

THE GENERATION OF 1898 --
A NEW RENAISSANCE IN SPANISH LETTERS

Thesis for the Degree of M. A.
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY
Sheila Yvonne Carter
1964

ROOM USE ONLY

~~NOV 10 1967~~ ~~10~~

11
11
11

11

THE GENERATION OF 1898 --
A NEW RENAISSANCE IN SPANISH LETTERS

By

Sheila Yvonne Carter

A THESIS

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

Department of Romance Languages

1964

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
INTRODUCTION	1
Chapter	
I. BACKGROUND	4
Precursors	
Literary Influences	
What Was the Generation of 1898?	
II. LITERARY GENRES AND THEMES	14
The Novel and Essay	15
History	
<u>"Voluntad"</u> and <u>"abulia"</u>	
Time	
El paisaje	
Literary Criticism	
Poetry	46
Machado's themes	
Drama	53
III. STYLE AND TECHNIQUE	63
Unamuno	
Pío Baroja	
Azorín	
Valle-Inclán	
Maeztu	
Antonio Machado	
Jacinto Benavente	
CONCLUSION	107
BIBLIOGRAPHY	115

This thesis is dedicated to my husband,
Kenneth, whose assistance and understanding
made its completion possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The writer wishes to express her appreciation to her committee chairman and adviser, Dr. John A. Ramsey for his assistance in the preparation of this thesis.

Thanks is also extended to Dr. Stanley E. Howell and Dr. Ella N. Cowles for their helpful suggestions.

INTRODUCTION

In the war between Spain and the United States in 1898, Spain lost the last vestiges of her overseas colonial empire. This disaster caused a subsequent reappraisal of the country's total philosophy. Spaniards set themselves to the task of investigating the various factors that were responsible for their country's dilemma and the means by which a remedy could be effected.

The forces of the Generation of 1898 had been building up in Spain for a long time. Even before the catastrophe, the origin of Spain's sad national condition was becoming a subject of much speculation. The war, therefore, merely crystallized tendencies that had been forming for some time. Indeed, as far back as the seventeenth century, Quevedo, satirist of that era, and Larra, early in the nineteenth century, had written about Spain's deteriorating condition. Benito Pérez Galdós, after the middle of the nineteenth century showed himself to possess many of the ideas that were later to be emphasized in the somewhat varied program of the Generation of 1898. Other important precursors were Joaquín Costa, Giner de los Ríos and Ángel Ganivet.

Costa's chief idea was that Spain needed to break with the past, and he also appealed for Europeanization of the country. His famous phrase that Spain should give a "doble llave al sepulcro del Cid" became something like a slogan of the new generation. He wanted Spain to assimilate from other nations those ideas and methods which were responsible for their success, but in order to do this, he felt that she must first break with the dead past. Giner de los Ríos was mostly interested in education. He put his ideas into practice by founding a

national institution, the Institución Libre de Enseñanza. Almost all the members of the Generation felt the direct influence of this school. Ángel Ganivet investigated the causes of Spain's problems, and he emphasized the importance of the will--a subject which became one of the literary themes of the Generation of 1898.

Moreover, there were influences not only from within Spain itself but also from abroad. For there was an increased collaboration between Spain and the rest of the world in intellectual and moral progress, as within the country appeared a great curiosity to learn and assimilate modern ideas--ideas of such thinkers as Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Kierkegaard, Hegel and Tolstoi. There was also a deep probing in all aspects of Spanish life and this situation gave birth to an era of general reform--a political, social, economical and intellectual renovation.

The writers that were most intimately connected with this reform and who seem, therefore, most typical of the Generation of 1898, are Miguel de Unamuno, José Martínez Ruiz (Azorín), Pío Baroja, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Antonio Machado, Jacinto Benavente and Ramiro de Maeztu. Essays, novels, plays and poems poured from their pens and the profound impact of their work was instrumental in bringing about the recognition of Spain as having new importance in European letters.

My fundamental purpose here is to investigate the conventionally held opinion regarding the literary and intellectual program of the Generation of 1898. The period is often regarded as a time of protest during which the members of the movement were united in their desire to break with the recent past, to analyze their culture and destiny and to diagnose the sickness which had paralyzed their country. This spirit of protest and self-examination is certainly present, but often

critics, in my opinion, do not sufficiently emphasize that this period was a reawakening of literary values.

I shall investigate the genres cultivated especially by this group, paying attention to the subjects about which the writers were concerned and to the manner in which they expressed their ideas. In this way, I shall attempt to show that the Generation of 1898 was as much a new renaissance in Spanish letters as it was a movement of protest and reform.

First, I shall show how the movement began with protest. I shall deal in turn with the writers I have mentioned, pointing out the aspects of Spanish life against which each one protested, and what, if any, suggestions he made for reform. Then, it will be shown how protest became less significant as the writers progressively emphasized original expression. They consciously sought a revival in Spanish literary art, and in so doing introduced new themes in the novel, created a new style and technique in this genre as well as in the drama, and made several innovations in poetry. In Chapter II, I shall discuss these new themes that were developed, and in Chapter III, I shall deal with style and technique. Thus, I hope to demonstrate that the Generation of 1898 was much more than a period of protest, that it was a new renaissance in Spanish literature, and that this aspect, indeed, overshadows the importance of "protest."

CHAPTER I

BACKGROUND

Precursors

The Generation of 1898 was the heir of those men who before them had seen the deteriorating condition of the country, and in their works had made various criticisms suggesting the desperate need of changes. Benito Pérez Galdós, in the nineteenth century, possessed similar attitudes and many of the underlying ideas of the Generation. He was deeply interested in the affairs of his day, was progressive and modern in his ideas and advocated social and political reform. Another precursor was Joaquín Costa who was the leader of the school which fought for Europeanization of Spain. His central idea was that Spain needed to break with the past, to deAfricanize itself and to adopt modern ideas from Europe. Then there was Giner de los Ríos who was very interested in education and founded the Institución Libre de Enseñanza through which literature and the arts were promoted. He was convinced that Spain's main problem lay in education and he sought to reform it. The most important and immediate precursor was Ángel Gani-vet who is considered, by some critics, as a member of the Generation. He believed that what was really wrong with Spain was a weakening of the will.

The members of the new generation did not all readily submit to the influence of their predecessors. On the contrary, being disillusioned by the recent disaster of 1898, some of them were inclined to reject their country as being unworthy of recreation. They regarded

Spain as being an "historically inconsistent nation," or as Laín Entralgo puts it:

Todos sienten con amargura, con ferocidad a veces,
la terrible inconsistencia histórica de aquella
España: aquella España no les gusta.¹

The members of the Generation viewed their country with great pessimism, but when the initial disillusionment had passed, they decided that she was worth saving, that she was indeed a part of their own lives. In one of his nivolas, Unamuno wrote:

Pues sí, soy español, español de nacimiento, de educación, de cuerpo, de espíritu, de lengua y hasta de profesión y oficio, español sobre todo y ante todo, y el españolismo es mi religión. . .²

The writers then, henceforth, sought in various ways to suggest corrections for the ills of Spain. They wanted to renovate their country and, influenced by their precursors, they were to carry on the work which they had initiated.

The nineteenth century novelist, Galdós, has been called master³ rather than a precursor because of the great influence which he had on the Generation of 1898. These writers are indebted to him for the significance of Spain as a literary theme. Azorín, in this regard, makes the following comment:

¹Pedro Laín Entralgo, La generación del noventa y ocho (Madrid: Diana, Artes Gráficas, 1945), p. 301.

²Miguel de Unamuno, Niebla (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1929), p. 171.

³Robert Kirsner, "Galdós and the Generation of 1898." Hispania, XXXIII (August 1950), 240.

D. Benito Pérez Galdós, en suma, ha contribuido a crear una conciencia nacional: ha hecho vivir España con sus ciudades, sus pueblos, sus monumentos, sus paisajes.⁴

In the beginning, the attitude towards Spain was negative, and the novels of Galdós were considered scarcely worthy of literary appreciation; but when attention was directed towards the artistic endeavours of Spaniards, he was not only appreciated but also imitated because, as Azorín said, "él (Galdós) ha realizado la obra de revelar España a los españoles."⁵ Galdós is important also because of his treatment of Spain's problems and because of his literary technique. The members of the Generation of 1898 found in his novels a relationship towards Spain which they expressed in their own individual ways.

One of the immediate precursors of the Generation is Ángel Ganivet. His Idearium español is almost the manifesto of the group because the ideas expressed in this work later served as a focus for speculation about Spain's strength and weaknesses and her rôle in past and future history. In the Idearium, Ganivet attempted to explain what was wrong with the country. He concluded that the chief fault of Spain was a weakening of the nation's will (la voluntad). Spaniards must cultivate the will to achieve progress or the nation was lost. From here originated the theme of la voluntad and its significance which became one of the central topics of Azorín and Pío Baroja, and others to a somewhat lesser degree. Ganivet pointed out that the true strength of Spain lay not in territorial expansion but in internal

⁴Azorín, Lecturas españolas (París: T. Nelson, 1937), p. 248.

⁵Ibid., p. 249.

reconstruction. The country must intensify itself intellectually and spiritually. Moreover, he said that there continued to be too much emphasis on the glorious past and this caused a lack of assimilation of new ideas. This, according to him, was one of the reasons for Spain's weaknesses.

In his España filosófica contemporánea, which is considered a companion-volume to the Idearium, Ganivet describes what was to be the real preoccupation of the intellectuals of his time. He says that society, in any given period, possesses "una idea directiva" which he defines as "la idea que flota en todos los espíritus e imprime cierto sello de unidad a cada época histórica."⁶ Ganivet felt that one must first refer to this prevailing outlook and modify it where necessary before the ills of society could be investigated and cures sought. After examining the basic, vital attitude of his time, he concluded that Spain was sick not only politically and economically but also metaphysically. This sickness, he felt, was the real problem of Spain and everything else only symptoms. The chief cause of Spain's dilemma was the absence of ideas madres. The members of the Generation of 1898, who were greatly influenced by this work, show reflected in their writings the search for these ideas madres which Ganivet had believed lacking in Spanish society.

The year 1898, then, was not the beginning of the Spanish regeneration; the members of the new movement were greatly influenced in their work by their predecessors. From Galdós they learned the importance

⁶Ángel Ganivet, Obras completas, II (Madrid: Aguilar, 1943), p. 589.

of the country as a literary theme and also new literary techniques; from Costa the idea of Europeanization; from Ganivet, the concept of the power of la voluntad and from Giner de los Ríos and his friends they got an Institution through which liberal education could be encouraged and literature promoted.

Literary Influences

There existed among the Generation of 1898 a great intellectual curiosity. They felt that communication with Europe and the incorporation of new ideas were necessary, for "Spain had to abandon sterile traditionalism and open her windows to ventilation from abroad."⁷ Although love of Spain was expressed throughout their works, it was felt that if the country was loved because of the spirit of the land, "el espíritu territorial" as Ganivet called it, then this Europeanization of the culture would be in effect a means of "el españolizarse más ." Therefore, the Generation had no intention of denationalizing their country, but rather wished to enrich and to understand better her problems. They saw in Europe "un surtido de afiladas herramientas con las que se podría reparar la maquinaria mental española de modo que aprendiéramos a pensar más claro."⁸

Of all the foreign thinkers, Nietzsche is perhaps the one that exercised greatest influence on the Generation, and on Baroja in particular. Maeztu and Baroja read Nietzsche's Also sprach Zarathustra in French and Spanish translation. Moreover, a book

⁷Beatrice P. Patt and Martin Nozick, eds., The Generation of 1898 and After (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1961), p. 5.

⁸Pedro Salinas, Literatura española, siglo XX (Mexico: Seneca, 1941), p. 19.

published in Paris in 1898 by Henri Lichtenberger called La philosophie de Nietzsche was read by many of the group. Azorín, who in 1902 wrote about Gracián, calling him the Spanish Nietzsche, says that Lichtenberger's book "corrió de mano en mano;" Maeztu also frequently expressed the Nietzschean credo. In Vida Nueva of August 1899, he published an article entitled "Nietzsche y Maquiavelo." Azorín calls Maeztu "el más exaltado de los Nietzscheanos" and Baroja says that Maeztu aspired to be the Spanish Nietzsche. Luis Granjel quotes Azorín as saying that this German philosopher gave the Generation a lesson in "rebel-día" that "hizo brotar en España muchos gestos de iracundia y múltiples gritos de protesta."⁹

The group read avidly other writers -- Tolstoi, Ibsen, Renan, Schopenhauer, etc., and each member shows in his work the influence of one or two of these men in particular. For example, in Unamuno it is Kierkegaard and Pascal; in Azorín, Montaigne and Flaubert; in Baroja, Nietzsche, Dickens and Schopenhauer. The bitter pessimism of Schopenhauer had a great impact on Baroja who confesses in his Memorias that, while he was a medical student, he read Schopenhauer's Parerga und Paralipomena, and that after his first clinical experience he inclined towards this pessimistic attitude. In El árbol de la ciencia, he tells that Andrés "se inclinaba a creer que el pesimismo de Schopenhauer era una verdad casi matemática."¹⁰

Some of the members of the Generation subscribed also to the Krausist philosophy which contains the belief in self-education and

⁹Luis Granjel, Panorama de la generación del '98 (Madrid: Guadarrama, 1959), p. 133.

¹⁰Pío Baroja, El árbol de la ciencia (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1932), p. 56.

seeks to maintain a balance among reason, science and religion. The stress which this system lays on the all-round human being appealed to the Spaniards. This philosophy had a great impact on Giner de los Ríos, the founder of the Institución Libre de Enseñanza which influenced all the members of the Generation. Luis Granjel, moreover, mentions Azorín as saying that the French poet, Verlaine "contribuyó a formar en ellos una nueva sensibilidad poética," and that Gautier "ayudó a la juventud de 1898 a ver el paisaje de España. Su Viaje a España fue leído y releído."¹¹ Unamuno, in Azorín's opinion, shows the influence of Tolstoi and Kierkegaard while in Benavente is manifested that of Musset and Shakespeare.

Moreover, simultaneously with foreign influence, the Spanish influence was gradually becoming stronger. The members were greatly inspired by their precursors, most important of whom were Galdós, Costa, Giner de los Ríos and Ganivet, and also some of the group re-examined certain Spanish classics such as Don Quijote, the Cid and the Celestina. Unamuno, Azorín and Maeztu gave their interpretations of Don Quijote, as they saw in him the embodiment of the true Spanish character.

What Was The Generation of 1898?

In the last third of the nineteenth century, there was developing in Spain a more critical attitude, for Spaniards realized that things were not going well in their country. Spain had lost many of her

¹¹Granjel, Panorama de la generación del '98, p. 133.

colonies, there was the internal strife of the Carlist Wars, the political system was inefficient. In literature, things were at a standstill. The War of 1898 merely came as the final blow. It was only natural, then, that a pessimistic soul-searching was inevitable, that many wanted to break with the immediate past and seek a complete regeneration for Spain. This was to become the outlook of the Generation of 1898.

The movement had nothing of an organized drive. It was a spontaneous and natural mood which manifested itself in varied activities. The young writers, using their native sources and those of foreign erudites, sought some historical constant in Spain's heritage. A new renaissance was taking place in Spain. Some writers emphasized more the Spanish tradition, others called for Europeanization and more pragmatic approaches to Spain's problems. Their program, literary and otherwise, was not a united crusade.

Critics of the Generation of 1898 disagree on its "composition, its tenets and its right to be called a Generation."¹² Some include Ortega y Gasset and Pérez de Ayala in the group and others insist that these two belong to a later generation. Jeschke sees a unity in the Generation's skepticism and pessimism. Melchor Fernández Almagro views its concern as the "problema de España" as different from that of the Modernists who were interested in aesthetics. Laín Entralgo, Chandler and Schwartz tell us,¹³ divides them into two groups, one whose work "está muy directamente afectada por la situación histórica

¹²Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961), p. 556.

¹³Ibid., pp. 556-557.

de España de que el desastre es símbolo" and another whom he calls "literatos puros y más influídos por el modernismo." My thesis will be based on this latter description although the division into two groups will not be emphasized. Concerning the members of the Generation, I shall use the well-known anagram of Corpus Barga (VABUMB - Valle-Inclán, Azorín, Baroja, Unamuno, Maeztu and Benavente), which has been accepted by most authorities on the Generation. I shall, however, also include Antonio Machado as representative of the poetic genre. It was Azorín himself, in 1913, who called the movement the "Generation of 1898" not because of the actual effect of the War but because of the symbolic significance of that date as a turning point in Spanish life.

In regards to the disagreement of many critics as to whether or not there was a Generation of 1898, it seems clear, when one considers the term "generation," that the movement in Spain bears all the characteristics of this concept. The literary concept of "generation," as it is known, was created by Dilthey¹⁴ about 1865, and has since been used by many as a literary classification. According to Juan Chabás, the following characteristics determine the existence of a generation:¹⁵

1. Writers born about the same time.
2. A homogeneity of education.
3. Common friendships and influences.
4. A generational experience.
5. A leader within the group or a predecessor who serves as a guide.

¹⁴Wilhelm Dilthey, Das Leben Scheleiermachers, Chapter V (Berlin, 1935).

¹⁵Juan Chabás, La literatura española contemporánea (Habana: Cultural, 1952), p. 6.

6. A generational language - repeated use of words, style and expression.
7. Paralysis of the former generation.

Pedro Salinas¹⁶ has applied each of these characteristics to the movement in Spain and has concluded, as have many other critics, that there was at least some justification for the concept of a Generation of 1898.

Concerning the characteristics of the Generation of 1898, most of the writers, regardless of their disparate backgrounds and viewpoints, seemed united in a protest against the traditional ideas of the immediate past and in a demand for a new interpretation of history and a critical look towards the future. Moreover, although many of them were from the provinces, they sought inspiration in Castile and in the spiritual qualities of the Cid and Don Quijote. There were some who wanted a fusion of Spanish tradition with the modern European while others wanted a completely new outlook. The Generation sought to create not only a new vision of Spain but a new Spain. Therefore, in all the various genres -- novel, essay, drama and poetry, the authors attempted an interpretation of the Spanish soul. They sought also to create a new style. Thus, as Laín Entralgo points out, the men of 1898 left a three-fold impact on future generations --that of language, esthetic sensibility and patriotism. Moreover, they all wanted to "reformular la conciencia española;" in style, all had a common aim: "dignificar la forma literaria, crear un estilo."¹⁷

¹⁶Pedro Salinas, "El concepto de generación literaria aplicada en la del '98." Literatura española del siglo XX, 2nd ed. aumentada. (Mexico: Antigua Librería Robredo, 1949), pp. 26-33.

¹⁷Chabás, La literatura española contemporánea, p. 8.

CHAPTER II

LITERARY GENRES AND THEMES

The movement of the Generation of 1898 produced an outpouring of novels, poetry and plays. Through these various literary media, writers voiced their protest against the ills of Spain and implied suggestions for the solution of the country's problems. But, in my opinion, the Generation of 1898 was not merely a movement of protest, it was more than this. The members consciously sought to renovate Spanish literary art, with the result that they created new forms, new formulae, and developed the existing genres, thus producing a new renaissance in Spanish letters. The purpose of this chapter is to attempt to show and examine the dominant themes expressed in the various literary productions. Chapter III will deal with their method -- their style and technique. Since what is important here is about what these writers were concerned and how they wrote, attention will be paid to literary themes and techniques rather than to the individual authors themselves. Moreover, although authors will be mentioned as representatives of a particular type of literary production, it must be pointed out that most of them, although their fame rests primarily on one type, also published works in the other fields. The novel and essay will be discussed together since, in some cases, important works were produced in both areas by the same writer and sometimes works were part novel and part essay.

The Novel and Essay

The chief novelists of the Generation of 1898 are Pío Baroja, Unamuno, Azorín, and Valle-Inclán. The essay is represented by Unamuno, Azorín and Maeztu. Although all these writers shared the basic ideas of their movement, each had his individual approach to the solution of Spain's problems.

Seeking the true soul of Spain as a means to solving her problem was the principal preoccupation of the Generation. The movement chose three ways by which to arrive at the essence of Spain -- history, paisaje (the countryside) and literature. But seeking the soul of the country was merely one aspect of the solution of its problems. The members of the Generation were concerned also with the security and origin of the formation of ideas, ideals, and beliefs on which their society rested. J. García López quotes Unamuno as stating that "lo que el pueblo español necesita es... tener un sentimiento y un ideal propios acerca de la vida y de su valor."¹ Therefore, their works reflect the search for these ideas madres, as Ganivet called them in his España filosófica contemporánea.

