EMILIA PARDO BAZÁN: FEMINISM IN HER LIFE AND WORKS

THESIS

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By

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The purpose of this investigation is to show the relationship between the autobiographical information evidenced by the principal female characters in Emilia Pardo Bazán's major novels and her influence on nineteenth-century feminism in Spain. The changing nature of Pardo Bazán's feminism is studied through an analysis of two literary phases in her work. In the first, classified as naturalistic, Pardo Bazán concentrates on the nineteenth century woman and her limited role within society. The second phase reveals a change of perspective as the author creates a character type: this "new woman" is an expression of her feminist beliefs. As Pardo Bazán sought support for feminist goals, diverse intellectual activities characterized her life and became an integral aspect of her art.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

La condesa Emilia Pardo Bazán, one of Spain's most important novelists of the nineteenth century, was born on the sixteenth of September of 1851 in the Galician port city, la Coruña. Her parents, don José Pardo Bazán and doña Amalia de la Rúa, were part of the Spanish aristocracy of the time. Her father was a lawyer, a devout Catholic and a liberal in politics. "Sus pañales eran hidalgos. . . . Su pueblo era la Coruña, en la época en que la Coruña era quizás la ciudad más liberal de España."¹ Emilia Pardo Bazán was the only child of the couple and they showered many gifts and demonstrations of affection on their precocious daughter. Her childhood was filled with costly games and toys: a train set in which she could ride throughout the house and a hobby horse that never bored her as her expensively dressed dolls inevitably did. She was offered books on all subjects and reading levels. José A. Balseiro describes doña Emilia in this period of her life as

. . . uno de esos niños que leen cuanto cae por su banda, hasta los cucuruchos de especias y los papeles de resquillas; de esos niños que se pasan el día quietecitos en un rincón cuando se les da un libro,

¹"Nota preliminar," (author not given), prologue to Los pazos de Ulloa, Emilia Pardo Bazán (Buenos Aires, 1943), p. 10.
y a veces tienen ojeras y bizcan levemente a causa del esfuerzo impuesto a un nervio óptico endeble todavía.2

Unlike that of most female children of the nineteenth century Spanish upper class, doña Emilia's education was not restricted to the typically feminine occupations of playing the piano, speaking French, and learning to embroider. Although she did retain an acute interest in studying foreign languages throughout her life, she quickly informed her parents of her dislike for music and sewing. She preferred to spend her time painting landscapes of her beloved native city and cooking famous Galician recipes with the aid of the family cook. However, the major amusement of Pardo Bazán's youth was reading. Her mother had taught her to read when she was quite young and afterwards her parents had sent her to a French boarding school. This was the beginning of a lifelong relationship with French culture that later would bring much criticism to Pardo Bazán. During her summers, which were spent at home with her parents, she was taught mathematics and natural sciences by a friend of her father. She subsequently gained access to an extensive library that fascinated her more than any toy or playmate had. Joaquín de Entramabasaguas y Peña describes her reading interests as follows:

2José A. Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos (New York, 1933), p. 263.
Así fue la formación literaria y cultural de doña Emilia: lecturas desordenadas, pero asimiladas rápidamente por su viva inteligencia—el Quijote, la Biblia, la Iliada, una Historia de las Cruzadas, la Conquista de Méjico, de Solís; los Varones Ilustres, de Plutarco; las Décadas Romanas, de Tito Lívio; la Anábasis, de Jenofonte; las Novelas Ejemplares, de Cervantes; el Viaje de Anácarasis a Grecia, de Barthelmy; la Historia de cien años, de Cantu; obras sobre la Revolución Francesa, diccionarios, revistas, ilustraciones, montañas y lagunas desiguales en el paisaje de la cultura y la literatura. . . .—que le entretenían mas que los juegos propios de su edad. 3

Pardo Bazán's father, don José, who had a great influence on his daughter's intellectual life, encouraged her to satisfy her tireless search for knowledge. In her well-documented book concerning Pardo Bazán's life and works, Carmen Bravo-Villasante expresses don José's attitude:

Para que nada esté vedado [a doña Emilia], su mismo padre le abre el paraíso del mundo con estas palabras:

—"Mira, hija mía, los hombres somos muy egoístas, y si te dicen alguna vez que hay cosas que pueden hacer los hombres y las mujeres no, di que es mentira, porque no puede haber dos morales para los dos sexos."

¡Qué estupenda invitación a la vida!
En vez de prohibiciones, posibilidades; en lugar de vetos y renuncias, regalos afirmativos.
Por eso dirá siempre Emilia "mi inolvidable padre."
Se crió la niña creyendo que todo es posible y que no hay límites a sus deseos ni a su capacidad. 4

Her father's inspiring words seem to have challenged doña Emilia to prove their validity in later life through her constant battles against the male-dominated literary world.

3Joaquín de Entrambasaguas y Peña, Las mejores novelas contemporáneas, III (Barcelona, 1958), 895.

Doña Emilia's first attempts at writing were poems that she composed in her eleventh year. Her poetry was heavily influenced by Zorrilla, to whom she dedicated many of her early pieces. The French poets Alfred Musset and Victor Hugo also influenced her romantic style. The aspiring young poet often found themes in the political history of Spain. She threw her patriotic verses from the balcony of the house as the soldiers, having returned from the African expedition directed by the count of Lucena, marched by in triumph. As a mature writer, doña Emilia considered her own childhood poems to be detestable and "hermosas tonterías." Critics have agreed with this evaluation. "Sus comienzos literarios han sido pequeñas obras poéticas, que pasaron sin pena ni gloria." Fortunately, Pardo Bazán did not abandon her writing completely. She instead found a more original means of expression.

As well as offering intellectual inspiration to their young daughter, don José Pardo Bazán and his wife, doña Amalia, traveled with her throughout Europe. Through these travels, the nucleus of a thought was implanted in doña Emilia's mind; it developed later into the belief that Spain should become more European and cosmopolitan. "Museos, exposiciones,

5Ibid., p. 22 citing Emilia Pardo Bazán (no primary source given).
6"Noticia," (author not given), prologue to Cuentos de la tierra, Emilia Pardo Bazán (Buenos Aires, 1940), p. 7.
During these travels, Pardo Bazán acquired the habit of writing down the important places she had visited and her observations, a habit which she never lost. Later, she would publish some of these travelogues in an effort to inform the Spanish public of the cultural wealth of Europe.

After a year's engagement, Pardo Bazán was married in 1868 at the age of seventeen. Her husband, don José Quiroga y Pérez Deza, was nineteen and was studying law at the University of Santiago de Compostela. Doña Emilia also studied at the university and consistently received higher grades than her husband, which was a source of pride to him. His admiration of her intelligence would prompt him to later support her in her literary quests. Soon after their marriage, in September of 1868, the "Glorious" Revolution began and don José Pardo Bazán was appointed deputy in the constitutional court of don Salustiano de Clózaga. The entire family moved to Madrid, where doña Emilia was able to meet with many intellectuals and to take part in the social activities of the capital. The family continued to enjoy the summers in their country home, where doña Emilia absorbed the Galician spirit. It was during this period that Pardo Bazán's father

7Ibid.
was conceded the title of count by Pope Pius IX. Soon after this event the family moved again, this time to France, fleeing from the political and social disturbances in Spain.

The stay in Vichy was intellectually profitable for Pardo Bazán; here was her first direct contact with the French culture she had read about with such obsession. Much of her time was spent reading famous French classics and contemporary works. She also began studying English and Italian so that she could read Shakespeare, Keats, Shelley, and Silvio Pellico without the need for translations which were often imprecise. The two couples traveled throughout Europe, visiting Italy, Germany, and England; as always, doña Emilia carried her notebook and continually recorded her observations and impressions. Mariano Baquero Goyanes regards this period in France as a crucial one for Pardo Bazán:

Posiblemente, de todas sus experiencias y contactos europeos, el más intenso y persistente fue el de Francia, hasta el extremo de que no hay excesiva hiperbole en considerar que esta nación fue para la escritora gallega algo así como una segunda patria, al menos literariamente considerada.  

The return to Madrid in 1874 was a return to the superficial calm of court life under the reign of Amadeo de Saboya. Again Pardo Bazán participated in the social life of Madrid, attending bullfights, concerts, dramas, and elegant evening parties. In the midst of all this activity, doña Emilia felt

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an anxiety, a need to placate her insatiable curiosity and literary ambitions. She wrote of this feeling in her *Apuntes autobiográficos*: "[Estas actividades sociales] empezaron a dejarme en el alma un vacío, un sentimiento de angustia inexplicable." Her course of study broadened to include the new Krausist philosophers, which in turn led to an intensive study of many of the major philosophers: Kant, Spinoza, Schopenhauer, Spencer, Saint Thomas, Aristotle, Plato, and Saint Augustin. Bravo-Villasante comments upon Pardo Bazán's voracious and varied reading at this moment of her life:

Como los filósofos prescriben el conocimiento de todas las letras y las ciencias, se compraban botánica y libros de física y de química que va introduciendo sistematically en su cerebro. Aprende mineralogía, estudia historia y geografía, y con Flammarion la ciencia astronómica. El cosmos inmenso la seduce como a aquellas filósofas antiguas que renunciaban a las galas para encerrarse en la celda de estudio. Por un tiempo es monja reclusa, en clausura voluntaria como Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz, ansiosa de sabiduría.

Never before had doña Emilia read any of the contemporary Spanish novelists; now she avidly read the best novels of Galdós, Alarcón, Valera, and Pereda, realizing that the Spanish novel had changed from a novel of trite romantic adventure stories to one of astute regional observations. Her enthusiasm for this new novelistic direction gave her hope that she also could write about her own region, Galicia. The scientific philosophy she had studied prepared her for the

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new literary method; her observations of Galicia took on a scientifically detailed quality. Now her leisure time was employed in traveling throughout Galicia with her husband, taking copious notes which she would assimilate into her novels.

In 1876, after eight years of marriage, a son, Jaime, was born. Without interrupting her literary pursuits, Pardo Bazán cared for her child with deep maternal devotion. A book of poetry entitled *Jaime* was the spiritual culmination of this happy period in her life. At the same time, doña Emilia published an article, "Ensayo crítico de las obras del Padre Feijóo," for which she received a prize in an important competition in Orense. This tribute to Feijóo reveals Pardo Bazán's growing feminism, as he was considered the great defender of women's educational equality. With an increasing confidence in her own literary abilities, Pardo Bazán wrote her first novel, *Pascual López, autobiografía de un estudiante de medicina*. Published in 1879, the novel is romantic in theme but realistic in method and description. Perhaps Pardo Bazán's biggest triumph with this first novel was not the pleasant reviews of critics nor the book's moderately successful reception by the public, but the fact that she had not hidden her sex behind a pseudonym, as so many of her friends had advised her to do. Even in her early literary career, Pardo Bazán revealed her independence and a desire to confront openly the myriad problems of a woman novelist in nineteenth century Spain.
In 1879, having met and been disillusioned by her childhood idol, Zorrilla, Pardo Bazán began to write an historical novel about San Francisco de Asís. Interrupted in her studies by an attack of hepatitis, she again traveled to Vichy to enjoy the famous water treatments. While in France, she visited Victor Hugo and experienced another disillusionment. Hugo showed a profound ignorance of Spanish history and letters, which angered la Pardo "... hasta el punto de perder la veneración que tenía por él." In the process of losing one of the gods of her literary pantheon, however, Pardo Bazán had encountered a new one; during a respite from the difficult task of writing her religious musings about the famous Italian mystic, she read L'Assomoir by Emile Zola. His techniques, the experimental novel and naturalism, would be adapted throughout her works in an attempt to modernize the Spanish novel. The conflict between naturalistic determinism and the Catholic concept of free-will would become a dilemma that Pardo Bazán was never to resolve completely.

The purpose of this investigation is to show the relationship between the autobiographical information as evidenced by the principal female characters in doña Emilia Pardo Bazán's major novels and her influence on nineteenth century feminism in Spain. This paper will attempt to demonstrate, through a study of selected female characters, the changing nature of...
Pardo Bazán's feminism and her search for a literary method that would best serve this ideology. In her first phase, which can be classified as naturalistic, the author observes the nineteenth century woman in Spain, defining the various roles available to her. Novels representative of this phase are: Un viaje de novios (1881), La Tribuna (1882), El Cisne de Vilamorta (1884), Los pazos de Ulloa (1886), La Madre Naturaleza (1887), and Insolación (1889). The second phase of Pardo Bazán's works shows a developing interior approach to the female characters as well as a manifestation of feminism in the character type which can be designated as the "new woman." Doña Emilia moves from the stance of the detached, yet critical, observer of the first phase to the defender of the modern woman presented in the novels of the second phase. Novels that represent the second phase are: Una cristiana (1890), La prueba (1890), Doña Milagros (1894), Memorias de un solterón (1896), and La Quimera (1905). This literary trend parallels developments within her own life which led her to become a leading advocate for feminism in the conservative Spain of her time.
CHAPTER II

SPANISH NATURALISM AND THE NINETEENTH CENTURY WOMAN

Naturalism, in a purely philosophical context, describes a tendency toward atheism or pantheism. The term specifically applies to a type of philosophy which opposes the theological concept of God. Within the naturalistic context, the ultimate principle is ascribed to nature. Given this interpretation of the term, the relationship between science and nature assumes an objective and exact interdependence, one that relies on empirical evidence to support its existence. In science, this nineteenth century philosophy was expressed in the theory of positivism as presented by Auguste Comte. According to Comte, science could help man to dominate the world or its natural forces; it was a tool that could illustrate for man the effects of nature if not interpret its underlying causes. Comte's theory expanded the scientific philosophy to include society. "The human animal was merely a part of his philosophy or biology."¹ Thus, the science of sociology was conceived.

It was Hippolyte Taine, in an introduction to a study of English literature, who added a literary dimension to the

scientific vision of the human organism. Generally, the
realist writers of the nineteenth century enthusiastically
accepted positivism and its philosophy of determinism. Charac-
ters could be described in depraved situations without the
need for moralizing on the part of the author, who was merely
communicating his scientific observations of reality. Natu-
ralism, as it was lucidly presented by Taine, was composed of
three determining forces: heredity, environment, and the
time in which a particular culture lived. Charles Darwin's
doctrine of biological evolution and Claude Bernard's experi-
mental methods strengthened the scientific literary system.

These ideas formed the cornerstone of the deterministic
philosophy of Emile Zola, who was to write the first natural-
istic novel. Zola's bête humaine or physiological man was
the outcome of incontrollable biological forces that could be
studied but not dominated. In the process of describing
scientific hypotheses in a literary context, the novel became
a means to prove sociological assumptions.

Just as a scientist such as Claude Bernard
assumes an hypothesis and then proceeds with a
series of trials to prove or disprove it, so the
novelist experiments with his characters, subjecting
them to the pushes and pulls . . . of their heredi-
tary equipment and of their surroundings in time
and place.2

The experimental novel is the literary form of the methods
employed by nineteenth century scientists. Naturalism, then,

2Ibid., p. 9.
is a formula which reduces the novel to experiment and analysis. The naturalistic novel in its purest form, as Zola conceived it, has a plot which arises spontaneously from the relationship between the characters and their surroundings. The adventure-filled exaggerations of the romanticists are rejected as being inconsistent with everyday life. The "slice of life" proper to the naturalistic novel is a portion of reality recorded with impersonal detachment. In order to situate firmly the novel in this everyday reality, the naturalistic author must develop the practice of documentation which, in turn, demands extensive research of the physical environment as well as analysis of human behavior. It was unfortunate, perhaps, that Zola and his imitators focused their literary experiments on the lower classes, for naturalism, as a result, was equated by its opponents with the bestial and sordid. Indeed, descriptions are explicit in the naturalistic novel, but not with the purpose of offending the reader's sensibilities; they are necessary in order to reveal the effects of natural forces on the characters.

Naturalism started in a century when it was the fashion to cover, disguise and idealize everything connected with the relation of the sexes. It is no wonder that naturalistic frankness caused such an outcry.\(^3\)

The impersonal style of the naturalistic writers did little to correct the misconceptions of the critics. If the writer did not comment upon the sordid events, then it was arbitrarily

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 22.
assumed that he approved of the immorality described. Yet, within the novelistic formula of naturalism, moralizing on the part of the author would destroy the objective quality of the novel; the resulting work would cease to be a scientific document. The author is detached, not because of his tacit approval of immoral behavior, but because he deems it the reader's responsibility to derive his own conclusions. The moral judgments and hypotheses concerning social evils are suggested and implied, but without didactics. Zola's experimental novel, and naturalism as a whole, demanded a deliberate method and frank descriptions in order to expose the social malaise of the nineteenth century.

Insisting upon free will, Catholic dogma rejects the determinism that is inherent in naturalistic philosophy. Although Pardo Bazán would always consider Zola as one of her literary heroes, as a devout Roman Catholic she was unable to accept his ideology completely. Instead, doña Emilia adapted a moderate form that has been termed Catholic naturalism by the critic, Donald Fowler Brown. Given her beliefs, she could subscribe only to a partial determinism, a force that influences human life but does not dominate it absolutely. Rejecting the bête humaine of Zola and the shallowness of the purely physiological man, Pardo Bazán expanded the naturalistic view of man as a mere animal organism to include spirituality as an integral part of his reality. Her vision of human existence transcends that of the naturalistic writers, who espoused a
novelistic formula which ignored the duality of mind and body. Throughout her novels and in literary polemics regarding naturalism, doña Emilia would reject consistently the anti-Catholic elements of the new school. As Chandler and Schwartz explain:

Pardo Bazán saw two aspects to Naturalism, the repulsive, dealing with the miserable and disgusting instincts of man, which she consciously rejected, and the idea that all things belong to nature. She wanted to adopt certain ideas of the new movement but to give them a Spanish meaning.  

The works of Pardo Bazán reflect the social structure of Spain at the turn of the century. In the words of Ronald Hilton,

Politically and socially, doña Emilia sought radical changes. Despite her traditionalism, she constantly subjected the prevailing social structure of Spain to unsparing criticism. She felt that the fundamental values of Spanish society were wrong. They had as their centre the traditional idea of honor, which Leopoldo Alas had lashed so bitterly in *La Regenta*.  

But, the most distressing aspect of Spanish society in Pardo Bazán's estimation was the lack of an intellectual element. The traditional aristocracy lacked effective leaders, was devoid of enlightenment and its reactionary pose precluded the exercise of an informed conscience. The entire social structure had lapsed into decay. "The Revolution of 1868 was a fierce protest against all this corruption in the Spanish

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social system." Pardo Bazán, as a defender of the Revolution, saw the dynamic qualities of the Spanish lower classes and the possibility for a revitalization of the liberal aristocracy. Her aim was to inform the Spanish public through her novels. Her technique, however, rejected the moralizing of the Spanish realists; instead, doña Emilia presented her case in the impersonal style of the naturalists: it is the relationship between her characters and their social environment that presents problems and implies solutions to the reader. Her modified acceptance of naturalism was harmonious with her greater goal: a conscious attempt to renovate Spanish literature and, ultimately, Spanish society.

As the liberal Spanish politicians had taken the French Republic as their model, Pardo Bazán had adopted French naturalism as a technique to express her evaluation of Spanish society. However, only a few critics understood her literary purpose. In defense of Pardo Bazán's novels, Andrenio (Gómez de Baquero) evaluates Spanish isolationism:

Lo que ocurre es que los españoles tenemos el pavor de la invasión extranjera. Sentimos un miedo atroz de que nos conquisten el alma, como si no estuviésemos muy seguros de ella ni nos fiásemos de su independencia. En nuestro carácter y en nuestras costumbres hay cierta endogamia de ideas. Queremos casarnos exclusivamente con nuestras propias ideas castizas, y cuando por casualidad nos deposamos con alguna de fuera, la buscamos en seguida antecedentes indígenas para disculparnos de aquella infidelidad a la tradición.  

Ibid., p. 8.

Andrenio (Gómez de Baquero), De Gallardo a Unamuno (Madrid, 1926), p. 154.
It was this kind of mental narrowness described by Andrenio that prompted Pardo Bazán to cross the Pyrenees in search of new modes for the Spanish novel; it also earned her widespread and vociferous criticism, for her tendency toward europeización was misunderstood by many Spanish intellectuals. In a prime example of this attitude, Julio Cejador y Frauca condemned even her limited acceptance of the new method:

[Dona Emilia] no se aprovecha de su español realismo. Hay demasia de ligereza extranjera, francesa, mejor diremos, y poco de la gravedad castiza española en la manera de tratar ciertos asuntos novelescos, históricos y críticos. Hay alguna mayor liviandad y hasta regodeo en casos crueles de las pinturas y escenas de sus novelas y cuentos... El estilo y lenguaje de doña Emilia, sobre todo, se resiente bastante de extranjerismo; es poco castizo, tiene mucha fraseología de cajón, de esa jerga que hoy corre medio francesa, medio científica, plagada de galicismos, de francesas metáforas, de abstractos, de tecnicismo culto.8

Perhaps it was doña Emilia's social position as a woman that rendered her so susceptible to the implications of determinism. The Spanish woman of the nineteenth century was molded by her environment and heredity just as inevitably as Zola's alcoholics and beggars. Through the course of her novels, Pardo Bazán reveals the social development of the Spanish woman at the turn of the century, an evolution in which the author herself would take part. The first phase of novels to be discussed gives a dispassionate evaluation of the nineteenth century woman; the author's viewpoint is detached

8Julio Cejador y Frauca, Historia de la lengua y literatura castellana (Madrid, 1918), p. 271.
as she systematicallycatalogues various types of women and their roles within society. She analyzes the situation of the middle-class woman: the one who is satisfied to accept her destiny as well as the one who strives to overcome it. She treats in a similar fashion these types in the lower class. She investigates the emotional development of women as they cope with their sexual reality. In her most intensely naturalistic moment, she presents a portrait of the passive woman who cannot escape dominance by nature and, therefore, by men. Subsequently, she examines the woman whose self-concept enables her to control her environment and social relationships. All of these portraits are laced with autobiographical allusions and suggest the inevitable feminism inherent in Pardo Bazán's second phase.

Un viaje de novios (1881)

Emilia Pardo Bazán's first novel, Pascual López, autobiografía de un estudiante de medicina (1879), is a romantic story that has little relationship to the author's literary goals or development. She was aware of the weaknesses in the novel's construction, for, at her request, it was not included in the first edition of Obras completas. Her second novel, Un viaje de novios, is, however, an important work in that it reveals the beginning of naturalism's influence on her style as well as a certain amount of autobiographical information. In effect, it constitutes her first
prominent literary statement. The novel's prologue reveals both her acceptance of naturalism and her reservations with regard to Zola's new school. As a statement of Pardo Bazán's own literary creed, the prologue later would be modified and expanded into La cuestión palpitante (1882). This essay, originally published as a series of newspaper articles in La Época, is not a catechism of naturalism, but an exposition and critique of the aesthetic ideas of the French literary doctrine. The prologue of Un viaje de novios expressed doña Emilia's initial reaction to naturalism and the novel is her first attempt to use its methods. It emphasizes her literary goal in regard to the Spanish novel. In an effort to bring about a renaissance in Spanish letters, she appropriated Zola's descriptive methods and character presentations. She considered the new school to be a healthy influence on the stagnant romanticism of the majority of Spanish novelists.

