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SPANISH LITERATURE – 19th Century

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Part I : POETRY

NARRATIVE POETRY

THE EPIC IN THE ROMANTIC PERIOD

Romanticism reawakened an interest in the Middle Ages. Surfeited by the ancient topics of eighteenth-century Neoclassicism, nineteenth-century Romantic poets eagerly returned to national, heroic, exotic, themes of the past, especially those dealing with the Moors, and invented a new poetic form, the *leyenda*, with which to express them. The *leyenda* was a form of narrative, semi epic poetry in which traditional themes were developed with vague realism and little historical accuracy, overlaid with an imaginative and colorful lyricism. The Romantic poets had a special evocative power with which to revive legendary figures of the past and to re-create the atmosphere of chivalry.

A. Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas (1791-1865)

The Duque de Rivas' best poetry was narrative rather than lyric. After attempting two narrative poems, *El paso honroso* (1812) and *Florinda* (1826), concerning Florinda's relationship with Rodrigo, the last Visigothic king, Rivas wrote a Romantic legend, *El moro exposito o Cordoba y Burgos en el siglo decimo* (1834).

The poem, in twelve cantos, relates the medieval legend of the Infantes de Lara. Although it has been called a *romance historico*, it is more a *leyenda* or *fantasia novelesca*. Pastor Diaz considered it to be "la mas bella Poesia romantica de la epoca," and Valera felt that it had no precedent. It was greeted as something fresh and new in its revival of the national past. Rivas added characters to the legend and changed Mudarra into a Romantic hero.

Romance historicos (1841) was inspired by the *romancero* and the ancient *crónicas* and exhibits a genuine patriotic note. Rivas attempted to revive some of the great moments and heroes of a bygone age. In addition to themes from the Middle Ages, he included as subject matter the discovery and conquest of the New World, the court of the Hapsburgs, and independence. In these *romances*, as in his less successful longer *leyendas*, published in 1854, Rivas at times included a note of mystery and occasional horror, and his descriptive power overshadows his storytelling ability.

B. Jose de Espronceda y Delgado (1808 – 1842)

Primarily a lyric poet, Espronceda also wrote *leyendas*, the best of which is *El estudiante de Salamanca* (1840), a Romantic revival of the don Juan theme. He recounts the libertinage of Felix de Montemar, who in a vision witnesses his own funeral and is given the kiss of death by a skeleton. This poem and Espronceda's philosophical masterpiece, *El diablo mundo* (1841), which also contains narrative patches, are essentially compelling lyric poetry.

C. Jose Zorrilla y Moral (1817 – 1893)

Zorilla had a true descriptive and narrative poetic talent, and this, combined with his facile skill as a versifier and genius for evoking Spain's chivalrous and romantic past, made him the nest of the *leyenda* writers. He wrote many poems, frequently retelling in his own colorful manner an oft-used tale from legend and tradition.

One looks in vain for ideas in his works, but despite irregularities the reader is carried along by sheer descriptive charm, overlooking the poet's improvised manner and sometimes careless craftsmanship. His best-known *leyendas* are *A buen juez, major testigo*, which recounts the story of the *Cristo de la Vega* in which a statue miraculously serves as a witness; and *Margarita la tornera*, the tender story of the Virgin's intercession in a nun's troubles. *Granada* (1852), in nine books, though never finished, is probably Zorilla's best combination of history and legend and is remarkable for its color and musicality.

THE ROMANCERO

A. General Characteristics

One of the most original and enduring monuments of Spanish literature and the richest collection of popular poetry anywhere is the Spanish *romancero* the word means three things: the immense Spanish ballad literature dating from the Middle Ages; a collection of ballads; and a series of ballads dealing with one theme.

The ballad, called *romance* in Spanish, is a short epico-lyric poem written in sixteen-syllable lines divided into two equal hemistiches' by a caesura, with the final word of each line assonating. Some collections print the ballad in eight-syllable lines with the even lines assonating.

The ballads reflect the traditional national spirit and mentality better than any other form of literature. Episodic in nature and related in origin to the primitive epic, they begin and end abruptly without exposition, implying an entire situation or identifying some hero with a few deft stokes. As the repository of genuine national spirit, they have had a profound effect of Spanish literature and have consistently inspired writers of all ages.

B. The Juglar and the Mester de Juglaria

The *juglar*, the public entertainer of the Middle Ages, amused his audiences with recitations, music, acrobatics, and sleight of hand. More important, he was the reciter of *cantares de gesta*, a professional who earned his living acting and singing before the public whether in a place or a marketplace. *Mester de Juglaria* means the type of poetry recited, sung, and composed by the *juglares*, principally ballads and epics.

C. The Fragmentation Theory of Ballad Origin

Some nineteenth-century critics believed in the *cantilena* theory to the effect that ballads strung together formed epic poetry, but Menendez Pida rightly asserted that the ballads descended originally from the epics. Representing the fragments of these poems preserved by the *juglares* when the epic was in its degenerative stages. The minstrels selected short portions from an epic to sing to a street-corner audience or were asked to repeat a particularly popular passage. These brief excerpts, remembered by the listeners and recited later at home, were passed orally from generation to generation down to the twentieth century. Written collections began to appear however in the sixteenth century, and new ones are still being collected from the people of Spain and the New World.

The phenomenal oral existence of Spain's ballad literature over a period of some eight centuries is unique in the world of art. Through the communal transmission and development, several versions of the same ballad have been found, and they have all absorbed through this process the true spirit of the people. The ballad thus mirrors the Spanish soul more faithfully than all other genres.

The original ballads were fragments of epic poems. Later, known poets wrote ballads and used the ballad meter in the drama and in poems on varied themes. Even twentieth-century poets have used the ballad meter.

D. Classification

There are several thousand ballads of such variety that classification is difficult. We can, however, note a few important types; *Romances historicos* or *viejos tradicionales* are derived from the medieval epics and histories. *Romances juglarescos* are longer and treat subjects from the degenerate period. *Romances fronterizos* relate the heroics and amours of Christian and Moorish knights of the fifteenth century. *Romances novelescos sueltos* are tales of adventure but are not necessarily epic. *Romances eruditos* were written on old themes by erudite poets. *Romances liricos* or *artisticos* treat any theme and were written by recognized artists. *Romances vulgares* treat a great variety of themes and were written by street-corner poets.

E. Collections

Two important early ballad collections are *Cancionero sin ano*, published in the middle of the sixteenth century by Martin Nuncio, and *Silva de varios romances*, published by Esteban G. de Nagera in 1550 and 1551.

Modern collections include *Romancero general* (1828 – 1832, 1849), by Agustin Duran; *Primavera y flor de romances* (1856), by Ferdinand Joseph Wolf and Konrad Hofmann; *Antologia de poetas liricos castellanos* (1944 – 1945), by Marelino Menendex y Pelayo, and *Flor nueva de romance viejos* (1933), by Ramon Menendez Pidal.

Part II : LYRIC POETRY

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A. Romanticism

The many attempts to define Romanticism confirm the difficulty of doing so. Sainz de Robles defines it as an artistic revolution against what he termed the rigidity, the coldness, the regulations, the antinationalism, the cerebralism, the pagan aestheticism, the religious incredulity, the preponderance of the objective over the subjective, the declamatory emphasis, and the artistic impersonality of Neoclassicism. He lists Romanticism's characteristics as contemplation of nature, intimacies of natural life, revival of the Middle Ages, the cult of the individual, rejection of the rules of Boileau and Luzan, the national against the foreign, subjective lyricism against epic objectivity, anarchy of inventiveness and procedure, the intimate connection between art and life, and absolute emancipation of the *yo*. Victor Hugo put it much more succinctly in the preface to *Hernani*, where he stated that Romanticism was simply "liberalism in literature."

As we have seen, the eighteenth century witnessed the return of Romanticism in Melendez Valdes' nature sentiments. Although dates cannot be firmly fixed for its triumph as the dominant literary taste, we can conclude that the nation was prepared well in advance of the outburst that occurred in 1833 with the return of the *emigrados*.

Spanish liberals had had to leave Spain under the despotic reign of Fernando VII, during which time a rigid censorship had succeeded in holding the nascent Romanticism in check. The expression of liberal ideas and the rebelliousness and individuality that characterized Romanticism were dangerous under Fernando's oppressive, absolute monarchy. On Fernando's death, however, the scene changed. Maria Cristina, the Queen Mother, called back the exiled liberals, or *emigrados*, for she needed their support to hold the throne against Carlos, Fernando's brother.

Many of the Romantic poets and dramatists, who as liberals had been obliged to leave Spain, breathed abroad the Romantic atmosphere of England and France, where the movement was already fully grown. When they returned after the 1833 amnesty, they brought the new literary rage with them. Romanticism was nothing new to Spain, however, for it had always been an undercurrent in Spanish literature. The nineteenth century revived what was typically Spanish rather than creating something new. The battle that raged in other European

countries between Classicists and the Romantic revolutionaries was neither fierce nor prolonged in Spain. The public was happy to revive a characteristic feature of their tradition and was not interested in literary quarrels. What the nineteenth century witnessed was the intensification and concentration of the elements of Romanticism to such a degree that other traditional characteristics of Spanish literature were subdued momentarily and suppressed. The undercurrent. Ow became a flood on the surface and swept everything before it.

The moderation and restraint of Neoclassicism were gone. Rules and precepts ceased to exist for the poet, who recognized no authority and no codes of behavior. Poets demanded absolute freedom and believed their primary function was to be expressive, not necessarily beautiful. Their poetry was often one of dreams in which they lost sight of reality. A melancholy, pessimistic, sometimes despairing note pervaded their poems, as they observed that the reality that surrounded them did not conform to their dream world. Poets became interested in exotic themes, such as Oriental potentates and their courts, and in the noble Moor, idealized in somewhat the same fashion as Rousseau had idealized the American Indian. Fatally attracted to the sepulchral, the mysterious, the funereal, tempestuous seas, rugged mountains, yawning abysses, ruins, nocturnal scenes, and landscapes, poets revealed through their vocabulary their interests and feelings, and used an abundance of terms such as *sordido, funebre, horrido, gemido, tetrico, lugubre, melancolico, espectro, tremendo, Ay!, sombras, historico, languidez, duda, suspiro, and lagrimas*. Poets were impassioned, unrestrained, and pessimistic, and emotionalism replaced reason in their poetry.

The poets of Romanticism, with few exceptions, were dramatic or narrative poets and did their best work in the *leyenda* and the drama. The Romantic fervor lasted only a short time in Spain. As the lingering scent of Romanticism weakened, writers interested themselves in more serious questions, and a group of so-called philosophical poets appeared, headed by Campoamor and Nunez de Arce. A third direction that poetry took in the second half of the century was that represented by Becquer and Rosalia de Castro, who, although perhaps classified temperamentally with the Romanticists, actually represented a movement of transition to the modern schools of poetry. Finally, the *costumbrista* poets of the last years of the century brought the experimental period to a close as the age of Modernism approached.

1. *Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas* (1791 – 1865) won his acclaim primarily in the drama.

As a poet his genius lay in narrative style rather than in the lyrical vein, as exemplified in *El moro exposito* and the *Romances historicos*. In his earlier work, Rivas tried the Neoclassic manner and dedicated a series of poems to beautiful shepherdesses. Although he has some interesting descriptions of nature, his most sincere poetry is that dedicated to Olimpia, a girl he fell in love with in 1819, that reveals the poet's nostalgia and the pain and pleasure of a lost love. His own rules for Romanticism at best can be termed mild: quicken the reader's interest in the narrative; suite style to argument; adapt style to the person speaking; make use of color; use historical customs; use clear expressions; and versify well.

In addition to his love themes and nature, which could be either pastoral or tempestuous (in *El faro de Malta*, for example), Rivas concentrated on religious and nationalistic and patriotic themes. His love of Spain, intensified by the homesickness and sorrow of exile, is one of the truly admirable traits in his lyric poetry. He also has some moral poems and uses the theme of the stylized noble Moor in some of his *romances*. Most of his poetry after 1835 is less noteworthy as part of his total production.

2. *Jose de Espronceda y Delgado* (1808 – 1842) enjoys the reputation of having been Spain's greatest Romantic lyric poet. Everything about this man was Romantic except his manner of dying. At the age of fifteen he joined a group of young conspirators called Los Numantinos. Arrested and later, in 1827, exiled, he met Teresa Mancha in Lisbon, fell in love with her, and induced her to abandon her husband in London and live with him. His life with Teresa was a tempestuous one. Meanwhile, between 1829 and 1835 he became involved in a series of military uprisings, both in France and Spain.

It would be convenient to classify Espronceda's poetry into two types: lyric and narrative. To the first type belong the shorter poems, such as *Cancion del pirate*, and to the latter belong *El estudiante de Salamanca* and *El diablo mundo*. Such a classification,

however, is not altogether valid, for there is much in the longer poems that is lyric – the *Canto a Teresa*, for example – and something of the epic in the shorter ones.

Espronceda personifies in his life and work what we might term the “Romantic frenzy.” He was vehement and passionate, a born rebel who wanted to convert his dreams to reality. He was outraged by restraints and could tolerate them neither in his art nor in society, an attitude fully revealed in his *Cancion del pirata*. There, in a moment of exaltation, he dreams of being a pirate, a rebel outside the law and society, who is his own law, feared by all, and who laughs at dangers and his enemies. Here one finds revolution and anarchy, scorn for the established order, and a plea for individualism and liberty.

Neither reality nor women nor anything else conformed to what the poet expected or wanted, and from a moment of exaltation, as in the *Cancion del pirata*, we see the pendulum swing to the opposite pole, where the poet confesses that his desire is eternal and insatiable and that he believes only in the peace of the sepulcher. As Bonilla so well put it, the four principles of Espronceda’s philosophy are doubt, the first principle of thought; pain, the positive reality of life; pleasure, the world’s illusion; and death, the solution to every problem. Combined with these are skepticism, irony, and sorrow.

Although Espronceda has been labeled “the Spanish Byron,” and although the Spanish poet knew English and admired Byron, there are few direct influences of the one on the other. Both were skeptical, liberal, and pessimistic regarding life, which they found to be largely an illusion. Espronceda had much more of a social conscience and was patriotic. In any event, Espronceda’s poetic sensibilities were far too great for him to be a servile imitator.

After an early series of poems written in the Neoclassic vein between 1828 and 1833, including some dedicated to friends and others involving themes of exile, politics, country, and freedom, he wrote his best-known poems, all included in the 1840 edition of his poetry. In addition to the *Cancion del pirata*, the consummate expression of individual liberty, he wrote *El mendigo* another cynical vision of the world; *El reo de muerte* (he was opposed to capital punishment); and *El verdugo*. In these poems, dedicated to the disillusion of the passing years, Espronceda combines realism with idealism and shows his sympathy for the outcast, the unfortunate, and the misunderstood. Perhaps the most pessimistic of these lyric poems is *A Jarifa en una orgia*, in which he identifies himself with the prostitute as a social outcast.

El estudiante de Salamanca, a kind of *leyenda* that handles the don Juan theme in a new way, synthesizes all the tendencies in Espronceda’s works up to that time. His don Felix, unlike the other don Juan prototypes, is a disillusioned materialist who discovers that life is a fantasy and death is the only reality. The poem uses a great number of poetic meters and chiaroscuro to good effect.

El diablo mundo, his longest poem (never completed), can be considered his masterpiece. It was conceived as an epic of mankind, a vast undertaking to show man’s struggles, deceptions, triumphs, and longings; but the poem is quite uneven, rising to great poetic heights at times but falling lamentably at others. Its *mal du siècle* tendencies are combined with a jumble of ideas, but the salient thought seems to be that life is senseless, after all, if all it has to offer is one deception after another. The plot relates how the protagonist, Adam, is miraculously restored to youth and, with the mind of a child, unspoiled by experience, goes through one disillusionment after another. Despite its standard Romantic philosophy, however, the poem has some exceptionally well-conceived and well-executed passages, for if Espronceda was not a philosopher, he was a great versifier. The introductory scene of *El diablo mundo* has been compared in majesty with the opening scene of Faust. It and the second canto written to the memory of Teresa are masterpieces of Romantic poetry. The *Canto II; A Teresa; Descansa en paz* has no connection with the rest of the poem and was intercalated by the poet with the typical Romantic comment: “Este canto es un desahogo de mi corazon; saltelo el que no quiera leerlo sin escrupulo, pues no esta ligado de manera alguna con el poema.” He expresses the typical Espronceda themes of delirium, despair, lament for lost youth, and the pleasure of dreams of glory. *El diablo mundo* also emphasizes that man becomes spiritually old quickly and looks forward to death; the hero’s idea of life bears no similarity to that of the masses; a

young dreaming soul is easily deceived and abandons real love for deceptive illusion; man indulges in blind and purposeless dreaming for an unattainable ideal; and dismal grief is man's lot, and the world will not grieve over one more corpse.

In his Romantic poetry, Espronceda served as the catalytic agent to fuse a large number of poetic tendencies awaiting expression, much as Ruben Dario did later. Rivas was the national, historical Romantic, but Espronceda represents the highly personal, subjective, revolutionary poet. In a sense, whether one doubts his sincerity or not, he carried on the humanitarian and libertarian spirit of the eighteenth-century French philosophers, conveyed to Spain by Hugo and others, but he was restless and undisciplined, original in his experimentation with meter and lines, if not in his themes. His characteristic note in doubt, almost desperation. When a bit of life and radiance creeps in, as in *El sol*, he fears that his happiness will be temporary and that the dark night will soon cover the radiant life. Despite the unevenness in his poetic output, Espronceda was the best poet of the century down to Becquer.

3. *Jose Zorrilla y Moral* (1817 – 1893) often liked to refer to himself as a troubadour; “Yo soy el trovador que vaga errante.” This sobriquet suits him in many respects, for like the troubadours of old, he had a native faculty for versifying and a gift with words that made writing poetry effortless for him. In Madrid in 1837 he became famous overnight when he stepped forward at Larra's funeral and read some of his verses written for the occasion.

Zorrilla's works are not intimate or personal. Sometimes called the Lope de Vega of the nineteenth century for his facility, he was more plebeian and less cultured than either Rivas or Espronceda. His basic inspiration seems to have been national, with a spirit more authentic, indeed, than that of Rivas. He conveyed emotion and a feeling of beauty but was overly fond of sensational imagery and even vulgarity. His characteristics are those of Romantic poetry in general: love of the medieval and national tradition and religion, as well as all the other trappings of the movement, such as boisterous nature, nocturnal scenes, tempests, exotic castles, shadowy figures, and ruins.

In the tradition of the troubadour, Zorrilla's poetic talent was more narrative and descriptive than it was lyric. He could describe what he saw or imagined much better than what he felt. He was a great storyteller, and his evocative power is not to be denied. Consequently, his best Romantic poetic work is in the longer narrative poems called *leyendas*. Even in his shorter poems he was not concerned with themes that produce lyric poetry. His verses often have a vagueness, a sentimentality, a melancholy and diffuseness that are typical of the emotional atmosphere of the Romantic lyric poetry; but atmosphere was about all that interested Zorrilla. The total result is that Zorrilla has little depth. In style he was so fluent and wrote so easily that he sins, on the side of verbosity.

