AN INQUIRY INTO POSSIBLE PLAGIARISM IN
BLASCO IBÁÑEZ'S LA HORDA

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AN INQUIRY INTO POSSIBLE PLAGIARISM IN BLASCO IBÁÑEZ'S LA HORDA

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. SIMILARITIES IN SETTING</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. SIMILARITIES IN PLOT</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. SIMILARITIES IN MAJOR CHARACTERS</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. SIMILARITIES IN MINOR CHARACTERS</td>
<td>121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. CONCLUSION</td>
<td>161</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is primarily concerned with two Spanish novels which have a social purpose. In 1904 Pío Baroja published his trilogy, *La lucha por la vida*, in three separate novels, *La busca*, *Mala hierba*, and *Aurora roja*. In 1905 appeared Blasco Ibáñez's *La horda*. Both novels present the contemporary, poverty-stricken environs of Madrid; and, at the same time that they protest the evils inherent in the poverty tolerated by the current social order, they point toward the changing times and the possible procurement of a better and a more just life for the victims of the current social exploitation.

One could study and compare these two works from many points of view, but this investigation is being undertaken to inquire into Baroja's charge that Blasco based *La horda* on his material. The two men both felt a need and a duty to expose injustices and to try to give the common man a better chance within the changing social structure. They were quite different in their temperament and in their style of writing. It was inevitable that they should clash, both being novelists critical of modern Spanish life, both living much of the time in Madrid and in Paris, and both being men of profound convictions.
Manuel Pérez Ferrero in his *Pío Baroja en su rincón* says that Baroja knew and got along with the majority of his fellow writers but that Blasco Ibáñez was "de los más antagónicos." He gives the following account of the first meeting of the two novelists.

Baroja le conoció en los jardines del Retiro, yendo en compañía de Carlos del Río y de Antonio Palomero. Encontráronse a Blasco, y éste se colocó entre ellos. Instantáneamente inspiróle a Baroja una profunda antipatía. Se le atragantaba el exuberante meridionalismo del valenciano.¹

At this meeting Blasco began to criticize a collection of novels soon to appear in Barcelona. He said, "El título ese, *Novelistas del siglo XX*, es una ridiculez."² Baroja took up the opposition immediately with, "No veo la ridiculez. Ser escritor del siglo XX no quiere decir ser buen escritor. Balzac o Dickens, escritores del siglo XIX, son magníficos. En cambio, nosotros, que somos del siglo XX, no creo que valgamos gran cosa."³ Blasco made a gesture which showed that he did not agree and passed on to deride authors who lived in Madrid [Baroja did], maintaining that they lived a life spiritually and materially so wretched that they never got enough money to treat a woman and that they did not know what a good meal was! Then, changing the subject, he began to attack the republicans. He stated that the

²Ibid.
³Ibid.
proclamation of a second Republic in Spain would result in a "reinado de la alpargata y de los zapateros de viejo."\(^4\)

Baroja replied, "Estimo que eso que dice Vd. es lo único que tendría de bueno."\(^5\) When Blasco moved away from them, Carlos del Río told Baroja that he [Blasco] had been bitter, especially in relation to the future of the republic. Baroja limited himself to saying, "Esta misma mañana Blasco ha actuado como orador en un mitin y ha preconizado que es necesario sacrificarlo todo por la República."\(^6\)

Two or three years later Blasco and Baroja met again in the Librería de Fe, and Blasco, to say the least, was untactful. He drew Baroja into the following conversation about three of his recent novels: *La busca*, *Mala hierba*, and *Aurora roja*.

- **Blasco**: Eso que ha hecho Vd. en las tres obras son estampas, pero hay que pintar el cuadro.

- **Baroja**: Es probable. Mas no por ello todos los cuadros son buenos. Hay cuadros que son deplorables.\(^7\)

As Ferrero shows, the two certainly did not understand one another. Time passed without a meeting until the famous banquet in honor of Baroja held at the end of his 1913 sojourn in Paris at "La Closerie des Lilas," where they were surely not in harmony. Among the twenty-five to thirty present were Zuloaga, Blasco, and a good number of Americans. Scarcely had the meal begun, when Blasco began deliberately

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 168. \(^5\)Ibid. \(^6\)Ibid. \(^7\)Ibid.
to speak badly of America. His opinions on this subject seemed to have changed notably from those which he held a few years before, when he had written La Argentina y sus grande-zas [1909-1910]. Baroja, disturbed, pointed out to him that at the moment there were several Americans listening to him, to which Blasco replied that "no le preocupaba lo más mínimo, ni ello le hacía reservarse su modo de pensar."

Toward the end of this banquet, Rafael de Mesa, a journalist from the Canary Islands, got up, perhaps to show his disagreement with Blasco's attitude, and pointed out that, when he [Mesa] was at the head of the Spanish section of the Biblioteca Nelson, he chose two works of Baroja to be published, La dame errante (1908) and La ciudad de la niebla (1909) and that he had abstained from choosing any work of the Valencian novelist. Blasco responded with characteristic violence to Mesa's remarks, arguing that those were not the moments most opportune to make literary criticism nor to try to convert the present meeting into a partisan one. Mesa did not answer, but then left the restaurant.

With this history of disagreement, it is not surprising that Baroja wrote what he did, as a preface to the excerpt from Mala hierba which appeared in Páginas escogidas in 1916.

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8Ibid., p. 110.

9In his Memorias (Madrid, 1955) Baroja says that Mesa went on to insinuate that Blasco had wanted to make a fabulous business deal in South America, abandoning his Valencian workers in the Argentine country and returning himself to Paris (p. 636). [No wonder Blasco grew violent!]
Como casi todas mis novelas Mala Hierba parece un borrador de un libro que no ha cuajado.

Esto me dijo una vez Blasco Ibáñez, antes de que él escribiera La Horda, a base de los libros míos. Ciertamente es verdad que estas novelas La Busca, Mala Hierba, y Aurora Roja no están bien cortadas, pero también es cierto que el libro de Blasco Ibáñez es bastante ramplón. Si en literatura el ruego debe ir seguido del asesinato, para ser legítimo, aquí hubo una ligera sospecha de ruego, pero no hubo una ligera sospecha de asesinato, y eso que mis libros tenían una salud precaria y no necesitaban mucho para morirse.

Lo que hizo Blasco Ibáñez es fácil. Dar unidad a un libro empleando fórmulas viejas de relleno, usando una retórica altisonante, es cosa que se puede aprender, como se aprende a hacer zapatos. A mí esto nunca me ha entusiasmado, me gusta la unidad; pero cuando sale del fondo del mito que ha buscado el autor, la unidad de Carmen de Mérimée; la unidad de Primer amor, de Turguenev, cuando la unidad se consigue añadiendo y quitando no me seduce.10

In Baroja en el banquillo, in an article entitled "La Busca," Ernest Boyd reports that Baroja says of Mala hierba: "A igual que todas mis novelas, Mala hierba parece el tosco borrador de un libro que finalmente nunca llegó a pulirse. Esto fué lo que Blasco Ibáñez me dijo en una ocasión, y entonces procedió a escribir La horda, basada en mi material."11

Camilo Pitollet in his V. Blasco Ibanez, sus novelas y la novela de su vida, which was published in French and in Spanish translation in 1921, summarizes this controversy of plagiarism as follows:

La horda, pintura de la mala vida madrileña, ha suscitado [por Baroja] ... una acusación de


11Baroja en el banquillo, Tribunal extranjero (Zaragoza, n.d.), p. 252.
If one takes Pérez Ferrero as a trustworthy source, he must accept the fact that Blasco had read the three books of La lucha por la vida before writing La horda. Baroja considered Pérez Ferrero dependable, for in a prologue to his Pío Baroja en su rincón, he wrote, "Ya expresados y contados los recuerdos, la versión de ellos de Ferrero es exacta y fiel." As to Baroja's charge of plagiarism, we have it set down twice in his own words: first in his Páginas escogidas and second in Ernest Boyd's article quoted above. Now one needs

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12 Camilo Pitollet, V. Blasco Ibáñez (Valencia, n.d.), p. 247. There seems to be a misprint in the above quotation. Caro Baroja in La soledad de Pío Baroja (1953) and Marino Gómez-Santos in Baroja y su máscara both give 1918 as the date for Páginas escogidas. Pitollet notes that Areilza's article, "La última novela de Baroja," appears on page 14 of Hermes.

13 Pérez Ferrero, op. cit., p. 10.
to consider the following points: (1) whether critics find that Blasco had a tendency to use other writers' materials, (2) what there is in the two works which would lead Baroja to make such a charge, and (3) whether one concludes that the charge is or is not justified.

After examining many suggestions of the influence of various authors on Blasco Ibáñez and the several inferences that parts of his novels recall parts of novels by other authors, one comes to feel that Blasco has not shown a tendency to plagiarize in works other than La horda. He himself says, "Cuando empecé, veía la vida a través de los libros de los otros, como la ven todos los jóvenes. Hoy la veo con mis propios ojos, y tengo ocasión de ver más que la generalidad, pues vivo una existencia plena y movida, cambiando con frecuencia de ambiente."¹⁴

Many critics see him as much influenced by the French realists and naturalists, chiefly Zola and Balzac. The spirit of Zola does appear in various of his books. It is particularly strong in the first novel, Arros y tartana, but less so in the following ones. The influence of the French cycles of La comédie humaine by Balzac and Les Rougon-Macquart by Zola is seen in Blasco's project of a cycle of twenty novels under the general title of Las novelas de la raza, each having an American background and exalting the glory of Spain and its colonization in the Western Hemisphere. He planned three

¹⁴Pitollet, op. cit., p. 194.
novels for each country, progressing from Argentina to Chile, to Peru, and on up the continent ending in Santo Domingo, thus reversing the order of Spanish colonization. He proposed to study each country personally and to produce pictures of the current life interwoven with evocations of the past.

Both George Tyler Northrup and Ernest Mérimée make statements regarding the influence of Zola upon Blasco. The former says, "The influence of Zola is marked in his early works. From Zola he got his Naturalism, his technique of handling plot (monotonously the same always), and his ability for describing crowds." Mérimée writes, "Blasco Ibáñez began as a follower of the French naturalists and in particular of Zola. Gradually he shook off their influence and formed a manner of his own."

Blasco writes as follows about his connection with Zola, in a long letter to Julio Cejador, dated March 6, 1918, which is inserted in the latter's Historia literaria, volume IX, pages 471 to 478.

Yo, en mis primeras novelas, sufrí de un modo considerable la influencia de Zola y de la escuela naturalista, entonces en pleno triunfo. En mis primeras novelas nada más. . . . No crea, querido Cejador, que me arrepiento ni reniego de este origen. Todos han sufrido una influencia imitativa en su juventud, aun los más grandes maestros, como Balzac, Victor Hugo, etc. . . . ¿Quién como él [Zola] supo mover y hacer vivir las muchedumbres en las páginas de un

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libro? ... En la actualidad, por más que busco, encuentro muy escasas relaciones con el gran novelista que fue considerado como mi padre literario. Ni por el método de trabajo, ni por el estilo, tenemos la menor semejanza. Zola era un reflexivo en literatura y yo soy un impulsivo. El llegaba al resultado final lentamente, por perforación. Yo procedo por explosión, violenta y ruidosamente.17

Pitollet offers the hypothesis that since realism is an essential quality of Spanish literature, Spain and Blasco did not need Zola to teach them realism rebaptized with the name of "naturalism," that particular "naturalism" which was floating through the air of all Europe at the time that Blasco began to write. Furthermore, says Pitollet, since popular material was the basis of the Spanish picaresque novel, Blasco was already familiar with its use and did not have to acquire this idea from his reading of French literature.

Both of these assumptions are well taken, but one must admit that Blasco may have been more influenced by the French naturalists than other Spanish writers were. France was, in fact, a second home to him; and French authors, especially Zola, Balzac, and Hugo ("la religión de mi juventud")18 were the recipients of his lifelong admiration and provided him with much joy and inspiration.

There are various critics who have suggested that reflections of different authors are noted in Blasco's works. They

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18Ibid., p. 102.
do not go so far as to charge plagiarism. The following list contains some of these ideas.

1. La horda (1905) is a Balzacian narrative.  
2. La barraca (1898) is on a theme from Sudermann's novel Katzensteg (1889), that of a virile person at odds with an entire community. [Blasco published translations from Sudermann's works in his publishing house, Prometeo, in Valencia. Sudermann had introduced the modern French naturalism into the German novel with his two first novels, Frau Sorge and Katzensteg.]  
3. D'Annunzio had a distant influence on La barraca.  
4. Eugène Sue's Wandering Jew inspired Blasco's early anticlerical novel, La araña negra (1892).  
5. Henri Murger's Scènes de la Vie de Bohême (1848) has Mimi, like Fell in La horda, dissected by the medical students and buried in a common grave.  
6. Carmen by Prosper Mérimée has a climax similar to Flor de mayo.  
7. Blasco rebaptises a tireless, political revolutionary, Fermín Salvochea, into Fernando Salvatierra, a champion of equalitarian ideas in La bodega.  
8. The two most powerful descriptive scenes in Mare nostrum, Naples' Aquarium and the death of the hero, were evidently suggested by Hugo's Travailleurs de la mer.

19Ibid., p. 248.  
20Northrup, op. cit., p. 378.  
21Pitollet, op. cit., p. 223.  
24Ibid., p. 216.  
25Ibid., p. 245.  
9. El Paraíso de las mujeres (1922) is suggestive of Gulliver's Travels.  

10. La catedral (1903) was inspired by Hugo's Notre Dame de Paris. 

11. La maja desnuda (1906) recalls a vague memory of Manette Salomon and may have part of the plot of Chapter VIII of Brumas la muerte of Rodenbach, a Belgian poet. [The episode referred to in the latter work is the dressing of a model in the dead wife's clothing to try to portray the wife dressed, since the painter has been unable to reproduce an earlier painting of his wife in the nude, which she had destroyed.] 

12. "The Hero," one of Blasco's short stories, is "a theme of Daudet, added to a mood of Flaubert or of Maupassant." 

13. Sönnica la cortesana (1901) brought Mérimée in 1903 to point out that Blasco was "un discípulo de Flaubert que procura imitarle lo mejor posible." He says Blasco was brought to this tour de force by the example of Flaubert in his Salammbo. 

14. Cowper and Lister make this statement about Sönnica la cortesana. "In 1901, Ibáñez, quite evidently under the spell of Flaubert's Salammbo published Sönnica la Cortesana. . . ." 

15. La reina Calafia (1923) was inspired apparently by the old Sergas de Esplandián of Montalvo. 

A more extensive investigation would no doubt add many more suggestions to the above list. However, it would also divert the purpose of this paper, which is not proposing to decide whether Blasco Ibáñez plagiarized writers other than

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27Ibid., p. xvi.  
28Ibid., p. xii.  
29Pitollet, op. cit., p. 252.  
32Cowper and Lister, op. cit., p. xi.  
33Ernest Mérimée, op. cit., p. 557.
Baroja. Nevertheless, after examining some of these suggestions, one feels that the critics are stressing their individual reactions and are sometimes straining a point to do so. For instance, the circumstances of the deaths of Mimi and Feli are repeated countless times at the turn of the century in the lives of those too poor to afford a decent burial. Blasco did not have to get them from Scènes de la vie de bohème. Both he and Murger copied from real life situations. Victor Hugo's success with using the Cathedral of Notre Dame as a focal point for his novel Notre Dame de Paris may have led Blasco to use the Toledo Cathedral as a central point for his La Catedral. However, Blasco is not merely describing a tremendous cathedral with its effect on people; he is directly attacking the fossilized, power-mad ecclesiastical organization of which the Toledo Cathedral is the leading Spanish symbol. The similarity in climax between Carmen and Flor de mayo exists only in that both have the violent outcome so common to plots which have a triangular love case. Pascuelo does not stab the faithless woman, as in Carmen, but stabs "the other man."

Blasco has been quite definite as to his reason for writing Sónica. During his adolescence, when he wandered on the beach, he always saw the old castle walls of Sagunto and told himself that one day he would write its story. He was in the middle of his study of the Albufera in preparation
for writing Cañas y barro when he had an impulse to fulfill this adolescent promise. In a Foreword, dated 1923, to an edition of Sónnica, he writes, "Sentí la imperiosa necesidad de resusitar el episodio más heroico de la historia de Valencia." He dismisses the allusions to Salammbô with, "No es necesario insistir en esto. Los que hayan leído ambas novelas saben a qué atenerse."

But he takes this occasion to say that Sónnica does owe much to Silvio Italicò's poem on the Second Punic War. He admits that "algunos de mis personajes secundarios los he sacado de ella [la obra de Italicò], así como determinadas escenas." In reply to critics who say that he stopped to write Sónnica in order to follow the currently popular mode of the historical novel, he says, ". . . vi en ella [Sónnica] un complemento de mi obra sobre la tierra natal. Había descrito ya la vida valenciana tal como puede verse directamente, y necesité realizar esta excursión por su pasado más remoto."

Blasco Ibáñez had sufficient originality to make plagiarism completely unnecessary. It is true that one will find critics who say that Blasco had little imagination, as for instance, Aubrey F. G. Bell, who writes, "The fact is that Blasco Ibáñez has an overwhelming personality but little imagination." Most critics, however, do not find him

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38 A. F. G. Bell, Contemporary Spanish Literature (New York, 1925), pp. 91-92.
lacking in this essential quality. Ernest Mérimée notes that Blasco's manner is "characterized by unusual union of an impetuous imagination and patient digging for myriad details." The Columbia Dictionary of Modern European Literature states that "his senses and imagination kept a record of his first impressions and he gave a vivid rendition of these in his writing." He was a born story teller. Arthur Livingston says that "he could furnish a thousand monthly 'plots' that would also be good plots. He has actually more 'ideas' among his notes than he could execute in books in a dozen life-times."

It is clear from his conversation with Baroja in the Librería de Fe that Blasco was dissatisfied with Baroja's trilogy, saying to him that it was only sketches [three volumes!] and not a finished picture. Perhaps he felt impelled to write La horda to present a true picture of Madrid,

de un Madrid que no conocen las clientelas turísticas del Ritz y del Palace, que ignoran hasta los españoles cuyo campo de acción no traspone el radio de los arcos voltaicos y de las calles asfaltadas del centro de su ciudad y que no se atreven a ir a estudiar a sus compatriotas en las alturas de los Cuatro Caminos, en los barrios de las Injurias, de las Cambroneras y otras análogas guaridas de parias madrileños.

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39 Mérimée, op. cit., p. 558.
41 Livingston, op. cit., p. x.
42 Pitollet, op. cit., p. 84.
Pitollet thinks that Blasco did not write *La horda* primarily to give a social message—the future awakening of the mob, for this does not appear until the last chapter. He states that the whole book is less doctrinaire than *La catedral* and *El intruso* and lacks their polemical bitterness.

The message is "fundida . . . en el patético relato de las aventuras de un bohemio intelectual."  

One needs now to inquire as to how Blasco Ibáñez composed his writings. Was there in his method anything which might have caused him to have a tendency to plagiarize? He himself said, "Yo llevo una novela en la cabeza mucho tiempo (algunas veces son dos o tres); pero cuando llega el momento de exteriorizarla, me acomete una fiebre de actividad, vivo una existencia que puede llamarse subconsciente, y escribo el libro en el tiempo que emplearía en copiarlo un escribiente."  

Federico de Onís writes that Blasco studies minutely "los tipos y el ambiente de cada una de sus novelas, vive por semanas, por meses la vida pintada en ellas, y una vez lleno de sus asuntos se retira temporalmente para escribirlas."  

The Argentine Manuel Ugarte says of Blasco, "He writes as freely

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as other men talk," and he has the "gift of free and lucid expression." 46

To Blasco, "El arte es instinto." 47 He stimulated his instincts and nerves by going to the locale of the proposed novel to soak up impressions and atmosphere. The letter to Cejador, already alluded to, includes this sentence: "En escritores como yo—viajeros, hombres de acción y movimiento --la obra es producto del ambiente." 48 He began to write Cañas y barro (1902) after eight or ten days spent studying the setting at first hand, fishing and drowsing in the bottom of a boat on the Albufera (a fever-ridden lagoon near Valencia). He started the book without knowing how it would end. It was in the fall. Pitollet tells that many nights during the composition Blasco watched the murmuring sea from the upstairs porch of Malvarosa. Keeping in the mood of the piece from this position, while pondering the last chapter of Cañas y barro, suddenly he saw the final solution. 49

Concerning his preparation for Flor de mayo, Blasco wrote the following:

.. . navegué en las barcas del Cabañal, haciendo la vida ruda de sus tripulantes, interriniendo en las operaciones de la pesca en alta mar. Como ya van transcurridos cerca de treinta años, hasta

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47 Pitollet, op. cit., p. 233.
48 Ibid., p. 76.
49 Ibid., p. 233.
me atrevo a decir que también navegué en una barca de contrabandistas, yendo a «trabajar» con ellos en la costa de Argel.50

In his 1923 Foreword to Los muertos mandan, Blasco relates the development of this novel. He first thought of using Mallorca and Ibiza for a setting in 1902 when he was invited to come to a political meeting by the Republicans of Mallorca. Six years passed without his being able to write the novel. He had not had the opportunity to return to study the types of people and the landscapes. Finally in 1908 while he was preparing to go to America for the first time, he found he could get away from Madrid for some weeks. He slept many nights in the little towns of the islands, climbed the mountains of Ibiza, and rowed out from the beaches in the old native boats. Returning to Madrid tanned and with callused hands, he began to write. He says of his impressions, "... eran tan frescas y al mismo tiempo tan recias mis observaciones, que produce la novela «de un solo tirón» sin el más leve desfallecimiento de mi memoria de novelista, en el transcurso de dos o tres meses."51

He had to write while still in touch with the atmosphere and the mood. Most of the novels were written in two to four months' time. Los enemigos de la mujer did take nine months but was written when he was ill from nervous exhaustion due

to his intensive and unflagging propaganda work during World War I. Concerning Los enemigos de la mujer, Blasco wrote that it was composed in Monte Carlo, "donde he residí durante un año entero, y si me quedé allí después de firmada la paz, fue porque tenía interés en terminar esa obra en el sitio mismo donde se desarrollaba su acción." 

The war interrupted his planned cycle of novels on Spanish American life, leaving only the long prologue, Las Argonautas, completed. After the five years spent away from South America, he announced that he was not giving up the plan, but was changing the order of the cycle, now beginning with the United States and Mexico. He was preoccupied with the America which he had just seen, whose impressions were fresh. First he proposed to write his novel on the Mexican revolution, El águila y la serpiente. However, when his visit to Mexico to gather firsthand impressions unexpectedly came to include a real revolution, he changed his mind and wrote El militarismo mexicano, expressing frank sorrow at seeing a great country seized by anarchy.

Pitollet says that Blasco conceived his novels "en bloque" (as Blasco himself expressed it), that he planned with clarity only "el nudo de la acción" and the part of its principal protagonist. The episodes and thousands of details did not emerge from his mind until later. He wrote in a

Pitollet, op. cit., p. 292.
compulsive manner, his pen running feverishly over the paper, not knowing which way the story would end, writing long hours, becoming more overstimulated as the story advanced, abandoning himself "a esa embriaguez extraña" as the great mystics did to their visions. *La barraca* was written in a state of hyperesthesia which increased as the book reached the climax. He even suffered hallucinations at the end. He gave little attention to the style or to worrying over proportions. Later, he mercilessly cut the mass of composition to a half or a third of the first draft.\(^{53}\)

A number of sources state that Blasco Ibáñez did not keep written notes. He depended on his subconscious to preserve a conglomeration of sense impressions arising from his direct observation and to provide him with multitudinous details. His active, even violent, life experiences and his voracious reading also kept his subconscious well stocked with plot and character material. He did not try to remember anything. When he felt moved to write, everything poured out. The influences of his past life and past reading mingled with the chosen atmosphere and setting which he frequently had visited just previous to the actual writing.

Blasco Ibáñez had read *La lucha por la vida* shortly before writing *La horda*. He had lived in Madrid much of the time between 1898 and the publication of *La horda* in 1905. Blasco wrote in 1925 in a Foreword to an edition of *La horda*.

that, realizing by 1905 the uselessness of his Republican representation "dentro de una Cámara fabricada por los monárquicos," and that he was going to be unsuccessful in achieving social reforms, he frequently went on walks through the suburbs instead of attending the Cortes meetings.

The location of his home at the end of the Paseo de la Castellana, almost in the country, helped turn him toward the environs. "Durante un año examiné las diversas agrupaciones acampadas en torno a Madrid." The groups which interested him most were the ragpickers, the gypsies, and the poachers.

His desire for a Republic in Spain never wavered, but he was disillusioned with politics. Small wonder that he felt moved to write a novel about a disillusioned intellectual living among the starving outcasts, the ignorant, exploited toilers of Madrid. He wrote down what his subconscious dictated, and Baroja's La lucha had been but recently buried there.

Baroja thought that Blasco copied from him. One needs to examine in detail the similarities existing between the two works in order to determine whether Baroja's charge may be justified. In the succeeding chapters this paper will discuss the similarities which are found (1) in the settings, (2) in the plots, and (3) between the major and the minor characters of these two novels.

55 Ibid., p. 8.
CHAPTER II

SIMILARITIES IN SETTING

When one discusses the setting of a novel, it is necessary to consider the time and the place of the events. These two novels were written in the first years of the twentieth century and they present contemporary problems.

