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Twentieth-Century Spanish Fiction Writers

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Introduction

The aim of *DLB 322: Twentieth-Century Spanish Fiction Writers* is to introduce the reader to the variety and excellence of the authors who shaped the development of Spanish fiction in the twentieth century. The entries focus on the interconnections between life and writing and trace the writers' personal response to the cultural, intellectual, and political concerns of the day, as well as to the traditions and literary styles that shaped their imagination.

Designed for the scholar, the student, and the nonspecialist alike, *DLB 322* provides a condensed assessment of the authors' aesthetic and personal preferences as shown through their fiction and nonfiction. The editors have provided an up-to-date list of primary and selected secondary publications. The strength of the volume lies in the contributors, most of whom are recognized critics and professors of Spanish literature well acquainted with the need for a reliable and accessible study guide to complement their students' readings.

For reasons of space, younger established authors, such as Luis Landero, Marina Mayoral, Paloma Díaz Más, and Almudena Grandes, could not be included. Also omitted were most Catalan, Galician, and Basque novelists whose original works did not appear in Spanish at the time of publication, with the notable exceptions of Mercé Rodoreda, Montserrat Roig, and Carme Riera, authors who achieved early nationwide recognition and have become part of high-school and college curricula in Spain. This criterion also leaves out masterful bilingual prose writers such as Josep Pla, Llorenç Villalonga, Sebastiá Juan Arbó, Alvaro Cunqueiro, Rafael Dieste, Bernardo Atxaga, and Manuel Rivas, who are typically excluded by the uniform-language requirements of anthologies and textbooks of Spanish literature. It is anticipated that future, more-extensive guides will be able to represent the multilingual nature of the Spanish literary scene after the 1970s, when the expansion of the publishing market and local governmental subsidies contributed to the flourishing of other vernacular literatures in the peninsula.

The Spanish-American War marks the beginning of the twentieth century in the literary history of Spain. The loss of the Atlantic and Pacific colonies after four centuries of Spanish domination, followed by the defeat in Cuba, brought about a new social and political climate and a growing awareness of the waning role of Spain in world events. The defeat of 1898 had an acute psychological impact on Spanish intellectuals. A group of writers labeled the Generación del 1898 (Generation of 1898), led by Angel Ganivet and Miguel de Unamuno and including Azorín (José Martínez Ruiz), Antonio Machado, Pío Baroja, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, and Ramiro de Maeztu, articulated their moral and ideological concerns for a national destiny that was to embrace the past greatness of Spain along with all the controversial legacies. They advocated a national regeneration that must start with self-knowledge and a critical view of the history of Spain. Their novels were no longer a mirror of the major social transformations of the moment, as had been the case for the realist writers of the Restoration (the twenty-five-year period following the restoration of the Spanish monarchy in 1874), such as Benito Pérez Galdós, Juan Valera, Armando Palacio Valdés, Emilia Pardo Bazán, and Leopoldo Alas, but an instrument for self-reflection as well as a vehicle for diagnosis of the stagnant values of Spanish contemporary society that had led to cultural and political decline.

Unamuno and Ganivet's propositions were philosophical rather than political. They adapted mainstream European thought to the crisis of Spain, which they saw as a "psychological ailment," without touching on the underlying social and economic factors, as Herbert Ramsden notes in *The 1898 Movement in Spain* (1974). Their deterministic pattern of thought and feeling was not exclusively Spanish but peculiar to the age, inspired by the post-Darwinist historicism of Hippolyte Taine and by the ideas of Arthur Schopenhauer, Friedrich Nietzsche, Edmund Husserl, and Sigmund Freud.

The Generación del 1898 took various strident positions against the status quo, exemplified by the young Azorín's anarchist spirit, Valle-Inclán's vitri-

olic satires of the court of Queen Isabel II, and Unamuno's personal enmity toward the dictator Miguel Primo de Rivera and King Alfonso XIII. Most of these writers, however, with the exception of Maeztu and Valle-Inclán, abandoned the political dissent of their youth. Lacking a consistent political commitment or adherence to a specific cause, their legacy was limited to the invention of a national identity based on the spiritual and aesthetic heritage of the Spanish classics, as well as on the indigenous traditions and collective beliefs that remained intact in the heart of the Spanish countryside, an innate cultural essence that Unamuno defined as *intrahistoria* (intrahistory). A symbolic and metaphysical transcendence was attributed to Castile, with its barren highlands and limpid skies, as the material core of the Spanish spirit. The writers of the periphery saw in the Castilian *meseta* (central plateau) the natural center of the regional diversity of Spain and the root of all its spiritual quests.

The year 1902 might be considered a landmark in the renovation of Spanish fiction, with the publication of groundbreaking works such as Valle-Inclán's *Sonata de Otoño* (translated as "Autumn Sonata," 1924), Vicente Blasco Ibáñez's *Cañas y barro* (translated as *Reeds and Mud,* 1928), and Unamuno's *Amor y pedagogía* (Love and Pedagogy). The first two works display vestiges of the symbolist and naturalist tradition, while in his humorous novel Unamuno embraced the antirealist experimentation of Anglo-European modernist fiction, characterized by stream of consciousness, internal ironies, fragmentary plots, self-reflective or self-conscious narrative, metafiction, intellectual humor, absurdist parody, and musical and lyrical structures, features that led to a redefinition of the genre from *novela* to *nivola* (antinovel or unnovel). In Valle-Inclán's four *Sonata* novellas (1902–1905) art for art's sake reached its pinnacle, while his satirical *esperpentos* (works that intentionally exaggerate the ugliness of reality, usually targeting traditional Spnish values and institutions) anticipated the acerbic pessimism of expressionist and absurdist drama. Baroja's fiction evolved from a type of social determinism to Surrealist trends, as in *El hotel del cisne* (1946, The Hotel of the Swan). Unamuno also called his novels *dramas del alma* (tragedies of the soul), establishing the foundation for an existential and confessional tone that blended poetic, autobiographical, philosophical, and dramatic elements. The immediacy of his style broke away from two persistent traits of nineteenth-century realist prose: rhetoricism and *casticismo* (pure or authentic Spanishness).

The early avant-garde efforts of the Generación del 1898 overlapped with those of subsequent literary groups in the pre-Spanish Civil War years, the Generación de 1914 and the Grupo poético de 1927 (Poetic Group of 1927). Writers such as Gabriel Miró, Eugenio d'Ors, Ramón Pérez de Ayala, Benjamín Jarnés, and Ramón Gómez de la Serna followed the precepts of José Ortega y Gasset's dehumanized art and opened the novel to a higher degree of abstraction and literary self-consciousness. Disengaged from the pressing historical realities of Europe, their art was soon to be eclipsed by a return to socially conscious preoccupations brought about by the reformist spirit of the Second Republic (1931–1936) and the turbulent political events that were to follow shortly thereafter.

The neutrality of Spain in World War I did not prevent ideological schisms among Spanish intellectuals, some of whom sided with either the Allies or the German-backed Central Powers, becoming *aliadófilos* or *germanófilos,* respectively. At both ends of the political spectrum one can find the axiological divisions that were to polarize the nation at the onset of the Second Republic and during the Civil War (1936–1939). The momentary triumph of the Left in April 1931 suppressed the emergent *falangista* (Falangist) movement that later reemerged and served as an ideological foundation for Francisco Franco's military insurrection.

The progressive spirit of the Second Republic culminated in one of the most productive and cosmopolitan periods of Spanish arts and letters, with personalities such as Federico García Lorca, Salvador Dalí, Pablo Picasso, Manuel de Falla, and Luis Buñuel, whose formative years coincided with Primo de Rivera's dictatorship (1923–1930) and who had won international recognition by the early 1930s. In this period, referred to as the Edad de Plata (Silver Age) of Spanish letters, three generations of writers engaged in a fecund dialogue with mainstream European intellectual thought as avid readers, translators, and commentators on Freud, Søren Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, Johan Huizinga, Oswald Spengler, Henri Bergson, and Husserl. Their works shaped the increasingly cultivated and receptive audience that the poet Juan Ramón Jiménez referred to as *la inmensa minoría* (the vast minority).

Even though the Second Republic was short-lived, its impact nurtured a whole generation of intellectual dissenters who were compelled to flee after the Civil War. The triumph of the Frente Popular (People's Front) in 1936 gave impetus to the reemergence of the social-realist and engagé novels of Ramón Sender, Andrés Carranque de Ríos, Max Aub, and Arturo Barea, authors who were committed to anarchist, socialist, or communist ideals and

dared to denounce the broad inequities and repression imposed on the working class by both political sides.

The Civil War gave way to a testimonial genre that transcended languages and nationalities and served as the mode best suited to report the excesses and contradictions of the conflict from a subjective standpoint. Semi-autobiographical accounts of battle, survival in concentration camps, and partisan resistance by André Malraux, George Orwell, Ernest Hemingway, Sender, Barea, and Rodoreda had an authenticity transcending the inevitably propagandistic subtexts. These testimonies were first published abroad and republished by mainstream Spanish publishers in the late 1960s, after thirty years of censorship.

For the writers who remained in Spain, Francoist censorship was harsh but not powerful enough to suppress all creativity. References to the war and its consequences had to be made obliquely or diverted into extemporal, existential concerns. *Tremendismo* was an overtly graphic and stylized literary response to the abjection, violence, and mental illness brought about by the war, a self-conscious literary dissection of the cruelty of life by way of metaphor and stylization. As a trend, *tremendismo* aimed at the destruction of poetic tenderness by overstimulation of the senses and excessive use of the grotesque. The degradation of family values and the spirit of vigilance and mistrust that Franco's regime helped to foster are depicted in Camilo José Cela's *La familia de Pascual Duarte* (1942; translated as *Pascual Duarte's Family,* 1946, and as *The Family of Pascual Duarte,* 1964) and Carmen Laforet's *Nada* (1945, Nothingness; translated as *Nada,* 1958, and as *Andrea,* 1964), two fictional paradigms of *tremendismo,* with its emphasis on the horrid, exposing the emotional and physical traumas that were haunting the survivors of the war in the city and in the countryside.

In the 1950s Italian neorealist literature and cinema helped to consolidate social realism. The fiction of Vasco Pratolini and Elio Vittorini and the movies of Vittorio De Sica and Roberto Rossellini depicted postfascist Italian society in the process of reconstruction, a situation with which the Spanish people could identify. Political schisms, regional rivalries, clerical superstitions, unemployment, lottery wins, the festive spirit of local customs, and melodramatic sentimentality were issues that disguised everyday miseries. The self-deprecation, black humor, caricature, and tenderness in Italian neorealism were soon adopted by Spanish movie directors such as Luis García Berlanga and writers such as Francisco García Pavón, Ignacio Aldecoa, Daniel Sueiro, Medardo Fraile, Jesús Fernández Santos, Luis and Juan Goytisolo, and Juan Marsé.

Novels and short stories depicted the miserable economic conditions that kept Spain in the shadow of industrial Europe, uncovering what the press did not dare to expose. Novels by Miguel Delibes, Jesús López Pacheco, Sueiro, Alfonso Grosso, and Juan García Hortelano dealt with the destitution and impoverished conditions in postwar cities, as well as with the rural misery hidden behind Franco's official propaganda of enduring peace and prosperity. Peasant communities desolated by the migration of the young to the city and abroad, the dispossession of villages by hydroelectric projects, and labor accidents in mines and power plants became the epic dramas of a nation being reworked.