But in spite of his defects, he was a master versifier and developed wonderful music with words that please the ear. Typical of his short poems are his *Orientales*, and among these are *Duena de la negra toca*, *Corriendo van por la vega*, and *Manana voy nazarena*. Zorrilla is still a favorite with the general public, forever captivated by his troubadouresque style, the music of his lines, and his rhythms.

4. *Juan Arolas* (1805 – 1849) became a priest over his parents' protests but had no true calling. His frustrations and unfulfilled longings made his life unhappy, and he died insane at the early age of forty-four.

His poetry, which is largely a reflection of the state of his mind, is conveniently divided into four thematic groups: religious, amatory, chivalresque, and Oriental. Significantly, the poems on religious themes are the least attractive of all in spite of their undeniable sincerity. His chivalresque poems revive great heroes of the past with all their splendor and color. His sensual love poems are somewhat autobiographical, for Arolas' love was not a game, as played by poets of earlier ages, but something very personal. His *Orientales*, showing influences of Victor Hugo, are acclaimed as his best lyric effort and are perfectly in keeping with the Romantic tradition. Here we find sultans and pirates, Oriental courts, rich color, voluptuousness, mellowness, and languidness. His Orientalism, based on his imagination, is exotic, sensuous, colorful, and imaginative and soars far above that of Zorrilla and at times even that of Espronceda. His poetry was published in two collections: *Poesias*

caballerescas y orientales (1840) and *Poesias religiosas, orientales, caballerescas y amorias* (1860).

5. *Gertudis Gomez de Avellaneda* (1814 – 1873) was born in Cuba of a Spanish father and a Cuban mother, but she came to Spain when she was twenty-two. She was highly regarded by poets of her day. She admired the Romantics, especially George Sand, and was a personal friend of all the Spanish poets. Her life was one of suffering, disappointment, and anguish, all reflected in her poetry.

She left an extensive work of half a dozen huge volumes, including dramas, novels, and lyric poetry, some of which she wrote under the pseudonym Tula. She is best remembered for her poetry, in which she was eloquent and passionate, as well as sincere. Her two principal themes were love, both divine and human, and religion, although she did write some poems on nature. Typical poems on these topics are *A la cruz*, *A el*, and *Al sol*. She wrote a poem on Niagara, *A vista del Niagara*, as did her fellow Cuban Heredia, the Venezuelan Perez Bonalde, and the North American William Cullen Bryant. Her cadenced verses forecast the coming of the moderns.

Her best poetry contains Byronic desperation of a love scorned. Her religious poetry, to which she may have been propelled by her religious poetry, to which she may have been propelled by her frustrated love, is quite orthodox. Though she shows deep and sincere feeling nonetheless she has little concern for humanity except as an expression of Christian charity on her part.

Among her many novels are *Esptolino* (1844), *Guatimozin* (1846), and *Sab* (1841). Her legends include *La montana maldita* and *El qura blanca*. *Alfonso Munio* (1844), her best play tells of a love triangle in Toledo in 1142. Avellaneda later changed its title to *Munio Alfonso*. Other plays are *El Principe de Viana* (1844) and the Biblical dramas *Saul* (1849) and *Baltasar* (1858). The robustness of her versification and the gravity of her thought prompted Nicasio Gallego to say of her: "Es much hombre esa mujer," but nevertheless the Spanish Academy in a stormy session refused to seat a woman.

6. *Carolina Coronado* (1820 – 1911) wrote tenderly idealistic, intensely sentimental poetry with delicateness, sweetness, and Romantic melancholy. She did not use the inflated rhetoric or sonority of so much Romantic poetry. In the beginning she was content to write about small wonders of nature, like flowers and butterflies, but later in more profound fashion she expressed her own feelings at once amorous and mystical. She attempted the novel without success. Her best-known poem is *El amor de los amores*, inspired by the Song of Songs.
7. *Nicomedes Pastor Diaz* (1811 – 1863) wrote poetry that is melancholy and gently pessimistic in tone, with a dreamy vagueness that is in keeping with the poetic tradition of his native Galicia. Typical poems are *A la luna* and *La mariposa negra*. He was affected by the Romanticist's interest in the macabre and could contemplate as well as any other his dead sweetheart and hopelessness of his fate. He posed as an austere ascetic who felt society could be redeemed. He thought the poet's mission was to be a social and religious high priest and refused to separate the poet from the politician.
8. *Other poets* of Romanticism are Gabriel Garcia Tassara (1817 – 1875); Patricio de la Escosura (1807 – 1878), who also wrote Romantic novels; Antonio Ros de Olano (1808 – 1886), born in Venezuela, who was a close friend of Espronveda's and wrote the prologue for his *El diablo mundo*; Enrique Gil y Carrasco (1815 – 1846), author of the most famous Romantic novel, *El señor de Bembibre*, who also wrote a number of excellent nature poems, among them *La gota de rocío* and *La violeta*; and *Juan Martinez Villergas* (1816 – 1894), author of mordant, satiric verses, who also attempted the novel and the drama.

B. The Transition: Second Half of the Nineteenth Century

The term post-Romantic has often been applied to the poetry that appeared after the Romantic movement had spent itself and was no longer the dominant force in literature. This designation, however, is not fully applicable to the period that dates roughly from 1850 to Ruben Dario's *Azul*, which appeared in 1888, for many of the poets classified as Romantics lived and wrote Romantic poetry long after 1850. Two of the greatest poets of the century, Gustavo Adolfo

Becquer and Rosalia de Castro, are sometimes so designated, but because they are more than Romanticists and form the link between Romanticism and Modernism, we shall include them here as transitional poets. Although the Romantic transition extended into the second half of the century, no definite trend developed in lyric poetry until the advent of Modernism in the last years. In addition to the Romantic note that continued, trends toward philosophy, skepticism, religiousness, and *costumbrismo* appear in the works of Campoamor, Nunez de Arce Medina, and Gabriel y Galan. The age, one of experimentation, found poets reacting against the excesses of Romantic imagination and exuberance with the evident intent of bringing poetry back to earth and making something useful of it. This eclectic period closed when Ruben Dario descended upon the peninsula and carried everything before him.

1. The *philosophical poets* include the following:

- a. *Ramon de Campoamor* (1817 – 1901), known as the Spanish Homer, enjoyed a tremendous vogue in the nineteenth century. His popularity with the people gave him a ranking out of proportion with his true merit. In Campoamor's time the middle class and the general public believed that they had inherited the role of connoisseur formerly enjoyed by the aristocrats. With every man a literary critic, standards of culture and good taste degenerated. Campoamor was able to give the public the kind of poetry they wanted, a homespun philosophy with ironic, sometimes sarcastic comments on life, easily memorized. He reacted against Romanticism and adopted as his guide "el arte por la idea" in his *Poetica* (1883). Humor abounds in his poetry, but it is often piquant and cynical.

He prided himself on having invented new poetic forms to which he gave the names *dolora*, *humorada*, and *pequeno poema*. The *humorada* is a very brief composition, usually of two lines, sometimes four, with philosophical intention and characterized by irony and skepticism. Campoamor's were collected in *Humoradas* (1886) and have been called "sculptured, chiseled expressions of thought." The *dolora* (*Fabulas morales y doloras* (1846) is a dramatized *humorada*, combining concision with philosophy, a kind of tiny drama with ideas, reflecting the mediocre and commonplace. The *pequeno poema* is an amplification of a *dolora*.

Opinions on Campoamor's work have been highly contradictory. Some have seen him as highly original, and others find nothing but platitudes in his poetry. Some consider his verse attractive, and others have called it doggerel. A fair judgment would not condemn him too harshly or praise him too highly, recognizing his ability as a versifier and his ingenuity in crystalizing thought, often in a delightful way, but at the same time admitting his lack of creative ability and failure to reach the stature of a truly great poet. His most famous poem, *Quien supiera escribir*, is a three-part dialogue in which an illiterate girl attempts to dictate to an obtuse priest a letter intended for her distant lover.

- b. *Gaspar Nunez de Arce* (1832 – 1903), like Campoamor, reacted away from the emotion of Romanticism and wrote ideological poetry. There are two strings to his harp, namely philosophy and politics. He summed up his poetic creed himself when he wrote: "La Poesia debe pensar y sentir, reflejar las ideas y las pasiones, los dolores y los gozos sociedad...No debe limitarse a cantar como el pajarito." In line with this serious purpose, Nunez de Arce deals with the philosophical and moral problems of his times and reflects better than any other poet of his day the nineteenth-century struggle between religious faith and science. To illustrate his philosophical reflections, he composed poems on great intellectuals of the past who were either confronted by similar situations or were considered nonconformists and original thinkers. *La vision de Fray Martin* (1880) deals with Martin Luther. Other poems deal with Raimundo Lulio, Dante and Lord Byron.

This poet yearned for the orthodox religious faith, but the discoveries of a rationalistic science would not allow him to justify it. From this conflict grew a sort of pessimism quite different from the Romantic kind. He also studied the problems of philosophical doubt. He is perhaps best loved today for his political poems in a declamatory style reminiscent of Quintana. *Gritos de combate* (1875) reveals his attitudes as a statesman and politician and reflects his disillusionment in the people's

abuse of democracy, his hope for the future, and his belief in progress and political and religious freedom.

- c. *Minor philosophical poets* include Ventura Ruiz Aguilera (1820 – 1881), whose *Ecos nacionales* (two volumes; 1849 and 1854 illustrate his concern with social and political questions; and Manuel del Palacio (1832 -1906), good at the epigram and much like Campoamor in his ability to wrap up a clever thought in a few words. He claimed to be the first to write the so-called *sonetos filosoficos*, serious at the beginning but with a humorous twist at the end.

2. *The transition poets* include the following:

- a. *Gustavo Adolfo Becquer* (1836 -1870) authored poetry that has risen in popularity and esteem with twentieth-century poets and critics, in contrast with that of Campoamor and Nunez de Arce, which has suffered. Many now feel that Becquer's poetry, although slight in quantity, is the greatest poetry of the century, principally because of his ability to foresee and to predict, in a sense, the modern schools of poetry. He is perhaps the purest Romanticist of all Spanish poets, for unlike Espronceda, he reveals no pose or showmanship in his sadness. But there is more than Romanticism in Becquer, as we will be pointed out.

Christened Gustavo Adolfo Dominguez Bastida, Becquer was orphaned at an early age, and he was left in the care of his godmother. At eighteen he went to Madrid in search of literary fame but did not find it. He took a number of jobs, married unhappily, and left three children at his death. Because of a serious illness, Becquer retired to Veruela with Valeriano, his favorite brother, to recuperate. They spent a year there, and Becquer wrote several works. Becquer died at the age of thirty-four, exhausted by tuberculosis. He never knew the acclaim of the public as Espronceda, Campoamor, or Zorilla did, and his poetry reflects his sad, impoverished, sick life. Luis Gonzalez Bravo, Isabel II's minister who had promised to publish Becquer's *Rimas*, was deposed by the revolution in 1868, and the manuscript was lost. Becquer rewrote the *Rimas*, and it was published posthumously in 1871. Some variation of number and order exists, but the standard order in most editions is that of Becquer's friend, Narciso Campillo.

Becquer's fame rests on this one small volume. These love poems constitute what one might consider a spiritual autobiography of the poet. At the outset we see an almost ecstatic yearning for poetry. He sees his love in nature and in his imaginary muse in the form of a woman. He finally meets his woman of flesh and blood and becomes desperately enamored of her. At first, she is cool to his love, but he manages to win her affection. His rapture ends with the hint of a bitter quarrel and his dismissal as she refuses to recognize him. His love continues, however, as he tries in vain to win her once more, and he consoles himself with the thought of approaching death. The *Rimas* close with meditations on death and nature, together with an expression of fears and desires. Some critics have felt that the *Rimas* are a running true commentary on the poet's love for Julia Espin y Guillen, the daughter of a music professor, who later married an influential politician.

Throughout the seventy-six little poems (some say seventy-nine or eighty, for no authentic edition exists), the poet is deeply subjective and sentimental. He represents a kind of purification of the exaggerations of Romanticism. The style is effortless and natural; the keynote is simplicity. He avoids altogether the rhetoric and inflation of Nunez de Arce and all other preceding poets and makes use of suggestiveness that the Symbolist poets did not discover until the end of the century. The simplicity of style, the musicality of the verses, the theme of love, and the appeal of Becquer's sentimentality and melancholy have made him a great favorite.

In his poetry as in his prose legends, Becquer's world is one of half shadows, uncertain shapes, suggestions of feelings and sentiments. There is nothing solid, but the poet carries the reader with him as he combines music with delicate and fugitive words and almost intangible, unutterable feelings. His poetry is full of sighs, dry leaves, smoke, gilded threads of spider webs, and wispy fog. There is a total effect of immense sadness, almost desperation, and above all resignation and tenderness. His poetry

exhales suffering. As one critic has said; "He has caught the subtle vibrations of an ethereal music."

Aside from their intrinsic merit, Becquer's poems have had a great influence on the development of modern poets. Damaso Alonso has said that Becquer is the "punto de arranque," the starting point, of all contemporary Spanish poetry. "Cualquier poeta de hoy," he says, "se siente mucho mas cerca de Becquer (y en parte, de Rosalia de Castro) que de Zorrilla, de Nunez de Arce o de Ruben Dario." This closeness in spirit to Becquer is due in large part to the fact that Becquer was really the first to see the difference between the traditional, pompous, rhetorical Spanish poetry that had been written up to his time and the new style of short, unadorned, simple poetry. Becquer himself made very clear the distinction between the two types.

In the second type, his own, which he called "the poetry of poets," he points out the direction that modern Spanish poetry will take, showing the coming generations how to write poetry that insinuates and suggests, that brushes lightly against you and then departs. Becquer attempted to convey the interrelationship of reality and dream, and in his poetry, pure affect related to sight and touch, he tried to define his inspiration, the "children of his fantasy."

Jorge Guillen feels that had Becquer lived as long as Zorrilla or Nunez de Arce, he would have been Spain's greatest lyric poet of the nineteenth century. Juan Ramon Jimenez, Ruben Dario, and others truly appreciated him, and modern critics agree that he is the principal precursor of Modernism. To understand Becquer's poetry is to understand more about our contemporaries. This poet could indeed be called the prophet of twentieth-century Spanish poetry.

Becquer's best prose work, *Leyendas* (1860 – 1864), is a group of delicate, rhythmic, Romantic legends in the style of Hoffmann and Poe. Almost all are set in a medieval atmosphere of ruins, monasteries, and churches. The supernatural, a magical sense, and fantasy were his strong points. Among his well-known legends are *Maese Perez, organista; los ojos verdes; and La ajorca de oro*. *Desde mi celda*, a collection of literary letters written from the Monastery of Veruela in 1864, describes the countryside and the persons he met. This, too, is touched with the subjective magic and poignant message of all his work.

- b. *Rosalía de Castro* (1837 – 1885) had a life that, like Becquer's, was sorrowful and unhappy. Like Becquer she was disillusioned and melancholy, and like him she died a victim of a terrible sickness. Like Becquer she made poetry a personal, unashamed outpouring of sentiment and tried to express with words what cannot be uttered but only suggested. The musicality of her verse, the tenderness the vagueness, the symbolism and imagery, and the suggestiveness and intuition have endeared her to twentieth century poets, who have found in her, as in Becquer, pure poetry – simple, unrheterical, interpreting an atmosphere and reflecting a state of soul but never describing in the traditional manner. Her fame, which was slight in her own lifetime, has increased steadily since her death. Brennan judges that she would be the greatest poetess of modern times had she written all her poetry in Spanish.

Born out of wedlock (her father was a priest), Rosalia was raised until her ninth year by a peasant woman. From her peasant relationships as a child she absorbed the spirit of Galician folk song that she used so beautifully later. At nineteen she went to Madrid to live. There she met the poets and writers of her day and began to write herself. City life however, had little attraction for her, and she grew immensely homesick for her native soil. She could find no beauties in the Castilian landscape, which augmented her *soidade* ("homesickness"). Perhaps because of this she became interested in a young Galician writer living in Madrid, Manuel Martinez Murguia, whom she later married. Her husband mistreated her, and her health failed as she struggled constantly against poverty to rear and educate her five children. Her emotional conflicts, occasioned by shame over the irregularity of her birth and the disfiguring effects of her disease, cancer, caused her finally to withdraw from the world and to see no one during the last years of her life. She died in her beloved native land at the relatively young age of forty - eight.

Rosalia de Castro wrote many novels, among them *La hija del mar* (1859) and *El caballero de las botas azules* (1867), but she is essentially a great poetess. Much of her poetry was written in Galician, not used for poetry for many centuries, but she knew the folk song that had preserved the vagueness, melancholy, and suggestiveness of Galician poetry. Her Galician volumes, *Cantares Gallegos* (1863), intensely personal, and *Folhas novas* (1880), filled with deep despair and melancholy, prepared the way for her last volume, in Spanish, *En las orillas del Sar* (1884), a collection of poetry written over many years, some shortly before her death. Slow and painful cancer caused her concern, and the poems reveal her longing for the relief of the life beyond death as well as a love and yearning for her native land. We see the past days that will never return as she expresses her deep failing for Galicia, its nature, customs, and the miseries and suffering of the poor. The poems reflect the counterpoint, through nature, of hope and despair, approaching spring and fatal winter. She reflects both an inner and outer reality, the autumn light, night and pain, a desire for happiness, and a kind of mystical union with the universe. Tormented, feeling unloved, and experiencing the shadow of impalpable desires, she awaited an approaching death.

The poetess experimented with meter, harmonies, assonance, and varied lines of poetry. Her poetry, completely personal, is modern in its nostalgic poetry she repeatedly drifts in dreams back to her native land where shapes are indecisive, and the essences of things are intangible. Along with Becquer's, her poetry is the purest of the transition period that stretched from Romanticism to Modernism.