Blasco's La horda is a single volume of some 400 pages which covers about a year in the life of the young hero, Isidro Maltrana, the second chapter presenting a flash-back of his previous life. Baroja's La lucha por la vida is a trilogy; each volume is about 300 pages in length. The first one, La busca, brings Manuel Alcázar from his late boyhood and adolescence through his first frustrated passion for a girl. Mala hierba picks him up without a pause and takes him into his twenty-first year. Between it and Aurora roja there is an interval of some years. This last volume covers perhaps a year, although Baroja is seldom definite about time elements in this trilogy. It ends a few days after an historical event, the coronation of Alfonso XIII, which took place on May 17, 1902.

The stories of both of these novels are set in Madrid, the Madrid of the turn of the century. The Enciclopedia universal gives the following description of the capital
of Spain as it had been before and as it was at the time of these stories.

En el último tercio del siglo pasado Madrid era un pueblo grande, feo, no muy limpio, ni muy sano. Existían entonces callesjones pobres que parecían reliquias de la Edad Media. Las casas de alquiler, cubiertas de teja, sin ornamentación ninguna en las fachadas, con sórdidos portales y balcones idénticos a los que se usaron en el siglo XVIII, daban a la capital de España el aspecto de una ciudad improvisada. . . . Se le llamaba la ciudad del polvo y de la muerte . . .

Since both authors are realists and since they both chose to point out the evils of the Madrid slum areas in these two works, it is but natural that the hilly suburbs where these evils flourished should provide the settings for both books. Blasco did not have to copy the streets, plazas, markets, jails, and cemeteries that Baroja used. He could not avoid using some of the same setting once he had decided to use a theme similar to Baroja's and set in the same city, Madrid. He had to put the gypsies in Cambrones, the poachers in Carolinas, the ragpickers in Tetuán, the beggars and vagabonds in Injurías and Peñuelas, the construction workers in Cuatro Caminos. These types did live in those wretched slums, and it would have been ridiculous for Blasco to have given them a different Madrid location.

Some of these slums were on the northern outskirts of the city and others were on the south, along the Manzanares.

\[1\] "Madrid," Enciclopedia universal, Vol. XXXI.
River. Cuatro Caminos was a common entrance into the city proper for the dwellers of the slums north of Madrid, from Tetuán, Chamartín, Carolinas, Bellasvistas. The Pardo, a royal game preserve, which figures in both books, is northwest of Madrid. On the south, the Puente de Toledo formed a passage from the Cambroneras and Injurias sections on one side of the Manzanares to the various cemeteries on the southern side, including that of San Isidro which is important in both works. The Modelo prison, the San Martín cemetery, and the Rastro market, all of which figure in both books, are not in the suburbs, but in the central part of Madrid.

It would seem proper now to examine the setting by tracing the chief dwellings of the two heroes. Isidro Maltrana, the hero of La horda, began life in a tenement house but was put into an Orphans' Asylum by a well-to-do woman who was grateful for his mother's good work as a servant and who found his talk precocious. This was located opposite the Tribunal de Cuentas. When he received the bachillerato, he went to live with his benefactress and studied Philosophy and Letters at the Universidad Central. At her sudden death he was pushed out by her relatives when no will was found. However, they gave him 3,000 pesetas to finish his education. After his mother's last illness used up most of his cash, he moved from lodging to lodging until he was finally forced to seek shelter with Señor José who lived outside the Paseo de
Ronda on the Calle de los Artistas, just beyond the weighing station of Cuatro Caminos. He and Feli set up housekeeping in a room in Don Vicente's flat in the neighborhood of the Plaza de la Cebada near the center of town. In La busca people buy greens on this plaza. As the fortunes of Isidro and Feli decline, they move south to Cambroneras, where Feli makes friends with the gypsies. This is one of the oldest and one of the worst of the Madrid slums. Feli's infant son is put to nurse with a woman living on Corvos Hill, which is located across the Segovia Bridge on the Extremadura Road.

Manuel Alcázar, the hero of La lucha por la vida, lives in many different parts of the city during the trilogy. His adolescence in La busca is spent mainly in the area between the Puerta del Sol and the river on the south and the west, except for a summer's thieving with Vidal and Bizco on the eastern and northern outskirts of the city. As an apprentice shoe repairman, he lives with Señor Ignacio at the Corrala, a multiple slum-housing unit at the junction of the Paseo de las Acacias and Embajadores. As an apprentice baker, he lives for a short time with Tío Patas on the Plaza del Carmen near the Puerta del Sol. For a year he works as a junk dealer's helper for Señor Custodio and lives in his hovel, which is situated on the general dumping ground between the Segovia and the Toledo bridges.

In Mala hierba Manuel is a young man. He lives first as a bohemian with a sculptor named Alex. Then, he poses as the
son of la baronesa de Aynant, Paquita Figueroa, sharing her dwelling. When her fortunes improve, they move from the Calle de la Princesa to the Plaza de Oriente, and when they decline, to the Calle del Ave María (between the Ronda de Toledo and Atocha). He even goes to the country with her, to Cogolludo. When her situation becomes desperate and she goes to the Netherlands, he becomes an apprentice to Sánchez Gómez, a printer. At first he sleeps and works at the shop on the Calle de San Bernardo. Later he gets a raise and begins living with Jesús in the Santa Casilda, a slum unit on the Ronda de Toledo near the Rastro. His connection with Jesús begins his change in life. At first it appears to be definitely a change for the worst, for Jesús is lazy and given to excessive drinking. After one of their drunken sprees they become tramps for months, living in all sorts of shacks and dives in an area which extends from the Fábrica del Gas south to the Puente de Toledo and east along the Paseo de Yeserías. He comes across Vidal again and begins to work with him as a gambler's lure. Also, he encounters his first love, Justa, the daughter of Señor Custodio. Their dwelling must have been in the northern part of the city, for they took strolls to Cuatro Caminos and the Puerta de Hierro, which forms the entrance to the Pardo.

When Vidal is murdered near the Toledo bridge, they change living quarters to escape the surveillance of the
police, moving to the Calle de Galileo, near the Tercer Depósito in Vallehermoso. He gets a job in a print shop as a typesetter. She deserts him, and he is picked up by the police but is allowed to leave when he tells the truth about his connection with Vidal in gambling activities. The big gambling boss gets him set free to stop further police investigation into the racket. La Salvadora and la Fea had befriended him while he was in prison, sending him food. Therefore, when he gets out, he goes to live with them, bitter because society which had never given him anything but toil and starvation now has pushed him into being a stool pigeon. He is ripe for Jesús' speeches on the anarchists' vision of idyllic humanity.2

Most of Aurora roja takes place within a long strip stretching from the Puerta del Sol on the south to the Glorieta de los Cuatro Caminos on the north and several streets to the west of the Calle de San Bernardo and its extension, Bravo Murillo. During the interval between Mala hierba and Aurora roja, Manuel has ceased to live with Jesús and has been living with his widowed sister Ignacia and with la Salvadora and her little brother Enrique on the Calle de Magallanes on the old Aceiteros Road, which is opposite the cemetery of San Martín. This interval between the two volumes probably lasted about eight years, for Enrique is two or

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three years old when he and his sister are discovered in Mala hierba, and in Aurora roja he is still referred to as el chico. Manuel buys a print shop on the Calle de Sandoval, which is just north of the Glorieta de San Bernardo. The title of the third volume of the trilogy comes from a tavern called "La Aurora" which stands on a dump ground between the Paseo de Areneros and Vallehermoso. The Tercer Depósito, which was being built contemporary with the time of Aurora roja, must be the Nuevo Depósito shown on a map of Madrid in the Enciclopedia universal.

Two theaters are discussed as a possible meeting place for the big anarchistic gathering, which is a high point in Aurora roja. Both were in the center of the city and produced mainly zarzuelas. The Barbieri Theater is described in the Enciclopedia universal as a small, low-ceilinged theater, poorly decorated where "se celebran algunos beneficios y los mitines de propaganda republicana o societaria." The Teatro de la Zarzuela, in the Calle de Jovellanos, was used on different occasions for "ruidosos mitines políticos," but the management refused to let the Aurora group use it. As

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4"Madrid," Enciclopedia universal, Vol. XXXI.
5Ibid.
6Ibid.
Baroja says in the novel, "No hubo más remedio que hacer el mitin en Barbieri."\(^7\)

This point may be a good place to take up other public facilities which are mentioned in both novels. Several markets serve as background but the Rastro figures in both. Blasco devotes from page 183 to page 197 to an extended description of Isidro and Félix's progress through the Rastro; but, as Betoret-París says, he is more interested in "los vendedores y la masa que lo [el Rastro] visita que por sus elementos físicos. Son Maltrana y su compañera quienes nos llevan a él en seguida de haberse unido y desear adquirir una cama."\(^8\) Details of his Rastro descriptions will be given later in this chapter when his method of scene painting is discussed.

Baroja does not describe the Rastro at any length. In La busca he says of Don Telmo that "alguien le vio en una ropavejería del Rastro, que probablemente sería suya."\(^9\) El Zurro, a neighbor of Señor Ignacio, had a place at the lower end of the Rastro, "una choza obscura e infecta rellena de trapos, casacas antiguas ... y otras baratijas sin valor."\(^10\) The picture of his shop takes only six lines. Another

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\(^7\)Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 223.

\(^8\)Eduardo Betoret-París, El costumbrismo regional en la obra de Blasco Ibáñez (Valencia, n.d.), p. 131.


\(^10\)Ibid., p. 78.
curious character, a friend of Señor Custodio, the humpbacked el Conejo, who parodies everything sacred, is connected with the Rastro. He, cunningly, would first find out what the stand merchants needed and wanted, and then he would buy these articles from the ragmen, selling them in turn to the merchants, always to his own advantage. In Mala hierba Manuel accompanies his employer, Bernardo Santín, several times to the Rastro where the latter buys photographs of actresses made in Paris by Reutlinger. Back in the studio, they unglue the pictures from the mountings and paste them upon other mountings which, printed in gold letters along the margin, bear the signature, "Bernardo Santín, fotógrafo."\(^\text{11}\)

Later in the same novel, Manuel goes to live with Jesús in the Santa Casilda hostelry, and from the window of his quartucho he sees the Rastro round about.\(^\text{12}\)

The Cárcel Modelo on the Calle de la Princesa is the prison which appears in both books. Manuel and Vidal attend an execution there which takes place the morning of the day Vidal meets his destiny and is killed beside the Manzanares, in the very area where he has engaged in criminal activities since early boyhood.\(^\text{13}\) Vidal's counterpart in La horda, Pepín, is more intimately connected with the Cárcel Modelo.

\(^{11}\)Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 33. \(^{12}\)Ibid., p. 130.

\(^{13}\)Ibid., pp. 247-251.
He is sent there for the theft of copper and wire from a factory in Vallecás. Putting this character within the prison gives Blasco a chance to depict the gloomy, coffin-like dungeon cells and, through an analysis of the inmates, to give expression to more social moralizing. His most unpleasant personal experience of a sojourn of fourteen months in a prison for common criminals gave him more than ample material to make this section convincingly realistic.

Various parks and barracks appear in the novels. In both, the Casa de Campo serves as a background and point of reference, although nothing noteworthy occurs there.

The slum charity called la Doctrina appears in both works. It had several divisions which were located in different parts of the suburbs. The one in La busca is on the San Isidro highway, west of the Toledo bridge. The one in La horda is at the north in a big shed at Bellasvistas. La Doctrina held religious meetings for poverty-stricken people either once or twice a week. Upper-class women from the city came to the slum location, called the roll, and led prayers and songs, and gave sermons to the miserably poor, advising them to live more moral lives. The reason the wretches came to hear these religious women and put up with their presumptuousness was that at intervals sheets, rice, and underwear

14 Blasco, La horda, p. 223.
were distributed to those who were enrolled and who attended regularly.

Isidro's grandmother has gone to a Doctrina meeting when he comes to call on her during Carnival time. Zaratustra tells him that the devout city ladies

regalaban a las traperas una sábana por año, y arroz y castañas por Navidad; pero las obligaban a oír la explicación de la Doctrina dos veces por semana . . . . Las que faltaban a estas grandes solemnidades como la gran reunión de Carnaval perdían la sábana.

--Te digo, Isidro, que se la ganan bien, y cuando vienen a coger los trapos de esas señoras tienen callos en las rodillas, como los elefantes. Pero el mediano, cuando siente necesidad, no se para en nada . . .

A coachman, observing the Doctrina meeting in La busca, explains to Manuel that some people enroll in two or three divisions at once so as to get all the charity they can.

"Nosotros, mi padre y yo, nos inscribimos una vez en cuatro secciones con nombres distintos. . . ¡Vaya un lio que se armó! Y ¡menudo choteo que tuvimos con las marquesas!" Baroja describes this meeting in some detail as follows:

Era aquel uno conclavo de mendigos, un conciliábulo de Corte de los Milagros. Las mujeres ocupaban casi todo el patio; en un extremo, cerca de una capilla, se amontonaban los hombres; no se veían más que caras hinchadas, de estúpida aparición, narices inflamadas y bocas torcidas; viejas gordas y pesadas como ballenas, melancólicas; viejuzuelas esqueléticas de boca hundida

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15 Ibid., p. 117.
16 Baroja, La busca, p. 86.
y nariz de ave rapaz; mendigas vergonzantes con la barba verrugosa, llena de pelos, y la mirada entre irónica y huraña; mujeres jóvenes, flacas y extenuadas, desmelenadas y negras; y todas, viejas y jóvenes, envueltas en trajes raídos, remendados, zurrados, vueltos a remendar hasta no dejar una pulgada sin su remiendo . . . .

Entre los mendigos, un gran número lo formaban los ciegos; había lisiados, cojos, mancos; unos hieráticos, silenciosos y graves; otros movedizos. Se mezclaban las anguarinas pardas con las americanas raídas y las blusas sucias. Algunos andrajosos llevaban a la espalda sacos y morrales negros; otros, enormes cachiporras en la mano; un negrazo, con la cara tatuada a rayas profundas, esclavo, sin duda, en otra época, en-vuelto en harapos, se apoyaba en la pared con una indiferencia digna; por entre hombres y mujeres correteaban los chiquillos descalzos y los perros escuálidos; y todo aquel montón de mendigos, revuelto, agitado, palpitante, bullía como una gusanera.17

Another charitable institution is mentioned in both novels, the Hospicio. Baroja speaks of "la banda del Hospicio" playing at the annual fair which took place on Pasión street. Blasco places his hero Isidro in the Hospicio after the death of his father. There he remains studying until he receives his bachillerato. One of the most touching scenes of the book is that which occurs when the children of the Hospicio are visited by their relatives in the late afternoon on Thursdays and Sundays, not inside the building and at leisure, but a visit of only a few minutes snatched in the street, when the children are returning from their walk in the suburbs and just before they disappear again into the building.

17 Ibid., pp. 83-84.
The restriction of the maternal instinct of the mothers by their poverty is depressing enough, but this picture of an old workman walking alone beside a motherless little boy is worse. "Su mano callosa, cubierta de escamas del trabajo, acariciaba las mejillas infantiles, mientras la cara barbuda miraba a lo alto, pensando en que los hombres no deben llorar."18

Of the hospitals included in the two novels, the San Carlos Clinic is used in both. Jesús goes there for his chest trouble in Mala hierba. Félix dies there "en aquella cuadra blanca" after several months, surrounded by antiseptic, cynical doctors and stern nuns with "manos de cera," who were (as Blasco characterizes them) "humanas bestias que sólo pensaban en ella con el egoísmo del dolor, sin una mirada de cariño."19

The morgue, that frequent resting place of the "unknown" man, of the very poor who cannot afford a funeral, has, of course, a place in these stories of the poverty-stricken worker. After José's accidental death, he is taken to the Depósito de cadáveres, which Blasco locates beside the Manzanares on the east side of the Puente de Toledo. His funeral procession begins there. In La busca Baroja describes the Depósito de cadáveres as "un pabellón blanco

18Blasco, La horda, p. 48. 19Ibid., p. 349.
próximo al río, colocado al comienzo de la Dehesa del Ca-

nal."  

Manuel, Vidal, and Bizco, who are members of a gang of boys called los Piratas, go along the Paseo de Yesserías until they reach the morgue; they circle it "por si veían por las ventanas algún muerto, pero las ventanas estaban ce-
rradas."  

Later in the same book, the bodies of Milagros and Leandro are taken to the morgue. This time, when Manuel arrives at "la casita próxima al río," with Aristón and another boy who had seen Leandro kill himself, "había una ven-
tana abierta de par en par."  

They peep in and see Leandro stretched out on one marble slab and Milagros' corpse on another.

Several cemeteries are mentioned in both novels. The old cemeteries southwest of the Manzanares, lying between the Puente de Toledo and that of Segovia, form a background for the dump grounds and slum areas which border both shores of the Manzanares. As a boy, Manuel had a favorite resting spot in the Campillo de Gil Imón from which he could see jutting above the mud walls "las torrecitas y cipreses del cementerio de San Isidro; una cúpula redonda se destacaba recortada en el aire; en su remate se erguía un angelote, con las alas desplegadas, como presto para levantar al vuelo sobre el fonde incendiado y sangriente de la tarde."  

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20Baroja, La busca, p. 68.  
21Ibid.  
22Ibid., pp. 155-156.  
23Ibid., p. 70.
Isidro and Feli went to live at Cambroneras, they could see the hills across the Manzanares "en cuya cumbre se aglomeraban los cipreses y mausoleos de los cementerios de la Almudena y San Isidro."\(^{24}\)

Another group of cemeteries was located close to the Glorieta de los Cuatro Caminos, across from the Nuevo Depósito and at the northern end of the Calle de Magallanes. Baroja introduces them in the first chapter of *Aurora roja* as follows:

Estos cementerios eran el general del Norte, las Sacramentales de San Luis y San Ginés y la Patriarcal.

Al terminar los tapiales en el campo, desde su extremo se veían en un cerrillo las copas puntiagudas de los cipreses del cementerio de San Martín, que se destacaban rígidas en el horizonte.\(^{25}\)

La Patriarcal forms the setting for Chapter IV in Part III. Here Manuel's brother Juan finds the miserable outcasts who frequent the cemetery shanties. They are the lowest dregs of society, wretches who even exploit one another. Juan thinks, "Seguramente, en el fondo de sus almas hay una bondad dormida; en medio del fango de sus maldades hay el oro escondido que nadie se ha tomado el trabajo de descubrir. Yo trataré de hacerlo ..."\(^{26}\) He attempts to lift them "de las tinieblas de la brutalidad en que se encuentran ... a una

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\(^{26}\) Ibid., p. 240.
esfera más alta, más pura!" He talks to them every afternoon, rain or shine; but finally, realizing his failure, he gives up in sadness. Baroja closes the chapter with these sentences: "Juan se fué a su casa. El oro de las almas humanas no salía a la superficie."  

As Baroja tells us, San Martín is across the way from the Patriarcal. It is this San Martín which is important in the settings of both novels. Pío Baroja describes it briefly through the eyes of the group which is out in the country spending a beautiful May Sunday celebrating the success of Juan's sculpture at the Exhibition. Juan, Ignacia, Salvador, Manuel, and Enrique are seated in a shady spot outside the large gate of San Martín. To them

el cementerio, con su columnata de estilo griego y sus altos y graves cipreses, tenía un aspecto imponente. En las calles y en las plazoletas, formadas por los mirtos amarillentos, había cenotafios de piedra ya desgastados, y en los rincones, tumbas, que daban una impresión poética y misteriosa.

Blasco introduces the Sacramental de San Martín briefly as "un cementerio hermoso y apacible como un vergel, que estaba cerrado hacia algunos años," but where Isidro's benefactress had reserved a place for herself next to her husband. In the same paragraph he characterizes it as

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27Ibid.
28Ibid., p. 243.
29Ibid., p. 66.
30Blasco, La horda, p. 58.
"aquél cementerio de novela, con sus grupos de rectos cipreses, sus columnatas orientales, y sus parterres de rosas."

These awakened in Isidro a sweet melancholy, "haciendo revivir en su memoria la imagen de la buena dama." Later when he and Feli first fall in love, San Martín is the scene of their first kisses, and this gives the author an opportunity to describe the physical details and the spiritual mood of the place, along with the contrasts existing between some of the personages buried there. Blasco gradually leads up to their realization of love for each other with a twelve-page presentation of the details of the landscaping and pavilions of the cemetery. He informs us of the approach of spring with the following picture: "... la tierra se agrietaba para dar paso a una vegetación salvaje, a una maraña verde, que parecía la cabellera primaveral surgiendo lentamente de la tierra." Three small children playing there symbolize life in contrast to the cemetery which at this time represents Death as "una gran señora de belleza triste." The personification of Death will be treated later in Chapter V. The two young people reflect on how geniuses end, how the great ladies, now stately in their tombs, probably spent their lives in loving and voluptuousness. This is the point

\[31\text{Ibid.}\]
\[32\text{Ibid.}\]
\[33\text{Ibid., pp. 159-171.}\]
\[34\text{Ibid., p. 163.}\]
\[35\text{Ibid.}\]
of the first kiss. The light, falling through the colored glass of the apsis window and reflected by a wave of colors upon Feli, makes a vivid and palpitating frame for Isidro's flood of kisses inspired by her vibrant youth and sincere love for him.

This discussion of the cemeteries completes the list of those public facilities which are found in both works. The two authors will now be compared as to the way they present their settings and as to their showing an interplay of mood between setting and character.

Both writers give the reader an intimate sense of the place of the action, but they do not do this in the same manner. Blasco seizes the opportunity of the location of a character and sets forth on an objective presentation of the scene, often interrupting the action to describe the whole area, like a guide book, only with a better literary style. Sometimes these pictures occupy just a paragraph; on other occasions they take up many pages, for example, the fourteen-page picture of the Rastro. As Isidro and Feli look for a bed, Betoret-París says that they pass "por la Ribera de Curtidores, el rincón de las Américas, el corralón de las Nuevas Américas, la ronda de Embajadores, la estatua del héroe de Cascorro. Blasco describe ... los puestos de géne-

ros diversos, los pintorescos vendedores y la aglomeración
de público." The author emphasizes the descent of the two to the poorest section of the Rastro, the Ronda de Embajadores, with Maltrana's statement to Feli that "esto es el Rastro del Rastro; lo más barato de la baratura. Los de la Ribera de Curtidores miran a los de aquí como puedan mirarles a ellos los comerciantes de la Puerta del Sol." The following representative bit of scene painting from the section on the Rastro shows his use of many details, both those which belong together and those which contrast greatly:

En el suelo, sobre viejas lonas, espacíanse los más heterogéneos objetos: espadas con fundas de terciopelo que habían servido en los teatros, machetes cubanos, sables corvos de la Milicia National, loza desportillada, saleros rotos, vasos de porcelana remendados con groseras lanas, viejas litografías de vidrios empolvados representando las desdichas de Atala o las hazañas de Hernán Cortés, lienzos embutados, en cuya negrura distinguíase una pincelada roja que era una pierna, una mancha amarilla que era una calva.

Los palos que sostenían los sombrájos estaban unidos por cuerdas, y pendientes de ellas se balanceaban uniformes de soldados, viejas levitas, pantalones roídos por el roce, sobrefaldas de gasa que habían sido de moda treinta años antes, sayas que olían a humedad y a polvo, delatando el olvido en los cofres de algún desván. . . . En otros puestos se exhibían viejos telescopios, cornetines, cartucheras de agrietado cuero, sillas de montar, y entre las ropas mugrientas asomaban, como una primavera moribunda, las pálidas rosas de alguna casulla.

Baroja intersperses his brief descriptions with the movements, the thoughts, or the conversations of the

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36 Betoret-París, op. cit., p. 131.
37 Blasco, La horda, p. 188.  
38 Ibid., pp. 184-185.
characters. Also, his scenes are presented as they are seen by the characters, moving along the street, or walking through a public garden, or seated viewing a panorama. But the view is not longer or more detailed than a spectator would experience in a true situation. To take one of many examples, in *Mala hierba* after Manuel and Jesús go off on their first drinking spree, la Salvadora tells them not to come back. It has been snowing all day. While wandering the streets, Manuel views the snow at the Plaza de Oriente (six sentences). He goes home and while in bed makes plans for finding work. On the morrow he arises and walks from the Puerta del Sol to the Paseo de Rosales. From this point he views the white landscape (seven sentences). Then the plot resumes. Baroja refers to the snow scenes of that winter in a number of places in the book, but always with few sentences and never interrupting the movements of the characters for longer than they would rest or sleep. His method seems quite natural, and through it the plot gains momentum.

These authors paint on both small and large canvases. Madrid at dawn is treated by both. *La horda* opens with the awakening of life at the octroi office of Cuatro Caminos.

La lluvia cesó al amanecer. Una luz violácea se filtró por entre las nubes, que pasaban bajas como si fuesen a rozar los tejados. De la

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bruma matinal surgieron lentamente los edificios, humedecidos y relucientes por el lavado de la lluvia; el suelo fangoso con grandes charcos; los desmontes de tierra amarilla con manchas de vegetación en las hondonadas.40

In *La busca* Baroja also describes a Madrid dawn following a rain.