History

"History," according to the Generation, means not the great events of the past, but rather "la historia íntima," "la intrahistoria," as Unamuno calls it, in which is revealed the essence of the Spanish people. García López also quotes Azorín as saying: "no busquéis el

¹J. García López, Historia de la literatura española (Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1962), p. 545.

espíritu de la historia y de la raza en los monumentos y en los libros," and adds that what is important is only "un mundo desconocido de pequeños hechos."²

In the beginning, the writers were negative in their attitude towards their country, for, in their frustration, they could see only the things that were wrong with Spain. They wanted to begin afresh, to create a new Spain. But following this period of disillusionment, in which they sought to Europeanize the country, they realized that there were some traditions worthy of being kept, and they all demonstrated a deep love for Spain which they now considered deserving of recreation and renovation. They set about to find the Spanish soul.

Unamuno seeks the essence of Spain in her history. In his five essays, collectively entitled En torno al casticismo, he seeks to interpret Spanish history and the meaning of her culture. For him, Castile is the great symbol of the Spanish spirit and, in determining the essence of Spain, he feels that language is important since it is through this medium that a people's ideas are made known. He looks forward to a new Spain, one of an eternal tradition sought in the present, not the past, but vitalized by foreign ideas. Here, I think, lies the essential difference between Unamuno and Baroja, for whereas Unamuno always maintained faith in Spain and believed that there was a solution to her problem, Baroja implied that there was no answer. Unamuno's solution to the problem of Spain is:

El porvenir de la sociedad española espera en la intrahistoria, y no surgirá potente hasta que lo despierten vientos o ventarrones del

ambiente europeo...España está por descubrir y sólo la descubrirán españoles europeizados.³

This formula for the regeneration of Spain --Europeanization-- is shared by many of the Generation of 1898. Maeztu, in his Hacia otra España, compared Spain unfavourably with England and insisted on the necessity of Europeanization and of copying England and Germany. Europeanization was particularly the cry at the beginning of the movement. The phrase of Unamuno "muera a Don Quijote" is descriptive of this period, but later the Generation gave thought to various other possible solutions to Spain's problem, such as through improvements in education and politics. But, as the period progressed, the Generation became less preoccupied with criticizing Spain and protesting against its ills, and the writers emphasized literary expression instead. Protest, then, was eventually subordinated to artistic creation, and such was the renewed interest in literature and the resultant outpouring of works in all the areas of writing, coupled with a conscious effort to dignify literary expression, that the Generation brought about a new renaissance in Spanish letters.

But, let us return to this initial period of protest. Unamuno also voices his protest, in En torno al casticismo, against the triviality of the Spanish life of his time, against the press, politics, literature, etc. In his La vida es sueño: Reflexiones sobre la regeneración de España (volume II) Unamuno states that Spain has to awaken from the idea that life is a dream and emulate the modern European man for whom life is life, it is action, with faith in intellectualism and culture. Paradoxical as is the spirit of Unamuno, he was to

³Unamuno, Ensayos, volume I (Madrid: Aguilar, 1942), p. 121.

continue to suggest the deAfricanization of Spain and the "españolización" of Europe (as a formula for the assimilation of ideas), but he still believed that the following was important:

abriendo las ventanas a vientos europeos, empapándonos en el ambiente continental, teniendo fe en que no perderemos nuestra personalidad al hacerlo... ⁴

In his interpretation of Cervantes' masterpiece, in Vida de don Quijote y Sancho, Unamuno emphasizes the human and Castillian soul of don Quijote and he urges Spaniards to accept the concepts of hacer bien, glory, action and longing for immortality, the characteristics of Quijote and Sancho who are, for him, spiritual symbols of hope and redemption for the Spanish soul.

Azorín devoted many works to analysis of the soul of Spain. He is regarded as "a splendid example of the Generation of 1898's scrutinizing attitude towards Spain and the problem of personal adjustment to the world."⁵ In 1900 he published El alma castellana, in which he shows that tradition and the soul of Castile are seen across Spain's human types, the classics and history. He, therefore, sought the essence of Spain in her literature and in the daily life of her citizens. Azorín interprets Spanish life in a new way, for he emphasizes the importance of little things. For him, while many great and important things pass away with time, the small, humble, everyday objects continue to exist. He sees in the Spain of today, the Spain of yesterday. Patt and Nozick quote him as saying: "España se repite, repite lo de ayer hoy, lo de hoy mañana. Vivir aquí es volver a

⁴Ibid.

⁵Walter T. Pattison, Representative Spanish Authors, vol.II (New York: Oxford University Press, 1960), p. 480.

hacer lo mismo."⁶ He feels that although individuals die, Spain itself does not change or die. More than any of his Generation, Azorín looked to the past of Spain to justify or accuse for his country's problems. But, unlike Unamuno and Baroja, his feeling for Spain has no agony, violence or grief; he always demonstrates a deep love for Spain although he feels its sadness and decadence. For him, as it was for Unamuno and Machado, Castile was a symbol of the Spanish spirit, and he thought that its ruins of past greatness signified an eternal, positive spirit.

Azorín believed that the regeneration of Spain must be the work of "sensibilidad." Chabás quoted him as saying:

El ideal humano -- la justicia, el progreso -- no es sino una cuestión de sensibilidad. Un poco más de sensibilidad, eso es el progreso humano. Es decir: un poco más de inteligencia.⁷

Moreover, intelligence for Azorín means tolerance. He feels that it is necessary to raise the level of Spanish culture in order to enrich sensibility, to cultivate intelligence, to create the spirit of tolerance. Barja calls Azorín "a la vez...un artista...un crítico y un reformador, un verdadero pedagogo de la escuela de Costa--educación y economía, escuela y despena, como remedios al mal..."⁸ Like the men of the Renaissance of the fifteenth century, also, Azorín looked to the classics for some models. In the classics of Luis de León, Cervantes, Garcilaso, Manrique and Vives, Azorín sought this spirit of tolerance.

⁶Beatrice Patt and Martin Nozick, eds., The Generation of 1898 and After, p. 141.

⁷Juan Chabás, La literatura española contemporánea, p. 103.

⁸César Barja, Libros y autores contemporáneos (New York: V. Suárez, 1935), p. 276.

Chabás points out that Azorín wanted progress for his country and that he meditated on its decadence: "La idea de la decadencia es antigua, sí, han colaborado en la creación del concepto de decadencia hombres eminentes, eruditos, historiadores, literatos."⁹ Azorín studied the works of writers such as Gracián, Feijóo, Jovellanos, Cevallos, Larra, Costa..., he wrote many pages on them, and shared their views regarding the causes of the decadence of Spain. These include the error of the wars of conquest, feudal propriety of the land and misery of the peasantry, religious intolerance, absolute governments, lack of culture and instruction and the backwardness of science and technology. But, optimistically, Azorín saw a remedy in Costa's "escuela y despena." He agreed with Jovellanos that lands should be properly distributed. He thought that action of the masses could renovate the life of the towns which were then permeated by inertia and resignation. He states: "He sentido, en este ambiente de inercia y resignación, una tristeza íntima, indefinible."¹⁰

Pío Baroja, a voluminous writer, is considered by many critics to be among the most important Spanish novelists. Baroja was a bitter pessimist in his protest against the defects of Spanish society. He saw the prejudices and lack of vitality, he criticized its cruelty and its injustices. But, unlike Azorín who seemed to feel with nostalgia and sadness the decadence of Spain, Baroja regarded the life of Spain as ugly and ruinous. His criticisms of Spain are, perhaps, the most

⁹Chabás, Literatura española contemporánea, p. 104.

¹⁰Azorín, Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1920), p. 189.

severe ever made by a Spaniard. In El árbol de la ciencia, which Azorín considered the one work which summed up best the spirit of Baroja, and Valbuena Prat called "la novela más típica de la generación del '98," he says of the customs of Alcolea:

...eran españolas puras, es decir, de absurdo completo...por falta de instinto colectivo el pueblo se había arruinado...el pueblo aceptó la ruina con resignación.¹¹

Concerning its politics, and this is a criticism which was made by many of the Generation to apply to Spanish politics in general, he states:

La política....respondía perfectamente al estado de inercia y desconfianza del pueblo. Era una política de caciquismo, una lucha entre dos bandos contrarios, que se llaman el de los Ratones y el de los Mochuelos ... Aquellos bandidos eran los sostenes de la sociedad.¹²

Baroja saw that one of the first things to be done was to shake the Spanish people out of that inertia which was the result of the power of the caciques, churchmen and the inefficiency of many officials. Some other instances of his sharp criticism of Spain appear in Mala hierba where, speaking of the giants in the sculptor's studio, giants that represent toilers exhausted by their labour, he says: "poco oportuno el asunto para España."¹³ Later in that same work, when Manuel tells Robert that he is waiting for some job to turn up, the latter replies: "¡Qué español es eso! Estar a lo que salga. Siempre esperando..."¹⁴

¹¹Pío Baroja, El árbol de la ciencia, pp. 194-195.

¹²Ibid., p. 196.

¹³Baroja, Mala hierba (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1904), p. 13.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 14.

Concerning Spain's education system, Baroja, in El árbol de la ciencia, implies that no research was being done in his country and that Spain needed to improve her antiquated education system and to cease believing that everything Spanish was good.

Baroja, therefore, sums up one aspect of his generation -- that of protest. He spoke against all areas of Spanish life, he was anti-clerical (the worse evil for him was clericalism), anti-militarist, seemingly anti-everything. But, in spite of his pessimism, Baroja was an idealist with a desire for reform; he felt, however, that the restrictions of society inhibited action. A cynic and agnostic, he had no spiritual orientation which permitted him to establish principles on which to base reforms for his country. He saw no salvation for Spain through art, religion or social conscience, but he had some faith in philosophy and science. Moreover, Baroja saw life as an absurd chaos: "La vida era una corriente tumultuosa e inconsciente, donde todos los actores representaban una comedia que no comprendían..."¹⁵ and a "cacería horrible"¹⁶ in which the only possibility of salvation was "la lucha." He thought that a life without struggle was not worthwhile, there must be "una lucha por la vida."¹⁷

Like Azorín, he admitted that the Spanish essence lay in the great figures of its literature -- The Cid, don Quijote -- but he

¹⁵Baroja, El árbol de la ciencia, p. 60.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 114.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 111.

felt that action was the remedy for Spain's ills. Being a virile Basque, it was natural for Baroja to turn to action as a solution, and indeed some of his characters are, therefore, men of action, men with voluntad who escape the futility and frustration of life. Following the concept of Nietzsche's superman, he presents such characters as Martín Zalacaín, of Zalacaín, el aventurero, and Eugenio de Aviraneta, the protagonist of his twenty-two volumes of Memorias de un hombre de acción. Like all members of the Generation of 1898, he thought that inaction was ruining Spain. He shows the meaningless, futile life of men without the strong will to act, such as Andrés, in El árbol de la ciencia, and Manuel, in Mala hierba. Silvestre Paradox, in Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox, and Juan de Labraz, of El rayorazgo de Labraz are other characters who are incapable of action and, therefore, live without aim or purpose. Patt and Nozick state that Arcelu, of El mundo es así sums it up in this way: "...ahora, como no tengo voluntad ni perseverancia, no lo he podido realizar nunca."¹⁸ I find particularly interesting Baroja's thought regarding the limits of action. He has Iturrioz state, in El árbol de la ciencia, that one solution may be action limited to a small area:

. . . la acción limitándose a un círculo pequeño. Es decir, que se puede tener el quijotismo contra una anomalía; pero tenerlo contra una regla general, es absurdo.¹⁹

Therefore, although Baroja placed so much emphasis on action, he seemed to believe that one should have specific, limited objectives

¹⁸Patt and Nozick, The Generation of 1898 and After, p. 86.

¹⁹Baroja, El árbol de la ciencia, p. 113.

in order to maximize one's probability of success.

Like Unamuno and Antonio Machado, he combined bitter criticism with real patriotism. He felt the anguish of Spain and wanted to eliminate from her all that was absurd. He detested superstitions, the Catholic sentiment, the concept of honour, and donjuanism, violence and religious dogma. His ideas are often criticized as being destructive and valueless, but Baroja felt that Spaniards must become self-critical and conscious of their country's faults before a remedy could be effected. He thought that not to recognize these faults was unpatriotic. Laín Entralgo quote him as saying, in Juventud, egolatría:

Yo parezco poco patriota, sin embargo, lo soy.
Tengo la preocupación de desear el mayor bien
para mi país, pero no el patriotismo de mentir.²⁰

In all his work, emotion and pain for Spain are his deepest emotions. As in Unamuno, he thought it necessary to "carry Spain to Europe" at the same time that Spain was being Europeanized.

Valle-Inclán, the prose stylist of the Generation, unlike the other members, does not have the spirit of protest and demolition. He was, above all else, a stylist and, unlike Baroja and Unamuno, he seemed indifferent to the problems of his country. He, however, viewed Spain with a feeling of tragedy and agony, as is seen in his Luces de Bohemia, where he describes the miserable life of Spain which he considered a caricature of Europe. He captured the mystery of Galicia in his works. He contrasts sharply with the other members of the Generation of 1898 in that he dwells little on the problem of

²⁰ Pedro Laín Entralgo, La generación del noventa y ocho (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1948), p. 93.

Spain, he rather escapes into a poetic, unreal world.

We have seen in the foregoing, then, one aspect of the work of the movement, that of protest against the things which the writers thought were responsible for Spain's perplexing situation. But, in these same novels and essays, the authors deal with new subjects and themes. Whereas, formerly, the Spanish novel treated such topics as chivalry, love, the Moors, the pícaro and, in the nineteenth century, cuadros de costumbres of particular regions in Spain, with this new renaissance in Spanish letters, these well-worn topics were replaced by new ones. The most important of these are the will, time and countryside. Of course, this does not mean that these subjects had never before appeared in Spanish literature, but not until now were they developed so fully as to be outstanding in the same way as the other topics such as chivalry, love, etc. The countryside had long been a subject of interest to poets but now it becomes an important source of inspiration for the novelists as well. I shall first discuss the theme of the importance of the will, and present the various interpretations that the novelists and essayists of the Generation gave to this topic.

"Voluntad" and "abulia"

Ángel Ganivet, in his Idearium español, sees the chief Spanish defect as paralysis of the will, abulia, which can be counteracted only by a strong exertion of will or voluntad.²¹ This concept of the will became one of the most dominant themes in the works of the

²¹Ángel Ganivet, Idearium español (Madrid, F. Beltrán, 1923), pp. 165-171.

members of the movement of 1898, who, although they had been influenced by the philosophy of such preachers of the will as Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and Ibsen, also lend their own individual interpretations to the concept. I should point out here, in brief, the difference between the thoughts of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche regarding the will, for these were views which dominantly influenced the movement of 1898. The former believed that the will was a force which pervaded the world with suffering, and he saw no relief for desire except ascetic denial. This idea, therefore, led to pessimism and negation. Nietzsche, on the contrary, exalted the person of will and made way for the concept of the "superman".

Unamuno, Baroja and Azorín are all more favourably disposed to the Schopenhauerian idea of the will. In her essay on this subject, Doris King Arjona explains why:

They were tempted by the vision of a desire forever renewed, forever unsatisfied, by a universe without rest or finality...each sought to satisfy the demands of the will in whatever way would make his individual and momentary life bearable, since the whole scheme of things was irreparably wrong.²²

Whereas Ganiwet had seen the will as a force in man stronger than Nature, capable of leading him to great achievements, Unamuno, Baroja and Azorín concluded that in order to satisfy the demands of the will, one often had to subordinate the intellect, ignore the truth and resort to illusions.

Unamuno states in Del sentimiento trágico de la vida that he

²²Doris King Arjona, "Voluntad and abulia in Contemporary Spanish Literature." Hispanic Review, LXXIV (December, 1928), p. 612.

agrees with Schopenhauer's conception of the force of la voluntad pervading the Universe, in which each creature partakes of each other, so that the highest morality is compassion. Moreover, for him, as for Schopenhauer, volition means eternal suffering.²³ Unamuno sees la voluntad opposed to the intelligence because, whereas the will absorbs the world, the intelligence is absorbed by the world. We see in Niebla, in which Unamuno creates fictional characters independent of their author, the power of the will to evoke what it desires. Augusto Pérez, the protagonist, falls in love with Eugenia, but she deserts him and runs off with a former sweetheart. Augusto wants to commit suicide but is told by the author, his creator, that he is not free to do so because he is a mere entity of fiction, an idea in the author's mind. Augusto exerts his will as an independent individual.²⁴ He places himself and his creator on equal ground by arguing that since the idea of creation is enveloped in a mist (niebla) the author and his characters are of equally questionable reality. He eventually dies of some mysterious cause. The chief characters of Tres novelas ejemplares y un prólogo are persons of great will. In Nada menos que todo un hombre, for example, Alejandro Gómez, the protagonist, personifies indomitable will. He dominates all around him until his will is finally thwarted by the death of his wife.

We see men of will and those with lack of it (abulia) in most of the characters of Pío Baroja. Perhaps the most definite expression of the will is exemplified by Roberto, in the trilogy La lucha por la vida,

²³Unamuno, Del sentimiento trágico de la vida (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1931), pp. 147, 148.

²⁴Unamuno, Niebla, p. 91.

who is the opposite in character to the ambitionless Manuel. Roberto possesses a strong will, one that is consciously achieved. He knows that "la acción es todo..."²⁵ and this necessitates la voluntad; he, therefore, proposes a course of gymnastics to develop it in the petty details of life.²⁶

For Baroja, Spain needs men of will. Men of will are men of action and action converts a static life into a dynamic one. He shows us such men in Zalacaín, of Zalacaín, el aventurero, and Eugenio de Aviraneta, of Memorias de un hombre de acción. These are men of energy, capable of achieving great heights. Zalacaín, born of humble peasant stock, is leader of the country boys against the town dwellers. He is instructed by his uncle, Miguel de Tellagori, who knows the realities of life. He eventually marries the daughter of an aristocratic family and dies after living a heroic, adventurous life and winning for himself an honoured memory. Baroja also shows us men without la voluntad in such characters as Silvestre Paradox who had an "ingenious mind but no will,"²⁷ so he has a meaningless life of constant starvation. Then, there is César Moncada of César o nada who, after having been almost successful in his political battles, is defeated and settles down to a life of futility. Yet another, Fernando Ossorio, of Camino de perfección, perhaps Baroja's best novel, is a neurasthenic and an aimless wanderer. These are all men who are adversely affected by the

²⁵Pío Baroja, Aurora roja (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1910), p. 331.

²⁶Pío Baroja, La busca (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1904), p. 230.

²⁷Pío Baroja, Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox (Madrid, 1901), p. 32.

kind of action that they take, or do not take, in shaping their environments to their ends.

Azorín's ideas on the power of will appear chiefly in the series of autobiographical novels entitled La voluntad, Antonio Azorín and Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo which form a detailed study of a abulia. Pablo, of Doña Inés, is another example of an abúllico or a man suffering from paralysis of the will to act. Azorín, of Las confesiones... is a man too developed intellectually and too analytical to have the will for action. He says:

Yo no he ambicionado nunca, como otros muchachos, ser general u obispo; mi tormento ha sido--y es--no tener un alma multiforme y ubicua para poder vivir muchas vidas vulgares e ignoradas...²⁸

Azorín considered this abulia characteristic of the youth of his time and type. Doris King Arjona explains this writer's concept of la abulia:

It is quite different from the general complaint characterized by idées fixes and violent, uncoordinated action which Ganivet had described in the Idearium español, an abulia, less purely Spanish, of less exaltation and more depression, ...an abulia proceeding from an excess of, rather than a lack of, thought.²⁹

This is why his Azorín is an abúllico, he has such an excess of thought that he spends his time in contemplation rather than in purposeful action.

Azorín, besides, seems to have been impressed particularly by one fact about the course of the Spanish will, that is, its tendency to anti-climax. In La voluntad, he tells of the great enthusiasm

²⁸Azorín, Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo, p. 159.

²⁹Doris King Arjona, "Voluntad and abulia in Contemporary Spanish Literature", p. 633.

with which the building of a church in Yecla was undertaken, only to decline and eventually die, how too, none of its great public works were ever completed. He describes this course of the Spanish will:

... en el pueblo yeclano hay un comienzo de voluntad, una iniciación de energía, que agota rápidamente, que acaba en cansancio invencible.³⁰

In La ruta de Don Quijote, Azorín wonders: "¿Qué hay en esta patria del buen caballero de la Triste Figura que así rompe en un punto... las voluntades más enhiestas?"³¹ In La voluntad, he tells of the effect of la abulia: "Aquí... la falta de la voluntad ha acabado por arruinar la inteligencia."³²

Valle-Inclán also deals indirectly with this topic of the will. He depicts the hero of gigantic will, although of decadent personality, in the character of the Marquis of Bradomín, the central figure of the Sonatas. His will increases throughout the work until in the Sonata de invierno we see him, as a Carlist chief, fighting heroically.