3. *The costumbrista poets* include the following:

- a. *Jose Maria Gabriel y Galan* (1870 – 1905), schoolteacher and farmer, represents a direction that is altogether different from that taken by other poets of the transition period. In him we find an expression of regionalism and *costumbrismo* as he describes life in his isolated little archaic town in Extremadura. He had a sincere, deep feeling for the country life and Spanish catholic tradition preserved by the Castilian peasants. He anticipated the coming Generation of 1898 with his appreciation and glorification of the Castilian landscape but fell short of their artistic tastes and standards. He was fond of the rustic sayings of the people, extolled the simplicity of rural life, used dialect in some of his poems, and optimistically bore sorrows and burdens. His best side is the descriptive one. His best-known poems are *El ama*, for which he became famous overnight, and *El cristu benditu*. Among his collections are *Castellanas* (1902) and *Religiosas* (1906).
- b. *Vicente Medina y Tomas* (1866 – 1936), journalist, soldier, schoolteacher, and poet, who hailed from Murcia, is another regionalist. His first book of poetry, *Aires murcianos* (1898), was edited by Azorin and was well received by known literary figures, among them Unamuno and Clarin. Medina had but one style – a regionalistic, rustic type of poetry expressed in simple language flavored with frequent use of dialect. His chief defect, consequently, is monotony, for he could only repeat himself rather than give new dimensions to his muse. He created, however, a different kind of regional poetry, which Federico de Onis feels close to that of the Modernists; by concentrating on the popular soul and spirit in their primitive, elemental aspects rather than on the picturesque, local color or physical appearance of his region as his predecessors had done, he produced poems of a simple but human impact. This type of *costumbrismo*, regional only in a limited sense, was an original contribution of Medina and had a widespread influence among local and regional Spanish and Spanish-American poets. Other collections characteristic of his manner is *Alma del pueblo* (1900) and *La cancion de la huerta* (1905).

Part II : DRAMA

ROMANTICISM

A. General Considerations

With the explosion of Romanticism in Spain in 1833 the unproductive formulas of Neoclassicism died, and Spain succumbed to the new literary fashion sweeping Europe. Romanticism was more a revolt against the precepts and moderation of Neoclassicism than it was a concrete literary movement. Consequently, Spain's dramatists abandoned all restraint discarded the unities, mingled prose and verse, and mixed comedy with tragedy. Emotionalism sensationalism. Sinister atmosphere, and the melodramatic replaced reason and moderation. Subjectivity replaced objectivity. Spaniards discovered Romanticism in Lope and Calderon and learned that the new movement was as much a revival as a revolt. There was a new interest in the national past especially the Middle Ages, prompted in part by the studies of Johann Nicholas Bohl von Faber and the Schlegel brothers enthusiasm for the *romancero* and Calderon. Violence inexorable fate, and characters distinguished by their passions appeared on the Spanish stage. Musical and flexible poetry served as the vehicle for the mysterious and passionate.

Agustin Duran's influential document *Discurso sobre el influjo que ha tenido la critica moderna en la decadencia del teatro antiguo espanol* (1828), in which he based his idea of romanticism on the *siglo de Oro* Bohl von Faber's idea defends the national theater; insists that each country must follow its own genius; declares that Spain's genius rests in the *Siglo de Oro* and in the popular element found in the epic the *romancero*, and the theater; and maintains that Spanish literature declined because it left its natural bent.

B. Francisco Martinez de la Rosa (1787 – 1862)

Martinez de la Rosa, a compulsive neurotic about cleanliness, was in and out of politics all his life. Imprisoned and exiled for six years, he was freed by the *levantamiento de Riego* in 1820. Hated by the reactionaries and cruelly labeled "Rosita la pastelera," he attempted always to choose *el justo medio*.

Although he wrote one Romantic novel, *Dona Isabel de Solis* (1837), and other Romantic plays, Martinez de la Rosa is known primarily for two Romantic dramas: *Aben Humeya*, written in French in 1830, translated into Spanish in 1834, but not performed in Madrid until 1836; and *La conjuracion de Venecia* (1834) in which some critics see the profound influence of Victor Hugo's *Hernani*. In *Aben Humeya* he stated that he wished to present a Spanish historical theme as something new and original but in keeping with good taste. *La conjuracion de Venecia* presented for the first time the essential traits of Romantic tragedy: ubiquitous and inexorable fate, the pantheon, and unrestrained emotionalism. Yet lovers are well drawn. In both plays the author makes use of local color, disregards the unities, and cultivates the sensational and exotic, mystery, extravagance, and suspense.

C. Angel de Saavedra, Duque de Rivas (1791 – 1865)

The Duque de Rivas, born into a family of grandees, fought valiantly for the Republic and was wounded several times. For his political activities he was twice exiled, first as a liberal and later as a conservative. In after years he served his country in important posts at home and abroad.

While living on the island of Malta, he was urged by the Englishman John H. Frere, a Romanticist, to seek poetic themes in the history of his own country. This Rivas accomplished with the writing of *El moro exposito*, his first Romantic work.

Rivas wrote several Neoclassic dramas, such as *Alfatar* (1816), but his is most famous for the Romantic drama *Don Alvaro o la fuerza del sino* (1835), which confirmed the triumph of Romanticism in Spain. Here Rivas condensed all the aesthetic ideas of Romanticism and created a Romantic hero to compete with Werther or Manfred. It's premiere in Madrid was sensational, as Rivas ran the gamut of the elements of the Romantic theater; duels, nocturnal meetings tempests, thunder, fate, and suicide.

Don Alvaro, the typical Romantic hero, is of mysterious origin yet clearly a gentleman. Denied even a moments happiness by an unrelenting fate, he is driven to commit crimes against his will and even denied the solace of an honorable death. The drama is full of wild, emotional elements, and its verse is sonorous and passionate.

Despite the intense Romanticism of the play, Rivas, an excellent painter, made use of realistic local color at the beginning of each act through *cuadros de costumbres*, which portray situations true to life. This, along with a few comic elements, afforded relief from the tenseness of the plot. With his excellent plastic sense and power of observation, Rivas was able to give detailed instructions for stage settings, scenery, and machines. The implicit social commentary and Alvaro's final despair, defiance, and suicide add to this drama's unique impact. *Don Alvaro* was immensely popular in its day and is still readable. Its fame soon spread abroad, where it influenced Verdi's opera *La Forza del Destino*.

El desengano en un sueño (1844), considered by many to be as important as *Don Alvaro*, is reminiscent of Gracians *Criticon*, Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and especially Calderon's *La vida es sueño*. On the basis of his work, Valbuena ranks Rivas second only to Calderon in symbolic drama. Readers have praised Rivas's poetry, dramatic interest, and especially his profound philosophical thought in this version of the theme of the awakened sleeper. Filled with the standard Romantic intrigue, mystery, apparitions, and murder, the play emphasizes disillusion with the world.

D. Juan Eugenio Hartzenbusch (1806 – 1880)

Hartzenbusch, son of a German father and Spanish mother, had to practice his father's vocation, cabinetmaking, when the absolutist reaction of 1823 deprived his family of all its wealth. Later his acknowledged erudition gained him good positions, and he was happily employed all his life.

In addition to solid works of literary criticism, Hartzenbusch wrote *costumbrista* sketches and poetry that was mostly erudite, moral, philosophical, and political. His fables reveal a good sense of humor. He translated French and Italian plays and later turned to reworking *comedias* of Lope, Tirso, and Calderon and producing editions for the *Biblioteca de Autores Espanoles*. He wrote twenty-nine dramas, most of them carefully constructed and polished, in which he used historical, Biblical, and magical themes. He also wrote some thesis plays.

His place in Spanish literary history stems, however, from his best play, *Los amantes de Teruel*, written in 1835 but not produced until 1837. Actually, he wrote two versions of this drama, based on an old Spanish legend used previously by other dramatists. He 1837 version contains five acts. The 1849 revision has four acts and changes especially the role of Margarita, Isabel's mother. Hartzenbusch may not have succeeded in producing the great love drama of the Spanish theater, but personal tragedy and Romantic techniques aside, he managed to create an unusual historical play filled with a strong social sense and with characters who far excel the Romantic stereotypes of the day.

E. Antonio Garcia Gutierrez (1813 – 1884)

Partly because of disappointment at not seeing his play *El trovador* produced, the author joined the army. When it was produced for the first time in 1836, he left his post without permission to see it.

Garcia Gutierrez composed some poetry and some *articulos de costumbres*. He authored some eighty plays, served as director of the National Library and was elected to the Spanish Academy in 1862. Among his half dozen outstanding plays, one should mention his masterpiece, *El trovador* (1836), as well as *Simon Bocanegra* (1843), *Venganza catalana* (1864), and *Juan Lorenzo* (1865). He wrote in the usual manner of the Romantics, employing historic legendary themes, sonorous and declamatory verse, startling dramatic effects, dungeons, battlefield scenes, and unbridled passions revealing a rich and vivid imagination.

In *El trovador*, combining prose and verse in five acts, Garcia Gutierrez reveals his outstanding ability to portray female protagonists. As in other dramas, he concentrates here on the power of love and vengeance. He used his play to deliver his sentiments about revolution and a liberal political and social message.

F. Jose Zorrilla y Moral (1817 – 1893)

This "spoiled darling" of Romanticism became a public favorite overnight when he recited his poetic composition at Larra's burial in 1837. He wrote voluminously, leaving volumes of lyric poetry, *leyendas*, and drama. Leading a haphazard bohemian existence, he unwisely married a woman many years his senior and was later widowed.

He went to Mexico, where Maximilian made him court poet and granted him a pension. He was enthusiastically received upon his return to Spain, and many honors were bestowed on him. Yet he spent his last days in poverty.

Zorrilla was an exuberant often careless, and hasty writer, and inveterate improviser, and a shallow thinker; but perhaps his greatest literary sin was verbosity. Although genuine pearls appear in his work, one is dismayed at the amount of mediocre verse one must digest before coming across one of the loftier passages. He had the knack of versification however, and regardless of his faults, he was capable of attaining great lyrical heights almost effortlessly. His theater is alive, passionate, and national in spirit. He wrote *comedias de capa y espada* in the Golden Age tradition, Classical tragedies, and historicolegendary

plays based upon moving incidents from national history. Among the best of his more than thirty plays are *El punal del godo* (1842); *El zapatero y el rey* (1840); and *Traidor, inconfeso y martir* (1849), the latter of which is considered by many critics to be his best play. In three acts and verse, it revives the *sebastianista* theme as the mysterious central character, Gabriel Espinosa, is suspected of being King Sebastian of Portugal. Jose Maria Diaz is credited with having collaborated on the second act.

Zorrilla is remembered mainly however, for one play *Don Juan Tenorio* (1844). This world-famous figure, first dramatized by Tirso and used by others before Zorrilla, received his most successful reincarnation at the hands of the "troubadour poet." Zorrilla despised his own play for its obvious imperfections, which he himself pointed out, and sold it for a handful of *reales*. He referred to its *mal gusto* and *ligereza improvisora*. Yet it became the most successful play of the nineteenth century and is still played at the approach of All Saints' Day in many important Spanish-speaking venters. Despite its shortcomings, such as its improbabilities, inconsistencies, and other signs of careless craftsmanship, it has become an international institution and has delighted the common people for almost a century and a half.

Some of the appeal of this drama may be accounted for by the fascination of the main character himself, his charm and seductiveness, and the popularity of the theme. Equally attractive is the combination of adventure with a religious theme. Also, Zorrilla's don Juan may be more appealing to some than Tirso's, for he is more human and more generous, and his dona Ines is more attractive than her counterpart in Tirso's version. Finally, the conclusion of Zorrilla's drama, in which don Juan repents and is saved from damnation, may be more pleasant to contemplate than Tirso's ending, in which don Juan, repenting too late is consumed by the fires of hell. Brisk, vigorous, colorful, filled with emotion and melodiously versified, *Don Juan Tenorio* is one of Spain's best-known dramas.

G. Mariano Jose de Larra (1809 – 1837)

Angel del Rio has pointed out that Larra was the opposite of Rivas. Rivas was Romantic in form and Classical in spirit, while Larra was Classical in form and Romantic in spirit. Best known as a composer of *articulos de costumbres* and a literary critic, Larra wrote one of the successes of the Romantic theater, *Macias* (1834). He had written a novel on the same theme, *El doncel de don Enrique el Doliente* (1834), and the play is a dramatization of the novel, but the theatrical production differs considerably from the novelistic account. Enrique Pineyro considered *Macias* which influenced both *El trovador* and *Los amantes de Terul*, to be the first Spanish Romantic drama in verse, though Larra refused to label it as either Neoclassic or Romantic.

Larra had excellent gifts as a satirist and prosist, but he was not exceptionally endowed as a dramatist. He wrote several adaptations of French plays, mostly under the pseudonym Ramon Arriala. The best of them, which Larra defended as quite original, was *No mas mostrador* (1831), a satiric comedy based on a work by Scribe.

H. Other Romantic Dramatists

Many others contributed to the Romantic theater in Spain. Some were total converts, some were lukewarm experimenters in their youth, some were Eclectics, others were writers of thesis plays, and still others wrote chiefly in altogether different genres. At one time in their careers, however, they tried the Romantic drama, an indication of how deeply Romanticism had permeated the literary fabric of the time. The following belong at least in part to Spain's Romantic theater: Mariano Roda de Togores (1812 – 1889), Tomas Rodriguez Diaz Runi (1817 – 1890), Gertrudis Gomez de Avellaneda (1814 – 1873), Eulogio Florentino Sanz (1825? – 1881), Patricio de la Escosura (1807 – 1878), Carolina Coronado (1820 – 1911), Eugenio de Ochoa (1815 – 1872), Antonio Gil y Zarate (1793 – 1861), Manuel Breton de los Herreros (1796 – 1873), and Ventura de la Vega (1807 – 1865).

THE REALISTIC THEATER OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

A. General Considerations

The Realistic theater of didactic intent existed before the Romantic movement became the leading literary movement, and outlived Romanticism by some fifty years. In the first half of the century the Eclectics dominated, combining Classical and Romantic ideas. In the transition period between

Romanticism and Realism, playwrights largely abandoned historical dramas, though some continued to produce them with more attention to detail and psychological elements. With the rise of the middle class around 1850, a new type of social satire called *alta comedia* appeared. By the end of the century it had evolved toward the elegant modern comedy of Benavente.

Realists developed the drama of social satire and the thesis play, showing a decided preference for criticizing the weaknesses, foibles, and vices of their contemporaries. They also felt compelled to censure materialism in an age when money provided more luxuries and pleasures. In many cases the liberal and modern ideas expressed by an author through his characters offered a dramatic contrast with the traditional motives of honor and duty. In their thesis plays dramatists failed to find any real answers and often resorted to commonplace doctrines or even passionate outbursts.

B. Manuel Breton de los Herreros (1796 – 1873)

Breton who wrote before, during, and after the Romantic movement, was immune to its effects. He cultivated instead a *costumbrista* theater related in spirit to the work of Mesonero Romanos. First a soldier and later a journalist, as a dramatist he was the best follower of the Moratinian tradition, without his master's precision but with more naturalness and comic force. Abandoning the strict Moratinian style, he took the first steps toward a Realistic comedy of manners and drama of social satire but without serious philosophical pretensions.

Breton was at his best when dealing with bourgeois customs, especially in a satiric and critical manner. Yet, never bitter, he exemplified a festive and pleasant spirit that allowed him to satirize without offending. In addition to composing more than one hundred original dramas, he translated copiously from the French theater and produced ten *refundiciones* of Golden Age dramas.

Among his best dramas are *Marcela o cual de los tres?* (1831), a comically satiric play dealing with the quandary of a girl who has to choose one of three unfit suitors, a situation that gives Breton the opportunity to satirize middle-class types; and *muerete y veras* (1837), a satiric play in which the rarity of true friendship is illustrated by the admonition: die, and you will see who your true friends are. Other important titles are *El pelo de la dehesa* (1840) and *La escuela del matrimonio* (1852).

C. Ventura de la Vega (1807 – 1865)

Born in Buenos Aires, Vega came to Spain at an early age and soon achieved prominence. His early reputation stemmed from his translations and imitations of the Song of Songs (1825) and Psalms (1826). He adapted tragedies from the French, especially from Scribe, and wrote some historical plays, but his best work is in the Moratinian style, and he was most effective in the drama of social criticism. An eclectic, he continued Breton's work and initiated the *alta comedia*, later perfected by Lopez de Ayala. Of fifteen plays, his best is *El hombre de mundo* (1845), a satiric portrayal of the life of the middle classes, anticipating somewhat the work of Benavente.

Also, interested in a minor art form, Vega initiated the modern *zarzuela*. His *Jugar con fuego*, with music by Barbieri, can still be heard with pleasure.

D. Manuel Tamayo y Baus (1829 – 1898)

Born the son of actors and married to an actress Tamayo showed an inclination for the theater at an early age and developed into one of the outstanding dramatists between Moratin and Benavente. An eclectic, he tried every form of the drama among his more than fifty theatrical pieces: Classical tragedy, Romantic national dramas, and Realistic comedies of moral intent. He also adapted and translated foreign plays. Among his works are *Virginia* (1853), a five-act tragedy in verse about honor and liberty; *La locura de amor* (1855), a Romantic historical play based upon the life of Juana *la Loca*, filled with sentiment and passion; *La bola de nieve* (1856), about the effects of unfounded jealousy; *Lances de honor* (1863), a thesis play about dueling; *No hay mal que por bien no venga* (1868); and *Los hombres de bien* (1870).

His masterpiece, *Un drama nuevo* (1867), a three-act tragedy, excels other plays of its time. It tells the story of Yorick, the clown of Shakespeare's troupe, who plays on the stage the part of the deceived husband only to find that he is playing the same part in real life. This play influenced Leoncavallo's opera *I Pagliacci*.

As a social critic, Tamayo continued the trend established by Breton and Vega in satirizing the middle class. Particularly incensed by the Positivism and love of money in his day Tamayo criticized them in *Lo positivo* (1862). His dramatic creed, he claimed, was to paint "el retrato moral del hombre on todas sus deformidades...y emplearlo como instrument de la Prodigencia para realiar ejemplos de provehosa ensenanz.

E. Adelardo Lopez de Ayala (1828 – 1879)

Lopez de Ayala, whose work resembles that of his intimate friend Tamayo y Baus, also inherited the style of Breton and Vega and refined it in his *alta comedia*. His artistic production consists of two distinct periods; he first wrote historical plays and then thesis plays. But even in his historical period he tried to develop "un pensamiento moral, profundo y consolador." He made the assertion in the preface to his first historical piece, *Un hombre de estado* (1851), in which he concentrates on the responsibilities of leadership and the virtue of duty.

His thesis plays, written to criticize and yet improve the lives of his contemporaries, emphasize moral themes, at times to the loss of dramatic impact. Some compare him with Juan Ruiz de Alarcon because of his careful attention to detail and skillful juggling of language and effects. His first such play was *El tejado de vidrio* (1856). In the better-known *El tanto por ciento* (1861), an attack on materialism, Positivism, and greed. Lopez de Ayala preaches in favor of high public and private morals, insisting that true love is more important than money, a favorite concept of his. *Consuelo* (1878), his masterpiece presents his one good character study (not his strong point because of his emphasis on a thesis) in the portrait of a woman who chooses wealth over love, to her sorrow.

F. Jose Echegaray (1832 – 1916)

Echegaray, a crowd pleaser, made concessions to public taste and ruled as undisputed king of the stage from 1874 with appearance of his first play, *El libro talomario*, to the end of the century, when Benavete revolutionized dramatic literature Echegaraym unloved by twentieth-century critics, was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature, which he shared with the Provencal poet Mistral. The award aroused a storm of protest in Spain among the writers of the younger generation who rebelled against everything for which Echegaray stood.