Alboreaba la mañana, ya no llovía; el cielo, aun obscuro, se llenaba de nubes negruzcas. .. . Madrid, plano, blanquecino, bañado por la humedad, brotaba de la noche con sus tejados, que cortaban en una línea recta el cielo; sus torrecillas, sus altas chimeneas de fábrica y, en el silencio del amanecer, el pueblo y el paisaje lejano tenían algo de lo irreal y de lo inmóvil de una pintura.

Clareaba más el cielo, azuleando poco a poco. Se destacaban ya de un modo preciso las casas nuevas, blancas; las medianerías altas de ladrillo, agujereadas por ventanucos simétricos; los tejados, los esquinazos, las balaustredas, las torres rojas, recién construidas, los ejércitos de chimeneas, todo envuelto en la atmósfera húmeda, fría y triste de la mañana, bajo un cielo bajo de color de cinc.41

In *Aurora roja* he presents a colorful Madrid dawn which contrasts greatly with the last.

Ya la claridad de la mañana se esparcía por la tierra, sembrada de hierba. El cielo se llenaba de nubes pequeñas y blancas, como vellones de lana,

... . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . . .

Había aclarado ya el campo; algún tinte de rosa brotaba en el cielo; el Guadarrama iba apareciendo velado por nieblas alargadas y blancas;

... Salrió el sol por encima de Madrid. La luz se derramó de un modo mágico por la tierra; las piedras, los árboles, los tejados del pueblo, las torres, todo enrojeció y fue luego dorándose poco a poco.


El cielo azul se limpió de nubes; el Guadarrama se despejó de nieblas; un pálido rubor tiñó sus cimas blancas, nevadas, de un color de rosa ideal. En los desmontes, algún rayo de sol vivo y fuerte, al caer sobre la arena, parecía derretirla e incendiariarla.\textsuperscript{42}

El last dawn Baroja describes is that of the final day of Juan's life when "a las cuatro empezó a amanecer;" and, because Juan had ordered the shutters kept open, "la luz fría de la mañana comenzó a filtrarse por el cuarto." When he awoke, it was already day.

En el cielo azul, con diafanidades de cristal, volaban las nubes rojas y llameantes del crepusculo.

Ya el sol de una mañana de mayo, brillante como el oro, iba iluminando el cuarto.

El reflejo rojo del día daba en el rostro pálido del enfermo. De pronto hubo una veladura en sus pupilas y una contracción en la boca. Estaba muerto.\textsuperscript{43}

Besides these pictures of dawn, there are a number of panoramas in each novel. Two of these follow. Blasco describes the Guadarrama thus:

El Guadarrama obstruía el horizonte con su masa de color de rosa coronada de pirámides de sal. La nieve brillaba en las cumbres, herida por el sol; destacaba su virginal blancura sobre el intenso azul del cielo, cayendo en líneas serpenteadas, sierra abajo, por los derrumbaderos y barrancos. El panorama grandioso hacía olvidar la miseria de este hormiguero de la busca, donde seres humanos buscaban su subsistencia en los despojos abandonados por sus semejantes.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42}Baroja, \textit{Aurora roja}, pp. 215-216.

\textsuperscript{43}Ibid., p. 295.

\textsuperscript{44}Blasco, \textit{La horda}, p. 125.
Baroja sees an autumn landscape through the eyes of the anarchists, who are looking toward the Casa de Campo from Rosales street and see that

los árboles de la Casa de Campo, enrojecidos por el otoño, formaban masas espesas de ocre y de azafrán; algunos chopos altos y amarillos, de color de cobre, heridos por el sol, se destacaban con sus copas puntiagudas entre el follaje verde oscuro de los pinos; las sierras lejanas se iban orlando con la claridad del día, y el cielo azul, con algunas nubes blancas, clareaba rápidamente...45

Both writers use conventional figures of speech in painting their settings. Baroja uses simile, metaphor, and personification very effectively. There are many instances of this in the three volumes; a few examples follow. The sun came out, "un disco rojo sobre la tierra negra."46

Thick drops of rain fell "como perlas de acero, que salieron en el agua negra de los charcos."47 The smoke "a botones densos... iba extendiéndose paralelamente a la tierra, como un escuadrón de caballos salvajes."48 Large flakes of snow "danzaban con las ráfagas de viento como mariposas blancas" and at intervals of calm fell "lenta y blandamente en el aire gris como el plumón suave desprendido del cuello de un cisne."49 On a beautiful May day the poppies

45 Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 216.
46 Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 175.
47 Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 34
48 Ibid., p. 74.
49 Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 169.
shone "como manchas de sangre caídas en la hierba." After an extended snowscape Baroja writes, "Y en el ambiente blanquecino, el humo negro espirado por las chimeneas de las fábricas, se extendía por el aire como una amenaza." Houses, station lights, railroad locomotives, factories, and the Gas House are subjects for personification.

While depicting the Estación del Mediodía, Baroja says, "las pupilas rojas y verdes de los faros de señales lanzaban un guiño confidencial desde sus altos soportes; las calderas en tensión de las locomotoras, bramaban con espantosos alaridos." He points out that the tanks of the Fábrica del Gas had "panzas redondas" and that a factory "parecía rugir y echaba borbotones de humo por la chimenea." Later he personifies the Fábrica del Gas as follows: "... de la chimenea de la Fábrica del Gas salía una humareda negra, como la espiración poderosa de un monstruo."

50 Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 66.
51 Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 170.
52 Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 31.
53 Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 182.
54 Ibid., p. 187.
55 Ibid., p. 285.
Although Blasco's figures of speech seem to be less frequent in his settings than in presentation of characters, they are nevertheless quite effective. The shafts and the mule girth of Zarathustra's cart look like a gallows etched against the sky.56 The snowcapped peaks of the Guadarrama seem like "una muralla de almenas de plata que brillan al sol."57 The lighting systems of the different parts of Madrid, visible from the region of the Prado, are called "luminous rosaries."58 As Isidro and Feli wander through the San Martín cemetery, Blasco writes, "De ciprés en ciprés aleteaban pájaros negros, rasgando el silencio con su silbido."59 After they move to Cambronorras and the winter advances, Isidro opens the door one morning and stops astonished. "La nieve cayó en montón a sus pies. . . . Todo lo que abarcaban sus ojos estaba blanco, con una blancura nítida y fúnebre, como el sudario de una virgen muerta."60

Blasco also uses personification to give a more personal aspect to nature. The moon had a "good natured face" which it reflected "en el cristal azul del agua que transcurría silenciosa."61 The red, inflamed petals of the flowers of the almond tree "parecían abrirse para saludarles [a Isidro y
After Isidro had left Féli at the hospital, he observed the afternoon sun, "un sol que Isidro no había visto nunca; un sol obscuro, empañado, fúnebre, como si el astro del día enviese sus rayos al través de negra urdimbre; como si estuviese envuelto en un crepúsculo."63

In both novels the mood of the setting frequently parallels the mood of the characters. In pleasant settings the characters often feel happy because their experiences are also pleasant. After the boy Manuel has spent a bitter-cold, rainy night without any other shelter than a doorway and has settled down in a hollow of an embankment, the sun has come out, and Baroja says, "El sol comenzaba a calentar de una manera deliciosa. Manuel soñó con una mujer muy blanca y muy hermosa con unos cabellos de oro... ella le envolvió con sus hebras doradas..."64 The order, food, and security of Señor Custodio's dumpground novel made Manuel quite happy.65 The setting represented poverty, but it encompassed a better life than that which he had known since his mother's death.

During the gay Carnival time, Féli, masked as a pink baby, discloses her love to Isidro. Blasco has her do this in a special setting, in the beautiful wood of Caño Dorado, "un rincon apacible y silencioso, cargado en primavera de

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62Ibid., p. 179.  
63Ibid., p. 345.  
64Baroja, La busca, p. 225.  
65Ibid., p. 237.
flores y trinos, que no conocían los habitantes de Madrid; un oculto paraíso, un trozo de poesía para la horda traperil acampada en el cerro inmediato."66 A bit later, after the two had become intimate, they walked each afternoon near the Bishop's Garden where the almond trees "extendían sobre sus cabezas una bóveda de flores;" and, when the spring breeze shook them, "una nevada de pétalos caía sobre Feli, enredándose en su peinado."67 In the smiling setting the two lovers were absorbed in their happiness.

The day of the bad snow storm the coldness and the isolation resulting from the weather accentuates the isolation felt by Isidro after Don Gaspar Jiménez's cold rejection of his last desperate plea for help. He was completely depressed. He felt that, "Todos los caminos estaban cerrados para él; ... Toda la nieve que abarcaban sus ojos la llevaba en el alma."68 This same day Feli begins in a true sense her isolation from Isidro and indeed from all humanity with her first attack of puerperal eclampsia. The night after this attack was a terrible one. "No se oía ruido de viento; la calma era absoluta; ... Parecía que el mundo acababa aquella noche, que el sol ya no saldría más, que la tierra iba a permanecer por siempre bajo su mantoja de nieve."69

68Ibid., p. 326.  69Ibid., p. 334.
After Nogueras told Isidro that Feli had died and been dissected before being placed in the common grave for paupers, Isidro found himself walking instinctively along the paths which had seen their first joy, and he saw that the same almond trees near the Bishop's Garden "parecían ahora escobas plantadas por el mango." The impact of this contrast with the earlier setting causes him to stagger "como un herido."

Baroja displays a like correlation between the mood of the setting and that of his characters. After Jesús has spoken to Manuel of a vision of an idyllic humanity, Baroja ends Mala hierba with the following mood: "Una beatitud augusta resplandecía en el cielo, y la vaga sensación de la inmensidad del espacio, lo infinito de los mundos imponderables, llevaba a sus corazones una deliciosa calma . . ." The contrast between the horror engendered by the sudden murder of Vidal in the blackness of the night, only a few steps from the brightly lit room in which he had just been having such a gay time at a party, is foreshadowed in the following description of a dramatic contrast of nature, a flaming sunset before a sudden darkness.

Afuera anochecía. A lo lejos la tierra azafrañada brillaba con las últimas palpitations del sol, oculto en nubes encendidas como dragones de fuego; alguna torre, algún árbol, alguna casucha miserable rompía la línea del horizonte, recta

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70Ibid., p. 359.

71Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 297.
y monótona; el cielo hacia el Poniente se llenaba de llamas.
Luego obscureció; fue ennegreciéndose el campo, el sol se puso.72

After the Sunday outing celebrating Juan's receipt of a prize for his statues, the group passes through the Calle de Rosales and reaches the Paseo de Areneros. Viewing the open country beyond the Hospital de la Princesa, the dust over the landscape, the hazy horizon, the rosy sunset, Juan asks the others, "Da todo esto una impresión angustiosa, ¿verdad?"73 He takes leave of them; and, contemplating an arid scene including the Hospital de Clérigos, the San Martín cemetery, and the Fábrica de electricidad, he receives the following impression: "Y el paisaje árido, unido a la pobreza de las construcciones, a los gritos de la gente, a la pesadez del aire, al calor, daba una impresión de fatiga, de incomodidad, de vida sordida y triste . . ."74 At the very end of Aurora roja as the burial of Juan takes place, "estaba anocheciendo;" and, as those attending the funeral return to Madrid, "había oscurecido."75 This darkness is a suitable setting for the gloom which has entered into the hearts of the members of Juan's family and into the spirits of his friends who realize their loss of a truly idealistic and unselfish leader.

72Ibid., p. 254.
73Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 74
74Ibid.
75Ibid., p. 299.
CHAPTER III

SIMILARITIES IN PLOT

From the previous chapter the reader acquires a knowledge of the similarity in the settings of the two novels. When one turns to the plots, he finds that the central idea is the same. Both plots are concerned with plunging their heroes, Manuel Alcázar and Isidro Maltrana, from the low social level of the poor who eat somewhat regularly to that lowest level of those who starve all too often. Then, these two characters are allowed to rise to a more stable social level, one where the members eat frequently and have regular lodgings. This improvement is effected through their basic intelligence, their innate goodness, and their decision to live in a secure bourgeois milieu.

Although the plots have essentially the same idea, they share but few episodes. Both include some popular fairs and festivals, but many other Spanish novels also do this. Each has a group of bohemians. Both contain a dramatic funeral, and that of Señor José in La horda does have some details which echo those of the interment of Juan Alcázar in Aurora roja.

In Part II, Chapter VII, of La busca Baroja mentions two fairs, saying that in other years Leandro had accompanied
Milagros "a la verbena de San Antonio y a las del Prado."¹ With this he introduces the series of events which have their origin at the annual fair celebrated upon a vacant lot on the Calle de Pasion. Hearing that his sweetheart Milagros and her mother are going to the fair, Leandro buys two tickets for himself and Manuel to attend. It is a terribly hot August night. The fair takes place on two adjoining lots. The lower lot is reserved for dancing, the upper one for refreshments. Milagros is quite peevish toward Leandro. Although she does dance with him, she manages to leave him with her parents, while they are having their beer, and runs off with two girls. This gives her an opportunity to flirt with Lechugino, a dude whom Leandro characterizes as "un tío que tiene lo menos cincuenta años y anda por ahí echándose-las de pollo."²

Thus, at the popular fair on the Calle de Pasion begins the courtship of Milagros by Lechugino, which has the approval of her parents. As it progresses to the point of engagement within the next several months, Leandro suffers increasing unhappiness, frustration, bitterness, and agony. He feels "el amargor que se deslizaba hasta el fondo de su alma."³ He tries to control himself; but finally he faces the two lovers, and when in answer to his direct question,

¹Baroja, La busca, p. 125.
²Ibid., p. 127.
³Ibid., p. 134.
Milagros shrieks that she prefers Lechugino to him, Leandro stabs her, in an uncontrollable fury. While he chases his rival with his opened, blood-stained knife, the people of the Corrala try to halt him, though not daring to get near him. The guards block his escape, and, his eyes blazing, he suddenly stabs himself in the left side.

In Chapter X of *La horda* Blasco refers to the fairs attended by the gypsies. He says that during the summer the gypsy *quincalleros* (who attend fairs in summer and engage in thieving and in swindling games in the winter) wander from fair to fair in Castile and La Mancha. The men trade horses and mules, and the women tell fortunes and cure illnesses with mysterious remedies. Blasco lists these fairs as follows: "Las dos primeras ferias eran en San Juan: las de Segovia y Avila. Luego venía la famosa de Alcalá, en el mes de Agosto. En Septiembre se verificaban las de Illescas, Aranjuez, Ocaña, Mora, Quintanar y Belmonte. Y en Octubre eran las últimas: las de Consuegra, Talavera y Torija." 4 Salguero, one of the gypsies, speaks to Maltrana enthusiastically of these summer fairs, "grandes mercados de bestias que daban vida para el resto del año a la gitanería vagabunda." 5 He assures him that "si no juese por las ferias, moriríamos como las ratas." 6 Later he states, "Son una

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4 *Blasco, La horda*, p. 307.  
gloria, don Isidro, las tales ferias. A cada instante hay un chambo y se vende una caballería; . . ."7

The fairs attended by gypsies are not necessary to the plot of La horda. They are only part of Blasco's costumbriismo. Some thirty pages are devoted to an extended exposition of the gypsy quarter, Cambroneras. One learns of the different types of gypsies, their struggle for a living, their family customs.

In contrast, the Carnival festival does play a definite part in the plot. It is during this pre-Lenten festival that Isidro Maltrana finds out that Feli loves him. The mask and the wine drinking of the celebration are necessary to this disclosure. If Feli had drunk no wine and had not been masked, she would not have relaxed to the point of expressing her anger over his not previously noticing her interest in him. Nor would she have forgotten her modesty and pride long enough to let him know of her love. Blasco has her speak to Isidro in this manner:

Pero no te enfades. Te digo esto porque llevo la careta puesta, y porque antes nos han hecho beber un poquito allí arriba. ¡Pobre Feliciana! ¡Pobres mujeres! ... Los hombres habéis arreglado las cosas de tal modo, que nosotras tenemos que callarnos y reventar de pena si es que no nos adivinan. Y tú ... tan ciego ... que no sabes distinguir entre Feliciana o las cachuelas de conejo a que te convida su padre.

Feliciana tiene la desgracia de haberse chalao por ti; . . .

7 Ibid., p. 307.  8 Ibid., p. 130.
Besides the episodes of the festivals, both novels contain groups of bohemians. As one would expect, these men tend to dress alike, and to lead disordered existences, rising late in the mornings and congregating in groups in the afternoons and at night. Pitollet even refers to La horde as "el patético relato de las aventuras de un bohémio intelectual [Isidro Maltrana]." But before comparing the bohemians in these two works, it would be interesting to inquire as to what there may have been in the backgrounds of the two authors to cause them to have their heroes live for a time as bohemians.

As a boy, Blasco Ibáñez was rebellious against discipline and showed a capacity to become a bohemian. In 1882, when he was sixteen, he ran away from his studies in Valencia to Madrid, hoping to find a publisher for his gran novela histórica. He failed in this purpose but became a sort of secretary-collaborator of Manuel Fernández y González, who had been a most popular novelist, writing thrilling tales of adventure. Baroja also knew and admired this "prodigioso imaginador" who had been a member of his father's tertulia at the Café Suizo. Baroja devotes an essay in El tablado de Arlequín to "el novelista más romántico, más popular y más desalificado de España . . . don Manuel

9Pitollet, op. cit., p. 248.
Fernández y González.” He thought him “mejor como poeta que como novelista” and was flattered when a critic wrote that *El mayorazgo de Labraz* was written too hurriedly like the novels by Fernández y González.

Now, old, worn out, and half blind, Fernández paid young Blasco one meal a day to take his dictation throughout most of the night. This they ate together each evening in the *Café de Zaragoza*, where Blasco met *toreros* and many types of the lower Madrilenian class. He passed his days wandering through the streets, having affairs with girls, attending propaganda meetings, “en que manos callosas de zapateros, de albañiles, de carpinteros y de otros artesanos aplaudían frenéticamente la elocuencia fogosa del estudiante.”

Finally, his mother came and took him back to Valencia. He remained there half-heartedly pursuing his studies, until he had to flee in 1889 because of being involved in a Republican conspiracy against the government. He went to Paris where he lived as a bohemian in “aquel Barrio Latino de la buena época,” although the three hundred francs, which his family sent each month, gave him considerably more means than the usual bohemian possessed. He lived with other

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13Fitollet, *op. cit.*, p. 36.
14Ibid., p. 45.
bohemios in the Hotel de los grandes hombres. He read much, wrote little, and, in general, lived in a wild and undisciplined fashion. In 1891 a political amnesty in Valencia brought him home and marked the point of his turning from a life of dissipation to one of austerity and hard work.

Pitollet describes the bohemian literary groups in Spain whose members met in cafés to talk at long length about the definitive books which they would one day write, who considered their group the sole depository of "lo Bello en arte," and who looked with disdain on those who were not enlisted under their banner. Then he states that

Blasco Ibáñez ha huido siempre de estas tertulias. . . . Creo asimismo que una de las razones . . . por las cuales Blasco tiene tal horror a los cenáculos, es la de que un carácter franco y viril como el suyo no se acomodaría al espíritu de maledicencia y de mordacidad que . . . prevalece en ellos."15

Blasco certainly had within him some of the characteristics which go to make up a bohemian; he was a "grand poseur" and "at all times impatient and impulsive."16 However, his invincible will and great persistence and industry made it impossible for him to be a true bohemian, and he turned away from the bohemian life when he was twenty-four.

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15Ibid., pp. 67-68.

"Vicente Blasco Ibáñez," Twentieth Century Authors (New York, 1942), pp. 149-150.
Baroja, on the other hand, was thirty before he settled down in his mother's home and began to give up bohemian activities.

Luis S. Granjel divides the formative years of Pío Baroja's life into three periods. The first, from 1872 to 1887, takes him through his boyhood and adolescence. The second, from 1887 to 1894, comprises the years spent on his professional education. The third includes his experiences as a physician and as a business man from 1894 to 1902. Granjel states that Baroja's industrial and bohemian life of the third period are reflected in the two novels which appeared at the end of it in the folletín of El Globo, La lucha por la vida and Camino de perfección. With their publication in 1902, Baroja abandoned "sus ocupaciones de pequeño industrial, cerrándose a las seducciones que todavía tiene para él la vida de bohemia,"17 and devoted himself entirely to writing. Two other factors probably contributed to this step. The business of the bakery was failing, and its owner, his aunt doña Juana Messi, died also about this time, leaving her home on the Calle de Mendizábal for the Barojas. Pérez Ferrero also connects Baroja's bohemian life to the novel under consideration in this thesis. He writes that "la documentación para estos libros La lucha por la vida la extrajo

17Luis S. Granjel, Retrato de Baroja (Barcelona, 1953), p. 115.
de la bohemia literaria, de la pobre existencia de los obreros, de las aventuras y manejos de los anarquistas.\textsuperscript{18}

Since both Granjel and Pérez Ferrero believe Baroja's bohemian activities influenced this novel, it would seem proper to examine his life during the years immediately preceding La lucha. After failing to make himself financially independent as a physician in Cestona, Baroja returned to Madrid in 1895 to try to succeed as a manager of his aunt's bakery, until then in the hands of his brother Ricardo. Granjel says of him, "al mismo tiempo convive, sin entregarse por completo, eso sí, con la bohemia literaria que vagabunda por las calles de la Corte en aquellos años finales del siglo."\textsuperscript{19} He lived in an old caserón on the Calle de Capellanes in which the bakery and the bread shop were established. Baroja tells that "la casa ... por dentro era folletinesca, melodramática y de capa y espada, ..."\textsuperscript{20} As his circle of acquaintances grew, the office of the bakery became an habitual center for "una variadísima fauna de bohemios y lunáticos."\textsuperscript{21} Baroja divided his interest between business and literature. At first, the latter interest found expression "en su incorporación a la bohemia madrileña."\textsuperscript{22} Later, it was to absorb all his time. Granjel

\textsuperscript{18}Pérez Ferrero, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 188.
\textsuperscript{19}Granjel, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 103.
\textsuperscript{20}Baroja, \textit{Memorias}, p. 229.
\textsuperscript{21}Granjel, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 106.
\textsuperscript{22}Ibid., p. 107.
quotes Baroja as follows:

Yo en la juventud era un buen caldo microbiano para todos los gérmenes de la calle. Así, ha sufrido uno las fermentaciones e infecciones de la época. Esta inclinación innata a la vida desordenada y laxa era para mí un peligro. El café, el alcohol, el tabaco, el noctambulismo, las horas pasadas en conversaciones interminables me atraían.\(^{23}\)

However, these experiences were expanding his rich knowledge of the society of his day. As Granjel says, he was at that time an "amigo de bohemios, de tipos fantásticos, ingenuos o avisados, miembros todos de una auténtica hampa entre literaria y picaresca."\(^{24}\)

Then, in direct contrast, Granjel proceeds to show that Baroja on repeated occasions denied that the name "bohemian" might be applied to him. He reports Baroja as saying, "Muchas veces a mí me han dicho: Usted ha sido un bohemio, verdad? Yo siempre he contestado que no. Podrá uno haber vivido una vida más o menos desarreglada en una época; pero yo no he sentido jamás el espíritu de la bohemia."\(^{25}\) Baroja felt that there was almost no bohemian life in Madrid, that the social atmosphere was too bitter for it. Moreover, he said that there were no women among "aquellos jóvenes


\(^{24}\)Granjel, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 107.

\(^{25}\)Baroja, \textit{Memorias}, p. 318.
vanidosos, agólatras y comidos por el rencor." Baroja also writes that these pseudo-bohemians, lacking women and the means to provide for themselves many necessities, liked to

Andar por las calles y plazas hasta las altas horas de la noche; entrar en una búnolería y fraternizar con el hampa y con la chulapería desgarrada y pintoresca, . . . hablar en clínico y en golfo, y luego, con la impresión en la garganta del aceite frito y del aguardiente, ir al amanecer por las calles de Madrid, bajo un cielo opaco, como un cristal esmerilado, y sentir el frío, el cansancio, el aniquilamiento del trasnochador.

This custom of roaming the desolate suburbs, "donde la ciudad vierte sus miserias e impurifica el campo," served Baroja well, when he was filling in the background of his trilogy, La lucha por la vida. After these excursions, Baroja felt a reaction of remorse. He explains, "Realmente, no sé si era remordimiento o aprensión de ponerme malo, o simplemente exceso de ácido clorhídrico en el estómago; pero la verdad era que se sentía uno descontento y cansado." Nevertheless, he reports that "al día siguiente volvía al café, el centro de operaciones." A few lines further, he says of la bohemia, "Sus principales puntos de reunión eran los

26Granjal, op. cit., p. 108.
27Baroja, Memorias, pp. 321-322.
28Granjal, op. cit., p. 108.
29Baroja, Memorias, p. 322.
30Ibid.
cafés, las redacciones, los talleres de pintor y, a veces, las oficinas."\textsuperscript{31}

La \textit{horda} presenta dos reuniones de bohemios. La primera se reúne por la noche en el restaurante Fornos y está formada por gente del medio y de menor talento. Blasco dice que se ajustaron a "un figurín profesional: largas cabelleras, grandes sombreros, corbatas amplias y sueltas, o apretadas con innumerables rosas sobre un cuello de camisa que les rozaba las orejas."\textsuperscript{32} La segunda reunión se lleva a cabo en el bar por la tarde y está compuesta por poetas de clase superior, entre ellos dos marqueses. No se asemeja a la primera en aspecto, y han tenido algún éxito en la prensa. "Vestían con elegante atildamiento; seguían las modas en sus mayores exageraciones. Las lacias melena brillantes de pomada eran la única revelación de sus entusiasmos literarios."\textsuperscript{33}

Hay sólo un grupo de bohemios en \textit{La lucha por la vida}. Manuel se convierte en miembro silente cuando comienza a modelar para Alejo Monzon, un escultor que aparece en \textit{Mala hierba} y a quien los bohemios llaman Alex. De hecho, Roberto Hastings se refiere a él más temprano en \textit{La busca} cuando le dice a Manuel que está compartiendo sus viviendas con un

\textsuperscript{31}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{32}Blasco, \textit{La horda}, p. 62. \textsuperscript{33}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 63.
sculptor.34 The dress of these men is not given, but Alex has a thick black beard and one of the members is described as "un melenuño."35 This group invades Alex's garret in the afternoons in considerable numbers, and all begin to talk at the top of their voices. They are very informal. They roll up their sleeves and model with Alex's clay as they talk.