Maeztu sees la voluntad as purposeful energy. He says in one of his works³³ that God has given man a will, not as an end in itself, but to enable him to compel Nature, who has no will, to serve the good as far as possible.

³⁰Azorín, La voluntad (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1919), p. 301.

³¹Azorín, La ruta de Don Quijote (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1919), p. 87.

³²Azorín, La voluntad, p. 202.

³³Ramiro de Maeztu, Authority, Liberty and Function (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), p. 43.

Since for him any undertaking which could not be productive would be a disaster, he considered Spain so exhausted by gigantic enterprises that its greatest need was to be told to cease from Quixotic activity.³⁴ He sees in Don Juan "una voluntad que nada quiere fuera del inmediato antojo..."³⁵ His was a tremendous energy not properly directed.

It can be seen from the foregoing, then, that the concept of the will presents itself in different aspects and interpretations in the novels and essays of the Generation of 1898. In the new renaissance that these writers produced in Spanish letters this was one of the dynamic themes variously interpreted and developed by them. Another was the preoccupation with time which will be discussed next.

Time

Of all the members of the Generation of 1898, the one who seemed most preoccupied with this theme was Azorín. The mystery and tragedy of time is the most constant leitmotif of his work. He was acutely conscious of the passage of time, and seemed to have had a great desire to capture a moment of time and make it last forever. He always had the feeling that "es ya tarde." He says: "Yo os digo que esta idea de que siempre es tarde es la idea fundamental de mi vida..."³⁶

Azorín believed that Spain would not change with time, he says: "España se repite, repite lo de ayer hoy, lo de hoy mañana."

³⁴Ramiro de Maeztu, Don Quijote, Don Juan y la Celestina (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1926), p. 103.

³⁵Ibid., p. 178.

³⁶Azorín, Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo, p. 38.

Vivir aquí es ver volver."³⁷ Azorín here seems to believe in the Nietzschean doctrine of eternal recurrence. This theme is repeated often in his works, notably in Castilla and Doña Inés.

In the essays Las nubes and Una lucecita roja, we have illustrations of the double phenomena of temporality and eternity, of the variety and sameness of things across time. César Barja quotes Azorín as saying in Las nubes:

Las nubes nos dan una sensación de inestabilidad y de eternidad...Son--como el mar--siempre varias y siempre las mismas. Sentimos, mirándolas, como nuestro ser y todas las cosas corren hacia la nada, en tanto que ellas--tan fugitivas--permanecen eternas.³⁸

The same thing happens in Una lucecita roja, when Azorín tells of a train that passes every evening at the same place and at the same time, carrying in its capoose a little red light. So, to this writer, as Chandler and Schwartz tell us, everything "changes but returns, too, in a kind of reincarnation, even though it may not be physically identical."³⁹

Azorín was always interested in the past. In his preoccupation with this subject, he deals with the landscape, history and soul of Spain as well as with its authors and its literature. Chandler and Schwartz also explain how he treats these last two:

He tries to relive the author's work and his life, and he often creates a feeling of immediacy as though the author were with us and had just left the room for a moment.⁴⁰

³⁷Azorín, La voluntad, p. 33.

³⁸César Barja, Libros y autores contemporáneos, p. 268.

³⁹Chandler and Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature, p. 567.

⁴⁰Ibid.

This is seen in Las nubes where Azorín attempts to recreate the story of the Spanish classic, La Tragicomedia de Calixto y Melibea. Azorín also believes that there is an eternal reality which serves as a common bond between past, present and future. He sees this reality in the little things of everyday life and throughout his works he gives the idea of the passage of time by showing how small things continue even though men pass away. For Azorín, there is tragedy in time, because if we all pass away, of what importance are our hopes, our desires of happiness? His is similar to the tragedy in Unamuno except that, whereas Azorín resigns himself before Destiny, Unamuno pleads for immortality of his soul.

Unamuno gives some of his thoughts concerning time in one of his writings where he states that a moment "está dentro o debajo del curso del tiempo, no fuera o sobre él."⁴¹ For to him, time and eternity are co-operative, with the former as an auxiliary contributing to the unity of both.

In Baroja's Zalacaín, el aventurero, there is a suggestion of the Nietzschean theme of eternal recurrence in the way in which the hero meets his death. For he dies at the hand of a member of the Ohando family who had before killed a relative of Zalacaín.

This concept of time was, therefore, considered variously by the members of the Generation of 1898. Another topic which they discussed was the countryside to which I shall turn next.

El paisaje

The countryside was another subject which was introduced into

⁴¹Unamuno, "Cartas de Unamuno a Warner Fite..." Revista Hispánica Moderna, XXII (January 1956), 90.

the novel with new meaning and interpretation by the Generation of 1898. Although it had been a subject for the poets, now it became an important one for the novelists. An important characteristic of these writers' work is its "sentimiento de la naturaleza." Whereas the novelists of the nineteenth century had described Spain in its various regions --- Andalucía, Galicia, Asturias ..., the men of 1898 are unique in that their interpretation of the landscape takes two directions. Carola Reig describes it in this way:

Para evocar, para recordar, para sentir nostalgia,...este sentimiento del paisaje toma dos direcciones: la consideración de su paisaje natal, de la región en que se deslizó la infancia y juventud del escritor y la del paisaje de Castilla, intenso, profundo y austero, de reposo y de contemplación.⁴²

So the writers of this movement interpreted the landscape of Castile as well as that of their native land. They were particularly interested in the former because they felt that it represented the physical and spiritual values of Spain as a whole. But even more unique is their attitude towards the countryside, for it is not viewed realistically as in the preceding century, but the members of the Generation project their own spirit into their interpretation. So the landscape of Spain now became an important topic for the novel, and contributed greatly to the rebirth brought about in this genre by the writers of this Movement. This topic was important chiefly because of the manner of treatment. Northup sums it up in the following lines: "Never before have the physical and spiritual values

⁴²Carola Reig, "El paisaje en Azorín." Cuadernos Hispanoamericanos, XXII (May 1955), 209.

of the nation been so admirably portrayed."⁴³

The Generation of 1898 showed great fondness for landscape and, with aesthetic delight, the writers viewed and described the arid plains of Castile with its picturesquely delapidated, stagnant, old cities. Azorín tells of the importance of this topic:

Lo que da la medida de un artista es su sentimiento de la naturaleza, del paisaje...Un escritor será más artista cuanto mejor sepa interpretar la emoción del paisaje.⁴⁴

So these writers considered portrayal of el paisaje to be an essential part of their art, and their work bears "el sentimiento íntimo de la Naturaleza."

Los paisajes abound in the works of Baroja, Valle-Inclán and Azorín. But Unamuno himself also wrote about the Spanish countryside in such works as El sentimiento de la Naturaleza, Paisajes, Por tierras de Portugal y España and Andanzas. Like all the other members of the Generation, he showed a great sensibility for the Castilian landscape. García López quotes him as saying of the countryside:

Yo no he encontrado todavía paisaje feo ni comprendo como hay quien lo encuentre... Hay tierras tristes, tristísimas, desoladas, saháricas, esteparias, pero muy hermosas, solemnemente hermosas ...⁴⁵

Therefore, Unamuno, like the others, demonstrated a deep love for el paisaje of Spain, in spite of the ruins and the sad aspect that he

⁴³George T. Northup, An Introduction to Spanish Literature (Chicago: University Press, 1955), p. 421.

⁴⁴Azorín, La voluntad (Barcelona: Henrich y Cia., 1902), p. 95.

⁴⁵J. García López, Historia de la literatura española, p. 555.

viewed, he saw a solemn beauty in all this.

Many critics have commented on Baroja's treatment of landscapes. De Onís calls it "ultra realistic impressionism,"⁴⁶ John Dos Passos states:

The natural history that gives the pictures etched with vitriol of Spanish life...which you get in these novels of Baroja's is very near the highest sort of creation.⁴⁷

Here Baroja gives us a glance at Spanish life:

En lo alto de la loma, una recua de mulas tristes, cansadas pasaban a lo lejos, levantaron nubes de polvo...El aire cada vez era más pesado, más quieto. En algunas partes estaban segando. Eran de una melancolía terrible aquellas lomas amarillas, de una amarillez, cruda calcárea, y la ondulación de los altos trigos...⁴⁸

His descriptions are even more lyrically emotive when he deals with his own Basque country:

...En la primavera, el camino próximo al río era una delicia. Las hojas nuevas de las hayas comenzaban a verdear...los manzanos y los perales de las huertas ostentaban sus copas nevadas por la flor, y se oían los cantos de los malvises y de los ruiseñores en las enramadas. El cielo se mostraba azul, de un azul suave, un poco pálido, y sólo alguna nube blanca...aparecía en el cielo.⁴⁹

Throughout his voluminous work, Baroja pictures practically all of

⁴⁶Federico De Onís, "Pío Baroja." Nosotros, LIV (October 1926), 171-182.

⁴⁷John Dos Passos, Rosinante to the Road Again (New York: Knopf, 1922), p. 99.

⁴⁸Pío Baroja, Obras completas, VI (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1948), p. 56.

⁴⁹Pío Baroja, Zalacaín, el aventurero (Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1961), pp. 27-28.

Nature. Particularly beautiful are his descriptions of seaside towns, as that of the harbour of Marseilles in El laberinto de las sirenas.

Baroja often presents his views as seen through the eyes of his many ambulant protagonists, and this adds a personal note to the descriptions. Another technique which he uses is that of describing the paisaje as seen by painters, such as Tarrañaga in Agonías de nuestro tiempo and Mister Bothwell in El mayorazgo de Labraz. Rosa Seeleman sees Baroja's paisajes as "a sort of moving picture" because in his descriptions "mountains, high at a distance, flatten out as one nears: meadows come into view in the valleys, are passed and replaced by others."⁵⁰ This serves to show how exact a copy of reality Baroja tries to give us in his novels. Rosa Seeleman concludes:

His descriptive pattern, his leisurely sight-seeing, his bulk of descriptive detail, have a casual recording of impressions that is unmatched in Spanish literature.⁵¹

There appears a contrast between the description of paisaje in Baroja and Valle-Inclán in that whereas the former includes much detail and presents the scene as it appears, adding an emotional or lyric note at times, Valle-Inclán's treatment of the landscape has a much greater personal note. Moreover, Valle-Inclán seems fond of describing the Galician landscape, and shows great originality in his portrayal of it. He presents this region with its archaic traditions and its folklore, full of mystery, superstition and magic.

⁵⁰Rosa Seeleman, "The Treatment of Landscape in the Novelists of the Generation of 1898." Hispanic Review, IV (July 1936), 232.

⁵¹Ibid.

Chiefly a literary artist and influenced by the Modernist and Symbolist movements, Valle-Inclán is fond of evoking emotions and selects paisajes for their pictorial and emotional effects, and for the kind of mystery that they seem to present. He selects the exotic and the rare as a means of self-expression. In the Sonatas, which represent four seasons of the love life of the Marqués de Bradomín, we see the use of el paisaje to great effect. The first Sonata, of Spring, depicts the sensation of the waking of a love. Here April bathes the hills with its sun, the rosebushes permeate the air with their fragrance and all nature is full of intrigue. In the second, of Summer, he tells how "el horizonte relampagueaba....," love is then at its height. Then in Autumn, there is the remembrance of a past love: "Las hojas que caen de los árboles, están amarillas..." With the coming of Winter, the sensation of age is represented "color opaco y gris en el paisaje," and the Marqués feels that his soul is "como el viejo nido abandonado." So we see here how Valle-Inclán uses well-chosen parts of el paisaje for the season as well as for the type of mood and feeling that he wants to convey.

In another of his descriptions, a moonlight scene, we can see how he selects those elements of the environment that will evoke a mood of fear and mystery. This is from his Flor de Santidad where Adega and the ventera, wishing to undo the evil spell that is causing the sheep to die one by one, have driven the flock one midnight to drink of the waters of San Gundián:

Era una noche de montaña, clara y silenciosa, blanca por la luna. Las ovejas se juntaban en mitad del descampado como destinadas a un sacrificio en aquellas piedras célticas que doraban líquenes milenarios. La vieja y la zalaga bajaron por el sendero: el rebaño se

apretaba con tímido balido y el tremante campanilleo de las esquilas despertaba un eco en los montes lejanos donde dormían los lobos. La ventera llevaba encendido un hachón de paja, porque el fuego arredrase a los lobos. Las dos mujeres caminaban en silencio y, sobrecogidas por la soledad de la noche y por el misterio de aquel maleficio que las llevaba a la fuente de San Gundián.⁵²

Typical of Valle-Inclán, he describes the sound, movement, colour, light and emotion of the scene rather than the topographical details.

Azorín, in his portrayal of landscape, often fixes his attention on small, humble things, and is fond of describing minutely everything in a landscape— a street, or a room or all the utensils in a farm kitchen. He describes these minutiae because he believes that they are representative of the whole scene.

Besides, in his definition of el paisaje, he equates it with the spirit of man. He says:

...el paisaje somos nosotros: el paisaje es nuestro espíritu, sus melancolías, sus placideces, sus anhelos, sus tártagos.⁵³

His vision is full of nostalgia and melancholy, he describes Castile with its ruins of past greatness in such a way that he evokes a profound tenderness and love for Spain. Like the other members of the Generation, two countrysides are described in his work, that of his native land and that of Castile. Descriptions of Alicante appear in La voluntad, Antonio Azorín, Superrealismo, Valencia and Madrid. He pictures the interior areas of this region as:

montañoso y gris,...oloroso de plantas
montarcas, surcado de blancos caminos que

⁵²Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Flor de santidad, Opera omnia II (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1913), p. 87.

⁵³Azorín, La voluntad, p. 95.

se pierden a lo lejos entre el verde de
las viñas y el gris de los olivos y al-
mendros... 54

Like Valle-Inclán, Azorín uses colours, scents and sounds to enhance his descriptions of el paisaje. He also often uses onomatopoeic words such as the croa-croa of the frogs, the tic-tac and the cu-cú, cu-cú of the clocks...

With great tenderness he describes the country-town of Yecla where he attended school. This is the town which he describes in detail in La voluntad. Two themes appear throughout the work—first, the sky, nature and the countryside give a feeling of hope, and second, those who live in Yecla speak of a life of sadness and pain. Azorín concludes: "España es un país triste con una hermosa naturaleza."55

Complementary to Azorín's definition of landscape, mentioned above, is the symbolism which he sees in los paisajes. In the scenery of Castile, which he regards as the most significant section of Spain, he sees re-enacted entire pages from Quevedo and Cervantes. He expresses the subjectivism typical of the Generation in their attitude towards el paisaje as he asks:

¿No está en estas iglesias, en estos calvarios,
en estas ermitas, en estos conventos, en este
campo duro y raso, toda nuestra alma, todo el
espíritu intenso y enérgico de nuestra raza?56

⁵⁴Carola Reig, "El paisaje en Azorín," p. 211.

⁵⁵Antonio de Hoyos, "Yecla en la literatura del '98." Clavileño, V (September-October 1954), p. 63.

⁵⁶Azorín, España, hombres y paisajes (Madrid: F. Beltrán, 1909), p. 163.

Carola Reig states⁵⁷ that Unamuno has expressed this same subjectivism in Del sentimiento trágico de la vida, when speaking of the sadness of the Castillian countryside he says:

La tristeza de los campos, ¿está en ellos
o en nosotros, que los contemplamos? ¿No
es acaso que todo tiene un alma, y que esa
alma pide liberación?

The Generation of 1898, then, were greatly preoccupied with the literary possibilities of the topic of el paisaje. Although Nature had been dealt with before in the novel, the contribution of the Movement to Spanish literature in this area is the great subjectivity with which they viewed the countryside and the very detailed treatment which they gave it, so much so that for the first time in the Spanish novel, el paisaje becomes the protagonist. In his novel, Madrid, Azorín says:

Nos atraía el paisaje. Prosistas y poetas que hayan descrito paisajes han existido siempre. No es cosa nueva, propio de estos tiempos, el paisaje literario. Lo que sí es una innovación es el paisaje por el paisaje, el paisaje en sí, como único protagonista de la novela, el cuento, el poema. Si a un clásico se le hubiera dicho que el paisaje podrá constituir la obra literaria, no lo hubiese entendido.⁵⁸

Although such writers as Gil y Carrasco in his Señor de Bemibre, and more recently Valera, Alarcón, Pardo Bazán and, above all, Pereda, have given magnificent descriptions of the countryside, there is hardly any intimate feeling for Nature in their work and el paisaje certainly is never the protagonist. So here we have another contribution of something new to Spanish letters by the Generation of 1898.

⁵⁷Carola Reig, "El paisaje en Azorín," p. 210.

⁵⁸Azorín, Obras Completas, VI (Madrid: Aguilar, 1962), p. 215.

It is noticeable in the portrayal of the countryside that there is seemingly an absence of protest, because now the writers centered their attention on artistic expression -- on breaking with the immediate past and effecting a revival in Spanish literature.

Another way in which they tried to renovate Spanish letters was by writing about the literature of the past. They, therefore, devoted themselves to literary criticism involving many phases of literature and the profession of writing.

Literary Criticism

The greater part of literary criticism appeared in essays, and through the work of the Generation, this genre became established as, perhaps, the best vehicle for literary criticism in Spain. Besides this, Mary E. Buffum, writing in 1935, says:

Through the journalistic essay, printed on the front page of the daily newspaper and signed by some one of the best contemporary writers, a popularization of the arts has begun similar to the popularization of material consumption which so rapidly raised the standard of living in the United States.⁵⁹

In their effort to renovate Spanish literature, the members of 1898 discussed various topics. The most outstanding subjects examined include the erudite, academic type of study in preference to the works of creative and emotional value, the current type of literary criticism, criticism of the conservatives by the modernists and vice-versa, and the relative importance of content and form. But, like much of the criticism of the Generation, literary criticism, for the most part,

⁵⁹Mary E. Buffum, "Literary Criticism in the Essays of the Generation of 1898." Hispania, XVIII (October 1935), pp. 290-291.

merely stated the problems. Some of the writers felt that destructive criticism would open the eyes of the public to Spain's problems and cures could then be sought.

The writers expressed their ideas as to what the purpose of literary criticism should be. Unamuno states:

Hay quienes escriben doctrinales de conjunto
y hay quienes hacemos ensayos sueltos, más
para suscitar y sugerir problemas que para
desarrollarlos.⁶⁰

Unamuno, therefore, seemed to believe that literary criticism should deal with how and for what purpose an author writes.

Azorín felt that there was too much effort on the part of Spaniards to establish the fact of their personality. He agreed with Ortega y Gasset who said that almost half of the Spanish books published in the last centuries were dedicated to showing that the other half of the books were admirable.⁶¹ But Azorín saw some importance in sentimental homage written by authors about other authors. He used this argument to support his request for a history of Spanish literature written by a Spaniard and of a kind similar to the then best existing accounts, both of which had been written by foreigners, Fitzmaurice-Kelly and Ernest Mérimée. He wanted one written by a Spaniard because he believed that there were certain subtle aspects of Spanish literature that would inevitably escape the best foreign critic. Unamuno also felt that there was too much criticism for the sake of criticism. He says:

⁶⁰Wilfred A. Beardsley, Ensayos y sentencias de Unamuno (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932), p. 40.

⁶¹José Ortega y Gasset, El Espectador, vol. II (Madrid, Espasa-Calpe, 1921), p. 136.

...hay críticos que no han ido de la poesía así sentida y gozada a la crítica, sino que han venido de la crítica, de la crítica en sí y por sí, de la crítica por la crítica, a criticar poesía...⁶²

Mary E. Buffum tells how he begged the young literary men to "leave off criticism, stop writing histories of Spanish literature, and start making this history."⁶³

There is criticism, too, of conservatism, aimed particularly at those writers who consistently patterned their own works after those of past generations or who preferred to write the academic type of study instead of works of creative or emotional value. Unamuno accused "la juventud intelectual" of inertia, lack of will and spirit. He said that, unlike the young men of France who, in their anxiety to create new forms, found new magazines and investigated new paths, in Spain the young minds were filled with everything old--old phrases, formulas and customary dogmas. Because of this, magazines that are founded have vestiges of everything old. Unamuno felt that one way to destroy "dogmatic literary religion" and so gain real literary appreciation and reevaluate literature was to admit when one was bored by a famous author.