An important physicist and mathematician as well as a politician and statesman and the founder of the Bank of Spain, Echegaray wrote his first play at age forty-two and thereafter turned out one or two "hits" a year, producing some seventy plays. Though the critics kept pointing out his shortcomings the public responded enthusiastically to his plays. Each premiere was received with noisy acclaim.

Though he is generally classified as a belated Romanticist, Echegaray attended the theater regularly in his student days in Madrid to see the Romantic works of Hartzbusch and the realistic ones of Lopez de Ayala and Tamayo y Baus. These authors influenced his formation and development as a dramatist. His thesis plays, melodramatic and sensational, nonetheless depart from the usual Romantic technique by replacing the legendary and exotic with problems of the home and modern society. Echegaray also used the honor theme, placing his characters in agonizing situations in which they have to choose between duty and passion. About half of his plays were in verse, but he frequently used grandiloquent and sensational prose. He preferred to deal with strong emotions, and most of his plays end in tragedy and death. Although his plots were precisely engineered, Echegaray had little regard for logic or psychological verity, and he strained for effect in declamatory and exaggerated dialogue. His inflexible personages move about in a conventional world, harassed by passion or *idea fixe* that leads to their own death or to someone else's. Creatures of his imagination many of his characters border on the abnormal. His unyielding situations seem contrived and his plays exhibit an unusual patchwork of influences, among them Calderon, Romanticism, Naturalism, Ibsen, and social criticism.

The best of his day despite his faults, Echegaray had a lively imagination, a fecundity of invention, a keen sense of tragedy, and an unerring ability to portray the strong situation. His dramas created emotion and stirred audiences deeply, perhaps because he believed that “lo sublime del arte esta en el llanto en el dolor y la muerte.” Using honor, duty, and love, with a liberal sprinkling of adultery together with the time-worn fate motive filled his plays with feverish and exaggerated passions; but he also applied his art to the social problems and prejudices of his society.

Echegaray’s two best-known plays are *O locura o santidad* (1877) and *el gran galeoto* (1881), the latter regarded as his masterpiece. The first of these, a combination thesis and honor play, relates the story of a quixotic protagonist whose sense of duty inclines him to return his wealth to its rightful owners. To forestall any such insanity, his own heirs commit him to an asylum. Typically, Echegaray insists upon the enforcement of honor even through the innocent will be hurt, and he exploits the dramatic situation skillfully. *El gran galeoto* deals with slander and frivolous gossip that destroy a marriage. Society as a whole is responsible, for as one of the victims says in the prologue “el gran galeoto” is “todo el mundo.” Filled with passionate outbursts and characters writhing in melodramatic agony the play can only end in tragedy. Here again Echegaray combines an honor tragedy, social protest and Romantic passion.

Other important titles of Echegaray’s production are *La esposa del vengador* (1874); *El puno de la espada* (1875); *el seno de la muerte* (1879); *La muerte en los labios* (1880); *el hijo de don Juan* (1892); *Mariana* (1892); *Mancha que limpia* (1895); and *A fuerza de arrastrarse* (1905).

G. Benito Perez Galdos (1843 – 1920)

Although he was Spain’s foremost novelist after Cervantes, Galdos unsuccessfully attempted to write for the theater in his early twenties. His first mature play however was not performed until 1892. Possessor of a keen psychological insight and the ability to create powerful characters, he nonetheless lacked the dramatic technique and feeling needed to create the perfect play. Many of his plays dramatizations of his novels by necessity develop more succinctly and clearly social theses involving justice, truth, and individual liberty.

Despite his relative failure as a dramatist, the strength, deep emotion, and sharp insight into human nature that characterize his novels are visible in his plays. *Electra* (1901), his most successful drama, reiterates a favorite theme of the author, the conflict between obscurantism and progress. *El abuelo* (1904), a stage adaptation of his novel by the same name, attempts to show the leveling power of love and that nobility is not a matter of birth but of spirit and heart, another favorite theme. Other plays are *La loca de la casa* (1893) and *La de San Quintin* (1894).

H. Lesser Dramatist of the Nineteenth Century

1. *Gaspar Nunez de Arce* (1834 – 1903), better known as a lyric poet, wrote a number of dramas, among them his masterpiece *El haz de lena* (1872), recognized as the best historical play of the nineteenth century. The author, promoting religious tolerance, exhibits good psychological penetration and empathy in delineating the struggle between love and duty in the father (Felipell) of a rebellious son (Carlos). Other plays are *Deudas de la honra* (1863) and *Quien debe paga* (1867).

2. *Joaquin Dicenta* (1863 – 1917) unsuccessfully attempted to apply Echegaray’s violent emotion to proletarian themes. Credited with initiating Naturalism on the Spanish stage, Dicenta preferred themes such as those of an honest workman made a criminal by brutal treatment (*Juan Jose*, 1895) and a convict regenerated by love (*El lobo*, 1913).

Eugenio Selles (1844-1926), with *El nudo gordiano* (1878), and *Leopoldo Cano* (1844-1934), author of *La opinion publica* (1878), could not equal Echegaray’s lead. *Enrique Gaspar* (1842 – 1902), with his satire, Realism, and social consciousness, took a stride toward Benavente.

I. The *genero chico*

In the second half of the nineteenth century the *zarzuela*, in its modern version a one-act operetta with music, song, and sometimes dancing alternating with dialogue, became immensely popular in Spain. Whether satiric, popular, or *costumbrista*, *zarzuelas* frequently depict in a comical vein low-life character types of Madrid. One of the most successful composers of *zarzuelas* was Francisco Asenjo Barbieri. Among writers of books are Ricardo de la Vega, Carlos Arniches, Javier de Burgos, and Vital Aza. Musicians include Valverde, Chapi, and Tomas Breton. One of the best-loved *zarzuelas* is *La verbena de la paloma* by Ricardo de la Vega and Tomas Breton.

Part III : FICTION

A. Romanticism

Spanish Romantic novelists imitated Sir Walter Scott, the dominating figure of the time but Manzoni's novels were also known in Spain, as were those of Chateaubriand and James Fenimore Cooper. In 1830 Ramon Lopez Soler (1806 – 1836) wrote one of the first Spanish historical novels in imitation of Scott, *Los bandos de Castilla; o, El caballero del Cisne*. Larra produced *El doncel de don Enrique el doliente* (1834), based on the legend of Macias. Successful in its period, like other historical novels it has not stood the test of time. Espronceda wrote *Sancho Saldana* (1834), but his true forte was poetry. The best Spanish Romantic novel was *El señor de Bembibre* (1844), by Enrique Gil y Carrasco (1815 – 1846).

The pseudo archeological novelistic prose of the Romantic age failed to give rise to a permanent figure, but Manuel Fernandez y Gonzalez (1821 – 1888) devoted a lifetime to this type of novel and wrote over three hundred of them. The number of such novels printed in the first half of the nineteenth century attests to their popularity. Although nothing of permanent value came from these works, it must be said that the Romanticists' appreciation of landscape was passed on to the Realistic novelists of the second half of the century, who developed it with greater skill and made it an important part of their art.

B. *Costumbrismo*

Flourishing in the years preceding Romanticism and representing a continuation of the realistic prose manner, *costumbrismo* proved to be one of the most popular literary forms in the first half of the century and was cultivated even by some confirmed Romanticists. The realistic portrayal of manners customs, and characters reached a minor peak in short prose sketches (occasionally in verse) depicting various social backgrounds.

The oppressive censorship of Fernando VII's despotic reign delayed the arrival of Romanticism in Spain. The *articulos de costumbres* was tolerated, since it was thought to be innocuous although a very definite shift in tone is noticeable after the death of Fernando and the establishment of a liberal government. The *costumbrista* literature has of course, an inherent value, but more important, the *costumbristas* probably laid the groundwork for the regional novel. In fact, the first such novel was largely a stringing-together of *cuadros de costumbres* on a negligible plot. Viewed in this light, the nineteenth-century regional novel was an outgrowth of *costumbrista* on a negligible plot. Viewed in this light, the nineteenth-century regional novel was an outgrowth of the *costumbrista* manner. Another school of thought, however, feels that one reason for the comparative lateness of the development of the novel in Spain in the nineteenth century was that the *articulos de costumbres*, by serving the purpose of fiction and satisfying readers, may have delayed it.

C. The Regional Novel

One of the highlights of Spanish literature is the regional novel of the second half of the nineteenth century. Developing out of *costumbrismo* and the rich realistic manner of earlier centuries, the regional novel represents a reaction against the passions, artificiality, and sentimentality of Romanticism. In the early years of the regional novel, writers depended on their own tradition and native forebears for example and subject matter. Later, influences from France drifted across the

border, and a few Spaniards attempted Naturalism but tempered it with typical Spanish warmth and subjectivity.

Since the novel was concerned with life in various areas of Spain and since the novelists were interested in portraying that life down to the smallest detail, it was natural that they should limit themselves to descriptions of the regions of the land they knew best. Galdos was the only writer who was able to invade all regions of Spain with success. The regional novel, however, was not merely a collection of *cuadros de costumbres* haphazardly joined together by some sort of plot, for it soon outgrew its infancy and blossomed into one of the great novels of Spanish literature.

1. *Cecilia Bohl von Faber* (1796 – 1877), better known by her pen name, Fernan Caballero, produced the first well known regional novel, *La gaviota*, in 1849. She wrote it first in French and then translated it into Spanish, which may account for some of the stylistic maladroitness. *La gaviota* lacks a realistic technique, though it does convey an image of life in a definite historical time and place. The story of the gifted peasant girl whose lovers die and who loses her beautiful singing voice is essentially Romantic. Nevertheless, Fernan Caballero carefully observed popular customs and used a realistic tone. As she said, “La novela no se inventa, se observa.” Her work suffers from an excessively moral tone and from her sentimental idealization of the picturesque. Also, we see in her work the theme of Antonio de Guevara’s *Menosprecio de corte y alabanza de aldea*. As in Pereda’s later novels, the city to Fernan Caballero is a “den of iniquity” where the lovely heroine is beset by all kinds of evil temptations.

Among her other novels are *Clemencia* (1852), *La familia de Alvarada* (1856), and *Un servilón y un liberalidad* (1857). Her realistic portrayal of Andalusian customs was a welcome relief after the vagaries and artificialities of the Romantic novel, in spite of her old-fashioned ideas and prejudices, lack of imagination, reactionary manner, and faulty style. To her credit is her democratic interest in common people and her insistence upon the importance and value of simple things and a wholesome life. Her chief claim to distinction is that she was the first to write a regional novel.

2. *Pedro Antonio de Alarcon* (1833 – 1891), one of Spain’s greatest humorists, was from Andalusia. As a young man he was a radical revolutionary, but he later became a conservative and a staunch defender of religion. He was elected to the Cortes and, in 1877, to the Royal Academy.

His works can be divided into long and short novels, short stories, travel books, and miscellaneous writings. His four full-length novels are *El final de Norma* (1851), *El escandalo* (1875), *El niño de la bola* (1880), and *La prodiga* (1881). *El final de Norma*, a youthful work about the love of a violinist for a singer, against the setting of fantastic and romantic adventures in the north, achieved an undeserved popularity, and the author himself declared it to be “naïve, childish, fantastic...commonplace.”

In *El escandalo* Alarcon offers a strong defense of the Catholic religion and attempts to prove that immorality and religious inconstancy inevitably bring tragedy. Because it deals with religious matters, it has been his most controversial book, eliciting glowing praise and hearty condemnation. The exceedingly complicated plot tends toward Romanticism, as do most of his semi-realistic works.

Alarcon’s fame rests largely, however on his shorter novels, *El capitán Veneno* (1881) and *El sombrero de tres picos* (1874). The former concerns a misogynist tamed by his sweet and charming nurse, who uses psychology to get her man.

El sombrero de tres picos, his most famous work, has served as the basis of operas in French, German, and English and ranks on par with Cervantes’ *Novelas ejemplares*. It is based on a ballad theme, *El molinero de Arcos*, and is little more than a short story. Its humor, fast pace, and intriguing characters make it an ever-readable work. The best features of Spanish Realism are combined with the rich picaresque tradition of the Golden Age, and critics speak of its “comic vigor,” “popular flavor,” and “lively dialogue.” This delightful tale relates how a miller, “tio” Lucas, fearing that his wife is playing him false with the aged Corregidor, seeks revenge with a visit to the latter’s wife. Three years later the Corregidor loses his position and dies in jail as a patriotic Spaniard. Frasquita and “tio” Lucas live to a ripe old age. Alarcon, in this little gem of the storyteller’s art, clothes a folk tale in elegant style without sacrificing its popular charm.

Alarcon's *Historietas nacionales* (1881) contains his best-loved short stories, *El libro talonariom La Buenaventura*, and *El afrancesados*. *Cuentos amatorios* (1881) and *Narraciones inverosimiles* (1882) are other volumes of short stories. Because of their conciseness, greater clarity of dialogue, and lack of didactic goals, Alarcon's short stories are superior to his novels, most of which are melodramatic, labored, and too moralistic to have lasting appeal. Since his works have characteristics of both movements, he is often considered a bridge novelist between Romanticism and Realism. He also left three travel books, three volumes of war correspondence, a play, two collections of essays, and an autobiography, in which he reveals his bitterness because of adverse criticism.

3. *Juan Valera y Alcalá Galiano* (1827 – 1905), an Andalusian of aristocratic origin, embarked on a long diplomatic career that took him to Lisbon, Rio de Janeiro, Russia, and Washington. A cosmopolitan linguist, he had a wide knowledge of Classical literature. His "salon aristocracy" and obvious refinements wear on the reader as do his often simple and cloying plots. He wrote largely for an intellectual elite of which he was a member.

Valera's most famous novel is *Pepita Jimenez* (1874). Its epistolary form lent itself to introspective monologue, at which Valera was adept. The plot concerns the mental and emotional turmoil of a young seminarian who is won from the priesthood by the beautiful young widow *Pepita Jimenez*. In most of his novels, including *Pepita Jimenez*, Valera is concerned with human conduct, and his works are nearly always analytical. Valera points out that the mysticism of Luis, the young seminarian, is false and founded on youthful, romantic notions, that man is not called on to lose his body in order to save his soul, and that God can be served in a number of ways.

Dona Luz (1879), a reversal of *Pepita Jimenez*, deals with the platonic love of a girl for a priest. The novel is filled with the same kind of philosophical and religious discussion found in the earlier work.

Valera's collected works run to some forty-six volumes. The most important are *Las ilusiones del doctor Faustino* (1875) which was for Valera his most real creation and "un compuesto de los vicios, ambiciones, ensuenos, escepticismos, descreimientos, concupiscencias...que afligieron a la juventud de mi tiempo"; *El commendador Mendoza* (1877), which deals with the adventurous life of Fadrique in Spain, Peru, and finally in the French Revolution; and *Juanita la larga* (1895), which concerns an old man's love for a young girl and contains nostalgic recollections of youth and childhood.

Valera won admittance to the Royal Academy in 1861, largely as a critic and poet. He was recognized as one of the best literary critics of the nineteenth century, and his readers admired his solid Classical and cultural background, rational outlook, common sense, good taste, and natural, simple, and lucid analyses. His prose was direct and elegant but without affectation.

Valera, whose style was cold yet undeniably beautiful, believed in "art for art's sake," since for him the highest function of literature was to create something beautiful and pleasant. This philosophy was in direct contrast with that of some Realistic novelists, who felt that the intentional avoidance of unpleasant things was a betrayal of the artist's responsibility to portray reality in all its aspects. Much of what Valera wrote does not fit into any neat classification. He exhibits pleasure and charm, Classical tranquility, and yet, from time to time, a light Romantic vein. In his novels he liked to deal with constants and with what he felt were experiences common to all. Thus, his works contain psychological analyses and usually deal with an inner action of universal scope. He did not accept many doctrines, but he had faith in life and in the value of living it: joy, not despair, was his goal. In the analyses of his character's souls, he often became too interested in his procedure, and his dialogue is not always suited to the character for whom it is intended. The lack of action in his works makes his novels discursive rather than dramatic. Yet he is not artificial as he stresses harmony of style rather than warm life.

Valera, described as both pagan and Christian, was at times somewhat mystical in his works. His characters, most of them Juan Valera in thin disguise, are virtually without exception discreet, elegant, and cultured. His plotting with almost inevitable Hollywood endings, leaves much to be desired. Nevertheless, he is psychologically penetrating and reflects realistically his beloved Andalusia within the obvious limitations of his overly optimistic view of life and the world.

Valera's short stories are often based on historical anecdotes. Usually he does not explain unnecessarily or give too much factual background. He preferred to use folklore material, not because it was popular because it was traditional, for he disliked the former and respected the latter. He wrote historical, fantastic, moral, and legendary stories, often incorporating his own moral viewpoint.

4. *Jose Maria de Pereda y Sanchez de Porrua* (1833 – 1906), the most regional of the nineteenth-century novelists, portrays effectively his native region of Santander and the *montana*. He represents better than any other writer the evolution of the sketch writer into the regional novelist. Whereas Andalusia seems a product of recent history, the northern part of Spain comparatively more isolated, conserved much of the spirit of the Middle Ages Pereda was a typical product of the traditional conservative life of the north and his works reflect this background.

Pereda emphasized the evils of contemporary life especially in large cities with their demoralizing and corruptive influences. He stressed the glories of the monarchy, the Church, and the patriarchal way of life. Consequently, he preached for a return to the good simple life of the country. In line with this philosophy, he injected into his works the language of the peasant folk, the salt of the earth, and he continually emphasized tradition and rural aristocracy.

His first fiction *Escenas montanesas* (1864), is mostly a series of sketches, but it is important as one of the earliest Realistic works and sets the pattern for much of Pereda's later work, which emphasizes the countryside instead of plot. It contains natural dialogue and regional impact and demonstrates that Pereda is essentially a *costumbrista*, as were all the Spanish Realists of this time to some degree.

Pereda's first long novel was *El buey suelto* (1878), an exaggerated tale that decries bachelorhood and deals with the problems of marriage. Pereda's skill with words is reflected in the stylistic beauty of this book, but the plot is trivial. *Don Gonzalo Gonzalez de la Gonzalera*, a satire on revolutions and politicians that appeared in 1879, defends the old traditions in which Pereda was interested, *El sabor de la tierruca* (1881) exhibits freshness, purity, and rustic tranquility, combined with beautiful descriptive power. *Pedro Sanchez* (1883), judged by Pardo Bazan and Clarin to be a good novel, deals with corruption in Madrid and describes Pereda's student life there. He returns here to one of his favorite themes, the joy and peace of rural life, away from the toil and turmoil of the monstrous city.

De tal palo, tal astilla (1880) was, according to some opinions Pereda's answer to *Gloria* by Galdos. Menendez y Pelayo agreed that this was a thesis novel and that the fervently Catholic Pereda had abandoned to a certain degree "la observacion desinteresada." Surprisingly, the extremely conservative Pereda and the liberal Galdos were good friends.