One, Bernardo Santín, habitually addresses a person with the intimate pronoun the third or fourth time he is in his company. After the scenes at the studio, Baroja says, "Los conciliábulos en el estudio de Alex se conoce que no bastaban a los bohemios, porque de noche volvían a reunirse en el café de Lisboa."36

Roberto Hastings summarizes the chief occupation of the bohemians with his statement to Manuel, "Esos quieren hacer de golpe y porrazo una obra hermosa y no hacen más que hablar y hablar."37 They do not do any consistent work. It is not that they are altogether lazy, but they are like Alejo Monzon. Baroja analyzes him as follows:

No era el escultor perezoso, ni mucho menos, pero no tenía constancia en el trabajo, ni dominaba su arte; no sabía concluir sus figuras, y viendo que al ir a detallarlas los defectos iban apareciendo con más fuerza, las dejaba sin terminar. Su orgullo le hacía creer después que él modelar exactamente un brazo o una pierna era una

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34Baroja, La busca, p. 190.
35Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 16.            36Ibid., p. 22.
37Ibid., p. 23.
labor indigna y decadente, y sus amigos, en quienes se daba la misma impotencia para el trabajo, corroboran [sic] su idea.38

Instead of using self-discipline to accomplish something, these men artificially blow up their egos. Alejo shows his sculpture, "figuras espantables y monstruosas,"39 to Manuel. Of his group called "Los Explotados," which represents toilers exhausted by their labor, Alejo says unabashed, "Tiene la rareza de todo lo genial. Yo no sé si habrá alguien en el mundo capaz de hacer esto. Quizá Rodin."40 He explains that his figures do not possess "la estúpida corrección académica tan alabada por los imbéciles,"41 because they are all symbols. He closes this exhibition with the statement, "Si Alejo Monzon no triunfa, la escultura en Europa retrocede cien años."42 After modeling for Alejo for some time, Manuel comes to think that "las teorías del escultor, más que convencimientos suyos, parecían pantallas para ocultar sus defectos."43

The group in La horda which met at the Fornos Restaurant was composed of futuros genios, who had written nothing but intended to create. They were all as ignorant as Isidro but were "convencidos de que darían que hablar mucho a la

38 Ibid., p. 20. 39 Ibid., p. 18.
40 Ibid. 41 Ibid.
42 Ibid. 43 Ibid., p. 20.
Historia. "Con los ojos en blanco, trémulos de admiración," they revered those poets, "cuya obscuridad y escasa obra" were, according to them, bases for a judgment of great merit. This reasoning supported their exalted opinion of their own meager products.

One of the earmarks of these groups is their malicious criticism of one another. Baroja writes concerning their discussions in Alejo's studio:

A veces una alusión embozada, un juicio acerca de éste o del otro exasperaba a todos los de la reunión de tal manera, que entonces cada palabra tenía un retintín rabioso, y por debajo de las frases más sencillas se notaba que latía el odio, la envidia y la intención mortificante y agresiva.

When they met at night at the Café de Lisboa, "eran casi todos ellos de malos instintos y de aviesa intención. Sentían la necesidad de hablar mal unos de otros, de injuriarse, de perjudicarse con sus maquinaciones y sus perfidias, y al mismo tiempo necesitaban verse y hablarse."

Blasco also points out the bohemians' biting criticism of each other. When Maltrana tired of the lower-class bohemians at the Fornos Restaurant, he began to attend "una peña de verdaderos escritores. Grandes poetas . . . gente que ha estrenado con éxito." In his presence "se murmuraba
Besides directing their venomous tongues against their friends, the bohemians engaged in a terrible, destructive criticism of literature. Baroja writes that "habían clasificado al mundo. Tal, era admirable; Cual, detestable; H, un genio; B, un imbécil. No les gustaba, sin duda, las medias tintas ni los términos medios; parecían árbitros de la opinión, juzgadores y sentenciadores de todo." Of the first group of bohemians with which Maltrana was in touch, Blasco says that

Todo lo sabían aquellas criaturas, a pesar de sus pocos años, como si al cogerse al pesón de la nodriza hubiesen comenzado a hojear el primer libro. Sus juicios resonaban terribles, inexorables, concisos, capaces de hacer temblar de pavor las mesas del café. Casi todos los escritores españoles eran atunes, besugos o percebes: género marítimo que solo podía gustar a paladares groseros. Luego, garrote en mano, pasaban la frontera. ¡Zola! ... un mozo de cordel con algún talento. ¡Victor Hugo! ... un señor muy elocuente, pero no era poeta. ¡Lamartine! ... un llorón ... tampoco poeta. ¡Musset! ... éste ya lo era un poquito más.

Maltrana finally tired of this gathering and incurred the

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49 Ibid., p. 64.

50 Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 17.

51 Blasco, La horda, p. 62.
dislike of the members because of some jokes he played on
them. Inventing the names of books and authors, he led los
genios into traps of admission that they not only knew the
works in question but also gave "detalles de sus bellezas y
defectos."\(^{52}\) After he joined the second group of bohemians,
he soon realized that these people too had little worth and
that "todos estaban más unidos por las aberraciones del
gusto que por la admiración literaria."\(^{53}\)

Although it is true that when Blasco makes his hero a
member of bohemian groups he increases the points of simi-
lariry between Valtrana and Baroja's Manuel Alcázar, one may,
nevertheless, refute a charge of plagiarism by saying that
any writer of the period might have included bohemians in
his story. However, one may not be so confident in rejecting
this charge, when he considers the similarity between the
funerals in each novel. Besides the explosive undercurrent
present on each occasion, there is a coincidence of detail
which gives pause for thought.

The funerals of Juan Alcázar in *Aurora roja* and of Señor
José in *La horda* develop dramatic suspense because each has
in it the possibility for a violent social demonstration.
When Juan, the idealistic leader of the "Aurora" anarchists,
died, the police note that a number of known anarchists are
gathering around Manuel's house. Some are going in, others

\(^{52}\)Ibid., p. 63. \(^{53}\)Ibid., p. 64.
leaving, and still others are clustered below in the street. When the police enter the house, and find that the gathering is in sorrow over a corpse and not the undercover threat they had supposed, they nevertheless warn Manuel to be sure that "no haya atropellos ni escándolos, ni ninguna manifestación en el entierro."Juan's death has occurred only a few days after the coronation of Alfonso XIII. Since the police failed to find on that day an anticipated anarchistic plot against the new regime, they are being especially vigilant toward this potentially explosive group.

The dramatic suspense in the funeral of Señor José, a stonemason and Isidro's stepfather, arises from the fury of his fellow masons at the circumstances of his death. His was the corpse recovered from the ruins of a building which he was helping to construct and which collapsed during working hours, critically injuring a large number of workers. The edifice was being erected under government contract with materials both inferior in quality and insufficient in quantity. Some time before the accident, José tells Isidro that

la obra es por contrata; al contratista le dan sus buenos millones, y él hace el edificio como si fuese de cartón. Lo que importa es ganar dinero, mucho dinero, para partírselo tal vez con los mandones que le protegen. Los que conocemos el oficio temblamos de miedo al ver cómo nos obligan a construir. Sólo llevamos hecho un piso, y estamos seguros de que el día que lo carrier se vendrá abajo, aplastando a todo Cristo. .

54Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 297.
El cemento es polvo de la carretera, las paredes son tabiques, las pilastras están huecas . . . Y por tres o cuatro pesetas estamos allí centenares de hombres honrados con la muerte en la garganta, mientras los culpables hacen vida de grandes señores.55

The masons donate from their meager income to pay the costs of José's burial. They plan to use their noon rest to attend the funeral en masse and to convert it into "una protesta contra las rapiñas de los podorosos."56 When the working men and the washerwomen gather outside the depósito de cadáveres, the latter are particularly noisy and insulting toward Madrid, saying, "¡Ladrones! ¡ladrones! . . . Matan a los trabajadores para hacerse ricos. . . . Sólo les importa el negocio, y los pobres que mueran como perros."57 Then they turn to the working men and insult them with coarse words, calling them "¡Calzonazos!" Some fiery-eyed men also reproach the masons with their inactivity in protesting their exploitation, "¡Armas! ¡armas! . . . Y para qué las queréis? Eso no sirve de nada. ¡Dinamita, me caso con Dios! ¡Bombas de dinamita!"58 Although anarchism is not a feature of La horda, it was the anarchists who were using dynamite bombs at that time.

There are several similarities in the two funeral processions. Both the corteges begin with a red flag's being

55Blasco, La horda, p. 227.  
56Ibid., p. 262.  
57Ibid.  
58Ibid., p. 263.
put over the coffin. In *Aurora roja*, "un amigo de Prats echó una bandera roja encima del ataúd y se pusieron todos en marcha."\(^{59}\) The coffin is carried first by four of Juan's friends, then by four women, and finally by a hearse. In *La horda*, José's fellow workers nailed down the box and covered it with "la bandera roja de la asociación."\(^{60}\) The bier began to move through the crowd, carried "en hombros por un grupo de albañiles."\(^{61}\)

When the procession in *Aurora roja* passes las Ventas on the Camino del Este, a couple of municipal guards step out "por detrás de cada loma," and near the cemetery there is even "un piquete de guardias a caballo."\(^{62}\) These men appear to make sure that their warning to Manuel is heeded and that there is no public demonstration by this group of anarchists. In *La horda*, the police halt the procession at the end of the Puente de Toledo and bar its further advance up the Calle de Toledo. A captain tells the masons that they cannot go through the city to reach the Calle de Alcalá. Instead, they may continue along the Paseo de las Acacias, going around the city proper, by the encircling boulevards; also they could do "todo lo que quisieran, gritos, lloros, aclamaciones, todo, menos desfilar por las calles de Madrid\(^{59}\) Baroja, *Aurora roja*, p. 298.  

\(^{60}\) Blasco, *La horda*, p. 264.  

\(^{61}\) Ibid.  

\(^{62}\) Baroja, *Aurora roja*, p. 298.
y que la gente del centro presencie el entierro, con su séquito de jornaleros que pedían venganza.  

Here the similarity between the two funerals ends.
There is a dramatic contrast between the final scene of the two burials. The Libertarian, speaking for the anarchists in *Aurora roja* makes some bitter remarks at the graveside; and the workers, in accordance with his final plea, leave the graveyard in small groups and return to Madrid in silence.

In *La horda*, a black rag, that looked like a shroud, is waved over the sea of heads in answer to the ultimatum of the police. Women seize the corners of the coffin and push the bearers so that they break into the rows of police. The latter draw back but also draw their swords. The swords do not irritate the mob as much as the blows from the sticks of the secret police, who, in civilian clothes, have infiltrated among them. The younger fellows with heroic expressions shower the police with stones, bricks, tin cans, even old shoes. The captain answers this audacity by firing his revolver, thereby giving the signal for his men to shoot at the backs of the fleeing crowd. Isidro is left sitting crouched over the coffin. He is unharmed by the police because they judge from his clothes that he must be a gentleman and not one of the working-class mob.

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CHAPTER IV

SIMILARITIES IN MAJOR CHARACTERS

The reader has seen that the similarities between the plots of La horda and La lucha por la vida are few in number. However, the same statement cannot be made after one compares the characters of the two novels. The major characters have many points in common, and among the minor characters there are a number of likenesses. This paper will not discuss all the characters of the novels but only those of La lucha por la vida which seem to cast a shadow in La horda.

Of these the two heroes are the most alike. Both Maltrana and Manuel Alcázar have native intelligence and come from the oppressed lower class. When their mothers die, they have to give up their chance for further education and have to leave the security of their boarding houses for a life of extreme poverty and hard work. Both are not strong physically; both are kind and humane toward their fellowmen; both listen to their consciences and have a natural aversion to coarseness and bestiality; and both suffer from lack of will power. This combination of characteristics is not the one usually found among people in their class.
There is a contrast in the early living conditions of these two men. The economic situation of Manuel's parents was fairly comfortable. They had rooms on the Calle de Reloj and took in two boarders. If they had not quarreled so much, their life might have been quite pleasant. Even after his father's death Manuel still lived with some security, for his mother sent him and his brother to live with her brother-in-law in the province of Soria, while she became a domestic in Doña Casiana's casa de huéspedes.

On the other hand, Isidro's parents existed with very little security in a crowded, barrack-like, tenement housing unit, having "una luz triste y fatigada que venía de lo alto, enturbiándose al resbalar por las paredes grasientas, al filtrarse por entre las ropas astrosas pendientes de las galerías."¹ They sat down before "el hondo plato, en el cual volcaba la madre el pucherete de los días de abundancia o un pobre guiso de patatas al final de la semana."² The quarreling and the coarseness of the neighbors reflected "la vida adusta e ingrata,"³ which was theirs. The one thing which Isidro liked to recall from this period of his life was "Capitán, un perrillo, feo y sucio,"⁴ who slept with him almost every night. After his father's death, Isidra, his mother, also became a servant and brought home each night

¹Blasco, La horda, p. 41.  
²Ibid., p. 42.  
³Ibid.  
⁴Ibid., p. 44.
the remnants of her dinner to feed the boy. Before long, her mistress had the small boy admitted to the Hospicio, so that the mother might spend more time on her household duties.

The formal education of Maltrana was quite different from that of Manuel. Due to the continued support of his benefactress, he received his bachillerato and moved to live at her house during his university training. His sheltered life in the Hospicio and the easy, peaceful life of study in her home were certainly not a suitable preparation for the hard life of the lower class into which he was plunged midway in the progress toward his doctorate, when her protection was removed by her death. Birth was the only thing he had in common with this class. His education in a different culture disarmed him for the struggle within the poverty-stricken class where he had to procure his food.

Manuel, on the other hand, attended the village school at Soria only two years before his uncle returned him to his mother to learn a trade, because he was "revoltoso y discolor" and was wasting his time. When Doña Casiana refused to keep him as a helper because of a fight which he had with one of her boarders, Petra, his mother, decided to find him an apprenticeship. Before her death, he had worked in a cobbler's shop, in a bread and vegetable stand, and in a bakery.

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5Baroja, La busca, p. 21.
When one analyzes a man, one must examine those who precede him, his parents. Baroja and Blasco both devote sufficient time to the parents of their heroes, Blasco even going back to Isidro Maltrana's grandmother, Señora Eusebia. Both heroes were more influenced by their mothers than by their fathers. This is due partially to the early deaths of the fathers but chiefly to the stability, the force, and the will power of both the mothers.

Besides originating from the same social class, Manuel and Isidro have a like inheritance from both their parents. An examination of the characters of the mothers reveals that they were very industrious and dependable workers who wanted their sons to have an education and who were rewarded by having the comfort of their sons' company in their last illnesses.

The reader meets Manuel's mother Petra at midnight in the kitchen of the casa de huéspedes. Baroja describes her as follows: "Era una mujer flaca, macilenta, con el pecho hundido, los brazos delgados, las manos grandes, rojas, y el pelo gris. Dormía con la boca abierta, sentada en una silla, con una respiración anhelante y fatigosa." He introduces these physical details to emphasize her health and to foreshadow her death from tuberculosis. She is sitting up asleep with her head resting against the window frame,

6Baroja, *La busca*, p. 11.
overcome by the fatigue of a long day's work. When she awakes and retires to her room, a dingy, stifling hole, tired as she is, she does not neglect to read "un instante en un libro de oraciones, sucio y mugriente, con letras gordas" and to repeat several prayers.

However, her character is not without blemish. Baroja depicts her as "voluntariosa, con apariencia de humilde, de una testarudez de mula." She enjoyed nagging and opposing her husband. She would irritate him until he beat her and then "satisfecha de tener un motivo suficiente de aflicción, se encerraba a llorar y a rezar en su cuarto." On the death of her husband, disliking the location of her dwelling, her stubbornness caused her to ignore the advice of her old boarders, to move to other lodgings, and to take in new boarders who would not pay. As a result, she lost her furniture and had to separate from her children and become a servant. As Baroja says, "De ama pasó a criada, sin quejarse. Le bastaba habérsele ocurrido a ella la idea para considerarla la mejor."

Petra did not wish Manuel to take after her husband but to be "como ella, humilde con los superiores, respetuoso con los sacerdotes." Her educational method was limited

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7Ibid., p. 12.  
8Ibid., p. 21.  
9Ibid., p. 22.  
10Ibid.  
11Ibid., p. 37.
to making him read prayer books and to giving him an occasional slap. She herself was always meditating "en el cielo y en el infierno; no se preocupaba gran cosa de las pequeñas de la tierra." Therefore, she was poorly equipped to shelter him from the rough, coarse life of the boarding house. Although she did not seem to be a good teacher; her example was good, and in the end its influence bore fruit, for he repeatedly returned to the "good" path after straying into "bad" ways. Toward the end of La busca, after living with the two wild fellows, Vidal and Bizco, for a time, Manuel is dejected. Baroja writes,

---Yo no sirvo para esto--se dijo [Manuel]; ni soy un salvaje como el Bizco, ni un desahogado como Vidal. . . .
En el interior luchaban obscuramente la tendencia de su madre, de respeto a todo lo establecido, con su instinto antisocial de vagabundo, aumentado por su clase de vida.
---Vidal y el Bizco--se dijo--son más afortunados que yo; no tienen vacilaciones ni reparos; se han lanzado . . .
Pensó que al final podían encontrar el palo o el presidio; . . .

Isidra was a ragpicker's daughter who, wanting to leave her home district, married a bricklayer. She was a loyal wife and a most attentive mother. At mealtime Blasco says, "Su madre apenas comía; sólo se ocupaba de él, . . . Con el instinto maternal de los pájaros, tenía que pasarlo todo

\[12\text{Ibid.}\] \[13\text{Ibid., p. 206.}\]
Being modest, she was shocked at her husband’s familiarities in public, and she endured his drunken beatings with silent weeping. After his death, she got financial help from her relations who lived in Tetuán and the Rastro and the Américas. When this diminished, she had to take work as a servant. Her mistress had "la manía de la limpieza, y . . . apreciando con honda simpatía a la Isidra por el brío con que apaleaba las alfombras, frotaba las maderas y sacudía un polvo imaginario que parecía haber huido para siempre, asustado de esta rabiosa pulcritud." Isidra always visited the boy in front of the Hospicio on those days when the children were taken for a walk.

Both of these mothers wanted their sons to have an education. When Manuel first arrived in Madrid, Petra hoped "que el muchacho se convenciera de que le convenía más estudiar cualquier cosa que aprender un oficio." She finally persuaded Doña Casiana to let him live in the house to run errands and serve meals until the end of the vacation season when he could resume his studies. This plan was working well until he returned the blows of one of the boarders who assaulted him. Then the landlady decided he had to go, and Petra apprenticed him to her husband’s cousin, a cobbler.

14 Blasco, La horda, p. 43.  
15 Ibid., p. 45.  
16 Baroja, La busca, p. 29.
Isidra was so filled with pride at Isidro's scholarly achievements and with hope for a brilliant future for him that she would not marry José. They had begun living together because they were both lonely and because she needed some support, since her work did not give her even enough to eat. Blasco says that "vivían «amontonados»—palabras de las vecinas—, sin que esta situación irregular produjese el menor escándalo en un caserón donde la miseria favorecía promiscuidades merecedoras de mayores repugnancias."\(^{17}\) José however, "en su acatamiento supersticioso a todo lo establecido,"\(^{18}\) wanted to get married. Isidra was afraid that if they did, the Hospicio might expel Isidrín when they found out he had a father to support him. Also, she would not let José come to her mistress' house for fear that Isidrín's protectress might become angry if she discovered their unmarried state. She unselfishly saw less and less of her son as he continued on the path of becoming a gentleman, and after the death of "la buena dama" she wanted him not to come home but to stay in a lodging house. As Blasco comments, "... un sabio como él no podía estar en un casuchón de las afuera, entre albañiles, obreros de la villa y vagabundos."\(^{19}\) She clung to her belief in a great future for her son, hoping "que éste saliese para siempre del círculo de miseria en que había nacido."\(^{20}\)

\(^{17}\)Blasco, *La horda*, pp. 50-51.  
\(^{18}\)Ibid., p. 51.  
\(^{19}\)Ibid., p. 59.  
\(^{20}\)Ibid.
Both sons prove their devotion in the final illness of their mothers. Manuel learns that his mother is quite ill and unable to get up. For some time she has ignored the blood she has been coughing up. When she developed a high fever, she was forced to call the doctor. Now she complains of "un magullamiento grande en todo el cuerpo y de dolor en la espalda." The landlady told Manuel that they needed to take her to the hospital, but, as Baroja says, "como tenía buen corazón, no se determinó a hacerlo." Petra's daughters visit her from time to time but do not bring money for medicines or special food. Manuel stays by her bed to look after her. He brings her things she asks for, and he calls for extra help when it is needed. Finally he sees her die and spends the whole night alone beside her body, a very sobering experience for a young adolescent.

While Isidro was living as a happy university student on the three thousand pesetas given him by the heirs of his "buena dama" to finish his degree, life in José and Isidra's home was going from bad to worse. José was idle for weeks at a time, and their eleven-year-old son Pepín could not keep a job as an apprentice because of his impudence. To make a little money Isidra began to help a laundress. Blasco describes her work thus: "en las mañanas de invierno bajaba al río desfallecida de hambre, temblando al contacto del agua.

21Baroja, La buscan, p. 177. 22Ibid., p. 176.
su mísero esqueleto cubierto de piel." Finally she caught cold or pneumonia, and two laundresses had to help her to the hospital. There Isidro saw his mother "en la cama, con los pómulos enrojecidos, la piel ardorosa y los labios violáceos, exhalando el estertor de sus pulmones congestionados." He felt ashamed to see her in a cheerless ward and had her removed to a private room. He spent the afternoons by her bedside "escuchando sus consejos, alentándole en sus esperanzas." Blasco remarks, "La enferma murió a los tres meses, después de haber abierto gran brecha en la exigua fortuna de Maltrana."26

The fathers of Manuel and Isidro were workmen whose hard work and difficult lives coarsened and brutalized them. In neither of them do we see the intelligence or the kindliness which developed in the sons. Both fathers died suddenly and away from home while the two boys were still small. As young men, they were apparently attractive enough to persuade decent young women to marry them. But before many years passed, their hard lot brought them on payday more and more often to the comfort of the tavern, and excessive drinking pushed them to harshness toward their families and even to the brutality of wife beating.

23 Blasco, La horda, p. 59.  
24 Ibid., p. 60.  
25 Ibid.  
26 Ibid.
Manuel Alcázar, the father of the hero of La lucha por la vida, had been "un hombre enérgico y fuerte," but toward his last days he became "malhumorado y brutal." He earned good pay as a locomotive machinist, but his home life was full of terrible quarrels with Petra. Her systematic nagging inflamed his temper, causing him to smash the furniture and to beat her. Baroja says that "entre el alcohol, las rabietas y el trabajo duro, el maquinista estaba torpe." One extremely hot August day he was found dead on the train roadbed without a wound. Apparently he either died as a result of the fall from the train, or he fell because of a heart failure.

Isidro's father is not named. Like Manuel's father, he worked very hard, but he did not make as much, for he was only a bricklayer. We have three pictures of him, at his daily lunch, on Sunday picnics, and drunkenly beating his wife. Isidra brought his lunch to whatever construction he was helping to erect. He ate it greedily, "devorando lo mejor del plato." He paid no attention to the baby except "al beber las últimas gotas [del vino]." Isidro remembered his father's good nature only on their Sunday picnics. Usually his father appeared to him "cólerico, con

27 Baroja, La busca, p. 21.  
28 Ibid.  
29 Ibid., p. 22.  
30 Blasco, La horda, p. 43.  
31 Ibid.
la voz ronca y el rostro congestionado, oliendo a vino, arro-

jándose con los puños levantados sobre la pobre mujer.\textsuperscript{32} He fell from a roof on which he was working; and, after being carried to a hospital, died "tras una agonía horrible, magu-

llado y deshecho."\textsuperscript{33}

It is true that the fathers had little influence on the two heroes due to the fact that they died when the children were quite young. However, the two boys did have the benefit of good masculine example. This came from two men, Señor Custodio and Señor José, who were foster fathers to them in spirit, although not legally so. They were good men, much better than their natural fathers were. They both believed strongly in the principle of order, had pride in following the path of virtue, and gave shelter and advice to the two young men.