The romantic elements that are so profuse in the novel have disturbed many critics in their attempts to classify Un viaje de novios as a purely naturalistic work. While many of the techniques are naturalistic, the plot and principal characters are romantic. The plot of the novel, in accordance with the formula of the French master, is simplistic and develops naturally from the interplay among the principal characters. However, diverging from the literary formula, the characters

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9Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 86.
are not normal types involved in daily situations. The romantic, or melodramatic tone of the novel pervades both characters and plot. There is, then, a discrepancy between what Pardo Bazán proposed to do in the novel as she expressed in the prologue and the actual literary effect of the novel. José A. Balseiro points out the paradox: "Si juzgamos Un viaje de novios atendiéndonos a la teoría de su creadora, comprobaremos en ellas contrariedades entre el crítico y el novelista. No podríamos decir que es ficción de estudio social, psicológico o histórico."10 The novel, by its independence of the naturalistic formula, parallels Pardo Bazán's hesitancy concerning the new literary philosophy.

Un viaje was originally planned as a travel book, with descriptions of Pardo Bazán's stay in Vichy in 1881 as the subject matter. The author changed this earlier intention, giving this explanation:

... acudió al punto a mi mente el mucho tedio y enfado que suelen causarme las híbridas obrillas viatorías, las Impresiones y Diarios, donde el autor refiere sus éxtasis ante alguna catedral o puerto de vista, y a renglón seguido cuenta si acá dió una peseta de propina al mozo, y si acullá cenó ensalada, con otros datos no menos dignos de pasar a la Historia y grabarse en mármoles y bronce. Movida de esta consideración, resolvi a novelar en vez de referir, haciendo que los países por mí recorridos fuesen escenarios del drama.11

10Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 266.
11Emilia Pardo Bazán, "Un viaje de novios," Obras completas, I (Madrid, 1957), 68. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.
With a novelist's approach, Pardo Bazán was able to impose elements of character and plot upon the description of landscape. Furthermore, she chose to comment upon, rather than simply observe, Spanish social customs and manners, especially those concerning young women. Rather than a factual recollection of the author's own honeymoon, this work is an expose of a level of Spanish society written from the perspective of one who was a member of that society. Doña Emilia was young when she wrote the novel, yet at the age of thirty, she had been married for thirteen years. An unhappy marriage had altered her perspective to the extent that she offers a rather cynical outlook on the destiny of the nineteenth-century woman. The romantic theme is secondary in significance in comparison to the astute appraisal of social mores.

Guillermo de Torre recognizes Pardo Bazán's underlying purpose: "Es una novela realista, un estudio de caracteres, donde el presumible lirismo epitalámico aplicable a todo viaje de novios está reemplazado por lo irónico, lo burlón, aun lo grotesco . . ." Un viaje de novios reflects Pardo Bazán's female resentment, her disenchantment with vacuous urbanities,

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12 In his portrait of doña Emilia, Ramón Gómez de la Serna presents a sensitive explanation of the tone of her early novels: "Casada a los dieciséis años con un seño formal, celebra su viaje de novios que siempre estará queriendo compensar sus novelas." Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Nuevos retratos contemporáneos (Buenos Aires, 1945), p. 138.

and her disdain for the frivolity of Spanish life during the Restoration.

The central character of the novel, Lucía González, is a young girl from León, an hija del pueblo. The first scene of the novel presents Lucía at the train station, surrounded by her girlfriends. The honeymoon trip is about to begin and the farewell party is animated and noisy. Lucía, having just celebrated her wedding, has been transformed suddenly into a woman:

Contaría la heroína de la fiesta unos dieciocho años: aparentaba menos, atendiendo al mohín infantil de su boca y al redondo contorno de sus mejillas, y más, consideradas las florecientes curvas de su talle y la plentitud de robustez y vida de toda su persona, nada de hombros altos y estrechos, nada de inverosímiles caderas como las que se ven en los grabados de figurines, que traen a la memoria la muñeca rellena de serrín y paja; sino una mujer conforme, no al tipo convencional de la moda de una época, pero al tipo eterno de la forma femenina, tal cual la quisieron Natura y arte (Viaje, p. 69).

Immediately following this wholesome picture of Lucía, Pardo Bazán describes her husband, Aurelio Miranda:

Medio siglo menos un lustro, victoriosamente combatido por un sastre y mucho alino y cuidado de tocador; las espaldas queriendo arquearse un tanto sin permiso de su dueño; un rostro de palidez trasnochadora, sobre el cual se recortaban, con la crudeza de rayas de tinta, las guías del engomado bigote; cabellos cuya ralidad se advertía aun bajo el ala tersa del hongo de fieltro ceniza; marchita y abolsada y floja la piel de las ojeras; terroso el párpado y plúmbea la pupila, pero aún gallarda la apostura y esmeradamente conservados los impotentes restos de lo que antaño fue un buen mozo; esto se veía en el desposado (Viaje, p. 70).
Lucía's youth and vigor are heightened by the effect of this immediate contrast with her pseudo-aristocratic and infirm husband. Suffering from a liver ailment, the honeymoon trip to Vichy merely offers Miranda the chance to enjoy the mineral baths and recuperate. Throughout this farewell scene Pardo Bazán uses many naturalistic techniques of description. She repeatedly describes Lucía's friends as ants: "La escolta de la novia, mucho más numerosa, parecía poblado hormiguero . . ." (Viaje, p. 69). "Entre aquellas hormigas humanas . . ." (Viaje, p. 69). The train is a serpent winding its way through the valley: "Ya oscilaba la férrea culebra . . ." (Viaje, p. 71). The effect is one of dehumanization of the characters and a personification of nature and inanimate objects. These details of physical description as evidenced in the sketches of Lucía and Miranda, as well as the naturalistic renderings of landscapes and minor characters, suggest the influence of the French formula. But, since Pardo Bazán never would embrace Zola's philosophy fully, it is not surprising that Un viaje de novios contains so few naturalistic topics. The novel is more precisely a study than it is a documentary investigation. While she desired to free the Spanish novel from the stagnation of idealism, Pardo Bazán refused to imprison it within the limitations of an inflexible formula.

Of primary significance in the novel is the relationship between Lucía and her father. Their deep love for each other
is an autobiographical illustration of Pardo Bazán's closeness to her own father and his importance in her life. Lucía's absence will leave señor Joaquín alone, his wife having died when Lucía was very young. As the train arrives, father and daughter say goodbye: "Corría la novia a su padre, abiertos los brazos, y el viejo y la nina se confundieron en un abrazo largo, verdadero, popular, abrazo en que crujían los huesos y el aliento se acortaba" (Viaje, p. 72). The second chapter of the novel is a flashback to Lucía's adolescence. More autobiographical information is revealed in the education of Lucía. The similarity is apparent between Lucía's course of study and that of doña Emilia's youth:

Quiso el señor Joaquín, a su modo, educar bien a Lucía, y, en efecto, hizo cuanto es posible para estropear la superior naturaleza de su hija, sin conseguirlo; tal era ella de buena. Impulsado, por una parte, por el deseo de dar a Lucía conocimientos que la realzasen; recelando, de otra, que se dijese por el pueblo, en son de burla, que el tío Joaquín aspiraba a una hija señorita, educóla híbridamente, teniéndola, como externa, en un colegio, bajo la fértula de una directora muy remilgada, que afirmaba saberlo todo. Allí enseñaron a Lucía a chapurrear algo el francés y a teclear un poco el piano; ideas serias, perdone usted por Dios; conocimientos de la sociedad, cero, y como ciencia femenina--ciencia harto más complicada y vasta de lo que piensan los profanos--, alguna laborcica tediosa e inútil, amén de fea: cortes de zapatillas de pésimo gusto, pecheras de camisa bordadas, faltriqueras de abaloria... Felizmente, el padre Urtazu sembró, entre tanta tierra vana, unos cuantos granitos de trigo, y la enseñanza religiosa y moral de Lucía fué, aunque sumaria, recta y sólida, cuanto eran fútiles sus estudios de colegio (Viaje, p. 74).

In addition to planning her education in harmony with the social norms of the nineteenth century, it is Lucía's father
who determines the course her life will take. He decides that she will marry:

. . . no faltaba al Leonés [Lucía's father] la aspiración propia de todo hombre que ejerce humildes oficios y se ganó con sudores de pan, de que su descendencia beneficiase tamaños esfuerzos, ascendiendo un peldaño en la escala social. . . . Vino a parar a la razonable conclusión de que el matrimoniol realizaría la anhelada metamorfosis de muchacha en dama (Viaje, p. 75).

The father's search for an appropriate son-in-law ends when he meets Aurelio Miranda, a minor political official from Madrid. The marriage arranged with the aid of a large dowry, Lucía's father sees his lifelong dream realized: "... el ingreso de Lucía en la esfera señoril tan ambicionada" (Viaje, p. 81). Lucía's acceptance of the marriage plans is easily obtained. Her passive attitude, befitting a young girl of the nineteenth century, is displayed in the conversation that occurs prior to the wedding. When her father introduces the matter to her, she listens attentively and answers submissively:

--Yo no he pensado despacio en esas cosas, ni sé cómo será el enamorarse. El asunto merece pensarse; ¡hagame usted el favor de pensarlo por mí! ¿Qué entiendo yo de bodas ni de? . . . No es que soy simple; es que no quiero entender, ¿lo oye usted? Porque si comienzo a cavilar en estas cosas doy en no comer, en no jugar, en no dormir. . . . No quiero acordarme sino de mis juegos y de mis lecciones (Viaje, p. 82).

The wedding is arranged by señor Joaquín, Miranda, and the Jesuit priest, padre Urtazu, without Lucía's involvement or concern. Pardo Bazán might well be remembering the wedding arrangements between her father and the one who was to be
her husband. Likewise, Lucía's exhilaration and exuberance during the honeymoon trip surely recall Pardo Bazán's own nuptial journey and her fascination with the landscapes of northern Spain. As a result, long descriptions of nature fill the novel. Lucía's spontaneity and childlike vulnerability to her surroundings sharply contrast with Miranda's jaded and apathetic personality. Again Pardo Bazán mirrors her own marital situation through this couple's relationship.

One cannot help but discern in Miranda's character an uncomplimentary sketch of doña Emilia's husband, don José.

The subplot of Un viaje de novios centers on two characters, Perico and Pilar Gonzalvo, who are brother and sister. Although interruptive, it offers a relief from the cloying romanticism of the main story and presents two important facets of Pardo Bazán's early literary development. Pilar is suffering from tuberculosis, which gives doña Emilia a chance to utilize many naturalistic descriptions of her illness and, ultimately, her death. Secondly, the subplot functions as a vehicle in which Pardo Bazán expresses her attitude toward the typical citybred young woman: "Tenía Pilar, de edad entonces de veintitrés años, la malicia precoz que distingue a las señoritas que, con un pie en la aristocracia por sus relaciones y otro en la clase media por sus antecedentes, conocen todos los lados de la sociedad" (Viaje, p. 114). Pilar's struggles to enter the Spanish upper class are embodiments of Pardo Bazán's feminist reaction against a
society which reduces women to a superficial plane of exist-
ence: "El mundo es ancho para los hombres, pero angosto, 
angosto para las mujeres" (Viaje, p. 115). Pilar, with 
typical Restoration frivolity, frets about clothes and parties 
while disregarding more serious values. Her personal health, 
for example, is of no concern to her. She literally leaves 
her deathbed to attend a stylish dance for the sole purpose 
of exhibiting a new piece of jewelry: "Pilar se consumía, a 
toda costa quería volar, romper el opaco capullo de la 
enfermedad y presentarse de nuevo, brillante mariposa, en 
los círculos mundanos" (Viaje, p. 137). Quite simply, Pilar 
dies as a result of her vanity.

Un viaje de novios as a whole lacks cohesive force due 
to many interpolated scenes and descriptions and prompts 
Emilio González López to assert that "abundan en la novela 
las descripciones detallistas. . . . La presentación de esos 
ambientes (de la fonda, de Vichy, del tren, etc.) es 
superior al análisis de los caracteres y al desarrollo de la 
trama."14 Nevertheless, the novel is Pardo Bazán's first 
endeavor to avail herself of naturalistic techniques without 
accepting its underlying philosophy. It contains certain 
autobiographical references that offer an insight into the 
author and her incipient awareness of the nineteenth century 
woman's plight. Her subsequent novels of the first phase

14Emilio González López, Historia de la literatura española: La edad moderna, siglos XVII y XIX (New York, 
will reveal Pardo Bazán's literary stature as a naturalistic writer to whom social problems, particularly those dealing with women, will become increasingly urgent.

La Tribuna (1882)

Prior to the publication of Pardo Bazán's second important novel, her series of articles collectively entitled La cuestión palpitante was presented to the Spanish public. Later published in book form, the articles analyze Zola's naturalism from a Spanish point of view. Similar in content to the prologue of Un viaje de novios, the essays reject the anti-Catholic and deterministic elements of the philosophy. However, this later statement by Pardo Bazán broadens the limited perspective of the earlier prologue in the greater acceptance of naturalistic techniques and topics. Clarín, in the prologue to La cuestión palpitante, describes doña Emilia as a sabio: a scholar who had made an informed study of the naturalistic school and who was able to make a lucid presentation of her opinions.15 Pardo Bazán, despite her rejection of the fatalistic doctrine, admired Zola artistically. This led many critics to believe that she defended naturalism completely, a misconception that would plague Pardo Bazán throughout her semi-naturalistic phase. Juan Valera, Menéndez y Pelayo, and Julio Cejador y Frauca were

15Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), prologue to La cuestión palpitante, Emilia Pardo Bazán (Madrid, 1883), p. vi.
the harshest critics of doña Emilia's role in the intro-
duction of naturalism to Spanish letters. Even Zola, although
he expressed his admiration for Pardo Bazán as an instigator
of a Spanish literary renovation, did not understand her
attempt to reconcile Catholicism and naturalism: "Lo que no
puedo ocultar es mi extrañeza de que la señora Pardo Bazán
sea católica ferviente, militante, y a la vez naturalista;
y me lo explico por lo que oigo decir que el naturalismo de
esa señora es puramente formal, artístico y literario."16
Zola's personal evaluation of doña Emilia's naturalism as
being strictly a formal and stylistic vehicle did not prevent
the Spanish critics from finding sacrilege and heresy in her
works.

La Tribuna adheres more fully to Zola's experimental
formula than do doña Emilia's previous novels. The tech-
niques of detailed observation, logical connection of events,
popular language, sexual frankness and even partial deter-
minism of heredity and environment are applied in this social
study of Marineda (la Coruña). But the novel is not a color-
less imitation of the French master; it deals with themes and
characters that are completely Spanish. There were many dif-
ferences between the Spanish and French lower classes which
demanded a regional documentation. Emilio González López, in
his interpretation of La Tribuna, points out its definite
Spanish tone:

16Emile Zola (no primary source given) cited in Bravo-
Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 89.
Es un auténtico tratado sociológico de la vida española en una capital de provincia en el periodo de crisis política producida por la Revolución de septiembre (1868), sin que falte en este tratado el capítulo a las clases urbanas, a la media y a la obrera, la presentación de las aspiraciones y necesidades de una y otra y las relaciones entre ambas. 17

The social and political problems of Spain, fundamental themes in all of Pardo Bazán's novels, were evidenced in the Glorious Revolution. Doña Emilia was seventeen years old when this social cataclysm upset the traditional and institutionalized hierarchy of Spanish life. Her feelings about the Revolution are presented in this novel through the female protagonist. Amparo, as the Tribuna, is a personification of Spain during this political upheaval; furthermore, she represents the lower class woman's incipient awareness of the social circumstances that envelop her. The dynamic quality of the proletariat is also exemplified by the political activism of this young woman who works in a cigar factory in Marineda. Through an analysis of this character, the reader is able to experience a synthesis of the working class spirit. The cigar factory, reminiscent of Lope's Fuenteovejuna, represents a collective personality which gives a broader meaning to the individuals who work within its walls. 18

Pardo Bazán's

17 González López, Historia, p. 474.

18 Pardo Bazán spent two months making daily visits to the tobacco factory in la Coruña in order to document the novel. The presence of the aristocratic señora disturbed the factory women until doña Emilia took her young son, Jaime, with her on the outings. The child captivated the women while doña Emilia made note of their speech patterns, details of dress and the gruesome working conditions.
selection of a female protagonist who works in a factory and is politically transformed by the Glorious Revolution expresses the author's personal relationship with her native city and its inhabitants and, on a political level, the novel presents Pardo Bazán's retrospective pessimism concerning the effects of the Revolution on the Spanish social order.

The plot of *La Tribuna*, in keeping with the formula of the experimental novel, is simple, as in *Viaje*, and arises spontaneously from the interaction of the characters and their environment. The daring treatment of the themes of seduction and betrayal classifies the novel as a naturalistic social study. Donald Fowler Brown considers the novel to be purely experimental, one that was composed according to the Zola pattern.¹⁹ His summary of the plot reveals the lack of dramatic elaboration which is characteristic of naturalism:

The milieu studied in *La Tribuna* is that of a tobacco factory and its surroundings in la Coruña. The year is 1868, at the time of the Revolution. The racial heritage is that of the working classes of Galicia. The plot is very simple: a daughter of the people becomes enthusiastic over the coming Republic and the equality it will bring; possessed of a good reading voice, she is delegated to read the newspapers to her fellow cigarmakers, and thus she becomes a sort of tribune of the people; filled with confidence in the coming equality, she allows herself to be seduced by a hard-hearted but handsome señorito, and has a child by him which he quite realistically forgets all about. The Revolution ends in a Restoration, high hopes are dashed, and honor is flown.²⁰

²⁰Ibid., p. 73.
The fate of Amparo, her seduction and betrayal, is the fate of the working class in the social struggle during this period. Several critics have found this political symbolism that surrounds the personal story of Amparo to be thematically unsatisfactory:

[La Tribuna] puede pasar como sátira política y como novela docente. Nada gana la novela con esta mezcla de aspectos, de los cuales, uno, el político, deshumaniza lo que el otro, el amoroso, hubiera humanizado. Si como mujer llega a interesarnos algo Amparo, como Tribuna y como revolucionaria no nos interesa poco ni mucho. Y, en definitiva, como mujer, como obrera y como revolucionaria es un carácter débil, sin atractivo especial.21

Juan Fernández Luján agrees with this opinion, commenting that "es verdaderamente lastimoso que resalte el ridículo por ciertas ideas políticas."22 Yet the political naiveté which is expressed by Pardo Bazán through the character of Amparo is a realistic portrayal of the political innocence of the proletariat, most particularly the innocence of the woman of this social class. As Clarín indicates in Sermón perdido, Amparo is "una muchacha vulgar,"23 for Pardo Bazán’s intention was not to present an exceptional being, but a typical working girl who has social aspirations and a crecive political awareness.

23Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), Sermón perdido (Madrid, 1885), p. 115.
The characterization of Amparo begins with a naturalistic scene in which the young girl is helping her father, señor Rosendo, in his work. He is a barquillero and it is necessary to rise early to make the pastries for the day's trade. The detailed description of the amount of physical labor involved is a pessimistic and monotonous presentation of the drudgery of the working class. The work is difficult for Amparo, who "de tiempo en tiempo . . . lanzaba codiciosas ojeadas a la calle." When the morning's work is at an end, Amparo goes to Mass. "Y se lanzó a la calle con la impetuosidad y brío de un cohete bien disparado" (Tribuna, p. 106).

As Lucía in Un viaje de novios is an hija del pueblo, Amparo is an hija de la calle:

Mientras su padre no se marchaba, el miedo a un pasagonzalos sacudido con el cargador la tenía quieta ensartando y colocando barquillos; pero apenas el viejo se terciaba la correa del tubo, sentía Amparo en las piernas un hormigueo, un bullir de la sangre, una impaciencia como si le naciesen alas a miles en los talones. La calle era su paraíso. El gentío la enamoraba; los codazos y empujones la halagaban cual si fuesen caricias; la música militar penetraba en todo su ser, produciéndole escalofríos de entusiasmo. Pasábase horas y horas correteando sin objeto al través de la ciudad, y volvía a casa con los pies descalzos y manchados de lodo, la saya en jirones, hecha una sopa, mocosa, despeinada, perdida y rebosante de dicha y salud por todos lo poros de su cuerpo. A fuerza de filípicas maternales, corría una escoba por el piso, salaba el caldo, traía una herrada de agua; en seguida, con rapidez de ave, se evadía de la jaula y tornaba a su libre vagancia por calles y callejones (Tribuna, p. 107).

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24Emilia Pardo Bazán, "La Tribuna," Obras completas, II (Madrid, 1956), 105. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.
Amparo accompanies her father as he walks the streets of Marineda and, on one of these outings, she meets Baltasar Sobrado, who is enchanted with her childish and natural beauty:

Miraba el alférez [Baltasar] a la muchacha: ... es verdad que había ojos grandes, pobladas pestañas, dientes como gotas de leche; pero la tez era cetrina, el pelo embrollado semejaba un felpudo y el cuerpo y traje competían en desaliño y poca gracia (Tribuna, p. 111).

As Amparo is too young for a serious affair, Baltasar merely flirts with her and envisions how she will look in two years. In the meanwhile, Baltasar courts a young señorita, Josefina García, who is the antithesis of Amparo. Pardo Bazán's use of contrast between two characters is a baroque element in her style that reoccurs frequently. The difference between Amparo and Josefina is stark and emphasizes the latter's shallowness:

Cuanto se ponía Josefina ajustábase siempre a los últimos decretos de la moda, no sin cierta exageración y nimiedad, que olía a figurín casero. Era la condición del cuerpo de la señorita semejante a la de la geletina que los escultores usan para vaciar sus estatuas, que recibe toda forma que se le quiera imprimir. Josefina entraba dócil en los moldes impuestos por la moda, sin rebelarse ni protestar jamás. Tenía su físico algo de impersonal, una neutralidad que le permitía variar de peinado y de adorno sin mudar de tipo. Mediana de estatura, su rostro prolongado y sus agradables facciones no ofrecían rasgos característicos. Sus ojos, ni chicos ni grandes, no eran feos, pero sí dominantes y escudrinadores más de lo que a su edad y doncellez convenía; su sonrisa, entre reservada y candida, desmasiado permanente en los labios para no tuviese visos de fingida y afectada; su talle, modelado por el corsé, sería pobre de formas sin hábiles artificios del traje, como un volante sobre los hombros, o en la cadera, no reforzasen sus diámetros. Sin alino y
Josefina, the middle-class stereotype, understands little of politics, which is Amparo's obsession. Whenever Baltasar mentions the political events of the day, her response is that she does not understand. Pardo Bazán uses her to reveal the typical mindlessness of the señoritas of the nineteenth century. The portrait of Josefina is similar to that of Pilar in Un viaje de novios; she is a young girl who spends all her time and energy trying to be elegant and, therefore, is cursi. If, at the end of the novel, Baltasar returns to Josefina, it is not because of her physical charms but due to her large inheritance and social position.