Pereda's two most popular works were *Penas arriba* (1895) and *Sotileza* (1884). The former, containing his best descriptions of the *montana* district, stresses again the need for a return to the simple life and has an almost mystical attitude toward nature painted with masterful strokes. It relates how a young city dweller, at first contemptuous of country life, is able to find happiness only by becoming a part of that life himself. In *Sotileza*, Silda, or *Sotileza*, an orphan girl, has three suitors from different social levels. Pereda shows that he can deal with various types, including drunks and degraded men and women, though his contrast of the pure *Sotileza* with the rough fisherman seems overly Romantic. In *Sotileza*, reputed to be the best novel of the sea by a Spaniard, Pereda gives us a striking picture of the life, the fine virtues, and the miserable physical existence of the Santander fisherfolk together with their struggles against the sea.

Pereda studied details with an almost scientific detachment, which caused some to comment on his Naturalistic technique at a time when Naturalism was not highly regarded in the literary world. Pereda himself felt that Naturalism was *hediondo*. Sincere in his beliefs he defended his ideas valiantly. He was a painter of nature in all its aspects – simple, grand, savage, or gently. He was above all a descriptive artist not a good psychologist or storyteller, and he tended to moralize too much. His enormous vocabulary, archaic words, Latinisms, religious emphasis, and excessive regionalism make for heavy reading. In consequence, his popularity with modern readers has suffered, but he was undoubtedly one of Spain's most admired Realists.

5. *Benito Perez Galdos* (1843 – 1920) is the greatest Spanish novelist of the nineteenth century and the only one who deserves to be ranked with great European novelists like Balzac, Dickens, and Dostoyevsky. One wonders why he has not yet taken place in world popularity among these giants and one can conjecture that in part it is due to bad translations and in part to antagonisms he aroused in his own country. His stern, somewhat fanatically religious mother caused him some anxiety, and many see in his well-known creation *dona Perfecta* a portrait of that severe old lady. Galdos' family was fairly well-off, and he studied at English schools in his native Canary Islands.

Though he studied law in Madrid, he was far more interested in newspaper work and writing articles than in attending class. His mother sent him to France to try to reform him, but his trip there simply convinced him that his true vocation was writing and gave him a closer acquaintance with the novels of Balzac.

On his return to a Madrid of *tertulias*, plots counterplots and revolutions, Galdos found himself in his element. He spent his time visiting buildings, studying architecture, listening to sermons – all of which would be grist for his mill later in his novels. He visited poor tenement houses and the lower districts to study life. He wrote for some of the best newspapers of the day, attempting even in these early journalistic efforts to analyze and evaluate the Spain he loved. Galdos, undoubtedly the giant of Spanish letters, championed the liberal causes, a factor in delaying his entrance into the Royal Academy until 1897 and its refusal to recommend him for the Nobel Prize. When he died, the masses mourned the only novelist of the time who truly understood them.

Although he was disheartened by the lack of dignity and intelligence of his environment, he optimistically insisted on the possibility of a better world and a better Spain. He believed in a God of love and not of wrath. He disliked artificial, restrictive, and bigoted codes, but he was notwithstanding, a religious man. After an unsuccessful attempt called *La sombra*, he published *La fontana de oro* (1870), a historical account of the liberal and revolutionary period of 1820 – 1823. In a vein reminiscent of the Generation of 1898, he discussed the deplorable and backward state of his country and its future possibilities.

In 1873 he began his first series of historical novels, the *Episodios nacionales*. In all he wrote five series, a total of forty-six volumes (the final series of ten was never completed), beginning with the battle of Trafalgar and covering the history of Spain for the next seventy years. He stopped writing historical novels in 1879 (after the first two series) but recommenced in 1898. Galdos shows a remarkable ability to synthesize historical figures with his fictional characters, and he combines this talent with an evocative picture of the broad canvas of Spanish politics, customs, and history.

Galdos wrote seventy-seven novels and twenty-six plays. His works are difficult to classify since some are Realistic, some Romantic, some Naturalistic, some psychological. Joaquin Casaldueiro classifies Galdos' novels into categories such as historical, abstract, Naturalistic, spiritualistic, and mythological, but critics usually divide them into Novels of the First Period and the so called Contemporary Spanish Novels.

The novels of his first period, *Dona Perfecta* (1876), *Gloria* (two volumes 1877), *Marianela* (1878), and *La familia de Leon Roch* (two volumes, 1879), in spite of Romantic overtones, try to carry out Galdos' ideas expressed later in his speech upon entering the Royal Academy. There he insisted that the novel had to be the image of life, the reproduction of human beings – their passions, large and small weaknesses, souls bodies, language, physical and spiritual attributes, and possessions. Indeed, as with the *Comedie humaine* of Balzac, there is a unity in his work, both in the characters who reappear from novel to novel and in the thread of love, justice, tolerance, and humanity that runs throughout his entire production.

Galdos wrote naturally, which occasioned the comments of uninformed critics that he had no style – the same kind of criticism offered to the works of Dickens, Balzac, Cervantes, and Dostoyevsky. His vocabulary is one of the largest among writers, but his special words and phrases do not detract from the overall impact. All the Galdosian characters live in an internal contradiction (the same duality we have seen so often). Like Cervantes, whom he resembles greatly Galdos often shows us a most horrible man or woman, claiming that this is the stuff of which we are all made, that we must thus love our fellow men with a true Christian love, and that even the most abject personalities may have positive moral values.

The early novels involve the continuing analysis of various hypocrisies, the struggle between science and religion, the conflict between different faiths, and the meaning of beauty and true charity. *Dona Perfecta* concerns a progressive, modern and broad-minded nephew from Madrid who meets a tragic death at the orders of his aunt in a struggle with a bigoted, reactionary, and tradition-bound town. Pepe Rey, the nephew, believes that men can be led upward through education. With his science, he believes in God (perhaps a *Krausista* influence on Galdos), while dona Perfecta, despite superficial appearances, does not believe, at least not in a tolerant Christian God. *Gloria*, too, treats a religious theme; it tells of the tortured, tragic love of a noble English Jew and a fine Spanish Catholic girl. Their son Jesus Nazarenito, the symbol of the power of love, is the hope for the future. Here Galdos adopts a rational attitude in an attempt to unify humanity. *Gloria's* appearance created almost a national crisis, and for months the book was discussed, condemned, and praised. The dramatic appeal of the novel lies in the conflict between true love and the force of traditional belief, and though the ending is inevitable, the all to love and tolerance overshadows it.

Marianela his most lyrical novel, seems like a quiet interlude after the torrential passions of his previous works. It is an idyllic story of the pathetic love of an ugly orphan girl for a handsome and attractive blind lad whom she serves as a guide. The ove ends with the death of the girl when the boy recovers his sight, forgets the lovely soul that had made him love her, and shrinks from the ugly body. Marianela, representing imagination; Paul, rationalism; and Teodoro Golfín the doctor who restores Paul's sight, science, are symbols of the various stages through which civilization has passed. When science supplants imagination as the guide of man, poor Marianela must die. The novel bears an obvious similarity to Cervantes' comparison of creative imagination and life. *La Familia de Leon Roch* shows how excessive religiosity and religious differences can wreck a marriage.

In the novels of the contemporary period, Galdos deals with all aspects of life of all social classes and analyzes the vices of Spanish society. His masterpiece is *Fortunata y Jacinta* (1886 – 1887), in four volumes. Basically, the work contrasts two women: Jacinta, the wealthy middle-class wife, and Fortunata the mistress from the lower class. The principal parts of the novel consist of the varying relationships between these two, though Galdos fills his book with a whole host of types, rich and poor, among them the pathological Maxi Fortunata's husband. Galdos was interested in mental illness and pathological types and shows a surprisingly modern knowledge of them. Jacinta is sweet refined, and angelic, and Fortunata is generous and warmhearted but of stronger passions. Fortunata gives Juanito Santa Cruz the child that Jacinta would have liked to bear; a favorite theme of Galdos is that the common people are virile, whereas the upper classes are decadent and thin-blooded. Maxi sums up the conflict between the ideal and the real in his contention that spirit and thought cannot be stilled by physical limitations. *Angel Guerra* (three volumes, 1890 – 1891) emphasizes spiritual and personal ideas of Galdos and treats the themes of humility, abnegation, salvation, and divine mercy. Angel Guerra (perhaps Galdos himself) sees a vision of a better world and dies when he comes into contact with the concrete reality of Spain and humanity (note again the Cervantine influence).

La desheredada (1881) and *Misericordia* (1897) are excellent samples of Galdos' Naturalistic work. Isidora, of *La desheredada*, is a maladjusted, emotionally unstable woman of refined tastes. Gradually her habit of self-delusion grows, and she sinks into moral degradation. The novel bears a certain similarity to Zola's writings, as Galdos describes Madrid slums and the effects of heredity and mental degeneration in Isidora's family. *Misericordia*, set against the background of the lower classes in Madrid, beautifully sums up Galdos' ideas of true charity. Again, we observe the Cervantine theme that in the ugliest and simplest body one can find great moral and aesthetic values. Galdos, in addition to treating the concept of forgiveness and including a message of hope, seemed to be preaching the possibility of conciliation between classes based on human understanding and uniting the degenerate aristocracy with its remaining ideals to the vitality of the masses.

Among the countless other novels are the four *Torquemada* books (1889 – 1895), of which the first, *Torquemada en la hoguera*, is the best. These works study the psychology of avarice.

Love, in its Christian sense, as the only solution for humanity, appears to be one of Galdos' strongest themes. Galdos sought unity in a mad world, harmony among various classes and

people through tolerance and understanding. His world is one of hope for a better future. Unlike the twentieth-century grayness and agony of Existential novels, his novels breathe a note of idealistic optimism as opposed to the later pessimistic intellectualism. Galdos is not naïve, however, in his hopes. He portrays humanity with all its vices and crudity, its passions, its tragedies, and its comedies, but he insists that through love of one's neighbor, tolerance for the weakness of others, and liberty for the individual (hence his protests against political, social, and religious abuse), man can triumph.

Psychologist, moralist, philosopher, and Christian, Galdos was the only novelist of his time who truly tried to amalgamate modern philosophy and science with social justice and the spiritual and religious needs of man. Galdos sought not only the meaning of human nature but also in his eternal quest the meaning of life itself.

D. Naturalism

The next movement in fiction of any importance was Naturalism. The Naturalistic approach to life originated with Comte and Darwin and was employed by Zola in his *roman experimental*, where he attempted to show us life under laboratory conditions. The basic difference between French and Spanish Naturalism is that Spaniards cannot depersonalize themselves enough to be truly objective, to look at life with cold eyes and unyielding hearts, and they incorporate the warmth of their souls and the passion of their emotions. French Realism, according to the Flaubert, tried to see reality in the coldest and most objective manner possible, eliminating all sentiments and emotions of the author. The Realistic rationalism accentuated even more in Zola's pseudoscientific materialism, accumulated details about the more bestial tendencies in man. Spanish Naturalism, on the other hand, was more spiritual, as it tried to give an impression usually without excessive emphasis on detailed imagery. Nevertheless, by the end of the nineteenth century, French Naturalism had made inroads into Spain, especially in some of the novels of Emilia Pardo Bazan, but the vogue was not to be a lasting one.

In the 1880's in Spain a continuing polemic appeared in the newspaper and reviews on the meaning and impact of Naturalism. Critics and authors discussed determinism, impersonality of style, and whether authors had to experience the series of events they were describing. The critics were about evenly divided and saw in Naturalism either the repugnant, pessimistic, and immoral or a new era of freedom and a new direction for the novel.

While it is true that most of the Spanish Realists to a greater or lesser degree partook of certain aspects of Naturalism, most of them rejected either completely or in part of materialistic determinism of the French movement. The experimental novel, Palacio Valdes said, led to fixed results with which he could not agree. Pardo Bazan objected to the extremes of the movement and condemned Zola's overly deterministic philosophy, though she defended him as an artist. Most writers reacted variously to the label Naturalist, but whether they accepted or rejected it, all refused to confine themselves to disagreeable things in human beings

1. *Leopoldo Alas* (1852 – 1901), who used the pseudonym Clarin, was one of the most important literary critics of his day. His fame as a novelist comes from a long novel, *La Regenta* (1884 – 1885), a dissection of a rainy provincial town where the three principal occupations are playing cards, gossiping, and discussing sex. The heroine, Ana Ozores, torn between imaginary mysticism and erotic desire, is one of the most powerful characters of the nineteenth-century Spanish novel. She finally yields her favors to one of the town citizens and brings death to her husband and ruin to herself. *La Regenta* spares nobody in its bitterness and seems to follow Zola's technique more closely than any other Spanish novel, although Clarin was not by any means a total convert to the French school.

Clarin's method differed sharply from that of the French. He objected to vulgar language, was opposed to Positivism, and knew almost nothing of science. His characters exhibit a free will far removed from the deterministic aspects of French Naturalism. Although Ana was frustrated sexually, she was considered to be an extremely cold type. She goes through agonies trying to resolve her struggles, but she is inevitably driven to certain predetermined actions. *La Regenta* excoriates the envy, intrigue, false erudition, and mental stultification to be found in Vetusta, Oviedo, and thus in all Spain.

Su unico hijo (1890) describes the atmosphere of a romantic period of Spain's life and predates the Generation of 1898 in its evocation of city characters who have a plan to regenerate Spain. In his short stories Clarin resembles Galdos greatly in his use of humor and tenderness. His later works also reveal a lyrical and idealistic note.

For some critics, Clarin must be considered the creator of the modern short story in Spain. Here he displays his analytical and critical gifts in combination with his keen sense of humor. His stories follow no definite pattern and are of every type imaginable – humorous, satiric, patriotic, fantastic, Realistic, erotic, idealistic, and religious. Among his many collections are *El Senor y lo demas son cuentos* (1893), *Cuentos morales* (1896), and *El gallo de Socrates* (1901).

Clarin was much influenced by *Krausismo* in forming his ethical and moral judgements. Also, he acknowledged his debt to one of his teachers, don Francisco Giner de los Rios. As a professor at the University of Oviedo, he interested himself in philosophy and law, but his reputation rests on his newspaper articles, his critical works, and his fiction.

2. *Armando Palacio Valdes* (1853 – 1938) has some purely Naturalistic works, such as *La espuma* (1891), an attack on the vices of the aristocracy and a satire on their rottenness and their oppression of miners. Another novel of this type is *La fe* (1892), an attack on religious hypocrisy and false religiosity. Although his other works have certain aspects of the Naturalistic technique, Palacio Valdes really belongs to an earlier and happier period. He used Naturalism much as the earlier Eclectics in the drama had used the best elements of romanticism and Neoclassicism. Though for many years he was considered a leader of the Spanish Naturalistic movement, he was never a whole-hearted convert. He shows a predilection for science, it is true, and he examines society carefully, looking at its vanities, its intrigues, and its imaginary and real piety. But even when he discusses horror, it is only as it rises naturally and not because of any abiding belief in determination. Nor does he hammer away at the unpleasant or base in life.

El senorito Octavio (1881), Palaio Valdes first novel, deals with the love of a sentimental country boy for a countess. *Riverita* (1886), set in a small village on the northern coast and in Madrid reveals his personal experiences and his childhood. Fisherman, bullfighters, politicians, and sailors pass through the book. *Maximina*, its sequel, appeared in 1887 and is also somewhat autobiographical. *La alegria del capitan Ribot* (1899), which preaches a philosophy of resignation, takes place against a background of Valencian customs.

The adjective *pleasant* comes to mind in discussing Palacio Valdes. He arouses no great emotions, though some critics have pointed to the profundity of one of his better novels, *Marta y Maria* (1883), a study of two sisters, one worldly and the other mystical, in which the author voices a preference for the former. Here Palacio Valdes contrasts the inner, contemplative, religious life with the active life. Local color abounds as he adequately paints the region he knows quite well and weaves his plot through episodes from the Second Carlist War. He stresses the harm religious excesses and fanaticism can do; yet he does not attack Mysticism, but only its cold imitators.

Another of his well-known novels is *Jose* (1885) a novel of the sea that deals with Asturian fishermen. Again, the author brings in authentic local color from a region he knew well. Jose clearly pictures the stormy life of fishermen, their sorrows and their difficulties. Jose, the hero, must struggle against the sea, nature, and human intransigence. Although the work is Realistic, it is also an idealization of the humble fisherfolk and pictures them as simple, devout hardworking, long-suffering, honorable people. Some have detected an almost epic quality in Palacio Valdes' treatment of these unsung heroes.

Palacio Valdes' best-known work is *La hermana San Sulpicio* (1889), a regional novel set in Seville that concerns a young nun who leaves the convent to marry. The book is particularly interesting for its local color, found in the descriptions of strange types in boardinghouses and the spirited, brave qualities of the Andalusian. *Sincere, joyous, and picturesque* are adjectives customarily used in describing this work. *La aldea Perdida* (1903) reiterates an old theme, and the author, like many before him yearns for the good old days when the village was a haven of rest, a Utopia. Materialistic progress, says Palacio Valdes, brings discontent instead of happiness.

Palacio Valdes handles sadness, humor, Realism, idealism and religion in a rather conventional and even *cursi* though pleasant, manner. When one compares him with Galdos or even with Clarin, his pleasant superficiality is immediately apparent. He offers no deep insights and usually employs simple themes, but he varies his geography. Wherever he sets his novels, the sites are full of color. His characters are true to life and he often analyzes the with humor and irony. He is especially good with women characters: Laura in *El señorito Octavio*, Marta and Maria Ventura and Cecilia in *El cuarto poder* (1888), and, of course, "la hermana San Sulpicio." He often displays an excessive sentimentalism. He is saved, however, by sincerity, truth, beauty, and clarity; and for him beauty and truth which he loved to exist and can be found in nature. He himself believed that in writing novels, plot, length, setting, and especially character, whether simple or complex, were important. Palacio Valdes enjoyed great success, largely because of his simple and clear style that is easy to read, because of his simple and clear style that is easy to read, because his criticism did not offend and because he was often sensitive, loving, and warmhearted.

3. *Emilia Pardo Bazan de Quiroga* (1852 – 1921), a countess, was the regional novelist of Galicia. Though she was of an extremely conservative family, she was occasionally more open-minded than Perda. She was not allowed to read French novels, which may in part account, at least a subconscious level, for the fact that such a staunch Catholic should have accepted French Naturalism even partially. In about 1879 she became interested in Zola and the Naturalists, and in the prologue to *Un Viaje de novios* (1881) she suggested that Spain needed a new kind of novel similar to that being written in France, though she warned against too servile an imitation. Apparently, Zola's *L'Assommoir* impressed her greatly, and she was attracted by the techniques of closer observation of life and the possibility of greater objectivity. But as she said she disapproved of the systematic selection of the repugnant. In 1883 she treated the question of Naturalism at length in a series of newspaper articles under the title *La cuestion palpitante*. Along with her Naturalistic pictures, Pardo Bazan gave us, in keeping with the truth after which she strove, an analysis of the part played by religion in the life of man, pointing out its many positive and consoling virtues.