After two months of very hard work and little rest in the bakery to which he was apprenticed, Manuel fell seriously ill. He lay two weeks in a delirium in his mother's room and was allowed by Doña Casiana to recuperate in the casa de huéspedes. This happy interval was cut short by his experi-

mental courtship of her niece, which resulted in his being thrown out of the house. He had no place to go, and soon afterwards he lost his mother. Still an adolescent, he took up with ragamuffins and tramps. Occasionally he made a few

\textsuperscript{32}Ibid., pp. 43-44. \quad \textsuperscript{33}Ibid., p. 45.
pennies as a delivery boy. When he had not a _sóntimo_, he ate at the soup kitchens of the public barracks. After a week spent sleeping in the open, he was influenced by Bisco and Vidal to join them in their career of thieving. They would call themselves _la Sociedad de los Tres_. Despite his scruples of conscience against this unlawful activity, he spent a summer with them. Their misdemeanors were "modestos robos de los llamados por los profesionales al descuido." Also they collected cats to have something to eat and to sell the skins in the Rastro. Finally, they robbed an empty house and got thoroughly frightened in the bargain. Bisco's bestiality disgusted the other two boys so much that they decided to leave him and to make a living with the theater claque. When winter came, Manuel had no place to sleep, and the cold was becoming severe. The filth of the holes where he sought shelter and the animalism of the outcasts with whom he was thrown disgusted him so much that he was desperate.

It was then that a ragman, Señor Custodio, found him early one morning nearly frozen and trying to sleep in a hole of an embankment. He offered him work in exchange for food and shelter. Manuel accepted partly because of his desperate plight but also because of the impression made by Señor Custodio. Baroja writes that "tenía facha de buena

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34 Baroja, _La busca_, p. 207.
persona." He had an old cart "compuesto con tiras de plettá" and drawn by two donkeys. His dog Reverte is described as having "unas lanas amarillas, largas y lustrosas, un perro simpático que, en su clase, le pareció a Manuel que debía ser tan buena persona como su amo." He lived on a city dump ground between the Segovia and Toledo bridges in a hovel which was the largest in the neighborhood and had a yard with an adjoining shed. There all the collected items were arranged methodically and neatly and kept until he found an advantageous sale for them. The animals in the corral, the cat, the hens, the pig, and the donkeys had a satisfied air. From Señor Custodio's establishment, Manuel got an impression of ugliness but also of tranquillity and security, two conditions with which he had had little experience in the past.

In the mornings Señor Custodio had a fixed route for collecting junk and was very thorough in his pickings. "Las hojas de verdura iban a los serones; el trapo, el papel y los huesos, a los sacos; el cok medio quemado y el carbón, a un cubo, y el estiércol, al fondo del carro." After sorting their accumulation of the morning, Manuel and Señor Custodio would wait for the dumpcarts from Madrid and would separate this refuse on the spot, "los cartones, los pedazos

35Ibid., p. 228. 36Ibid. 37Ibid. 38Ibid., p. 234.
de trapo, de cristal, y de hueso."  

In the afternoon, Señor Custodio would collect manure from a stable in the Argüelles district and take it to the orchards on the Manzanares. Baroja says, "Aquella vida tosca y humilde, sustentada con los detritos del vivir refinado y vicioso; ... entusiasmaba a Manuel."  

He wished to imitate Señor Custodio; he thought he would be a happy man to have such a hut, a cart, donkeys, hens, a dog, and in addition, a woman to love him.

Señor Custodio not only influenced Manuel in making him want to achieve his financial security, but some of his standard of values and his realistic common sense rubbed off on him. Baroja states that "Manuel, que solía hablar mucho con el señor Custodio, pudo notar pronto que el trapero era, aunque comprendiendo lo ínfimo de su condición, de un orgullo extraordinario, y que tenía acerca del honor y de la virtud las ideas de un señor noble de la Edad Media."  

The author says that Señor Custodio was "un hombre inteligente, de luces naturales, muy observador y aprovechado." He could not read or write but was very attentive to the newspapers which he would have Manuel read aloud. He listened also to the novels which his daughter had left behind. His comments on them were "siempre atinadas y justas, reveladoras

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39Ibid., p. 235.  
40Ibid., p. 237.  
41Ibid., p. 241.  
42Ibid., p. 239.
de un instinto de sensatez y de buen sentido." His realistic criticism cut short any attempt of Manuel's to defend "una tesis romántica e inmoral." In addition, he had two fixed ideas. The first was to use on the fields of the suburbs all the manure then being wasted and to have them irrigated by the Manzanares and the Lozoya, thereby producing gardens and orchards everywhere. The second was to reclaim used material. "Creía que se debía de poder sacar la cal y la arena de los cascotes de mortero, el yeso vivo del ya viejo y apagado, y suponía que esta regeneración daría una gran cantidad de dinero." Manuel fell in love with Justa, Custodio's daughter. She, after cruelly leading him on, became passionately attracted to el Carnicerín. Manuel then thought of leaving Señor Custodio's house; but, when Bizco suggested that he again join him in robberies, he refused to go. Baroja comments, "Las ideas del señor Custodio habían influido en Manuel fuertemente; pero, como a pesar de esto sus instintos aventureros le persistían, pensaba marcharse a América, en hacerse marinero, en alguna cosa por el estilo." Justa's betrothal was disappointment enough, but Manuel came to feel further separated from the family through an invitation to a bullfight extended them all by el Carnicerín.

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43Ibid., pp. 239-240.  44Ibid., p. 240.
45Ibid.  46Ibid., p. 250.
Somewhat to his surprise, Manuel found that he, alone out of their group, could not stomach bullfighting and had to leave the arena before the conclusion of the contest. The spectacle seemed to him "una asquerosidad repugnante y cobarde," and he thought that "aquello no podía gustar más que a gente como el Carnicerín, a chulapos afeminados y a mujerzuelas indecentes." As the summer went by, the preparations for the wedding depressed him even more.

His complete break with Custodio's family came in November as the result of his treatment at the wedding of one of Justa's shopmates. Manuel was sent by the parents to escort Justa and to bring her back before nightfall. When he tried to get her to leave, he was manhandled by some of the guests who were friends of el Carnicerín. His despair turned into a mad rage, and he fled toward Madrid, determined not to return "a casa del señor Custodio aunque se muriera de hambre." He does not meet this friend again in the trilogy, but he does find Justa in the last part of Mala hierba. The effects of her father's influence on him are seen as he matures, when he rejects extreme actions and ideas and makes realistic, balanced decisions.

It is true that Manuel was exposed to good examples, from his mother, from Señor Ignacio, the cobbler with whom he began his apprenticeship in the trades, from Roberto

48 Ibid., p. 257.
Hastings, who preached the importance of a strong will, and from Señor Custodio. However, most of his contacts were with people who ranged from coarse and selfish to criminal and even to horribly evil. Therefore, it can be stated that the good people had a greater importance than might have been expected from their number. Their teachings no doubt met a responsive chord within the boy's spirit, and they helped him to reject evil. One feels that without them the terrible environment would have completely ruined him.

The same imbalance of good and evil is not found in the background of Isidro. He spent most of his formative years in the Hospicio where he received the affectionate regard of his teachers and the discipline necessary to make him an excellent scholar. His mother gave him the best example and encouragement within her power. "La devoción fetichista y estrecha" of his benefactress was tempered by her sincere feeling for the young man. The other good influence in his background was Señor José. He was a quiet, sober Aragonese, who was gruff in manner and frugal. As a soldier, he had served abroad in the colonies and in the civil guard at home. Blasco states that the army had molded his thinking, so that "de sus años de disciplina guardaba un gran respeto a todo poder fuerte, un hábito de sumisión, que le hacía acoger las contrariedades con inquebrantable bondad."9

49Blasco, La horda, p. 54. 50Ibid., p. 49.
Isidro knew José even before his father's death, for he was also a bricklayer and a friend of his father's. He lived as a neighbor in the big tenement housing unit. He had been abandoned by his wife, "una buena pieza que andaba suelta por el mundo después de amargarle la existencia." As a little tot, Maltrana used to sit on José's knees, pull his coarse moustache, and ask him questions about his adventurous life.

When José accompanied Isidra on visits to the Hospicio, he would gently caress Isidro's head with his hard hand "en la que el yeso marcaba con entrecruzados filamentos las escamas de la piel." He would say to him, "Que sigas siendo bueno. Que no disgustes a tu pobre madre." As Isidro's education progressed and he became more of a gentleman, José saw him only occasionally. When he met him by chance, he spoke to him respectfully as if he were a part of that world of authority which he almost worshiped. He would say, "Eso marcha, muchachito. Sigue zurrando a los libros. Tú irás lejos."

Isidra, in the hospital, begged him not to forget José and their son Pepín. She told him that José had been very good to her and had had the courage to help her when she had been most miserable. She urged him to respect the mason as

51Ibid.
52Ibid.
53Ibid.
54Ibid., pp. 52-53.
if he were his own father, saying that Señor José "la había querido más que el otro . . . el legítimo."\textsuperscript{55} Blasco reports that José showed this with "su silencio desesperado" and with "el gesto de dolor"\textsuperscript{56} when he saw her in the hospital bed.

Having used up the last of his means and unable to get a regular job, Maltrana was finally forced to accept shelter from José, who lived with Pepín in "un misero cuartucho"\textsuperscript{57} on Artistas street which contained only a camaestro, a table, and two chairs. Isidro had to use the bed during the day while they were working. He lay down on it when it was "todavía caliente, con la huella de los cuerpos."\textsuperscript{58} Only on Sundays did he see his roommates. Then he paid his stepfather what he could toward the rent of the room. Pepín spent that day with a gang of boys at Amiel, a public picnic ground in the northern part of Madrid, and the two men usually went off to eat at a rotisserie at Cuatro Caminos.

José could not talk to his fellow workers. His attitude of submission to established authority and acceptance of his lot in life irritated them. They insulted him, "por reaccionario, por borrego."\textsuperscript{59} He was fond of talking to Isidro, for he felt that he, as a learned man, could understand his

\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 60. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{56}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{57}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 18. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{58}\textit{Ibid.}

\textsuperscript{59}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 75.
philosophy. These two statements of José to Isidro contain the kernel of his convictions: (1) "Sin orden no se puede vivir," and (2) "Cada uno para lo que ha nacido, y que se conforme con su suerte." Blasco says that he "reconocía que todo estaba mal repartido y que el pobre sufría mucho. Pero si metían sus manos aquellos arregladores que predicaban contra los ricos, ¿quedaría el mundo mejor? . . ."62

When Pepín, at the age of fourteen, was caught in the act of robbery and put into the Cárcel Modelo, José's philosophy was truly shaken. As Blasco explains, "Le parecía que todo su pasado de áspera integridad y honradez feroz se derrumbaba de un golpe."63 The author states that Pepín had exiled José from the world of decent people, had taken from him "el orgullo de una virtud que era su único lujo."64 José tells Isidro, "Yo, que soy su padre, podré parecer tosco y pasar por ignorante, pero allí donde he estado nadie ha tenido que decir de mí, y los jefes me citaban como modelo de honradez."65 On the next page, Blasco adds, "Y de repente, un pedazo de su carne, una prolongación de su persona, se pasaba de un salto al campo de los malos, burlándose

60 Ibid., p. 77.  61 Ibid., p. 76.
62 Ibid.  63 Ibid., p. 224.
64 Ibid., p. 225.  65 Ibid., p. 224.
de todas las doctrinas de orden y sumisión enseñadas por su padre.»

The shattering paradox that he "el guardián del orden procrearía carne de presidio" begins his disillusionment. He wonders if he has not altogether misunderstood the world. He says to Isidro, "Te digo, Isidro ... que soy otro, y que cada día pierdo algo de mis creencias. Esto es el fin del mundo: todo farsas y mentiras." It is at this point that José tells his stepson of the crookedness existing in the construction business which leads to his sudden death. The reader will remember that this episode is presented in Chapter III. Blasco writes his epitaph as follows: "Morir era una solución para aquel hombre sencillo, que se indignaba contra un mundo apartado de los sanos principios y contra la mala suerte que convertía en aprendices del crimen a los hijos de los servidores de la ley."

The reader has seen the strong, formative effect of the mothers and of Custodio and José upon the two heroes. This is perhaps a good time to take up the strong influence of their sweethearts upon them. Both Manuel and Isidro are kind and humane to their fellowmen and especially so to women. Their concern for their mothers has already been presented in the present chapter. They are equally attentive

to the needs and desires of their sweethearts. Both of the latter are decent, lower-class girls who sew for a living. Both are hard workers, serious, and dependable. Feliciana through her infant son and Salvador by her own positive character lead the two men from a life of changing occupations and weakness of will to strength of purpose and exertion of will power.

Salvadora was too young to be the recipient of Manuel’s first love. His frustrated passion for Justa has been described in the section on Señor Custodio. Actually, Manuel had come across her earlier in *La busca* when he first came to Madrid and was staying with his mother. She was the modiste’s assistant who came daily for a period of several weeks to the *casa de huéspedes* to fit the Baroness de Aynant and her daughter Kate with dresses and hats. One night Manuel saw her pass by and fell in love with her. He followed her at a distance until she disappeared in the crowd. As Baroja says, “Fué para Manuel el recuerdo de aquella chiquilla como una música encantadora, una fantasía, base de otras fantasías.”

When Manuel leaves Custodio’s family at the end of *La busca*, she is about eighteen and soon to be married to el Carnicerín.

Toward the end of *Mala hierba*, after Manuel and Vidal had been working some time for Marcos Calatrava in the*

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70 Baroja, *La busca*, p. 42.
gambling rooms, the latter invited them to go with him to a house on the Calle del Barquillo where they could pick up some mozas guapas. The third girl to arrive was Justa, "más pálida, con los ojos más negros y la boca roja."⁷¹ Seeing Manuel, she tried to sneak out, but Vidal got her to go along. She and Manuel scarcely spoke the whole evening. Baroja described Manuel's mood as follows: "Manuel sentía una tristeza dolorosa, el aniquilamiento completo de la vida."⁷² After he accompanied her home to the Calle de Jacometrezo, she invited him up to her room and soon burst into tears and told him of having been first dishonored and then infected by el Carnicerín. Señor Custodio found her in the hospital and "con voz rabiosa dijo que para él su hija había muerto."⁷³ So, she became a prostitute.

Manuel did not intend to stay with Justa that night, but after she made advances, he did. He promised her he would at once leave the gambling job at the Círculo, find honest work, and take her out of that life. Despite their plans of regeneration Manuel continued at the gambling den, and did not have the force of will to alter his life except to move in with Justa. Baroja states that "a veces los dos sentían una repugnancia grande por la vida que llevaban, y reñían y se insultaban por cualquier motivo, pero en seguida

⁷¹Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 238. ⁷²Ibid. ⁷³Ibid., p. 241.
Justa was wildly jealous and sometimes in a paroxysm of rage would throw herself on the floor and lie there as if dead. To escape involvement in Vidal's murder, they moved into a house in the suburbs which had bright, sunlit rooms. It was on the Calle de Galileo near the tercer deósito. Manuel got work in a printing shop of Chamberí; but Justa found time heavy on her hands, and after a week of this reformed life she disappeared. When she did not come back, he felt miserable and depressed. Baroja explains his emotion thus: "Era el despertar de un sueño hermoso; había llegado a creer que al fin se emancipaban los dos de la miseria y de la deshonra."

The next time Manuel hears of Justa is in the first part of Aurora roja. He is at a theater, the "Apolo," with his brother Juan. In the lobby Flora, Vidal's former sweetheart, tells him that Justa has become very fat and has taken to drink. He sees Justa for the last time at a restaurant called "A los placeres de Venus", where he is accompanied by all his family. Justa sends for him to sit at her table, and when he rejects her invitation, she comes toward him. She tells him that Salvador looks like un fideo raído and asks for an introduction to Juan. Manuel curtly refuses and leaves her. Her appearance had filled him with disgust.

Baroja states that

74Ibid., p. 242.  
75Ibid., p. 258.
La Justa había tomado un aspecto de bestialidad repulsiva; su cara se había transformado, haciéndose más torpe; el pecho y las caderas estaban abultados; el labio superior la sombreaba un ligero vello azulado; todo su cuerpo parecía envuelto en grasa, y hasta su antigua expresión de viveza se borraba, como ahogada en aquella gordura fofa. Tenía todas las trazas de una mujerona de burdel que ejerce su oficio con una perfecta inconsciencia.

The shock of Vidal's murder marks the turning point in Manuel's life. For the first time, he finds a job for himself and Justa. After his arrest and his subsequent release, he struggles continually toward respectability. Salvadora serves as a maturing catalyst for Manuel. She reads in the paper of his imprisonment and brings food to the jail for him. When he is released, she meets him at the entrance of the Juzgado and tells him, "Pasa luego por casa. Vivimos en el callejón del Mellizo, cerca de la calle de la Arganzuela."77

However, he is not completely a free man. The police give him this choice: "O ayudas a buscar al Bizco, u otra vez vas al calabozo."78 Rather than rot in prison, he agrees to help the police, since he believes Bizco to be the murderer. Salvadora's respectability gives him status with Ortiz, the police detective under whose direction the judge has placed him. Ortiz releases him to her responsibility.

76Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 71.
77Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 272. 78Ibid., p. 274.
This position of informer is onerous to him. He feels that his degeneration through the pressure of poverty and petty crime has been bad enough, but that being a police helper is altogether too low. Salvadora's kindness and faith in him help him to decide to try to get out of his predicament. He goes to the Maestro of the Círculo and asks him to tell his man, el Garro, to quit pursuing him. El Garro is one who collects graft from the crooks while at the same time working as a plain-clothesman for the police. The Maestro approves of Manuel's decision and agrees to call off el Garro, leaving Manuel a free agent to continue his lucha por la vida in the last volume of the trilogy.

Salvadora's name is truly symbolic. She brings out the best in Manuel, and, as he admits to Perico Rebolledo, she saved him from being a tramp. With her patience and stability she helps him to follow the path of common sense and balance. Her influence is strongest in Aurora roja. However, she first makes her appearance one Christmas in Mala hierba in the Santa Casilda hostelry where Manuel has gone to live. Three members of the Conferencia de San Vicente de Paúl come to visit the sick and the poor and to give food tickets to the most needy. One of the residents leads them to a dark hole under a staircase, where "sobre un montón de trapos y arropada en un mantón raído había una chiquilla delgada, esmirriada, la cara morena y flaca, los ojos negros,"
huráños y brillantes."79 Beside her slept a little boy of two or three. She was Salvadora. Her mother, "que . . . no llevaba muy buena vida,"80 had died in that housing unit. The little girl had then planted herself and the baby in that hole, and no one could get her to move or to give up the baby. She gets their food by stealing it. Jesús feels it would be quite wrong for the two to be separated and put in asylums, so he offers to give them both a home. His sister, la Fea, has just lost a baby, and he thinks their presence will make her happy. They are enthusiastically welcomed by la Fea. Baroja describes Salvadora as follows:

Tenía la Salvadora un genio huráño y despé-tico, una afición a limpiar, a barrer, a fregar, a sacudir, que a Jesús y a Manuel les fastidiaba; le gustaba ordenar y disponer; todo lo que tenía de esmirriada lo tenía de enérgica. Ella dispuso llevar la comida a Jesús y a Manuel, porque gastaban mucho en la taberna, y al medio día, con un cesto que abultaba más que ella, iba a la imprenta. En tres meses de ahorros, la Fea y la Salvadora compraron en una casa de empeños una máquina de coser nueva.81

Jesús had been staying sober since la Fea’s confinement, yet he became daily more glum. Finally he could not stand the steady work in the print shop where he and Manuel were employed and suggested that in the spring they take to the road and work en route. They drank toasts to the prospective journey and finally got drunk. Jesús disappeared, and Manuel

79Ibid., p. 139. 80Ibid. 81Ibid., p. 157.
missed two days work. Salvador, furious, told him, "No vuelvas más por aquí... no necesitamos golfería. Mientras estamos ahí nosotras trabajando, vosotros de juerga. Ya te digo, no vuelvas más por aquí, y si le ves a Jesús dile esto mismo de parte de su hermana, y de la mía."

Manuel finds Jesús, and they tramp together for several months. Then the guards pick them up for sleeping in the San Sebastián Church. Jesús escapes, but Manuel is detained in the city jail overnight and let go because he says he is a compositor on El Mundo. He does not meet Jesús or Salvador again until after he is arrested in connection with the stabbing of Vidal.

Both la Fea and Salvador had always sewed for a living. In Aurora roja, in order to be free of exploitation by the shirt manufacturers, they opened a shop for children's clothing. After la Fea married el Aristón, Salvador came to live with Manuel and his widowed sister Ignacia to escape Jesús' insistence that she set up housekeeping with him. Now twenty years of age,

la Salvadorera una muchacha alta, esbelta, con la cinturade que hubiese podido rodear una liga, y la cabeza pequeña. Tenía la nariz corta, los ojos oscuros, grandes, el perfil recto y la barbilla algo saliente, lo que le daba un aspectode dominio y de tesón... Su expresión era una mezcla de bondad, de amargura y de timidez que despertaban una profunda simpatía; su risa le iluminaba el rostro;
Aquella cara tan expresiva, en donde se transparentaba unas veces la ironía y la gracia; otras, como un sufrimiento lúgubre, contenido, producía a la larga un deseo vehemente de saber qué pasaba dentro de aquella cabeza voluntariosa.

It is this expression that compels Juan to make a bust of her. He says, "Tienes una cara especial. No eres como nosotros, por ejemplo, que siempre somos guapos, elegantes, distinguidos . . . ; tú, no; un día estás fea y desencajada y flaca, y otro día de buen color y casi, casi hasta guapa."

Manuel says that Salvadora believes that "todo se puede conseguir con voluntad y con paciencia." This determined frame of mind makes her work too hard and keeps her too thin. Each morning she works in the children's shop on the Calle del Pez. In the afternoons, she teaches sewing at home to twenty small pupils. At night she attends to the house. When she first came to live with them, she gave part of her earnings to Ignacia to pay for her and her little brother's food. But after a bit, they gave up keeping separate accounts, and Salvadora took charge of the money while Ignacia cleaned and cooked for the four of them.

Sometimes Manuel would wait for Salvadora when he got through working. She would appear "en invierno, de mantón; en verano, con su traje claro, la mantilla redogida y las tijeras que le colgaban del cuello." Baroja says that

83 Baroja, *Aurora roja*, pp. 41-42. 84 Ibid., p. 50.
85 Ibid., p. 34. 86 Ibid., p. 42.
Manuel liked to have people think that she was his sweetheart and was proud to have her take his arm.

It is assumed by them and their friends that eventually they will marry, but they want to buy a printing shop first. She waits up for him at night and listens to all his problems and adventures. She carefully nurses him when he becomes seriously ill of a nervous exhaustion brought on by overwork in setting up their shop. She is mother, sister, and sweetheart to him. After they marry, she nurses Juan in his last illness with great care. Her humanity and tolerance is especially shown when she allows la Filipina to go in to Juan's corpse. La Filipina is the lowest of the prostitutes. The poor girl had been operated on and "olía de un modo insosportable a yodoformó." 87

Just as Manuel waited for Salvadora at her place of work to walk with her, Isidro waits for Feliciana across from the cap factory on Bravo Murillo. He wants to tell her that he loves her as she does him and that the two of them are going to be rich, because Don Gaspar Jiménez will give him 3000 reales for a book which he is to write but which will bear Jiménez's name. He also tells her that he had not allowed himself to notice her "regracióísima personilla" before because he was a beggar, "sin casa, sin una peseta, durmiendo poco menos que de limosna." He adds,

87Ibid., p. 298.
"¿Cómo iba a pensar en una mujer, a proponerla que partiese la miseria contigo?"88

She is a pretty, young girl, innocent, and very inexperienced. We catch a glimpse of her in the first chapter of La horda. As the workers, ragpickers, and beggars stream past the octroi office of Cuatro Caminos, two girls also pass, "cogidas del brazo, con el emboso del mantón ante la boca."89 Blasco writes that "tenían la belleza de la obrera, la frescura de esa breve juventud de las hembras de trabajo, que triunfa sólo momentáneamente de la anemia hereditaria, de las privaciones que dificultan el desarrollo."90 The smaller of the two girls was

una morena de rostro pálido y grandes ojos de un negro intenso, casi azulado, igual al de sus cabellos. El busto endeble erguido con una arrogancia natural dentro del mantón; sus pobres faldas de verano se movían con cierto ritmo majestuoso, sin tocar el barro, en torno de los pies pequeños, cuidadosamente calzados, que revelaban ser la parte más atendida de su persona.91

She and Isidro exchanged greetings, and his eyes followed "su cuerpo gentil y esbelto."92 He knew she was the only daughter of his friend Mosco, the famous hunter of Tetuán.

Mosco had originated from Tetuán and was a printer by trade, but he felt stifled in the city and hated the crowds

88 Blasco, La horda, pp. 156-157. 89 Ibid., p. 31.
90 Ibid. 91 Ibid.
92 Ibid., p. 32.
of people. Finally, he married a ragpicker's daughter and fled "de las grandes aglomeraciones humanas para vivir solitario"\(^\text{93}\) in Tetuán. He left his trade and pretended to take up hers as a pretext for following his natural bent, that of hunting. He did not go out without a weapon as the other poachers did, "resignados de antemano a recibir un escopetazo o una paliza"\(^\text{94}\) from the guards of El Pardo.