The second wave of Spanish social realism lacked the terse, testimonial style of the first wave. It incorporated psychoanalytic, existential, and Marxist concerns and shifted the perspective from alienated peasants or factory workers to the young, educated, urban middle class that had conformed to Franco's totalitarian rule in order to maintain its privileges. At the same time, Spain was rapidly developing new socio-economic structures and becoming part of a southern European belt of capitalist development.

In *Novela española de nuestro tiempo* (1975, Spanish Novel of Our Time) Gonzalo Sobejano uses the term *realismo dialéctico* (dialectical realism) to define the dynamic confrontation of the evolving self with a rapidly changing environment that defies explanation in terms of simple materialistic causation. The literary hero is no longer an opinionated or impassive observer but an active participant, full of self-doubt, who feels the futility of his involvement in a repressive system and ends up withdrawing from history and regressing to a *tiempo de silencio* (time of silence), as in Luis Martín-Santos's 1961 novel of that title (translated as *Time of Silence,* 1964). In *Tiempo de silencio* a young doctor abandons his career in Madrid for an obscure life in the provinces after being falsely accused of performing a fatal abortion on a gypsy girl impregnated by her father. Martín-Santos's ambitious stream-of-consciousness work opened the way to a myriad of novels that experimented with time, space, and the role of the narrative voice, such as Juan Benet's *Volverás a Región* (1967, Return to Región), Juan Goytisolo's *Revindicación del Conde Don Julián* (1970, Vindication of Count Julian; translated as *Count Julian,* 1974), and Cela's *oficio de tinieblas 5* (1973, Office of Darkness 5).

The Spanish novel of the late 1960s explored the self-conscious processes of writing in search of language-sustained fictional worlds. Reality was mediated by myth or was subordinated to the literary self. Writers such as Juan Pedro Aparicio, Luis Mateo Díez, Marina Mayoral, Soledad Puértolas, Jorge Martínez Reverte, Vicente Molina-Foix, Raúl Guerra Garrido, Alvaro Pombo, and Eduardo Mendoza were not committed to the political concerns of the radical Left and embraced a variety of aesthetic influences. Some followed the French theories of structuralism set forth in the literary review *Tel Quel,* some incorporated psychoanalytic discourse, and some integrated myth and fantasy in the depiction of the everyday, as in Latin American magic-realist fiction.

A common denominator among the leftist authors emerging around 1968–including Luis Goytisolo, Manuel Vázquez Montalbán, Fernando Savater, Marsé, Félix de Azúa, Roig, Lourdes Ortiz, and Rosa Montero–is the denunciation of the declining values of the counterculture and the eclipse of Marxist and feminist convictions in the wake of the hedonistic society of post-Franco Spain. The accelerated development of the northern regions went hand in hand with a will to forget the past, as the proletariat entering the middle class and the intellectuals already integrated into the Socialist Party no longer wished to be reminded of their revolutionary aspirations. Montero, Guerra Garrido, Vázquez Montalbán, and Ortiz voiced less-privileged or silenced perspectives, minor dissensions that the capitalist order had now made mainstream.

Writers engaged in the anti-Franco resistance created satirical portraits of the new Spanish technocratic and political elites. Writers such as Miguel Espinosa, Terenci Moix, Luis Goytisolo, Vázquez Montalbán, Ortiz, Eduardo Mendicutti, and Mercedes Soriano also targeted the bourgeoisie and the sentimental education that had molded it by transcending the portrayal of the personal journey of sexual discovery in order to express the collective need to exorcise guilt and suffocating parochial mores.

After Franco's death in 1975, new freedoms made political gossip and speculation much more exciting than fiction. The public was more interested in learning about the secrets and scandals of the leaders of recent history than in any fictional account of the past, so the political and sociological essay took precedence over fiction. Santos Sanz Villanueva states that "el clima de libertad de opinión de la etapa de la transición política indujo la falsa esperanza de un resurgimiento literario a cargo de los textos que los mecanismos de control de la dictadura habían impedido publicar" (the climate of freedom of speech during the period of political transition to democracy induced the false hope of a literary revival owing to the writings released by the regime's censorship machinery).

The quantity and quality of Spanish prose increased in the 1980s, with lively publications by established and young writers alike reconnecting with a wide readership that had the pleasure of reading as its main goal. Several generations overlapped on the best-seller lists, with writers creating imaginative plots that broke the impasse left by the hermetic fiction of the *Novísimos.* Later works by Cela, Delibes, Gonzalo Torrente Ballester, Juan Goytisolo, José Manuel Caballero Bonald, and Carmen Martín Gaite still surprise readers with relevant contemporary messages full of humor, acid wit, irony, and autobiographical wisdom. The stories of Mendoza, Javier Tomeo, Landero, Pombo, Antonio Muñoz Molina, Riera, Francisco Ayala, and Manuel Vicent surprise readers with anecdotes taken from preposterous events reported in the daily press. Vázquez Montalbán, Azúa, Marsé, and Guerra Garrido seek foremost to capture the reader's attention, writing in genres such as the detective novel, the historical novel, the erotic novel, and the fantastic as frameworks within which to insert a clever critique of postindustrial social values and customs or to parody obsolete sentimental conventions. The critic José Maria Castellet announced readers' new participation in the literary text, which now reclaimed their attention from the media and offered relief from the everyday through a deceptively light alternative form of entertainment.

At the end of the Franco dictatorship the issue of Basque, Catalan, and Galician nationalism emerged in a backlash against the suppression of political autonomy and the imposition of Spanish over the languages of these regions. In the case of the Catalan language, the revival of the flourishing vernacular literature of the 1920s and 1930s became the basis for reconstructing an interrupted historical identity. Most monolingual Catalan writers continued publishing in Spanish (for example, Villalonga and Pla), while some, such as Salvador Espriu, Carles Riba, Josep Carner, and Rodoreda, opted for Catalan as a sign of resistance, thereby limiting their audience to the cultured minority. After 1970 the Catalan language was widely used in literary and critical works alike, although it was still common practice to write academic articles and journalism in Spanish to reach a larger audience, a phenomenon evident in the works of Roig, Riera, and Pere Gimferrer, who faced

the challenge of bringing Catalan to a contemporary cultural context without the aid of linguistic models. Most Barcelona-born writers who received their primary and secondary education in the postwar period (for example, Juan and Luis Goytisolo, Marsé, Vázquez Montalbán, Mendoza, and Azúa) chose Spanish as their creative language but reflected the bilingual nature of the city in their works, interspersing Catalan words and expressions in the speech of their characters, just as the bicultural settings of Barcelona dominate their works. Others, such as Moix, switched to Spanish when their mother tongue ceased to be a dissenting language and became a reminder of the confining provincialism they wanted to leave behind. Three novels of this generation are unsurpassed epics of the city: Luis Goytisolo's *Recuento* (1973, A Retelling), Mendoza's *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986; translated as *The City of Marvels,* 1988), and Moix's *Lleonard, o, El sexe dels àngels* (1992, Leonard, or The Gender of Angels). The first is a generational chronicle set at the end of the Franco dictatorship; the second is a foundational novel that depicts the two apotheoses that transformed Barcelona into a modern European capital, foretelling the splendors of 1992, the year the city hosted the Summer Olympics. The International Exposition of 1899 and the World's Fair of 1929 appear as historical climaxes that parallel the unscrupulous ascendancy of a self-made man, Onofre Bouvila, who becomes one of the forefathers of the entrepreneurial class of the city. Moix's work is a roman à clef that targets the Catalan petit bourgeois mentality and cultural politics during the emergent nationalism of the mid 1960s.

Another continuing subject of modern Spanish literature is the Civil War. Franco's censorship could not obliterate the heroic accounts told from varying perspectives, both within and outside of Spain. Real-life chronicles written in the trenches, such as those by Sender and Barea, and accounts written during the aftermath were published abroad and became accessible to Spanish readers after the 1970s. Ayala's *La cabeza del cordero* (1949, The Lamb's Head), Sender's *Réquiem por un campesino español* (originally published as *Mosén Millán,* 1953; translated as *Requiem for a Spanish Peasant,* 1960), Barea's three-volume autobiography *La forja de un rebelde* (translated as *The Forge,* 1941; *The Track,* 1943; and *The Clash,* 1946; collected as *The Forging of a Rebel,* 1946; original Spanish version published, 1951), Aub's story "El cojo" (1944, The Lame Man; translated, 1980), and Rodoreda's novel *La plaça del diamant* (1962, Diamond Square; translated as *Pigeon Girl,* 1967, and as *The Time of the Doves,* 1980) were instant best-sellers. Before these works were published, writers who remained in Spain offered personal accounts that avoided political statements, emphasizing existential or moral concerns. José María Gironella's *Los cipreses creen en Dios* (1953; translated as *The Cypresses Believe in God,* 1955) and Augustín de Foxá *Madrid de corte a checa* (1962, Madrid from Court to Prison) are sentimental dramas that mark the eclipse of a careless bourgeois lifestyle set against the harsh realities of the war, told from the winners' perspective.

The Franco dictatorship also inspired oblique political tales of totalitarian domination set in a dystopic future, as in Delibes's *Parábola del náufrago* (1969, Parable of a Castaway; translated as *The Hedge,* 1983), or in an invented tropical republic, as in Ayala's *Muertes de perro* (1958; translated as *Death as a Way of Life,* 1964), a novella that takes up the paradigm of the Latin American *novela de dictador* (dictator novel). Ayala also resorted to other periods of Spanish history to offer a critique of Franco's totalitarian rule. Retrospective memories dominated by nostalgia, pain, or shame for the collective loss of innocence are found in Cela's *Víspera, festividad y octava de San Camilo del año 1936* (1969, Eve, Feast and Octave of St. Camillus's Day in the Year 1936; translated as *San Camilo, 1936,* 1991), in which he exorcises his political guilt by portraying himself as a cowardly young man hiding in the midst of Madrid's heroic Republican resistance, thinking only of making love to his fiancée. In García Pavón's *Cuentos Republicanos* (1961, Republican Stories) and *Los liberales* (1965, The Liberals) and in Caballero Bonald's *Dos días de setiembre* (1962, Two Days of September), the Civil War marks the end of an idyllic lifestyle, destroying the communal spirit of southern villages such as Jérez and Tomelloso, where the authors grew up as sons of entrepreneur landowners. In *Primera memoria* (1960, First Memory; translated as *School of the Sun* and as *Awakening,* 1963) Ana María Matute duplicates the social divisions of the war in the betrayal by two adolescent cousins of their *chueta* (Majorcan of Jewish descent) friend, whom one of them falsely accuses of stealing. Civil War themes continue to fascinate the Spanish public, as the successes of Juan Iturralde's *Dias de llamas* (1979, Day of Flames), Julio Llamazares's *Luna de lobos* (1985, Wolf Moon), and Javier Cercas's *Soldados de Salamina* (2001; translated as *Soldiers of Salamis,* 2004) attest. Cercas's novel, part fiction and part biography, narrates the story of how a Republican soldier spared the life of a *falangista* soldier, Rafael Sánchez Mazas, who had fled a prisoner-of-war camp in north Girona. After the war Rafael becomes an impassive high functionary of the government, haunted by the

memory of the soldier whose generosity he can never reciprocate.