Her first work, *Pascual Lopez* (1879), is a somewhat puerile, although occasionally colorful, story of a medical student. It contains an artificial striving for stylistic effect through formalized archaic language. *Un Viaje de novios*, in spite of the author's apparent objections to sordid details, treats of the physiological incompatibility of a dissipated old man and a naïve adolescent girl. *La tribuna* (1882) is a study of popular customs about the *cigarreras* in Coruna. Critics are almost unanimous in regarding this as a Naturalistic novel composed in accordance with the principles of Zola. *El Cisne de Vilamorta* (1885) is another Naturalistic work. In *Una Cristiana* (1890) and several later works Pardo Bazan lays great emphasis on the spiritual forces in life rather than on environment or heredity, and in *La Quimera* (1903) one of her richest novels, she examines the roles of inspiration and imagination in the aspirations of artists.

Pardo Bazan's two most famous works are *Los pazos de Ulloa* (1886) and its sequel, *La madre naturaleza* (1887). In *Los pazos de Ulloa*, a novel of the decaying feudalism of Galicia, the author describes the beautiful countryside, but its grandeur contrasts with the creeping decadence of the humans inhabiting it. The treatment of the effects of environment and heredity and the importance attached to determinism make this a Naturalistic work.

The sequel, *La madre naturaleza*, represents a further deterioration and degradation of the family of the marquis, whose children, Perucho, a son by Sabel, and Manolita, a daughter by nucha, are driven to a momentary incestuous love, encouraged by luxuriant natural surroundings.

Even though these two works contain many sordid episodes, drunkenness and adultery in the first volume and incest in the second, the technique seems more Realistic than Naturalistic. Pardo Bazan longed for membership in the Royal Academy but was never appointed probably because of her sex, since her literary excellence and conservative attitudes would have caused her little difficulty in that body.

In analyzing Pardo Bazan, one must remember her ultraconservative upbringing. She had strong feelings, many of them intolerant. She condemned bullfighting and the Spanish peasant, hated the Arabs and the Jews, and felt that the salvation of Spanish women lay in

their copying European models and being educated to their privileges. Her fatal blind spots, perhaps the product of her somewhat unhappy life, detract from her work. Though her Zolaesque works, such as *La tribuna* and *El cisne de Vilamorta*, have been forgotten except by literary gravediggers, *Los paos de Ulloa* and *La madre naturaleza* will continue to be read.

Pardo Baan stands as a unique figure in an age when the novel was dominated by men. Surpassed by Galdos, Pereda, and Valera in most aspects of the novelist's art, she was nevertheless the equal of the best of them in the grace of her style and the coloring of her phrases. Her language is considered to be among the purest of her time in spite of the regional quality of her work. Her women are beautifully portrayed. Indeed, their very perfection points up the weakness of her male characters, although she did manage an occasional good masculine portrait in her rural novels. She only rarely sought to idealize or embellish her characters, however. She maintained that she wanted to represent the truth and to portray her characters as they were. She surpassed most of her contemporaries as a storyteller, and her short stories rank with the best Spain has produced.

4. *Luis Coloma* (1851-1914), a Jesuit, is of minor interest. Considered a disciple of Fernan Caballero's, he shared her enthusiasms and prejudices. In addition to *Cuadros de costumbres populares* and a series of fictionalized historical sketches, Padre Coloma left a number of novels. Those of lesser importance are *La Garriona* (1887) about a countess mixed up in politics; *Por un piojo* (1889), on Christian charity; and *Boy* (1910), a story of aristocratic intrigue. His best novel was *Pequeneces*, which appeared in 1890. In this book, a bitter censure of Madrid society, Coloma created what many considered a *roman a clef*, and the pastime of the season was to attempt to identify the principal characters. Frankly Naturalistic in his treatment of the immoralities in Madrid society, Padre Coloma probably intended the work as a satire, but his purpose is weakened by his didactic intent. *Pequeneces*, based on real-life characters, is a combination of sermon and satire, in which Coloma discloses that something is rotten in Spanish society. It is a pessimistic book that paints the ugly and the grotesque and attacks the moral defects of the aristocracy.
5. *Vivente Blasco Ibanez* (1867 – 1928), chronologically a part of the twentieth century, belongs through his ideas, style, and technique to the Realistic and Naturalistic schools of the nineteenth century. In his early work he was the regional novelist of Valencia, which has prompted many critics to maintain that the fecund, beautiful landscape influenced him to be exuberant, generous, energetic, strong, and passionate. Blasco was by nature a person of impulse, and his imagination was rich and luxuriant. His parents reared him as a devout Catholic, but through his political activity he achieved a reputation as an anticlerical revolutionary, suffering exile and imprisonment many times for his attacks against the government.

The work of Blasco's first and essentially regionalistic period comprises *Arroz y tartana* (1894); *Flor de mayo* (1895), about a street where he lived in his youth; *Cuentos valencianos* (1896); *La barraca* (1898), considered by most to be his masterpiece; *Entre naranjos* (1900); and *Canas y barro* (1902). Most of these novels reflect in vivid colors the Valencian landscape in almost epic measure. *La barraca*, a great monument to Realism, combines the picturesqueness of Valencia with the sordid story of the miserable life of the peasant in his struggle against superstition injustice, and rapacious landlords. Blasco, as might be expected, reveals great compassion for the have-nots of the world. The work of his second period consists of social novels, sometimes called novels of protest or rebellion that cover various areas of Spain. Among these, the best is *La catedral* (1903), an anticlerical novel about traditional Spanish religion. *El intruso* (1904) analyzes the Jesuit power in Spain. *La bodega* (1905) a politically oriented study of social life in Andalusia echoes anarchistic ideas against the rich class and stresses the evil of alcohol. *La horda* (1905) discusses low society in Madrid, the beggars, thieves, and gypsies.

He has countless other novels, too numerous to analyze here. Two other famous works are *Sangre y arena* (1908) and *Los cuatro jinetes del Apocalipsis* (1916), both of which had successful screen versions, as did five of his other novels. *Sangre y arena* concerns a bullfighter and the national institution of bullfighting which Blasco attacks. Made famous in the United States through the motion picture version, the work concludes that the real villain is the crowd that clamors for blood. In this novel, as in most of the works Blasco wrote after 1906,

he emphasizes character and psychology. It is also a novel of customs in its Realistic sketches of Spanish life.

Blasco had planned a cycle of novels on his American adventures, but he had completed only one, *Los argonautas* (1914), when the First World War and especially the battle of the Marne inspired him to write *Los cuatro jinetes del Apocalipsis*. Blasco understood the consequences of a German victory and foretold the intervention of the United States. The first part describes life on an Argentinian ranch, but in the second part Blasco reproduces photographically the scenes of violence, pain, and misery brought on by the war, analyzes pitilessly the immorality of fighting and senses the coming of a new era in human affairs. He intensely expresses here the hates, desires, horrors, and beauties of being human. This novel won for him a widespread international reputation.

His many other postwar novels need not be mentioned here. Some of his novels have been dramatized and presented on the stage. Many critics claim that Blasco was an improviser and they fail to grant him his positive virtues. He presented brilliant scenes of nature and life. He spoke sincerely and passionately of human problems, and in spite of stylistic defects and often in delicate expressions, this most underrated of writers has, with a truly dramatic impact, painted rich and powerful descriptions in bold and moving colors.

Part IV : NONFICTION

COSTUMBRISMO

A. General Considerations

Costumbrismo, a kind of fiction that stresses realistic description of characters, manners and customs, consists mostly of sketches or essays that concentrate on social background rather than plot. Many, however, have a short story framework or a dialogue involving a cousin, a nephew, or a friend of the authors who reveals society's weaknesses. Of the two basic types, the *cuadro* adopts a picturesque outlook and stresses local color for its own sake, while the *articulos* is concerned more with reality from a satiric and critical point of view. It can be argued that *costumbrismo* in the nineteenth century was simply a restoration of elements found in works of sixteenth-century Spanish writers or in eighteenth-century journals. Others view it as an imitation of Addison and Steele's *Spectator Papers* or of Victor Joseph Etienne Jouy, who signed himself de Jouy. In the nineteenth century Santos Lopez Pellegrin (1801 – 1846) and Sebastian de Minano (1779 – 1845) wrote in the *costumbrista* manner. Whatever its origin, it was fantastically successful, and almost every writer of the day produced an *articulos or cuadro*. *Los Espanoles pintados por si mismos* (1843 – 1844) contains forty-nine articles that portray Spanish life at its picturesque best and represents the zenith of the movement. Novelists such as Fernan Caballero and Alarcon used the *cuadro de costumbres* effectively. Some critical opinion feels that *costumbrismo* was necessary for the development of the Realistic novel, while other opinion finds that the lack of fiction in the early nineteenth century in Spain was caused by the Journals and the *articulos*, which took up the load, satisfied the readers, and thus delayed the novel's development.

B. Mariano Jose de Larra y Sanchez de Castro (1809 – 1837)

Larra represented the conflict between the Romantic and the Neoclassic and summed up in his life the ferment of his time. Indeed, few men have been so faithful a product and a portrait of their era. Larra grew up amid the liberal-conservative quarrels and the hectic political turmoil of the first third of the century. He studied both law and medicine, but in 1826 he was forced to give up his studies and a government position because of the absolutist terror. In 1828 he started the journal *El Duende Satirico del Dia*, and in 1832, *El Pobrecito Hablador*, neither of which lasted long. In the latter he described the Parnasillo, the Café Principe *tertulia* that he joined.

Though Larra married Josefa Wetoret y Velasco in 1829, he fell in love with Dolores Armijo in the early 1830s. If his *article Casarse pronto y mal* is autobiographical, then his passion for another married woman is easily understood. In 1837 Dolores broke off the affair and Larra committed

suicide a few minutes after she left his house. Some feel he would have killed himself in any event because of his unhappiness over their political situation and his growing neuroses.

Larra, a Romantic and yet anti-Romantic, exemplified the clash between eighteenth-century rationalism and nineteenth-century individualism. His enduring work is represented by his *artículos de costumbres*, which can be divided into three different groups: general sketches on Madrid society and current events, such as *Casarse pronto y mal*; anti-Carlist ones, such as *Nadie pase sin hablar al portero*; and those dealing with national foibles, such as *Vuelva Vd. Manana*. Another division is: *artículos de costumbres*, theatrical criticism, and political articles. One might term these sketches appearing in newspapers “novelistic essays.” Larra used a variety of styles, the rhetorical-logical, mock-pompous, satiric rhetorical, and dramatic; and he criticized nearly every aspect of Spanish life: actors, jails, lazy people, bureaucracy, censorship, mail service, coaches, inns, and so on.

In 1835 his collected articles were published under a very long title that we shall abbreviate to *Colección de artículos dramáticos, literarios, políticos y de costumbres*.

These articles had appeared in a variety of journals under the pseudonyms Andrés Niporesas, El Duende Satirifo, El Ponrefito Hablador, and Figaro. His best work, however, appears in *El Pobrecito Hablador*; it was published at irregular intervals under the pseudonym Bachiller don Juan Pérez de Munguía with the object “de reirnos de ridiculeces – esta es nuestra divisa; ser leídos – este es nuestro objeto; decir la verdad – este nuestro medio.” Among his many famous articles are *Casarse pronto y mal*; *El castellano viejo*, an attack on exaggerated belief in Spanish tradition and a defense of good breeding; *Vuelva Vd. manana*, a depiction of Spanish laziness, chauvinism, and economic decay; and *Empenos y desempenos*, an examination of the false and exaggerated concept of honor, superficial education, and spendthrift habits of Spanish gentlemen. In January 1833 Larra started writing for the *Revista Española* and adopted his famous pseudonym, Figaro. He wrote for this review until August 1835, when government censorship closed it down. Later he joined several other journals in Madrid, among them *El Correo de las Damas*, *El Español*, and *Redactor General*.

Among Larra’s typical political articles we find *Día de difuntos de 1836, o Figaro en el cementerio* a bitter attack on the corruption overwhelming Spain, a country without justice, integrity, or hope; *La noche buena de 1836*, lacking the hilarity of some earlier articles, a symbolic discussion between master and servant over Larra’s inability to promote Spanish progress; and *Los viajeros en Vitoria* a denunciation of Church support of the Carlists and their inordinate greed.

Among his best theatrical articles is one on Hartzenbusch’s *Los amantes de Teruel*, in which Larra praises the dramatist’s work and takes issue with those who said that the ending was artificial in its insistence on death because of frustrated love.

Larra was a man of contradictions. He believed that literature is the expression of the progress of a people and that it has truths to contribute. In this he was Neoclassic like his model, Moratin. He wanted Spain to progress and copy France, but at the same time he wanted his country to maintain its worthwhile old traditions. He represents a special kind of Eclecticism. Some claim that his work belongs neither to the eighteenth nor the nineteenth century, yet most feel that in him the paradoxical spirit of his era and its literature found perfect fusion. Some insist that his disillusion and pessimism were not a Romantic pose but innately his own. Certain students of his writings charge that he lacks sentiment; others charge him with too much. Some feel that his criticism is unjust in its extravagance; others say his articles offer the truest picture possible of the Spain of his day.

Almost every critic has had something to say about Larra. The analysis of Lomba y Pedraja’s seems representative: “De la pluma de nuestro escritor salió la prosa española de más quilates...en la primera mitad del siglo XIX.” The Generation of 1898 treated him well, and on February 13, 1901, a group of young men marched in solemn procession to pay their respects at Larra’s grave. They saw in him, according to Baroja, a “maestro de la presente juventud” who believed in freedom, tolerance, and a new Spain.

C. Ramón de Mesonero Romanos (1803 – 1882)

Mesonero Romanos was a product of Madrid, where he was born and died. In his earliest work, *Mis ratos perdidos, o ligero bosquejo de Madrid en 1820 y 1821* (1822), he deals with *tertulias*,

dances, and bullfighting and uses a different Madrid custom to set off each month of the year. He became interested in the restoration of Golden Age drama and helped produce some between 1826 and 1830. He worked on studies of the dramatists contemporary to Lope de Vega in several volumes of the BAE. His *Manual de Madrid* (1831) went through several editions, and in an appendix, he discussed almost every aspect of city planning.

In 1832 he began publishing his *Escenas matritenses in Cartas Espanolas*. His first article was *El retrato*, signed with his pseudonym, El Curioso Parlante. All these articles were later published in several volumes under the title *Panorama matritense*. His *Recuerdos de viaje por Francia y Belgica en 1840 y 1841* record his travels in Europe, and in 1836 he founded the first illustrated newspaper, *Semanario pintoresco espanol*, in which he published a second series of *Escenas matritenses* between 1836 and 1842. He also published *Tipos y caracteres* (1862), *El antiguo Madrid* (1861), and *Memorias de un setenton* (1880). Mesonero merited the title "Cronista de Madrid." He founded the Ateneo de Madrid, of which he was the first secretary, and became a member of the Royal Academy.

Mesonero's *Escenas* trace the social history of Spain in the 1830s and early 1840s. His earlier articles, such as *La Calle de Toledo*, *La romeria de San Isidro*, and others, are quite merry and full of local color. His later articles contain less story but are more skillfully done. He starts some with a historical background. For others he uses a dialogue form. Occasionally he uses archaic language for flavor, but he seldom exaggerates. Critics have divided his articles into groups: historical, satiric and philosophical. Mesonero, an unemotional man of the middle class, was a benevolent observer of society. He painted the best pictures we have today of Madrid life of his time, and as the city's historian, he described it with great warmth. Sometimes a nostalgic note rings through his work, for although he accepts the new, one senses that he is a traditionalist who would like to keep the "good old days."

His clarity of style is attractive, and his little short stories are gems. Pineyro said that some of his articles "recall the comedies of Aristophanes in the vigor and energy with which they penetrate to the very heart of the pretensions they set out to ridicule, destroying appearances and tearing into shreds false pretenses of legitimacy and piety invented to cover sordid passions." Mesonero, however, allows his smug self-satisfaction to shine in his memoirs, where he speaks disparagingly of Larra's temperament that led him to suicide, while he, "Dios sea loadado," had been permitted to write the memoirs of a septuagenarian. Larra was kinder, for he said that Mesonero had come to know Spain perfectly and that he was an "imitador felicisimo de Jouy hasta en su medida, si menos erudito, mas pensador y menos superficial." Unlike Larra, Mesonero was never eager to engage in political wrangles, although he treated a few political problems in articles such as *Grandeza y miseria*. Larra was excitable, impulsive, generous, and Romantic. Mesonero was methodical and practical.

Although Mesonero wrote several critical articles on Romantic dramas and accepted Romanticism, he satirized it delightfully in *El romanticism y los romanticos*, in which he pokes fun at the exaggerations of the Romanticists.

D. Serafin Estebanez Calderon (1799 – 1867)

Estebanez Calderon was born in Malaga. He wrote for many newspapers and carried on a polemic with Gallardo over the authenticity of *El Buscapie...* Among his works are *Poesias* (1831), *Manual del oficial de Marruecos* (1844), *De la conquista y perdida de Portugal* (1835), several short stories such, as *Los tesoros de la Alhambra*, and a historical novel, *Cristianos y moriscos* (1838). His most famous work is *Escenas andaluzas* (1847).

Estebanez Calderon began publishing his *Escenas* in 1831 in *Cartas Espanolas* under the pseudonym El Solitario. These *Escenas* are to Andalusia what those of Mesonero are to Madrid. El Solitario, however, deliberately seeks local color and archaic effect. He is more traditional than the others, and his works contain much folklore. Indeed, his language is too full of the local idiom, and the very abundance of dialect detracts from the Andalusian flavor he is trying to promote, making some of his articles seem scholarly productions, a feeling emphasized by erudite footnotes. He uses many themes, Andalusian, Moorish, and historical.

Nevertheless, he was what he professed to be, a painter of scenes, and he portrayed popular types, authentic characters, and background, often with vitality and charm. His articles contain

many remarks to his readers, not with the light touch of Larra or Mesonero, but in the somewhat ponderous vein of *benevolos lectores*. His article *Un baile de Triana* discourses on various dances and Andalusian songs, as he describes the fire, pleasure, color joy and madness involved. *Pulpete y Balbeja* contains a bit more action, as two men fight over a young lady who turns them both down. But as Estebanez himself says here, "No hay mas que decir sino que Andalucia es el mapa de los hombres regulares y Sevilla el ojito negro de tierra de donde salen al mundo los buenos mozos, los bien plantados, los lindos cantadores."