Blasco tells the reader that "el guarda que intentase impedirlo corría el riesgo de verse cazado, de que le disparasen de entre la espesura sin darle el «alto!»"\(^\text{95}\) Mosco claimed that he only caught birds with nets. He kept his gun and his ferret hidden at all times; and what meat he did not eat, was sold immediately in the neighborhood, for the civil guards often searched his house. His famous dog, \textit{Puesto en ama}, killed so many deer that he was "la pesadilla de los altos empleados de El Pardo!"\(^\text{96}\) Mosco said it took the game keepers, "desplegados en ala como un ejército,"\(^\text{97}\) to finish an animal that had more cunning than many men.

This nonconformist was born for violent action and enjoyed risking his skin all the time. Blasco says that he abandoned himself "a las puertas de una gran población, a una vida prehistórica, cazando a la bestia para comer, y al

\(^{93}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ pp. 79-80.}\)

\(^{94}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 80.}\)

\(^{95}\text{Ibid.}\)

\(^{96}\text{Ibid.}, \text{ p. 83.}\)

\(^{97}\text{Ibid.}\).
hombre, si era preciso, para defenderse; considerando la tierra como suya, sin respeto a tapias que podía saltar, ni a leyes representadas por hombres que eran mortales como él."98 He had met Maltrana at the house of his neighbor, Señora Eusebia, Isidro's grandmother, one of the oldest of the ragpickers, also called Mariposa. Mosco invited the young man to lunch, and he came often after that, bringing bread and wine. On Sundays Feliciana served at table and watched Isidro, overawed by his education which was all the more apparent in this uneducated group. He guessed her admiration and was attracted especially by her "manos de virgen, . . . las únicas del barrio que ofrecían cierta limpieza;"99 but because of his unstable financial position and his respect for women, he never thought of courting her.

Once Maltrana and Señor Manolo, the brother of Mosco, accompanied the latter on a hunt. For some twenty pages Blasco describes the details and the suspense of this rabbit hunt through the grandeur of El Pardo, "catorce leguas de tierra las que guardaban los reyes para sus cacerías."100 Maltrana found himself in a new world, unbelievably beautiful, an "inmenso jardín encantado,"101 where the wind playing through the trees spread "el lamento de la sinfonía

salvaje." During the two hours within the walls they were in constant danger of being shot.

The suspense element in this episode is especially successful because Blasco is retelling a personal experience. While he was serving as a deputy to the Cortes, he and Pedro González-Blanco (brother of Andrés González-Blanco) went on just such a poaching expedition in 1905. Blasco relates the following in the Al lector section, dated 1925, which introduces the edition of La horda used for this paper.

Juntos, y vestidos con nuestras peores ropas, para que nos sirviesen de disfraz, fuimos una noche a cazar conejos en El Pardo, con unos cuantos hombres que exponían su vida en este trabajo peligroso, ilegal y poco lucrativo. La descripción de dicha cacería, que figura en La horda, refleja exactamente la realidad. Sufrimos las mismas fatigas que los personajes de la novela, arrostramos iguales peligros, tuvimos que saltar el muro de El Pardo, como los cazadores fuera de la ley.

Creo que pocas veces un novelista ha llevado tan lejos su deseo de estudiar directamente la realidad.

He says that this excursion was kept a secret for some time, but finally the Heraldo de Madrid related "en un graciosso artículo como el autor de La horda había acompañado a los explotadores furtivos de El Pardo para verles trabajar, con riesgo de su propia vida." Blasco cites this newspaper as saying that had the guards shot this particular group of

102Ibid., p. 103.
103Ibid., pp. 8-9.
104Ibid., p. 9.
poachers, the result of the affair would have been "una sorpresa extraordinaria, inaudita, al recoger herido o muerto a uno de los culpables, encontrarse con que era un diputado a Cortes."105

Feliciana did not worry about her father. She was accustomed to his being shot and having to lie in bed to recover. He was usually gone during the time she was at home; therefore, he was not much company to her. For this reason, she hesitated only briefly to think of him, when she fell in love with Isidro and he proposed that they set up housekeeping. As Blasco points out, "... una mirada de él bastó para vencer su resistencia. Estaba en plena embriaguez de amor, sin otra voluntad que la de adorarle y seguirle."106

When they moved into Don Vicente's rooms, they were both very much in love, and everything each did pleased the other. With Maltrana's first 2000 reales, they had bought the necessities of housekeeping and a few luxuries, a great gilt bed, some linen stockings for Feli, and an enormous gilded inkstand for Isidro. At first, all was happiness. Feli, an excellent housekeeper, kept him so cleanly and neatly dressed that his friends were astonished. He was gaining weight and had a better color. Blasco comments that "los pucheretes de Feli, ... y al no trasnochalar daban nuevo

105 Ibid. 106 Ibid., p. 177.
vigor a su cuerpo quebrantado por las privaciones y desarreglos de la vida bohemia. Feli had a new suit and some lemon colored shoes she had longed for. They became more isolated from the world, quite satisfied and happy with their love, thinking this state could last forever.

However, the Marquis of Jiménez did not give Isidro more commissions, and the money began to dwindle. Isidro could not find work and began to doubt his strength and to despair. Finally one night Feli tells him that she is pregnant, and Maltrana is completely sobered, feeling pride but also fear of the approaching problems. Both of them began to undergo a great change. Her inexplicable spells of sadness irritated him. Her nausea, fainting fits, and nervous attacks made him flee the house despite the fact that she treated him with the same love as before. Inwardly the girl's faith in him was declining. She asked herself,

He, feeling himself more criticized than admired, began to realize that his passionate love for her had diminished and had been replaced "con un nuevo afecto plácido y tranquilo."  

107 Ibid., p. 214.  108 Ibid., p. 245.  109 Ibid.
Their misfortunes increased. Her father was killed by the game keepers, and, unknown to Isidro, the sixty duros of her inheritance were set aside for future needs. She was more or less constantly ill and afraid of her condition. She began to take less care of Isidro's appearance, letting him go out "sin lanzar una mirada a sus cuellos grasientos, a sus pantalones moteados por el barro de lejanas lluvias."\(^{110}\) He was sometimes gruff with her but regretted it later. When the money ran out and he could not find a job, she got one putting stays in corsets, even though he was opposed to her working while she was ill. As she sat all day bent over the corsets, he became truly ashamed of his idleness, tried to write, and made a point of accompanying her when she returned the corsets to the shop. In spite of the shame he felt at the possibility of having his friends see him carrying the great parcel, he wanted to help her. On these walks he thought nostalgically of their happy past. She became saddened and resigned to carrying the heavier load, "cuidándolo como un niño grande."\(^{111}\) They were further depressed by the catastrophic death of Señor José.

Brother Vicente's shoemaker convert influences him to ask the young couple to move. They had no money in reserve. Isidro did not want to see her, "tan delicada y tan dulce," living in the filthy sordidness of one of "los falansterios

\(^{110}\)Ibid., p. 249. \(^{111}\)Ibid., p. 260.
de la miseria,\textsuperscript{112} the workingmen's houses. He found a room in Cambroneras, where the gypsies lived. This was a wise choice, for the gypsies were very kind and helpful to Feli. She continued to sew on the corsets until she became too ill. He anxiously watched her illness develop. The advancing winter added to her discomfort. They had no fire, little cover for the bed, and only bits of bread and cheese to eat. She ate almost nothing. He went out daily in search of bread. He applied for jobs, and tried to borrow from friends and relatives. Finally, she began to have convulsions. After the second one within two days, he decided that she would have to go to the hospital, not the common one where all the poverty cases go, but to the San Carlos Clinic where his old friend Nogueras was a doctor. Nogueras recognized the symptoms immediately as those of puerperal eclampsia and asked him to bring her at once. A forced delivery was necessary to avoid the danger of death during the convulsions.

There is a touching, almost wordless farewell between the lovers in the hospital corridor. Maltrana has told Nogueras that Feli is his mistress, but "una querida a la que amaba como muchos maridos no aman a sus mujeres; una querida que podía gloriarse de una fidelidad que pocas esposas conocían."\textsuperscript{113} As he leaves the hospital, he is weak

\textsuperscript{112}Ibid., p. 293. \textsuperscript{113}Ibid., p. 342.
from emotion. He fears the worst. He cannot bear to go back to Cambroneras without her. He spends the following nights in the editorial rooms of the newspapers, frequently sleeping on a sofa. He eats almost nothing. The remembrance of Feli causes him to burst suddenly into tears. His companions are unable to understand. Each morning he goes to the door of the San Carlos Clinic, and on one occasion is told that he has a fine son and to take him away as soon as possible. He gets Señora Eusebia to take him. She, deeply moved, joyfully undertakes to care for the baby and advises him to visit Feli, who is extremely ill.

Isidro is afraid to see Feli suffering and spends the nights in taverns, drinking to forget. Finally, he cleans up and brings her a bunch of violets. It takes him some time to recognize her; she is so changed. Her bloodless face, her chin "con la agudeza de un hierro de lanza," her eyes "con el estrabismo de las frequentes crisis,"114 her voice, weak and slow, her words somewhat incoherent—all torture him. He does not go back because he has not a penny to buy her the flowers he promised her on leaving. A week later, he hears from Nogueras that she has died and been dissected by the medical students. He is horrified and feels a great remorse for the days he had wasted, without enough courage to go and visit her. He fled the city,

114Ibid., p. 350.
weeping openly and unconsciously. He went to his grandmother's, who listened to him but did not share his sorrow. Mariposa thought only of her great-grandson and cared nothing about the fate of the mother.

Felis's death forced Isidro to look at himself critically. Bâasco explains that "lo que le avergonzaba era el abandono en que la había dejado, la cobardía de su floja voluntad, el egoísmo de no entristecerse viéndola enferma." She had died without a word of love. If she could come back for a day, an hour, he would not leave her until the last moment. He stayed two weeks in the Carolinas district. The day he returned to the city, he learned the true irony of the situation. She really had not died in the terrible attack which Nogueras heard of, but did a week later. Actually, he could have been holding her hand at the last moment and might have prevented the final indignity of her being dissected and thrown into a common ditch.

Nogueras ends his remarks with these words, "Pensé avisarte, escribirte; pero ¿quién diabó adivina dónde encontrarte, con esa vida que llevas? . . . Murió, no lo dudes; ahora es de veras. Tú eres un espíritu superior, y ciertas preocupaciones no te comueven. No dudes de que ha muerto. Vi su cadáver en una mesa de la clase de disección."116

115Ibid., p. 360.  
116Ibid., p. 362.
The last eight pages of the novel leave the reader a bit breathless and dissatisfied with its sudden solution to the problems of the poverty-stricken mob and with its forced and unconvincing change in the hero. Pitollet writes that the conclusion of the book would be "espantosamente triste," if the author had not left us with a picture of a Maltrana, "vencedor de su carácter, encaminándose hacia el desahogo."\(^{117}\) He admits that one of Blasco's critics, F. Vézinet, in his Les maîtres du roman espagnol contemporain, finds this ending, "imaginado para complacer al lector."\(^{118}\) Pitollet finds its justification in Maltrana as he appears in later books. He crosses the stage in La maja desnuda (1906). In Los argonautas (1914) he is one of the transatlantic passengers on the ship Goethe. His last appearance is in a short story entitled "El automóvil del general" (1921). To a group of Spanish friends gathered in a small restaurant off lower Broadway in New York, Maltrana summarizes "his character as a wielder of a mercenary pen letting his genius out for hire to the highest bidder"\(^{119}\) irrespective of the cause to be served.

\(^{117}\) Pitollet, op. cit., p. 250.


He tells them that [like Blasco] he had tried farming in Argentina and had returned to journalism to make a living. He calls himself "essentially a bohemian, never satisfied with what he had, . . . always moving on in search of something better." 120

Several months intervene between Feli's death in La horda and these last eight pages. The winter is almost past. Maltrana is working, has had several articles accepted by the magazines, has some translations to do, is living in a boarding house, and is able to save enough money to pay his son's nurse. He wears mourning. Outwardly and inwardly he has changed for the better, but too late for comfort.

He goes to the Corvos hill on the Extremadura road to visit the baby. While waiting for him to finish his nap, he contemplates the city across the Manzanares, Madrid, monumental, superb. Then, he fixes his gaze on the nearer side of the river with its beggars' huts; "el hormiguero de la miseria también estaba allí. . . . subsistiendo con las artes y astucias del hombre primitivo, amontonándose en la promiscuidad de la miseria, procreando sobre el estiércol a los herederos de sus odios y los ejecutores de sus venganzas." 121 He thinks of all the famished mob gathered in

120 Ibid.
121 Blasco, La horda, p. 365.
the suburbs around the capital, "la horda que se alimentaba con sus despojos y suciedades, el cinturón de estiércol viviente, de podredumbre dolorida."\textsuperscript{122} He foresees that "alguna vez la horda dejaría de permanecer inmóvil. Los que entraban en Madrid al amanecer se presentarían a mediodía. Ya no aceptarían los despojos: pedirían su parte; no tendrían la mano: exigirían con altivez."\textsuperscript{123} Maltrana decides that the horde lacks leaders. He thinks, "¡Ay, si los que nacían en su seno armados con la potencia del pensamiento no desertasen, avergonzados de su origen! . . . poniendo a su servicio lo que habían aprendido, esforzándose en regimentar a la horda, dándola una bandera, fundiendo sus bravías independencias en una voluntad común!"\textsuperscript{124}

At this point the nurse gives him the baby, whose touch almost simultaneously wipes from the father's mind the fate of the unfortunate ones, "el destino de la horda miserable."\textsuperscript{125} The child's body inspires in him "una resolución egoísta y brutal."\textsuperscript{126} He wants his son to be among the privileged, "aunque para ello tuviese que aplastar a muchos."\textsuperscript{127} Blasco contrasts the old Maltrana with the new one in these words:

\textsuperscript{122}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 366. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{123}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 367. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{124}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{125}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 368. \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{126}\textit{Ibid.} \hspace{1cm} \textsuperscript{127}\textit{Ibid.}

Lo que no habían logrado la miseria y el triste destino de Felt, lo conseguía aquel chi-quitín con sólo su contacto. Caía hecha polvo la herrumbre de su voluntad. Era otro hombre: . . . Lo que no había osado hacer por el amor, lo haría por su hijo. Se lanzaría en plena lucha, . . . Adiós, ideas, fe, entusiasmos . . . Ilusiones, todo ilusiones. . . . se vendería como esclavo, para que su hijo fuese libre. 128

The book ends with these final thoughts of Maltrana, mentally addressed to his son, "No temas que caiga desalentado, que vuelva a sentirme cobarde y te abandone como a la pobre mártir. Este amor que ahora nace es de hierro. Ya soy otro. Soy . . . tu padre." 129 One doubts the endurance of sudden will power in a man whose force has hitherto been spent in speech-making about a course of action rather than in active work toward a definite goal.

There is quite a difference in attitude between the two heroes on the idea of trampling on one's fellowmen. Manuel Alcázar turns from the anarchists when he realizes how ruthless they are and how lacking in responsibility for their fellowmen. This change occurs after he and Salvadora find a bomb in the suitcase of Passalacqua, whom Juan has brought home to spend the night. Perico Rebolledo defuses it. It was to have been used on King Alfonso XIII during his Coronation parade. Baroja says that

como si aquella máquina infernal hubiese estallado en su cerebro, Manuel sentía que todas sus ideas anarquistas se desmoronaban y que sus instintos de hombre normal volvían de nuevo. La

idea de un aparato así calculado fríamente le sublevaba. Nada podía legitimar la mortandad que aquello podía producir.

The police, alerted, raid Manuel's house, fail to find the bomb, but carry off the Italian on a charge of not having a passport.

That night Manuel tries to make Juan see how idiotic his growing fanaticism is. He says to him,

Y tú, libertario... tú, que crees que el derecho de vivir de un hombre está por encima de todo; tú, que no aceptas que uno evite la fatiga y haga trabajar a otro, aceptas que un inocente tenga que sacrificar su vida para que los hombres de mañana vivan bien. Pues yo te digo que eso es imbécil y monstruoso. Y si a mí me dijeran que la felicidad de la Humanidad entera se pudiera conseguir con el lloro de un niño, y eso estuviera en mi mano, yo te digo que no le haría llorar a un niño, aunque todos los hombres del mundo se me pusieran de rodillas...

In contrast, Isidro Maltrana, in his changed character, is quite determined for his son to rise, even if to reach such a position he has to "aplastar a muchos."

All the major figures of La lucha por la vida are reflected in parallel characters in La horda except Juan Alcázar. The very omission in Blasco's novel of an anarchist, when occasion exists for such a person, gives rise to inquiry. Why did Blasco not include an anarchist as a focal character to solve the basic problem of La horda, the

130Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 264.  
131Ibid., p. 267.  
132Blasco, La horda, p. 368.
need for a better life for the downtrodden poor? There are anarchistic rumbles in the book, but not until three pages before the end does Maltrana suggest that the members of the horde lack leaders who will mold "sus bravías independencias en una voluntad común." Perhaps the early introduction of an idealistic anarchist might have strengthened the novel and saved its conclusion from seeming forced and unconvincing. Blasco must have had plenty of contacts with such men before writing La horda. Could it be that he realized that any further parallelism in the major characters would lay him open to a charge of plagiarism? There are other possible explanations for this omission. He had included a social revolutionary, Fernando Salvatierra, in La bodega, which was published in 1905 immediately preceding La horda. Also, his creative method may be the cause of the omission. Being a compulsive writer, he may have been carried away by the personality of his intellectual bohemian, Isidro Maltrana, and may have had no time for or interest in another character. This chapter has already referred to his continuing interest in Maltrana during the years following La horda.

Juan Alcázar is mentioned in La busca as a boy who combined good scholarship with an inclination to morbid sentimentality. With that compound one is not surprised

133 Ibid., p. 367.
to learn that he was the best student at the seminary. He was, however, a true idealist. When he discovered corruption in the seminary, he ran away and abandoned religion. Thereafter, he educated himself through books and art, finally achieving some success as a sculptor in Paris with his group Los rebeldes. At this point he returns to Madrid and finds Manuel again. Fifteen years have passed since they were separated at the beginning of La busca; they are probably between the ages of twenty-five and thirty. Juan's success at the Madrid Salon brings him disillusionment with artists. He finds them as guilty of envy and selfishness as the bourgeoisie. Blinded by his unrealistic idealism, he now puts his faith in the proletariat, seeing it as the last bastion of unselfish human dignity.

Throughout his life he had believed in the principle of individualism opposed to the principle of authority. Therefore, he now embraced anarchism as a means of achieving freedom for the proletariat. As his health declined, he became less balanced and more fanatical, eventually living and working single-mindedly for the cause, believing that "todos los caminos, todos los procedimientos eran buenos con tal de que trajeran la revolución soñada."\textsuperscript{134} Speaking at the big propaganda meeting in the Barbieri Theater, he wished that "los hombres se libertasen del yugo de

\textsuperscript{134}Baroja, Aurora roja, pp. 267-268.
toda autoridad, sin violencia, sólo por la fuerza de la razón."\textsuperscript{135} He wanted to do away with the State, the law, the judge, the soldier, the priest—"cuervos que viven de sangre humana."\textsuperscript{136} Baroja states, "El afirmaba que el hombre es bueno y libre por naturaleza, y que nadie tiene derecho de mandar a otro. El no quería una organización comunista reglamentada, que fuera enajenando la libertad a los hombres, sino la organización libre, basada en el parentesco espiritual y en el amor."\textsuperscript{137} He not only made speeches; he also gave unselfishly of himself. He sold his sculptures to secure money to pay for propaganda. His personal missionary work among the lowest derelicts at the Patriarcal cemetery has already been described in Chapter II. His death at the end of \textit{Aurora roja} occurred after a bad haemorrhage brought on by his over-agitation preceding the Coronation parade.

Juan Alcázar is an autobiographical combination of Pío Baroja's two brothers. Like Ricardo Baroja he was a self-trained artist who had a great sympathy for the lower class and used it as subject matter for his art. Ricardo and Pío Baroja lived together in Madrid at the time of the writing of \textit{La lucha por la vida}, and their personal ties were very

\textsuperscript{135}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 231. \textsuperscript{136}\textit{Ibid.} \textsuperscript{137}\textit{Ibid.}
strong. Juan also came to live with Manuel, and the two brothers shared an active interest in the plight of their fellowmen.

It is in his illness and death in early manhood that Juan resembles Darío Baroja, who died in February 1894. The progress of Juan's tuberculosis parallels that of Darío's. They both have initial spells of illness and seem to improve with good nursing and rest. But within about a year's time they each have a fatal attack. The physician who is called to attend Juan tells Manuel, "No puede resistir más que días."138 About thirty-four hours later Juan dies at dawn. Concerning the death of Darío Baroja, Pérez Ferrero writes as follows: "... hacia febrero, recibió [Pio Baroja] un telegrama de su casa avisándole que su hermano se moría. Tomó precipitadamente el tren y, al día siguiente de su llegada, Darío falleció. Había cumplido veintitrés años ..."139

138Ibid., p. 290.
139Pérez Ferrero, op. cit., p. 66.
CHAPTER V

SIMILARITIES IN MINOR CHARACTERS

With the passing of Juan Alcázar the parade of major characters has come to an end. Now, one turns to compare the minor characters of the two novels in order to note similarities which appear between those presented by Baroja and those of Blasco. These seem to fall into pairs and into groups. There is in each book a bad son, an ingenious repairman, a philosophical old ragpicker, an old woman who hoards trifles. Also in both, there are priests, gypsies, and men who are a part of the printing and newspaper world.

There is much likeness between the two bad sons, Vidal in *La lucha por la vida* and Pepín in *La horda*. They come from good fathers. They are both clever and daring and from early boyhood have been leaders of juvenile delinquents. They have little or no feeling for their parents and no moral sense. One ends in jail and one is murdered.

Manuel Alcázar's first apprenticeship is with his cousin, Señor Ignacio, who is a good man, but lacking in force. A master cobbler, he has been reduced to the salvaging of usable parts of old shoes and boots. Manuel learns that he is a mild liberal, who speaks "a boca llena
de la Gloriosa [la revolución],"¹ and who would like to see the expulsion of religious orders from Spain. He also believes in hard work and keeps his two sons at it.

Leandro, the older, is a good boy, but obstinate and mentally not too quick. The other, Vidal, is "de la edad de Manuel, delgaducho, esbelto, con cara de pillo."² Vidal has been pilfering, stealing, and chasing girls since he was quite small. The first time Manuel goes out with Vidal and his gang, his conscience troubles him with "un miedo horrible"³ when Bizco steals some codfish. The three boys later form a Sociedad de los Tres dedicated to stealing; but after a summer, Vidal and Manuel separate from Bizco because of his brutality.

Actually Bizco is more animal than human. Baroja introduces him as follows: "La cara del Bizco producía el interés de un bicharraco extraño o de un tic patológico. La frente estrecha, la nariz roma, los labios abultados, la piel pecosa y el pelo rojo y duro, le daban el aspecto de un mandril grande y rubio."⁴ He enjoyed torturing cats and dogs to death with jabs of his sharp knife. It was this monstrosity who in Mala hierba murdered his mistress, Dolores la Escandolosa, as well as Vidal, and then in Aurora roja killed another mistress, la Galga—all by stabbing.

¹Baroja, La busca, p. 59. ²Ibid., p. 58. ³Ibid., p. 69. ⁴Ibid., p. 67.
After being condemned to death, he sits not in remorse but in "una enorme tristeza." He is rather pitiful when he says to Manuel, "Si me matan, dile al verdugo que no me haga mucho daño."

Between the time of the Sociedad de los Tres and his death, Vidal climbed the criminal ladder from thief to procurer to high-class gambler for a crime syndicate. He never did a bit of honest work; he ceased to visit his parents; he did not lose his scheming air. He was clever enough to see that others took all the risks, and he always had sufficient means either from his crimes or from his mistresses.

Pepín, José's son, was at seven "un genio asombroso para echar la zancadilla y poner la piedra donde fijaba el ojo." At eleven he was "tan malo que los vecinos le apodaban el Barrabás," thereby indicating his chief activity. He was dismissed for impudence from a series of apprenticeships. He continued a career of thieving until he was arrested with other boys for stealing copper and wire from a Vallecas factory and thrown into the Cárcel Modelo. Señor José appealed to Isidro to help get him out of prison. He admitted that Pepín was "un golfo, pero de los de marca" and that "ni golpes ni consejos habían servido de nada al

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5 Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 178. 6 Ibid., p. 179.
7 Blasco, La horda, p. 53. 8 Ibid., p. 59.
padre." He indicted Pepín as un pillo but hoped that he would repent and change his ways. Isidro does find him in the prison and learns that Pepín does not repent but is cynically proud of his roll of criminal and dreams of leading other thieves "como glorioso capitán." Indeed, his fellow inmates have decided to form a gang when they get out, with Pepín as chief. Pepín regards the thefts of his gang as portentosas hazañas and says, concerning this particular theft which landed him in jail, "Mis consortes son más culpables que yo. Si hubiese justicia, ya me habrían puesto en la calle." Isidro knows that his words will have little effect on Barrabás. Blasco gives us this reflection of Isidro's on his stepbrother, "Estaba agarrado por el engranaje del crimen. Cuando saliese de esta mala aventura, caería en otra. La cárcel era su casa, y toda aquella juventud que se aislaba de la sociedad, su verdadera familia, la escogida por él, con la atracción de las comunes aficiones." He reports to Señor José that it would be possible to get Pepín out of jail if they could raise a bond for him; but he advises him to give him up for lost, telling him that the boy has no shame, no sense of

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9 Ibid., p. 223.  
10 Ibid., p. 235.  
11 Ibid., p. 237.  
12 Ibid., p. 234.
right and wrong, and, if they should get him out, he would only break the law again.