Amparo's metamorphosis from a young, innocent girl into a woman seduced and abandoned parallels the political evolution which Pardo Bazán describes in the book. Amparo's son is born on the day the Republic is announced; both the newborn creatures are illegitimate but they are links to the future:

... la madre y amante defraudada, en lugar de borrar la mancha de su deshonra con el suicidio, prefiere la nueva vida que le ofrece el niño que busca ávido su pecho maternal. En este desenlace, en el que la vida ahuyenta la sombra de la muerte, penetra, con el naturalismo, un sentido más humano, y quizás más gallego, del honor.25

Motherhood ennobled the nineteenth century woman regardless of social position; Amparo's dream of climbing the social ladder by marrying her señorito has been replaced by the

maternal instinct to protect and care for her son. The
description of the childbirth is naturalistic, as are many
of the scenes in the novel, but the effects of the birth are
too optimistic to fit within the cynical determinism of the
school. Cejador y Frauca, in his usual nationalistic stance,
credits Spain for this optimism:

Pero la verdad es que la autora jamás atrebió a
traer el naturalismo en crudo, la novela documental,
determinista, de solas fealdades sociales y hediondas
porquerías, de negrura pesimista y mal humor. Su
españolismo la libró, como a los demás novelistas de
por entonces, de tales exageraciones ultrarrealistas. . . .
La sana alegría y buen humor que da el cielo castellano
no se compaginan con las tristezas lóbregas de los
escritores franceses, decadentes y gastados.26

Whatever the reason may be, Pardo Bazán captures the expecta-
tions of the working classes, the belief in progress that
frees the masses from their monotonous existence: "En medio
de la vulgaridad e insulsez de su vida diaria y de la monotonía
del trabajo siempre idéntico a sí mismo, tales azares revolu-
cionarios eran poesía, novela, aventura, espacio azul por
donde volar con alas de oro" (Tribuna, p. 141). Amparo
symbolizes this patriotic idealism as she heroically displays
the true working class spirit that Pardo Bazán felt to be
crucial in the revitalization of Spanish society. Thus La
Tribuna reveals in a microcosm the liberating effects of the
Glorious Revolution and an anticipation of the future.

The secondary and tertiary characters of the novel are
described following the experimental formula, a technique

26Cejador y Frauca, Lengua y literatura, p. 274.
which Pardo Bazán used throughout the first phase of her novels. Ana, *la Guardiana*, and Carmela are three exquisite sketches of the lower class woman. They are types of the nineteenth century woman who cope in various ways with their social and economic positions. Ana, who is Amparo's best friend, also has a boyfriend from the middle class. Both are initially certain that their dreams will be realized, that they will become *señoras* and that the leveling effect of the Revolution will bring them honor and material comfort. This false confidence blinds them to the truth of the situation; they will both be betrayed by their handsome tenorios. *La Guardiana* is a sensitive and beautifully pure girl who, with her brothers and sister, presents a study of heredity within the lower class:

Guardiana era huérfana; su padre y madre murieron del pecho, con diferencia de días, quedando a cargo una muchacha, de dos lustros de edad, cuatro hermanos, todos marcados con la mano de hierro de la enfermedad hereditaria: epiléptico el uno, escrofulosos y raquiticos dos, y la última, niña de tres años, sordomuda" (*Tribuna*, pp. 127-128).

Carmela, a lacemaker who dreams of becoming a nun, is the only character in the novel who fully achieves her aspirations. She dares to acquire the necessary dowry to enter a religious order by playing the lottery. As she prepares to leave, she warns Amparo about the inevitability of Baltasar's intentions. Carmela's realistic attitude concerning the effects of the Revolution contrasts with Amparo's false confidence. Her religious faith proves to be of greater substance than do
Amparo's futile longings for social position. Carmela's role within the novel, although minor, foreshadows the spiritual tone of doña Emilia's second phase of novels.

La Tribuna is a masterpiece of Spanish naturalism and social documentation. It follows the formula of the experimental novel but concentrates on Spanish themes and characters. Indeed, as Pérez Minik points out, La Tribuna is a milestone in nineteenth century Spanish literature:

La aparición de La Tribuna, en 1882, ha de considerarse como una fecha memorable de la novela española. Aquel instante tuvo que ser sorprendente, al ver a esta escritora, muy joven aun, inquieta, atrevida y con la responsabilidad de la madurez, rebasar su propia geográfica física y moral, y escribir un libro donde se atacaban paisajes nunca vistos y se suscitaban problemas estéticos, sociales y morfológicos de la mejor seriedad. Con esta novela quedaban arrumbadas todas las desabridas narraciones postrománticos y aún el sentido que de las mismas tenían Alarcón y Valera, con sus ingenuas maquinaciones y sus pintorescas tesis.27

This break with the postromantic realists suggests Pardo Bazán's ultimate literary goal: the revitalization of the Spanish novel. Pérez Minik compares the leading novelists of the time and emphasizes the importance of La Tribuna:

Emilia Pardo Bazán no preparó un lenguaje o un diálogo idóneo para esta novela naturalista, como Pereda. Ni inventarió tan gran número de individuos novelescos, calles y casas, ni tuvo tan gran sentido del debate dramático entre las ideas y los sentimientos como Galdós, ni tampoco la fuerza de un dibujo clásico para fijar personajes, como Clarín. Pero tiene en su tesoro de novelista haber compuesto La Tribuna, el primer libro en que el obrero, en su condición de tal y

hasta, como clase social, hace su aparición dentro
de un cuadro ausente de todo pintoresquismo y sujeto
a una estricta y severa realidad.\textsuperscript{28}

The novel expresses the author's esthetic opinions, her
political pessimism, and her attraction to naturalism. The
female characters are representatives of the nineteenth
century woman and her dissatisfaction with the social
restraints of the period. Amparo, Ana, \textit{La Guardiana}, and
Carmela support each other in their search for new modes of
expression within their limited environment. Without
offering solutions, Pardo Bazán dispassionately records
the plight of feminine unrest.

\textit{El Cisne de Vilamorta} (1884)

The personal consequences of the publication of \textit{La
cuestión palpitante} and \textit{La Tribuna} had an incisive effect on
Pardo Bazán's marriage. Carmen Bravo-Villasante gives a
penetrating insight into don José Quiroga's reaction to the
controversy surrounding his wife's new literary statements:

\ldots los amigos cuchichean asustados: en el Casino
y en el Círculo los hombres leídos fruncen el ceño y
los más atrevidos condenan abiertamente el gesto de
la Pardo. Algunos íntimos preguntan a don José
Quiroga cómo es que ha permitido a su mujer escribir
ese libro [\textit{La Tribuna}]. Don José, hombre de familia
pía y tradicionalista empieza a contagiarle del temor
de los contertulios. . . . La herejía, la excomunión
por un libro nefando, son ideas obsesivas que estremecen
a don José Quiroga y le trastornan.\textsuperscript{29}

\textsuperscript{28}Ibid., p. 111.

\textsuperscript{29}Bravo-Villasante, \textit{Vida y obra}, p. 96.
Overwhelmed, finally, by public opinion, don José rushed into doña Emilia's study and prohibited her from continuing to write. He insisted that she must publicly retract the statements made in *La cuestión palpitante* and then refrain from writing anything else about the French doctrine. *La Tribuna*, the novelistic expression of the theories contained in the articles, must not be published. A determined Pardo Bazán traveled to Rome with the manuscript of *La Tribuna*, where a cardinal sanctioned her book as lying totally within the dogma and doctrine of the Church. Nonetheless, the conjugal disagreement over the works marked the beginning of the separation between Pardo Bazán and her husband. From that time until her death doña Emilia would refuse to sign her married name to her works. Upon her separation from don José Quiroga, Pardo Bazán returned to live with her parents in Madrid. Released from many domestic duties, she was able to dedicate her time to writing. The spirit of Galicia was deep within her and its inspiration filled her with melancholy. "Los recuerdos de la vida de la provincia, la observación del corazón humano y el paisaje de la tierra natal inspiran a Emilia *El Cisne de Vilamorta*."

The novel contrasts with *La Tribuna* in theme and mood; it is romantic and detached from the modern pace of la Coruña, yet the techniques are similar in both novels. In the prologue to the work, doña Emilia states her purpose:

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30Ibid., p. 112.
Al escribir La Tribuna me guiaban iguales propósitos que al trazar las páginas del Cisne: estudiar y retratar en forma artística gentes y tierras que conozco. Si alguien tachó a La Tribuna de naturalismo, es posible que ahora encuentren cierto idealismo, pero el método es el mismo, pues no es más idealista la descripción de una noche de luna que la descripción de una fábrica, ni la muerte que el nacimiento.

The village that is the setting for the novel is Carballino, the site of don José Quiroga's ancestral estate. Galician village life is romantic and poetic; the inhabitants are separated from the modern world, and they are united to the rich soil in pantheistic spirituality. The sensuality and eroticism of the Galician landscape pervade the novel; the characters are sexually alive yet frustrated by the restraints of society. In order to impart this sensuality, Pardo Bazán developed the technique of impressionism. "De esta presentación exterior, de este sensualismo de olor y de color, y de este erotismo a flor de carne, hay mucho en la novela de la Condesa de Pardo Bazán."

The influence of French impressionism and the style of the Goncourt brothers can be seen in the interplay of light and color in the novel. Clarín aptly defines her style: "La señora Pardo Bazán es de todos los novelistas de España el que más pinta: en sus novelas se ve que está enamorada del color y que sabe echar

31 Emilia Pardo Bazán, prologue to El Cisne de Vilamorta (Madrid, 1884), p. iii.


33 Barja, Libros y autores, p. 561.
sobre el lienzo haces de claridad." Thus, Pardo Bazán contemplated Galician life through blotches of color, presenting ideas by the means of an iridescent sensuality.

The costumbrismo elements in the novel might indicate that El Cisne de Vilamorta is simply a regional survey of Galician customs and types. The political aspect of the work is a study of Galician caciquismo, with a colorful fair and fireworks serving as a backdrop for the intrigues and struggles for power. Long descriptions of the landscape, transcriptions of Galician dialect, and scenes of romerías, bailes, and fiestas illustrate the provincial flavor that doña Emilia savored in her writings. Pardo Bazán, however, was continually waging a battle against the limiting effects of regionalism. Her scope and depth could not be restrained by the costumbrismo genre. Guillermo de Torre speaks about this aspect of her work: "Aunque una de sus excelencias consista precisamente en la descripción de paisajes, tipos y escenas campesinas, tanto como en la transcripción del habla rural, nada de ello justifica señalar a su autora como novelista regional." The novel appears to have presented a dilemma to its author; she was torn between the poetic aura of Galicia and the prosaic and utilitarian aspects of her literary goal to free the Spanish novel from its regionalistic bonds:

34Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), Nueva campaña (Madrid, 1887), p. 113.

35Guillermo de Torre, Del 98 al barroco, p. 258.
En todas las manifestaciones literarias de la escritora la poesía deriva hacia lo prosáico, la fantasía es sustituida por la ciencia. La inspiración celeste es traída a tierra. Este prosaísmo voluntario deshace a veces sus mejores páginas poéticas; mediante una sola palabra ella misma destruye el encanto. La palabra puede ser vulgar y a veces una pedantería. La mujer poeta parece luchar con la mujer sabia.36

The novel presents the duality of poetry and analysis through the characters who attempt to dispel the prosaic and ugly realities in their lives by an escape into romantic illusions. The central character, Segundo García, a young village poet who imitates Bécquer, denies the existence of the real world surrounding him. His poetic illusions, a certain sensitivity and physical charm make him attractive to women. There are three female characters in the novel who succumb to Segundo's enticement: Leocadia Otero, Nieves de la Comba, and her daughter, Victorina.

En El Cisne de Vilamor analiza la Pardo Bazán el erotismo de tres mujeres de distinta condición, una casada y dos solteras. . . . El sentimiento erótico de las tres es despertado por la presencia de un poeta postromántico. El erotismo femenino es el tema central de esta novela, por ser él la energía que enciende el erotismo de cada una de las tres mujeres, despertando ilusiones románticas en su corazón.37

The sexual instincts of these women are carefully analyzed from a particularly feminine point of view. Perhaps their frustrations suggest a pessimism on the part of the author as a result of her marital problems. Clarín discerns this personal touch in Pardo Bazán's writing:

36Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 114.
37González López, Historia, p. 475.
The analysis is critical and detached, in keeping with the naturalistic techniques, but nonetheless, traces of personal bitterness and frustration appear. In regard to the nineteenth century woman, naturalism was an appropriate form in which to display the confinements that were placed upon the women by antiquated social order. In evaluation of this restricted position within society, Pardo Bazán was as harshly critical of the submissive and weak female as she was decisive in her reproaches against male dominance. Her emphasis in this work is on the restrictions that the nineteenth century woman placed upon herself through her extreme emotional needs.

Leocadia Otero, the highstrung schoolteacher who is desperately in love with Segundo, is a pathetic character. She is obsessed with pleasing the young poet, even to the point of her own destruction:

Leocadia es uno de esos caracteres cuya complejidad escapa a toda lógica, pero cuya existencia humana—o la posibilidad real de esa existencia—resulta indudable. Feota, ya en el otoño de su vida cuando conoce a Segundo; progenitora de un hijo de padre y de pasado oscuros, al relacionarse con el Cisne enamórase de él con tal mimo y tan incondicionalmente que su amor es de esposa, de amante, de hermana, de amiga, de madre.39

38 Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), Sermon perdido, p. 117.
39 Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 227.
Her tragic suicide occurs after she sells her house and all her possessions in order to pay for the publication of Segundo's shallow poems. Leocadia is a naturalistic character, but she is completely human in her pathos. Her martyrdom to love is relentless, her failures in life implacable and her self-destruction unromantic. She forsakes everything in her life in order to deal with the realities that Segundo refuses to face. The loss of her house and her lover bring about the madness that foreshadows her death:

Estaba enferma, según unos; según otros, arruinada, y según bastantes, no muy cabal de juicio. . . . Solía aparecer tranquila, aunque muy callada, y sin la actividad habitual en ella. Ayudaba a Flores [la criada] en la cocina, atendía a las niñas de la escuela, barría, todo lo mismo que un automata. . . . Mostró aquellos días gran versatilidad e hizo mil planes; habló de irse a vivir a Orense, dejando la escuela y poniéndose a coser en casa. . . . Todas estas resoluciones duraron breve tiempo, y fueron desechadas para adoptar otras no menos efímeras; y con la serie de proyectos y cambios, el tiempo se apresuraba y Leocadia se hallaría pronto sin asilo.⁴⁰

Leocadia's suicide frees her from the sadness and suffering that she had experienced all her life, in part due to her own emotional hypersensitivity.

A less pathetic character, but an equally frustrated one, is Nieves de la Comba, the wife of a minor deputy and a typical señora. Bored and unhappy in her marriage, Nieves views Segundo's attentions as a respite from her monotonous existence in Madrid:

⁴⁰Emilia Pardo Bazán, "El Cisne de Vilamorta," Obras completas, II (Madrid, 1956), 272. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.
Nieves lleva en Madrid una vida sumamente correcta, mesocrática, sin ningún incidente que no fuese vulgar. A misa y a tiendas, por la mañana; por la tarde, al Retiro o a visitas; de noche, a casa de sus padres, o al teatro con su marido. . . . La venida a Vilamorta, al país pintoresco del cual tanto le había hablado su padre, fue un incidente nuevo en su existencia acompasada. Segundo le pareció un detalle original del viaje. La miraba y hablaba de un modo tan desusado (Cisne, p. 217).

Suddenly Nieves' affections are captured by Segundo and she feels the hopelessness of being in love and at the same time being married to a man she cannot tolerate:

Era Nieves lo que suele llamarse una señora cabal, sin una página turbia en su historia, sin un pensamiento de infidelidad a su marido, sin más coquetería que la del vestido y tocado, y aun ésa, libre de afeites o desaliños tentadores, limitada a complacencias serviles con la moda. Su ideal, caso de tener alguno, se cifraba en una vida cómoda, elegante, rodeada de consideración social (Cisne, p. 235).

The peaceful monotony of her life has been shattered by Segundo, who courts her with pretty poems and forget-me-nots. Nieves is able to free herself from his destructive passions.

"En Nieves . . . el amor es en realidad un puro goce espiritual sin concupiscencia de ninguna clase; es la satisfacción de sentirse amada, que cesa inmediatamente que pone en peligro su honestidad y lealtad matrimonial."41 Nieves rejects Segundo when she realizes that the affair might tarnish her social image and she returns to Madrid with the beautiful memory of an intimate diversion. As a character type, Nieves represents the woman who is completely ruled by societal pressures.

41 González López, Emilia Pardo Bazán, p. 80.
Victorina, Nieves' adolescent daughter, is an exemplary study of feminine innocence and eroticism. Her attraction to Segundo equals that of Leocadia and Nieves, but it is much more subconscious.

Encerróse la niña en el invencible mutismo de las adolescentes, en quienes la sensibilidad exquisita y temprana produce una timidez extremadamente penosa. Sus labios sonreían, y sus ojos, al mismo tiempo, se arrasaron en lágrimas (Cisne, p. 217).

The transition from child to woman brings about a heightened susceptibility to emotions; Victorina vacillates between playing childish games and shyly following Segundo in his poetic wanderings:

. . . los ojos de la mujercita en miniatura, entornados, de mirada ansiosa y amante al traves de las espesas pestañas, no estaban fijos en su madre, sino en el poeta, cuyas palabras bebía la chiquilla, poniéndose muy colorada cuando él le dirigía cualquiera chanza o daba cualquier indicio de notar su presencia (Cisne, p. 254).

Her love for Segundo is more instinctive that it is conscious. Her sexual awareness develops throughout the novel with the spontaneity and movement of real life. José A. Balseiro captures the essence of Pardo Bazán's characterization:

En el retrato de Victorina dejónos la Pardo una obrita maestra. Presenta a la niña en visperas de ser mujer, por obra de prematura consciencia y de inconsciente intuición sexual . . . atraída [a Segundo] en un prematuro despertar erótico.\(^4\)

The natural flow of Victorina's maturation, with her anxieties and fanciful illusions, is exquisitely realistic. A critical

moment in this development occurs when she overhears her parents arguing about Segundo's flirtations with Nieves:

Nadie acertará a decir cual es el momento critico que divide la noche del día, el sueno de la vigilia, la juventud de la madurez y la inocencia del conocimiento. ¿Quién es capaz de fijar el instante en que el niño, convirtiéndose en adolescente, nota en sí ese algo inexplicable que acaso pueda llamarse conciencia sexual; en que el vago presentimiento se trueca en rápida intuición; en que, sin tener noción precisa de las realidades concretas del vivir, adivina todo lo que más tarde le ha de confirmar y puntualizar la experiencia; en que entiende la importancia de una indicación, la trascendencia de un acto, el carácter de una relación, el valor de una mirada o el sentido de una reticencia? ¿El momento en que sus ojos, abiertos solamente a la vida exterior, adquieren facultades para escudriñar también la interior, y perdiendo su brillo superficial, el claro reflejo de su pureza candorosa, toman la concentrada e indefinible expresión que constituye una mirada de persona grande? (Cisne, p. 259).

Victorina's moment of realization about her mother's affair with the poet deals a death blow to her innocence. She is now consumed by a loathing that obliterates her previous romantic illusions. This psychological analysis of the young girl, as well as those of the other principal characters in the novel, shows the depth of Pardo Bazán's artistry. Infantile and subconscious eroticism, vague romantic illusions, and amorous passions comprise the thematic focus of the novel.

In his review of El Cisne de Vilamorta, Clarín praises doña Emilia's discretion in the treatment of daring subject matter. The precision of her style lessens the boldness inherent in the material.

Es Emilia Pardo uno de los españoles que más saben y mejor entienden lo que ven, piensan y sienten. Tratar con ella, siempre es aprender mucho; y así, en sus
mismas novelas, donde menos quiere enseñar, lo que resalta más es el talento, la penetración, la claridad con que ve y expresa, la corrección con que dice, lo sabiamente que compone, la perspicacia con que observa.\textsuperscript{43}

The novel is an attempt to reconcile the ugly and beautiful aspects of life, the naturalistic forces and the idealistic visions, the prosaic realities, and the poetic illusions that Pardo Bazán struggled with throughout her novels. While the female characters in \textit{El Cisne de Vilamorta} are not atypical, they each demonstrate the intense emotional susceptibility that burdened the nineteenth-century woman.

\textbf{Los pazos de Ulloa (1886)/La Madre Naturaleza (1887)}

The \textit{apuntes autobiográficos} which comprise the prologue to this masterpiece of Spanish naturalism give a penetrating insight into the childhood of Pardo Bazán. The author revealed herself to the public in confidential tones, assuming an attitude of intimacy which was unheard of in her time. It appears, as might be expected, that doña Emilia's frankness was offensive to some critics. Due to her adaptation of naturalism in previous works, she had developed a conclave of formal adversaries; now her upbringing and social position were attacked.

With self-righteous indignation, Cejador y Frauca condemn Pardo Bazán as "una simple engarzadora de vocablos repulidos y rebuscadora de giros elegantes, que se da el

\textsuperscript{43} \textit{Clarín} (Leopoldo Alas), \textit{Nueva campaäh}, p. 152.
gusto de escribir en los ocios que le prodiga su vida de senora bien acomodada." Menendez y Pelayo demonstrates the typical attitude of the nineteenth-century male toward the educated woman in a letter to Juan Valera:

Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán ha publicado el primer tomo de una nueva novela, que no he leído. Pero si he leído unos apuntes autobiográficos con que la encabeza y que, en mi entender, rayan en los últimos términos de la pedantería. Dice, entre otras cosas, que cuando ella era niña la Biblia y Homero eran sus libros predilectos y los que nunca se le caían de las manos. Parece increíble y es para mí muestra patente de la inferioridad intelectual de las mujeres--bien compensada con otras excelencias--el que teniendo doña Emilia tantas condiciones de estilo y tanta aptitud para estudiar y comprender las cosas, tenga al mismo tiempo un gusto tan rematado y una total ausencia de tacto y discernimiento.