ROMANTIC THEORISTS

A. General Considerations

It may be, as I.L. McLelland says, that national instinct in the 1750s and 1760s reawoke Spain's passive Romanticism and that "the battle against Neoclassicism was fought and won without any help from outside." E.A. Peers and others feel that the development occurred along two lines, the continuing one from the eighteenth century about the Golden Age drama, medieval themes, and the like, and the other that attempted to acclimatize foreign genres to Spain. Foreign influences were felt in Spain, thanks to Herder, the Schlegel brothers, Victor Hugo Scott, Manzoni, and others. The real Romantic quarrel developed in Spain in poetry and drama, and the nation had its manifestos to equal Hugo's *Preface de Cromwell* and those of Manzoni and Schlegel.

Some knowledge of important theorists is imperative to understand the background against which Romanticism developed. Neoclassic writers like Feijoo questioned the overemphasis of rules. Jovellanos, Cadalso, Garcia de la Huerta, and even Nicolas Fernandez de Moratin showed Romantic urges. Juan Jose Lopez de Sedano stressed the importance of ancient Spanish poetry. Much nineteenth-century theorizing, therefore, was simply a continuation of the Revival, as Peers terms it. But whether out of a conviction of the need for new literary forms or because of a patriotic defense of Spanish spirit, a series of polemics, soul searching's, and self-examination dominated the scene.

Martinez de la Rosa, in his *Aputes sobre el drama historico*, appended to his *La conjuracion de Venecia*, defended his Romantic work in subdued fashion and apologized for breaking the rules. In an Eclectic spirit, Larra and others attempted to make Scribe popular in Spain as a kind of compromise between popular and Neoclassic taste, although Larra endorsed Duran's view for the most part. According to Peers, the Duque de Rivas was the culminating figure, both in the Revival with *El moro exposito* and the Revolt with *Don Alvaro*. Alcalá Galiano's "anonymous" prologue to *El moro exposito* reversed his earlier criticism of Bohl von Faber, who though not a native Spaniard, played a vital role in the developing quarrel among Romantic theorists.

B. Johann Nicholas Bohl von Faber (1770 – 1863)

Bohl von Faber was born in Hamburg, Germany. As a folklorist he was astonished at the lack of knowledge in Spain of ancient Spanish works and felt that Spaniards should seek inspiration in their seventeenth-century drama and medieval poetry. His opening shot in the battle was his 1814 translation of Schlegel's series of lectures delivered in 1808 and later published under the title *Über dramatische Kunst und Literature* (1809 – 1811), in which he praised Spanish literature highly, stressing that Shakespeare and Calderon were the greatest of poets. This precipitated a debate between Bohl von Faber and Jose Joaquin de Mora and Alcalá Galiano on the relative merits of the Golden Age drama.

Bohl von Faber held *tertulias* in Cadiz at which Calderon's plays were performed. In addition to his newspaper polemics and the Schlegel translation, he published several other works, including the important *Teatro espanol anterior a Lope de Vega* (1832), which includes works by Encina, Gil Vicente, Torres Naharro, and Lope de Rueda. His literary views must have directly influenced his daughter, Fernan Caballero, and, indirectly, future Spanish literature.

C. Agustin Duran (1793 – 1862)

Agustin Duran, best remembered as a theorist of the Romantic movement, supported Bohl von Faber's view on the Spanish theater. He wrote extensively on the Spanish ballads and in 1821 produced *Coleccion de romances antiguos*. Between 1828 and 1832 he published various volumes of ballads divided according to types, *moriscos*, *doctrinales*, *amatorios*, *jocosos*, *satiricos*, *burlescos*, *festivos*, *historios caballerescas*, etc. These now form Volumes X and XVI of the BAE and are known as the *Romancero de Duran*. His *Discurso sobre el influjo que ha tenido la critica moderna en la decadencia del teatro antiguo espanol* (1828) is one of the most important critical documents of the Spanish Romantic movement. He produced other works on the Golden Age drama, Ramon de la Cruz, Tirso de Molina, and Lope de Vega, and he wrote some original *leyendas*. He was the first really to reveal fully the quality and spirit of Spanish epic poetry, although some of his theories have been disputed by later critics. He felt the *romance* was more indigenous than the *cancion*, was of broader origin, displayed Spanish character better, and in essence was the true and original Castilian poetry.

Duran loved literature that was genuinely Spanish and was not the only one to object to the eighteenth-century scorn of Spanish literature or who tried to restore Golden Age drama and arouse an interest in medievalism. Martinez de la Rosa, Bartolome Gallardo y Blanco, and Eugenio de Ochoa did their share; but Duran was the most effective defender of Golden Age drama. Whereas most quarreling centered around Lope and Calderon, Duran also studied Tirso, whose work he praised highly.

Undoubtedly his discourse of 1828 was his most important work. Pineyro claims that when it appeared it had a great influence but was quickly forgotten until its reprinting by the Spanish Academy in its *Memorias* in 1870. Duran, however, was the critic who labeled Calderon's drama romantic and made it stick, and his attacks on the unities and praise of Golden Age drama appear to have been the most influential of all. In the 1828 discourse Duran strongly defends his country as having once been the center of world learning and literature. He maintained that one could find the "sublime and beautiful creations of the Romantics" in the medieval age. The theater should reflect the needs and aspirations of the Spanish people and not something imposed from abroad, and the Golden Age drama exemplified these qualities. He called the native drama Romantic and felt that medieval literature served as a prelude to the works of Lope and Calderon.

He agreed that Classicism and Romanticism had a justified existence but that Golden Age drama should not be measured according to rules that were intended for Classical drama. Classical drama lacks individuality, he said, while Romantic drama concentrates on the individual. The Classicist stresses form and rules. The Romanticist chooses freedom from them and uses plot, style, and character as he wishes. Classical plays inspire order and symmetry; Romantic ones are untrammelled and unconfined. Duran also emphasized the place of Christianity in Romantic literature as part of the background of romantic writing.

D. Antonio Alcalá Galiano (1789 – 1865)

In 1814 Alcalá Galiano criticized the theories of Bohl von Faber in the *Cronica Científica y Literaria de Madrid*. He lectured at the Ateneo, wrote on history and law, and, in *Recuerdos de un anciano* (1878), commented on the contemporaries he had known. Although he wrote extensively on literary matters and was known as a violent and impassioned orator, he merits attention primarily for his "anonymous" prologue to *El moro exposito*, a somewhat lukewarm apology for Romanticism.

He admitted that a definition of the schools of Classicism and Romanticism is difficult, for many works that are Classical can be classified as Romantic. There are times and nations in which Romanticism rather than Classicism should hold sway. Nevertheless, he praises the Classical theater and maintains that French Classical literature is not really classic in the Greek sense of the word, as it copies the exterior form of a composition and alters it as circumstances dictate. Eighteenth-century Spanish poets shared the same defects, and though Meléndez made some progress, the Classical school, a French copy disguised in the style of ancient Spanish writers, held sway. Spanish poets have not freely expressed their spirit because it was fettered by the shackles of French Classicism and by limits imposed by eighteenth-century

foreign critics. Luzan, says Alcalá, helped in establishing good taste, but in so doing he imprisoned Spanish literature.

Alcalá traces Romanticism in various countries, but he insists that Rivas is neither Classical nor Romantic. He analyzes the mixture of the real and the ideal in *El moro expósito* and cites the “rules” that Rivas followed. The latter tried to arouse the curiosity of his readers, to suit the style to the argument, to give real settings, to versify well, and to obey his spontaneous inspirations.

E. Jose Joaquin de Mora (1783 – 1864)

Jose Joaquin de Mora, enthusiastic about the cause of the Latin American colonies, went to Chile in 1828, where he founded the *Mercurio Chileno* and engaged in a series of polemics with Andres Bello about educational, philological, political, and literary matters. In 1843 he returned to Spain and succeeded Lista and Alcalá Galiano as the director of the Colegio de San Felipe.

Much of Mora’s work consisted of critical writings in various periodicals. In 1814 and again between 1817 and 1820 he championed Neoclassicism against Bohl von Faber and others and termed Romanticism detestable because of its irregularity and its lack of good taste. He commented on its over use of horror and felt it was overloaded with bandits, witches, and magicians. Undoubtedly his best work is *Leyendas españolas* (1840), though he wrote a number of collections of poetry. Despite his defense of Neoclassicism, he was essentially an Eclectic, but it has been argued that he later became a Romantic convert.

F. Francisco de Paula Martinez de la Rosa (1787 – 1862)

Martinez de la Rosa was an active participant in most of the political events of his day. Though he sympathized with liberal principles, he scorned the *pueblo*. Rejected by both conservatives and liberals, he was unjustly termed “Rosita la Pastelera” for his refusal to adopt extremist views.

In his *Arte poetica*, published as part of his *Obras literarias* (1827 – 1830), he reveals his Neoclassicism, finds inspiration in Boileau, and attacks the Golden Age drama. Elsewhere he is less severe, for though he speaks of the “gravísimos defectos de ese poeta (Calderon),” he adds: “queda que admirar en ellas la urbanidad amena, la diccion Purisima y la versificacion agradable.”

He blames Calderonian defects on the “age of contagion” in which he lives. He claims that Tirso is not “tan ingenioso o urbano como Calderon,” but that he is superior to everyone in “malicia y sal comica, aquella gracia inimitable que no solo encubre los defectos, sino que seduce y cautiva.” He disliked the *Poema del Cid* but favored *El libro de buen amor*, though he objected to its exuberance.

His *Apuntes sobre el drama historico* stresses the need for the *justo medio* but allows the breaking of unities of time and place. He states that he wrote the work because of the decadent state of the Spanish theater in the hope of stimulating young writers. Since historical drama unites the essential characteristics of utility and pleasure, Martinez thought it acceptable within the rules of good taste. Spanish Classical authors who had “mas genio que cordura, y mas talent que instruction.” Were easily capable of painting a current scene but lacked ability to disinter Classical plots or treat of foreign people and cultures.

Good taste, then, was the watchword of this critic and faithful public servant. Despite his natural leanings toward Neoclassicism and away from Romanticism, the two opposing forces fused in him into a surprising moderation. He was, indeed, a man of the *justo medio*.

G. Other Didactic Writers

1. *Ramon Lopez Soler* (1806 – 1836), a young Barcelonian critic who might have become one of the great names of the nineteenth century had he lived to fulfill his early promise, wrote for *El Constitucional* and *El Europeo* in the 1820s and edited *El Vapor* and the *Revista Espanola* in the 1830s. he also wrote several historical novels, among which the

most famous is *Los bandos de Castilla: o, El caballero del cisne* (1830), an imitation of Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* that Mesonero Romanos called "Ivanhoe in disguise." Lopez Soler admitted that he translated part of Scott's novel and imitated it in other parts, though he added a Mediterranean vehemence absent in the northerner's work. He published several novels under the pseudonym Gregorio Perez de Miranda.

In *El Europeo* he discussed such matters as philosophical history of Spanish poetry and the pre-Romantic symptoms in the work of Melendez and others. Romanticism, he thought, originated in Christianity as represented by the Crusades and in the ideas of knighthood, symbols of medieval virtue, but neither his admiration of the picturesque in the Middle Ages nor the sentimental in religion contains originality.

His greatest critical fame stems from his short prologue to *Los bandos de Castilla*, which several critics considered an important Romantic manifesto. More important is his definition of Romanticism: "libre, impetuosa, salvaje, la literatura romantica es el interprete de aquellas pasiones vagas e indefinibles... En medio de horrosos huracanes, de noches en las que apenas se trasluce una luna amarillenta, reclinada al pie de los sepulcros...suele elevar su amarillenta, reclinada al pie de los sepulcros...suele elevar su peregrino canto." Lopez Soler saw excellent qualities in both Classicism and Romanticism and felt they could exist side by side.

2. *Eugenio de Ochoa* (1815 – 1872), one of the younger members of the Parnasillo Café, wrote a historical novel, two dramas, lyric poetry, translations of Hugo and Scott, and a series of important critical works on Spanish writers and literature. His many titles include *Apuntes para una biblioteca de escritores Espanoles contemporaneos en prosa y verso* (1840) and a series of "Treasures," including *Tesoro del teatro espanol* (1835 – 1838), on the origins of Spanish theater, Lope, Calderon, and eighteenth and nineteenth-century drama; and *Tesoro de escritores misticos Espanoles* (1847).

Ochoa is important also as the founder of the most Romantic journal, *El Artista* (1835 – 1836). Although he later regretted somewhat his ardent defense of Romanticism, he conceived of the movement as a revolution to sweep away Neoclassic debris. He saw Calderon as the true apostle of Romanticism and the Romanticist as a youth with a soul full of brilliant illusions, as a reflection of the age of knighthood, and as a patriot more interested in the virtues of the Middle Ages than in Greek heroism.

3. *Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto* (1815 – 1901), the Marques de Valmar, was Rivas' brother-in-law and his most fervent admirer. Cueto wrote poetry and drama but was primarily a critic. He contributed to countless periodicals and wrote many excellent studies, including works on Zorrilla, Quintana, and the *Cantigas of Alfonso el Sabio*. He delivered a famous eulogy in memory of Rivas at a session of the Spanish Academy. His most famous work is *Historia critica de la Poesia castellana en el siglo XVIII* (1893), an elaboration of an earlier work. *Bosquejo historico-critico de la Poesia castellana en el siglo XVIII*, begun in 1869.

Cueto uttered penetrating comments on all the eighteenth-century writers. He discussed Feijoo's moral conviction, Jovellanos' clarity, Gallardo's lack of good taste, Cienfuegos' sentiment and feeling and Quintana's energetic and manly sentiments. Although he denies Melendez Valdes emotion and energy of expression, he praises his flexibility, grace, and delicacy and considers him to have been the best poet of his time.

4. *Jaime Luciano Balmes Urpia* (1810 – 1848), a Catalan priest, represents with Donoso Cortes the conservative Catholic aspect of critical writing during the first half of the nineteenth century. He directed various review, such as *La Civilizacion*, *La Sociedad*, and *El Pensamiento de la Nacion*. He was the leading writer of the latter. He wrote constantly on social, political, philosophical, and religious matters, and for many is the greatest Spanish philosopher of the nineteenth century.

His complete works fill thirty-three volumes. Of these the important ones are *El protestantismo comparado con el catilicismo en sus Relaciones con la civilizacion europea* (1844), *El critero* (1845), *Filosofia fundamental* (1846), *Filosofia elemental* (1847), and *Escritos politicos* (1847).

5. *Juan Donoso Cortes* (1809 – 1853), aside from his masterpiece, *Ensayo sobre el catolicismo, el liberalism y el socialism* (1851), wrote a variety of articles and discourses.

In 1829 at the opening of the course in the Division of Humanities at Cáceres, he delivered a Romantic eulogy on Byron, Walter Scott, Madame de Staël, and Schiller. He stresses his belief that the moderns instead of the ancients should be followed in the development of new literary pathways. After his early Romantic enthusiasms, he became more of an Eclectic, as can be seen in *El clasicismo y el romanticismo* (1838). One of the most brilliant orators of his time, he was, according to Pineyro, next to Larra “the most original and brilliant prose writer among all those who were born or flourished in the so-called Romantic period.”

6. *Manuel Mila y Fontanals* (1818 -1884) acquired a solid Classical culture, although Romanticism was his early passion. He was influenced by Chateaubriand, Schiller, Schlegel, and especially Manzoni and Scott. As a young man he contributed to *El Vapor*, and Peers felt he “stood for a historical form of Romanticism.” Although he was a romance philologist, folklorist, and historian, his principal fame lies in the realm of literary criticism. He was one of the first in Spain to study comparative literature on a scientific basis. Menéndez y Pelayo, his best student, published his complete works and insisted that Mila y Fontanals was essentially a poetic man and without doubt the foremost Spanish critic of his time.

Among Mila y Fontanals’ many literary studies are *Arte poética* (1844); *Observaciones sobre la Poesía popular; De los trovadores de España* (1861), a study of the influence of Provençal poetry in Spain and Portugal; *De la Poesía heroico-popular* (1874); *Principios de literatura general y española* (1874); and *Romancero catalán* (1884), a study of the relationship between popular Catalan poetry and the Castilian epic. He belonged to a group that was trying to renovate Catalonian literature, and he fought for it throughout his life.

7. *Jose Amador de los Ríos* (1818 – 1878) is known primarily as a medievalist and historian. He taught literature at the University of Madrid and produced many works on a variety of subjects, such as *El Marques de Santillana* (1853), *El arte Mudéjar* (1859), and *El arte latino – bizantino en España* (1861). His two most famous works are *Historia crítica de la literatura española* (seven volumes, 1861 – 1865), which stops with the reign of Ferdinand and Isabel; and *Historia social, política y religiosa de los judíos en España y Portugal* (three volumes, 1875 – 1876).

Countless names could be added to the list of scholars, critics, and essayists of this period of the nineteenth century. Pedro Felipe Monlau y Roa (1808 – 1871) produced *Diccionario etimológico de la lengua castellana*. Pascual Gayangos (1809 – 1897) taught Oriental languages, translated Ticknor’s *History of Spanish Literature*, and contributed studies to the BAE. Cayetano Rosell (1817 – 1883) wrote history and criticism, edited works of many famous authors, and contributed to the BAE. Pablo Pífferrer (1818 – 1848) helped Mila y Fontanals in his bid for Catalonian literary renovation, edited a collection of Spanish classics, and wrote on art and archeology. Jose M. Quadrado (1819 – 1896), Francisco Pi y Margall (1824 – 1901), and Manuel Canete (1822 – 1891) produced well-known works in history, archeology and literary criticism.

CRITICS, SCHOLARS, AND HISTORIANS OF THE SECOND HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

- A. Juan Valera y Alcalá Galiano (1824 – 1905)

Although Valera won greater fame as a novelist, he is just as important as a critic. His critical prose contains the same classic serenity found in his novels, a serenity and calm that lead him into the error of exaggerating his praise and saying something good about everybody whenever possible. He wrote countless newspaper and magazine articles on an amazing variety of philosophical, religious, aesthetic, and literary subjects. He signed many of these with pseudonyms such as Eleuterio Filogyno and Currita Albornoz, after the heroine of Coloma’s *Pequeneces*. He introduced Leopardi’s works to Spain; translated parts of Heine, Goethe, and several North American poets; and wrote on Espronceda, the character of the novel, Spanish lyric and epic poetry, Donoso Cortés, Spanish philosophy, religious freedom, and the Portugal of his day.

Among his more important works are *Estudios críticos sobre la literatura, política y costumbres de nuestros días* (1864), *Disertaciones y juicios literarias* (1878), *Apuntes sobre el nuevo arte de escribir novelas* (1887), *Cartas americanas* (1889), *Nuevas cartas americanas* (1890), *La metafísica y la Poesía* (1891), and *Florilegio de Poesías Castellanas del siglo dieinueve* (five volumes, 1902 – 1903).