Perico Rebolledo in *La lucha por la vida* and el Ingeniero in *La horda* are the ingenious repairmen. They make toys, and they can fix anything. Using their abundant native intelligence, they proceed to make something out of all sorts of salvaged, worn-out articles.

There are two Rebolledos, father and son. In the first part of *La busca*, Baroja mentions the father as a barber and inventor and a resident of the Corrala, where Manuel lived with Ignacio's family. He says that Manuel admired them both because he felt that "la superioridad de un hombre estaba en el talento, y, sobre todo, en la mañana." The father, a dwarfed hunchback, each day set up a shop in the open sunlight of the Rastro. He had "una cara muy inteligente, ojos profundos; gastaba bigote y patillas, y melena azulada y grasienta." The son, Perico, was not deformed, "sino esbelto, delgado, con los ojos brillantes y los movimientos vivos y desordenados. Parecía, como suele decirse, un ratón debajo de una escudilla."

Concerning the activity of this couple, Baroja tells the reader that

13Baroja, *La busca*, p. 94.  
Padre e hijo pasaban la vida soñando maquinarias; para ellos no había nada inservible: la llave que no abre puerta alguna; la cafetera de viejo sistema, estafalaria como un instrumento de física; el quinqué de aceite con máquina, todo se guardaba, se descomponía y se utilizaba. Rebolledo, padre e hijo, gastaban más ingenio para vivir miserablemente que el que emplean un par de docenas de autores cómicos, de periodistas y de ministros para vivir con esplendidías.16

They made toys of wire and pasteboard which they sold to the street vendors. The father's masterpiece was a set of false teeth made for himself out of a divided and sawed bone napkin ring with gums of sealing wax. He said that "comía con ella perfectamente, siempre que tuviera qué."17 Perico early proved his inventive genius with a mechanical snuffer made of a shoe polish tin. The greatest pleasure of these two was "pensar y cavilar las aplicaciones de un cristal de unas gafas, por ejemplo, o de un braguero, o del cuerpo de bomba de una lavativa, o de cualquier otro trasto roto o descompuesto."18

This couple appears again in Aurora roja. After Manuel had been living for two years on the Calle de Magallanes, the Rebolledos, now in better circumstances, rented the lower floor of the house. On one side, the father installed his barber shop; on the other, Perico maintained his shop as a mechanic-electrician. During Manuel's experiences in

16Ibid., p. 97.  
17Ibid., p. 96.  
18Ibid., p. 97.
Mala hierba, Perico was apprenticed to an electrical engineer. At the beginning of Aurora roja he is inventing a simplification of arc-lights, and planning to take out a patent on it and market it. His success has not made him vain, nor does he consider himself superior. He has become a close friend to Manuel and takes the liberty of reasoning with him about Salvadoras's love for him and his feeling for her. Both Rebolledos are almost like members of Manuel's family. In the evenings all of them gather in the workshop to talk of their individual problems and their plans for the future. On Sundays they take long walks together.

The father has always taken his deformity for granted. When they were all on the outing celebrating Juan Alcázar's success, the escort of Justa taunted him with "Ahí va uno que se lleva la merienda guardada." Juan was indignant, but the hunchback muttered indifferently, "Falta de educación." Later in Aurora roja the father displays a logical mind. He tells a group of socialists and anarchists at the café that he can not grasp the universal right to happiness because "tener derecho y no poder, es como no tener derecho." To Prats' statement that "podrán quitar la vida, no el derecho a la vida," he replies, "De modo que estará uno muerto; pero tendrá derecho a la vida?"

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19Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 72.  
20Ibid.  
21Ibid., p. 108.  
22Ibid., p. 110.
Maldonado says that in the coming revolution "a cada uno se le dará lo que merece," Rebolledo père retorts,

--¿Y quién lo tasa? ¿Y cómo se tasa?
--No se ve claramente lo que uno ha trabajado? --dijo Frats de mal humor.
--En el oficio de usted y en el mío, sí; pero en los ingenieros, en los inventores, en los artistas, en los hombres de talento, ¿quién les tasa el trabajo?  

On the next page he says to Maldonado,

--Porque usted me dice: "No habrá ladrones, no habrá criminales, todos serán iguales . . . " No lo creo.
--No lo crea usted.
--Claro que no; porque si tuviera que creer en esos milagros, por su palabra de usted, antes hubiera creído en el Papa.  

The friendship and the discussions with the Rebolledos were surely stabilizing influences for Manuel. When he and Salvador find the bomb in Passalacqua's suitcase, it is to Perico that they turn for advice. He grasps immediately its construction and courageously defuses it. Then, at his direction, they wash the various powders down the sink, throw the bits of iron into the patio sewer, and burn all the propaganda papers including the sketches of the bomb's construction.

Perico Rebolledo brings to mind Pedro Ruidavets with whom Baroja became friends during his last year of the bachillerato (1886) while attending the Instituto de

\[23^{\text{Ibid.}}, \text{p. 113.} \] \[24^{\text{Ibid.}}, \text{p. 114.} \]
San Isidro. Many afternoons Ricardo Baroja, Riudavets, and Pío got together in the attic of their aunt's house and "consumían las horas charlando y dándose a trazar mil fantasías juveniles." Later, Riudavets and another friend, Carlos Venero, persuaded Pío to study medicine instead of pharmacology. After Pío abandoned the practice of medicine and returned to Madrid to manage his aunt's bakery, he began to see Riudavets again. Granjel writes as follows concerning the three friends, Ricardo, Pedro, and Pío: "En un sótobanco de la casa estableció Ricardo, ayudándole su hermano y el compañero de estudios de este último Riudavets, un taller en el que los tres se aislaban para entregarse a extraños experimentos físicoquímicos y a forjar toda suerte de ingenios mecánicos."

El Ingeniero is much more of a minor character than either of the Rebolledos. He is called el Ingeniero because of his great ability at fixing musical instruments and mechanical toys. He is Isidro Maltrana's uncle and formerly had a stand in the Rastro where his speciality was weapons and ancient musical instruments. When he retired, he left this store in the hands of his children; but he likes to do a little business on Sundays. His friends still bring to the Rastro whatever defective mechanism

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26 Granjel, op. cit., p. 106.
falls into their hands for him to fix. He is now quite old and almost blind. He shares his genius at fixing things with Perico and his joy in living and his sense of humor with the older Rebolledo. He is a regular Don Juan but has the good sense not to acknowledge any of his mistresses in a formal way. He is the scandal of the whole Rastro district because of the loud squabbles among his various odalisks. When Isidro and Feli are seeking a bed in the Rastro, they look for this uncle. He tells them to go to his sons' shop where they will get one for a small sum. He goes on to inform them that his brother, the antiquary, and his own sons are judíos who are only interested in money. Concerning himself, he says, "Yo parezco un chaval al lado de ellos. Aquí no hay otro joven en la familia, alegre y que se las traiga, que este cura: el Ingeniero."27

The two ragmen philosophers are Señor Custodio and Señor Polo. Señor Custodio has been discussed at length in Chapter IV. In his personality, Polo is a great contrast to Custodio. He is a scheming, undignified, grasping man who beats Mariposa; whereas, Custodio, who has a fine sense of personal honor, is dignified in his behavior and good to his wife and children. The similarities between these two men lie in their fur caps, their dwellings and trades, and their capacity for independent thought.

27Blasco, La horda, p. 193.
Blasco gives us this picture of Señor Polo: "Sus barbas amplias de plata se extendían sobre el pecho y formaban una aureola de blancos vellones en torno de sus mejillas sonrosadas. . . . Las manos eran negras, con escamas en el dorso; las mejillas y los labios, acariciados por la navaja, mostraban una frescura de niño." His clothing was very filthy but picturesque. He had two coats. One was sleeveless, made of rabbit skins and tied around the waist with a rope; the other was liberally covered with spangels, tinsel, and ribbons which made him look like un salvaje de teatro. His trousers were adorned with ribbons like those decorating the headstall of his mule. These ribbons recall another ragman from La lucha por la vida, el Conejo, who also dressed in a picturesque fashion and liked to decorate his cap with bright cock feathers and stride about in riding boots.

The dwellings of these two men were located on a city dump ground, but not the same one. Custodio's was in a great quadrangular ditch "ennegrecido por el humo y el polvo de carbón, limitado por murallas de cascote y montones de escombros." Polo's was in Tetuán sunk into the side of a small hill from which one could view all Madrid. These huts grew little by little. Their many annexations could be

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28 Ibid., p. 34.
29 Baroja, La busca, p. 228.
marked from the exterior, the materials of construction varying with the items of the junk collections. Polo's windows were galvanized bottomless pails and his chimney a broken tub. Both these hovels were divided into three compartments and included a yard. Custodio's house had a kitchen, a storeroom, and a bedroom. Polo's had the same divisions except that his bedroom was just a cave off the stable.

This last detail will give the reader an idea of the filth and confusion in Polo's hovel which contrasts sharply with the cleanliness and order within Custodio's. Blasco says, "El almacén exhalaba un hedor de polvo, huesos en putrefacción y ropas corrompidas, . . . Un zumbido de moscas pegajosas vibraba en la obscura profundidad de las chozas." The bedroom, "saturado de polvo y estiércol," was entered from the stable and had no window and so low a roof that Polo had to glide into bed, "como por la boca de una madriguera." He and Mariposa kept warm from the heat of both the mule and the manure. The whole cavern was hung thickly with dusty cobwebs which nearly touched the bed and of which Polo was proud. He said to Isidro, "Tamiza [la telaraña] el aire, le quita los malos bicharracos que dan

30 Blasco, La horda, p. 116.  
31 Ibid., p. 123.  
32 Ibid., p. 121.
las enfermedades, se come a los microbios y demás insectos...

Señor Custodio has no nickname, but Isidro calls Polo "Zaratustra" and "el gran filósofo de los Cuatro Caminos." Polo complains because Isidro has kept on changing his name, from Kruger, to Trapatustra, to Zorra-no-sé-que. He says to Isidro,

... me contaste un día su historia. Un sabio que no tenía un perro chico, como yo; que estaba en el secreto de todo y se reía de todo; lo mismo que yo; que vivía en alto, como yo vivo, viendo a mis pies todo Madrid. El tenía al lado un aguilucho al decir sus cosas, y yo, a falta del pajararraco, tengo cinco perros que... me rodean y me escuchan cuando digo las mías...

Even Polo's dogs differed greatly from Custodio's Reverte, a good-natured, playful, satisfied dog "con unas lanas amarillas." Polo's dirty, ferocious pack were of all sizes and breeds "con los ojos amarillentos y una baba rabiosa en los colmillos: animales casi salvajes." Reverte and Polo's five dogs reflect the temperaments of their masters.

Polo is ninety-four at the beginning of La horda and has been going down to Madrid every day for fifty years.

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33Ibid., p. 122. 34Ibid., p. 35.
35Ibid.
36Baroja, La busca, p. 228.
37Blasco, La horda, p. 114.
He feels that since he has seen so much, he is qualified to speak confidently. Whereas Custodio’s chief interest is in a realistic appraisal of current problems and in the reclamation of wasted materials, Polo is interested in social problems. He considers woman as inferior to man and "un animal de escaso caletre." He says she thinks only of appearances. In contrast, since man thinks of other things, he is more dignified and noble. Concerning modern progress, he says,

... he visto cómo la villa ha ido poco a poco ensanchándose y dándonos con el pie a los pobres para que nos fuéramos más lejos. ... Dicen que esto es el Progreso, y yo respeto mucho al tal señor. Muy bien por el Progreso ... pero que sea igual para todos. Porque yo, señor mío, veo que de los pobres sólo se acuerda para echarnos lejos, como si apetésemos. El hambre y la miseria no progresan ni se cambian por algo mejor.39

His sympathy is with los medianos, who he says must be helped. He tells Isidro, "... que gaste el de arriba, ya que tiene, pero que no sea todo para él ..."40 Also, he assures Maltrana that we are all pilgrims.

¿Qué somos todos en este mundo, más que peregrinos que vamos pidiendo a los demás y caminando hasta llegar al final de nuestra vida? Peregrino es el rey, que pide a los de abajo los millones que necesita para vivir en grande; peregrinos los ricos, que viven de lo que les sacan a los pobres; peregrinos nosotros, los medianos ... y no digo los de abajo, porque es feo.

38Ibid., p. 118.  
39Ibid., p. 36.  
40Ibid., p. 39.
No hay criatura de Dios que esté abajo. De abajo sólo son los animales. Nosotros somos los medianos.\(^1\)

He bids the octroi official, Maltrana, and all the passers-by, who have paused to form his audience, farewell with this analysis of the social system: "Es el planeta de las criaturas. El lobo se come al cordero, el milano a la paloma, el pez gordo al pequeño, y hay que dar gracias al rico porque, pudiendo tragarse al mediano, le deja vivir para que pene."\(^2\) Blasco closes the scene with a Nietzschean echo, "Así hablaba Zaratustra."\(^3\)

Polo's wife, Señora Eusebia, or Mariposa, is one of the women ragpickers who has a secret hoard. The one in \textit{La lucha por la vida} is Dolores la Escandolosa. These two old women consider the items of their hidden treasure to be very valuable when in reality they have little worth. Each reveals her treasure to the hero of her novel.

Dolores is about fifty; she is a gypsy who lives in Cambroneras and, in \textit{La busca}, is Bizco's mistress. When Manuel visited them, at Bizco's command she went over to the wall, and "despegó un trozo de tela rebozado de cal, de una vara en cuadro, y apareció un boquete lleno de cintas, cordones, puntillas y otros objetos de pasamanería."\(^4\) In the

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 37.  
\(^2\)Ibid., p. 40.  
\(^3\)Ibid.  
\(^4\)Baroja, \textit{La busca}, p. 201.
middle of *Mala hierba* Vidal tells Manuel that he is sure that Bizco murdered Dolores.

Señora Eusebia is much older than Dolores. For many years she has been courted by Polo and finally goes to live at his "palacio real de Tetuán"\(^4^5\) while at the same time maintaining her independence in business matters. She has always had a hoard which her neighbors and friends think must be very valuable. She has never allowed Polo even to know its hiding place.

When Isidro comes to her for help just before he and Feli move to Cambroneras, Blasco describes her as having "ojos pitañosos"\(^4^6\) and as contracting "el negro agujero de su boca."\(^4^7\) At first she denies that she has a treasure, but his appeals to help her great-grandchild soften "su dura avaricia,"\(^4^8\) and she disappears into the narrow tunnel that leads to the stable. Here Blasco builds up a bit of suspense as he writes

> Por fin salió, sucia de telarañas, con el pañuelo de la cabeza cubierto de briznas de paja.

> Llevaba en las manos un trapo blanco repleto de objetos. Al depositarlo sobre un tronco, con mucho cuidado, como si contuviese cosas frágiles, sonó en su interior un retintín metálico... lentamente, ... fue desatando los nudos del envoltorio.

> Un resplandor de oro, de piedras preciosas, de objetos de gran brillo, que aún parecían más

\(^4^5\)Blasco, *La horda*, p. 115.  
\(^4^6\)Ibid., p. 283.  
\(^4^7\)Ibid., p. 284.  
\(^4^8\)Ibid., p. 287.
esplendorosos en este ambiente de miseria, hirió los ojos del asombrado Maltrana. El tesoro era cierto. ¡Vive Dios! 49

However, in an instant, Maltrana's astonishment changes to pity, for he realizes that the large jewels are false. Blasco points out the irony of the situation, "Aquellas riquezas que hacían estremecer de codicia a la trapera no eran más que basura de insignificante valor." 50 When Isidro takes only a small part of the treasure, some silver spoons, a few plain rings, a little gold chain, she thinks he does not want to take advantage of her and is leaving the best things for her to bequeath to the great-grandchild. Out of gratitude, she gives him some silver coins and begs him to keep her riches a secret. Her last words are, "Huye, Isidrín: que no nos pille [Poló] aquí; que no huele el gato." 51

Personified Death stalks both novels. It is true that death does seem to be ever lying in wait for hungry, poverty-ridden people, but one who reads these novels will be struck by the fact that Death is personified in both. Baroja names a drunken, old hag la Muerta. She haunts the Corrala, begging alms and spitting out insults as if to make sure "que en aquella casa hubiese siempre algo terrible

49 Ibid., p. 288. 50 Ibid., p. 289.
51 Ibid., p. 291.
When Manuel goes to live at the Corrala, Baroja describes her as follows:

... su mirada era extraviada, su aspecto huraño, la cara llena de costras; uno de sus párpados inferiores, retraído por alguna enfermedad, dejaba ver el interior del globo del ojo, sangriento y turbio. Solía andar La Muerte cubierta de harapos, en chanelas, con una lata y un cesto viejo, donde recogía lo que encontraba.

Baroja reflects that none of the residents of this microcosmo of "la eterna e irremediable miseria" dared to throw her out due to an ingrained superstitious dread. He presents another picture of her in a drunken stupor at Blasa's tavern. "La luz daba en su cara erisipelatosa y llena de costras; de la boca entreabierta, de labios hinchados, le fluía la saliva; la melena estoposa, gris, sucia y enmarañada le salía en mechones por debajo del pañuelo negro, verdoso y lleno de caspa; ..."

Later, she appears again and precipitates Leandro's suicide. He has just killed Milagros and, fleeing through the Corrala, is blocked by guards at the Amparo Street entrance. He turns to escape through the Paseo de las Aca- cias when he stumbles against la Muerte, who begins to call him names. He stops, looks in every direction, and suddenly stabs himself.

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52 Baroja, La busca, p. 74.
53 Ibid.
54 Ibid., p. 75.
55 Ibid., p. 136.
Blasco does not embody the idea of death in a character, but he presents three personified impressions of her. Fell listens to Teodora's presentation of the gypsy idea of death. "Ay, la Merivén! ¡Qué mardita bestial! ¡Y qué de tristezas trae! . . ."56 Grimaces of horror accompanied the word Merivén, "como si la tuviese delante y quisiera apartarla con las manos."57 Long before she met Teodora, Fell had heard Isidro's impression of Death as they walked through the San Martín cemetery.

Era una gran señora de belleza triste, pálida, intensamente pálida, con una piel mate que parecía absorber la vida del aire, sin dejar en su superficie brillo ni jugo; con unos ojos negros, intensos, helados, profundos, que recogían la luz del espacio sin devolver el más leve fulgor. Era una matrona de potentes caderas, en cuyas entrañas renacia la vida; de robustos y voluminosos pechos, siempre hinchados de leche densa y amarga.58

At her passing, plants wither and animate beings fall dead, but afterwards everything revives. She is "el abono de la vida, la hoz que siega el prado para que resurja con mayor fuerza."59

Wandering distraught, after learning of Fell's death, Isidro finds himself again before the San Martín cemetery. Death is for him no longer a beautiful woman, but a horrible, threatening one. Blasco says that he dared not enter

56 Blasco, La horda, p. 312.  
57 Ibid.  
58 Ibid., p. 163.  
59 Ibid., p. 164.
the gate, that

La Muerte le asediaba con sobrada insistencia para que él fuese a devolverle la visita. ¡Ay, como odiaba a la infame señora de los ojos sin luz, de la piel intensamente pálida, que una tarde había descrito allí dentro, ante la absorta muchacha! ¿Con qué delección la escupiría en su pecho voluminoso y amargo, en sus flancos potentes, si pasase ante él! ... Cierto que tras sus pisadas resurgía la vida; que otras Felis vendrían al mundo; pero no eran para él.60

The two novels have in common three groups of people who provide some of the background for the other characters: priests, gypsies, and workers in the printing and newspaper world. The priests reflect the anticlericalism shared by both authors, and they are much alike. In La busca Baroja has the priest Don Jacinto tell smutty stories to the boarders and remark after Irene’s abortion, "Tiene cara de infanticida, pero está más guapa."61 Later, Petra realizes that she is dying and sends Manuel to get Don Jacinto. The priest is in the dining room at a gay party and tells the boy, "Tu madre no tiene más que aprensión. Luego iré."62 When she begins to breathe with a loud rasping sound and Manuel runs to notify Don Jacinto, the priest leaves the party, but grudgingly.

At the end of Aurora roja, when Juan is also dying, another priest, summoned by Ignacia, is determined to

60Ibid., p. 358.
61Baroja, La busca, p. 39.
62Ibid., p. 178.
literally push his way into the bedroom. Juan absolutely
does not want to see him. Salvadora tells him that it
would be better for him not to see Juan. She continues,

... ahora ya ha pasado el peligro y no que-
remos asustarle.
—¿Asustarle?—repuso el cura—; no, al
revés; se tranquilizará.
—Es que ha tomado hace poco una medicina
y está entontecido.
—No importa, no importa; me han dicho que
es un chico muy bueno, pero de ideas avanzadas,
antirreligiosas; además, ha sido seminarista y
es necesario que se retracte.

Y el cura trató de pasar a la alcoba.
—No entre usted, señor cura—murmuró la
Salvadora.
—Mi obligación es salvar su alma, hija mía.
—Entonces, espere usted un momento; yo le
hablaré de nuevo—replicó ella.

Y entrando en la alcoba cerró la puerta con
llave.63

She left the door locked until Manuel came home.

Blasco has a very unattractive priest who is a hanger-
on of Don Vicente, the kindly but ignorant religious fanat-
ic. This priest resents Vicente's allowing Isidro and Feli
almost rent-free occupancy of a room in his flat. He pushes
his way into Feli's room during the absence of both Isidro
and Vicente, sees the pictures of Hugo, Darwin, Zola,
Schopenhauer, and Haeckel on the wall, and plays on Vicen-
te's ignorance to assure him that these men are worse than
Voltaire and Garibaldi, who to Vicente are the quintessence
of evil. The priest uses these pictures as a pretext to get

Vicente to ask the couple to leave his dwelling, although they both know that the two have no place to go and that they will be plunged into the deepest misery.

It seems natural for gypsies to be part of the scene of both books. Many of them lived in Cambroneras, and Cambroneras is an important part of both the settings. Words from the gypsy language are scattered through the novels; for example, aluspiar, bato, dai, churumbeles, jurde, papiris, chorar, jonjano, pinreles. The gypsies are only incidental to La busca; they are referred to at various points. One of them, Dolores la Escandalosa, has a quite minor roll in the novel. In contrast, Blasco devotes some forty pages to a description of the lives of the gypsies in Cambroneras. He writes in the Al lector section of a 1925 edition of La horda that on his walks he studied "las costumbres de los gitanos instalados junto al puente de Toledo." Rubén Darío went with him several afternoons, "interesado por mis relatos sobre las costumbres de estas gentes de origen nó-mada, entregadas a una vida sedentaria."65

In their destitution Isidro and Feli received much kindness from the gypsies. The latter were really outcasts in the Christian community. Despite their extreme poverty, they lived with dignity, not wearing castoff clothing or

64 Blasco, La horda, p. 8.  
65 Ibid.
eating slops from the refuse of the rich. They preferred rags when they could not get new clothes, starvation when they could not buy fresh food, itinerant stealing to steady work. Yet, even they were better off than Isidro and Feli.

The last group of characters is made up of those who live and work on the fringe of the printing and newspaper world. Both of the heroes were attached to this world, Manuel Alcázar by his printing business, and Isidro Maltrana with his journalistic writing.

The first of these characters presented in *La busca* is el Corretor, the father of Milagros and a proofreader for a newspaper. He lived at the Corrala, and Manuel met him when he became an apprentice to Señor Ignacio. The description of his clothing is reflected in *La horda* in the clothing of Isidro. El Corretor wore "un macfarlán destrozado, lleno de flecos, un pañuelo grande y sucio anudado a la garganta y un hongo amarillo, blanco y mugriento."66

At the beginning of *La horda*, Blasco describes Isidro as follows:

Sus botas mostraban los tacones rotos y el cuero resquebrajado bajo los roídos bordes del pantalón. Un macferlán de un negro rojizo serviable de abrigo, y por entre las solapas mostraba con cierto orgullo su único lujo, el lujo de la juventud misera, una gran corbata de colores chillones, que ocultaba la camisa, y un cuello postizo, alto, de rígida dureza, pero cuyo

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66 Baroja, *La busca*, p. 78.
Toward the end of the novel Blasco remarks on the deterioration of Isidro's appearance. "Isidro conservaba aún aquel macerlán de color indefinible, que era como la librea de su miseria. Le servía para ocultar la delgadez del traje y su deshilachada camisa, mal cubierta por un pañuelo negro lustroso de mugre." 68

At the Corrala Manuel also became acquainted with Aristas, whom he finds again toward the end of Mala hierba at the housing unit where Salvadora lives. The old friend now distributes periodicals. Baroja gives this picture of Aristas' activities:

Corría medio Madrid llevando el papel de un puesto a otro, . . . Por la mañana repartía periódicos, repartía entregas, repartía prospectos; por la tarde pegar anuncios y por la noche iba al teatro. Tenía una actividad extraordinaria, no paraba nunca; organizaba funciones, bailes; representaba los domingos una compañía de aficionados; . . . 69

This friend finds Manuel a job in a print shop in the Carrera de San Francisco.