After the death of Franco, Spanish fiction became progressively detached from local, provincial, and bourgeois themes and increasingly open to urban and cosmopolitan issues. Although several novelists have reflected upon the moral and political sequels to the dictatorship, the dominant trend has been the tendency to erase national particularities and the sense of victimhood in favor of a progressive image of Spain as a country worthy of member status in the European Union (achieved in 1982), having more in common with its European neighbors than with its own cultural past. This cosmopolitan impulse does not imply the erasure of distinctive Iberian traits of identity but rather a tendency to universalize the cultural legacy of Spanish achievements and to inscribe them within an international artistic discourse. Part of this tendency arises from the novelist's preference for the urban medium, both as a subject and a setting. The term *postmodern* can be applied to a contemporary aesthetic of Spanish fiction that is characterized by the dissolution of barriers between high and low culture, the hybridization of genres, the lack of political or ideological commitment, and the writer's conscious disavowal of any moral conviction. These common denominators of the new democratic novel do not exclude old categories. If the realist novel focused on the individual conscience as a narrative center, introspection and emotional density now address the emptiness of the technocratic world rather than metaphysical questions. In *De postguerra: 1951–1990* (1994, On the Postwar Period: 1951–1990) critic José-Carlos Mainer points to a revival of the sentimental novel, ready to embrace the "obscenity of feelings" displaced by the new eroticism.

Novels are no longer self-sufficient textual worlds but rather subsidiaries of cinema, painting, music, the essay, autobiography, and bioscience; language experimentation and playfulness have been replaced by the accelerated rhythms, improvisation, chaos, and chance that govern urban life. Authors such as Enrique Vila-Matas, Juan José Millás, and Javier Marías seek the complicity of an extinct reader with whom they can engage in creating imaginary worlds amid the noise and distraction of the mass media. At the same time, images from cinema, photography, painting, and comics have become integrated into the literary text to an unprecedented extent in the generation that includes writers such as Lucía Etxebarria, Angela Vallvey, and José Angel Mañas. The interrelation between audiovisual and verbal discourses corresponds to the disappearance of barriers between popular and high culture and to the reinstatement of movies and television programs as fully legitimate artistic media. Novels incorporate forms and messages from a wide range of sources, including popular music (jazz, rock, and rap), video clips, advertisements, self-help guides, tabloids, and Internet chats, which reclaim readers' attention. The extensive presence of such forms and the use of virtual reality, together with a lack of literary referents and psychological depth, are common in the works of Generation X writers, whom leading literary critics have censured for their inability to create complex and memorable characters and their constant borrowing from movie and television narrative structures. The need to comply with market demands constrains young and established authors alike. In some cases the production schedule imposed on writers limits both experimentation and research as they resort to the more commercially secure forms sought by publishers and readers. This commercial orientation risks the loss of cultural values in fiction, which is transformed from an uncompromising object of art into a commodity. Still, there are some benefits: newly emerging writers connect with a wider audience attracted to best-selling novels that are more accessible to the general public. Best-seller lists, the impact of the media on cultural production, and extensive marketing campaigns providing greater visibility for new writers have helped to create readers loyal to "launched" authors, even if these readers are less inclined to enjoy classic literary works. The novel in Spain is now less an instrument of moral or social change than a tool for measuring dissent and contradictions within modern society without fully exploring aspects of social unrest, including solitude, uprooting, financial insecurity, loss of communal memory, the absence of moral standards, the need for instant gratification, and collective boredom. As a consequence of widespread unrest, plots are centered on the individual conscience rather than on collective concerns. The great causes, such as communism, ecology, militant feminism, and liberation theology, have lost their vigor, having been replaced with more-modest and viable proposals. The legitimation of previously marginalized positions, such as women's rights, multiple sexual orientations, interracial coexistence, and multiculturalism, is expanding a belief system no longer shared universally. This new horizon does not preclude the relevance of works exploring the universal and timeless subjects of enduring love, thwarted ambitions, and journeys to one's origins.

A constant feature of postmodern Spanish literature is nostalgia as a feeling that emphasizes a pri-

vate, subjective past over the collective present and that allows writers to enhance common and trivial experiences without losing sight of the fleeting nature of their evocations. The present is perceived as a deceptive stage of adult life, incapable of fulfilling youthful expectations, a dissatisfaction reflected in the ironic ruminations of Vázquez Montalbán's Catalan detective character Pepe Carvalho and in many of Muñoz Molina's lucid *perdedores* (losers or failures), as well as in the retreat of authors to a land of their childhood that no longer exists, as is seen in the travel chronicles of Llamazares and in the imaginary regions conjured up by José María Merino and Díez from the legends of the León countryside.

There are distinctive differences in the works of the last two generations of twentieth-century Spanish fiction writers. Those who enjoyed recognition and honors in the 1980s, including Marías, Muñoz Molina, Millás, Marsé, Llamazares, Ortiz, Montero, Puértolas, Arturo Pérez-Reverte, Riera, Esther Tusquets, and Vila-Matas, conceive of writing as an act of solitary, almost solipsistic reflection, but they do so from two different moral preconceptions. Marías's aloof characters lack moral commitment or clear programmatic principles of behavior, while Muñoz Molina's protagonists are more historically grounded *agonistas* (self-questioning characters). The engagement of Muñoz Molina's heroes with the past and their awareness of Franco's social legacy make them appear tense, anguished, and incapable of distinguishing their personal fate from collective amnesia. The emotional intensity of these protagonists contrasts with the unaffected and Apollonian demeanor of Marías's narrators, who, lacking definite direction and convictions, surrender to their present circumstances without judging them.

Marías's empathy with the British cultural elite and cosmopolitan settings, explicit in *Todas las almas* (1989; translated as *All Souls,* 1992), contrasts with the localism of Muñoz Molina's provincial heroes, limited by daydreaming and alienation. Beyond these divergent attitudes and contexts, both authors have distanced their fiction from transcendental concerns, attempting only to expose basic civic values in their characters' decisions, thus reclaiming what an increasingly impulsive and selfish society has done away with. In depicting interpersonal relations, everyday commitments, and family affairs, their first-person narratives do not aspire to change the social or moral order but rather to articulate a sensible judgment of the world that confines them, remaining conscious of their arbitrary and inconclusive explorations.

Writers born after 1960, such as Mañas, Ray Loriga, Suso de Toro, Etxebarria, Juan Manuel de Prada, Benjamín Prado, David Trueba, Roger Wolfe, and Vallvey, share an indifference toward common enterprises for collective well-being and a basic self-centeredness. The adolescent-like conflicts they expose tend to run deeper than they appear, while remaining obscure and unarticulated. Their characters are shallow antiheroes, disconnected from social reality, irresponsible, irreverent, restless, and capable of cruelty and self-destructive impulses. Mañas's *Historias del Kronen* (1994, Stories from the Kronen) has become a paradigm for this type of social novel, in which disregard for form and style in favor of everyday speech struck a chord of truthfulness and spontaneity. The banal and venal conversations of a group of youths drinking, flirting, and yelling in their neighborhood bar, the Kronen, are interrupted only when the sole youth among them with homosexual tendencies dies after a bout of drinking that he was incited to engage in by the others as a demonstration of his virility. The group meets in the Kronen the next evening as if nothing has happened, a routine symptomatic of a generation out of touch with the past and the future. Written during the decline of the Socialist Party government, *Historias del Kronen* may lead the reader to infer the degradation of a society in which ideals had succumbed to power, money, and instant gratification, a society in search of palliatives to fill the vacuum left by a former way of life regulated by family, religion, and secure work, all of which the conformist majority has begun to miss. Dissent, lack of purchasing power, and political indifference keep the customers of the Kronen excluded from the more glamorous consumerist fiesta goers; the bar patrons learn to escape from apathy and audiovisual solipsism through the more socializing stimulants of alcohol, drugs, and violence. The dispossessed youth labeled Generation X by Douglas Coupland might include these sons of the Spanish establishment who seem as ready to practice aggression to ease their pain as their American peers.

Best-selling authors such as Mañas and Etxebarria have given voice to the young urban subculture by integrating urban speech, colloquial expressions, anglicisms, and generational tics into their narratives. Their impoverished and terse linguistic mannerisms point to a symbolic level of generalized impotence and morbidity. Nevertheless, their writing differs greatly from that of contemporaries such as Belén Gopegui, Blanca Riestra, and Prada, who have opted for a return to the literary novel by means of a baroque and metaphorical discourse rich in classical

references. Unashamed of his canonical models, Prada demonstrates in his works a return to a high style, evoking many influences and reassessing the craftsmanship of the storyteller, often replacing visual or oral mimesis by the autonomous work of art as a sustained effort of metalanguage and self-referential creation.

–Marta E. Altisent and Cristina Martínez-Carazo

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Pío Baroja

(28 December 1872 - 30 October 1956)

Nelson R. Orringer
University of Connecticut

and

Sebastiaan Faber
Oberlin College

BOOKS: *Vidas sombrías* (Madrid: Antonio Marzo, 1900);

La casa de Aizgorri: Novela en siete jornadas (Bilbao: Cardenal, 1900);

Larra (1809-1837): Aniversario de 13 de febrero de 1901, by Baroja, Azorín (José Martínez Ruiz), and others (Madrid: Imprenta de Felipe Marques, 1901);

Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox (Madrid: Rodríguez Serra, 1901);

Idilios vascos (Madrid: Rodríguez Serra, 1902);

Camino de perfección (Pasión mística) (Madrid: Rodríguez Serra, 1902);

El mayorazgo de Labraz (Barcelona: Henrich, 1903); translated by Aubrey F. G. Bell as *The Lord of Labraz* (New York: Knopf, 1926);

El tablado de Arlequín (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1903);

La busca (Madrid: Fernando Fé, 1904); translated by Isaac Goldberg as *The Quest* (New York: Knopf, 1922);

Mala hierba (Madrid: Fernando Fé, 1904); translated by Goldberg as *Weeds* (New York: Knopf, 1923);

Aurora roja (Madrid: Fernando Fé, 1904); translated by Goldberg as *Red Dawn* (New York: Knopf, 1924);

La feria de los discretos (Madrid: Fernando Fé, 1905); translated by Jacob S. Fassett Jr. as *The City of the Discreet* (New York: Knopf, 1917);

Paradox, rey (Madrid: Hernando, 1906); translated by Nevill Barbour as *Paradox, King* (London: Wishart, 1931);

Los últimos románticos (Madrid: Hernando, 1906);

Las tragedias grotescas (Madrid: Hernando, 1907);

La dama errante (Madrid: R. Rojas, 1908);

La ciudad de la niebla (Madrid: Hernando, 1909);

Zalacaín el aventurero: Historia de las buenas andanzas y fortunas de Martín Zalacaín el aventurero (Barcelona: Domenech, 1909); translated by James P. Diendl as *Zalacaín the Adventurer: The History of the Good Fortune and Wanderings of Martin Zalacaín of Urbia* (Fort Bragg, Cal.: Lost Coast Press, 1997);