The bitter antagonism of these critics is an indication of Pardo Bazán's iconoclastic role within the literary mode of the past century. The glimpse into her personal life offered in the apuntes, anecdotes related with candor and precocity, represented another traditional rule that doña Emilia had transgressed. Certain critics, however, praised Pardo Bazán's frankness and appreciated the biographical information contained in the notes. As Andrés González Blanco states:

... no es el documento lo que ha de estudiarse para conocer al hombre; aquél es posterior e inferior a éste; lo que ha de estudiarse es el hombre, para descifrar y glosar el documento.

44 Cejador y Frauca, Lengua y literatura, p. 282.

Creo que se puede proceder al examen de la obra de Emilia Pardo Bazán estudiando en ella al hombre.\textsuperscript{46}

Yet there is reservation even in this positive commentary for González Blanco felt that doña Emilia had not revealed enough about her life, especially about her adolescent years. It appears that whenever and whatever Pardo Bazán was to write about her life, she would be criticized.

While not a servile imitation of the French form, Los pazos de Ulloa more closely approximates the content of the naturalistic philosophy than do her previous novels. With this novel, Pardo Bazán attempted to integrate the deterministic viewpoint with an analysis of the Galician landed gentry; in the process, she communicated her disenchantment with Spain's traditional social order. The renovation of Spanish society, not through senseless revolution or a capricious restoration, but by an informed appraisal of lasting and meaningful traditional values had become a true passion for Pardo Bazán. Her bitter evaluation of the Galician aristocracy was the outcome of a penetrating study of the region and its inhabitants. The very absence of strong female characters in the novel is significant; it reflects the actual role of the Galician woman in society. The passivity of this role distressed doña Emilia and intensified the tragic aspect of country life which pervades the whole novel. Unswayed by regional patriotism and her natural

empathy with women, she ruthlessly examined elements of the social structure.

The attack on political bosses that began in *El Cisne de Vilamorta* is amplified in *Los pazos de Ulloa* so that it becomes the theme of an intricate subplot. The traditionalist aristocracy is so decadent and inconsequential that its rightful authority is seized by the ambitious caciques. "The pazo of Ulloa is a concrete testimony to the activity of this type of nobility, . . . the whole edifice has fallen into decay, a symbol of the decline and disappearance of the Liberal nobility."\(^{47}\) Several chapters in the novel are dedicated to the description of the political ruses of the bosses and the empty vanity of the landed gentry. Don Pedro Moscoso, the titular owner of the *pazos* of Ulloa and Primitivo, his overseer, represent the two sides of this rural political struggle. As the forces of nature have eroded the estate buildings, so the enterprising underlings have usurped the power of the weakened rural aristocracy. Pardo Bazán attacked the provincial isolationism and decadent feudal aristocracy with perspicacity. Sherman H. Eoff comments on this element of the novel and doña Emilia's attempt to fuse naturalistic theories and this sociopolitical process:

The author's unsympathetic attitude is evident in satirical scenes, notably in reference to small-town social life and political activities. The body of the novel, however, presents a picture of animal insensibility and sluggishness, from which people

\(^{47}\) Hilton, p. 7.
are periodically aroused to acts of violence and fierceness. The rational explanation of this sluggishness, from the author's viewpoint, is isolation rather than the fateful oppressiveness of harsh environment. Nevertheless, the latter idea is attractive artistically because it affords a goal for the creation of a dominant effect. So it is that the vision of a deadening existence in the interior of Galicia combines with a naturalistic vision of human brutification.

The environment, the natural forces that pervade the countryside, are personified with the literary intention of employing naturalistic content as well as techniques and descriptive formulas. This fusion of naturalism and Galician rural life, incomplete as it is, represents the culmination of Pardo Bazán's affiliation with the French doctrine.

Although the novel emphasizes the particularly regional composition of the landed gentry, Pardo Bazán's purpose was not merely to present a static panorama. The contrast between Pereda, the regionalist and doña Emilia, the naturalist, is readily apparent:

Nada más opuesto que la novela regional realista, como la de Pereda, y la naturalista, que tiene como modelo el de la Pardo Bazán, a pesar de que ambos novelistas operan sobre la misma materia social de hidalgos y campesinos del norte de España, un tanto parecido en su organización social, a pesar de pertenecer a dos regiones distintas. La novela regional realista de Pereda busca lo permanente, lo inmutable e inmovible, lo tradicional, en la vida social de su pueblo, de nobles hidalgos y sufridos campesinos. La Pardo Bazán, naturalista, ve ese mundo en constante transformación, en su dinamismo, en los cambios que se operan en el carácter de las gentes y de las clases sociales. El labor de un novelista es, para ella, percibir, como sociólogo y biólogo, los cambios sociales.

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y no lo permanente, y esa transformación es creación, vida y también destrucción y muerte. Los hidalgos y clérigos de Pereda son la encarnación de las virtudes más altas de su pueblo, mientras que los de la Pardo Bazán personifican la fuerza de lo humano, los goces de la vida. 49

Nature, as González López suggests, is a dynamic force which destroys the social hierarchy of landed gentry and peasants. Artistically described, the luxuriant nature of the Galician countryside becomes a malignant power and all the characters in the novel are secondary in strength to this degenerative presence.

There are only two salient female characters in Los pazos de Ulloa: Sabel, the housekeeper and concubine of don Pedro Moscoso, and Marcelina de la Lage, his wife. Unlike many of Pardo Bazán's other female characters, neither of the women is a true protagonist, although both are certainly important characters. In the presentation of these women, Pardo Bazán again employed a baroque contrast, an element which appears in most of her novels. There is a vivid contrast between Sabel's sensual physicality and Marcelina's delicate spirituality, a duality which is interwoven throughout the naturalistic plot. These characters exemplify two basic female types: Sabel is representative of the rural stock unlimited by social restraints while the refined Marcelina is the product of city life and its intricate codes of behavior. In this sense, both characters are somewhat shallow

and one-dimensional. All the characters in the novel are overpowered by natural forces, but the women, Pardo Bazán insists, are subservient to masculine demands as well as to those of nature. A continual struggle in regard to their allegiances plagues both women. The inner nature of each conflicts with the expectations of her master; both live in constant frustration.

As the incarnation of sensuality and sexual nonchalance, Sabel deals with her frustration on a different level than does her counterpart, Marcelina. The main obstacle to Sabel's happiness is her father, Primitivo, who is the overseer of don Pedro's estate and the clearcut villain of the piece. Primitivo manipulates Sabel in order to gain more control over don Pedro and his extensive land holdings. As the concubine of don Pedro, Sabel is passively content and enjoys authority within the house. The illegitimate son of the liason, Perucho, also has unlimited privileges. Yet there is an underlying frustration for Sabel in her concubinage and in her enslavement to her father's machinations. She is in love with another man, a peasant, who, as her social equal, could offer her a more satisfying existence. Her very circumstances make this goal unattainable, for Sabel is destined to forsake her inner longings in fulfillment of her father's insatiable lust for power. Sabel's passive and innocuous behavior, filtered through the strict moral perspective of Julián, the young priest who serves as the primary observer
in the novel, takes on an evil and sinister tone. Sabel's physical charms threaten Julián and his attempts to civilize don Pedro are impeded by her presence. Her behavior and position in the household scandalize the priest, who is accustomed to the life of the seminary. Although she momentarily loses favor in the pazos after the marriage of don Pedro and Marcelina, she soon regains her status as concubine and, despite Julián's attempts to oust her from the house, she again reigns in the kitchen. Aware of her sensuality, Sabel delights in tormenting Julián by shamelessly interrupting his privacy:

Una mañana entró Sabel a la hora de costumbre con las jarras de agua para las abluciones del presbítero, que, al recibirlas, no pudo menos de reparar en una rápida ojeada como la moza venía en justillo y enaguas, con la camisa entreabierta, el pelo destrenzado y descalzos un pie y pierna blanquisimos, pues Sabel, que se calzaba siempre y no hacía más que la labor de cocina, y esa con mucha ayuda de criadas de campo y comadres, no tenía la piel curtida ni deformados los miembros. Julián retrocedió y la jarra tembló en su mano, vertiéndose un chorro de agua por el piso.

--Cúbrase usted, mujer--murmuró con voz sofocada por la vergüenza.--Ni me traiga nunca el agua cuando esté así. . . . Ese no es modo de presentarse a la gente.

--Me estaba peinando, y pensé que me llamaba . . .

--respondió ella sin alterarse, sin cruzar siquiera las palmas sobre el escote.50

Sabel's favorite pastimes are innocuous: playing cards and gossiping with the other peasant women, dancing at the local fiestas, and seeing her boyfriend, el Gallo. Her role in the

50 Emilia Pardo Bazán, "Los pazos de Ulloa," Obras completas, I (Madrid, 1957), 183. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.
novel diminishes as the plot develops until only oblique references are made concerning her continued presence at the pazos. She reappears in the sequel, *La Madre Naturaleza*, where her physical beauty and spirited gaiety have deteriorated into dull placidity. Pardo Bazán describes Sabel according to rules of naturalism: she is dehumanized through natural processes and is given an aura of maliciousness and evil. Yet Pardo Bazán's criticisms of Sabel are muted and, at times, her tone is tender. Sabel is a peasant and is, therefore, not responsible for her immoral behavior. Doña Emilia has much less compassion for Sabel's counterpart, Marcelina. The outward descriptions of Sabel's eroticism are treated in much the same way as Pardo Bazán's landscape descriptions, while Marcelina's spirituality offers a deeper psychoanalysis of the nineteenth-century woman and a correspondingly deeper criticism by the author within her general condemnation of social ills.

The development of Marcelina into a central character in *Los pazos de Ulloa* occurs rather late in the novel. Don Pedro travels to Santiago de Compostela to select a wife from among his four cousins; of these he chooses Marcelina, assuming that she will offer the least resistance to the status quo. This process of selection is a crucial component of doña Emilia's feminist statement in the novel. José A. Balseiro discusses the ritual:
Los capítulos IX, X y XI, que se desarrollan en Santiago de Compostela, y en el hogar del Sr. de la Lage, padre de Nucha [Marcelina], forman animadísimo cuadro de familia provinciana y galaica donde conviven cuatro hermanas solteras. Sus fisonomías físicas y morales; sus anhelos, sus intenciones, sus juegos, sus costumbres; cuanto condiciona a la naturaleza femenina en plenitud juvenil, vive con tal vigor en estas páginas, que el lector experimenta sensaciones, ansias y dudas, analogas a las de don Pedro frente a sus cuatro primas, imantado por la hermosura corporal de Rita; atraído por la dulce pureza de Nucha. Y con qué maestría resuelve Pardo Bazán la elección que al fin hace el marqués sometiéndole a inconsciente e impremeditada prueba que le permite conocer, en solo unos minutos, la coquetería consentidora de Rita—que se deja besar y provoca la persecución sabrosa—, y la acrisolada virtud de Nucha, cuyas manecitas tornarse garras para atacar y defenderse de su primo cuando, en la oscuridad, don Pedro persigue a Rita y tropieza con la otra.51

The stereotype of the young middle-class woman is revealed with unstinting pessimism as Marcelina inevitably and tragically submits to the demands of her father and, as a result, becomes a martyr at the hands of her new husband. Life at her home at the pazos fills Marcelina with fear and an unnatural foreboding of death. Nightmares and nervous attacks plague her throughout her married life; her only solace is the presence of the priest, Julián, and the subsequent birth of her daughter Manolita. Emilio González López describes Marcelina as "delgada y espiritual, delicada y sensible, como una flor que se va marchitando lentamente en el tosco ambiente del pazo."52 Unfortunately, Marcelina's innate physical weakness can hardly sustain her in the midst of the violent and brutish actions of the other inhabitants of the estate; she

51 Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 282.
52 González López, Novelista de Galicia, p. 132.
succumbs to the fatal natural order through the decadent emptiness of her refined culture. Marcelina's spirituality, although it offers consolation to her during the course of her marriage, never approaches the type of viable and supportive religiosity characteristic of Pardo Bazán's second phase of novels. Here it is a sentiment instead of a belief. It imparts a romantic tone to the otherwise implacable naturalism of the story. Marcelina's delicate tastes and religious inclinations make her vulnerable to the sinister aspect of nature which barbarously destroys all outsiders. Her spirituality is insignificant in the face of the brutishness of her animalistic husband, who cruelly rejects her after the birth of their daughter. The impact of don Pedro's rejection prompts Marcelina to devote all her attention to her "angelito hembra" (Los pazos, p. 232). The difficult childbirth, which merely proves to don Pedro the uselessness of cultured and educated women, signals the approach of Marcelina's complete physical and emotional deterioration. Her obsessions and hallucinations convince her that the other inhabitants of the pazos want to kill her daughter. She develops a deep-seated psychosis. The climax of Marcelina's breakdown occurs when she discovers that Sabel's son, Perucho, who lovingly plays with her daughter and who is her inseparable companion, is the illegitimate offspring of her husband's

53Eoff, Modern Spanish Novel, p. 122.
54Pérez Minik, Novelistas españoles, p. 112.
affair with the maid. Julián witnesses the effect of this realization:

Cierto día entró el capellán en la habitación de la señorita y encontró un inesperado espectáculo. En el centro de la cámara humeaba un colosal barreño de loza, lleno de agua caliente, y estrechamente abrazados y en cueros, el chiquillo sosteniendo en brazos a la niña, estaban Perucho y la heredera de Ulloa en el baño. Nucha, en cucullas, vigilaba el grupo.

—No hubo otro medio de reducirla a bañarse— exclamó al advertir la admiración de Julián--; y como don Máximo dice que el baño le conviene, . . .

—No me pasmo yo de ella— respondió el capellán—, sino de él, que le teme más al agua que al fuego.

—A trueque de estar con la nena— replicó Nucha— se deja el bañar aunque sea en pez hirviendo. Aíí los tiene usted en sus glorias. No parecen un par de hermanitos?

Al pronunciar sin intención la frase, Nucha, desde el suelo, alzaba la mirada hacia Julián. La descomposición de la de éste fue tan instantánea, tan reveladora, tan elocuente, tan profunda, que la señora de Moscoso, apoyándose en una mano, se irguió de pronto, quedándose en pie frente a él. En aquel rostro consumido por la larga enfermedad, y bajo cuya piel fina se traslucía la ramificación venosa; en aquellos ojos vagos, de ancha pupila y córnea húmeda, cercados de azulada ojera, vio Julián encenderse y fulgurar tras las negras pestajías una luz horrible, donde ardían la certeza, el asombro y el espanto. Calló. No tuvo ánimos para pronunciar una sola frase, ni disimulo para componer sus facciones alteradas (Los Pazos, p. 251).

With this knowledge, Marcelina attempts to oust Sabel, Perucho, and Primitivo from the pazos, but their influence and power over don Pedro are too deeply rooted for her frail efforts. The only solution is escape from the estate, which she diligently plans with the priest as her accomplice. Don Pedro discovers the plot, banishes the priest from the area and abuses his wife. As a result of a nervous paroxysm brought
about by her physical condition and mounting superstitions, Marcelina dies.

The naturalistic milieu and the balanced literary development of the various themes within a complex plot suggest that *Los pazos de Ulloa* is Pardo Bazán's greatest triumph in her first phase of novels. The suffocating narrowness of provincial life, the bestiality of man as he is dominated by nature, the frustrated sujegation of the peasant woman, the weakness of the refined woman, the decadence of the feudal aristocracy: these concepts merge into a stark and terrifying panorama which Pardo Bazán manipulates to perfection. Although the techniques and themes of the novel are overwhelmingly naturalistic, there is a hint of the spirituality that will blossom in doña Emilia's second phase. At the novel's climax don Pedro's children seem to represent hope for the future and even a chance to escape the bonds of nature in mankind's struggle for meaningful existence. The sequel to this novel, *La Madre Naturaleza*, lays bare this struggle between man and nature, one which through Pardo Bazán's artistry acquires a universal significance.

If, in *Los pazos de Ulloa*, nature is a dominating and asphyxiating presence that offers no escape, in *La Madre Naturaleza* it becomes a source of fecundity and sensuality, a power that influences rather than dictates human behavior. Nature incites the characters to love by its healthy sensuality. It is voluptuous and seductive: the protective foliage, the luxuriant flowers, the wind and river that murmur together,
the green tenderness of the fields, the luxuriance of spring, the ardor of summer, the sun that makes one drunk, the warm nights, the song of the nightingale.\textsuperscript{55} Nature continues to be a protagonist in this novel, a primordial force that moves the world but does not tyrannize it. The earlier determinism implied in this personification of nature clashed with Pardo Bazán's sense of individual free will. Guillermo de Torre sees this new level of meaning as a romantic element:

\textit{\ldots la tesis naturalista--el factor de la herencia, la degeneración de una familia, desenvuelta en el curso de una intriga ingenua con ciertos toques folletinescos: los amores imposibles de una hermana y su hermano bastardo--está presentada con tantos celajes de pudibundez que casi resulta invisible.}\textsuperscript{56}

This slight change in perspective between the two novels, so similar in terms of locale and socio-historical ambience, marks a new direction in doña Emilia's literary development. She had been satisfied to follow Zola's formula almost entirely in \textit{Los pazos}; now her individuality demanded that she add other levels of meaning to the naturalistic substructure. \textit{La Madre Naturaleza} attempts a reconciliation between conflicting approaches: a confrontation with human complexities far beyond the reach of naturalism vies in this novel with remnants of a naturalistic point of view.

Certain naturalistic components employed in \textit{Los pazos} remain: the influence of heredity and environment, the

\textsuperscript{55}Bravo-Villasante, \textit{Vida y obra}, p. 143.

\textsuperscript{56}Guillermo de Torre, "Emilia Pardo Bazán y las cuestiones del naturalismo," \textit{Cuadernos Americanos}, CVIII (1960), 255.
animalistic characters and their base passions, the pan-
theistic deification of nature. Environment and heredity
are still factors in the characters' developing personalities,
but they no longer absolutely determine the courses of their
lives. Natural forces brutalize and destroy men who have
relinquished their aspirations and free will in exchange for
physical gratification. Only the secondary characters are
naturalistic in that their free will is subjugated to their
animal passions. In an imitation of his estate, don Pedro
Moscoso, the virile master in Los pazos has degenerated and
fallen prey to the corrosive environment. The descriptions
of his appearance and the obvious deterioration of his physi-
cal and mental health are truly pathetic passages. Sabel,
the voluptuous servant of the first novel, is another natu-
ralistic study:

Salió... la ex bella fregatriz Sabel, causa de
tantos disturbios, pecados y tristezas. Quien la
hubiese visto cosa de dieciocho años antes, cuando
quería hacer prevaricar a los capellanes de la casa,
no la conocería ahora. Las aldeanas, aunque no se
dediquen a labrar la tierra, no conservan, pasados
los treinta, atractivo alguno, y, en general, se ajan
y marchitan desde los veinticinco. Sus extremidades
se deforman; su piel se curte; la osatura se les
marca; el pelo se les vuelve áspero, como cola de
buey; el seno se esparce y abulta feamente; los
labios se secan; en los ojos se descubre, en vez de
la chispa de juguetona travesura propia de la mocedad,
la codicia y el servilismo juntos, sello de la máscara
labriega.... Sabel no desmentía la regla. El azul
de sus pupilas, antes tan claro y puro, amarilleaba;
su tez de albérchigo era piel de manzana que en el
madurero se va secando, y los pómulos sobresalientes
y la frente baja se marcaban ahora con energía.57

57 Emilia Pardo Bazán, "La Madre Naturaleza," Obras com-
pletas I (Madrid, 1957), 333.
Sabel is merely a link between the two novels. She represents the material, carnal aspect of life, the "slice of life" that the French naturalists observed and analyzed in detail. Pardo Bazán, while she admitted this temporal aspect of reality, refused to abandon all of her characters to a naturalistic fate.

As examples of a triumph over fatalism are the two protagonists, Perucho and Manolita. They are innocent, young creatures who are deeply in love and ignorant of their sibling relationship. They are able to extract themselves from their sinful association by the power of their moral virtue and sense of ethics. They choose to separate as Manolita leaves to become a nun. These characters differ from those in Los pazos de Ulloa in that they are individuals, not types. Instead of simply representing forces of good and evil, they exhibit human traits and conflicting motivations and desires. Manolita's rejection of her natural passions and the novel's outcome are affirmations of Pardo Bazán's broader perspective.

This new outlook warranted a completely new style, which gives the novel a more modern quality. As Manuel de la Cruz so beautifully describes, Pardo Bazán made skillful use of modern symbols and language:

"... vibre en la página la intensa sensación que produjo en su temperamento de artista de contemplación del objeto real, pudiendo decirse que vemos la naturaleza o el hombre por nuestros propios ojos y no al traves de un temperamento. ... En la composición de lugar, siempre escabrosa, potro de tormento de realistas y naturalistas, pecado original..."
de los idealistas, [Pardo Bazán] deja a cada individualidad su verbo propio, la integridad absoluta de su idiosincrasia. Cada personaje habla y se produce como corresponde a su edad, cultura y condición, procediendo como agente en la acción general por sus pasiones, regulado e impulsado por las influencias posibles del medio.  

Doña Emilia was always attracted to the interplay of color and light; de la Cruz sees La Madre Naturaleza as the most complete and accomplished testimony of this visual artistry.  

Her new style, supportive of a new vision of human existence, determines that the novel is a transitional work and stands as a precursor to doña Emilia's second phase. Separating these two literary moments in her career, however, is a light-hearted romance that restores importance to the female protagonist.  

**Insolación** (1889)  
During Pardo Bazán's naturalistic phase she traveled outside of Spain, both figuratively and literally, in order to encounter new techniques and subject matter. Of greatest influence upon her were the French naturalists, some of whom she met in 1886 and 1887. Daudet, the Goncourt brothers, and Zola, besides welcoming doña Emilia into their literary coteries and conferences, brought her into contact with the contemporary Russian novelists. Upon her return to Spain, Pardo Bazán gave a series of lectures in the Ateneo on the  

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58 Manuel de la Cruz, Obras de Manuel de la Cruz: Estudios literarios (Madrid, 1924), p. 287.  
59 Ibid., p. 279.
new Russian novel; these were published under the title of
La revolución y la novela en Rusia (1887). After extensive
trips to Rome, Venice, and Portugal and polemics with Valera,
Menéndez y Pelayo, and the Carlists, doña Emilia published
the novel Insolación in 1889. Federico Carlos Saínz de
Robles explains Pardo Bazán's motivation:

Después de Los pazos de Ulloa y La Madre Naturaleza,
obras de una complejidad extraordinaria, Emilia
Pardo Bazán necesita solazarse en juguetos sin
trascendencia, necesita descansar su espíritu
atormentado. Para ello escribe dos historias
amorosas: Insolación y Morriña.60

The novel is pleasant and entertaining, distant from the
pyrotechnical displays of the two previous novels. In the
words of C. C. Glascock:

Insolación is one of the brightest and airiest of
Pardo Bazán's stories: graceful and swift in style,
wholly free from morbidity and gloom, it is a book
for a rainy day, and will bring cheer to a saddened
spirit. It marks a temporary break with the previous
morbid trend and indicates that gloomy determinism
is losing its charm for the author.61

As doña Emilia gained independence from the restraints
of naturalism, she was able to deal with new scientific
theories without the seriousness and pedagogism of her former
novels. Thus, she continued to make use of new theories in
her literary creed while she lessened her adherence to the

60Federico Carlos Saínz de Robles, prologue to "Insolación," Obras completas, Emilia Pardo Bazán, I (Madrid,
1957), 413.

