tragically when she plays up to Ventura's overtures causing her husband Perico to kill him. In *La Gaviota*, the author's intention is to show how modern urban life breeds ambition, which in turn leads to corruption and immorality. Virtue and goodness can only thrive in the simple life of the country. As one character forecasts when Stein and

Marisalada arrive in Seville: "Estas gentes vivían contentos y sin ambición, y desde ahora en adelante no podrán decir otro tanto" (I, 66).

In *Elia*, the conflict between traditionalism and liberalism is shown in several ways. Clara, Isabel's niece, who has lived in France, returns to Spain and tries to change the antiquated customs and attitudes of her aunt. Clara, like most of Fernán Caballero's "liberal" characters, is an agnostic and a skeptic who rejects established traditions and insists upon change for its own sake rather than for social and political reasons. Isabel, who has great respect for Spanish customs, warns Clara that "la más pequeña mudanza me ha, no sólo de disgustar, sino de afligir" (III, 19). The conflict is also seen in Carlos and his brother Fernando. The latter does not feel that Carlos should marry Elia because she is not of noble birth. Fernando's argument is that "hay árboles con tales raíces que aunque logren cotarlos, vuelven a brotar con más fuerza, porque su savia está en las entrañas de la tierra madre" (III, 47). The quotation is significant; while Fernando is referring primarily to Elia's background (she was the illegitimate daughter of a bandit), his words are typical of all conservatives: a person who repudiates his values and traditions destroys his very essence and being. In spite of the sincere love between Elia and Carlos, Doña Cecilia agrees with Fernando that their different backgrounds would be an obstacle to their marriage.

Traditionalists did not believe that society could be governed only by man-made laws, since these were fallible. Religious laws, on the other hand, which stemmed from God, were irrefutable. In *Clemencia* there is a discussion between the central character, Clemencia, the alter ego of Doña Cecilia, and the English rationalist and agnostic, Sir George, who believes in the perfectibility of man. Clemencia, an arch-conservative, answers her opponent saying that "el cristianismo, pero sobre todo el catolicismo, siendo un sistema completo de represión de las tendencias depravadas del hombre, es el mayor elemento de orden social."<sup>19</sup>

The rejection of reason is at the core of doctrinal traditionalism. Consequently, all of the virtuous and redeeming actions in Fernán Caballero's novels are motivated by piety and patriotism rather than by intellectual impulses. Fernán Caballero could not condone social reforms which were not sanctioned by the church. Furthermore, she believed that the equality which revolutionaries spoke of could be achieved only through religion:

Nivelados así por sus virtudes [*los hombres*], se conseguirá esa igualdad decantada por la que claman inutilmente la soberbia y el orgullo. . . así habrá progreso. . . en la senda que le trazó el Evangelio, fuente primera y única de todo progreso moral. (II, 224)

Her repudiation of reason also affected her novelistic technique by causing her to set aside objective observation for an idealized interpretation of reality. In *Elia* she said that "todas las cosas de este mundo tienen dos modos de mirarse; el uno con la helada mirada de la razón, que todo lo enfría y lo rebaja. . . y el otro con la ardiente y simpática mirada del corazón que todo lo dora y vivifica como el sol de Dios" (III, 46).

Fernán Caballero's novels are a literary expression of her own traditional ideology, but she never explored the conflict between liberals and traditionalists in depth since she always approached the problem aprioristically. Even Pereda, who sided with Doña Cecilia ideologically, found her work shallow and tendentious: "Yo no podía hablar bien de ese

autor. . . por ser una pertinaz protagonista de ideas reaccionarias y no saber dar interés laberíntico ni unidad de fondo a sus libros, repletos de charranadas andaluzas. . . ¿Dónde está el argumento? ¿Qué problema se plantea en él? ¿Qué conflicto se resuelve? ¿Qué ideas persiguen? Luego no hay novela."<sup>20</sup>

## Conclusion

The dichotomy between the two Spains manifested itself essentially in two types of novels: (1) a polemic novel in which authors took sides endorsing one faction and stigmatizing the other, and (2) a more objective, studious novel which explored the mores of contemporary society to discover the causes of contention. Examples of the latter type of novel, which was leading toward Realism, are few. What took root in Spain was the former, both in the form of the feuilleton and the neo-Catholic novels of Fernán Caballero. These tendentious novels established the genre as a battlefield for ideologies, which only served to stratify an already divided country. It is not surprising that Galdós, Pereda, and Alarcón, who began to write novels in the 1870's, continued this tendentious trend.<sup>21</sup> Of course, the September Revolution of 1868 helped to crystalize the religious and political outlook of many writers, but they had a well established novelistic tradition to expand upon. Galdós first novel, *La fontana de oro* (1870), which depicts the reactionary regime of Ferdinand VII and its uneven odds against the liberal faction, was rebutted by Pereda's defense of conservatism in *Los hombres de Pro* (1872). Galdós' indulgent attitudes towards marriage expounded in *Gloria* (1876-77) were also rebuked by Pereda in *De tal palo tal astilla* (1879). Even Alarcón took up his pen to defend Cánovas and the ultra-Catholic cause in *El escándalo* (1875) and *El niño de bola* (1880).