César o nada (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1910); translated by Louis How as *Caesar or Nothing* (New York: Knopf, 1919);

Las inquietudes de Shanti Andía (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1911);

El árbol de la ciencia (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1911); translated by Bell as *The Tree of Knowledge* (New York: Knopf, 1928);

El mundo es así (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1912);

El aprendiz de conspirador (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1913);

El escuadrón del brigante (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1913);

Los caminos del mundo (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1914);

Con la pluma y con el sable: Crónica de 1820 á 1823 (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1915);

Los recursos de la astucia (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1915);

La dama de Urtubi: Novela inédita (Madrid: La Novela Corta/Tip. Antonio Palomino, 1916);

La ruta del aventurero (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1916);

Nuevo tablado de Arlequín (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1917);

Juventud, egolatría (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1917); translated by Fassett and Frances L. Phillips as *Youth and Egolatry* (New York: Knopf, 1920);

El capitán Mala Sombra (Madrid: La Novela Corta, 1917);

La veleta de Gastiar (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1918);

Los caudillos de 1830 (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1918);

Idilios y fantasías (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1918);

Las horas solitarias: Notas de un aprendiz de psicólogo (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1918);

El cura Santa Cruz y su partida: Folletos de actualidad (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1918);

Páginas escogidas (Madrid: Calleja, 1918);

Momentum catastrophicum (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1919);

Pío Baroja (AP Photo, AP#6760034)

La caverna del humorismo (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1919);
La Isabelina (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1919);
Cuentos (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1919);
Divagaciones sobre la cultura (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1920);
Los contrastes de la vida (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1920);
La sensualidad pervertida: Ensayos amorosos de un hombre ingenuo en una época de decadencia (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1920);
El sabor de la venganza (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1921);
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La leyenda de Juan de Alzate (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1922);
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El laberinto de las sirenas (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1923);
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Las veleidades de la fortuna (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1926);
El gran torbellino del mundo (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1926);
Los amores tardíos (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1927);
Entretenimientos (Dos sainetes y una conferencia) (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1927);
Las mascaradas sangrientas (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1927);
El horroroso crimen de Peñaranda del Campo y otras historias (Madrid: Caro Raggio, 1928);
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Yan-Si-Pao o La esvástica de oro (Madrid: Prensa Moderna, 1928);
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Los confidentes audaces (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1931);
La venta de Mirambel (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1931);
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El cabo de las tormentas (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1932);
Los visionarios (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1932);
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Las noches del Buen Retiro (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1934);
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Fantasías vascas (Buenos Aires & Mexico City: Espasa-Calpe Argentina, 1941);
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El caballero de Erláiz (Madrid: La Nave, 1943);
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Obras completas, 8 volumes (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1946–1952);
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Bagatelas de otoño (Madrid: Biblioteca Nueva, 1949);
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El árbol de la ciencia, edited by Julio Caro Baroja and Fox (Madrid: Cátedra, 1998);
El mayorazgo de Labraz, edited by Miguel García-Posada (Madrid: Alfaguara, 1998);
Las inquietudes de Shanti Andía, edited by Caro Baroja (Madrid: Cátedra, 1999);
La nave de los locos, edited by Francisco José Flores Arroyuelo (Madrid: Caro Raggio/Cátedra, 1999);
Zalacaín el aventurero, edited by Ricardo Senabre and Óscar Barrero Pérez (Madrid: Espasa-Calpe, 1999);
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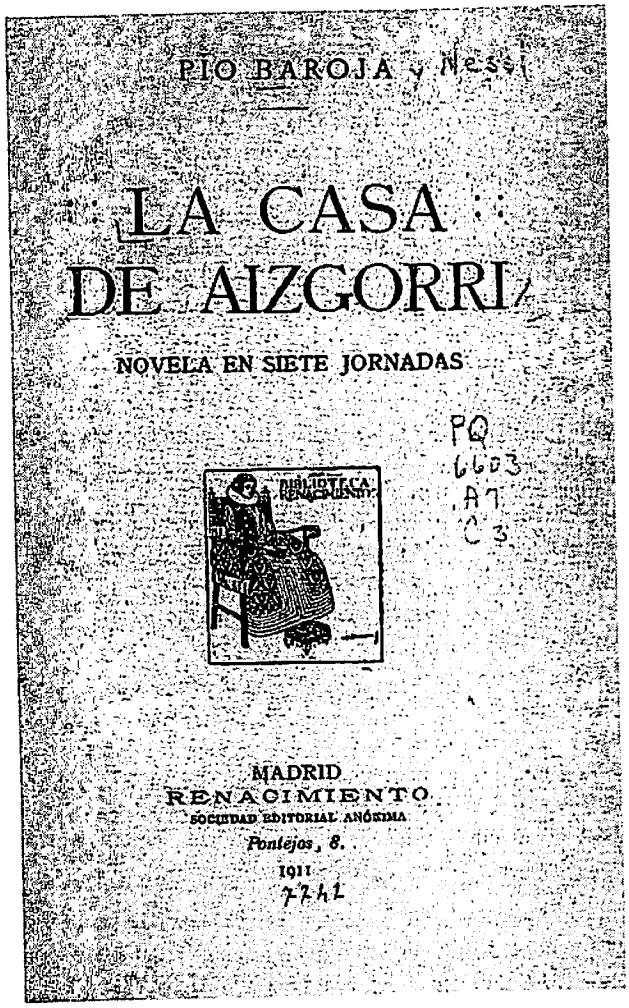
PLAY PRODUCTIONS: *El mayorazgo de Labraz: Drama trágico en cuatro actos, en prosa,* by Baroja and Eduardo M. del Portillo, Madrid, Teatro Cervantes, 27 April 1923;
Arlequín, mancebo de botica, o, Los pretendientes de Columbina: Sainete en un cuadro, Madrid, El Mirlo Blanco, 11 March 1926.

Pío Baroja is one of the most influential Spanish novelists after Miguel de Cervantes and Benito Pérez Galdós. He stands out as twentieth-century Spain's chief contributor to the modernist novel. His first work of prose fiction appeared in 1900, and for the next fifty-six years he published prolifically: sixty-six novels, not to mention short stories, essays, travel pieces, memoirs, plays, and even a poetic anthology. As a modernist, Baroja esteemed newness and change so much that he had no sustained formula for literary creation. As he writes in his autobiographical essay *Juventud, egolatría* (1917, translated as *Youth and Egolatry,* 1920), "No cambiar por temor a los demás es una de las formas más bajas de la esclavitud. Cambiemos todo lo que podamos. Mi ideal sería cambiar constantemente de vida, de casa, de alimentación y hasta de piel" (Not to change for fear of other people is one of the lowest forms of slavery. Let us change all we can. My ideal would be constantly to change our lives, our homes, our favorite foods, even to shed our skin time and again). Thus, Baroja preferred to try his hand at many novelistic forms: philosophical novels and adventure novels, novels in dialogue and novels without it, novels with complicated plots and plotless novels, historical novels and descriptive novels, symbolic novels and social novels. For Baroja, the novel was a multifaceted, open-ended genre, and correspondingly his work is characterized by constant change and innovation in terms of style, subject matter, and ideology. "En muchos aspectos Baroja es un escritor fundamentalmente experimental," critic and novelist Manuel Vázquez Montalbán writes; "era . . . el primer cronista o periodista . . . que al tratar de expresarse mediante novela abre caminos para un novelar libre, un novelar que respondiera a su propia consigna estética: en la novela cabe todo" (In many respects Baroja is a fundamentally experimental writer. . . . He was . . . the first chronicler or journalist . . . who, trying to express himself in a novel, clears the way for a free way of novel writing, one that responds to his own aesthetic lemma: a novel has space for everything).

The worldview of Baroja and many of his protagonists seems determined, above all, by doubt, uncertainty, and disorientation. This uncertainty also means that their lives are rife with paradox and contradiction, in thought as well as in action. Rejecting authority of all kinds, Baroja lashed out at the Catholic Church in Spain, at the Spanish system of education, and at corrupt Spanish politics both in the capital and the provinces, and both on the Right and on the Left. Yet, with sharp irony, he also criticized the excessive pretenses of natural science, while not wholly losing faith in the progress of modern medicine.

Baroja's literary production was often autobiographical and always intensely personal. "En su forcejeo con los personajes y la realidad," Vázquez Montalbán remarks, "Baroja se ha caído con ellos en el guiso del libro y sorprende encontrar al cocinero en el centro del estofado" (In his struggle with his characters and with reality, Baroja has fallen into the book soup with them, and one is surprised to find the cook himself floating in the stew). For Baroja, in fact, "sincerity" was a sine qua non for all literature. Sincerity was the same word that the modernist poet Rubén Darío had used in the late nineteenth century to denote his aesthetic ideal of spontaneity and originality, particularly in his Parnassianist poetic anthology *Prosas profanas* (1896, Profane Prose). Baroja, however, employs the word in a different sense: for him, sincerity designates a rejection of false rhetoric and embellishment–including Darío's 1896 preciosity–in order to depict truth in all its complexity, but in as plain and direct a language as possible. As he wrote in *Juventud, egolatría,* "Yo no pretendo ser hombre de buen gusto, sino hombre sincero; tampoco quiero ser consecuente; la consecuencia me tiene sin cuidado" (I do not claim to be a man of good taste, but a sincere man; nor do I wish to be consistent; consistency holds no concern for me). The novelist, then, is a servant to truth, not to intellectual or aesthetic abstraction.



Title page for a later edition of Baroja's 1900 novel (The House of Aizgorri: A Novel in Seven Acts), written entirely in dialogue, about a fledgling artist with a background of hereditary decadence (Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina)

Pío Baroja y Nessi was born on 28 December 1872 in the city of San Sebastián in the Spanish Basque country. This seaside birthplace always seemed to him to augur a life and a love of liberty and change. He belonged to a middle-class Basque family with four children, including two older brothers and a younger sister. Their father, Serafín Baroja y Zorzona, a native of San Sebastián, could write both in Castilian and in Basque. A mining engineer, he also taught natural history in the local high school and served as correspondent for the Liberal Madrid newspaper *El Tiempo*. Pío found him benevolent and cheerful, with a reputation for being a rather arbitrary nonconformist. Pío's mother, Carmen Nessi y Goñi, born in Madrid, had married at age seventeen and was nine years younger than her husband. The novelist describes her as fatalistic and resigned, having been raised in a puritanical atmosphere. Life held few joys for her, many obligations, and an overarching seriousness. The family moved to Madrid when Pío was seven, to Pamplona when he was nine, back to Madrid when he was fourteen, and to Valencia when he was nineteen. This continual exposure to new settings gave Baroja's fiction a national breadth but also a preference for wandering characters.

Baroja's readings as an adolescent were undisciplined. As he writes in *Juventud, egolatría,*

> En la época que a mí me parece más trascendental para la formación del espíritu, de los doce a los veinte años, viví alternativamente en seis o siete pueblos; no era posible andar de un lado a otro con libros, y llegué a no guardar ninguno. El no haber tenido libros me ha hecho el no repetir las lecturas, el no haberlos saboreado y el no haberlos anotado.
>
> (In the period which seems to me to be most transcendental for the formation of the spirit, from twelve to twenty years of age, I lived alternatively in six or seven towns; it was not possible to go from place to place taking any books, and I never came to keep any. Not having books made me not read any over again, nor savor any, nor take notes in any).