61C. C. Glascock, Two Modern Spanish Novelists: Emilia
French school. González López mentions the naturalistic elements of the work, but one may readily see the harmlessness of nature in her descriptions:

El tema erótico es el eje de la trama de *Insolación* (1889), teniendo de protagonista a una mujer gallega. En *Insolación*, el impulso erótico tiene cierto sentido de fuerza de la Naturaleza, por ser como una ráfaga primaveral desencadenada por el calor del vino y la alegría de la fiesta de San Isidro, en la Pradera y las Ventas del Espíritu Santo, que lleva a la viuda marquesa a sucumbir ante el donjuanesco Diego Pacheco, gaditano de nacimiento. . . . El medio ambiente tiene un papel preponderante en el desarrollo del erotismo.

Nature, then, becomes an ally of the young man, Diego Pacheco, in his seduction of the young and beautiful widow, Asís Taboada. Without a trace of malevolence or terror, Pardo Bazán presents the forces of nature as being merely easy rationalizations for the widow's behavior. Perhaps many critics have overlooked this aspect of the work, taking Asís Taboada's declarations and excuses as factual evidence of nature's influence. The novel expresses a most basic kind of feminine psychology: the explanations a woman makes to herself in order to rid her conscience of guilt. Naturalism is but a veneer. It serves to veil the underlying motives of Diego, the seducer, and Asís, the infatuated victim, for Asís is able to blame the effects of nature in a skillful attempt to free herself from the truth of her coquetry.

Sainz de Robles summarizes the story in his prologue to the novel:

El eterno triángulo normal: una mujer y dos hombres. La mujer, decente y normal, Los hombres, el serio y el que no lo es, completamente normales. Y unos diálogos entre la mujer y cada uno de los hombres. Y una pasión efímera. Y otra que se inicia sin fundamento, entre chanzas y veras, y que acaba enraizándose cuando menos se esperaba. Y el pecado que salta con esa normalidad y con ese sin saber por qué al parecer, con que saltó en el Paraíso, entre Adán y Eva.63

A romantic triangle and the effects of a sunny day at the fair serve as the backdrop for this portrait of the artful seduction of a nineteenth century woman belonging to the upper class. The novel is Pardo Bazán's first endeavor in the realm of describing the aristocracy of Madrid, a part of society that she knew better than any other. Thus, the story has an element of veracity that was achieved in doña Emilia's other novels by intense documentation and analysis, an effort that was not necessary for Insolación. Pardo Bazán lived in the ambience she describes in this novel; the mannerisms, codes of behavior, activities, forms of entertainment, and styles of dress were a part of her daily environment. The novel cannot be considered autobiographical, yet it can be assumed that Pardo Bazán was acquainted with people who were similar to her protagonists. Many of the elements of the story are descriptive scenes of the social life of Madrid, thereby almost making the novel a costumbrista piece. The pace and interest of the plot free it from this restriction; the smooth flow of events contrasts with the stagnation of most novels of the costumbrismo genre.

63Saíñz de Robles, p. 411.
As an example of Pardo Bazán's skill in the discernment of feminine psychology, Asís Taboada stands as one of her best characters. In contrast with the passive nature of Marcelina and Manolita, Asís is a vital and spontaneous woman who is able to make a triumph out of her supposed downfall. Throughout the novel Asís experiences vacillations and guilt feelings, but, at heart, she is the true master and enchantress of the relationship. Martínez Sierra refers to doña Emilia's mastery of Asís and the strength of her character:

[Emilia Pardo Bazán] nos habla de la hora de amor y de hombres y mujeres que aman, que gozan, que sufren y que pecan; y he aquí también que el concepto de la relación amorosa se desmorona, se trueca, se vuelve de reves. Aquí está Insolación, obra a mi entender incomparable. ¿Quién es el inconsciente en aquella pareja? ¿Quién es el que llora? ¿Quién es el que pide? ¿Cuál de las dos es el alma niña, la que va indefensa con las alas de par en par, mal que pese a todo su aparato de fortaleza exterior? . . . No hay que dudarlo: Emilia Pardo Bazán pone en claro problemas de reivindicadora psicología, y venga a su sexo soberanamente con el arma de la verdad. Vean ustedes--parece decirnos--lo que bulle dentro de las cabecitas mujeriles en el mismo momento en que ustedes las creen locas de amor por sus interesantes personas. Nosotras señores hombres, también sabemos de dominación intelectual sobre el amado; nosotras también estamos investidas del imperio de la serenidad; nosotras también gustamos en medio de nuestra locura el saboreo consciente de sentimientos, sensaciones y matizes; también nuestros cerebros saben lo que hacen nuestros corazones, con la inmensa ventaja de que ustedes crean que lo ignoran.  

Asís is in complete control of her emotions as she decides to leave Madrid for Galicia in order to escape Pacheco's advances. At this point, doña Emilia is able to demonstrate the young man's seductive abilities as he dissuades Asís from leaving:

La tristeza del héroe desarma en las historias de la autora no pocas fortalezas de la heroína. Decidida está a huir y a romper el idilio que encendió el implacable sol madrileño en la noble señora Doña Francisca de Asís Taboada, y tan buenos propósitos se quebran porque el grandísimo tuyo de Pacheco sabe ponerse a tiempo melancólico, quebrar oportunamente la platónica mimosa con emoción que deja asomar lágrimas. Harto se ha dicho cuán pocos hombres saben resistir al llorar femenino: Emilia Pardo Bazán nos hace saber como no son tampoco las mujeres capaces de conservar entereza ante lágrimas de varón.  

Asís’ inner conflict in regard to her natural attraction to Pacheco and her sense of ethics affords Pardo Bazán a chance to comment upon the prevailing code of behavior among the aristocracy of the nineteenth century. Asís, as a representative of the upper class, is torn between the reserve and propriety that have been ingrained in her and feelings of physical desire. During the San Isidro fair, where the insolación occurs, Asís describes her changing values:

"... empezaba a tener subvertidas las nociones de la corrección y de la jerarquía social."  

The young widow, however, realizes her need to maintain the correct appearance: "comprendía la necesidad de guardar en mis dichos y modales cierta reserva de buen gusto; y, en efecto, la guardaba, evitando toda palabra o movimiento que siendo inocente pudiese parecer equívoco" (Insolación, p. 432). Among these

65Ibid., p. 135.

66Emilia Pardo Bazán, "Insolación," Obras completas, I (Madrid, 1957), 431. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by title and page number within parentheses.
hesitations Pardo Bazán intersperses diatribes against the Spanish double standard that demanded purity from women as well as lascivious behavior from men. This is doña Emilia's clearest statement concerning the place of women in society and her desire to change the injustices of that bondage. Asís, with her unique self-knowledge and high social position, is able to extricate herself from this subjugation.

The end of the novel, in contrast with the preceding novels, is happy and in keeping with the pleasant tone of the whole story. Pacheco's perseverance finally elicits Asís' surrender. She accepts his suggestion that they stay together one evening. The morning comes:

... el sol alumbra con dorada claridad el salondito, colándose por la ventana que Asís, despeinada, alegre, más fresca que el amanecer; abre de par en par, sin recelo o más bien con orgullo. ¡Ah! Ahora ya se puede subir. Pacheco está allí también, y los dos se asoman, juntos, casi enlazados, como si quisiesen quitar todo sabor clandestino a la entrevista, dar a su amor un baño de claridad solar, y a la vecindad entera parte de boda. ... Diríase que los futuros esposos deseaban cantar un himno a su numen tutelar, el sol, y ofrecerle la primera plegaria matutina (Insolación, p. 473).

The whirlwind romance ends in marriage; the two lovers plan the trip to Galicia where the ceremony will take place.

To the modern reader this story is not shocking or indecent. Pardo Bazán's contemporaries, however, were scandalized by the novel's treatment of a premarital relationship. Even Clarín, usually enchanted by the style and subject matter of doña Emilia's work, criticizes her lack of moral decorum:
Insolación es un episodio realista, en ese sentido no artístico; un episodio de amor vulgar, prosaico, es decir, de amor carnal no disfrazado de poesía, sino de galanteo pecaminoso y ordinario; es la pintura de la sensualidad más pedestre, y hasta pudiera, decirse de una sensualidad gastada, superficial, anémica hasta de deseos, sosa y noña. El principio, el medio y el fin de los amores de Asís Taboada y su andalucito bobalicón y chorlito, no son más que vulgaridad, necedad, pobreza de espíritu y de sangre; y la perversión inútil, caprichosa, sin gracia, de la viuda, no deja ver más que la profunda inmoralidad del carácter, pero sin enseñar nada, ni doctrinal ni estéticamente.  

Emilio Bobadilla is shocked by the anti-Catholic statement he interprets from the plot:

Doña Emilia es católica, ella lo dice, cree en el libre albedrío. ¿Cómo, pues, escogió una tesis determinista, o que tiene ribetes de tal? Los influjos del sol fueron la causa de que la Taboada cediese a los antojos carnales de Pacheco. Vemos aquí una fuerza física (el sol) venciendo la libertad moral, que está por encima de todo, en sentir de los católicos. . . . La señora Pardo está en contradicción con sus teorías. Admite el pecado original--esa herencia paradisiaca--y el libre albedrío, y sin embargo, acaba por reconocer que la voluntad está sometida a los influjos exteriores.

Obviously Bobadilla failed to understand Pardo Bazán's new use of naturalism. Certainly it is present in the novel, as Mariano Baquero Goyanes points out: "El título de la obra alude precisamente a esa influencia del sol, del calor, en el acercamiento de los dos personajes. . . . La Pardo Bazán acepta novelescamente los postulados deterministas de Hipólito Taine." But doña Emilia subdues naturalism and the

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67 Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), Folletos literarios: Museum, VII (Madrid, 1890), 80.

68 Emilio Bobadilla (Fray Candil), Triquitraques (Madrid, 1892), pp. 223-24.

69 Baquero Goyanes, Emilia Pardo Bazán, p. 42.
deterministic theories to the degree that free will becomes the decisive factor. Así s rises above the limitations of her environment and manipulates them to her advantage: "Mareo, alcohol, insolación. . . ¡Pretextos, tonterías!! Lo que pasa es que me gusta, que me va gustando cada día un poco más, que me trastorna con su palabrería . . . y punto redondo" (Insolación, p. 458).

Few critics, either of doña Emilia's time or of this generation, have considered Insolación as a crucial novel in Pardo Bazán's literary development. Although the subject of the work is light and completely lacking in pessimism, the basic themes are motifs in later novels, threads which tie all of the author's works together. While retaining a certain sort of naturalism, Pardo Bazán revealed her discontent with the doctrine and began to formulate an independent and more viable form of expression. Insolación is an eclectic work, but it does not suffer in dramatic appeal due to the differing elements which merge within its pages. Pardo Bazán's descriptive and stylistic abilities are amply evidenced in this pleasant narrative of romance in Madrid.
CHAPTER III

FEMINISM AND THE "NEW WOMAN"

Naturalism had been an important theory in Pardo Bazán's literary development, one she had chosen to follow in her attempt to revitalize the Spanish novel. As Emile Zola had observed, doña Emilia's naturalism was not based on deterministic philosophy, but was part of conscious effort to reconcile opposing trends and doctrines. Sherman Eoff also sensed the nature of Pardo Bazán's literary direction:

For artistic reasons she was attracted by Zola's grim vision of man's place in nature. But, since she could not wholly identify herself with his ideas, her adaptation of naturalism turned out to be almost exclusively literary, having some of the weakness inherent in the pursuit of a goal in which one does not fully believe. 1

Gómez de Baquero discerns a great independence of thought in Pardo Bazán's brand of naturalism:

...la actitud de la Pardo, partidaria del naturalismo, era difícil. Difícil por su personal situación en la sociedad española, por el medio familiar que la rodea. Todos estamos influídos por nuestro medio y somos algo prisioneros de él. Las fugas tienen algo de heroicas. El medio de la Pardo era tradicionalista, aristocrático, provinciano. ...La actitud de la Pardo Bazán era un acto de valentía artística en una dama española tradicionalista y de linaje. Por esas mismas cualidades tuvo cierta eficacia social. 2

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2Andrenio (Gómez de Baquero), De Gallardo a Unamuno, pp. 152-53.
Naturalism had succeeded in awakening Spanish writers to the light of modern thought, even though they rejected the scientific and literary theories of the school. "Hasta ahora, la novela moderna no debe a ninguna escuela como al naturalismo, y es, en gran parte, obra de él. Las flores que broten en lo futuro, en el huerto novelesco, habrán sido posibles por el naturalismo, que fecundó el terreno." Pardo Bazán's role in the introduction of naturalism into Spain was a major one and it brought her many insults and animosities. Few critics were able to perceive the underlying purpose in her treatment of naturalism, although she specifically outlined her goal in many prologues and critical essays. Juan Valera wrote the most vociferous attack against doña Emilia's naturalism in his *Apuntes sobre el nuevo arte de escribir novelas*. Confessing that he had yet to read any of the novels of the French naturalists, Valera condemned Pardo Bazán in her aesthetic appreciation of the naturalist doctrine. Menéndez y Pelayo, writing to Valera after the publication of the latter's book, compliments him on his witty refutation of naturalism and continues with this explanation of doña Emilia's diversity:

En cuanto a doña Emilia, no hay que tomarla por lo serio en este punto ni en muchos otros. Tiene ingenio, cultura y sobre todo singulares condiciones de estilo; pero, como toda mujer, tiene una naturaleza receptiva y se enamora de todo lo que hace ruido, sin

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3 Andrenio (Gómez de Baquero), *Novelas y novelistas*, (Madrid, 1918), p. 302.
There were many reasons for Pardo Bazán's dissatisfaction with naturalism, yet she never acquiesced to these and other criticisms of her contemporaries. Clarín offers an explanation for the bitterness of some critical opinions: "Muchas de las enemistades literarias que han surgido contra la señora Pardo Bazán tienen su origen en la envidia de varios barbudos sujetos, que no pueden llevar con paciencia que sepa más que ellos una señora de la Coruña." Her long struggle to reconcile the conflicting currents of naturalism and Catholicism was partially due to her very determination to prove herself independent of her critics. Manuel de la Cruz perceives Pardo Bazán's oscillations to be an indication of a superior personality:

As Pardo Bazán matured as a writer, it became impossible for her to write effectively within the limitations of naturalism. As her enthusiasm for naturalism diminished and she moved

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5Clarín (Leopoldo Alas), *Polletos*, p. 60.

6de la Cruz, *Obras*, p. 278.
toward a more individualistic approach, she found that she had the experience to construct her own literary guidelines.

Religion was an important facet in Pardo Bazán's life and, in her second phase of novels, it becomes a basic characteristic of all of her principal female characters. To the degree that doña Emilia gained confidence in her own literary worth, she also brought an intense measure of spirituality to her novels. In these new novels, religion becomes an integral part of reality, a force that is capable of strengthening an otherwise passive or subjugated individual. Her new vision of reality, and its expression in art, encompasses a complexity that naturalism denies:

"Reclamo todo para el arte, pido que no se desmiembre su vasto reino, que no se mutilen sus cuerpos sagrados, que sean lícitos pintar la materia y el espíritu, la tierra y el cielo." The wider idealism of the author's perspective, the basic Christianity which acts as a liberating force, the tolerance of human weakness and a softened tone: these new aspects of the second phase all have their roots in doña Emilia's spirituality. C. C. Glascock reflects upon these new values in doña Emilia's prose:

One of the best things about her work is the just appreciation that she shows of the part played by religion in man's life, of its power to elevate, even to reform, to comfort and console the suffering and the dying, to keep one from the pitfalls and temptations everywhere, to soften and subdue the most rebellious and the fiercest souls. Pardo Bazán was all through her life

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7 Emilia Pardo Bazán, La dama joven, (Barcelona, 1885), p. xv.
a communicant of the Roman Catholic Church. She was faithful in her adherence to enlightened religion; she was as frank in her acceptance of religious truth as she was open to the facts of science and of history. A more sincere seeker after all that is true and good, a more unprejudiced and honest observer, one freer from all bias and inclination to distort, or one more genuinely sympathetic to dealing with man's frailty, is hard to find.\(^8\)

Her new religious emphasis does not diminish the artistic value of Pardo Bazán's works; her intention, as with her former adaptation of naturalism, is to expand the customary limits, to transcend the narrow confines established by scholars and poets.

The profound influence of spirituality in Pardo Bazán's novels hardly reflects a lessening of her involvement in the everyday issue of feminine rights. Her aspirations in this regard are most tangibly evidenced in her struggle to enter the Spanish Academy. With an aura of self-confidence that was mistaken for egotism, doña Emilia began to write articles calling for the admission of women into the Academy. Again Valera wrote a scathing but witty article, Las mujeres y las Academias (1891), that due to his prestige stifled Pardo Bazán's ambitions. Typical also of masculine reaction to doña Emilia's pretension is a comment by Ricardo Palma:

Muy juzgada, y por plumas eminentes, ha sido la señora Pardo Bazán, para que yo repita lo que sobre su ya indiscutible talento se ha escrito; o que, por echarla de novedoso, dijera que no está su mérito a la altura de su fama, con lo que conquistaría reputación de malévolo y envidioso. Lejos de eso: mi convicción

\(^8\)Glascock, *Two Modern Spanish Novelists*, p. 37.
sincera es que doña Emilia constituye una de las más altas glorias literarias de España y de nuestro siglo, y que esa gloria sería tanto mayor cuanto menores fueran las aspiraciones varoniles de la escritora. ¿A qué pretender que en homenaje a ella, a su ilustración, a su inteligencia, que nadie ha osado negar, rompa la Academia Española con seculares tradiciones, aumentaría, por ser tal, en un quilate la bien conquistada reputación de la literata? Consérvese mi amiga doña Emilia siempre mujer, y no renuncie a las prerrogativas de su sexo, que la severidad autoritaria del académico, cuadra mal en boca que habla de trajes y modistas.9

The polemic surrounding this issue of doña Emilia's membership in the Academy was just as obstreperous as that concerning La cuestión palpitante and Pardo Bazán dedicated much of her time to defending her claim. In the midst of the controversy, the death of don José Pardon Bazán, the author's father, halted her campaign. During a year of mourning, she availed herself of the opportunity to read feminist literature, especially "Feminine Slavery" by John Stuart Mill. She could not help but appreciate the similarity of thought expressed by her father and this philosopher:

Mi inolvidable padre, desde que puedo recordar como pensaba, profesó siempre en estas cuestiones un criterio muy analogo al de Stuart Mill, y al leer las páginas de "La esclavitud femenina," a veces me hieren con dolorosa alegría reminiscencias de razonamientos oídos en la primera juventud, que se trocaron en diálogos cuanto comenzó para mí la madurez de juicio.10

Carmen Bravo-Villasante evaluates the influence of Pardo Bazán's father upon her growing feminism: "Ahora que está

9Ricardo Palma, Recuerdos de España (Buenos Aires, 1897), pp. 140-41.

10Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 166.
sola, parece como si la ausencia del padre la diera fuerzas para decir su verdad.\textsuperscript{11} Ultimately, her father's death at a time of great disappointment over the Academy controversy prompted a new wave of feminism in Pardo Bazán's writing. At first in articles, and then in her novels, doña Emilia expressed a militancy that approached any statement made by Concepción Arenal.

In a series of articles entitled "La mujer española," Pardo Bazán formulated a model for a female character which she termed the "new woman." A civilized woman who is also profoundly religious, she is the ideal which doña Emilia presents to the Spanish public through novels of her second phase. Unlike the stereotypes found in the first series of novels, these modern women are individuals: they are aware, they are dissatisfied, they criticize society and their place within it. They are strong in their relationships and they question the traditional roles of men and women. Pardo Bazán's attitude toward her characters is also different. She praises these "new women," relying on autobiographical information to give her characters veracity. The criticism and detachment so characteristic of her first phase are exchanged for closeness and warmth.

\textsuperscript{11}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 168.
The critical reception of this two-part novel was unenthusiastic, as Saínz de Robles explains, because many critics who had anticipated another scandalous naturalistic work were disappointed:

La grave crítica... esperaba una novela fuerte, de un realismo crudo más perfilado aun por una tendencia naturalista... y se encontraba con una novela en dos partes, ... sencillo, ejemplar, de un realismo casi idealista, con unos personajes llenos de seducción cristiana, en un ambiente de un naturalismo casi ascético; novela en la que cuanto sucedía era de una ortodoxia rigurosa.¹²

With her model of the "new woman" clearly formulated, Emilia Pardo Bazán placed this character within a novelistic setting in order to express both her neo-catholic creed and her feminism. This individualistic character is an incarnation of the ideal woman, one who chooses spiritual fulfillment over material comfort. The transition from naturalism to this new tendency is complete; although there are still elements of naturalism in the novel, they are presented merely to heighten the final triumph of spirituality. César Barja detects a new tone in the novel:

El título Una cristiana es ya por sí solo bastante expresivo, y no lo es menos el de la novela que forma la segunda parte: La prueba. Porque se trata, en efecto, de una verdadera cristiana y de una verdadera prueba: de una mujer que hace del sacrificio cristiano la ley de su vida. Dicho queda ya que la Condesa de Pardo Bazán fue siempre cristiana católica, y sentimientos cristianos y católicos palpitan en todas sus obras. Una cristiana y La prueba prestan por primera vez en una acción completa todos esos sentimientos y todo el espiritualismo.

¹²Saínz de Robles, p. 535.
As Barja mentions, the total orientation of the novel is spiritual and even mystical, in sharp contrast to the few naturalistic descriptions that still appear. Heredity and environment have lost their power; the "new woman" is not swayed by these forces. González López sees this struggle as the test that the "new woman" must experience, one in which her spiritual self always triumphs: "En esta lucha, que es su prueba, entre el medio y el espíritu, sale vencedor éste." This conflict is necessary so that the character's true worth can be forcefully exhibited.