In the 1870's we can also see a new trend taking shape in the novels of Galdós. In *Doña Perfecta* (1876) he explores with mastery and insight the irresolvable conflict between Pepe Rey's liberal ideology and his aunt's traditionalism. Like Ros de Olano, he depicts the failure of both factions and sees Spain as the ultimate victim of the strife. In *Marianela* (1878), Galdós questioned the values of positivism which Salas had done nearly thirty years earlier. And as La Avellaneda, Galdós refrained from influencing his reader or drawing clear-cut conclusions. Galdós, like these novelists of the 1840's, was still cultivating a thesis novel of ideas, but he was beginning to realize what these early Realists had already discovered — that the problem of the two Spains could best be served, not through a tendentious novel, but through impartial, perceptive analysis.

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## NOTES

<sup>1</sup> See Sherman H. Eoff, "The Spanish Novel of 'Ideas': Critical Opinion (1836-1880)," *PMLA*, 55 (1940), 531-58.

<sup>2</sup> Antonio Neira de Mosquera, "De la novela moderna," *Revista de España, de Indias y de Etranjero*, 12 (1848), 187.

<sup>3</sup> Antonio Ros de Olano, *El diablo las carga* (Madrid: Compañía Tipográfica, 1840). All quotations from this novel are to this edition.

<sup>4</sup> Montesinos believed that the *cuadro* had a deleterious influence on the development of the novel. See *Costumbrismo y novela* (2nd ed.; Madrid: Castalia, 1960), p.135.

<sup>5</sup> Mariano Baquero Goyanes, *El cuento español en el siglo XIX* (Madrid: CSIC, 1949), p.73.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p.71. One of the first systematic definitions of the novel was made in 1826 by José Gómez Hermosilla in his *Arte de hablar en prosa y verso*, who insists on the relationship between the novel and history: "En todas las [novelas] . . . conservan los autores la forma histórica, refiriendo los sucesos en una narración adornada con arengas, como en las historias verdaderas." I quote from the 2nd ed. (Madrid: Imprenta Nacional, 1839), p.84.

<sup>7</sup> See Raymond Carr, *Spain, 1808-1939* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1966), pp.155-69.

<sup>8</sup> Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda, *Dos mujeres* (Madrid: Gabinete Literario, 1842-43). Quotations from this novel are from *Obras de la Avellaneda* (La Habana: Aurelio Miranda, 1914), IV.

<sup>9</sup> Antonio Neira de Mosquera, "Gertrudis Gómez de Avellaneda," *Alequín*, 1 (1844), 10-11.

<sup>10</sup> Jacinto Salas y Quiroga, *El Dios del siglo* (Madrid: José María Alonso, 1848). I quote from the 2nd ed. (México: Ignacio Cumplido, 1853).

<sup>11</sup> In 1844 Ayguales de Izco founded the publishing house La Sociedad Literaria — the first of many organizations established to issue books at popular prices. In that year he translated Sue's *Le Juif errant*. Two years later there were ten other translations of it. See José Montesinos' list of translations in *Introducción a una historia de la novela en España en el siglo XIX* (2nd ed.; Madrid: Castalia, 1966), pp.249-53.

<sup>12</sup> See Iris Zavala, *Ideología y política en la novela española del siglo XIX* (Madrid: Anaya, 1971), especially Chapter III, "Socialismo utópico y novela," pp.83-122.

<sup>13</sup> *El Semanario Pintoresco Español*, 12 (1847), 131-32.

<sup>14</sup> Wenceslao Ayguales de Izco, *María o la hija de un jornalero* (Madrid: Ayguales de Izco, 1845-46). I quote from the 9th ed. (Madrid: Guijarro, 1868).

<sup>15</sup> See Donald L. Shaw, "The Anti-Romantic Reaction in Spain," *Modern Language Review*, 63 (1968), 606-11.

<sup>16</sup> For more information about Francisca Larrea's thinking and her influence on her daughter, see Blanca de los Ríos Lampérez, "Doña Francisca de Larrea Böhl de Faber. Notas para la historia del romanticismo en España," *Revista Crítica Hispanoamericana*, 2 (1916), 5-17. See also Javier Herrero, *Fernán Caballero: Un nuevo planteamiento* (Madrid: Gredos, 1963), who clearly shows how Doña Cecilia was influenced by her family and her conservative upbringing.

<sup>17</sup> From a letter written to her friend, José Fernández Espino, in Fernán Caballero, *Epistolario* (Madrid: Guijarro, 1912), p.7.

<sup>18</sup> By 1850 Fernán Caballero had finished five novels. The first draft of *La familia de Alameda* (1849) had been written as early as 1828. After 1828, and probably before 1833, she wrote *Elia* (1849). We know from a letter to Dr. Nikolaus Julius that *La Gaviota* (1849) was being composed in French by 1845. As *La Gaviota* was appearing in *El Heraldo*, Doña Cecilia was working on *Lágrimas* (1850). References to her novels are to José María Castro Calvo's edition in the *BAE* (Madrid: Atlas, 1961).

<sup>19</sup> *Clemencia* (Madrid: Rubiños, 1922), p.327. The *BAE* does not include the third part of *Clemencia* where this quotation appears.

<sup>20</sup> *Pedro Sánchez*, in *Obras completas* (2nd ed.; Madrid: Tello, 1904), XIII, 316.

<sup>21</sup> See Juan López-Morillas, "La Revolución de Septiembre y la novela española," *Revista de Occidente*, 67 (1968), 94-115, who clearly shows that the novel of the 1870's was ideological and polemic.