He perused whatever reading matter came into his possession, especially novels, without regard for the opinions of the critics. He reports having read works by Jules Verne, Daniel Defoe, Alexandre Dumas *père*, Victor Hugo, Eugene Sue, Emile Zola, Alphonse Daudet, Honoré de Balzac, and George Sand, as well as Charles Dickens, Stendhal, Ivan Turgenev, Fyodor Dostoevsky, and Leo Tolstoy. He was an avid reader of the plays of Henrik Ibsen. As far as poetry was concerned, he read the Spaniards Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer and José Espronceda, the American Edgar Allan Poe, and the Frenchmen Charles Baudelaire and Paul Verlaine.

Literature early acquired a special aura for Baroja. As a child in Madrid, he was introduced by his father to Manuel Fernández y González, a serial novelist then in his prime, who deeply impressed the boy with his fearful appearance; his height; his cross, homely face; his raspy voice; and his Andalusian accent. Years later, as a teenager, Baroja attended Fernández y González's funeral. At the wake he found the old man unrecognizable, lacking the ferocity of his earlier years, and endowed in death with "una cara plácida, de cura" (the placid face of a priest).

Baroja's lifelong irony, so essential an ingredient of his literary style, developed during his adolescence. At fifteen he had to choose a professional career and hit upon medicine as the course of study with the least

unlikeable professors. His more pretentious teachers at the universities of Madrid and Valencia, such as the once highly acclaimed pathologist José de Letamendi, became the target of his sarcasm in novels and personal memoirs. He wrote of his teacher in *El árbol de la ciencia* (1911; translated as *The Tree of Knowledge,* 1928) that Letamendi was one of those "hombres universales a quienes no se les conocía ni de nombre pasados los Pirineos" (universal men who were not known, not even by name, beyond the Pyrenees). At best a mediocre student, Baroja rebelled against academic authority. At age seventeen he began attending patients at the Madrid General Hospital, a dilapidated building largely governed, he later recalled, by rampant immorality. With his father's transferral to Valencia in 1891, Baroja proceeded with his medical studies at the university of that city, from which he received his master's degree in medicine two years later. Valencia did not arouse his enthusiasm. He recalled once having spotted at the theater the prestigious Valencian novelist Vicente Blasco Ibáñez–a disappointment because, instead of resembling a dashing Italian condottiere, he turned out to have a high-pitched voice, a blondish beard, and a portly frame.

Valencia was also the place where Baroja first became acquainted with philosophy. According to *Juventud, egolatría,* a text on pathology by Letamendi inspired Baroja to purchase Spanish translations of the works of Immanuel Kant, Johann Gottlieb Fichte, and Arthur Schopenhauer. Fichte irritated him against philosophy as a whole because of his incomprehensibility, but Schopenhauer's *Parerga and Paralipomena* (1851) reconciled him with the discipline. Baroja later bought French translations of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781) and Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (1819). Schopenhauer left a lasting impression on him, as did Schopenhauer's interlocutor Friedrich Nietzsche, whom Baroja read much later. Together, Schopenhauer and Nietzsche had the most direct influence on Baroja's fiction.

Baroja's medical career was brief. In 1893 he moved to Madrid to obtain his doctorate, and in the same year he successfully defended his short doctoral thesis, a psychophysical study of pain. He took a post as physician in Cestona, a town in his native province of Guipúzcoa, where he felt he had returned to his Basque roots. Rural town life, however, including the inevitable rivalry among the local physicians, annoyed him. Abandoning his position in Cestona in 1895, he returned to his birthplace in San Sebastián. Although he had applied for a transfer to the towns of Zaraúz or Zumaya, both on the Basque coast, he never obtained one. Aware of his own lackluster medical ability, he decided to leave the profession.

When his older brother Ricardo became tired of running their aunt's bakery in Madrid, Baroja took it over. This business failed, however. He dabbled in the stock market, but with little success: Spain's economy had been hard hit by the country's humiliating defeat by the United States in the Spanish-American War of 1898, which deprived the country of overseas colonial markets and raw material. Having nothing more enticing to do, Baroja decided in 1899 to become a writer. With friends he began frequenting the offices of the newspaper *El País* and the journal *Revista Nueva.* In the same year he made his first trip to Paris. The city did not impress him: "París es un pueblo de *poseurs*" (Paris is a town of poseurs), he wrote in an 1899 newspaper article about his experience in the French capital (quoted in Eduardo Gil Bera's 2001 biography). Moreover, the latest developments in the notorious Dreyfus Affair–in which Alfred Dreyfus, a Jewish officer in the French army, was falsely accused of treason and convicted in 1894, to the alarm of prominent intellectuals such as Zola, who argued his case in the famous newspaper article "J'Accuse" (1898, I Accuse)–convinced Baroja that Western European cultural decadence had begun.

In 1900 Baroja published his first book, *Vidas sombrías* (Shadowed Lives), a collection of short stories. Set in the Basque country, these texts already display the modernist traits, as well as the variety, that characterize most of Baroja's later work. In *Vidas sombrías* he touches a range of moods and themes, including slice-of-life Basque despair at being drafted ("El carbonero"); lyrical sentimentality ("Mari Belcha"); Poe-like Gothic horror ("Medium"); and the depth of Schopenhauerian pessimism ("Marichu"). The Basque setting thus serves as a pretext for assimilating diverse foreign influences. Before the year was over, Baroja published his first novel, *La casa de Aizgorri: Novela en siete jornadas* (1900, The House of Aizgorri: A Novel in Seven Acts). It was the first installment of the trilogy *Tierra vasca* (Basque Country), which continued with *El mayorazgo de Labraz* (1903; translated as *The Lord of Labraz,* 1926) and *Zalacaín el aventurero: Historia de las buenas andanzas y fortunas de Martín Zalacaín el aventurero* (1909; translated as *Zalacaín the Adventurer: The History of the Good Fortune and Wanderings of Martín Zalacaín of Urbia,* 1997). In *La casa de Aizgorri,* the Basque ambience recedes into the background as the novel focuses on the life of a fledgling artist. Written entirely in dialogue form (Baroja first conceived of it as a play), the novel enables Baroja to dramatize in symbolic fashion the notions of hereditary decadence found in the works of Max Nordau and Ibsen.

In the same year that his first two books came out, Baroja came into contact with some of the mem-

Dust jacket, with painting by John Dos Passos, for the 1924 English translation of Baroja's 1904 novel Aurora roja. *It is the third volume in his trilogy* La lucha por la vida *(The Struggle for Life), which examines how modernism arose from the clash between religion and post-Darwinian science (Collection of Richard Layman).*

bers of what was later classified as his literary generation. He met his lifelong friend, the essayist, journalist, and politician José Martínez Ruiz, better known under his pen name, Azorín. Azorín eventually coined the term "Generation of 1898" to denote the disunified bevy of writers galvanized by Spain's colonial defeat of that year, and among those writers Azorín included Baroja as well as himself. Baroja always denied the existence of a unified Generation of 1898, however, notwithstanding the success of the formula among Spanish literary historians. Baroja found in that so-called generation no common points of view, no shared aspirations, no solidarity among its members, and not even the bond produced by a common chronological age. At most, with Azorín and the journalistic essayist Ramiro de Maeztu, Baroja formed the short-lived group calling themselves "Los Tres" (The Threesome), participating together in protests and political and literary events to criticize the injustices of Spanish society and politics. When introducing Baroja in 1901 to Galdós, the greatest living Spanish novelist, Maeztu said of Baroja that he was the man who spoke ill of everyone, Galdós included.

On 13 February 1901 Azorín and Baroja organized a group of nine Madrid youths in an homage at the tomb of Mariano José de Larra, one of Spain's greatest nineteenth-century writers. Larra had killed himself in 1837 at age thirty-eight after dedicating his short but intense literary and journalistic career to criticizing traditional Spanish society in the sharpest of terms. While Larra's belief in the value and necessity of rational critique was strongly indebted to the Enlightenment, he was also a quintessential Romantic, tormented by his inner contradictions, his failed aspirations, and the painful awareness of his own hypocrisy. At the homage Azorín acclaimed Larra as the teacher of the young people of the times by bringing to art the inner impression of life, together with a moving, artistic personalism. The Larra homage later became an act symbolic of the Generation of 1898, even though only two of its best-known members, Baroja and Azorín, had actually participated. Baroja, Azorín, and the other participants wrote a description of this homage in a pamphlet titled *Larra (1809–1837): Anniversario de 13 de febrero de 1901,* with a trenchant paraphrase of Azorín's speech, characterizing Larra as a great writer and rebel, a restless, tormented spirit full of yearnings, doubts, and ironies.

In 1901 Baroja published his second novel, *Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox* (Adventures, Inventions, and Deceits of Silvestre Paradox), with which he also inaugurated a second trilogy, titled *La vida fantástica* (The Life of Fantasy). Critics agree that in this novel Baroja discovers his distinct way of writing, setting the tone for the rest of his fiction. Open and apparently structureless, the novel breaks with the linear causation dominating nineteenth-century realism. Accidents, gratuitous events, farce, and absurdity prevail. The protagonist, Silvestre Paradox, is an inventor, sage, and author. He read Verne and Defoe in his youth, writes murder mysteries, and eventually cofounds an insurance company that charges its clients a fee for praying to heaven asking for life after death. Equally as extravagant are secondary characters such as Silvestre's friend Don Avelino Diz de la Iglesia—collector of stamps, coins, excess books, and prehistoric relics—or Dr. Labarta, a nonpracticing doctor who owns a declining bakery and who, in both character and appearance, is suspiciously similar to Baroja himself.

In 1902 Baroja started to become more widely known as a writer. He served for some months as editor

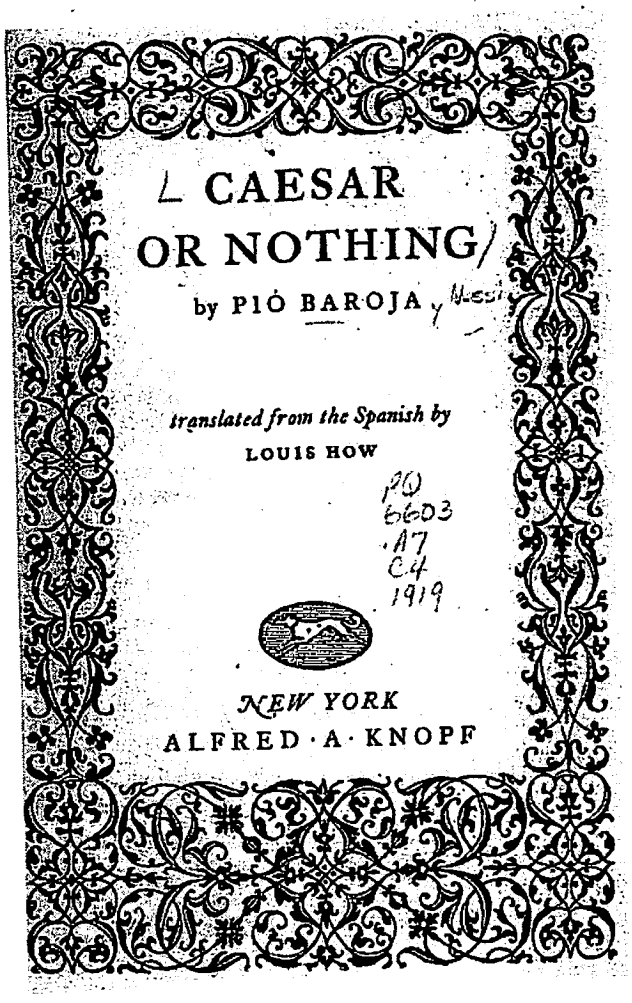
in-chief of the newspaper *El Globo,* for which he also wrote theater criticism, and held a position as special envoy to Tangiers to report to the nation about events in Morocco. More important for his literary career, however, was the publication of *Camino de perfección (Pasión mística)* (1902, Way to Perfection [Mystic Passion]), the second installment of *La vida fantástica,* which was immediately recognized as an outstanding novel. Some of the best-known Spanish intellectuals of the day threw a highly publicized banquet in Baroja's honor to celebrate its appearance. His friends Azorín and Maeztu attended, as did the playwright Ramón del Valle-Inclán and the older novelists Galdós and José Ortega Munilla.