This is not his first job in such a shop. At the beginning of Mala hierba, after Manuel has decided to be one of "los que trabajan al sol, no de los que buscan el placer

67Blasco, La horda, pp. 16-17.  
68Ibid., p. 323.  
69Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 280.
en la sombra," he thinks that Roberto Hastings might help him. Doña Casiana suggests that Superhombre, who works for El Mundo, a newspaper on the Calle de Valverde, might know where to find Roberto. From this Superman he learns that Roberto teaches at Fischer's Academy. At first Roberto has Manuel help Alex the sculptor. After Manuel's happy interlude with the Baroness de Aynant, Roberto suggests that he learn the business of printing and finds him a place with the printer Sánchez Gómez. There he learns to know two typesetters, Jesús, with whom he goes to live and through whom he meets Salvadora, and Yaco, who in Aurora roja at Manuel's invitation installs a book bindery next door to Manuel's own print shop.

Their boss, "aquel Proteo de la tipografía," was a most versatile printer. On a single press, run with an old gasoline engine, he published nine newspapers: Los Debates, El Porvenir, La Nación, La Tarde, El Radical, La Mañana, El Mundo, El Tiempo, and La Prensa. Baroja writes that

Cada periódico importante de estos tenía una columna suya; y lo demás, información, artículos literarios, anuncios, folletín, noticias, era común a todos. . . . El Radical, por ejemplo, furibundo republicano, dedicaba la primera columna a faltar al Gobierno y a los curas; pero sus noticias eran las mismas que las de El Mundo, diario conservador.

70Baroja, La busca, p. 263.
71Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 121.
impenitente que empleaba la primera columna en
defender la Iglesia, esa arca santa de nuestras
tradiciones; ... 72

Three journalists are described in this chapter on the
activities of Sánchez Gómez. González Parla seemed "un bárbaro por su facha de mozo de cuerda. Hablabá brutal-
mente; llamaba al pan, pan, y al vino, vino; a los políticos
braguetones y a los periodistas de Sánchez Gómez, los sa-
pos." 73 Señor Fresneda was "muy flaco, muy espiritado, muy
bien vestido y siempre muerto de hambre." 74 His finesse was
climaxed one day when, very hungry, he asked his director
for money. The latter answered, "Yo le daré a usted una
recomendación para el ministro." Fresneda replied, "Para
morirse de hambre ... no se necesitan recomendaciones." 75

The third journalist, Ernesto Langairinos, was nick-
named Superhombre because he was always talking about the
coming of Nietzsche's superman. He first appears early in
La busca as a boarder in Doña Casiana's house. He used to
send the boy Manuel off to the printers with his copy.
When Manuel was recuperating at the boarding house, Super-
hombre employed him to copy his notes and articles, paying
him by lending him novels by de Koch and Pigault-Lebrun.
Some of their plots "de un verde muy subido" 76 led to

72 Ibid., pp. 121-122.  
73 Ibid., p. 125.  
74 Ibid., p. 123.  
75 Ibid., p. 127.  
76 Baroja, La busca, p. 169.
Manuel's expulsion from the house, when he tried to practice their love theories on the niece of Doña Casiana. At the time that Manuel begins working for Sánchez Gómez, Superhombre is on the staff of Los Debates, but his work was printed "en los nueve sapos nacidos en los sótanos de la imprenta de Sánchez Gómez."\(^7^7\) He was then in his thirties with a black beard, an aquiline nose, and a noticeable abdomen. His trousers were always baggy and frayed, his coat much stained. Baroja remarks that "la superioridad del espíritu de Langairiños no le permitía suponer que un hombre que no fuera él valiese más que otro."\(^7^8\)

Roberto Hastings also writes for a newspaper. In addition, he serves Baroja well as a mouthpiece. He represents will power and, as Manuel's friend, gives advice to him throughout the trilogy. Like Superhombre, he first appears as a roomer in Doña Casiana's house, a serious, young student, an aristocratic type, thin, with thick blond hair, a silvery blond moustache, and eyes of steel. He becomes Manuel's friend when he upholds him in his fight with the

\(^{7^7}\)Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 123. Either there is a misprint on p. 125 (see footnote 73) and periodistas should be periódicos, or Baroja gives rise to confusion with his use of the expression los sapos. The chapter in which this occurs is entitled "Los nombres de los sapos." On p. 123 he calls the nine newspapers printed by Sánchez Gómez los nueve sapos. On p. 125 he has González Parla call the journalists working for Sánchez Gómez los sapos.

\(^{7^8}\)Ibid., p. 124.
salesman. He is a good student and tries to delve into the meaning of what he reads instead of just learning things by heart. One time he comes upon Manuel in the bread line at the María Cristina barracks and tells him, "Estoy en un periódico trabajando y esperando a que haya una plaza vacante," He helps support his mother and sister and works very hard at making translations, giving English lessons, and writing newspaper articles. He informs Manuel that it would require seven or eight years preparation to get into the newspaper trade. He later becomes Manuel's silent partner when he lets him have 15,000 pesetas to buy his own print shop.

Roberto seems to reflect Baroja in his remarks about poverty, upon politics, and on will power. In La busca he lives and works with the very poor. While observing the customers in Blasa's tavern, he remarks, "Sería curioso averiguar . . . hasta que punto la miseria ha servido de centro para la degradación de estos hombres." Baroja seems to be investigating this same environmental influence throughout his trilogy.

Roberto does not believe that human brotherhood will ever come. He thinks that "la democracia es el principio de una sociedad, no el fin." He states twice in Aurora

79Baroja, La busca, p. 190. 80 Ibid., p. 105. 81 Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 275.
roja that an enlightened, progressive despotism would be a good thing for Spain. He continues, "Yo prefiero obedecer a un tirano que a una muchedumbre; prefiero obedecer a la muchedumbre que a un dogma. La tiranía de las ideas y de las masas es, para mí, la más repulsiva."82

The main basis of his philosophy rests on the will. Early in their acquaintance he assures Manuel that "nada hay imposible para una voluntad enérgica,"83 and later in the same volume he tells him, "Se necesita más voluntad . . . para vencer los detalles que aparecen a cada instante que no para hacer un gran sacrificio o para tener un momento de abnegación."84 At the beginning of Mala hierba he smiles banteringly at Manuel's willingness to do whatever turns up and exclaims, "¿Qué español es eso! Estar a lo que salga. Siempre esperando . . ."85

Concerning the bohemians, he tells Manuel that if he keeps hanging around with the loafers who come to Alex's studio, he will change from an idler to a tramp. He reasons further,

pero cuando un hombre no puede comprender nada en serio, cuando no tiene voluntad, ni corazón, ni sentimientos altos, ni idea de justicia ni de equidad, es capaz de todo. Si esta gente

82Ibid., p. 274.
83Baroja, La buscar, p. 89.
84Ibid., pp. 194-195.
85Baroja, Mala hierba, p. 14.
tuviera un talento excepcional, podrían ser útiles y hacer su carrera, pero no lo tiene; en cambio han perdido las nociones morales del burgués, los puntales que sostienen la vida del hombre vulgar: ... Quizá haya algo genial, yo no digo que no, en esos monstruos de Alex, ... pero eso no basta, hay que ejecutar lo que se ha pensado, lo que se ha sentido, y para eso se necesita el trabajo diario, constante. 86

Roberto gives him this advice: "Haz algo; repite lo que hagas, hasta que la actividad para ti sea una costumbre. Convierte tu vida estática en vida dinámica. ¿No me entiendes? Quiero decirte que tengas voluntad." 87 This last idea Roberto repeats twice in Aurora roja:

En la vida hay que luchar siempre. 88

¡Céme! En el fondo no hay mas que un remedio y un remedio individual: la acción. ... La acción es todo, la vida, el placer. Convertir la vida estática en vida dinámica; éste es el problema. La lucha siempre, hasta el último momento. ... El motivo es lo de menos. El acontecimiento está dentro de uno mismo. La cuestión es poner en juego el fondo de la voluntad, el instinto guerrero que tiene todo hombre. 89

La borda has three characters connected with this "paper" world, Mosco, Manolo, and Maltrana. Mosco will be identified by the reader as the famous poacher of the Carolinas and the father of Feliciana. Reference has been made in Chapter IV to his having been a printer by trade. He even achieved the managership of a press where several

86Ibid., p. 23. 87Ibid., p. 24.
88Baroja, Aurora roja, p. 129. 89Ibid., p. 278.
magazines were printed. Blasco asks, "¿Por qué había de permanecer dentro de una población, juntando letras de plomo, agotándose en esta tarea de mujer? . . . Era hombre de pelea; le gustaba torear a la Muerte todos los días . . ." 90

His brother Manolo, nicknamed el Federal for his political beliefs, was the foreman of a newspaper agency. In his newspaper distributions he recalls to the reader's mind Aristas in La lucha por la vida, but he was calm where Aristas was very restless. He would tell Isidro, "... ya sabe dónde tengo las oficinas: Puerta del Sol, de cinco a ocho de la mañana, en la acera de la botica de Borrell . . . aunque lluevan chuzos, aunque caigan capuchinos de punta." 91 Blasco informs the reader that Manolo was a great person to the retailers of printed matter and that he was also famous in the editorial rooms for his picturesque language as well as for his remarks on politics. El cuarto estado was his favorite phrase. Blasco explains his use of it. "El cuarto estado" era su frase favorita, en la que lo abarcaba todo, y cuyo alcance había que adivinar. Unas veces, el «cuarto estado» era únicamente los vendedores del papel; otras, la gente popular; y algunas, todos los que compran periódicos." 92 After Isidro and Feli had eloped, Manolo spoke

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90 Blasco, La horda, p. 84. 91 Ibid., p. 87.
92 Ibid., p. 88.
indignantly to Isidro, "Parece mentira que hombres intelectuales que no son del cuarto estado cometen esas pifias." 93 Despite their mean trick and the sadness they have caused Mosco, he offers to intercede with him to forgive the couple. Later Manolo is the one who brings them the sad news of Mosco's death, the result of his ambush by the guards of El Pardo.

The journalist of La horca is Isidro Maltrana. He is not only a member of this "paper" world, but Blasco says that "el papel le perseguía, le rodeaba; había nacido para ser su siervo. ¡Siempre el papel, negro de tinta, acosándolo, cerrándole el camino!" 94 In his extreme poverty he could not find anyone who would give him food, but he always came home with his pockets full of paper, the articles and books given him by their authors.

Isidro resembles not one character in La lucha por la vida, but three, el Corretor, Roberto Hastings, and Manuel Alcázar. If the only similarity lay in Isidro's attire being like that of el Corretor, the reader would deny that being a basis of plagiarism, for this dress may well have been common for underlings of the newspaper world. But, as he reads further, he notes that Isidro also engages in activities similar to those of Roberto Hastings. He writes articles, hangs around the editorial rooms, does

translations, and is always waiting for a vacancy to arise so that he may secure a permanent newspaper job. He even writes a book for a politician to sign, but it is too good for everyone to believe it written by Don Gaspar Jiménez. Therefore, Isidro receives no more commissions from that worthy senator. Unlike Roberto, Manuel is not interested in politics. Blasco says he never made an effort to remember a single word of the frequent political talk in the editorial rooms. Isidro thought, "¿Cómo podían interesar a nadie tales futilidades?" 95

Maltrana's outstanding characteristic is weakness of will. In his lack of will power lies his chief resemblance to Baroja's hero, Manuel Alcázar; that is, the Manuel Alcázar of the first two books of the trilogy. Blasco writes that Isidro

reconocía su gran defecto, el mal de su generación, en la que un estudio desordenado y un exceso de razonamiento había roto el principal resorte de la vida: la falta de voluntad. Era impotente para la acción. . . . Y permanecía inmóvil, . . . sin ánimo para intentar un esfuerzo, confiando en un extraño fatalismo que había de sacarle del mal paso, . . . 96

Does that not recall Manuel's waiting for whatever turns up? Again toward the end of the novel, Blasco repeats, "Estaba vencido sin remedio, . . . El estudio desordenado y ansioso sólo servía para anular su voluntad." 97

95 Ibid., p. 17.  
96 Ibid., pp. 25-26.  
97 Ibid., p. 338.
Isidro used the editorial rooms of Don Cristóbal's paper as his home by night. The latter was a kindhearted soul who was preoccupied with his paper and "la revolución que no llegaba nunca." He tolerated Isidro's using the light, the paper, and the ink of the rooms to do his translations because he admired him as a learned man. At the same time he realized that Isidro would not have made even a good office boy. Isidro's fellow journalists hated his culture and every month gave him a new nickname, depending on his current quotations. First he was "Schopenhauer," then "Nietzsche," and finally "Homer." The editor wanted to put him on a regular job, but his writing was too concise for everyday reporting, and his editorials were long, cold prose which came to disinterested conclusions. Blasco describes them in this manner: "... después de examinar y pesar todo lo existente, [era] tan malo y defectuoso el ideal defendido por el periódico como el régimen de los gobernantes actuales." Then, they allowed him to write on any subject he pleased, and his learned prose was so dull that Don Cristóbal remarked that he nearly wrecked the paper. So, he failed to get the regular job and the fifteen duros monthly.

There are many authentic touches in these pictures of the printing and newspaper world. Both authors had been

98 Ibid., p. 20. 99 Ibid., p. 25.
journalists and were writing from personal experience. Some of the characters in this field are no doubt based upon real people they knew. It is interesting to examine their journalistic experience before the publications of *La lucha por la vida* and *La horda*.

Gómez-Santos quotes Baroja as follows concerning his first published article: "Por esta época creo que el primer artículo mío que se comentó algo fue uno que publiqué en el año 1897, en una revista *Germinal*, que dirigía, Dicenta. El cuento mío tenía como título «Piedad oculta o Bondad oculta.»" However, Pérez Ferrero says that the first journalistic efforts of Baroja came to light in the Madrid newspaper *El Ideal*, which was located in the Plaza del Celentía and whose director and owner was el comandante Prieto. Next, he began to sign some articles for *La Justicia*. Rafael Altamira had left its directorship and Francisco Rodríguez had taken it up. After a while Baroja's friends took him to *El País*, established in the Calle de la Madera, which was directed by the talented priest Ferrándiz, who was anticlerical in his attitude and wrote some scandalous books under the pseudonym of Constancio Miralta. At *El País* he knew Antonio Palomero, Carlos Soler, Adolfo Luna, and Pineda. In 1899 he also wrote for *Arte Joven. Granjel*

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says he attended the tertulias in the office of Arte Joven and "a la que sostenía en su casa el editor Rodríguez Serra." 101

At the end of 1898 Luis Ruiz Contreras, "animador de flamantes círculos literarios," 102 had wanted Baroja to write for a magazine which he was about to bring out under the title of Revista Nueva. It was also located on the Calle de la Madera. Baroja did write some articles for it but refused to contribute to its support, although Pérez Ferrero states that he did donate to its furnishings, "un par de mesas y algunas sillas." 103 In this venture he associated with Cornuty, Bernardo G. de Candamo, Valle-Inclán, Maeztu.

Baroja's connection with El Globo was very important for his literary life. As chief editor he was brought in direct contact with other writers and publishers, and with the public. When he became the Tangiers correspondent for the paper in 1902, he was able to give up the bakery and devote himself entirely to writing. This daily belonged to Emilio Riu and was administered by his brother Daniel. Pérez Ferrero lists some of Baroja's fellow workers: «Azorín», López Pinillos («Parmeno»), Pedro de Répide, Luis

102 Pérez Ferrero, op. cit., p. 83.
103 Ibid., p. 124.
In 1901 his novel *Aventuras, inventos y mixtificaciones de Silvestre Paradox* was published in a *folletín* of *El Globo*.

During 1902 he wrote theatrical criticisms for this paper. Azorín thought that the "inflexible independencia" of Baroja especially qualified him for this work. José Alsina characterizes his pieces as *militantes* and says that he published them "bajo el epígrafe de «Crítica arbitraría»." However, Baroja did not like the work and gave it up at the end of three months. That same year *La lucha por la vida* appeared in a *folletín* of *El Globo*, and *Camino de perfección* came out in a *folletín* of a different newspaper, *La Opinión*.

When one turns to Blasco's journalistic efforts before the creation of *La horda*, he finds that his first publication was a short story in Valencian dialect entitled "La torre de Boatella." He was sixteen when it was printed in Valencia in 1883 by Constantino Llombart in his magazine *Lo Rat-Penat*.

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104 Ibid.


106 Ibid., p. 171.

107 Betoret-París, *op. cit.*, pp. 317 and 337.
After the political amnesty of 1891, Blasco returned to Madrid, married, and founded *El Pueblo*. Gascó Contell quotes him to the effect that *El Pueblo* was founded "en una época en que no existían en España, fuera de Madrid, periódicos radicales y me arriesgué en la empresa sin apoyo pecuniario ninguno." Blasco's financial risk in this undertaking was considerable, for the paper could not have the support resulting from advertising. As Blasco said (still quoted by Gascó Contell), advertisers flee "como de la peste" from newspapers with "ideas avanzadas." Since *El Pueblo* depended on the sale of copies and was directed toward poor people many of whom could not read, it was certain to have a standing deficit. Concerning the current illiteracy, Gascó Contell reports Blasco as saying that "España tiene una mitad de población que es iletrada."

Blasco poured his inheritance and his energy into this venture for a ten-year period. He wrote the art criticism and many of the other articles himself, as well as short stories, and also novels in serial form for the folletines of the paper. These were *Arroz y tartana*, *Flor de mayo*, and *La barraca*, and those stories later gathered into *Cuentos valencianos* and *La condenada*. *El Pueblo* not only aroused

the people through its inflammatory articles, but also it organized public demonstrations. Because of government opposition and the threat of imprisonment, Blasco fled to Italy for three months of 1895. From that safe spot he sent back articles on Italy which make up his volume *En el país del arte* (1896). On his return he served fourteen months in prison before his fellow journalists succeeded in securing his release.

While he was a deputy to the Cortes, he took part in the Asamblea de Castellón where the party of the Unión Republicana was organized. From that time dates his famous article "Al pasar" which the *Enciclopedia universal* says alcanzó gran resonancia y fue denunciado a los tribunales, y la organización de sus partidarios que con el nombre de blasquistas se pusieron en encarnizada pugna con los llamados sorianistas (partidarios del diputado a Cortes don Rodrigo Soriano) por los años de 1903 a 1907, conteniendo a veces en las mismas calles de Valencia.  

Blasco himself did not consider his journalistic work worth preserving and later in life wanted to use his impressions in novels and not in journalistic articles. In the *Al lector* section at the beginning of *El militarismo mejicano*, he states, "El novelista deseaba guardar la virgenidad de sus impresiones para el libro." He continues,


Yo he considerado siempre el trabajo periodístico como «flor de un día» que no merece ver prolongada en un libro su existencia, circunstancial y efímera. He coleccionado en volúmenes mis cuentos (no todos) y algunos artículos literarios (muy contados). Nunca consideré dignos de ser reunidos bajo una cubierta editorial mis trabajos sobre política, sociología, historia, etc. He sido periodista durante quince años, y escribí un artículo o dos todos los días.  

113 Ibid., p. 12.
CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to determine whether Blasco Ibáñez in his novel La horda used Baroja's material which was published in Le lucha por la vida. Baroja claimed that he did. Therefore, this paper has compared the two novels to discover similarities in their settings, their plots, and their characters.

There are so many parallels and reflections between the two novels that one can not summarily dismiss the charge of plagiarism. Some critics state definitely that Blasco used the same subject matter and the same theme that Baroja did. In 1927, in the "Introduction" to La barraca, Hayward Keniston writes that La horda "is a rather interesting picture of the sordid life of the refuse collectors and gypsies in the suburbs of Madrid, a theme already treated by Baroja in Le Busca."¹ Helen Schenck Nicholson in her study, The Novel of Protest and the Spanish Republic, states that Blasco's novel "The Rabble . . . is almost identical in subject matter and purpose with Baroja's

Struggle for Life."² She says that therefore she will omit a separate analysis of Blasco's book and proceeds to discuss that of Baroja. Perhaps the bulk of the evidence of similarity alone will cause the reader to admit that Blasco did use some of Baroja's material. If this is the case, a further judgment must be made as to whether he did so intentionally or unconsciously.

In fairness to Blasco, it may be said that part of his background material may lie in the experiences of his first sojourn in Madrid in 1882, long before Baroja wrote La lucha por la vida, and in his various Madrid residences from 1898 until 1905, the date of La horda. The first five years of this period he maintained his Valencian residence, staying in Madrid when the Cortes were in session. However, in 1904 he moved to Madrid to a house on the Paseo de la Castellana, where he remained until he withdrew from politics and went to South America in 1906. Also in Blasco's defense, some critics state that both novels are great books, implying that therefore the similarities do not matter. Pitollet agrees with Andrés González-Blanco that there is "ningún punto de contacto entre ambos escritores y sus respectivas obras, cada uno era grande a su manera."³

³Pitollet, op. cit., p. 247.
Even if the many similarities do not matter, if they are unintentional coincidences, there is no denying that the timing is against Blasco. For him to publish a novel using the identical setting and the same segment of a single social class just one year after the publication of Baroja's trilogy is, to say the least, an expression of bad taste. No one but an egoist would do such a thing. He must have thought that his rendition of the theme was much better than Baroja's. If, on the other hand, he had waited some years, he probably would not have written La horda at all, for he usually wrote his novels when he felt close to a particular setting and situation.

After a cursory examination of the evidence one might convict Blasco only of bad taste, if the latter had not made this unfortunate remark to Baroja concerning his trilogy, "Eso que ha hecho Vd. en las tres obras son estampas pero hay que pintar el cuadro." Baroja says that Blasco made this statement "antes de que él escribiera La Horda, a base de los libros míos." Without the composition of La horda this remark might be considered an interesting bit of literary criticism, but in the light of a published La horda, it seems to point toward an intention on Blasco's part to "pintar el cuadro."

4Pérez Ferrero, op. cit., p. 168.
5Baroja, Páginas escogidas, p. 148.
Many of Blasco's novels were written while he was in a state of hyperesthesia. His method of composition has been described at length in Chapter I. Whenever some special stimulus broke through the dam which held back the impressions stored up within his brain, there was a compulsive outpouring of words without an attempt on his part to examine or to shape the results. Nevertheless, he did not publish the novels in this rough, verbose form. Before presenting them to the public, he condensed them to one-third or one-half of the original mass.

After he had poured into La horda all that he felt in protest against the social system that produced such victims as Feli and Isidro, he must have examined his work, cut it down, and polished the descriptions. He would have noticed the likeness between this new novel and Baroja's trilogy, which he had read in the recent past. When he realized that there were so many similarities between the two works, why did he not give up the book as he did two years later with La voluntad de vivir (1907)? After this latter work was printed, Blasco first stopped its distribution and then had the whole edition burned to avoid offending a friend who believed the novel contained her physical and moral portrait.6

6La voluntad de vivir has been published posthumously (1953).
If he felt impelled to protest the special evils which flourished in the suburbs of Madrid, he could have used Baroja's theme and setting without danger of a charge of plagiarism, for no writer has a monopoly on a theme or on a particular setting. If he had only used the same theme in the same setting, the reader would have thought of Baroja, but with little sense of disapproval toward Blasco. It is when the evidence of similarities between incidents and among many characters begins to accumulate that one at first doubts, and then questions.

Instead of the ragpickers, why did he not select a different group from the lower class, the prostitutes, for example? Why not choose an intelligent hero who is not a member of the printing and journalistic world, a teacher or a painter, neither of which figures in La lucha por la vida? One must agree with Hayward Keniston that most of Blasco's heroes "are embodiments of some single aim, toward which they strive without reck of circumstances." Why did he on just this occasion choose a weak-willed hero who would be certain to recall to the reader's mind the weak and vacillating will of Manuel Alcázar? Finally, why does he have his book end in the same disillusionment as that of La lucha por la vida? At various spots in the novel he points toward a future awakening of the exploited lower

7Keniston, op. cit., p. xii.
class, but at the end he offers only disillusionment for those who hope to see this dawn of a new day. Manuel sums up the situation at the end of *Aurora roja*, when he says while gazing at Juan's corpse, "Ni los miserables se levantarán, ni resplandecerá un día nuevo, sino que persistirá la iniquidad en todas partes. Ni colectiva ni individualmente podrán libertarse los humildes de la miseria, ni de la fatiga, ni del trabajo constante y aniquilador."³

In the future there remains only depression for the poverty-stricken masses. They are abandoned by their possible leaders. Isidro Maltrana, like Manuel Alcázar before him, in the full knowledge that wrong should be righted and that the masses need capable leaders, decides to conform henceforth to the bourgeois pattern, turning his back on the problems of the current evils, and leaving to others the protesting against the existing social order. Some may see a ray of hope for the lower class in the example set by Manuel and by Isidro, that of the individual, who, through the development of will power, improves his own lot within the bourgeois frame. Others, more realistic, would protest as Manuel did earlier, "Pero no todos están a bastaría altura para luchar."⁴

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⁴Ibid., p. 278.
Is Blasco Ibáñez guilty of plagiarism in *La horda*? In consideration of his method of creation, one feels that during the actual composition he probably was not conscious of using Baroja's material. However, when he came to re-shaping and condensing the work for publication, one feels reasonably certain that he did recognize the many likenesses between the two novels. His publication of *La horda* in spite of this realization amounts to an intentional disregard for his use of Baroja's material and leads one to decide that Baroja's charge is a legitimate one.
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