Valera had many polemics with several famous writer. His famous clash with Pardo Bazan was one of the principal literary fights of the time. Valera felt that a novel should not be prosaic and vulgar reflection of human life. A good novel, he said, was poetry, not history, and things should be painted not even as they are, but more beautiful than they are. He opposed trends toward French Realism and resented especially the sociological implications. He was repelled by the Naturalistic emphasis on the base as an affectation and accused French authors of confusing life with literature, which for him were two different things. The most important aspect of any work was that it not be ugly. In answer to Pardo Bazan's *La cuestion palpitante*, he charged that a Naturalistic novel was not a novel. He took the Naturalists to task for their mania in supposing they were preparing the way for a great social change by their work and for their emphasis on the depraved, not as the ancients had done with humorous intent, but in deadly seriousness. Valera wondered how Pardo Bazan could be a true Naturalist and yet be a good Catholic. Since Valera was a Humanist and interested in the entire man and since he felt that man helped direct his own destiny, he was especially upset by the deterministic factors inherent in Naturalism.

Cartas americanas shows that he knew both Latin American and North American literature. It was he who supported Longfellow as a corresponding member of the Spanish Academy, and he liked Poe, Emerson, and especially Whittier. His best-known article on American subjects is his letter to Ruben Dario about *Azul*. Although at first, he felt it might an imitation of Hugo, he soon came to realize that Dario had "gran fondo de originalidad muy extrana." He was surprised at how well Dario was able to assimilate French elements while maintaining his Spanish form. The "afrancesamiento" of *Azul*, he said, was only a "galicismo de la mente," and he was struck by the strong personality of the poet and the "rara quintaesencia" of the work.

Valera's letters from Saint Petersburg to Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto and others in 1856 and 1857 reveal not only the society of the time but also certain characteristics of the Russian people that exist to this day. He treats of the museums, churches, funerals, trains, soldiers, the luxury of the rich, the many banquets, and the difficulty of finding one's way around in Russia without a knowledge of Russian. He discusses the curiosity of the Russians, their potential for great power, their self-love, their nationalism, and their love of exaggeration. He feels that the Russian is more sensual than abstruse and is vain, presumptuous at times, and scornful of most European nations. Yet he found the society of Saint Petersburg "tan amable y tan aristocratida y estas mujeres tan elegantes y tan hermosas."

Valera wrote about almost all the writers of Spain at one time or another in his articles. He denied that his friend Estebanez Calderon used an archaic language and an artificial style. He considered the poetry of Campoamor the most delicate poetry of the age and praised Espronceda, Rivas, and especially Quintana.

B. Emilia Pardo Bazan (1852 – 1921)

Pardo Bazan wrote studies on a great many authors that are still quoted today. Her first work was *Examen crítico de las obras del Padre Feijoo* (1877). She wrote also on Pereda, Galdos, Alarcon, and many other Spanish authors. She wrote on Darwinism and the Christian epic. She produced travel books, plays, verses, biographies, and, of course, novels and short stories. Among her many titles are *Literatura y otras hierbas* (1887); *La revolucion y la novela en Rusia* (1887); *Nuevo teatro Critico*, a monthly periodical that began in 1891 and lasted until December 1893, in which she discussed books, theater, history, psychology, Campoamor, Pereda, Alarcon, and culture in general; *Polemicas y estudios literarias* (1892); *Lecciones de literatura* (1906); *Por*

Francia y por Alemania (1890); *Por La Espana pintoresco* (1895); and *Por la Europa catolica* (1902). She also started *Biblioteca de la mujer* in 1892 and published many works on and by women authors.

Pardo Bazan gave her criticism honestly. She said Pereda's writing was like a "huerto hermoso, bien regado bien cultivado, pero de limitados horizontes." Criticisms of this nature and certain lectures she gave aroused the enmities of many conservatives, especially since she seemed convinced that the emptiness, corruption, and decadence of Spain had led to its political downfall. She also aroused a great furor with her most famous critical work, *La cuestion palpitante*, attacked by Alarcon, Valera, and Pereda.

This work began to appear in 1883 in *La Epoca* as a series of articles, later published in book form. She saw two aspects of Naturalism, the repulsive dealing with the miserable and disgusting instincts of man, which she consciously rejected, and the idea that all things belong to nature. She wanted to adopt certain ideas of the new movement but give them a Spanish meaning. The French novel was good in its realistic orientation, but it was, nonetheless, "errada y torcida en bastantes respectos." She condemned the deterministic aspects of Zola as the leading "explainer" of the new theory, but she pointed out that he failed to prove Darwinism scientifically and she would not accept it.

She also rejected his "bestia humana" and insisted on a realism that offered a "teoria mas ancha, completa y perfecta que el naturalism." In her prologues she accepted more of Zola, even "algo de su pesimismo...de la miseria humana." She condemned the overabundance of pathological cases in the Naturalistic work and found that the experimental novel might not be experimental since the experiment often existed only in the mind of the author.

Her other well - known critical work is on Russia. She comments on the sudden revelation of Russia's national literature and geography, the Jewish problem, the Oriental aspects of the national culture, Russian history, Russian autocracy, the agrarian communes, and the various social classes. She traces the development of Russian literature from its origins through the Realistic period. Turgenev, she says, "stood in the gulf that separated the two halves of Russia yet maintained a contemplative and thoughtful attitude." He was a true thinker and poet, a classic writer and a visionary with an unsullied heart. She felt that Dostoyevski's heroes were incomprehensible. He was an apostle, a philosopher, and a fanatic, full of mystical Realism. Tolstoy, a nihilist and mystic unfortunately became a "heretic and rationalist." In comparing French and Russian Realism, she explains that Russia is still an enigma, and she offers no conclusive judgments. Indeed, in summing up her criticism, it would not be unfair to say that she rarely offered it, except in an occasional defense of her own inconsistent positions with regard to Naturalism.

C. Leopoldo Alas (Clarín) (1852 – 1901)

Clarín, for many years the most popular critic in Spain, was often considered the most penetrating and intellectual one. He lived in a decaying age, a period of conflict between the traditional and Catholic, and the Europeanized liberals. In this quarrel, in spite of his reputation as the most feared critic of his day and as an aggressive, passionate, and wild revolutionary, he was essentially a conservative and religious man. If he was cutting in his remarks, if he took sides and fought valiantly for what he thought was right, if he was on occasion blind to the merits of those who disagreed with him, then he proved, simply, that he was human. But the critic who inspired actual terror in his victims was not the critic of the five volumes of *Solos de Clarín* who was kindly and resembled Valera, his literary opponent. He showed *Krausista* affinities in his tolerance and comprehension and opposed the purely mechanical and materialistic approach.

Among his many works are *El derecho y moralidad* (1878), *Solos de Clarín* (1881), *Sermon perdido* (1885), *Benito Perez Galdos, studio critico – biografico* (1889),

Ensayos y revistas (1892), and *Palique* (1893). Between 1879 and 1898 he wrote numerous critical articles in various periodicals, some of which he signed with the pseudonym Zoilito.

Clarín anticipated the religious tension of Unamuno and the technique of Azorín and other members of the Generation of 1898. He opposed the Modernists, with the notable exception of Azorín. HE accused Darío of “galicismo interior” to which he objected. He played a large part in the discussion of Naturalism in Spain. He was considered a follower of Zola’s and possibly was the real leader of the movement instead of Pardo Bazán. Although at one point in his career he saw Naturalism everywhere, even in lyric poetry, he had grave reservations about the movement. Clarín accepted *Krausista* influence, which he later abandoned for an Eclectic position, but he never accepted Positivism or science. He felt that science might destroy the intangible values of society, and he accused Zola of indulging in superficial Positivism and writing “muchas vulgaridades de adocenado experimentalista.” In his introduction to *La cuestión palpitante*, he refused to accept the experimental techniques of the French Naturalists. HE believed that Spanish Naturalism might imitate the French in subject matter and certain techniques but that it should always have a moral goal. He even felt that free will could overcome the defect imposed by heredity, an obvious contradiction to the tenets of Naturalism. He stated, however, that Naturalism was not a description of the ugly seamy side of life that Pardo Bazán was not an imitator of things repugnant to the senses, and also that she was not one of those women writers who tried to substitute tenderness and sentimentality for lack of talent. As did most Spanish Realists, including Pardo Bazán and Galdós, Clarín encouraged the writing of novels on transcendental problems. He was, in fact, one of the first representatives of the neospiritual or neoidealistic school.

Clarín’s pupil, Pérez de Ayala, saw that “por ser Clarín tan gran maestro fue tan gran escritor...es que todas sus obras contienen una enseñanza permanente.” This is probably the true picture of Clarín, not eh narrow defender of a specialized doctrine, not the feared critic, but the man who offered teaching of permanent value.

D. Francisco Giner de los Ríos (1839 – 1915)

In 1876 this philosopher and educator founded the all-important Institución Libre de Enseñanza. The idea of the Institución’s founder was to create a school with an environment based on mutual love, respect, and tolerance and remove it from any partisan political or religious influence. Among the first teachers were Nicolás Salmerón and Joaquín Costa. A student came there not to learn from books exclusively but to observe nature and learn truth based on personal investigation. Giner concentrated a great deal on the study of the history of fine arts, for he believed that beauty should be a guiding principle in life. Physical education, too, was part of the program, as were industrial arts, job training, and field trips of various kinds.

Giner’s works are not confined to philosophy and education. He wrote on literature, art, law, religion, sociology, and especially the philosophy of law, but he became more and more convinced that Spain’s primary problem was one of education. His collected works run to some twenty-two volumes, including *Estudios literarios* (1866), *Estudios jurídicos y políticos* (1875), *Estudios filosóficos y religiosos* (1876), *Institución Libre de Enseñanza* (1882), and *Estudios sobre educación* (1886). Giner also wrote articles and essays for various journals and made many translations.

He accepted the philosophical standard of his teacher, Sanz del Río, that one must through means available arrive at harmony with the world. The Way this was to be done was not predetermined but education contained a key. Since he was Sanz del Río’s outstanding student, Giner, with prophetic zeal, sought to create new men at his Institución Libre de Enseñanza. He had a profound effect upon his students, and a whole generation of intellectual leaders depended on him for their early guidance. He was an idealist, but a pragmatic one who believed in testing theories and in applying idealism to practical problems of life. He agreed, in the *Krausista* tradition, that as

society becomes more closely equated with the image of God, man approaches the heights. He sought to reform Spanish education, worked for penal reform, and became intensely interested in and concerned about the problem of juvenile delinquency. He sought to impart a kind of religious idealism to many who later lived by it in their social struggles. He was the most important precursor of the Generation of 1898. Among his pupils and friends were Cossio, Unamuno, Altamira, Juan Ramon Jimenez, and the Machado brothers. Antonio Machado dedicated a loving poem to Giner's memory, and Unamuno called him the Spanish Socrates, the great "agitador de espiritus." Giner engendered this kind of feeling and spirit in all his students, many of whom looked upon him as a father or even with almost religious devotion.

Undoubtedly Giner deserved that love and respect. He was distressed by the misunderstandings of the world, and he worked for tolerance, peace, and harmony among men. He based his life on love, humility in the sight of God, and the cultivation of the religious ideal of God as the model by which to live.

E. Marcelino Menendez y Pelayo (1856 – 1912)

This Spanish critic and philosopher occupy in Spanish literature a place greater than that which Sainte-Beuve holds in French letters. From 1875 on he produced an astounding amount of literary and cultural material. Indeed, one admirer said that if some worldwide catastrophe were to destroy the whole planet, a good part of the world's culture could be resurrected if only the works of Menendez y Pelayo were saved. Menendez y Pelayo knew all the major European languages and literatures. An insight into his background can be obtained by examining his polemic against Azcarate and Manuel de la Revilla, begun in 1876 and continuing for many years thereafter, about whether Spanish science and philosophy existed. Menendez wrote a violent defense of Spanish philosophy, attacking *Krausistas* and liberals. For the conservatives this was an ardent defense of patriotism and orthodoxy. For the liberals it was an example of fanaticism and intransigence. The twenty-year-old Menendez had not yet matured, of course, as a critic, but he never changed his basic position.

His major works of Menendez y Pelayo are *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (1880), *Historia de las ideas estéticas en España* (1883 – 1891), *Obras de Lope de Vega* (1890 – 1902), *Historia de la Poesía hispanoamericana* (1911 – 1912), *Orígenes de la novela* (1905 – 1910), *Antología de poetas líricos castellanos* (1890 – 1908), and *Calderón y su teatro* (1811). Among his lesser works, if anything Menendez did can be called lesser, are *Antología de poetas hispanoamericanos* (1893 – 1895), *Ensayos de crítica filosófica* (1892), *La ciencia española* (1880), *Horacio en España* (1877), *Historia de la Poesía castellana en la edad media* (1911), *Estudio de crítica literaria* (1884 – 1908), and *Las cien mejores poesías líricas castellanas* (1908).

His *Historia de los heterodoxos* was less objective than later works. He himself later admitted his "excesiva acrimonia o intemperancia de expresión con que califican ciertas tendencias o se juzga de algunos hombres." This acrimony that led the "rightists" to consider him their champion aroused the antipathy of others who never forgave him, even when they admired his scholarship. He tried to prove, among other things, that at heart every Spanish writer whatever his professed beliefs, was unable to escape his religious heritage. In his *Historia de las ideas estéticas* he considered a field almost untouched in Spain up to that time. He studied not only Spanish ideas but the cultural and literary history of all Europe, including Christianity, the Middle Ages, and the Renaissance as world movements. In *Calderón y su teatro* he admits that Calderón is inferior to Lope in variety and spontaneity and to Tirso in character creation and comic grace, but he insists that nobody excels in grandeur of concept as a great Catholic and symbolic poet. Menendez y Pelayo ranked Calderón, in spite of his defects, after Sophocles and Shakespeare as the greatest dramatist of all time.

Every critic of note has had something to say about Menendez y Pelayo, Valera, who did not think much of him when he entered the Royal Academy, later admitted that he was "el mayor y mas celebrado" of all Spanish authors who wrote works other than

those of mere entertainment. Americo Castro did not think highly of his individual works, but he felt that Menendez led the way for those who wished to see with modern eyes and judge with a modern viewpoint the artistic creation of the past.

F. Rafael Altamira y Creva (18656 – 1951)

Altamira, a disciple of Giner de los Rios', taught at the Institucion Libre de Ensenanza. He wrote on a variety of subjects and even tried fiction, but his best work lies in the fields of history, education, and law. He was active in teaching reform, to be expected from an Institucion man. His *La ensenanza de la historia* (1891) became the guide for a generation of history teachers.

Of some sixty volumes, many of them amplified rewritings of earlier works on history, politics, teaching, and international law, his *Historia de Espana y la civilizacion espanola* (1900 – 1911) is the most famous. He traces here the development of institutions customs, and laws from their remote origins to modern times. He describes the causes active in Spanish cultural history, how they work, and what effect they had. He analyzes controversial subjects with a logical and impassive objectivity. For his scrupulous adherence to historical facts and historical concepts, he has been considered the outstanding interpreter of the history of Spain. Altamira presents an organic picture of Spanish life, its meaning, psychological backgrounds, and individual and collective historical events. Even though he has strong feelings on certain subjects such as war and Spanish cultural values. He tries to tell the whole truth. He presents not only Spanish history but also a kind of universal history, not to justify Spanish actions but to "indicate the universality of certain human acts or ideas to show how difficult it is to avoid them and how imperative is the duty incumbent on us to help correct them, instead of confining ourselves to disclosing the errors or cruelties of others."

Beneath Altamira's objectivity and cold spirit, however one senses a controlled passion as he focuses attention on Iberian and Hispanic considerations, the people and their psychology, as he seeks to promulgate a new international spirit of approximation.

G. Joaquin Costa (1844 – 1911)

Another immediate forerunner of the Generation of 1898 and an honorary member thereof, along with men like Cossio and Ramon y Cajal, was Joaquin Costa. He was a brilliant student, but although he taught at various institutions, including the Institucion Libre de Ensenanza, he did not obtain in his lifetime the professional rewards his talent merited.

Costa was especially interested in the philosophy of history and historical investigation. He was a jurist, historian, Republican politician sociologist, and agrarian reformer. His many works include *La vida del derecho* (1876), on political economy and jurisprudence; *Poesia popular espanola* (1881); *Reconstitucion y europeizacion de Espana* (1900); *Oligarquia y caciquismo* (1901 – 1902), his most famous work, based on the series of lectures he gave at the Ateneo; *Tutela de pueblos en la historia* (1917); and *La religion de los celtiberos* (1917).

Costa was not interested in the spiritual and aesthetic values of the times but rather in political and agricultural reform. He was the leader of the school that fought for Europeanization of Spain, and one critic called him the "Apostle of Europeanization." He was, indeed, a vehement defender of *regeneracionismo*. He wished to regenerate the spirit of Spain, affected as it was by the loss of its colonies and its ruined agriculture and economy, and he insisted that Spain had to jump several centuries to catch up with Europe and the rest of the world. His most famous dictum in this regard was "echar doble llave al sepulcro del Cid." Some of his enemies felt he was negating rather than extolling the value of the Spanish spirit. He supported the truly popular in Spain, rather than outworn tradition or the artificial overgrowths of nineteenth-century

society, and he hoped to cure part of what ailed Spain through refreshing breezes of modern Europe.

His *Krausista* background manifested itself in most of his works. He felt Spain's destiny was tied in with that of Africa and sought a colonial policy of peace and education. He was opposed to what he termed the "centralismo de Espana," and in some of his essays he anticipated Ortega y Gasset's ideas on government.

H. Other Didactic Writers

Of necessity we have omitted many worthy authors such as Antonio Canovas del Castillo (1828 – 1897) and Emilio Castelar (1832 – 1899), the greatest political orator of the century. Important as precursors of the Generation of 1898 are authors such as Ricardo Macias Picavea (1847 – 1899), a *revisionista* professor at the Instituto de Vallasolid. He wrote on educational reform, but his most famous work is *El problema nacional: Hechos, causas y remedios* (1891), in which he studies Spanish life and seeks remedies for its decadence. Even more important are Santiago ramon y Cajal (1852 – 1934) and Manuel Bartolome Cossio (1858 – 1935). The former, a physician and histologist who won the Nobel Prize, belonged in spirit to the Generation of 1898. He wrote scientific and literary essays about Spain's problems, its need for psychological and moral regeneration its lack of scientific progress, and its intellectual segregation, but he refrained from the pessimism of many of the younger writers of the day. His most influential work was *Reglas y consejos sobre investigacion biologica: Los tonicos de la voluntad* (1897), which went through many editions. He examined in detail the causes often given for the decadence of Spain, such as climate, lack of rainfall, provincialism, and religious fanaticism. He emphasized the Spain was backward but not decadent, uneducated but not degenerate. Manuel Bartolome Cossio, the most intimate colleague of Giner de los Rios in the Institucion Libre Ensenanza, had great influence on the following generations, especially in his chosen field of art. His most important work is *El Greco*, a biographical and artistic study that offered a new interpretation of the sixteenth-century artist. The Generation of 1898 and the Modernists were fascinated by El Greco, and Cossio's book, while not published until 1908, helped focus their spiritual commitments, for Cossio interpreted El Greco as the maximum spiritual symbol of the Spanish Renaissance.

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