The protagonist of *Camino de perfección,* the painter Fernando Ossorio, is one of the first of a series of typical Baroja heroes: disillusioned and disoriented young men who can stand as a symbol of the author's own intellectual generation. They are heroes, moreover, who share some striking similarities with the portrait that Baroja and Azorín had painted of Larra one year earlier. Ossorio, open and flexible in the face of new sensations, rejects medicine conceived as a positivistic science. Since modernism implies innovation and experimentation, Ossorio refutes artistic naturalism and tries out pictorial symbolism, but to no avail. He renounces the imitation of nature and prefers to rely on memory as reservoir of sense perception. Yet, he comes to regard himself as a mental degenerate, so oppressed by his family heritage that he lacks the will to create. To free himself of religious and social prejudices—a modernist aspiration—he devotes himself first to carnal excesses, then to mystical hallucinations. The need for escape impels him to wander, as it did Silvestre Paradox. In a search for lost faith, Ossorio reacts as an artist to the beauty of old Castilian churches while rejecting the Catholic dogma. Finally, with the help of Schultze, a German Hispanophile, Ossorio discovers Nietzsche as his liberator. Baroja, typically, leaves the ending of the novel open. On the one hand, Ossorio has high hopes for his newborn second son, who is either to become a "lion"—the metaphor is Nietzschean—and develop strength, or an "eagle" with high aspirations. On the other hand, while Ossorio prepares the child to fly free of the life-denying past that has ruined his own life project, Ossorio's mother-in-law has quite different plans, guiding her grandson toward the conventional Catholicism that can ruin him.

In *El mayorazgo de Labraz,* the second part of the *Tierra vasca* trilogy, secondary characters give expression to a modernist's critique of progressivism as well as Spanish moral corruption in love, religion, and politics, and an application to contemporary society of Charles Darwin's notion of survival of the fittest. The novel tells the story of a blind nobleman who leaves his village in disgrace, but who is redeemed by the love of a young woman.

Whereas the trilogy *La vida fantástica* features protagonists with overly powerful creative imaginations, in the 1904 trilogy *La lucha por la vida* (The Struggle for Life) Baroja disciplines his own imagination and sets down episodes and characters observed by him in the poorer districts on the outskirts of Madrid. The Darwinian title of the trilogy refers to the fact that modernism has arisen from the clash between established religion and post-Darwinian science. Consisting of the novels *La busca* (translated as *The Quest,* 1922); *Mala hierba* (translated as *Weeds,* 1923), and *Aurora roja* (translated as *Red Dawn,* 1924), *La lucha por la vida* draws on the novels of Dickens, the nineteenth-century Russians, and French writers such as Sue. But it seems to draw its main inspiration from the picaresque novel—although it has a looser, less deductive structure than the Spanish Golden Age models. In Baroja, disconnected episodes of misery follow each other in quick succession, with a cumulative effect of general desolation. Moreover, whereas the picaresque normally uses the first person, in this trilogy the narrator assumes an ironic third-person voice. This voice allows the narrator to maintain a critical distance from the protagonist, the fifteen-year-old Manuel Alcázar, the serving boy who is present in all three novels.

Like the typical antihero of the picaresque novel, Manuel lives on the edge of urban society and moves from one menial job location to another: a boarding-house, a shoe-repair shop, a grocery store, a bakery. Serving as a passive spectator, he comes to conclude that life is sad and senseless and that people behave as egotistical predators toward their fellow human beings. Like Galdós, Baroja likes to compare his characters to animals: "El Bizco" (Cross-Eyes) looks like a chimpanzee; "Besuguito" (Little Sea Bream) resembles a fish; "Conejo" (Rabbit) has a nose that quivers; and Don Alonso is "el Hombre Boa" (Boa Man). However, more than in Galdós, the characters engage in exploitative relationships and are clearly part of a Darwinian struggle for survival. Further, Baroja, in contrast with Galdós, has not sought to portray local color or to paint scenes that make Madrid poverty seem unique. Baroja prided himself on the fact that the scenes and characters of his works were based as much as possible on personal observations and careful note-taking. At the same time, his outlook is cosmopolitan; he remarks in retrospect that the misery of the outskirts of Madrid is virtually identical to that of Paris and London. So direct and hard-hitting are these scenes of human wretchedness that the three novels of *La lucha por la vida*



Title page for the English translation of Baroja's 1910 novel César o nada, *in which a protagonist based on Cesare Borgia tries to implement populist reform in the Castilian city of Castro Duro (Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina)*

seem to have attracted the most attention outside Spain of any of Baroja's books. They have appeared in translation in English, French, German, Italian, and Russian.

In Azorín's autobiographical novel *La voluntad* (1902, Will), the author included a detailed verbal portrait of Baroja, thinly disguised as the character Enrique Olaiz. Azorín depicts Baroja as prematurely bald, with a blond, pointed beard; an intelligent, penetrating look; and a hint of mystery, of hermeticism, about him. According to Azorín, he loved everything strange and paradoxical, including psychological subtleties or complexities. Azorín found Baroja himself a paradox: so complex in himself, he cultivated simplicity in his personal and literary style. His writing struck Azorín as simple, flowing effortlessly and seemingly without preparation. His limpid transparency appeared to overwhelm his critics to such a degree that, in Azorín's judgment, he had not received the full critical admiration he deserved. The literary milieu in which he moved mostly admired what it regarded as a "brilliant" style, while Baroja lacked "brilliance" in the conventional sense. But Azorín deemed this preference a passing rhetorical and syntactical fashion; Baroja conveyed deep feeling, originality, picturesqueness, and suggestiveness, so what did it matter that at times his grammar showed faults? Azorín's opinion weighed heavily upon subsequent Baroja criticism, blinding it for a long time to his versatility and to the extreme care with which he elaborated even his apparently most facile prose.

Nevertheless, Baroja undeniably wrote and published quickly. By the end of 1904, only four years after his first book had appeared, he had no fewer than ten works in print. Baroja kept up this high level of production for most of his life. Despite appearances of verbal facility, however, Baroja strove for a precision that he usually achieved. The transparency and swift pace that characterize his style are generally attained through the use of brief sentences in short, clipped paragraphs, expressed in straightforward language rushing toward an open ending. As Baroja confesses in his memoirs, "Ahora escribir con sencillez es muy difícil, y exige mucho tiempo; más de lo que la gente se figura" (Now, to write with simplicity is very difficult, and demands a great deal of time; much more than people imagine).

In 1906 Baroja published *Paradox, rey* (1906; translated as *Paradox, King,* 1931), the third installment of the *La vida fantástica* trilogy. It once more features Silvestre Paradox, but this time in a novel with a striking plot, accidentally elevating him to the rank of king of a utopian state in Africa with a geography not unlike that of the Iberian Peninsula. His companions in this utopia include Diz de la Iglesia, who had already appeared in *Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox,* as well as an odd assortment of other eccentrics, such as the maimed former soldier Hardibrás, the Manchester needle manufacturer Simpson, and the German geologist-naturalist Thonelgeben. Together they resist and dominate the natives before establishing their model state. This state has a fixed governmental system but no army, no police force, and no true constitution, for its founders–disillusioned with established religious and political authority, as well as with imperialism and colonialism–reject all of the major forms of state, including monarchy, totalitarianism, communism, and democracy. The state that emerges is essentially anarchistic and celebrates individual creativity above everything else.

At a climax of the novel, after the main characters have dynamited the land to form a new lake, a

mythical cyclops mysteriously appears to eulogize destruction as the equivalent of creation. Just as enigmatically, Baroja inserts into the novel an "Elogio de los viejos caballos del tíovivo" (Praise of Old Merry-Go-Round Horses), in reference to poet Verlaine's use of the animals on the merry-go-round as symbols of life as a desperate circular journey without rest, without purpose, and without end–as if human progress were at base an illusion. The novel ends with the failure of the "paradoxical" state when the imperialistic French usurp the government, bringing disease, demoralization, and devastation along with modern civilization.

Zalacaín el aventurero is the masterpiece of the trilogy *Tierra vasca*. It features a romantic, Nietzschean hero by the name of Martín Zalacaín, a Basque smuggler and spy for the Carlists during the Second Carlist War. His tutor, his great-uncle Tellagorri, inculcates in him individualism, restlessness, independence, and the disdain for authority that is characteristic of Baroja's modernism. After a series of adventures–including an escape from prison and love affairs with three different women–this strong and cunning, yet basically noble, protagonist ultimately perishes to treachery.

In 1909 Baroja ran without success for municipal councilman as a Republican for the Partido Radical (Radical Party), which had just been founded by the prominent populist politican Alejandro Lerroux. Reformist politics stood at the forefront of his thinking in 1910, when he published *César o nada* (translated as *Caesar or Nothing*, 1919). The title is inspired by Cesare Borgia's motto, "Aut Caesar, aut nihil," expressing the unbreakable will to be a ruler or not to be anything at all. Baroja had initially planned to go to Rome to write an historical account about Borgia but finally decided to turn the book into a work of fiction. The protagonist of *César o nada*, César Moncada, is endowed with heroic qualities as a man of action who develops an ambitious plan for reform in the reactionary Castilian city of Castro Duro. His aim is "destrozar a los caciques, acabar con el poder de los ricos, sujetar a los burgueses . . . entregar las tierras a los campesinos, mandar delegados a las comarcas para hacer obligatoria la higiene" (destroying the political bosses, doing away with the power of the rich, subduing the bourgeois . . . giving the land over to the peasants, sending delegates to the provincial regions to make hygiene obligatory). Given Moncada's tendency toward self-doubt, melancholy, and moments of inertia, however, his plan fails.