In Una cristiana the author develops the theme of a Christian woman who is called to prove her beliefs through a process of self-abnegation. The descriptions of the psychological consequences of her martyrdom give the work an interior approach which is used throughout Pardo Bazán's second phase. Carmina Aldao, the protagonist, is the cristiana who idealistically perceives her life as an offering to God. Although she is young and fairly attractive, her moral beauty surpasses her physical. Pardo Bazán sketches Carmina's marriage to don Felipe Unceta, an older man who is part Jewish and repugnant in appearance. The nephew of don Felipe, young Salustio, an engineering student in Madrid and one of the

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13Barja, Libros y autores modernos, p. 563.
wedding guests, is the narrator of the story. His infatuation with Carmiña and her submission to a marriage devoid of love are the main themes of the first part of the novel. Carmiña desires the wedding only as a means to escape the immoral atmosphere which surrounds her at her father's home, for Carmiña's father is a widower and has been living with a concubine for many years. As this woman had grown old and unattractive, el señor de Aldao had taken a new concubine, Candidiña, a sixteen-year-old peasant girl. His sinful behavior is painful to Carmiña's sensibilities and she sees marriage as the only decent way to remove herself from the position of passively sanctioning the affair by her presence.

A Franciscan monk, padre Moreno, her spiritual advisor and close friend, warns Carmiña of the dangers of marrying someone she does not love. Guillermo de Torre views Carmiña's actions as a concession to social prejudice and conventional religion: "Huyendo de la inmoralidad que supone convivir con un padre abarraganado, comete la amoralidad de casarse con un hombre al que no ama, pero al cual, no obstante, se sacrifica cristianamente."15 José A. Balseiro is even harsher in his criticism of Carmiña's motive:

Pero Carmiña se casa. Es decir: por huir de un mal del que no es responsable—la inmoralidad de su padre—incurre en otro peor del que es directamente culpable: el de unirse, sedimentado su espíritu de reservas mentales y de prejuicios por el perfil judaico de Felipe Unceta, con quien ni siquiera simpatiza porque el mundo

15 de Torre, "Emilia Pardo Bazán," Cuadernos Americanos, p. 256.
no le estima. (Siendo tan puritana, ¿por qué no entró monja, en vez de desposarse como lo hizo?) Su decisión no es, en consecuencia, de origen puramente heroico.\textsuperscript{16}

The martyrdom of Carmiña and the mystical tone of the novel have prompted many critics to dismiss the work as a purely religious study. Donald F. Brown describes the confusion surrounding the novel's classification:

These [Una cristiana and La prueba] are products of the Catholic or mystic side of Pardo's nature, which contributed its share to the collection, La dama joven. The use of the first person would exclude them from classification as experimental novels a la Zola. They seem to represent a temporary reaction against naturalism and are often classed as psychological novels. . . . Some critics profess to see in them the beginnings of Pardo's later manner as typified in La quimera (1905) and La sirena negra (1908). In any case, these novels of 1890, being inferior in quality and mystical in tendency, can have little significance. . . .\textsuperscript{17}

With this limited perspective, few critics have seen the importance of Carmiña as the seminal expression of the "new woman." In the modern sense, her self-denial seems to contradict the liberating aspect of feminism. Yet, she is not subjugated to her husband; she has chosen her path with an awareness not restricted by emotional preoccupations. While not as yet the perfect embodiment of the modern woman nor of Pardo Bazán's ideal, Carmiña is nonetheless a morally strong individual.

In the second part of the novel, La prueba, Carmiña's trial is intensified as her husband, don Felipe, contracts

\textsuperscript{16}Balseiro, \textit{Novelistas españoles modernos}, p. 296.

\textsuperscript{17}Brown, \textit{Catholic Naturalism}, p. 134.
leprosy and she becomes his nurse and sole companion, separated from the rest of the world. Salustio, the nephew, continues to pursue Carmiña even though she has forbidden him to enter her house. Salustio's adolescent schemes and reflections are a humorous relief from the gravity of Carmiña's situation. His behavior torments her as much as her husband's illness as he egotistically believes that his "tití" Carmiña suffers because she is deprived of his presence. Carmiña's suffering stems, however, from her inability to love her husband, a sin that she attempts to erase by her complete dedication to him as he nears death:

... cuanto haga yo ahora es poco para borrar lo de antes, y estoy agradecidísima a Dios que me ha concedido medios para reparar mi conducta. Es cierto que lo hacía así... no sé cómo, sin querer y sin poderlo remediar, porque me incitaba una cosa interior, una prevención o una manía; pero no me disculpo, porque las manías raras se vencen; cuando una mujer se casa, adquiere compromisos muy sagrados, y no valen manías ni antojos... Nadie me había obligado a casarme con Felipe, y en vez de quererle, parece que andaba buscando pretextos para apartarme de él.18

She is transformed by this new devotion to her dying husband. The selfishness and moral fastidiousness that Carmiña demonstrated by her marriage gradually change into a true and articulate illustration of the depths of her spirituality. José A. Balseiro praises Carmiña's Christianity, not on the

18 Emilia Pardo Bazán, "La prueba," Obras completas, I (Madrid, 1957), 699. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.
basis of her decision to marry, but in the light of her sub-
sequent actions:

Que luego de casada Carmiña cumple sus deberes
con ejemplar abnegación; que resiste a las tentaciones
de Salustio--el sobrino que insiste hasta el mal
gusto y la crueldad en hacerla caer--; que cuando al
marido se le desarrolla la enfermedad de San Lázaro
le cuida como sólo las criaturas tocadas por la divina
gracia podían hacerlo, repitiendo en sus días los
cuadros de las leyendas de oro . . . Indudable. Es
decir: Carmiña es cristiana, no cuando lo dice por
primera vez su confesor. Lo es después de casada.¹⁹

As padre Moreno explains to Salustio, Carmiña suffers because
she seeks a higher goal:

Usted cree que la vida ha de componerse de una serie
de dichas y venturas, y en eso se equivoca mucho,
porque la vida es una prueba, y a veces una sucesión
de pruebas que acaba con la muerte. A su tía de
usted, la señora de don Felipe, le mandó Dios prueba
más dura y más amarga; pero ya sabe Dios donde hiere,
porque su alma no es del temple común. Carmen es la
mujer cristiana . . . y si yo, hablando humanamente,
prefiría que hubiese sido dichosa aquí y en el otro
mundo, como confesor diré a usted que no lamento
demasiado verla en este trance. Es un medio de que
luzca en todo su esplendor la hermosura de su alma
(Prueba, p. 686).

This idealistic spirituality on the part of the protagonist,
although beautiful in its humanitarian significance, is
incapable of fully expressing Pardo Bazán's new feminist
orientation. She would be forced eventually to amend her
model of the "new woman" so that the character would be modern
and progressive instead of medieval. Carmiña's obsession with
self-abnegation and complete surrender to God detaches her

¹⁹Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 297.
from the social world. Perhaps doña Emilia felt the necessity to describe this glorified ideal before she could descend to earth to write about the real and efficacious woman of the twentieth century.

The minor characters in Una cristiana and La prueba function as contrasts to the serious and dogmatic tone of the main story. While doña Emilia solemnly portrayed her ideal woman through the character of Carmiña, she also ridiculed the stereotyped woman of the future. With a sense of humor that is uncommon to her novels, Pardo Bazán described Maud Baldwin, the English girl who represents the liberated woman. Luis Portal, Salustio's classmate, is attracted by Maud's unusual behavior: she is not afraid to talk to him, to walk with him unescorted in the park, or to earn spending money by tutoring young children in English and history. Luis describes his new girlfriend to Salustio: "Figúrate que siempre hablamos de cosas indiferentes, de esas que son conversación velada para las madrileñas: de política, de ciencias, de literatura, de artes, hasta de religión" (Prueba, p. 622). Luis expresses his astonishment at the archaic social mores of Spanish society, as he becomes Pardo Bazán's mouthpiece: "Mo [Maud] no es como esas mujeres de por acá, que andan en busca de un marido que las mantenga, porque su ineptitud y las absurdas ideas sociales no les permiten ganarse honradamente la vida" (Prueba, p. 622). Maud is in a sense the "new woman" in contrast to the señoritas whose sole desire in life is marriage:
"Mo es <<la mujer del porvenir>> , hembra superior al nivel general de su sexo, libre de preocupaciones enfermizas; varonil en el mejor sentido de la palabra, que es el que implica fuerza, entendimiento y resolución" (Prueba, p. 649).

Luis is soon disillusioned for ultimately Maud discloses her desire to be married; she betrays the image that Luis has created of her when she attempts to coerce him into an engagement. Luis is able to escape from her trap, although he suffers from disappointment:

...no sé si te diga que prefiero el tipo de nuestra mujer ignorante y cerril a una marisabidilla como Mo. Las cosas a medias, los conatos, siempre tienen algo de aborto, cierto sello ridículo. La instrucción de Mo es embolada, es ñoña: solo sirve para confirmar preocupaciones, no para desterrarlas dejando libre el campo intelectual. A Mo le han enseñado a pintar, pero sin estudio del modelo vivo, flores y pájaros únicamente; Mo toca el piano...como cualquiera; a Shakespeare lo lee, conformes... pero en edición expurgada; Mo conoce la historia de su país...según un compendio para niños; en suma, yo que creía encontrar su espíritu igual al de un varón...y me suena a hueco, lo mismo que el de las demás hembras (Prueba, p. 690).

He later forgives Maud her feminine wiles and they marry. As he explains to Salustio: "Mo no es la <<mujer nueva>> , convenido; pero acaso no es tiempo aún de que esa hembra excepcional aparezca en nuestra sociedad y la modifique" (Prueba, p. 703). For the moment, Pardo Bazán's completely liberated woman is just as limited as the completely altruistic and devoted female. She can as yet see no reconciliation between these two extremes.
It is quite clear, however, that Pardo Bazán disliked and was ashamed of the typical young Spanish girl of her time. The señoritas of Barriento appear in the novel as comic portrayals of the vacuity of the uneducated female. Again Pardo Bazán humorously expresses her criticisms of her society's mores:

[Las señoritas de Barriento son] dos pares de niñas, muchachas del género insulso, nerviosas y linfáticas, de estas cuya inutilidad e intolerable sosera son fruto combinado de la vida anodina, la deficiencia de instrucción, la estrechez de miras y la frivolidad... eran prueba vivente de que andaba acertado mi amigo [Luis] al insistir en la necesidad de crear una mujer nueva, distinta del tipo general mesocrático (Prueba, p. 635).

Doña Emilia continues with a delightful description of the señoritas' typical activities:

Pasábanse todo el día de Dios en la ventana, ya entre cristales, ya con el cuerpo fuera. Cuando no estaban así, en postura de loritos, martirizaban el piano, revolvían figurines, charlaban de modas, leían revistas de salones para husmear las bodas y los equipos de la gente encopetada, criticaban a sus amigas, fisgoneaban quién entraba en casa de los vecinos, se miraban al espejo o dan vueltas a sus sombrerillos y trajes. A falta de otro género de conocimientos, su madre les inculcaba ideas de nímia corrección social, explicándoles día y noche lo que era “buen visto” y “mal visto”, lo que “podían hacer” “y lo que” “no podían hacer” unas señoritas; y a aquellas criaturas, capaces de establecer comunicación telegráfica con el primer mequetrefe que pasase por la acera fronteriza, les parecía tan imposible ir solas hasta la esquina de la calle como en ferrocarril a la luna (Prueba, p. 635).

As her focus shifts from the general renovation of Spanish society to the education of the Spanish woman, Pardo Bazán's female characters will assume positive qualities that
emphasize their progressive feminism. These later characters exemplify Emilio Gonzálež López' statement: "las novelas de la Pardo Bazán se destacan por la perfecta caracterización de los personajes femeninos, superiores en la casi totalidad de los casos a los masculinos."\(^{20}\) Chandler and Schwartz express the same idea: "Pardo Bazán stands as a unique figure in an age when the novel in Spain was dominated by men. Her women are beautifully portrayed. Indeed, their very perfection points up the weakness of her male characters."\(^{21}\)

The women in the novels surpass the men and such was Pardo Bazán's intention. The male characters are weak not because of the author's inability to treat them artistically, but because their weakness helped to prove her point concerning the new breed of woman in Spanish society.

**Doña Milagros** (1894)

With the inheritance received upon her father's death, Pardo Bazán founded the monthly magazine, *Nuevo Teatro Crítico*, named in honor of Padre Feijóo. This magazine was the work of doña Emilia alone, the personal expression of her intellectual fecundity. Each issue included a short novel, an extensive study of some literary topic, a chronicle of a trip, brief reviews of important books and summaries of the latest activities of many Spanish authors. Guillermo


de Torre expresses admiration for dona Emilia's effort:
"...no era una simple compilación de estudios o críticas sueltas; asumía el carácter de miscelánea orgánica que suelen presentar las revistas escritas pluralmente."  

He considers the magazine to be a unique mirror that aids one in reconstructing the intellectual image of Spain from 1891 to 1893. Pardo Bazán's intentions were to stimulate the intellectual curiosities of the literary world and to provide herself with a forum for her new feminist statements. Many of the articles in the magazine deal with the problems of the "new woman." Many refer to her campaign to propose Concepción Arenal as a candidate to the Academy, a proposal that was to fail as had her own. The refusal in Arenal's case, one which Pardo Bazán felt was irrational and arbitrary, intensified her militancy; she wrote strident articles calling for the education of women and the enlightenment of men. Pardo Bazán fought the limitations imposed upon the nineteenth century woman:

La mujer se ahoga, presa en las estrechas mallas de una red moral menuda, menuda. Debercitos: gustar, lucir en un salón. Instruccióncita: música, algo de baile, migajas de historia, nociones superficiales y truncadas. Devocióncilla: prácticas rutinarias, genuflexiones, rezos maquinales, todo enano, raquitico, como los albaricoqueros chinos. Falta el soplo de lo ideal, la línea grandiosa, la majestad, la dignidad, el brío.

23 Ibid.
The statements of Pardo Bazán and Concepción Arenal during this period became the foundation for the feminist movement in Spain. For three years Pardo Bazán dedicated herself to her magazine, but eventually she lost her enthusiasm and energy. In a final article entitled "Despedida," she expressed a pessimism about Spain that easily could have been a manifesto of the Generation of '98.

Now doña Emilia again began to write in a creative vein and her fame as a short story writer reached a pinnacle, perhaps because she dwelt in these on profane and scandalous themes. One in particular, "La sed de Cristo," was so badly misinterpreted by the Spanish public that doña Emilia was accused of blasphemy. Many of these short stories share a common theme of maternity; a theme that is central to Doña Milagros. This novel is the first of a proposed series that Pardo Bazán entitled the "Ciclo de Adán y Eva," in which human love would be studied in its different manifestations. Pardo Bazán wrote only two novels in this series, the second being Memorias de un solterón, when political events called her away from her novels. The two works are set in Marineda, doña Emilia's poetic name for her native city, La Coruña.

The women in the novels are superior to the men who, as passive characters, are unable to control their relationships and their lives. The plot of Doña Milagros, which Saínz de Robles summarizes, is an apparently simple story of a middle
class couple, their twelve children and the frustrations of their collective existence:

Verdaderamente, el argumento de Doña Milagros no puede parecer más sencillo. Es la triste historia de un hombre corriente—por no decir vulgar—, cargado de hijos y apesadumbrado de miserias, que tiene que vivir y desvivirse en monótono desfilar de días angustiosamente parecidos en sus exigencias y en sus amenazas. Benicio Neira de Villalba, un pobre ser, humilde y sencillo, tiene una esposa irascible, once hijas y un hijo—de muy distintas índoles y condiciones—y un sueldo miserable, que no alcanza a cubrir las necesidades más perentorias. Doña Milagros, hermosa y bonisima mujer, esposa del comandante Tomás Llanes, a quien su esterilidad tiene atormentada, pudiera ser el rayo de sol en el hogar de Benicio. Pero la terrible Ilduara, su mujer, odia a la infeliz y graciosa doña Milagros, a la que no permite que sacie su anhelo de maternidad en los numerosos retoños que a ella le sobran.  

As with most of Pardo Bazán's novels, the plot of the story is secondary in importance to the character studies, in which the author's artistry is most perceptible. The narrator of Doña Milagros, Benicio Neira, the father of eleven daughters and one son, is a weak man who finds his goodness ineffectual in the face of the aggressive and demanding women who surround him. Emilio González López analyzes Benicio in his role as a foil to the women in the novel: "Benicio es un hombre vacilante y blando, mientras que las mujeres de la misma novela rebosan vitalidad y decisión." Pardo Bazán uses male narrators in all the novels of her second phase, a fact which superficially appears to give a

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25 Saínz de Robles, pp. 351-52.

26 González López, Novelista de Galicia, p. 164.
masculine point of view to the works. C. C. Glascock, for example, holds the opinion that this masculine perspective limits the impact of Pardo Bazán's feminism:

True it is she might have given us more revelation if she had written only from the woman's standpoint, she might have made a greater amount of admirable disclosure of feminine psychology, and it may be unfortunate that she did not do so, for one may learn better from a woman what a woman's soul is, and much of man's knowledge of woman is, so to speak, second hand, or at least of a different sort. The protagonist in her novels is usually a man who tells the story in the first person. Hence it is said that she usually seems to be writing from the standpoint of a man.27

In one sense, however, this presence of a male narrator intensifies the feminine orientation of the novels; Pardo Bazán intentionally portrayed her women characters from a male point of view, for she felt that men spoke of women in a way that in itself testified to the need for feminist reform.

Doña Milagros contains more important female characters than any other novel written by Pardo Bazán. For this reason it is a key novel in the understanding of her feminism. She offers the reader many different personalities and, through a process of contrast, she underscores the strengths of the "new woman." With a sense of certainty about her characters and their worth that was lacking in Una cristiana and La prueba, doña Emilia sketches various individuals who deal with the demands of womanhood in different ways. Ilduara, the wife of don Benicio, is a shrew who completely manipulates her

27Glascock, Two Modern Spanish Novelists, p. 11.
husband with a heartlessness that is softened only by Pardo Bazán's humorous treatment of the relationship. Ilduara is like Shakespeare's Kate; unfortunately she lacks a Petruchio to tame her. She is the strong partner in the marriage, and, as González López states, she "...es el verdadero varón de la casa, la que manda y se hace obedecer por el tímido esposo y sus hijas." José A. Balseiro agrees with this opinion: "Doña Ilduara...es dueña de masculino espíritu. Diríase que los temperamentos y los caracteres de estos dos seres [Ilduara y don Benicio] no corresponden enteramente a su sexo." Yet, for all her harshness, there is a strength in Ilduara that supports her family and even Don Benicio appreciates his wife's tenacity: "Ella regía casa y hacienda, y si bien las regía con poca suavidad, no por eso ha de negarse que su firmeza y su vigilancia eran sanas y útiles. Podríase comparar a mi Ilduara con un corsé emballenado y recio, que si se oprime, sostiene." Ilduara suffers from physical ailments which, rather than transform her into a whimpering hypochondriac, simply irritate an already overbearing disposition:

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28 González López, Novelista de Galicia, p. 164.  
29 Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 305.  
30 Emilia Pardo Bazán, "Doña Milagros," Obras completas, (Madrid, 1956), II, 386. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.
Padecía mi esposa diversísimos achaques, unos acabados en algias, como neuralgias, gastralgias y cefalalgias; otros en ágias, como hemorragias; otros en emia, como anemia. . ., pero todo ello, hablando en cristiano, se podía encerrar en dos síntomas funestos: debilidad de un organismo gastado, pérdidas de sangre que agotaban su escaso caudal del vigor. Lo extraño es que semejantes empobrecimientos y afligiciones no paraban en apagarle el carácter a Ilda, ni en doblegar su firmeza. Al contrario, aquel carácter de bronce parecía más recio y bravo con los males físicos (Milagros, p. 360).

Ilduara also suffers from extreme jealousy which is intensified by the presence of a neighbor, doña Milagros. The birth of the twins in the Neira household brings the Andalusian neighbor such joy that she endures Ilduara’s hatred in order to be with them and thus she emerges as the central character:

Es de advertir que en cuanto mi esposa recobró ánimos impacientose con la inmixtión de la comandanta [doña Milagros] en nuestros asuntos domésticos. Ilda siempre había sido guardadora de su autoridad, lo cual, añadido a la prevención que contra doña Milagros alimentaba, dió por resultado una tirantez de espíritu y una sobre-excitación que se declaraban sólo consentir los pasos de la infeliz señora en el recibimiento. . . Por desgracia, la andaluza subía más que nunca; nos la encontrabamos hasta en la sopa. Había cobrado a mis gemelas tal cariño, que rayaba en frenesí, y no sabía pasarse dos horas sin echarles la vista encima (Milagros, p. 375).

Ilduara's death soon after the birth of the twins upsets the Neira household and the remainder of the novel deals with the adjustment of the members of the family to the loss of their mother. The maternal theme reappears in Pardo Bazán's treatment of doña Milagros.

Doña Milagros is a warm and loving counterpart of Ilduara's ill humor. She is an attractive woman and her spontaneous outbursts of affection are often misinterpreted by the
The taciturn Gallegos of Marineda. Don Benicio describes her physical appearance:

No diré que la comandanta fuese una belleza acabada y sorprendente; pero poseía en grado altísimo ese don de su raza que se conoce por sandunga. Hasta sus defectillos eran de los que prenden y enganchan la voluntad mejor que las perfecciones clásicas. La sombra oscura sobre el labio superior, carnoso y de un rosa pálido; el lunar castaño con cerdas rizadas en el carrillo izquierdo; la abultada cadera, las ojeras cariendas y la voz gruesa y un tanto bronca, no acierto a decir si la desmejoraban, o si, por el contrario, la hacían seductora en grado sumo. Estos puntos yo los había oído debatir en la Sociedad de Amigos con gran calor, cuando el maridazo volvía la espalda, pues doña Milagros era mujer muy discutida, y no caía sobre ella ese olvido indiferente en que envuelven los varones a las hembras que no excitan su malsana curiosidad (Milagros, p. 370).

Doña Milagros' only suffering stems from her inability to have a child. Not only is she attracted to the Neira household at the birth of the twins but her maternal spirit is so strong that after Ilduara's death, doña Milagros comes to believe that she is the actual mother of these children and that don Benicio is her mate:

Me creo que soy la misma de ellas, y que Zita y Media las he dado a lus, pasando los dolore, y las fatiga, y las aflisiones de las madre. . .Que si, don Benisio; caa loco con su tema, y no hay nadie que no esté loco; yo, loquía estoy, y me ha entrao la manía de que es mentira que usté estuviese casao con. . .con la difunta, vamo ¡con la difunta! que con quien estuyo usté casao fue conmigo; que nos quisimo. . .allá en tiempos, que tuvimos es nenya. . .y que ahora todavía nos queremo, si seño, nos queremo. . .de la entraña. . .; pero santamente, como los hermanitos viejos, muy viejos. . ., sin pecao ni malisia. . .Los dos somo una Eva y un Adán, pero que acaban por donde los demás empeísan (Milagros, p. 424).
Her love for Benicio is an expression of pure gratitude for his kindness and the part he played in the birth of the beloved twins. Doña Milagros is a simple yet beautiful character whose philosophy of love is inspiring. Balseiro considers her to be one of Pardo Bazán's best creations:

...simpatiquísimo espíritu, por su generosidad, por su afán materno; por su trato llano pero no vulgar, y por su sentido casi adivinatorio para leer con sutil habilidad y certera intuición las intenciones y las resoluciones ajenas. Doña Milagros: uno de los más amables caracteres femeninos de la novela española y uno de los más atractivos de quien, sin contar otras obras suyas, creo en este ciclo notabilísimos retratos de mujer. 31

Doña Milagros certainly encompasses the time-honored values of motherhood and selfless love.