Azorín, in Los valores literarios, advocates what he calls "la revisión de los valores literarios." This, according to him, consists in judging the classics in the light of contemporary sensibility. He states:

⁶²Miguel de Unamuno, Ensayos, vol. VI (Madrid: Residencia de Estudiantes, 1918), p. 106.

⁶³Buffum, "Literary Criticism in the Essays of the Generation of 1898," p. 284.

No existe más regla fundamental para juzgar a los clásicos que la de examinar si están de acuerdo con nuestra manera de ver y de sentir la realidad; en el grado en que lo estén o no lo estén, en ese mismo grado estarán vivos o muertos.⁶⁴

Azorín wrote many pages discussing the ideas of the great writers of the past and so produced material for the investigation and examination of old Spanish literature. He, moreover, studied such subjects as realism in the picaresque novel, the classic theatre, and wrote, too, about some writers of his own time, such as Pío Baroja, Rubén Darío, Juan Ramón Jiménez, Antonio Machado, etc. Although the latter material is not as detailed a study as that done on past authors, yet, through his own works of literary criticism, Azorín contributed much material for the understanding and appreciation of Spanish literature. Literature, to Azorín, has value only if it conveys a message to the present generation; he detested the drama and seemed narrow in his judgement of this genre.

Azorín objected to the state of literary criticism at that time because he believed that language and style had been the only concern of the critics so far in their study of the classics. Unamuno thought that one should not give too much attention to form because not only are ideas important but also moods, emotion and tones. In his essay, La locura del Doctor Montarco, he further criticized the dominant didactic character of Spanish literature. He says:

Aquí todos tienen alma de dómine; no comprenden que se escriba sino para probar algo o defender o atacar alguna tesis, o con segunda intención.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Azorín, Clásicos y modernos (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1919), p. 261.

⁶⁵ Beardsley, Ensayos y sentencias de Unamuno, p. 40.

Unamuno believed that if a work had vehemence, passion and spirit, that was enough.

Like Azorín who wrote critical essays on the Spanish classics, Ramiro de Maeztu also made some penetrating literary studies on such personages as Don Quijote, Don Juan and la Celestina.

As mentioned at the beginning, the greater part of this literary criticism appeared in the essay. With the Generation of 1898, the essay as a vehicle of thought was, in a sense, a new form. These writers followed the example of Angel Ganivet who showed them how effective a tool for the expression of ideas was this genre. Although the essay had long existed in Spanish literature, with the Movement of 1898 it became a very important form. The writers added their own individuality and intimate perception to their ideas which they expressed in the essays. Moreover, even their novels, which were often plotless, many times appeared as half novel and half essay in form; so the essay was used as a very effective medium for the expression of ideas in this era and has continued to be so.

POETRY

This period in Spanish letters represented, too, a great revival in poetry. Azorín, writing in 1913, told how there was taking place in his day a vigorous blossoming of lyric poetry.⁶⁷ The poets of this era undertook to rejuvenate the form and thought of poetry which they considered as being then antiquated. Some were influenced by

⁶⁷Azorín, Clásicos y modernos, p. 223.

the French lyricists, Baudelaire and Verlaine, and by the Spanish Americans, Rubén Darío and Rodó.

The greatest representative of this genre in the Generation of 1898 is Antonio Machado, who, like the novelists and essayists of this group, shows his fondness for landscapes and simplicity and sincerity in writing. He also played an important rôle in producing the renaissance in Spanish literature at this time for he introduced new themes into its poetry and renovated its style and form. He, particularly, developed the ballad form and made it the very expressive, flexible form which it now is.

Critics differ as to the literary classification of Machado's poetry. For Díaz-Plaja, he is "noventaiochista puro" whose work exemplifies the opposition to the school of Darío.⁶⁸ Pedro Salinas states: "hay en algún caso leves acentos modernistas," but not so much that Machado cannot be considered "un típico poeta de '98."⁶⁹ This opinion is shared Guillermo de Torre and César Barja. Gabriel Pradal-Rodríguez, however, feels that "la influencia de Rubén Darío sobre Machado es preponderante."⁷⁰ Juan Ramón Jiménez and Ortega y Gasset see in this poet the unión of Rubén Darío and Unamuno.

Indeed, although Machado's first poem, Almas de violeta (1900), is in the Modernist style, yet he quickly reacted towards simplicity, retaining only the exquisite elegance of the school.

⁶⁸G. Díaz-Plaja, Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1951), p. 183.

⁶⁹Pedro Salinas, Literatura española, siglo XX, 2nd ed. (México, Séneca, 1940), pp. 143-147.

⁷⁰Gabriel Pradal-Rodríguez, "Antonio Machado: su vida y obra." Revista Hispánica Moderna, XV (January 1949), 57.

Machado's Themes

Although some critics have tried to divide Machado's works into isolated epochs, his poetry is characterized by a distinct unity of themes typical of the Generation of 1898. The dominant subjects are preoccupation with Spain, his evocations of the countryside and nature, time, love, God and death.

But, above all, he is the poet of the "campos de Castilla." He is a great interpreter of the Castillian landscape, and by his work, el paisaje became a principal topic in Spanish poetry. He found in the countryside not only a motive for metaphysical reflection but also a stimulus to purposeful action. He expresses the pessimistic concept of the national reality, the abulia, the nostalgia of the past:

Castilla miserable, ayer dominadora,
envuelta en sus andrajos, desprecia cuanto ignora...⁷¹

But he hopes for a better Spain. Machado is a lover of Castile, as were the others of the Generation. He regards this land as one of infinite possibilities which have hardly been realized. His Campos de Castilla (1912) which is considered his best work, reflects the somber and barren landscape and indignation at Spain's lethargy.

Chandler and Schwartz describe this book of poems as follows:

...definitely a book of the Generation spirit where he sums up his tragic appraisal of his land with "Castilla miserable, ayer dominadora, envuelta en sus andrajos, desprecia cuanto ignora"⁷² and then stirs it to

⁷¹Antonio Machado, "A Orillas del Duero," Obras completas de Manuel y Antonio Machado (Madrid: Editorial Plenitud, 1957), p. 735.

⁷²Ibid.

action with "Tras el vivir y el soñar,
está lo que más importa: despertar."⁷³

It is in the harsh contours of the Castillian landscape that Machado sees the essence of Spain, and, like Azorín, he views its timeless austerity.

Like Unamuno, he pleads with Spanish youth to shake off their apathy and to work towards a better Spain:

Tú, juventud más joven, si de más alta cumbre
la voluntad te llega, irás a tu aventura,
despierta y transparente a la divina lumbre,
como el diamante clara, como el diamante pura.⁷⁴

Like Unamuno too, he searches for God. In his quest for "intra-historical" Spain, Machado, as does Azorín, returns to the Spanish classics, to such works as the Cid, to Gonzalo de Berceo and the verses of Don Sem Tob.

Machado received his intellectual formation in the Institución Libre de Enseñanza and was influenced by such thinkers as Kant and Schopenhauer. Angel Valbuena Prat points out his "franciscanismo gineriano," of love of all things, shown particularly in his La novia where we see his affection for the "mula vieja."⁷⁵ Moreover, like Azorín, Machado demonstrates his interest in the little things of everyday life.

Machado seemed deeply interested in the concept of time. Indeed,

⁷³Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature, p. 366.

⁷⁴Antonio Machado, "A una España joven," Obras completas, p. 847.

⁷⁵Angel Valbuena Prat, Historia de la literatura española (Barcelona, Editorial Gustavo Gili, 1937), p. 494.

he has referred to himself as a "poeta del tiempo,"⁷⁶ and Zubiría has stated that "el tiempo está la semilla desde la cual surge esplendoroso el árbol magnífico de su poesía."⁷⁷ This critic further points out that time concerned Machado not as a mere abstraction but rather as something vivid, lasting and personal.⁷⁸ The former does appear in his work but this is extremely rare, as in the poem which he called "A Narciso Alonso Cortés, poeta de Castilla." Zubiría also quotes Machado as stating that the life of a poet "...no es, fuera del tiempo, absolutamente nada,"⁷⁹ and that his definition of poetry is "el diálogo del hombre, de un hombre con su tiempo."⁸⁰ Therefore, Machado writes poetic dialogues with the morning, evening, night, water, the fountain... all of them time or symbols of time. Here he speaks with a spring morning:

Me dijo un alba de la primavera;
Yo florecí en tu corazón sombrío
ha muchos años, caminante viejo
que no cortas las flores del camino
.....
Pero si aguardas la mañana pura
que ha de romper el vaso cristalino,
quizás el hada te dará tus rosas,
mi corazón tus lirios.(XXXIV, 69)⁸¹

⁷⁶Antonio Machado, Obras (México: Séneca, 1940), p. 388.

⁷⁷Ramón de Zubiría, La poesía de Antonio Machado (Madrid: Gredos, 1959), p. 18.

⁷⁸Ibid.

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 24.

⁸⁰Ibid.

⁸¹Antonio Machado, Obras (México: Séneca, 1940). (The Arabic numbers refer to the page in this volume, the Roman numerals refer to the number with which these poems are usually marked in other editions).

In this poem we see a sad man longing for his past and looking with illusion towards the future. The following takes place in his dialogue with the night:

¡Oh, dime, noche amiga, amada vieja,
que me traes el retablo de mis sueños
siempre desierto y desolado, y sólo
con mi fantasma dentro,
mi pobre sombra triste
sobre la estepa y bajo el sol de fuego
o soñando amarguras
en las voces de todos los misterios,
dime, si sabes, vieja amada, dime
si son más las lágrimas que vierto. (XXXVII, 70)

Machado shows his confusion in distinguishing between his own personality and his dreams. He wants to know if the creature he creates in his dream corresponds exactly to his real self. Throughout his work, dreams seemed important to Machado, a possible way of arriving at self-knowledge, "una especie de clave reveladora del secreto de la propia alma,"⁸² and a refuge from the pains of life. Besides, evening for him is a time of melancholy, a time which seems a combination of horror (the shadows) and hope (the light) of a new day.

Machado, moreover, sees certain objects as symbols of time. To him, water is time, and life, which is also time, passes away with the same rhythm as that of the waves and rivers. The fountains, to him, sing the sadness of lost love or the pain of existence:

las fuentes de piedra
.....
y dicen tristezas,
tristezas de amores
de antiguas leyendas. (VIII, 47)

⁸²Zubiría, La poesía de Antonio Machado, p. 29.

Another more obvious symbol of time and the brevity of life is the clock, which he sees marking with cruelty the passage of time. We see this in his poem "El viajero" in Soledades. Machado also sees time in things and vice-versa, that is, regarding the former, he sees things as representing various phases in the passage of time. In his poem entitled "Las Moscas" (XLVIII, 86), he writes:

Moscas de todas las horas,
de infancia y de adolescencia,
de mi juventud dorada;
de esta segunda inocencia,
que da en no creer en nada,
de siempre...

Here we see flies as symbols of the various periods of his life — of infancy, adolescence, adulthood. Concerning things in time, in his preoccupation with Spain, he sees his country with a past, a present and a future but with the three united, for he believes that yesterday is in today and on this depends the future. He says:

¡Y este hoy que mira a ayer: y este mañana
que nacerá tan viejo! (CXLIII, 257).

For he feels a deep "melancolía histórica de la vida española."⁸³

Together with his concern for time is his interest in death, because time is:

... el tiempo, el homicida
que nos lleva a la muerte... (327)

and he seemed to believe that with death disappeared all men's dreams.

Machado, therefore, shared many of the new themes developed by the Generation of 1898. With him, as with the prose writers, el

⁸³Pedro Laín Entralgo, La generación del noventa y ocho (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1947), p. 133.

paisaje became a central topic in Spanish literature. His chief contribution was through the emphasis which he laid on order and form; because of this, great attention was henceforth paid to these elements of poetry and this resulted in an enrichment and development of this genre. He is also considered to be one of the first to introduce the abundant use of symbols in modern Spanish poetry. These aspects of style will be dealt with in the next chapter.

DRAMA

The greatest dramatist of the Generation of 1898 is Jacinto Benavente who infused new life into the Spanish theatre. He freed it of the melodramatic tone which the romantic playwrights had given it and which had been revived in the works of Echegaray. His work constitutes a true renovation of Spanish dramatic art and represented a new renaissance in this genre of Spanish letters because of its sincerity, its politeness, its excellent technical skill and the many innovations which Benavente introduced. These elements all modernized the drama, made it new, fresh, cosmopolitan, and his work also resulted in the breaking down of Spanish resistance to the modern stage. Concerning the renaissance which the Generation produced in Spanish literature, Federico de Onís quotes Juan Ramón Jiménez as referring to Benavente as "Príncipe de este Renacimiento"⁸⁴ and this critic also states:

Y cierto es que a la honda transformación
que en la poesía, la novela y las ideas
llevaron a cabo... Valle-Inclán, Unamuno,

⁸⁴Federico de Onís, Jacinto Benavente (New York: Instituto de las Españas en los Estados Unidos, 1923), p. 15.

Ganivet, Azorín, Baroja, Marquina, Juan Ramón y Machado, corresponde la que Benavente llevó a cabo en el teatro.⁸⁵

Indeed, like the representatives of the novel, the essay and poetry, Benavente transformed the drama, as we shall see in the following pages.

His work is very extensive, he wrote some 180 dramas of various kinds, with one, two, three and four acts. Besides his plays, he wrote a five-volume collection of articles on dramatic criticism, De sobremasa (1910-16), and a series of papers on the theatre, Teatro del pueblo. Benavente has also translated various foreign works, among which are Molière's Don Juan and Shakespeare's King Lear. He was influenced in his work by these writers to a greater extent than by the classic Spanish theatre, for Benavente deliberately broke with Spanish tradition and often sought his models outside of Spain, in Shakespeare, Molière, Ibsen and the contemporary French dramatists. He reacted against the traditional Spanish forms because of the desire and the necessity to free the drama of its well-worn mold, and to modernize it in keeping with the spirit of the new age. This was what Benavente accomplished in this genre. De Onís describes his achievements in this way:

Con independencia y agilidad de espíritu admirables ha creado él sólo toda una literatura dramática, que es española por ser suya y que es al mismo tiempo universal por haber logrado asimilar originalmente las más diversas tendencias del teatro europeo.⁸⁶

⁸⁵Ibid.

⁸⁶Ibid, p. 17

So we have for the first time this cosmopolitan element in Spanish drama; this art is no longer essentially Castillian as before, but now has been permeated with the elements of other dramas. For Benavente's theatre was capable of assimilating the influence of the various European literatures without losing its originality. Through the assimilation of these influences, he effected a new renaissance in Spanish drama, by completely Europeanizing it, making it modern, rich and varied.

The work of Jacinto Benavente contains the spiritual aspects of the Generation, but the emphasis is different. Like the other members of the movement, he criticized the society of his time, but unlike them, he attacked chiefly one sector, the upper class. He chose this class, he said, because it is more charitable to laugh at those with advantages than at those suffering privations. He satirized the complacency and hypocrisy of the aristocracy and his work bears a strong mark of "costumbrismo." Moreover, he rarely considers the historical and political aspects of Spanish life -- La ciudad alegre y confiada is an exception -- and he did not concern himself greatly with the Spanish problem. However, like the novelists, he sought to present modern life as it was, and in so doing, got away from the old romantic love story that had been customarily portrayed in plays.

His work includes plays of satire, of fantasy, rural dramas, psychological studies, romantic comedies, plays of pageantry, grotesques and children's plays. The first period of his production may be called satiric, during which he criticized the society of his

day, first that of Madrid, then that of the provinces. In Gente conocida (1896), he satirizes the corrupt society of Madrid and the spendthrift customs of its aristocracy. The Duque de Garellano describes the nobility of modern Spain to his mother thus:

En tus tiempos la aristocracia deslumbraba
con el brillo de sus títulos. Hoy un título
lo tiene cualquiera; se dan y se venden por
nada, y al que tiene dinero y lo sabe gastar,
nadie le pregunta de dónde ha venido. Ya verás
a Montes una vez casado con Petra, mujer distin-
guida; dirigido por ella, será más estimado en
todo Madrid que nosotros; su casa será un centro
de reunión más distinguido que la nuestra, y su
hija, esa hija natural, heredera de un capital
inmenso, se casará . . . con quien ella quiera,⁸⁷
con el más linajudo, con el más aristócrata...

Montes is the only character not bored with life because he bears the quality dear to the hearts of the members of the Generation of 1898 -- he is a man of action.

La comida de las fieras (1896) presents the ruined noble families who are forced to sell their heirlooms. Hipólito brings out this point:

...En América el hombre significa algo; es una fuerza, una garantía.... Aquí la riqueza es un fin, no un medio para realizar grandes empresas. La riqueza es el ocio; allí es la actividad. Por eso allí el dinero da triunfos, y aquí desastres...⁸⁸

Benavente here wants to turn the eyes of Spain on itself. He feels that new ideas must be brought in from abroad and that the antiquated conventions in Spanish society must be replaced by new activities. But he feels that the good qualities in Spanish life should be maintained, thus there was in him a basis of conservatism. He

⁸⁷Jacinto Benavente, Teatro, volume I (Madrid: Hernando, 1929), p. 127.

⁸⁸Benavente, Teatro, vol. II (Madrid: Hernando, 1920), p. 272.

shows this in Lo cursi (1901) in which he satirizes the new spirit of freedom which was gradually changing life in his country.

Benavente also wrote plays about the provinces. In La Farándula, La Gobernadora and El primo Román he exposes the evils of caciquismo, the boss-system in politics, the criticism of which unites him with all the members of the Generation. In La Gobernadora, also, we see the typically weak Benaventian hero, like that of Baroja, the man of no will, Don Santiago. In contrast are his wife and Manolo, both characters with voluntad. Later, Benavente wrote plays of middle-class life in which his satire is milder, such as El bombrecito and Rosas de otoño. In these he deals with the fundamental causes of the great problems of life. He shows the falsity of the conventions of society and the egoism of men, but he states the problems without directly offering any solutions. It must be noted that although this playwright was pre-eminently a satirist, his satire is very refined without any intention at moralizing; rather, he seems to have an attitude of indifference to the social ills which he criticizes.

Benavente's dramas soon acquired a more moral and human tone as his vision widened and became more profound, and we see not only a criticism of society but the ideal of a better humanity, and a certain compassion for human weaknesses. In his plays of fantasy, Benavente leaves the confines of the society of Madrid and enters a cosmopolitan and international world which is artificial and fantastic. Some of these are La noche del sábado, El dragón de fuego, La princesa Bebé, La fuerza bruta, La escuela de

las princesas and Los cachorros. La noche del sábado deals with the lives of princes, and in it, Benavente portrays the amoral and meaningless lives of the members of this branch of society. We see the typical Benaventian heroine in the character of Imperia, who is the personification of ambition or voluntad and achieves power through her own will and energy. A complement to her is Leonardo who has no will power, only the longing for an ideal.

Sacrificios, Alma triunfante, Más fuerte que el amor and Los ojos de los muertos are all deep psychological studies. According to Walter Starkie, the first two:

Might be called the most brilliant examples in Spanish literature of that modern type of psychological drama to which the public of Europe has become accustomed.⁸⁹

This type of drama was an innovation in Spanish literary art because, whereas the old authors were not concerned whether methods used to reach the emotions of the public were good or bad, in Benavente's psychological plays he attempts to portray the working of the subconscious mind as realistically as possible. Starkie points out the importance in Spanish letters of the first of these psychological dramas:

To applaud Sacrificios meant an apostasy for the Spanish public; it meant that the era of red romantic drama, with its glorification of force and its conventional and exaggerated painting of passions, was past.⁹⁰

⁸⁹Walter Starkie, Jacinto Benavente (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 117.

⁹⁰Ibid., p. 110.

Thus, in renovating the Spanish drama, Benavente got away from the old romantic love story and portrayed life as it really was, whether in the working of the mind, as these psychological plays or in those dealing with everyday activities. In these four plays, Benavente also develops what seems to be his feminist theory that women are more capable of heroism than are men. He also expresses the Schopenhauerian concept of the will, for each heroine discovers that the will to live requires suffering. Doll, in Sacrificios, and Isabel, in Alma triunfante, both decide to annihilate this will by renouncing life because of love.

In his rural dramas, the most important of which are Señorita ama (1906) and La malquerida (1913), Benavente presents the Spanish folk of old Castile, portraying their customs and their relationship with one another. In the former, he gives us an interpretation of what is the heart of a woman, in the character of Dominica who is another of his heroines with a strong will. La malquerida shows the consequence of the incestuous love of a father, Esteban, for his stepdaughter, Acacia. Raimunda, the wife, is like Dominica and Isabel, another of Benavente's strong heroines, and these female "personajes" all serve to show how feministic a trend he followed.