In the first edition of the novel, Moncada seems to have been wooed away from politics by an appreciation for art, similar to Ossorio's in *Camino de perfección*. In subsequent editions, the ending is different: gravely wounded by assassins' bullets, Moncada loses power to the reactionaries, and Castro Duro returns to the old order. The fountains dry up; Moncada's new school closes; the saplings in the park named after him get plucked up; and the city continues to live in its traditional fashion, which envelops it in dust, dirt, and grime. While both a political and an adventure novel, *César o nada* also includes chapters of travel literature on the Rome of the Borgias, among other European sites of interest. The notion of destruction as a form of creation, already suggested in *Paradox, rey,* returns in *César o nada*. In a chapter titled "Elogio de la violencia" (Praise of Violence), Moncada claims to be a partisan of violence, willing to set fire to the jail and to the entire city; for "el primer deber de un hombre es violar la ley–gritó–cuando la ley es mala" (the first duty of a man is to violate the law–he screamed–when the law is evil). And, like the protagonists of *Paradox, rey,* César Moncada is defined more by what he rejects than by what he embraces; he is anticlerical, as well as anti-German, anti-French, anti-English, and antiaristocratic.

Baroja's next novel, *Las inquietudes de Shanti Andía* (1911; translated as "The Restlessness of Shanti Andía," 1959), both marks a departure from the urban fiction of *César o nada* and establishes some important continuities with previous works. Set in the fictitious Basque fishing village of Lúzaro, Baroja's novel constitutes an act of rebellion against well-known realist seaside novels such as *Sotileza* (1884) by José María de Pereda. While Pereda's novel deplored the loss of the old patriarchal tradition, buttressed by an orthodox Catholic way of life, Baroja's narrator, the retired old seafarer Santiago "Shanti" Andía, emphasizes the pointlessness of life. His worldview is similar to that conjured up by the image of the merry-go-round in *Paradox, rey:* "No hay fin en la vida. El fin es un punto en el espacio y en el tiempo, no más transcendental que el punto precedente o el siguiente" (There is no end in life. The end is a point in space and in time, no more transcendental than the preceding or the following point).

Structurally, *Las inquietudes de Shanti Andía* is a frame story, much like *The Arabian Nights,* which Baroja said he admired. The main plot serves as a framework within which a variety of stories unfold, most of them associated with seagoing. On the last page of the novel, Shanti reveals that after wandering beside the sea in his retirement, he spins his yarns by the hearth of his kitchen: "Allí cuento yo mis aventuras, y las adorno con detalles sacados de mi imaginación; pero las he contado tantas veces que mi mujer me reprocha un poco burlonamente que las repito demasiado" (There I tell my adventures, and I adorn them with details taken from my imagination, but I have told them so

often that my wife reproaches me a little waggishly that I repeat them too much). Shanti, then, is an unreliable narrator, but one whose skill in impressing his audience matters more than the truth value of the narrative content.

Shanti assumes many of the same postures toward his storytelling as Baroja did toward his writing. Calling himself, at the start, a rough-hewn sailor, unlearned in rhetoric, Shanti claims to hold no literary pretensions, but he writes with a sentiment of sincerity, notwithstanding the clumsiness of his form. Still, just as the unfolding narrative gives the lie to his reputation for indolence, optimism, indiffence, and apathy, it also seems to deny his lack of literary pretensions by showcasing his dexterity as a writer. In chapter 2, titled "El mar antiguo" (The Sea of Yesteryear), Shanti takes on lyric tonalities as he laments the loss of mystique suffered by the sea with the advent of bourgeois, modern times: "Antes, el mar era nuestra divinidad, era la reina endiosada y caprichosa, altiva y cruel; hoy es la mujer a quien hemos hecho nuestra esclava. Nosotros, marinos viejos, marinos galantes, la celebrábamos de reina y no la admiramos de esclava" (In earlier times, the sea was our divinity, it was the deified, whimsical queen, haughty and cruel; today it is the woman we have made our slave. We old mariners, gallant mariners, celebrated her as our queen and do not admire her as our slave).

The novel is composed of seven parts, all seemingly centering on different stages of the narrator's life, yet actually thrusting the interest of the reader beyond Shanti Andía and toward a fascinating gallery of characters in the community of Lúzaro. Part 1, an introduction to the narrator and selected members of his family, especially brings to the fore Shanti's singular aunt Ursula, able to narrate the most insignificant happenings with solemnity, and prone to filling her nephew's head with visions of pirate boats, shipwrecks, and desert isles. Among the bizarre characters occupying the family archives is Lope Aguirre, self-defined "traitor" under Philip II. The lurid account of his life precedes the introduction to Shanti's uncle Juan Aguirre, who, though buried in absentia in part 1, chapter 7, actually reappears on his deathbed in the middle of part 3, and subsequently comes alive in Shanti's adventure stories throughout the novel, especially in part 7, tying together the previous accounts through his handwritten autobiography.

After many blood-spattered adventures, Shanti offers the open ending so compatible with Baroja's aesthetics. Shanti says that the Basques no longer put to sea as previously, and that he rejoices that his own sons follow this new path; yet, the ellipse with which the novel ends indicates a reservation on his part about the abandonment of the sea life by his descendants.

El árbol de la ciencia is the third volume of Baroja's *La Raza* (Race) trilogy, following *La dama errante* (1908, The Wandering Lady) and *La ciudad de la niebla* (1909, The City of Confusion). *El árbol de la ciencia* occupies a place of privilege among Baroja's novels. Many critics, including E. Inman Fox and Joaquín Casalduero, have deemed it Baroja's best. He himself has called it his most complete philosophical novel. It recapitulates his biography until his thirty-ninth year, his novelistic production until that point, and his peculiar style of modernism. *El árbol de la ciencia* has a strong autobiographical base–so much so that many paragraphs from the novel reappear, transposed from third-person to a first-person narrative, in *Familia, infancia y juventud* (1944, Family, Infancy, and Youth), the second volume of Baroja's memoirs, collectively titled *Desde la última vuelta del camino* (1944, From the Final Bend in the Road). The protagonist of the novel, Andrés Hurtado–clearly Baroja's alter ego–displays what he calls a "new sensitivity," a yearning for sincerity in all he thinks and does. Andrés, however, finds his surroundings a bastion of the "old sensitivity," a series of false formulas disguising a will to live, to promote the ego in an exploitative, Darwinian world.

The clash between the two sensitivities, the modernist and the traditional, unfolds in the seven parts of the novel. In part 1, which chronicles a student's life in end-of-the-nineteenth-century Madrid, Baroja satirizes through Andrés his own disappointments as a medical student, when his intellectual curiosity was stifled by false, theatrical professors. Andrés, with his native sympathy, feels hostile toward cruel, venal classmates, and his sociopolitical reformism clashes with his father's conservatism. In part 2, Baroja satirizes the hypocritical morality of the old sensitivity, embodied by the petit bourgeois widow Doña Leonarda, who has allegedly told one of Andrés's classmates, "A mis hijas hay que tratarlas como si fueran vírgenes, Julito, como si fueran vírgenes" (My daughters must be treated as if they were virgins, dear Julio, as if they were virgins). Julio, a Darwinian Don Juan, out only for his own animal pleasure, cares little if he obtains the older daughter's favors through false promises of marriage: insincere, he belongs to the old sensitivity, and with him, Niní, the girl he pursues. By contrast, her sister Lulú sees through Julio's falseness and with her sincerity and helplessness in a predatory society wins Andrés's sympathy, friendship, and eventual love: she partakes of the new sensitivity.

Part 3 foreshadows the tragic ending of the novel through the narration of the final days of Andrés's youngest brother, Luis, who is virtually another

EL ÁRBOL
de
LA CIENCIA

Pío Baroja y Nessi

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New York

Frontispiece and title page for a later edition of Baroja's 1911 novel (translated as The Tree of Knowledge, *1928), in which the autobiographical protagonist is caught between modernist and traditional sensibilities (Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina)*

Andrés: studious, sedentary, and imaginative. As is clear from Baroja's memoirs, the episode stylizes the death of Baroja's own brother Darío. As long as Andrés's family obeys his own scientific hygiene by exposing the tubercular Luis to fresh air, the child thrives. When his father–representative of the old sensitivity–causes the child to be shut away indoors, however, he dies of tubercular meningitis.

Part 4, at the exact center of the novel, recapitulates the story up to that point and orients the reader toward the conclusion. This part also makes explicit the philosophical dialectic lying at the base of the novel. Having undergone so many disappointments, Andrés seeks guidance in the world and a plan of action for the immediate future. He consults his uncle Iturrioz, a father figure who, contrary to Andrés's real father, is sincere and congenial to the new sensitivity. From their conversations it becomes clear that Andrés is a philosopher, a lover of truth, while Iturrioz is a "biophile," a lover of life. Iturrioz, Darwinian in his outlook, reveres the Tree of Life in the Garden of Eden at the expense of truth; Andrés, more analytical, chooses the Tree of Knowledge and favors the pursuit of truth even at the cost of life. Baroja's own work was marked by an inability to choose between these two positions. His novelistic heroes up to this point have been contemplative (Paradox, Ossorio) or active (Zalacaín). Andrés, contemplative like Baroja himself, is fated to succumb to the Tree of Life.

Part 5, narrating Andrés's experience as a country physician, draws on Baroja's own experience as a village doctor in Cestona. Baroja stations Andrés not in the Basque country, however, but in a town in La Mancha, a village where Don Quixote might have lived. This choice allows him to present town life as characteristic of Spain as a whole: "Las costumbres de Alcolea eran españolas puras, es decir, de un absurdo completo" (The customs of Alcolea were pure Spanish, that is, completely absurd). According to the narrator, the townspeople lack any kind of solidarity. Moreover, their agriculture belongs to the past, and their politics display traditional corruption without possibility of

change. Inevitably, the old, traditional sensitivity dominating the Spanish countryside clashes with Andrés's modern worldview, and he departs the town in disappointment, afflicted with neurasthenia.

Part 6, marking Andrés's return to Madrid, brings him the new disillusionment of discovering the falseness of Spanish patriotism: with the humiliating defeat to the United States in the colonial war of 1898, Spaniards of the old sensitivity, in complete indifference, continue to go to the theater and the bullfights as if nothing had happened. With falseness on all sides, Andrés in part 7 creates an oasis of sincerity with Lulú, whom he marries. Against the advice of Iturrioz the biophile, who warns Andrés not to have children, since they would inherit their parents' congenital sickliness, Andrés succumbs to the Tree of Life, that is, to Lulú's desire for offspring, oblivious to the truth of her physiological incapacity. Lulú and the baby die in childbirth, and Andrés uses his medical training to poison himself swiftly and painlessly. Nonetheless, Baroja gives Andrés's life an open-ended meaning and the whole novel a kind of open ending: a knowledgeable physician at the end of the work says of Andrés that he was ahead of his time, a man of a rare, Northern European, scientific mentality devoted to the disclosure of truth, the Tree of Knowledge.

After writing *El árbol de la ciencia,* Baroja delved for his material with ever greater insistence into his own biography, making the finished product almost predictable. As a bachelor with ample leisure time to write and travel–he never married or had any significant romantic relationships–Baroja allowed his impressions of Italy, England, France, and Switzerland to abound in his novels, as in *César o nada* and in *El mundo es así* (1912, The World Is Thus-and-Such), recounting the pan-European disillusionments of Russian medical student Sacha Savarof. Between 1911 and 1935 Baroja also embarked on his most ambitious project: *Memorias de un hombre de acción* (Memoirs of a Man of Action), a twenty-two-volume series of historical novels centering on a single figure, his distant relative Eugenio Avirareta, who was a guerrilla fighter in the Spanish War of Independence (1808–1812) and a Liberal, Masonic conspirator afterward.