The older daughters of the Neira family are exquisitely described by Pardo Bazán in a realistic study of the nineteenth century middle class family. As González López states: "La Pardo Bazán nos ha dejado en la descripción de las hijas de Benicio, de la casa de Neira, una estampa viva y llena de color de una familia burguesa de fines del siglo pasado. Su retrato es para la familia de la clase media lo que el célebre cuadro de Goya para la del desventurado Carlos IV." 32 Balseiro compares Pardo Bazán's description of the family with that of Galdós in *Fortunata y Jacinta*:

Su pintura del hogar de Neira—hogar un tiempo tranquilo en la superficie, pero trabajado interiormente por las

pasiones y los anhelos de varias mujeres jóvenes y sedientas de vivir—es, literalmente, tan admirable, que sólo pensando en los cuadros de familia presentados por Galdós en *Fortunata y Jacinta* puede hallarse digna comparación en las letras españolas modernas. Y si insuperable es el conjunto; si el grupo adquiere vigorosa plasticidad, cada una de las figuras principales que en él participa adquiere original, fuerte y distinto carácter.33

Doña Emilia had attempted this composite sketch of sisters in earlier novels. The female cousins of don Pedro in *Los pazos de Ulloa* and the señoritas of Barrientos in *La prueba* are examples. Now the brief sketch becomes the core of the novel and the young girls and their impulses engender much of the action. Never do these women escape the confines of intellectual adolescence; their only goal is to merchandise their physical attributes. Indeed, each represents a flaw proper to the "old" rather than the "new woman" and are used by Pardo Bazán for the effect of contrast.

Again, González López gives a good analysis of Pardo Bazán's objective:

Todas las hijas de Neira, por encima de sus diferencias personales, tienen rasgos comunes, sobre los que insiste la Pardo Bazán; como si la variedad de psicologías individuales no tuviera otro objeto que realzar con más fuerza esas notas constantes, que son la vanidad, la coquetería y el fácil enamoramiento. Están siempre dispuestas a amar al primero que se presente; en su amor no hay nada de idealismo, sino que es una combinación de grosero sensualismo y de un cierto egoísmo crematístico; ... es un amor activo y perseverante que opera sobre

33Balseiro, *Novelistas españoles modernos*, p. 305.
Pardo Bazán espouses the feminist ideas expressed by Concepción Arenal in her book *La mujer del porvenir, la mujer en su casa* and gives them life through her study of these young women of the past century. Her characters reflect Arenal's pessimism and, quite aptly, fit her friend's summary of the feminine situation of her time: "Tal es la situación de la mujer; abiertos todos los caminos del sentimiento, cerrados todos los de la inteligencia." Neira's older daughters: Tula, Rosa and María Ramona, are obsessed with love and marriage to the neglect of their own intellectual development. Tula is a replica of her mother, her sharp personality and domineering attitude hide a strong matrimonial aspiration. For all her aristocratic pretension, she marries a poor sign-painter. Rosa is the materialist of the family, who spends hours making clothes and scanning fashion magazines in order to satiate her desires. María Ramona hides her eroticism behind the veil of mystical exaltation. Her infatuation with a priest leads to his flight from Marineda to salvage his own reputation. These three sisters, driven by trivial

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obsessions, are women of the nineteenth century who are completely unsuited to the modern world. They are trapped in the web of their ignorance.

In contrast to these hypocritical and shallow women, two admirable women appear in the novel, Clara and Feita. Clara, the truly religious woman of the story, observes with horror the disintegration of her family. She goes to a convent at the end of the novel, both heeding her call and escaping the miseries of her home. A Jesuit priest explains Clara's decision to don Benicio:

Sabe que no ha de heredar grandes bienes de fortuna; ve que pasa tiempo y no la han pretendido aquellos jóvenes a quienes podría aceptar y con quienes podría ser una buena esposa; no quiere ni imaginar bodas con un hombre desagradable, que la repugne; cree, y no se engaña, que si el matrimonio encierra felicidades, también trae consigo grandes penas, y, por último, en la imaginación de su hija de usted ha labrado huella el espectáculo de la incesante fecundidad de su madre, el verla sufriendo siempre, siempre encinta, siempre con el comadron a la puerta y, por último, el verla morir como murió... En fin--pronunció el jesuita con voz mordiente--la han asustado ustedes. Clara es de complección tranquila, amiga del reposo, de la vida regular y metódica, de las horas fijas, de la paz, de la calma, de la dignidad (Milagros, p. 410).

If Clara's escape has been into the quietude of holy orders, Feita's is into the future. She is the feminist of the family, even though she is just a child. Pardo Bazán's childhood obviously served as the basis for this character. Feita's activites mirror doña Emilia's curiosity and rebellious nature:

Cuando se peleaba con sus hermanas, cuando todo lo ponía patas arriba, cuando nos daban ganas de atarla
para que no nos volviese locos, Feita era un bichejo, un tití enrededor, cuya graciosa insensatez ya fatiga, ya divierta; pero al hablar conmigo a solas, quieta, seria, advirtiase en ella inclinación a ponerse en lo justo, a observar lo real y a conocerlo todo y juzgarlo todo con un sentido exacto, original y radical, que bien podia admirar en mozuela tan tierna (Milagros, pp. 384-85).

Feita is preoccupied with the familial problems that surround her. Her father is too weak to control the selfish extravagances of her older sisters and so the financial situation worsens. Feita's incipient feminism can be seen in her analysis of her family: "No hay mayor desgracia que reunirse tantas Mariás como aquí nos hemos reunido. Si en vez de mujeres fuésemos hombres, saldriamos adelante, ¡vaya si saldriamos! Pero esto es un gallinero. No entiendo que será de nosotras, porque realmente no servimos más que de estorbo" (Milagros, p. 390). Her intelligence seems to provide the solution to her family's financial problems as she plans to go to school to prepare for a career. She hopes to support her sisters when her father is too old to work. Echoing Concepción Arenal's words, Feita rebels against the narrow limitations of nineteenth century life:

Yo sé barrer y coser y quidar de una casa, y sé criar un chiquillo, como crie a las gatas monas...; pero me gusta estudiar, y estudiare. ¡Solo faltaba! Aquí todo el mundo se pronuncia para hacer disparates... Pues me pronuncio yo para hacer una cosa justa y buena. Quiero estudiar, aprender, saber y valerme el día de mañana sin necesitar a nadie. Yo no he de estar dependiendo de un hombre. Me lo ganare y me burlaré de todos ellos (Milagros, p. 429).
These youthful dreams will be realized in *Memorias de un solterón* when Feita actually does become the "new woman" who educates herself and earns a living.

*Memorias de un solterón* (1896)

In this novel, Feita Neira becomes the main character. Again Pardo Bazán expresses the ideas of Concepción Arenal and other feminist writers through a novelistic technique. The story presented in *Memorias de un solterón* involves Feita's struggle to be independent and, even more, to deal with her independence. Never losing sight of her ideal, Feita's battles are with her family, her friends and, at times, herself. The relationship between Feita's life and that of doña Emilia is evident, as González López astutely perceives: "Feita Neira, carácter no enteramente ficticio, que en muchos aspectos representa la rebeldía de la joven Pardo Bazán en su lucha contra el estrecho medio ambiente de las clases conservadoras coruñesas. . . . Vivo retrato de Pardo Bazán en sus años mozos." Feita, the voracious reader and insufferable interrogator, is, in fact, a complete portrait of the author in her youth. This autobiographical information, coupled with the strong feminist statement presented in the novel, makes *Memorias de un solterón* the best example of Pardo Bazán's new literary direction. Just as doña Emilia spent her life fighting the prejudices of her

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environment, Feita experiences her own personal conflict with her surroundings. Feita is the "new woman" in all her glory and, furthermore, in all her loneliness as the dreams of the first novel crystallize into real aspirations that Feita actually attempts to fulfill:

Feita es la heroína que llena con su personalidad toda la novela Memorias de un solterón. Es esta última uno de los más interesantes personajes femeninos salidos de la pluma de doña Emilia; ambas, la escritora y su creación, coinciden en tener fe en su propio esfuerzo, en el trabajo y en la inteligencia, en el desprecio de los convencialismos y rutinas sociales. Feita, bajo su apariencia masculina, esconde un corazón femenino que desea un amor sincero y desinteresado; es la joven española moderna que se abre camino con su estudio y voluntad; la que con sus actos, más que con sus palabras, reclama su equiparación al hombre en esta vida.37

Both Feita and Pardo Bazán grapple with the same dilemma, which Guillermo de Torre defines in these terms: "... en una sociedad eminentemente matriarcal, sucedía paradojicamente que la mujer estaba privada de iniciativas y toda actividad extrahogareña se miraba como 'bachillerías', como una transgresión imperdonable."38 In this phase of Pardo Bazán's writing, the nineteenth century woman sheds the restrictive shackles of decades past and emerges as the "new woman" who can deal with the modern world in an intelligent manner. The transition, however, is painful and multitudinous obstacles appear to challenge her. Feita's victory in the quest for independence is not easy. Through the eyes of the narrator,

37Ibid., p. 169.
38de Torre, De 98 al barroco, p. 236.
Mauro Pareja, who is the bachelor of the title, one sees that even Feïta's physical appearance reflects a rebellion against the norm:

Cien pliegos de papel no bastan para retratar a este curioso personaje. Su exterioridad es lo más fácil de sorprender al vuelo, pues no necesita el lápiz esmerarse para no alterar líneas de belleza. Feïta (diminutivo algo injurioso de Fe), no es linda, aunque tampoco repulsiva ni desagradable. Su cara, más que de doncella, de rapaz despabilado y travieso, ofrece rasgos picantes y originales, nariz de atrevida forma, frente despejada, donde se arremolina el pelo diseñando cinco puntas que caracterizan mucho la fisonomía. . . . Sus ojos son chicos, verdes, de limpio matiz, descarados, directos en el mirar, ojos que preguntan, que apremian, que escudriñan, ojos del entendimiento, en los cuales no se descubre ni el menor asomo de coquetería, reserva o ternura femenil. . . .Yo que me perezco por las mujeres ataviadas, peripuestas y pulcras, no me puedo acostumbrar a la manera de vestirse de esta chicuela indomita, siempre metida en un talego o amarrada como un saco de garbanzos. . . .Su pelo vive en perpetua insurrección; es el mambis más rebelde que conozco. Lo lleva corto porque no se aviene a dejarlo crecer. . . . Los dedos de Feïta son un mapamundi de manchas de tinta y de desolladuras y arañazos. . . . Los arrechuchos de laboriosidad domestica no son en Feïta muy frecuentes. Por lo general paga tributo a otra manía, insolita y funesta en la mujer; y es su malhadada afición a leer toda clase de libros, a aprender cosas raras, a estudiar a troche y moche, convirtiéndose en marisabidilla lo mas odioso y antipático del mundo.39

Carmen Bravo-Villasante sees in this portrait of Feïta the adolescent figure of Pardo Bazán.40 Feïta's thirst for knowledge also mirrors doña Emilia's youthful obsession:

Ha leído todo cuanto cayó en sus manecitas, ávidamente, con prisa, sin discernimiento, tragando, cual los

39Emilia Pardo Bazán, "Memorias de un solterón," Obras completas, (Madrid, 1956), II, 468-69. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.

40Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 198.
avestruces, perlas y guijarros en revuelta confusión. Desde los libros de mística con que se espiritaba Argos en sus tiempos de fervor, hasta lo de fisiología y medicina que tuvo la insensatez de prestarle a Feita el filántropo doctor Morgas; desde las novelas de Ortega y Frijas que le ofreció con grandes encomios el brutazo de don Tomás Llanes, hasta las poesías de Verlaine que le facilitó secretamente un empleado en la biblioteca del Puerto, Feita ha recorrido toda la escala bibliográfica, hacinando en su mollera un fárrago estupendo, una capa de detritos, entre los cuales van envueltos preciosos gérmenes que podrían fructificar si los cultivase con método y sazón. No cabe duda que la tal Feita sabe ya muchísimas cosas; pero su instrucción ha sido, como suele la de las personas de su sexo, confusa, precipitada, incoherente, y con lagunas y deficiencias donde debían existir ciertas nociones sin dudar elementales (Memorias, p. 469).

As had Pardo Bazán, Feita struggles against the insipid forms of instruction forced upon young girls and, as did Pardo Bazán’s, her desires reach far beyond the simple skills of a domestic creature. She seeks freedom. To achieve it, she must defy the type of education so aptly described by Concepción Arenal and so fastidiously perpetrated upon the nineteenth century woman:

Así despilfarra la joven los primeros y mejores años de su vida, sin hacer nada útil, ni tratar de nada formal, ni pensar en nada grave. Así tiene la veleidad y la ligereza propias del que no se emplea en nada serio; así adquiere hábitos de holganza intelectual, que la imposibilitarán toda la vida para los trabajos del espíritu, que exigen mucho esfuerzo y perseverancia; así, no pudiendo ser para ella la vida una ocupación, quiere convertirla en un entretenimiento.41

Feita cannot accept this deadening existence; vicariously she had tasted of freedom through her readings and now she wants to live that dream. As she herself declares, it is not enough

41 Arenal, La mujer, p. 115.
to sew and pray and sweep; she wants to study and to educate herself so that she can earn a living (Memorias, p. 470). This decision scandalizes her friends and family, for is it possible that a well-bred young lady could so much as dream of leaving her house unaccompanied? Her determination to do so dismays her father:

... ha desgarrado velos que conviene a toda senorita respetar, y, por efecto de sus disparatadas lecturas y de sus atrevidos estudios, piensa, habla y quiere proceder como procederia una mujer emancipada, y temo por ella. ... Ahora se le ha metido en la cabeza el mayor de los absurdos: pretende, fundándose en el supuesto de que las mujeres deben ganarse la vida lo mismo que los hombres, dar lecciones a domicilio a los chicos, prepararlos para el bachillerato.... ¡que sé yo! Delirios todo. ¡Y para esta hazana quiere salir sola, ir sola a donde se le antoje, volver a la hora que le acomode, disponer de lo que gane y por este estilo! (Memorias, p. 473).

Feita finds students to tutor and is exhilarated when, through her own efforts, she escapes the financial difficulties of her home. Even her appearance, as Mauro Pareja explains, undergoes a change as she approaches the fulfillment of her aspirations:

Sólo entonces note hasta qué punto se había exagerado en la muchacha su habitual aspecto de estudiantillo. Su pelo, mas corto y revuelto que nunca, como si lo hubiese alborotado con los dedos, se escapaba del casquete o toca rusa, de piel; las líneas de su taile desaparecían bajo un chaqueton de pano, con bolsillos y solapas, prenda masculina; al cuello llevaba un panuelo de seda arrollado y anudado al descuido; los guantes brillaban por su ausencia, y las botas eran grandes, duras, resquebrajadas, lo mas opuesto a la coquetería y al arte de agradar, lo mas desilusiona en una mujer (Memorias, p. 478).
The extremity and exaggeration of her dress suggest that, as yet, she has not adjusted to her new independence. At this point she must still flaunt it with feigned nonchalance. Perhaps Feita's behavior reflects Pardo Bazán's own need at this moment of her literary career to overstate her determination to be accepted as an equal among men.

Another autobiographical detail enters the narrative at this point. Feita is drawn to Mauro Pareja's library, which is an evocation of the library which so beckoned to doña Emilia in her childhood. Carmen Bravo-Villasante points out the similarity:

Feita con su voz sonora y bien timbrada, imperiosilla, independiente, recuerda mucho a la Pardo Bazán en sus deseos fervientes de libertad, en su ansia de mujer emancipada. Hasta la biblioteca donde lee Feita es una evocación de la biblioteca de la condesa de Mina, en la que leyó en su juventud. ... Feita es de una tremenda sinceridad; impetuosa, genial y vive entregada a una vida libre y insolita, dedicada al estudio, sorbiéndose los libros. Sepultada entre tomos la antojadiza criatura, la maniática, la insubordinada, la original chiquilla, dedicada a un serio trabajo se olvida del mundo, para volver a él y verlo con nuevos ojos y explicarselo mejor.42

Feita's ideals are high, like Pardo Bazán's, and she realizes the need for moral rectitude and a good reputation if she is to fulfill her goals. Thus, as a single woman, she must beware of compromising situations. To the people of Marineda, her behavior may be scandalous and improper but it is never morally objectionable. Even Mauro Pareja,

42 Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 199.
infatuated by this time with Feita and concerned about her reputation, attributes her social pecadillos to innocent caprice:

Yo temía que los arranques de [Feita] diesen motivo para que en Marineda la apedreasen. Cierto que se habló a destajo, que se armó alboroto y se calificó a la emancipada, según merecía, de insolente marimacho; pero en punto importantísimo de su honra, en la interpretación maligna e infamante a que se prestaban sus correrías, fue dictamen general no atribuir a las genialidades de Feita, por lo pronto, ninguna intención siniestra (Memorias, p. 483).

Feita begins to achieve the ideal of the single woman set forth by Concepción Arenal: "La mujer soltera, casta si tiene un poco de pan y un poco de educación, no es, como el hombre célibe, un elemento de vicios, desordenes y males, sino que, por el contrario, puede consagrar toda su existencia al bien de la sociedad."43 She spends her day teaching and exploring the wonders of the city, drawing sketches, visiting parks and old buildings and she is happy when she is alone. When men offer her their company, she answers quite honestly that she feels no need for it: "--me encuentro felícísima haciéndome compañía a mi propia--decía, con tal irradiación de gozo en las pupilas verdes, que era preciso creerla y dejarla cumplir el capricho" (Memorias, p. 483). A subtle change can be seen in Feita as she becomes adjusted to her new life. She shows less intensity in expressing her

43 Arenal, La mujer, p. 128.
Mauro Pareja, of course, is enchanted by this new feminity:

Feita era la mujer nueva, el albor de una sociedad distinta de la que hoy existe. Sobre el fondo burgués de la vida marinera destacaba con relieve singular el tipo de la muchacha que pensaba en libros cuando las demás pensaban en adornos; que salía sin más

Feita was the new woman, the dawn of a society different from the one that exists today. Above the bourgeois background of everyday life, she stood out with singular relief, the type of girl who thought about books instead of adorning herself; she left without any more

Feeling herself to be, at last, truly independent, she has less need to protest against the social prejudices that formerly enslaved her. Her feminity is not a male-inspired flirtatious device; grooming and cleanliness manifest her own self-respect. She has finally reached the status of the "new woman," freed from the chains of her own rebellion as well as from the bonds of society. So attractive is this newly acquired independence that Mauro Pareja's love for Feita is in fact based on her emancipated outlook:

Feita era la mujer nueva, el albor de una sociedad distinta de la que hoy existe. Sobre el fondo burgués de la vida marinera destacaba con relieve singular el tipo de la muchacha que pensaba en libros cuando las demás pensaban en adornos; que salía sin más
companía que su dignidad, cuando las demás, hasta para
bajar a comprar tres cuartos de hilo necesitaban
rodrigón o dueña; que ganaba dinero con su honrado
trabajo, cuando otras solo añadían al presupuesto de
la familia una boca comilona y un cuerpo que pide
vestimenta; que no se turbaba al hablar a solas con un
hombre, mientras las restantes no podían acogernos sino
con bandera de combate desplegada. . . . En suma, todo
lo que al principio me pareció en Feita reprobable y
hasta risible y cómico, dió en figurárseme alto y
sublime, merecedor de admiración y aplauso. En mi
inteligencia surgieron, a manera de flores finas y
blancas que creciesen en un solo tallo, el respeto
y la estimación hacia Feita (Memorias, p. 494).

While she has resolved the problem of her own self-
esteem, Feita still faces the problem of her life at home.

Her father's passivity distresses her and her older sisters
have fallen prey to two tenorios who shamelessly seduce them.

Rather than tell her father of her sisters' behavior, she
decides to go to Madrid, where she can find work as a
governess. Needing money, she tries to borrow the train fare
from Mauro Pareja. This dilemma, in which Feita is at the
mercy of Mauro Pareja and his kindness, is Pardo Bazán's
tour de force in a novel replete with feminism. Spurred by
his desire to help and protect her, Mauro proposes. Feita's
rejection of his proposal is not a brutal or thoughtless act.

It is a statement of a personal dignity which cannot accept
this kind man's sacrifice in exchange for her family's
financial security. On the other hand, when she has resolved
the financial problems that plague her family without Mauro's
help, it is she who cheerfully proposes marriage to her good
friend.
In addition to an excellent portrayal of the "new woman" in the character of Feita, Memorias de un solterón contains a discussion of the decadence of the middle class and Pardo Bazán's theory that its regeneration resides in the simple concept of work. In this sense, Pardo Bazán is a precursor of Pío Baroja, who saw social reform through work as the only salvation for a suffering society. Bravo-Villasante recognizes in Feita a personification of doña Emilia's projected solution for the same problem:

La Pardo Bazán observa que la clase media muere si continúa inactiva, y que se agota en la quietud y en el retraimiento de sus moradas. Necesita para vivir incorporarse a la vida moderna. Por eso Feita es la que da el primer paso para emancipar a toda su clase, en el momento en que decide sacar a su familia de la miseria, mediante el trabajo.

Para Feita es mejor que una clase indigna se convierta en pueblo antes que perder la moral. Es preferible ser planchadora o maestra antes que prostituirse.44

This new idea of work for a middle class which has traditionally clung to an aristocratic way of life is as revolutionary as Pardo Bazán's concept of the "new woman." Both are a positive, modern and realistic way to approach life in the twentieth century and are still to be accepted by the majority of Spanish society.

La Quimera (1905)

The years that separate Memorias de un solterón from La Quimera, although devoid of major novels, were important for

44 Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 200.
Pardo Bazán's literary development. Doña Emilia formed a deep and enduring friendship with Miguel de Unamuno, for the two authors shared their love of Spain and its literature. The young writer and doña Emilia often conversed on myriad topics and she would urge even her children to profit from these dialogues, as Carmen Bravo-Villasante points out:

Tiene doña Emilia respeto a los superiores, admira profundamente a los artistas y quiere transmitir a sus hijos esta admiración. El magisterio de los grandes personajes lo quiere para sus hijos. Cuando Unamuno venía a visitarla, aquel señor tan raro que hacía pajaritas y monigotillos de papel mientras hablaba de literatura, los adolescentes, los niños, debían escuchar para aprender.⁴⁵

Pardo Bazán's affectionate admiration for Unamuno demonstrates her attraction to the younger generation of writers, their new ideas and perspectives, and, most notably, their extremely critical patriotism. She became involved in political conferences where she made contact with many of the prominent noventayochistas. The Spanish-American War affected doña Emilia in much the same way as it did the Generation of '98 writers. Her reaction to the destruction of the Spanish Empire was one of sorrow and disbelief, furthermore, she was unable to comprehend the public indifference to this disaster. Pardo Bazán later recalled that unfortunate moment of history and her reaction to it:

En efecto, lo más trágico en mi entender fue la insensibilidad de la muchedumbre, cuando la historia de España acababa en punta y nuestro sol ya no se

⁴⁵Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 120.
eclipsaba, que se borraba en el horizonte. Nunca olvido cierto dia, de fecha luctuosa, en que, al entrar en una casa, alguien se fijo en mis ojos hinchados y me preguntó:

-- ¿Se le ha muerto a usted algun pariente?