Los intereses creados (1907) is considered Benavente's greatest dramatic achievement. In it he resorts to the grotesque masks of the Italian commedia dell'arte for his types. The puppets, through their actions, show the good and bad passions which inspire men's deeds. Walter Starkie believes that "no play shows more completely the delicate humour of Benavente, and thus it may be taken as his

greatest masterpiece."⁹¹ The central character is the pícaro, Crispín, astute and wise and is considered by Federico de Onís to be the great creation of Benavente.⁹² This is the one who puts into play all the passions of the other characters, as he works in the service of Leandro. The plot in brief is as follows: Leandro, having had to flee from his creditors, allows his servant, Crispín, to obtain money, food and lodging for them by pretending that he is a servant of a great lord. He eventually arranges the marriage of his master with Silvia, the daughter of the city's richest man. Benavente sums up his philosophy in the words of Silvia concerning the true meaning of the play, showing that although he is, in a sense, pessimistic, yet he always looks ahead to the ideal of Christianity. She states that in the play, as in life, we see puppets, like human beings, moved by strings. These strings are their interests, their passions, their deceits, their miseries. Some, who are pulled by their feet, wander away hopelessly; others, pulled by their hands, work hard, save their money and commit murders. But in the life of all of them, at times appears a fine thread of love which makes us realize that in life there is something divine, an eternal truth which goes on even after the play ends.

Many critics say that Benavente's drama is not a pure expression or portrait of life, but a critical philosophy. Indeed, in many of his plays he exhibits a tendency towards philosophical moralizing. In his symbolic play, Campo de Armuña, he seeks to restore love to

⁹¹Ibid., p. 151.

⁹²De Onís, Jacinto Benavente, p. 30.

its primitive truth. In El mal que nos hacen, he develops the idea that in order to accept the evil that is done to us we must understand that it is punishment for evil that we ourselves have committed. He tells us in La ley de los niños that the past life with its sins can never be erased. In this play, too, Benavente deals with the rights of a child. Spanish drama to this time had seldom considered this subject, but in the program of the Generation of 1898 when all the new social problems were dealt with, this area received some attention. This dramatist has also written some plays for children among which are El príncipe que todo lo aprendió en los libros and El nietecito.

In his numerous plays, then, Benavente introduced many new subjects and new themes into the Spanish drama. He emphasized psychological drama in his country and added the spirit of humour and feminism which had been lacking in the nineteenth century drama. Walter Starkie states:

The greatest service rendered by the dramatists of the 1898 generation, under the leadership of Benavente, was the gradual restoration of the spirit of Humour. Benavente reintroduced the comic spirit which was to correct pretentiousness, inflation, dullness, and the vestiges of rawness and grossness to be found among men.⁹³

Moreover, whereas most of the dramatists of Spain before Benavente portrayed reality as something rigid and the characters adopted a constant, unchanging manner; with this playwright life is presented as it is and the personages change as they do in real life.

In the foregoing I have tried to present some of the new

⁹³Starkie, Jacinto Benavente, p. 201.

subjects which Benavente introduced into the Spanish drama, and also to show how he renovated its material. Even more revolutionary were his innovations in style and technique. These will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III

STYLE AND TECHNIQUE

The members of the Generation of 1898, in general, reacted strongly against the grandiloquent rhetoric of the preceding era and the work of most of them is characterized by simplicity, sincerity and the vivid, expressive sentence. They made a sharp break with the past because they believed that the worst vices of Spanish writing -- careless improvisation and pompous phrases should be avoided. Their literary endeavour, which has been called "el movimiento de bien escribir,"¹ demonstrated two main tendencies: one towards extreme simplicity, evidenced chiefly in the work of Pío Baroja, and the others, towards enrichment of the language, as seen particularly in the poetic, highflown style of Valle-Inclán. Indeed, their chief aim was to dignify Spanish literary expression, to give the language greater expressive force. Juan Chabás quotes Azorín as saying: "A los escritores del '98 preocupados por el estilo, por la precisión en el estilo, nos interesaba en extremo la precisión en las palabras."² This sense of precision is expressed very strongly in Unamuno who considered the establishment of a new literary language to be the most important task of the new writers.

The Generation thought it necessary to establish this new

¹Northup, Introduction to Spanish Literature, p. 420.

²Chabás, Literatura española contemporánea, p. 16.

language because, with the Europeanization and modernization of Spain, it was essential to express the new ideas in a new form. Unamuno states it in this way: "Meter palabras nuevas, haya o no ótras que las reemplacen, es meter nuevos matices de ideas."³

This is not a problem peculiar to Spain or to that epoch, it has happened in other literatures. In France, for example, the movements of romanticism, parnasianism and symbolism all represented a search for new forms of expression; and in Spanish America, the influence of romanticism resulted in the renovation of the language of poetry and a subsequent transformation of the concept of that genre. Parallel with this desire for a new language, however, was also recognized the importance of expressing the new ideas within the old patterns of the language.

The Generation, therefore, applied itself to a diligent study of language, stressing its etimological significance as Unamuno did, and selecting some classical forms but using chiefly those of ordinary speech as did Azorín; while Valle-Inclán was concerned the enrichment of Spanish through refinement. The result was a renovation of the language so that it became more flexible and capable of expressing modern ideas. The Generation of 1898, indeed, produced a new renaissance in Spanish prose by giving it new life and a greater power of expression.

Concerning literary technique, the tendency was to move away from the objective and impersonal narrative which characterized the nineteenth century novelists, and instead to emphasize expression of

³Unamuno, El Idioma in Ensayos (Madrid: Aguilar, 1942), p. 310.

the author's intellectual or emotional responses to certain things in his environment. But although each writer, in his manner of writing, shows the general tendencies of the Movement, yet each demonstrates a personal style clearly differentiated by certain features from that of the others.

In this chapter, I shall deal with the style and literary technique of each writer. I shall attempt to show the diverse means by which they sought to renovate Spanish literary art, and by which they effected a revival of Letters in Spain during this period.

Unamuno

Perhaps the most asystematic and provocative of all his contemporaries, Unamuno has stated his indifference to the refinements of style. He was more interested in the content of his writing, in his ideas through which he wanted to arouse Spaniards from the inertia into which they had fallen, and to make them think for themselves. About his style he says:

No siento...superstición alguna hacia la lengua literaria, y buena prueba de ello es que cuando escribo, escribo por lo general, a vuela pluma, huyendo del estilismo, para así tener estilo...Yo he aspirado siempre a que de mis escrituras se diga: "¡Hablan como un hombre!", en vez que de mí se diga que hablo como un libro.⁴

Unamuno felt, then, that there should be less distinction between the language used in conversation and that used in writing because, I think, he believed that a writer's function was not to attract

⁴Unamuno, Ensayos, II, p. 630.

the reader by his style or technique but rather by what he had to say. He states:

Mi empeño ha sido, es y será que los que me leen piensen y mediten en las cosas fundamentales...Yo he buscado siempre agitar y a lo sumo sugerir más que instruir. Y lo más de mi labor ha sido siempre inquietar a mis lectores.⁵

Unamuno had his own idea of what constituted good writing. To him, it was not based on grammatical norms and rhetoric but "el escribir bien será escribir como se habla -- según las normas fonéticas."⁶ He believed in writing "conversacionalmente," "como hombre y no como escritor."⁷ He speaks out against modernism:

Detesto eso que llaman modernismo. No hay más que el eternismo...Incluso desde el punto de vista estético...no hay cosa más deplorable que eso que llaman el estilo de los estilistas.⁸

He detests it because he feels that this type of literature puts its readers to sleep whereas the true purpose of the writer or poet is to awaken the public. He praises Antonio Machado as a Spaniard preoccupied with the task of awakening the national consciousness. He sees in his work, as he does in that of Kierkegaard, the triumph of "el hombre ético" over "el hombre estético." For Unamuno, man is more important than any work of art. He repeatedly voices this idea throughout his works as he said in his En torno al casticismo: "La

⁵Unamuno, Ensayos II, pp. 300-301.

⁶Unamuno, Ensayos I, p. 208.

⁷Ibid., p. 455.

⁸Unamuno, Ensayos II, pp. LVII, 1156.

vida más oscura y humilde vale infinitamente más que la más grande obra de arte."⁹

Most of Unamuno's novels are stories of passion and tragedy based on conflict in which his characters fight against destiny. Unamuno seems to put himself and his own personal interior struggle into these novels. With him, as Cansinos-Assens states in his La nueva literatura, the Spanish novel ceased to be "un cuadro de costumbres" and is converted into an essay of practical ideology, into "una propedéutica de las ideas."¹⁰

Unamuno called many of his stories nivolas -- "relatos acezados de realidades íntimas" -- in which each character serves as a mouthpiece for the author's ideas. These tales are almost free of the usual mechanics of fiction such as physical description of characters, background or setting. Let's take Amor y pedagogía as an example. Here Avito Carrascal wishes by scientifically educating his son, to create a genius. He, however, through his attempts, causes his son to commit suicide. In this story, mechanics of style are not the important factor, but Unamuno seems to want us to think about the question: Does science have the answers to our doubts and needs for immortality and for God? In Niebla there appears one of Unamuno's dominant stylistic traits -- that of creating a character who fights against destiny and wants to live independently of his creator, the author. But central in the story are the questions which the author

⁹Unamuno, Ensayos, I, p. 22.

¹⁰Rafael Cansinos-Assens, La nueva literatura, I (Madrid: Editorial Páez, 1925), p. 51.

broaches on the subjects of a living idea and reality and the meaning of existence. Concerning ideas, Augusto says: "una idea es siempre inmortal... Los inmortales no vivimos, y yo no vivo, sobrevivo; ¡yo soy idea!"¹¹ Then he declares to the author after his death: "aunque dormido y soñando aún vivo,"¹² and of the meaning of existence, he reaches the conclusion that the real world is merely the dream we all dream, the dream we have in common.

I find particularly interesting the manner in which Unamuno dispenses with background or setting in this story. He has the protagonist simply appear on a city street as if he has "stepped out of the misty realm of ideas."¹³ In Abel Sánchez, which is concerned with the subject of fratricide, Unamuno invites the reader to contemplate the concepts of hate and envy as he presents the protagonist Joaquín Monegro in his anguish and struggles against these two passions.

The more existentialist aspects of this writer's work are represented by Tres novelas ejemplares, La tía Tula and San Manuel Bueno, mártir. In these, as in all his work, Unamuno expresses his own ideas through his characters. In San Manuel Bueno, mártir, we see how a priest struggles to find his faith, which was the exact experience of the writer. The theme here seems to be that the noble life of a good man can actually serve to create faith in others even

¹¹Unamuno, Niebla (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1928), pp. 290-291.

¹²Ibid., p. 302.

¹³Sherman Eoff, The Modern Spanish Novel (New York: New York University Press, 1961), p. 191.

though he himself may be incapable of belief. It also illustrates another of Unamuno's ideas, that it is the martyr who creates faith rather than vice-versa. He expresses, too, one of his thoughts on religion:

Todas las religiones son verdaderas en cuanto hacen vivir espiritualmente a los pueblos que las profesan, en cuanto les consuelan de haber tenido que nacer para morir, y para cada pueblo la religión más verdadera es la suya, la que le ha hecho.¹⁴

The most realistic of his novels is Paz en la guerra, which deals with the Carlist siege of Bilbao in 1874. Unamuno calls this book "una historia anovelada," and says that "apenas hay en ella detalle que haya inventado yo. Podría documentar sus más menudos episodios."¹⁵ It is regarded too, as being autobiographical. The author himself says: "Aquí está el eco...de los más hondos recuerdos de mi vida y de la vida del pueblo en que nací y me crié."¹⁶ This book, his first, is written in the tradition of the nineteenth century realistic novel and as such bears some of those characteristics. Thus, from the point of view of stylistic techniques, Paz en la guerra can be considered the most artistic of his novels. There is evidence of a concise style, and examples of regionalism and costumbrism -- he even uses some words that are typical of the region and he mentions some folklore. There are poetic phrases such as "horas muertas," "ojos

¹⁴Unamuno, San Manuel Bueno, mártir y tres historias más (Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1951), p. 43.

¹⁵Unamuno, Paz en la guerra (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1960), p. 9.

¹⁶Ibid.

bovinos," "risueño valle" and poetic images such as "saboreaba la miel de sus memorias." Very often he uses exclamations to excite the reader, and rhetorical questions to show doubt. Metaphors and similes are also employed: The crowd looks "como una serpiente de mil anillos" and the Carlist insurrection grew "poco a poco como vegetación que va ganando suelo."¹⁷ There is also balance and rhythm in the composition and flow of many of the sentences. Los paisajes are also important in forming a background for the narration.

Unamuno makes a distinction between the style of this book and that of those previously mentioned in this discussion. He says that in these others "no he querido distraer al lector del relato del desarrollo de acciones y pasiones humanas."¹⁸ For this reason, while there are stylistic details in Paz en la guerra, in the majority of the others, Unamuno has used what Andrenio calls the theory of "la novela desnuda,"¹⁹ that is, a novel free of stylistic details.

The lack of artistic impartiality is noticeable in Unamuno's literary technique for his stories are extremely personal. In San Manuel Bueno, mártir, we see a reflection of his own personal struggle in the religious torment of San Manuel, through whom he also expresses many of his own ideas such as that the noble life of a good man can create faith in others and that it is terrible to live without faith. In Miebla he enters the story as a character speaking to the protagonist. Chandler and Schwartz quotes Eugenio de Nora as

¹⁷Unamuno, Paz en la guerra, p. 96.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 9.

¹⁹Andrenio, Novelas y novelistas (Madrid: Calleja, 1918), p. 244.

stating that Unamuno lacks "la objetividad del gran creador."²⁰ But I think Unamuno wanted his stories to be personal; that is the best way he could express the ideas with which he wanted to provoke his readers to thought and subsequent action.

Unamuno's characters are often symbolic, as we see in Niebla where Augusto Pérez represents love. In facing their problems they seem to have no free will to act, and seem also to follow a course predetermined by faith or the author.

Throughout his works, Unamuno showed an interest in the power of words as did the entire Generation. Along with his other themes of Spain, man and religion, language was one of his principal preoccupations. As a philologist and writer, he felt a passion for the Spanish language; he saw it as both an instrument of the writer and as one way of arriving at the soul of the Spanish people. He devotes many of his works to the theme of language. In his five essays of En torno al casticismo and in La reforma del castellano and Sobre la lengua española he discusses this subject. The following are some of his views. Unamuno says that the word is a form of life and when life changes words themselves must change. That is why he brought about a renaissance in the Spanish language, he thought it needed to be renovated since it now had to express new ideas and thoughts of the time. He insisted upon a scientific study of the language and on its Europeanization so that it would have amplitude capable of expressing the new. He states in his Ensayos:

Revolucionar la lengua es la más honda revolución que puede hacerse; sin ella, la revolución

²⁰Chandler and Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature, p.234.

en las ideas no es más que aparente.²¹

In renovating the Spanish language, Unamuno was willing to accept certain barbarisms, some neologisms and other innovations along with concentration on the traditional language of his people. He, moreover, considered the use of foreignisms to be necessary in the modernization of Spanish:

El viejo castellano, acompasado y enfático... que oscilaba entre el gongorismo y el conceptismo, dos fases de la misma dolencia...necesitaba refundición. Necesita para europeizarse a la moderna más ligereza y más precisión... algo de desarticulación...de una sintaxis menos involutiva, de una notación más rápida.²²

The adoption of foreign words was another innovation by which Unamuno chose to enliven and enrich the Spanish language. He considered their use necessary to express new things, he explains this in his essay Sobre la lengua española. One way to renovate the old, tired language, he says, is to "inundarlo" with "exotismo europeo."²³ Besides, since not everyone could read the original works of such writers as Kierkegaard and Ibsen, he thought translations into Spanish of the most important European books were one way of bringing new ideas to the country. He thought, too, that Castillian Spanish should incorporate some American forms:

El futuro lenguaje hispánico no puede ni debe ser una futura expansión del castizo castellano, sino una integración de hablas diferenciadas sobre su base, retando su índole, o sin respetarla, si hace al caso.²⁴

Important to this writer, also, was a knowledge of the language spoken by the people. He based his theory of style, as Blanco Agui-

²¹Unamuno, Ensayos I, pp. 304-305.

²²Ibid., p. 304.

²³Ibid., p. 394.

²⁴Ibid.

naga tells us,²⁵ on the idea that "hay una bastante abierta disidencia entre nuestra lengua hablada y nuestra lengua escrita."²⁶ Therefore, he wanted to use, in his writings, the language of everyday speech, but thought it should be used with imagination.²⁷ Rafael Lapesa quotes Unamuno as replying, when accused of employing some words which did not appear in the Academy Dictionary: "¡Ya las pondrán! Y las pondrán cuando los escritores llevemos a la literatura las voces españolas--españolas, ¿eh?--que andan, y desde siglos, en boca del pueblo."²⁸ In his works he therefore, uses such words from the spoken language as hondón, redaños, sobrehaz, meollo, and Leónisms such as renejar, brijar, cogüelmo and perinchir.

Unamuno uses the metaphor and the paradox because "la metáfora, la parábola y la paradoja son los elementos didácticos de las enseñanzas orales del divino maestro."²⁹ Besides, he feels that the use of these figures of speech further encourages the reader to stop and think. He thought that "la paradoja suele ser el modo más eficaz de transmitir la verdad a los torpes y a los distraídos."³⁰

Unamuno, therefore, seemed very sincerely to view literary genres as media for expressing his personal ideas. He did not believe that

²⁵Carlos Blanco Aguinaga, Unamuno, teórico del lenguaje (México: El Colegio de México, 1954), p. 57.

²⁶Unamuno, Ensayos, I, p. 309.

²⁷Ibid., p. 725.

²⁸Rafael Lapesa, Historia de la lengua española (Madrid: Escelicer, 1959), p. 285.

²⁹Unamuno, Ensayos, I, p. 719.

³⁰Ibid., p. 836.

the writer should be bound by stylistic details but that he should write simply and conversationally. In this way he would impress by what he had to say, not by how he wrote. This writer also had many ideas on ways of renovating the Spanish language and, by practising these and his beliefs on style, he played an important part in the revival of Spanish literary art and language.

Pío Baroja

Baroja says that the novel "es un saco donde cabe todo."³¹ To him, the novel should cover all phases of human life. As he explains in his "Prólogo casi doctrinal sobre la novela," the prologue to La nave de los locos,³² which is usually taken as a text of reference for his novelistic art, the novel is a genre which is "open", polymorphic, undefinable. Typical of his generation, he felt that the novel should take the haphazard course of the average human life. Therefore, he wrote his novels without any apparently preconceived plan. There is no artificially arranged plot in his books; on the contrary, things happen to the characters more or less haphazardly as they do in real life. Juan Chabás describes Baroja's literary technique in the following way:

El hecho novelable fundamental, para él, es una vida. El hilo de una vida. Baroja toma ese hilo, lo enhebra de una vez en su aguja de marear vidas, y empieza a tejer, sin contar los puntos, la red de su historia. Por todas las mallas se le escapa el personaje, se le pierde, y él, ese gran tejedor y pesca-

³¹Pío Baroja, Memorias de un hombre de acción, V (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1928), p. 153.

³²Pío Baroja, "Prólogo casi doctrinal sobre la novela." Revista de Occidente (Madrid 1925), pp. 253-272.

dor de aventuras que es Baroja, se encuentra de pronto que en su red...han caído otros personajes con sus aventuras, sus hazañas, sus historias. ¿Qué hacer? Baroja, con sus hilos de las nuevas vidas, enhebra otras agujas, sigue tejiendo y, de cuando en cuando, da un tirón al hilo primero y teje un poco más de red. A esa red, Baroja la llama un saco.³³

Baroja's novels, then, contain many digressions and inconsistencies, but he has all life as his model which is, indeed, full of inconsistencies. Thus, Baroja transformed the Spanish novel. He developed a new technique, gave the novel new form by writing instinctively and thus introducing an element of surprise into the novel.