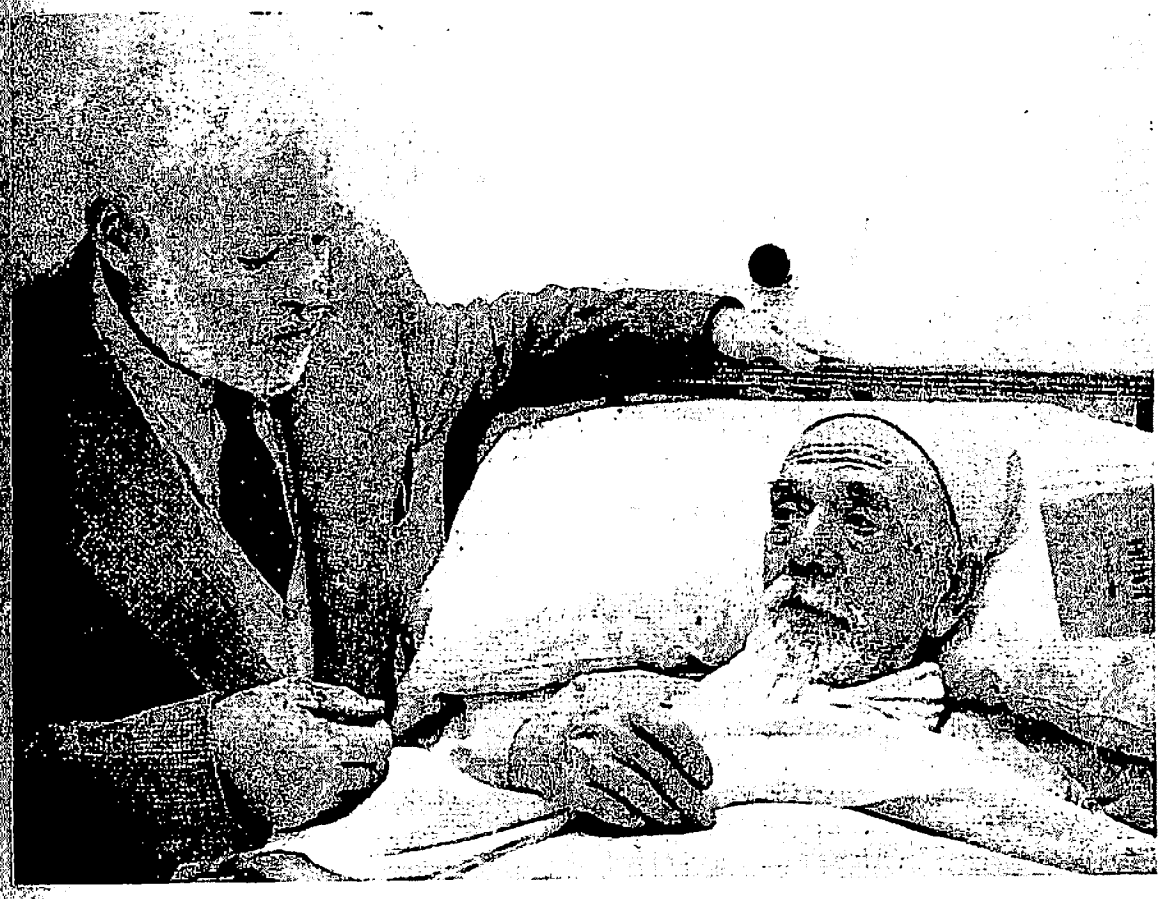
Like all of his work, Baroja's historical series has a modernist inspiration, subordinating tradition to inventiveness. He chooses a Basque hero all but forgotten by history, as if to return to his familial roots. Further, as he asserts at the outset of the first volume in the series, *El aprendiz de conspirador* (1913, The Conspirator's Apprentice), he has endowed his hero with a passion for truth in a nation of empty rhetoric–a passion witnessed as well in Andrés Hurtado of *El árbol de la ciencia.* As in the case of Andrés, however, this passion eventually leads to Avirareta's downfall.

Baroja's novelistic treatment of his heroic family member also marks a rebellion vis-à-vis Galdós, who set a precedent for historical fiction in his forty-six *Episodios nacionales* (1873–1912, National Episodes). Baroja claims in *La intuición y el estilo* (1948, Intuition and Style) that Galdós sought brilliant events to make history out of them, whereas Baroja has concentrated on his hero–a Nietzschean man of action. Moreover, while Galdós pursued a panoramic spectacle of happenings, Baroja worked in a more impressionistic manner, choosing isolated but intense incidents. In his *Memorias* (1955, Memoirs) he expressed his own preference for French pictorial impressionism as the best cultural product to have emerged from the end of the nineteenth century; and he particularly praised Edgar Degas, Edouard Manet, Alfred Sisley, Vincent Van Gogh, and Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec.

In their appreciation of novelty over tradition and their subversive attitude stemming from the crisis of religion clashing with post-Darwinian science, Baroja's writings display the general characteristics of all world modernism. Within the modernist mindset, Baroja belongs to the so-called *Edad de Plata* or Silver Age of Spanish literature, that is, the second greatest period of cultural creativity in Spain, which started approximately in 1874 with the Bourbon Restoration and ended in about 1936, with the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Like Baroja, the intellectuals from this period were generally marked by an acute awareness of living in a period of Spanish decadence and tended to perceive their own era as a break with the country's former greatness. This awareness spurred an aspiration to end the downward spiral and to elevate Spanish culture once more to the level of the rest of Western Europe.

As Baroja wrote in the 24 August 1903 article "Estilo modernista" (included in volume eight of his *Obras completas* [1946–1952, Complete Works]), the overused word "modernism" denoted admiration for "lo fuerte, lo grande y lo anárquico" (what is strong, great, and anarchic) and included in art "todos los rebeldes" (all the rebels), in whose ranks Baroja situated Dickens, Ibsen, Dostoevsky, Nietzsche, and Auguste Rodin. Although the term irritated him, he accepted it for lack of an alternative: "Modernista! Indudablemente, la palabra es fea, es cursi; pero los que abominan de ella son imbéciles" (Modernist! Doubtlessly the word is ugly, is shoddy; but those who abominate it are imbeciles).

While Baroja can be considered part of the general artistic and intellectual movement called modernism, however, it is important to keep in mind that he



Ernest Hemingway visiting Baroja shortly before Baroja's death in October 1956 (from Fernando Baeza, Baroja y su mundo, *1961; Thomas Cooper Library, University of South Carolina)*

was also a quintessential loner whose attitudes, views, and actions were generally at odds with the tendencies of his intellectual environment: "Yo he sido siempre un liberal radical, individualista y anarquista" (I have always been a radical liberal, individualist and anarchist), he wrote in volume five of his *Obras completas.* Even those of his contemporaries who did not agree with his views sometimes expressed admiration for his steadfast individualism. "Baroja no se contenta con discrepar en más o menos puntos del sistema de lugares comunes y opiniones convencionales," José Ortega y Gasset, the Spanish philosopher, wrote, "sino que hace de la protesta contra el modo de pensar y sentir convencionalmente nervio de su producción" (Baroja is not content to disagree more or less with some points of the system of commonplaces and conventional opinions, but he turns the protest against the conventional way of thinking and feeling into the center of his production).

Throughout his life Baroja insisted on marking his disagreement with the prevalent opinion of his times, both in speech and in action. During World War I, in which Spain declared itself strictly neutral, most intellectuals supported the Allied forces; Baroja openly rooted for Germany. In 1915 he argued in the prominent magazine *España:* "Si hay algún país que pueda sustituir los mitos de la religión, de la democracia, de la farsa de la caridad cristiana por la ciencia, por el orden y por la técnica, es Alemania" (If there is any country that can replace the myths of religion, democracy, and the farce of Christian charity with science, order, and technique, it is Germany). When the Spanish Civil War broke out in 1936, Baroja, after a skirmish with a group of right-wing militants and a short detention, went into exile in Paris. After General Francisco Franco's victory, however, when hundreds of Spanish intellectuals chose exile in preference to living under a reactionary dictatorship, Baroja returned to Madrid in 1940.

Baroja's publishing continued unabated until his death on 30 October 1956 from cerebral arteriosclerosis. With his solid reputation as a heterodox and a

rebel, he received many visitors from Spain and abroad. When asked to serve as one of Baroja's pallbearers, Ernest Hemingway, who had visited him only weeks before his death, declined on the grounds that he did not deserve so great an honor.

According to Ortega y Gasset, most readers will react to Baroja with indignation. Baroja's work is rife with strong, potentially offensive statements, owing in part to his lifelong tendencies toward anti-Semitism, anticlericalism, and misogyny; his rejection of parliamentary democracy; and his belief in the existence of "weak" and "strong" races. But his offensiveness is also partly caused by the fact that Baroja, his narrators, and his characters tend to be opinionated and express themselves in a straightforward, nonrhetorical style. Like his preferred philosopher, Nietzsche, Baroja's heterodox opinions left him vulnerable to being mobilized by extreme right-wing political movements. Thus, during the Spanish Civil War, a prominent intellectual in the Spanish fascist party, Ernesto Giménez Caballero, published an anthology of passages from Baroja's work under the title *Comunistas, judíos y demás ralea* (1938, Communists, Jews, and Others of the Kind), meant to prove that Baroja was a "Spanish precursor of fascism," preceding even Benito Mussolini. For Vázquez Montalbán, a leftist intellectual who grew up in post–Civil War Spain and who dedicated a great part of his youth to opposing the Franco regime, these Francoist appropriations of Baroja initially made it difficult to appreciate the author's significance.

While Giménez Caballero's image of Baroja as a fascist is clearly slanted, later biographies have also called attention to the misleading nature of the image that Baroja himself liked to present to the world. The most critical of Baroja studies was a biography published in 2001 by Gil Bera, who begins by expressing his surprise that, almost half a century after the author's death, "apenas se conoce un dato de su vida que no proceda de su propia versión" (hardly a fact is known of his life that does not originate in his own version of it). Gil Bera then goes on to expose the many "lies" and "omissions" in Baroja's life story as told by himself.

Pío Baroja's influence on twentieth-century literature was significant and by no means limited to Spain. In the United States, Hemingway and John Dos Passos were among his greatest admirers. Most importantly, Baroja expanded the boundaries of the novel as narrative genre. As Vázquez Montalbán writes, Baroja was always breaking through the frontiers: "destruye el encantamiento novelesco desde dentro . . . no cree en la novela como sacramento" (he destroys the magic of the novel from the inside . . . he doesn't believe in the novel as a sacrament). With his aspiration to roughhewn rebelliousness and his penchant for plain speaking in prose, Baroja deeply affected the fiction of great novelists who came later–notably, Spanish Nobel laureate Camilo José Cela, but also Ramón Pérez de Ayala, Miguel Delibes, José María Gironella, Ignacio Aldecoa, Luis Martín-Santos, and Juan Benet Goita. Cela affirms, in his *Cuatro figuras del 98* (1961, Four Figures of [18]98), that every Spanish novel published since Baroja in some way derives from his work.

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