When he began writing, at the end of the nineteenth century, the Spanish novel as a genre was at a standstill. The only true creator was Galdós. The genre needed to be saved by new techniques and new forms of expression had to be found. This was what Pío Baroja set out to do in his novels. He saw it necessary to break with specific forms, he did not believe there was only one way of writing a novel, but as he has been quoted by Chabás as saying:

La novela hoy por hoy es un género multiforme, proteico, en formación, en fermentación. Lo abarca todo: el libro filosófico, el libro psicológico, la aventura, la utopía, lo épico, todo absolutamente.³⁴

This is an apt description of the type of novel which Baroja wrote, and in the wealth of novels which he wrote, he ran the whole gamut of human experiences. His first volumes deal with Basque regional life, three of these are La casa de Aizgorri, El mayorazgo de Labraz and Zalacaín, el aventurero. Many of his novels were written in

³³Chabás, Literatura española contemporánea, p. 74.

³⁴Ibid.

trilogies; he even wrote one tetralogy. His works fall under such headings as La lucha por la vida, El pasado, La raza, Las ciudades, El mar, Memorias de un hombre de acción, Agonías de nuestro tiempo, La selva oscura and La juventud perdida. So we can see that Baroja's work cover all of life, in all its various aspects. In his trilogy La lucha por la vida, where he portrays the low life of Madrid, he wrote in a somewhat picaresque form.

In discussing the composition of Baroja's novels, we shall see how he effected the rebirth of a genre which had become static. His novels are loaded with characters and action. He presents many social outcasts and often shows them as victims of a cruel society. But he did not wish to preach to the reader, he merely spoke harshly against a society which he sometimes felt was responsible for the individual's plight. Above all, he wanted to portray life realistically as he saw it. He thought that this could be done best through his recounting the actions of individuals. Because of this, he peopled his stories with vagabonds and adventurers, usually peripatetic heroes who have a panoramic view of life and its experiences. Andrenio, in his Novelas y novelistas, mentions this "nomadismo" which is characteristic of many of Baroja's personajes. He calls them "nómadas, aventureros errantes, que vagan de unos en otros lugares; seres inquietos que no hacen asiento en ciudades, ni profesiones ni estados ni siquiera en sus pasiones."³⁵ In his novels, everything seems to revolve around the human, for in this way he felt he could best portray life. He wrote: "Para mí, en la literatura no hay más que la unidad humana con su identificación, su nombre, apellido, temperamento y demás

³⁵Andrenio, Novelas y novelistas, pp. 274-275.

circunstancias."³⁶ In some of his books, he presents the man of action, the man with voluntad. In one philosophical passage,³⁷ he discusses the growth of the fictional hero in modern Europe and says that the man of action was a conscious choice with him. Intrigue and adventure occupy a central place in Baroja's novels. To him, being dynamic was the only answer to life's problems. He does not, like Unamuno, limit himself to the probing of the soul of a few characters, paying no attention to their surroundings. On the contrary, he surrounds his personages with a mob of others, and piles action on action to give a mass picture. He also creates an air of movement by the constant coming and going of his characters.

Besides his protagonists there are other characters whom Dwight Bolinger labels as "proxies."³⁸ These are shadowy characters whose physical traits are slighted or omitted and who appear to serve only as the author's mouthpiece. These include personages such as Iturrioz in La dama errante and La ciudad de la niebla, and Arcelu in El mundo es así.

In transforming the Spanish novel, Baroja shows a contempt for pattern as did Unamuno, Azorín and Benavente. For him, a novel is not an organized work of art, but a dispersion of action, time and adventure. He did not believe in a single formula for writing a novel, but he felt that there were certain elements which constituted a good novel. D. L. Shaw, in his article on Baroja's ideas on the art of the

³⁶Pío Baroja, Obras completas, V (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1946), p. 715.

³⁷Baroja, El nocturno del hermano Beltrán, p. 257.

³⁸Dwight L. Bolinger, "Heroes and Hamlets: The Protagonists of Baroja's Novels." Hispania, XXIV (February 1941), 91.

novel,³⁹ mentions these elements: Baroja believed that the real enemy of artistic creation is conscious technique which kills spontaneity. He opposes Ortega y Gasset chiefly on this point, for whereas Ortega y Gasset believed that the "realidad vivida" of life and the "realidad contemplada" of art are at opposite extremes, as he expresses in his La deshumanización del arte, Baroja insists that art is a spontaneous creation arising directly out of "lived reality," that is, observation of experience. D. L. Shaw points out that Baroja describes his novels as "de observación de la vida" and as "reportaje" and that he feels that a novel should consist, as far as possible, of "costas vistas" and its description should arise from direct impression.⁴⁰ Shaw further relates how Baroja, in an article in Insula (no. 82), and also in conversation with him, strongly criticized Galdós for having used, in one of his Episodios, a description of a town which he had not visited.

Baroja himself, true to his theories, was a spontaneous, instinctive writer. He proceeds with a jerky, rapid, direct style to produce unorganized stories. The essential elements in them seem to be action, intellectual reflection, and description. I already have discussed the first at length in Chapter II and further in this section. Through the intellectual reflection of his characters Baroja could express many of his own ideas. We see an example of this in the character of Iturrioz, in El árbol de la ciencia, who always engaged in reflections on life, serving as Baroja's mouthpiece and revealing the author's own pessimism and skepticism.

³⁹D. L. Shaw, "A Reply to Deshumanización--Baroja on the Art of the Novel." Hispanic Review, XXV (March 1957), 107.

⁴⁰Ibid.

Baroja displays his magnificent descriptive power in his portrayal of characters and paisajes. For him, a character, if he is to seem real, must live in a definite place and must have a known circumstance. Juan Chabás quotes him as saying, "No podría hablar de un personaje si no supiera dónde vive, y en qué ambiente se mueve."⁴¹ Here is an example of his descriptive technique:

Una ingente montaña, cubierta en su falda de retamares y jarales florecidos, se levantaba frente a ellos; brotaba sola, separada de otras muchas, desde el fondo de una cóncava hondonada, y al subir y ascender enhiesta, las plantas iban escaseando en su superficie y terminaba en su parte alta aquella mole de granito como muralla lisa o peñón tajado y desnudo, coronado en la cumbre por multitud de riscos, de afiladas aristas, de pedrujos rotos y de agujas delgadas como chapiteles de una catedral.

En lo hondo del valle, al pie de la montaña, veíanse por todas partes grandes piedras esparcidas y rotas, como si hubieran sido rajadas a martillazos; los titanes, constructores de aquel paredón ciclópeo, habían dejado abandonados en la tierra los bloques que no les sirvieron.⁴²

We see that in his descriptive technique Baroja pays much attention to presenting his observations realistically for the reader, with an obvious familiarity with what he describes.

Baroja often uses adjectives of exaggerated severity. The ones most commonly used are stupid, absurd, ridiculous and silly. In El árbol de la ciencia, the professor "era un pobre hombre presuntuoso ridículo,"⁴³ Spain lived "en un ambiente de optimismo absurdo."⁴⁴ Baroja also repeatedly expressed his belief that life itself was an absurdity. We can see, perhaps, in him a forerunner of French

⁴¹Chabás, Literatura española contemporánea, p. 76.

⁴²Pío Baroja, Camino de perfección (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1913), p. 83.

⁴³Pío Baroja, El árbol de la ciencia (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1932), p. 10.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 275.

existentialism, that of Sartre and Camus, who used the words absurd, hostile, useless, perhaps more often than any others in their references to life. In his severe descriptions, Baroja often adds touches of naturalism to his writing. For example, in a discussion about the right to have children, he describes a servant in this way:

La mujer, sin dientes, con el vientre constantemente abultado, tenía una indiferencia de animal para los embarazos, los partos y las muertes de los niños.⁴⁵

Again, in Mala hierba, he describes a room thus:

El cuarto era nauseabundo, atestado de anuncios rotos, grandes y pequeños, pegados a la pared; en un rincón había una cama estrecha y sin hacer; tres sillas destripadas, con la crín al descubierto, y en medio un brasero cubierto con una alambrera, encima de la cual se secaban dos calcetines sucios.⁴⁶

Most striking in his style is the extreme simplicity of his prose. He represented one tendency of the Generation of 1893 in style--the tendency towards clear, simple, precise expression. We cannot help seeing a constant sincerity in his work. He says:

Supongo, más o menos piadosamente, que algunos de mis libros, si no tienen valor de obras de arte, tienen valor de documentos porque están escritos...sin ninguna tendencia al artificio.⁴⁷

He practised what he called "la estética del impropio," that is, saying in complete independence what he thinks of anything.

Many critics have claimed that Baroja had no style, but, as Chandler and Schwartz say, "Baroja's very lack of style is his style."⁴⁸

⁴⁵Ibid, p. 275.

⁴⁶Pío Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 39.

⁴⁷Pío Baroja, Memorias de un hombre de acción, pp. 36-37.

⁴⁸Richard E. Chandler and Kessel Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature, p. 243.

Most important to this author was to present life as he observed it and he wanted his style to suit his realistic description. He felt that he could best describe life through the individual and that his novel should follow the course of the life of the average person. Because of this, his stories are unorganized, with digressions and inconsistencies. But that is how life is, and that was what Baroja set out to portray, and in so doing, he developed a new technique in novel writing and helped to produce the rebirth of a genre which had become static.

Azorín

Azorín, who had a highly personal and evocative manner of writing, played a very important rôle in helping to produce a new era in Spanish letters for he wrote in a new style, and added an intimate, personal element to Spanish prose. Juan Chabás states:

Uno de los escritores que han hecho de la voluntad de renovar el estilo una verdadera conciencia es seguramente Azorín. Renovar el estilo es hallar un diferente y personalísimo ritmo a la prosa; es encontrar—escorzándolas para recrearlas—una mayor libertad para las palabras; es, frente a la ampulosidad o a la vulgaridad, conseguir una claridad sencilla y escueta. He aquí todo lo que ha perseguido y logrado Azorín...⁴⁹

Unlike the long, involved sentences of the traditional period of Spanish prose, Azorín uses short sentences, separated by the semi-colon or period. He rarely uses the particle que and is the sworn enemy of similes and metaphors, but he overworks the rhetorical question, uses much repetition and also uses mostly the present tense. He also seems fond of subject pronouns. Here is a typical passage:

⁴⁹Chabás, Literatura española contemporánea, p. 95.

Cuando la dueña de la casa me ha dicho: "Deje usted el sombrero," yo he sentido una impresión tremenda. ¿Dónde lo dejo? ¿Cómo lo dejo? Yo estoy sentado en una butaca, violentamente, en el borde; tengo el bastón entre las piernas, y sobre las rodillas el sombrero. ¿Cómo lo dejo? ¿Dónde? En las paredes de la sala veo cuadros con flores que ha pintado la hija de la casa; en el techo están figuradas unas nubes azules, y entre ellas revoltean cuatro o seis golondrinas.⁵⁰

We see in this selection the use of the semi-colon or period to separate short sentences, the rhetorical questions, repetition and, above all, the extreme simplicity and clarity of style. Azorín was deeply interested in the perfection of the Spanish language and considered clarity of style as a mark of elegance. Cansinos-Assens has described his writing "como un tirso desnudo de toda hojarasca" and says that "tiene toda la gracia en la sutileza y en la claridad. Nada de pompa innecesaria, nada de falso."⁵¹ It was Azorín's intention to create a clear, plain language in which he would replace the vague sonorous sentences of the nineteenth century writers with greater exactness.

Concerning the use of comparisons, Azorín says:

...la comparación es el más grave de ellos (de los subterfugios y tranquilos). Comparar es evadir la dificultad...es algo primitivo, infantil..., una superchería que no debe emplear ningún artista...Se trata de producir una sensación desconocida, apelando a otra conocida..., que es lo mismo que si yo, no pudiendo contar una cosa, llamase al vecino para que la contase por mí.⁵²

José María Martínez Cachero⁵³ points out that Azorín, in his desire

⁵⁰Azorín, Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo, p. 151.

⁵¹Cansinos-Assens, La nueva literatura, I, p. 88.

⁵²Azorín, Obras completas, I (Madrid: Aguilar, 1962), p. 861.

⁵³José María Martínez Cachero, Las novelas de Azorín (Madrid: Insula, 1960), p. 36.

to produce a faithful copy of reality in his novels, was indignant at the frequent use of such an evasive procedure as comparison. Similarly, Azorín dislikes the use of literary images. In chapter sixteen of Salvadora de Olbena, the character Paco Ardales, a poet, states:

El decir que las imágenes son lo esencial en el arte de escribir, me parece absurdo; no es verdaderamente escritor quien no sabe escribir secamente, escuetamente, sin una sola imagen. La imagen es lo que envejece el arte, la imagen es lo vulgar. Escribir con imágenes es hacer trampa en el juego.⁵⁴

Azorín, therefore, very rarely uses images and comparisons in his writing.

The novelistic technique of Azorín seems an antithesis to that of Baroja. For, whereas in the latter's works there is a hasty succession of events, Azorín's stories are characterized by a contemplative slowness, and hardly anything happens. As is not the case in Baroja, there is little action and if there is any intrigue, it is very vague. Azorín helped to produce a new renaissance in Spanish letters because he brought to it the spirit of observation, the psychological purpose, and the calm and measure which are characteristic of other literatures. He had read Descartes' Discours de la méthode, works of Racine, Stendhal and Balzac, and had studied Taine and other writers and critics. His works reflect many of the ideas that he had gleaned from these and other foreign writers.

Azorín exhibits a great fondness for the simple, little things of life. Concerning this fondness, he refers to Racine's words in the

⁵⁴Azorín, Obras completas, VII, p. 609.

preface of Bérénice—"Toute l'invention consiste à faire quelque chose de rien," saying:

De entonces acá (años en París de 1936 a 1939)
se ha ido simplificando la materia novelística:
sólo me complace lo sencillo, hacer algo de nada:
la fórmula raciniana es para mí el culmen del arte.⁵⁵

Martínez Cachero points out that the nada of Racine and Azorín does not refer to nothing, but rather to the small concrete facts of life.

Theirs is an art of the miniature. Azorín believed that it was in the minutiae of daily life which he observed in the small villages and cities that one could best discover the essence of Spain. In this vein, he writes of the three most common phrases he used to hear as a child:

Si yo tuviera que hacer el resumen de mis sensaciones de niño en estos pueblos opacos y sordidos...Escribiría sencillamente los siguientes corolarios:
"¡Es ya tarde!"
"¡Qué le vamos a hacer!"
"¡Ahora se tenía que morir!"
...ellas resumen brevemente la psicología de la raza española...⁵⁶

In creating atmosphere, Azorín describes everything in a chosen scene --such as on a street or in a room, because he thinks these minute details are suggestive of the whole scene. His novels are really impressionistic interpretations of what Yuste in La voluntad said was the measure of an artist--"su sentimiento de la naturaleza del paisaje." His technique is impressionistic; he seeks to produce a sensation of things Spanish and at the same time to give the reader the intimate, spiritual reality of these things. His descriptions, there-

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 872.

⁵⁶Azorín, Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo, p. 155.

fore, usually have lyric and emotional overtones.

Rather than narrative, too, his novels are more essayistic in form. Why is this so? Perhaps because of Azorín's ideas on the use of dialogue and its falsity in portraying reality. As he does with comparisons and images, Azorín uses dialogue very sparingly because he feels that this form in novels is usually artificial and excessively literary and that this is not so in life. He says:

...en la vida no se habla así, se habla con incoherencias, con pausas, con párrafos breves, incorrectos, naturales...⁵⁷

Although some of Azorín's works -- La voluntad, Antonio Azorín, Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo, Don Juan and Doña Inés are called novels, some critics doubt whether they are properly so classified chiefly because of their autobiographical, fragmentary, lyrical nature. Moreover, there is little story in most of them and no plot, since Azorín's chief interest lies in giving his reflections on himself and on Spanish life. César Barja describes Azorín's art in this way:

Lo propio del arte de Azorín es el carácter fragmentario y estático del pequeño cuadro, de la pequeña escena, de la sensación o emoción momentánea --tiene mucho de sala o galería de museo la obra de Azorín--; de ninguna manera el complejo o interno dinamismo de un verdadero organismo de novela o de drama.⁵⁸

Except in the relating of his past experiences, which are often treated with a touch of fantasy, Azorín usually sticks to the reporting of his observations of reality. Julio Casares feels that this is because this writer lacks a creative imagination. He says:

⁵⁷Azorín, Obras completas, I, p. 863.

⁵⁸César Barja, Libros y autores contemporáneos, p. 291.

Yo me explico este afán de Azorín de aferrarse a la realidad, por su falta de fantasía. Tengo el convencimiento de que, privado de imaginación creadora, es incapaz de inventar personajes, escenas o tramas novelescas... En cuanto a escenas imaginarias no sólo no las busca, sino que las rehuye cuidadosamente, para no verse en el trance de escribir lo que no ha visto con los ojos de la cara.⁵⁹

Cansinos-Assens, Romero Mendoza and Antonio Zunzunegui all share the same view concerning Azorín's apparent lack of imagination. I do not believe that Azorín lacked the ability to be creative; I feel that this writer thought fantasy should not be the most important element in a novel which he believed should be, as much as possible, a reflection of reality. Like Baroja, he felt that a faithful portrayal of reality could be achieved in only one way -- by observation. He, therefore, wrote, in his novels and essays, his observations of Spanish life, as shown by the daily actions of the people and of his own life. I do not think he was interested in imaginary happenings.

The protagonist of Azorín's novels is the writer himself, for in that way he is best able to give his own impressions, recollections and thoughts. This is so, not only in his obviously autobiographical novels. Also in his other works he is easily recognizable, such as in the characters of don Pablo of Doña Inés and Félix Vargas of El caballero inactual. The appearance of the same personage in Azorín's novels adds a certain monotony to his works. Some critics such as the Spanish-Italian Franco Meregalli, attribute this to Azorín's

⁵⁹Julio Casares, Crítica profana (Madrid: Imprenta Colonial, 1916), p. 124.

incapacity to create character. But Ortega y Gasset gives what seems to me to be a better explanation:

Ningún personaje de Azorín, ninguna acción, ningún objeto tienen valor por sí mismos. Sólo cobran interés cuando percibimos que cada uno de ellos es sólo el cabo de una serie ilimitada compuesta de elementos idénticos. No ser lo que son, sino meramente ser igual a otros cien, y a otros mil, y a otros sin número, les presta poder sugestivo. El propio origen tiene la suave gracia de las alamedas; no nos importa cada árbol, sino el que, siendo muchos, parezcan uno mismo repitiéndose en serie.⁶⁰

In his essays, Azorín has the same concern as in his novels -- the humble, daily happenings of life. Like his narrative work, nothing much happenings in these essays, life merely goes on from day to day in the same way. He has also written essays on literary criticism. He is well-known, also, for his short stories, which taken separately, cover the whole range of his art. He regards as his best collection of cuentos those published under the title Blanco en Azul (1929).

I find it interesting that both Baroja and Azorín who sought to copy reality, and yet who are so similar in their simple style of writing, are so different in their technique. For, whereas Baroja uses much action, intrigue and peripeteia, Azorín does not; on the contrary his narrative flows on smoothly, with rarely any action, as he describes the minutiae in daily life. In my opinion, this does not mean that either of them did not portray their observations, rather I feel it was a difference in the part of reality that each chose to emphasize in his writing. Azorín himself refers to the choice

⁶⁰Ortega y Gasset, Obras completas, II (Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1953), p. 177.

a writer has to make:

Cuando tengamos nuestro acerbo de pormenores exactos--fruto de nuestra observación--escribiremos la novela. ¡Ah, un momento! Nos falta saber cuáles pormenores son los significativos, los vitales y cuáles no. Necesitamos conservar unos y desechar ótros. Sin ese cernido haríamos, desde luego, una novela exacta, auténtica, pero no viva, palpitante; no una obra de arte.⁶¹

Azorín, therefore, must have observed the reality around him and decided that, for him, the little things of daily life were most significant.

True to the spirit of the Generation, he also placed great emphasis on words and the power of words. In his works he used those words which he felt best suited the moment, to express the right emotion, and which would produce the maximum evocation of the senses. This writer, then, was an enemy of rhetoric and vagueness in writing. He believed in writing simply and impressionistically. It is obvious that by his own personal style and technique he contributed greatly to infusing new life into Spanish letters.

Valle-Inclán

Ramón María del Valle-Inclán was an extraordinary prose stylist. His work represents one of the two main tendencies in the style of the Generation -- that towards the enrichment of the language by a consciously poetic and high-flown style influenced by the Modernist and Symbolist movements. His efforts to improve Spanish prose certainly helped to revive it. Indeed, it is said that he has done

⁶¹ Azorín, "La Novela," ABC (19-III-1952).

for modern Spanish prose what Rubén Darío did for verse. We shall see how, by introducing a different style in writing, Valle-Inclán helped to effect a rebirth in Spanish letters.

Valle-Inclán placed great emphasis on style. Whereas Unamuno, Baroja and Azorín cultivated style as a "handmaid" of their thoughts,⁶² with Valle-Inclán, it rules supreme. He was not concerned with ideological problems, but insisted that style was the important thing in literature. He, therefore, concentrates on the use of musical words, symbols, cadence, harmony and rhythm while an element of mystery surrounds all that he writes. In his Jardín umbrío we see a typical passage:

Del fondo oscuro del jardín, donde los grillos daban serenata, llegaban murmullos y aromas. El vienteccillo gentil que los traía estremecía los arbustos, sin despertar los pájaros que dormían en ellos. A veces, el follaje se abría sustruyendo y penetraba el blanco rayo de la luna, que se quebraba en algún asiento de piedra, oculto hasta entonces en sombra clandestina. El jardín cargado de aromas, y aquellas notas de la noche, impregnadas de voluptuosidad y de pereza, y aquel rayo de luna, a aquella soledad, y aquel misterio, traían como una evocación romántica de citas de amor, en siglos de trovadores.⁶³

In his effort to create an ornate style, he wrote such sentences as "El viejo libertino la miraba intensamente cual si sólo buscara el turbarla más," and "dijérase que infiltraban el amor como un veneno."⁶⁴

Critics define Valle-Inclán as a "pure artist," a "decadent," a degenerate and a sensualist. Northup says "Valle-Inclán is a degenerate in his eroticism and Sadic cruelty."⁶⁵ Rubén Darío, however, states

⁶²Northup, Introduction to Spanish Literature, p. 435.

⁶³Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Jardín umbrío (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1960), p. 116.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 117.

⁶⁵Northup, An Introduction to Spanish Literature, p. 117.

his opinion on this writer thus:

A Valle-Inclán le llaman decadente porque
escribe en una prosa trabajada y pulida de
amirable mérito formal.⁶⁶

While most of the members of the Generation of 1898 were interested in ideas, Valle-Inclán was more concerned with artistry, with 'Art for Art's sake'. He made a deliberate attempt to create literary art in order to produce a new renaissance in this area of Spanish letters. He, moreover, felt that a writer's mission was to play upon feelings and increase and refine sensations. Therefore, he set about evoking moods and emotions and catering to all the senses, by using chosen colours, sounds, scents and shapes for artistic purposes. Chandler and Schwartz quote Pérez de Ayala as saying of Valle-Inclán's work that it is plastic, coloured and static, "cual si fuera obra pictórica más que literaria."⁶⁷ This writer polished and repolished his prose and constantly experimented with style until he arrived at what he considered perfect form. He wrote in a very lyric style, more like poetry than prose. Words fascinated him and he often chose them for their suggestive or musical power rather than for their sense, because music and colour concern him as much as meaning. Northup, in this regard, states that Valle-Inclán's vocabulary is choice, every sentence clear and rhythmic. He avoids the hackneyed and tries always to "ayuntar dos palabras por primera vez."⁶⁸

The style of Valle-Inclán passed through various phases.

⁶⁶Rubén Darío, España contemporánea, p. 313.

⁶⁷Chandler and Schwartz, A New History of Spanish Literature, p. 236.

⁶⁸Northup, p. 436.

Chandler and Schwartz have divided it into three periods.⁶⁹ In his first works he appears sensual and erotic and his style seems artificial and archaic. Femeninas (1894) is an example of this phase. Here he discusses woman as the female Don Juan and his feminine characters are all of easy virtue, cruel and inconstant. A second period is seen in his Comedias bárbaras and in his trilogy on the Carlist War which both deal with the tragic story of don Juan Manuel de Montenegro and his family. Here Valle-Inclán discusses regional and popular types. In his last phase, he concentrates on the popular and historical and writes in a mocking, disdainful manner.

Valle-Inclán's most famous works are his Sonatas, a series of four books, named after the seasons of the year, which describe four chapters in the emotional life of a Galician nobleman, the Marqués of Bradomín. This writer shows himself to be typical of the Generation of 1898 in his reaction against the old literary traditions of Spain and in these books he created a new style. Arthur L. Owen describes it in this way:

Se ha creado un estilo hasta cierto punto nuevo, es una prosa cadenciosa, y rítmica, discretamente arcaica, adornada de imágenes, pulida con el más minucioso cuidado.⁷⁰

The chief interest of the Sonatas lies in the musicality of their phrases and their lyricism rather than in their plot. The best of these is, perhaps, the Sonata de otoño, the style of which extremely evokes the senses. The impressions sought here are those of sadness, through his description of the autumnal surrounding:

⁶⁹Chandler and Schwartz, p. 235.

⁷⁰Arthur L. Owen, "Sobre el arte de don Ramón del Valle-Inclán." Hispania, VI (March 1923), 69.

Cuando salimos al campo empezaba a rayar el alba. Vi en lontananza unas lomas yermas y tristes, veladas por la niebla. Traspuestas aquéllas, vi otras, y después otras. El sudario ceniciento de la llovizna las envolvía: no acababan nunca.⁷¹

He does it, too, through his portrayal of tragic atmosphere in this manner:

Pensé huir, y cauteloso abrí una ventana. Miré en la oscuridad con el cabello erizado, mientras en el fondo de la alcoba flameaban los cortinajes de mi lecho y oscilaba la llama de las bujías en el candelabro de plata. Los perros seguían aullando muy distantes y el viento quejaba en el laberinto como un alma en pena y las nubes pasaban sobre la luna y las estrellas se encendían y se apagaban como nuestras vidas.⁷²

Valle-Inclán achieves considerable effect by his manner of using adjectives. Often he uses two adjectives joined by "y" such as "las ramas verdes y foscas de un abeto rozaban los cristales llorosos y tristes."⁷³ His style is also rich in images, metaphors, similes and the construction introduced by "como si." His writing sometimes appears somewhat archaic when he employs little used words such as quedeja, monacal, linajudo, señorial.

Valle-Inclán, moreover, varies his style to suit the mood of what he narrates. For example, whereas his Sonatas, which are concerned with love, are sensuously emotive and erotic, his Carlist trilogy, having to do with affairs related to history, is more serious.

⁷¹Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Sonata de otoño (Madrid: Imprenta helénica, 1930), p. 16.

⁷²Ibid., p. 210.

⁷³Ibid., p. 1226.

In these books he uses longer and less rhythmic sentences, so that his prose here is more sober in keeping with the historical content. He also wrote realistic prose, such as that of his La media noche which deals with impressions of the World War. Here is his description of a French attack on a German trench:

Asoman apenas los puntos de los cascos, y los franceses los aplastan a golpes de granada. Al abrigo de la trinchera, desmoronada y llena de muertos, los alemanes hacen fuego de repetición...Las granadas ponen fuego en las yacijas de paja y en los capotes de los muertos, y el humo y el olor de la carne chamuscada sirve de fondo al clamor de los heridos. Un soldado alemán, envuelto en llamas, corre a través del campo dando gritos.⁷⁴

We can see here the extreme realism of some of the prose written by Valle-Inclán. He gives a somewhat photographic description of this brutal attack choosing just the right style, one bordering on naturalism, to suit the mood of what he is describing.

Valle-Inclán does not seem to have a great inventive power. He uses his material many times. For example, Historias de amor contains the same stories as Cofre de sándalo, and Femeninas, Jardín umbrío and Jardín novelesco are the same story; Flor de Santidad is merely an amplification of his Adega, and El Marqués de Bradonín is a collection of fragments of the Sonatas. Often, too, his material is not original, as we see in La sonata de invierno where he has copied various pages from the Memorias of Casanova. This criticism of a seeming lack of inventive power and of originality is one that can be made of some other members of the Generation. But it must be remembered that content was not the chief concern of some of them (as it was with

⁷⁴Ramón del Valle-Inclán, La media noche (Madrid, 1917), pp.93-94.

Unamuno and Baroja), rather it was form, how they wrote, for they wanted to enrich the mold of Spanish writing. So they sought to renovate it, removing what they considered superfluous and unnecessary and adding new elements, thereby effecting a revival in Spanish literary art.

Valle-Inclán is also considered an exponent of the regional Galician novel. He was able to capture the feeling of this region with its archaic traditions, and its folklore full of mystery, superstition and magic. Patt and Nozick quote Azorín as saying, concerning the greatest contribution of this writer:

(su contribución) consiste en haber traído al arte esta sensación de la Galicia triste y trágica, este algo que vive y no se ve, esta aprensión por la muerte...este misterio de los palacios centenarios y de las abruptas soledades.⁷⁵

Most famous of his characters is the Marquis of Bradomín, the protagonist of the Sonatas, who seems in a sense to be a reincarnation of Don Juan Tenorio. In the personage of Don Juan Manuel Montenegro, a relative of the Marquis of Bradomín, Valle-Inclán proposed to picture one of the decadent, old Galician hidalgos. Through this character, he is able to evoke the spirit of the past, in such works as Comedias bárbaras and Los cruzados.

Valle-Inclán conceived a new genre in his Esperpentos. He first gave this name to Luces de Bohemia in which one of the characters, Max Estrella, says "La tragedia nuestra no es tragedia...(es) el esperpento." These works, to Valle-Inclán, represented the

⁷⁵Beatrice P. Patt and Martin Nozick, eds., The Generation of 1898 and After, p. 66.

grotesque and ridiculous aspects of modern life and, through them, he lashed out at the world and its absurdity, in a sarcastic vein. These, others of which are La hija del capitán and Los cuernos de don Friole-ra, are half puppet show and half tragedy.

The artistic ability of Valle-Inclán is, therefore, multifaceted. Not only did he endeavour to enrich the Spanish language by seeking out all the possibilities of verbal expression but he even invented a new genre, the esperpento, by which he could attack the contemporary scene. Through these various means he was able to play a great rôle in producing a new literary renaissance in Spain during this time.

Maeztu

Maeztu was a brilliant journalist who wrote mostly articles and essays for reviews. He was not a great thinker nor did he seem to have much artistic sensibility, for, as Chandler and Schwartz tell us, "in most of his works on literature, he studies his subject as a sociologists and not as an artist."⁷⁶ There is, therefore, little to be said about his style or his literary technique. He writes with emotion and sincerity and with the rapid sentence of the newspaperman. His work is never a model of literary beauty. Contrary to the perfection of style reached by many of the members of the Generation of 1898, his writing is wordy and oratorical.

Antonio Machado

Antonio Machado, in the spirit of his Generation, undertook to

⁷⁶Chandler and Schwartz, p. 569.

rejuvenate the form of Spanish poetry. Influenced by the French and Spanish-American poets, he endeavoured to add originality of expression, departing from the old, traditional forms. Machado was, however, both a traditionalist and a man of his time. He was the former in spirit, for he had a certain resignation towards life, which he considered a dream. His own contribution to Spanish poetry was through the great emphasis which he placed on order and form. He is also considered to be one of the first to introduce the abundant use of symbols in modern Spanish poetry.⁷⁷ According to Northup, "the fact that he uses form to clothe a serious message is what has given Antonio Machado his reputation as the greatest living Spanish poet."⁷⁸

Machado avoided rhetorical eloquence at all cost. One of his dominant characteristics which made him a member of the Generation of 1898 was his insistence on simplicity and clarity. Poetry for him was an expression of feeling as a result of contact with nature, and he believed that this should be expressed clearly. He aspired always to eliminate, through the natural flow of his syntax, the possibility of any obscurity in his verse. He says, "Silenciar los nombres directos de las cosas, cuando las cosas tienen nombres directos, ¡qué estupidez!"⁷⁹ Often his poetry seems surrounded by an air of mystery and a feeling of solitude and melancholy, particularly in those works in which he describes the countryside of Castile which

⁷⁷Carlos Bousoño, La poesía de Vicente Aleixandre, (Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1950), p. 33.

⁷⁸Northup, p. 423.

⁷⁹Antonio Machado, "Notas sobre la poesía." Cuadernos hispanoamericanos, VII (January 1951), 20.

he felt had those characteristics.

He did not follow the path of Modernism. Chandler and Schwartz quote him as stating: "Admiraba a Rubén, pero no quise seguirle."⁸⁰ His is a different technique. Concerning this variance, Machado wrote, according to Zubiría:⁸¹

Yo pretendí seguir camino bien distinto.
Pensaba yo que el elemento poético no era
la palabra por su valor fónico, ni el color
ni la línea, ni un complejo de sensaciones,
sino una honda palpitación del espíritu; lo
que pone el alma, si es que algo pone, o lo
que dice, si es que algo dice, con voz propia,
en respuesta animada al contacto del mundo.

Above all, he feels that his poetry is an "íntimo monólogo," and concerning his style, he said in Retrato:

¿Soy clásico o romántico? No sé. Dejar quisiera
mi verso, como deja el capitán su espada,
famosa por la mano viril que la blandiera,
no por el docto oficio del forjador preciada.⁸²

This shows, too, that between content and form, Machado places more importance on the former.

He uses imagery and metaphors in his poems, but not indiscriminately because as he says:

En la lírica, imágenes y metáforas son...
de buena ley cuando se emplean para suplir
la falta de nombres propios y de conceptos
únicos que requiere la expresión de lo in-
tuitivo, nunca para revestir lo genérico y
convencional.⁸³

Machado felt that the poet should prefer those images which express

⁸⁰Chandler and Schwartz, p. 365.

⁸¹Ramón de Zubiría, La poesía de Antonio Machado, p. 147.

⁸²Antonio Machado, Obras completas de Manuel y Antonio Machado (Madrid: Editorial Plenitud, 1957), p. 733.

⁸³Antonio Machado, "Notas sobre la poesía," p. 21.

intuitions since those speak more directly to our feelings. He often uses several adjectives to describe a noun. He writes such phrases as "tardes tristes o soñolientas, destartaladas o melancólicas, rustias o desabridas, llenas de hastío."⁸⁴

Instead of using the trite metaphors employed by the Baroque poets to whom, for example, rivers and brooks were always "sierpes de cristal," Machado uses his own, original figures of speech. He describes the Duero as a "curva de ballesta en torno a Soria," and the Guadalquivir as "un alfanje roto y disperso, reluce y espejea." These three metaphors, as were many of those which he used, are not transferable since each is characteristic of the particular object which it describes. Not only did he use metaphors sparingly, but he often repeated them, sometimes introducing slight variations. Three times he compares the vegetation of trees to a green cloud of smoke:

las hojas de sus copas
son humo verde que a lo lejos sueña. (XXXVI, 70)
.....

y el verde nuevo brotaba
como una verde humareda... (LXXXV, 118)
.....

parecen humear las yertas ramas
como un glauco vapor... (CXIII, 157)

This repetition of metaphors does not, however, seem to be due to a lack of imagination since, when he wished, he could use metaphors of various kinds. But he used these figures of speech only in situations which, in his opinion, could not be better expressed by direct language.

⁸⁴Zubiría, La poesía de Antonio Machado, p. 160.

I have already discussed, in Chapter II, Machado's preoccupation with time. Here we shall see how he saw best to express this in his poetry. The frequent use of the verb in various tenses was the method he chose. In the following he uses six forms of the verb:

Desde el umbral de un sueño me llamaron...
 Era la buena voz, la voz querida.
 --Dime: vendráis conmigo a ver mi alma?...
 Llegó a mi corazón una caricia.
 --Contigo siempre...Y avancé en mi sueño
 por una larga, escueta galería,
 sintiendo el roce de la veste pura
 y el palpitir suave de la mano amiga. (LXIV, 104)

He employs abundantly the use of rhymes in "ía" and "aba" showing his preference for the imperfect tense. He also uses adverbs to give the idea of time. By their use he could situate things in time or show the transformation undergone by things during the passage of time. The adverb "ya" is, perhaps, the most frequently used. It served to express the realization of a happening:

Ya hay un español que quiere
 vivir y a vivir empieza,
 entre una España que muere
 y otra España que bosteza. (CXXXVI, 243)

.....
 Ya en los campos de Jaén
 amanece. Corre el tren... (CXXVII, 205)

Of all his innovations in his effort to give new life to Spanish poetry, perhaps the most important is his development of the "romance." This ballad form seemed to Machado to be the supreme expression of Castillian poetry. He used assonance and tried to make his "romances" flexible by introducing in them the frequent use of "enjambements" and short-lined verses, or long pauses indicated typographically by an indented line or a break in the

sentence. Pedro Salinas believes that these and his other reforms are what have made the ballad the fine form which it now is today, capable of being adapted to the various genres of the verse, the epic or the drama.⁸⁵

It is clear, then, that Antonio Machado's fresh approach to poetic concepts was like breathing new life into Spanish poetry. He brought it out of its traditional mold, by making his poetry simple and clear, by developing the uses of some figures of speech and of verb forms, and by introducing new possibilities for the old ballad form. He truly helped to bring about a modernization of Castilian verse.

Jacinto Benavente

The theatre of Benavente is, in general, a reaction against the melodramatic plays of the romantic school. He broke with this type of drama, which had been revived in the works of Echegaray, and introduced new, modern methods in the style of plays and in stage technique. He introduced a new, fresh, cosmopolitan type of drama into Spain. Walter Starkie points out that with Benavente we find an inversion of the dramatic ideals which had been accepted up to this time.⁸⁶ In stage technique, he reversed the procedure followed by former playwrights, for instead of laying stress on actual words advanced by the characters, he concentrated on the subtle inferences drawn from the dialogue. He also uses few stage directions and his plays are in prose. He, moreover, exhibits an elegance of style, ingeniousness in ideas, cynicism, subtle irony, skepticism and

⁸⁵Pedro Salinas, "El romanticismo y el siglo XX." Estudios hispánicos, Wellesley College (Wellesley, 1952), p. 512-514.

⁸⁶Walter Starkie, Jacinto Benavente (London: Oxford University Press, 1924), p. 180.

tenderness.

Benavente wrote all kinds of plays, realistic as well as plays of fantasy. Moreover, he was well equipped to produce a new renaissance in Spanish drama for he was a devoted dramatist who loved his art; he was well educated, well travelled and held firm beliefs as to what a playwright should be. He also had a profound knowledge of both the older and newer dramas of Europe. In one of his critical works, Benavente gives his idea of the theatre. I present it here in Starkie's translation:⁸⁷

The stage must be loved for itself, perhaps with greater devotion than any other form of art. The true playwright must have passed his life in the theatre, he must have seen all the plays and all the actors within his reach, and he must have acted himself. To the playwright the world must be a vast stage; men and women must be tragic heroes and heroines, or comedians in one immense play. The most beautiful sights of nature must appeal to his eye as stage scenery. Then, too, he must have the knack of finding his plays.

Benavente fully conformed to these conditions. Throughout his life he was interested in all phases of the theatre -- writing, acting, producing, history, criticism and esthetic principles. He travelled widely and mingled with all kinds of people in order to find play material. He was fond of the circus and of clowns and this is seen reflected in some of his plays.

In his early plays which are satiric, he satirizes the aristocracy and rich bourgeoisie of Madrid. In these works the writer presents a series of types and exposes their faults; he often chooses a woman as the symbol of virtue in order better to emphasize the

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 33.

evils of others. But Benavente, in spite of his attacks on certain failures, reveals a tenderness and a compassion for human nature. In these plays satirizing the upper class, there is very little action, and we see one of Benavente's most important innovations, namely his clever handling of dialogue. It is through the conversation of the characters, who are very well delineated, that the development of the theme takes place and through which, too, these characters are explained. This is one of the reasons why the theatre of Benavente has been called "conversational" or "drawing room" drama. Moreover, his conversations often consist of half-statements and approximations which have to be co-ordinated by the spectator, who draws his own conclusions as to their significance.

Another of this group of satiric plays is La gobernadora the scene of which is laid in a provincial town which is controlled by corrupt political bosses. We see here one of Benavente's characteristic techniques -- the thronged stage. He uses an immense crowd of characters and through their gossip we learn about the celebrities of the town. Benavente uses Danián, the waiter serving coffee to customers in the square, to introduce the characters as they go by.

We can see in these plays, too, how this playwright brought several changes into the construction of the Spanish drama. He abolished the grandiloquent forms of the past and used instead everyday scenes in conversational tones, dealing with the middle class of Madrid. Moreover, before him Spanish drama was dominated by plays in which many tricks were used to bring about a successful conclusion. Even Galdós, in Electra (1901), introduced a ghost to help the dénouement, but with Benavente all the old tricks such as

lost rings, letters and handkerchiefs disappear. This dramatist of the Generation of 1898, also, does not seem to work out a well formulated plot but to develop his theme as his play progresses, for, as we see in La gobernadora, the first act of his plays is generally full of movement yet nothing definite happens. The true plot does not begin until the second act and the first merely creates the atmosphere in which the story is to take place. Benavente, besides, gives a minimum of stage directions; instead, he lets his characters themselves create the framework for their action. For example, in Señora ama, one of his rural dramas in which he seeks to define the Castillian spirit, the characters personify certain types. There is Tío Aniceto, the old Castillian farmer, Dacia, the young shy maiden and Gubesinda, the farm servant.

Benavente completely transformed and modernized the Spanish theatre by introducing the drama of the "unconscious mind." John Garrett Underhill sums up his achievement in this way:

To have developed this subtle and most subjective of psychologic dramas among a people as crassly unmetaphysical as the Spaniards, who, through their picaresque tradition, have been parents of modern realism, is a stroke of subconscious humor as opposite as unexpected.⁸⁸

Benavente's drama includes both objective and subjective qualities, for his plays contain an external, written plot with sparkling dialogue but this foreground serves as a screen behind which the sub-

⁸⁸John Garrett Underhill, Plays By Jacinto Benavente, third series (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923), p. vii.

jective drama is developed. The outward story of his plays, then, is not to be accepted as it seems but, rather, as "one of the pivots upon which the action turns."⁸⁹ Benavente, in effect, describes this duality of his plays in the words of the Signore in La noche del sábado:

SIGNORE - ¡Poseo la clave de tantos sucesos inexplicables! ...La mayor parte de la gente conoce de la vida, como del teatro, la escena nada más; y la verdadera comedia está entre bastidores.⁹⁰

It is because of this subjective character in Benavente's drama that character is not defined but deduced by the spectator; and the sharp outline of personality is dispensed with, and it becomes determined by the actions of the emotions and the will.

Benavente's exploitation of the unconscious, then, replaces the banalities of the former playwrights, for apart from the written plot there is also an inner, suggested plot which consists of an interpretation of what is seen on the stage. This unwritten action occurs in most highly developed form in the plays which deal with the will such as La noche del sábado. Here Imperia, personification of the will, pursues her ambition at the expense of Donina (her youth), and acquires wealth and power. When her ambitions are near fulfillment, she tries to recover Donina whom she sees amidst the revellry of the circus as she herself is on her way to the celebration of the "witches' sabbath." Here her old life dies at the hand of youth and she seeks the aid of Leonardo (the imagination) who had

⁸⁹Ibid., p. viii.

⁹⁰Jacinto Benavente, La malquerida y la noche del sábado (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1961), p. 95.

given her, in the beginning, her vision of the ideal. Under his instruction, she finally sacrifices her youth, Donina, who dies, and Imperia now achieves her ideal. She says:

Para realizar algo grande en la vida hay
que destruir la realidad; apartar sus fan-
tasmas que nos cierran el paso; seguir como
única realidad, el camino de nuestros sueños
hacia lo ideal...⁹¹

The real meaning of this drama of the "unconscious mind" is suggested in the second tableau of the play when Imperia says:

...entre las horas de la vida más apacible
hay para todos una noche del sábado en que
nuestras almas brujas vuelan a su aquelarre.
Vivimos muchas horas indiferentes por una
hora que nos interesa. Vuelan las almas
brujas, unas hacia sus sueños, otras hacia
sus vicios, otras hacia sus amores: hacia
lo que está lejos de nuestra vida y es
nuestra vida verdadera.⁹²

This type of drama was something entirely new in Spain and, therefore, was not fully understood at first. In fact, it was ten years before this play became popular among Spanish audiences.

Benavente's outstanding dramatic achievement is considered by many to be Los intereses creados (1907), a play which is a landmark in the development of the Spanish drama, for it is patterned after the Italian commedia dell'arte in which the characters wear grotesque masks. It is a symbolic play in which each of the characters represents a human type. The most important of them are Leandro, who represents the good, and his servant, Crispín who symbolizes the evil of the human soul, and who exercises great control over his master. Northup quotes Federico de Onís, in translation, as stating

⁹¹Ibid., p. 160.

⁹²Ibid., p. 120.

the thesis of this play as follows:

We have to do with a pessimistic work in which the power and necessity of evil are recognized and affirmed. Although love, purity, and generosity are not denied, and even end triumphant, they do not triumph through any virtue of their own, but thanks to the machinations of all-powerful evil.⁹³

Indeed this play, like many of the others, expresses some of Benavente's ideas on life and his vision of the world, for in this story Crispín, pretending to be the servant of a great lord, obtains food, lodging and credit for his master who had just fled from his own creditors. Crispín also eventually arranges the marriage of Leandro with Silvia, the daughter of the city's richest man.

In his numerous plays, then, Benavente shows himself to be a master of dramatic art. Above all, he brought about a renaissance in Spanish drama by breaking with the melodramatic type of theatre and introducing new, modern methods in both the style of plays and in stage technique.

⁹³Northup, An Introduction to Spanish Literature, p. 430.

CONCLUSION

The war of 1898 crystallized tendencies of protest prompted by Spain's deteriorating condition. For this disaster excited public interest in, and a subsequent examination of, the country's national and spiritual values. This gave birth to a movement which sought to find answers to Spain's problems. Its leaders, the Generation of 1898, turned, among other areas, to the field of letters, and by their work it is my conclusion that they produced a rebirth in this area of Spanish life. There was a renewed interest in all the literary genres and there took place an outpouring of novels, essays, poems and plays. There was, moreover, a complete renovation in each area, for the writers of the Generation used these genres not only as media through which to voice their protest but they also had firm ideas as to what constituted good writing and most of them consciously sought to effect a revival, and succeeded, in literary style and technique.

In this thesis I have attempted to show how this period was truly a new renaissance in Spanish letters. This time in Spanish literature is generally regarded as dominantly an era of protest and reform. Certainly it was a period of criticism and protest as I have tried to show in Chapter II, but, in my opinion, it was much more than this, for the writers not only protested against the ills of their country and made suggestions for their reform, but, by their literary program, they produced an era which was a bridging-point between one of literary stagnation and the modern period with

numerous works which introduced a new style and technique to Spanish writing.

One aspect of the modernization of Spanish literature was the influence of foreign literatures. This period, perhaps, marked the first time in their history when Spaniards were so willing to lay aside their españolismo, their stubborn resistance to influence from abroad. This did not happen in the Renaissance of the fifteenth century. For this reason, in Spain, at that time, there was not such a complete rebirth in all areas as was the case in most other European countries. But the writers of the Generation of 1898 had a great intellectual curiosity for new ideas. Therefore, they felt that communication with Europe and the incorporation of pertinent ideas of such thinkers as Nietzsche, Tolstoi, Schopenhauer and Kierkegaard were necessary. They also accepted new ideas concerning the style of writing and some foreignisms of language so that Spanish would become more flexible and capable of expressing the new thoughts of a new age.

Then, there was inspiration from within the country itself. For, like the fifteenth century rebirth, there took place a blending of local traditions and native influences with foreign innovations. The Generation was greatly influenced by Joaquín Costa who emphasized the idea of Europeanization, by Ángel Ganivet, who showed them the importance of the will in the betterment of Spanish life, and there was Giner de los Ríos who sought to improve education and gave the Generation an institution through which literature could be promoted. Galdós also showed the importance of Spain as a

literary theme. Moreover, they looked back to the past for models -- Azorín thought that the Spanish essence lay in the great figures of past literature, such as in the Cid and Don Quijote, Unamuno also saw in Don Quijote and Sancho the spiritual symbols of hope and redemption for Spain's ills.

The members of the Generation of 1898 sought various ways of solving their country's dilemma, with the result that the first period of their writings is characterized by protest and criticism -- in some cases, as with Baroja, very bitter criticism. But the majority of the writers, in spite of their protest, show a deep love for Spain. This aura of protest is, as I have said, descriptive of particularly the first part of the period, for it was later subordinated as the Generation emphasized artistic expression and thus effected a new renaissance in Spanish letters. The movement represented a time of change during which many new elements, forms, techniques, styles and themes were introduced or greatly developed. The Spanish novel to this date had been concerned with chivalry, love, pastoral subjects, the Moors, the pícaro and, in the nineteenth century, consisted of cuadros de costumbres of particular regions of the country. But, with the renaissance in Spanish literary art, with the work of the Generation of 1898, the writers were not concerned with these well-trodden paths. Although it must be admitted that some of Baroja's novels are picaresque in form, they cannot be called typical of this type of literature. The Generation, instead, developed new themes foremost of which were the importance of the will (la voluntad) and its counterpart la abulia, Spain and its countryside, and the mystery of time. Influenced by Ganivet, Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, the

members of 1898 applied the theme of the importance of the will, of action to the Spain of their day. They interpreted it in many ways; Baroja, the chief exponent of this theme, wrote novels about the man of action whom he felt Spain needed at that time to improve her condition. The writers attached great importance to the countryside of Spain, for in it they saw the physical and spiritual values of their land. Although Nature had long been a subject for poets, it had never before been treated so fully in the novel. Each writer projected his own personality into his interpretation of the countryside which he viewed: Unamuno viewed it with deep feeling; Baroja described the scene just as he saw it as if he were taking the reader on a leisurely sight-seeing tour; Azorín also gave minute description, but limited it chiefly to the old cities of Spain full of ruin and stagnation and he also showed his great love for his country; Valle-Inclán viewed it with strong, personal feeling and was fond of describing Galicia with all its traditions, folklore and mystery. Influenced by the Nietzschean doctrine of eternal recurrence, the members of the group introduced the theme of the mystery of time into Spanish literature. It was developed chiefly by Azorín, in prose and, in poetry by Antonio Machado.

But, above all, the Generation of 1898 effected a new renaissance in the various literary genres. In their anxiety to break with the immediate past, the writers set new values on literary types. Baroja, Azorín and Unamuno fostered what was for Spanish literature a new realism in the novel, while Valle-Inclán emphasized a revolutionary, precious style. They set forth a new conception of the novel.

It was no longer bound by the rules of the past concerning structure, plot, material, characterization, etc., but it now became a loosely-knit type of composition, plotless, not necessarily logical and enveloping all the aspects of one's daily life and environment. To Baroja, Unamuno and Azorín, content was more important than style; for them, the novel became a vehicle for ideas rather than a beautiful work of art. It is characterized by simplicity, sincerity and precision. They dispensed with all the rhetoric and vague phrases of the past and wrote simply and clearly. Valle-Inclán, influenced by the Modernist movement, sought to write prose which appealed to all the senses. He felt that in this way he would, and he indeed did, enrich the Spanish language and increase the possibilities of verbal expression.

The members of the Generation, also, were very conscious of what constituted good writing. They wrote many essays on the art of writing, on literary criticism and on the use of language. They, moreover, follow these precepts concerning good literary composition in their own works. They all strove to write well and were interested in the classics thereby reviving interest in these works as models. In order to express the wealth of new ideas gleaned from abroad, they felt it necessary to create a new literary language. Many of them introduced foreignisms, or used some pertinent archaisms, with the result that the Spanish language was renovated and became more flexible. In poetry, Machado, like the rest of the Generation, made a clean break with the obscurantism of the past and wrote in a simple, clear style, and the poem became a medium for conveying a serious message. Machado introduced assonance to the romance form and thus

made it the wonderful form it now is today, very flexible and capable of great poetic expressiveness.

In the drama, Benavente brought about a complete modernization. Using many of the contemporary French dramatists, and sometimes going back to Shakespeare, as his models, he dispensed with the melodramatic style of the romantics and that which was used by his immediate predecessor, Echegaray. He also avoided all the theatrical conventionalities such as abundant stage directions, a rigid plot and tricks to help the dénouement. Instead of stage directions, he relied on the conversations of his characters to explain what was taking place, and he developed his plot as his play progressed. Often his plays have an air of mystery since he usually leaves the resolution of certain questions to the members of the audience. Benavente, moreover, wrote a play which was a landmark in the development of the Spanish drama. This was his Los intereses creados in which he resorts to the grotesque masks of the Italian commedia dell'arte for his types and with the use of puppets who represent human types, he is able to convey a serious message.

The above eloquently testifies, then, to the fact that although the Generation of 1898 was a time of protest and demand for reforms of Spain's ills, it was much more than this. The writers did, indeed, criticize those ills which they thought were impeding their country's progress, and suggest reforms which they believed, if adequately implemented, would act as panacea for Spain's social, political and intellectual lethargy. But, also, through the prolific outpouring of novels, essays, poems and plays, the Generation of 1898 produced a new renaissance in Spanish letters. For these literary genres all

had direct relevancy to the survival, rejuvenation and subsequent growth of Spanish literature because of the many innovations which were introduced and the already existing areas which were developed. Because of this rebirth in the field of literature, the literary prestige of Spain was launched to new heights.

B I B L I O G R A P H Y

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Andrenio (E. Gómez de Baquero). Novelas y novelistas. Madrid: Calleja, 1918.

Barja, César. Libros y autores contemporáneos. Madrid: V. Suárez, 1935.

Baroja y Nessi, Pío. Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox. Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1901.

1932. El árbol de la ciencia. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe,

Aurora roja. Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1910.

La busca. Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1904.

1913. Camino de perfección. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe,

Mala hierba. Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1904.

sa-Calpe, 1928. Memorias de un hombre de acción. Madrid: Espasa-

1946. Obras completas, V. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva,

1948. Obras completas, VI. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva,

Páginas escogidas. Madrid: Calleja, 1918.

Zalacaín, el aventurero. Buenos Aires: Editorial Losada, 1961.

Beardsley, Wilfred A. Ensayos y sentencias de Unamuno. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932.

Benavente, Jacinto. La malquerida y la noche del sábado. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1961.

Teatro, volume I. Madrid: Hernando, 1929.

Teatro, volume II. Madrid: Hernando, 1920.

Blanco Aguinaga, Carlos. Unamuno, teórico del lenguaje. México: El Colegio de México, 1954.

Bousoño, Carlos. La poesía de Vicente Aleixandre. Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1950.

Cansinos-Assens, Rafael. La nueva literatura, I. Madrid: Sanz-Calleja, 1917.

La nueva literatura, I. Madrid: Editorial Páez, 1925.

Casares, Julio. Crítica profana. Madrid: Imprenta Colonial, 1916.

Chabás, Juan. Literatura española contemporánea. (1898-1950). Habana: Cultural, 1952.

Chandler, Richard E. and Kessel Schwartz. A New History of Spanish Literature. Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1961.

De Onís, Federico. Jacinto Benavente. New York: Instituto de las Españas en los Estados Unidos, 1923.

Díaz-Plaja, Guillermo. Historia de la literatura española. México: Editorial Porrúa, 1955.

Modernismo frente a noventa y ocho. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1951.

Dilthey, Wilhelm. Das Leben Scheleiermachers. Berlin, 1935.

Dos Passos, John. Rosinante to the Road Again. New York: Knopf, 1922.

Eoff, Sherman Hinkle. The Modern Spanish Novel. New York: New York University Press, 1961.

Ganivet, Angel. Idearium español. Madrid: F. Beltrán, 1923.

Obras completas. Madrid: Aguilar, 1943-1951.

García López, J. Historia de la literatura española. Barcelona: Editorial Vicens-Vives, 1962.

Granjel, Luis. Panorama de la generación del '98. Madrid: Guadarrama, 1959.

Lafin Entralgo, Pedro. La generación del noventa y ocho. Madrid: Diana Artes Gráficas, 1945.

La generación del noventa y ocho. Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1948.

Lapesa, Rafael. Historia de la lengua española. Madrid: Escelicer, 1959.

Machado y Ruiz, Obras completas de Manuel y Antonio Machado. Madrid: Editorial Plenitud, 1957.

Poesías completas de Antonio Machado. (1899-1930). Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1933.

Maeztu, Ramiro de. Authority, Liberty and Function in the Light of the War. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1916.

Don Quijote, Don Juan y la Celestina. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1926.

Martínez Cachero, José María. Las novelas de Azorín. Madrid: Insula, 1960.

Martínez Ruiz, José (Azorín). Clásicos y modernos. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1913.

Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo. Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1920.

España, hombres y paisajes. Madrid: F. Beltrán, 1909.

Lecturas españolas. Paris: T. Nelson, 1937.

Obras completas. Madrid: Aguilar, 1962.

La ruta de Don Quijote. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1919.

La voluntad. Barcelona: Henrich y Cia., 1902.

La voluntad. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1919.

Mérimée, Ernest and S. Griswold Morley. A History of Spanish Literature. New York: H. Holt and Company, 1930.

Nora, Eugenio G. de. La novela española contemporánea, volume I. Madrid: Editorial Gredos, 1958.

Northup, George T. An Introduction to Spanish Literature. Chicago: University Press, 1955.

Ortega y Gasset, José. El Espectador de José Ortega y Gasset. Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1961.

El Espectador, II. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1921.

Obras completas. Madrid: Revista de Occidente, 1953.

Patt, Betarice P. and Martin Nozick eds. The Generation of 1898 and After. New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1961.

Pattison, Walter T. Representative Spanish Authors, volume II. New York: Oxford University Press, 1960.

Salinas, Pedro. Literatura española, siglo XX. México: Séneca, 1941.

Literatura española, siglo XX, 2nd ed. aumentada. México: Antigua Librería Robredo, 1949.

Starkie, Walter. Jacinto Benavente. London: Oxford University Press, 1924.

Unamuno y Jugo, Miguel de. Abel Sánchez, una historia de pasión. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1928.

Del sentimiento trágico de la vida. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1931.

Ensayos, vols. I and II. Madrid: Aguilar, 1942.

En torno al casticismo. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1961.

Niebla. Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1929.

Niebla. Madrid: Renacimiento, 1928.

Obras completas. Madrid: A. Aguado, 1950-1952.

Paz en la guerra. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1960.

San Manuel Bueno, mártir y tres historias más. Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe, 1951.

Underhill, John Garrett. Plays by Jacinto Benavente. Third series. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1923.

Valbuena Prat, Angel. Historia de la literatura española, II. Barcelona: Editorial Gustavo Gili, 1937.

Valle-Inclán, Ramón del. Flor de santidad. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1913.

Jardín umbrío. Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1960.

La media noche. Madrid, 1917.

Sonata de otoño. Madrid: Imprenta helénica, 1930.

Zubiría, Ramón de. La poesía de Antonio Machado. Madrid: Gredos, 1959.

PERIODICALS

Arjona, Doris King. "La Voluntad and Abulia in Contemporary Spanish Ideology." Revue hispanique, LXXXIV (December 1928), 537-667.

Azorín. "La Novela." ABC (19 - III - 1952).

Baroja, Pío. "Prólogo casi doctrinal sobre la novela." Revista de Occidente, (March 1925), 258-272.

Bolinger, D. H. "Heroes and Hamlets: the protagonists of Baroja's novels." Hispania, XXIV (February 1941), 91-94.

Buffum, Mary E. "Literary Criticism in the Essays of the Generation of 1898." Hispania, XVIII (October 1935), 277-292.

De Onís, Federico. "Pío Baroja." Nosotros, LIV (October 1926), 171-182.

Hoyos, Antonio de. "Yecla en la literatura del '98." Clavileño, V (September-October 1954), 60-66.

Kirsner, Robert. "Galdós and the Generation of 1898." Hispania, XXXIII (August 1950), 240-242.

Machado, Antonio. "Notas sobre la poesía." Cuadernos hispanoamericanos, VII (January 1951), 13-29.

Owen, Arthur L. "Concerning the Ideology of Pío Baroja." Hispania, XV (February 1932), 15-24.

- Owen, Arthur L. "Sobre el arte de don Ramón del Valle-Inclán." Hispania, VI (March 1923), 69-80.
- Pradal-Rodríguez, Gabriel. "Antonio Machado: su vida y obra." Revista Hispánica Moderna, XV (January 1949), 1-80.
- Reig, Carola. "El paisaje en Azorín." Cuadernos hispanoamericanos, XXII (May 1955), 206-222.
- Salinas, Pedro. "El romanticismo y el siglo XX." Estudios hispánicos, Wellesley College (Wellesley, 1952), 512-514.
- Seeleman, Rosa. "The Treatment of Landscapes in the Novelists of the Generation of 1898." Hispanic Review, IV (July 1936), 226-238.
- Shaw, D. L. "Ganivet's España filosófica contemporánea and the Interpretation of the Generation of 1898." Hispanic Review, XXVIII (July 1960), 220-232.
- _____. "A Reply to Deshumanización -- Baroja on the Art of the Novel." Hispanic Review, XXV (March 1957), 105-111.
- Unamuno, Miguel de. "Cartas de Unamuno a Warner Fite..." Revista Hispánica Moderna, XXII (January 1956), 87-92.

MICHIGAN STATE UNIV. LIBRARIES



31293104880442