A lo cual conteste:

-- Se me ha muerto al mismo pariente que a ustedes todos. Y creo que ni se enteraron. . . . Lo que me dolía como una quemadura, era aquella indiferencia increíble, aquellas risas, pullas y chanzonetas por la calle, aquel Madrid. . . . evocaciones siempre vivas, por mi desgracia, en el fondo de mi corazón. Porque es malo haber asistido al declinar de la patria, y es peor aún que esto nos afliga como la perdida de una persona a quien amamos.46

Her patriotism was expressed literally through a series of short stories, Cuentos de la Patria, characterized by a strong note of sarcasm. She strenuously attacked the political and cultural decadence of Spain and its belated reaction to the loss of its colonies. After 1898, doña Emilia's work became increasingly political and, as Ronald Hilton notes, "the Spanish problem was the nucleus of doña Emilia's thought. It became almost an obsession with her as a reaction against the indifference of the Spanish public, whose behavior proved that it had no sense of responsibility."47 The tragic national failures of Spain's history would leave an indelible imprint on her later fiction and, in this respect, she foreshadows the spirit of the Generation of '98.

46Ibid., p. 209 citing Emilia Pardo Bazán (primary source not given).

The Paris Exposition of 1900 served as a forum for the new wave of writers. Pardo Bazán, who attended the conference, would feel the impact of yet another literary doctrine and would employ yet another means to revive the Spanish novel, that of modernism. Rubén Darío, as the recognized leader of this new movement, had attended doña Emilia's tertulias during his visit to Spain in 1892. Now, in her meetings with the French modernists at the Exposition, she found the spontaneous idealism and the symbolic imagery of this school to be in harmony with her own literary direction. The variety of techniques and doctrines assimilated into Pardo Bazán's work has been censured by some critics as a lack of literary stability. Margarita Nelken's criticism is representative:

...esa curiosidad insaciable, que la hacía entregarse de lleno a unos estudios o a unas lecturas comenzadas poco menos que al azar, y sustituirlos por otros estudios, u otras lecturas, cuando aun no se le habían revelado aquéllas sino muy superficialmente; su mismo afán de saber y de avanzar de continuo, no le permitieron nunca equilibrar, en un credo literario sereno, el ideal propuesto y el idea aceptado.48

Cejador y Frauca also condemns Pardo Bazán for her attraction to foreign literature:

Como novelista, hay que distinguir en ella dos tendencias. La mas antigua, que sin duda es la mas sana y castiza, la que llevo mas en el fondo de su alma, la que le dio y le dara mas renombre, es la que encaminó, sobre todo al principio, a expresar el alma gallega, sentimental y tierna, recóndita y misteriosa. ... Pero la otra tendencia, que arrancó a la autor de del terruño, seó en flor a la novelista regional y la medio afrancesó

en la mayor parte de sus obras. La inclinación de doña Emilia a seguir la moda extranjera y a hombrear con los grandes novelistas cultos modernos, sacóla de Galicia y aún de España, para meterla en Europa y hacerla terciar en cuestiones sociales, tal como las tratan los escritores cultos y sociólogos. Ella creería, acaso, haber subido; a otros se les antoja haber bajado con ello en valer artístico. 

How narrow, if not ungrateful, their opinion appears to be when one considers doña Emilia's constant search for techniques that might inject a new vitality into a lifeless Spanish society as reflected through its literature.

Pardo Bazán formed another deep friendship during this period, one which would serve as the basis for her last major novel, La Quimera. A young portrait painter, Joaquín Vaamonde, visited doña Emilia at her Galician country home in 1898 and later became her protegé. Carman Bravo-Villasante describes their first meeting, as Vaamonde goes to the Torres de Meirás to paint Pardo Bazán's portrait:

El joven Vaamonde a su retorno de Buenos Aires donde emigró para ganarse la vida como obrero decorador, huyendo de un tutor que le dedicaba a la carrera militar, se dirige en 1898 a la Torre de Meirás con una carta de recomendación para pedir a la Pardo Bazán que le deje hacer un retrato suyo, que luego expuesto en la Corte le valga encargos.

La Pardo accede y aunque no quiere posar, a la segunda sesión queda encantada de ver trabajar a su pintor, porque Vaamonde es hombre que transmite su extraordinario y nervioso espíritu a la obra. Tipo interesante le parece el joven pintorcito a la famosa modelo, niño genial por descubrir. Y súbitamente se encariña con el artista enamorado de su arte, como ella de su literatura.

A los 15 días de exhibirse el retrato de la Pardo Bazán, un pastel rosa y blanco donde la escritora

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49 Cejador y Frauca, Lengua y literatura, p. 272.
The portrait pleased the author and, as a result of her influence, served Vaamonde as a passport into Spanish aristocratic society. While at the Paris Exposition, doña Emilia received the news of Vaamonde's death and immediately began to formulate plans for a novel based on the artist's tumultuous life. His intense desire for fame through the realization of a masterpiece is recaptured in La Quimera. Doña Blanca de los Ríos, a personal friend of Pardo Bazán, describes the artist's death and his literary transformation into Silvio Lago, the protagonist of the novel: "Este artista, después de llevar una vida agitada, encontró su paz en aquel rincón de Galicia, cuidado con todo cariño por la familia de Pardo Bazán y murió muy cristianamente. 'Silvio Lago,' el protagonista de La Quimera—una de las novelas más interesantes de la Condesa—es este pintor de personalidad interesantísima."

Vaamonde's Christian conversion before his death, combined with Pardo Bazán's recent infatuation with modernism, serves as the basis for the profound spirituality and symbolism of the novel. Without forsaking her feminist cause, Pardo Bazán

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50 Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, pp. 224-25.

51 Doña Blanca de los Ríos, interview with Xorita, "Cartas de una mujer que escribía como hombre: Evocación de una amistad," La Estafeta Literaria, XXI, (Feb., 1945), 3.
masterfully depicted many facets of Spanish society. Sainz de Robles considers the portrayal of the aristocracy to be the culmination of Pardo Bazan's artistry:

In this novel dealing with the life of Vaamonde, Pardo Bazan herself appears as a major character. It is interesting to note that while earlier characters recall doña Emilia in her adolescence, not until the appearance of La Quimera did the author deftly capture her own mature semblance.

Minia Dumbriá, a symphonic composer, is a thinly veiled portrait of doña Emilia in her later years and even the author's mother, doña Amalia, is present as the baroness of Dumbriá, a wise and practical woman who graciously nurses Silvio as he approaches death. Doña Emilia's country estate serves as the setting for parts of the action: the Torres de Meiras, under the name of La Alborada, is both Silvio Lago's starting point in his career as a portrait painter and his final abode.

52 Sainz de Robles, p. 708.
González López mentions these personal elements of the novel: "En el retrato de Minia Dumbría, protectora desinteresada del pintor, y en la descripción del pazo que estaba construyendo en las mariñas coruñesas, hay una serie de elementos autobiográficos de la Pardo Bazán." These autobiographical references, along with numerous sketches of aristocratic personages, enrich La Quimera with heretofore unmentioned details from Pardo Bazán's personal life.

The plot of this novel, unlike many of Pardo Bazán's other works, is intricate and substantial. The story, as it follows the trajectory of Silvio Lago's artistic career, is a penetrating and meaningful profession of the author's own beliefs. One may discern through Silvio's artistic development the varied changes in doña Emilia's literary evolution. His obsessions are, in part, reflections of her own struggles with her art; the chimera that tempts him also had enticed doña Emilia with its siren song. While Pardo Bazán was able to strive for the ideal, to be inspired by it, to approach it, to tame the daemon, Silvio Lago, conversely, is completely destroyed by his illusions. He recognizes, far too late, that his dreams have poisoned his existence: "Y a mí lo que me ha consumido, lo que me tiene tan débil es... mis sueños... ¡mis sueños, Minia! ¡Esos me ha emponzono las

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53 González López, Historia, p. 481.
venas! ¡Eso es lo que me devora!54 The moral and psychological problems presented in the novel reach a depth not previously touched by Pardo Bazán.

Three women appear in Silvio's life to sustain him in his quixotic wanderings. Saínz de Robles describes Silvio's magnetism and the women who are attracted to him:

Su belleza físcia, su vehemente y original espiritualidad, atraen en seguida a muchas mujeres del gran mundo, modelos de sus retratos, en los que lo morboso se auna con las puras reconditeces. Entre estas mujeres, tres le ayudan a elevarse, a triunfar. Tres le dan armas sutiles con las que vencer a la Quimera: Clara Ayamonte, o la sensibilidad sexual; Espina Porcel, o la audacia expresiva; Minía Dumbría, o la serenidad reconfortante.55

Silvio's egotism and preoccupation with his artistic obsessions blind him to the true worth of these women who, with disparate motivations, dedicate themselves to the young artist. González López, who compares the novel to those of Valle-Inclán due to its decadent atmosphere, gives an explanation for Silvio's detached attitude: "El propio pintor, incapaz de amor, según propia confesión, es ya una figura decadente, que se deja proteger o amar por varias mujeres, sin preocuparse gran cosa del dolor que pueda causarles con su actitud."56

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54 Emilia Pardo Bazán, "La Quimera," Obras completas, (Madrid, 1957), I, 887. Subsequent references are to this edition and occur supra by abbreviated title and page number within parentheses.

55 Saínz de Robles, p. 707.

56 González López, Historia, p. 481.
Silvio's immaturity prevents him from recognizing the self-sacrifice of Clara Ayamonte, the treachery of Espina Porcel and the wisdom of Minia Dumbria. These women, despite the differences in their characters, are definitely superior to the protagonist in awareness and strength.

Clara Ayamonte, a young and wealthy widow, meets Silvio when she goes to his bohemian studio in Madrid to have her portrait painted. Silvio describes his first impression:

La Ayamonte es viuda, acaudalada, libérrima; parece contar de treinta y seis a treinta y siete años. ¿Fea? ¿Guapa? Al pronto, insignificante. Fijándose—como tiene que fijarse el retratista para sorprender lo que late en la fisonomía—produce impresión, atrae. Es descolorida, y cuando se emociona aún se pone más palida; los ojos, pardos; el pelo, que ha debido de ser rubio, ahora es de un castaño muy suave, apagado, sin ondulaciones, fino y limpio, revelando el esmero de la mujer cuidadosa. Viste bien, pero le falta chic. (El chic lo adivino yo. Tengo ese don fatal de inclinarme al chic; a la vez lo detesto, porque el chic es la mueca de la belleza). Pero lo que me llama la atención de esta mujer, que a primera vista pasa inadvertida, es que encuentro en su cara la misma expresión que en la mía, lo cual crea una especie semejanza (Quimera, p. 740).

Silvio's attraction to Clara is innately selfish and stems from their physical similarity: he sees himself quite literally mirrored in her image. Clara's love for the artist, on the other hand, is a result of her extreme sensitivity; she feels drawn to the young painter's dedication to spiritual ideals. Clara searches for someone with whom she can share illusions and love; she perceives Silvio in his poverty, both material and moral, as a perfect recipient for her total self-sacrifice. Silvio, in his blinding egotism, is unworthy of
her love and rejects her offer to marry him. González López believes that Clara's love is an illness: "...la joven viuda Clara Ayamonte, amante en Madrid del pintor, para quien el amor es como una enfermedad, y la cual, al ver que Lago se va cansando de sus relaciones amorosas, siente una exaltación religiosa que la lleva a hacerse monja." Her highest ideal, as she explains in a letter to her godfather, is self-abnegation: "Me avasallan con violencia dulce dos sentimientos: ansia de purificación y anhelo de sacrificio. Es la forma actual de mi apasionamiento; ahora mi fuego arde así. Cierta de no encontrar en los demás la abnegación, la descubro en mí, en mis propias entrañas" (Quimera, p. 750). She continues with a description of the satiating effects of selflessness: "Y el sabor de la abnegación era como de miel, y su fragancia como de vino puro y anejo, que embarga los sentidos" (Quimera, p. 755). Clara's mystical experience, which Pardo Bazán presents through a symbolic series of dreams, liberates her from the mundane world as she fulfills her need for self-sacrifice by becoming a nun. Silvio's relief at her decision is abhorrent to Minia Dumbría, who senses Clara's goodness:

...viene una mujer, llena de cariño, poseedora de cuantiosa hacienda, distinguida, intelectual, sensible, a acercarse al ideal, suprimiéndole toda preocupación del orden práctico, y la recibe, por lo visto, a puntapiés. ... Clara es incapaz de un cálculo egoísta, mezquino. Juzguela como quieran, y sin que

57 González López, Historia, p. 482.
Minia's admonition has little effect on Silvio, who is incapable of responding to Clara's idealistic renunciation.

The next woman who enters the painter's life is the complete antithesis of Clara Ayamonte. Espina Porcel is the incarnation of decadence and heartlessness. Her cynical and detached attitude attracts Silvio, who is slowly captivated by her overwhelming but artificial beauty. He describes her aristocratic lasciviousness:

Es andaluza por parte de padre, mejicana por parte de madre, pariense por residencia habitual y gustos; yo la llamo <<la cosmopolita>>. Me anuncia su presencia un ruge-ruge de sedería, de volantes picados y escarolados, un taconeo atrevido y menudo, un golpeteo de contera de sombrilla larga sobre el entarimado del pasillo, y comprobo esta entrada bulliciosa con la majestuosa de la Flandes, y la bocanada de jaquecoso perfume, compuesto de varias esencias, que penetra al mismo tiempo que Espina, al olor discreto de violetas, apenas perceptible, que la ricahembra exhala a cada movimiento de su senorial persona. . . es la mujer de una civilización avanzada, refinada y disuelta (¿o descompuesta?) en la decadencia artística. Sobre un plantío de garbanzos, Espina surge como una de las más raras orquídeas que se cultivan en las estufas calientes (Quimera, p. 800).

Pardo Bazán's presentation of Espina Porcel reveals the author's new involvement with modernism: Espina is symbolized by an orchid which, like the swan, is a beautiful yet useless creation. Espina devotes her wealth and leisure to the questionable art of dressing herself. She scoffs at nature and at the simplicity of the nude form. Silvio admires her disdain and comments upon her artistic vanity:
Los maestros de las decadencias y las afeminaciones voluptuosas del arte consiguen sus efectos con ropajes y panos... ¿Acaso en los silencios expresivos, saturados del tedio, que guarda Espina cuando me da sesión, no he notado que el atractivo peculiar de esta mujer está en la ropa, en su habilidad para adaptarla al cuerpo, enroscar, ceñir y plegar la tela, incorporada, identificada a su persona? Son tan cómplices los tejidos que la envuelven, que no se la figura uno, en las audaces figuraciones, sino vestida... En Espina no sé distinguir la forma de la vestidura. En esto debe de consistir el arte supremo (Quimera, p. 805).

Nevertheless, Silvio is ambivalent in his feelings for Espina. He admires her sense of beauty and her lack of typical feminine weaknesses, but he is also terrified by her malicious and perverse behavior:

El sentimiento hacia ella, en mí, unas veces es acre curiosidad; otras, irritado deseo de subyugarla; otras, antipatía repentina, el gusto imaginado de pegarle un latigazo que saque sangre; otras, atracción inexplicable, complicada. Una perversión que descubro en mí y que me asombra sin desagrardarme, pues no puedo aguantar la gente bonachona, de psicología blanca.

Espina me atrae, tal vez por el sump refinamiento de su existencia y la desdeñosa altanería con que prescinde de las nociones admitidas y vulgaronas.

No es la Porcel una de aquellas rebeldes romanticas que siempre estaban a vueltas con la moral, y que, al combatirla, la afirmaban. Sencillamente, para Espina, no existe eso, ni nada, fuera de lo bonito y lo selecto, de ese aquilatamiento sensual de la exterioridad, que hace de ella una especie de Cleopatra. Pues, como le sucedía a la reina de Egipto, <<su vida es inimitable>>. En otros términos: probablemente me atrae Espina porque es exaltadamente elegante y rematadamente mala (Quimera, p. 810).

Espina enjoys humiliating the people who surround her and Silvio becomes her prime target. Suffering from extreme morphine addiction, she cruelly manipulates the young artist and blatantly shames him in front of his aristocratic clientele. Still Silvio continues to be attracted to this heartless woman.
who incessantly belittles him. He explains this strange power that Espina possesses: "Extraña y casi puede decirse monstruosa atracción, análoga a la que nos lleva a acariciar y jugar con el perro que muerde o el gato que araña y saca sangre" (Quimera, p. 838). Her insults finally become intolerable and Silvio retreats to the reclusive atmosphere of Minia's country home. José A. Balseiro considers Espina to be a beautiful characterization of the cruel female: "En ninguna literatura moderna conocemos una inteligencia femenina tan refinadamente cruel como la de esta morfinómana que sentía el orgullo de distinguirse más allá del Mal." 58

Her symbolic decadence is a masterful example of Pardo Bazán's creativity.

Minia Dumbriá — actually Pardo Bazán——lives with her mother, the baroness of Dumbriá, in their country house, La Alborada. Minia is Silvio's objective conscience, the super-ego that struggles with his impulsive and destructive fantasies. Minia represents success, the fulfillment of all Silvio's longings, the culmination of his artistic yearnings. Her stability and tranquil confidence are bitter reminders to Silvio of his own aberrations and inabilities. Silvio's entrance into Minia's home is the first step in his quest for recognition. As she poses for a portrait, Minia and Silvio communicate to each other their ideals. They share

58 Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 310.
a common vision, a similar dedication to beauty and a belief in art's liberating and purifying elevation of human existence. Silvio's portrait of Minia is striking: "Aquel pastel, que reproducía una cabeza de mujer ni joven ni hermosa, un rostro energico, lleno de imperfecciones, era, sin embargo, elegante a la moderna, exquisitamente elegante, por la manera de estar <<puesto>>, y tenfa lo blando y fino del natural idealizado" (Quimera, p. 720). Minia realizes his talent and the depth of his chimerical vision and she feels compassion for him. She assumes the role of mentor and loyal friend as she endeavors to temper his illusive fantasies:

Es el error de nuestros artistas: quieren sorprender a la ninfa dormida, ser faunas nervudos. Y lo que deben ser es caballeros andantes, cumpliendo mil hazañas oscuras, mil pruebas, antes de desencantar a la infanta. ¡Si al menos hubiese infanta! Se dan casos de encontrar, en vez de infanta, una bruja. ¿Y sabe usted lo más curioso? Al artista caballero andante, después de tantas heroicidades y de pelear con siete endriagos, lo mejor que le puede suceder es no acertar con la infanta, sino acertar consigo mismo y autodesencantarse . . . De antemano, ¡Cortese usted las alas de cera! discípulense la voluntad; precava el desengaño. ¡Beba cada día un sorbo de decepción: el vaso entero, de una sentada, es dosis mortal! Un sorbo es muy provechoso; aunque mejor sería no necesitarlo, no haber sonado, y ser como los ciapodos, que tienen la cabeza junto al suelo, lo más bajito posible; rasando la tierra; tanto que sus pelos se vuelven raíces (Quimera, p. 722).

Silvio is incapable of coping with death and, since he has no spiritual beliefs, he views death as the ultimate threat to his aspirations. Minia's religious faith, on the other hand, has sustained her throughout her life and she attempts to make Silvio aware of its consoling support. In
a scene taken from Pardo Bazán's life, Minia takes Silvio to see her sepulcher, to her a thought-provoking reminder of the inevitability of death:

La mirada de Minia, deteniéndose en aquel hueco y volviéndose después hacia el artista, fue tan elocuente que Silvio entendió igual que si leyese un rotulo escrito en clara letra.

--¡La única verdad!...--murmuró.

--¿Es usted de los que encuentran desconsoladora la perspectiva del no ser?--articulo bajito Minia...

--Francamente, ¡si! No concibo el fin de mi mismo;
estoy por decir que la muerte me parece absurda--y miro al arco de nuevo, como si le fascinasen. Mejor dicho: ¡ni aún consiento pensar en eso! Déjeme usted que cargue conmigo la Quimera y me lleve a la luna, al sol, al las islas fantásticas. (Quimera, p. 729).

Neither inspired nor comforted, he must pursue fame and fortune and only after he fails does he return to Minia's presence. He cannot share Minia's acceptance of death as a natural phenomenon, as but another aspect of the mystery of life. The chimera that was once his guiding light has become a humiliating vestige of his youthful dream. The peace of the Alborada comforts him as he goes through a process of self-recrimination which ends in spiritual conversion. Minia and the baroness nurse him in his physical deterioration as tuberculosis slowly obliterates his life and his illusions.

Critical reaction to this modernist work has been varied and discordant. While all critics have appreciated the autobiographical aspect of the novel, some have found fault with Pardo Bazán's symbolic techniques. Pérez Minik views the
work as an incohesive accomplishment which never reaches a sustain-
taining rhythm:

En el nuevo libro, en un deseo sobresaliente de perfección y arrastrada por una ideología espiritualista, intenta crear sobre un individuo una psicología más o menos compleja, bien encadenada a la moda de entonces. . . . La novela es irregular y desacertada. Su composición, hermafrodita, pues que quiere participar de la medida de "unas memorias," del tono objetivo y hasta de la confesión lírica . . . con todos estos elementos dispersos nos encontramos con un rompecabezas, difícil de reconstruir, ante la ausencia de una mano rectora que unifique y sedimente. . . . La novela no llega a adquirir su ritmo vital. . . . Al terminar el libro, no sabemos que clase de quimera perseguía nuestro Héroe. Como buena quimera, permanece indeterminada y huye de toda herencia platónica.59

Guillermo de Torre joins in this negative criticism, charging doña Emilia with conventionalities and inverisimilitude:

En La quimera cambian la técnica, los personajes y el medio: del mundo mesocrático o popular se pasa al de la sociedad elegante y a los medios de artistas. Del naturalismo, muy restrictivamente entendido, nos trasladamos al modernismo, no menos caprichosamente interpretado. Porque La quimera es—quiso ser—una novela sincrónica con la tonica dominante artísticamente en aquellos años de comienzos del siglo: una novela modernista—no en el estilo, por supuesto, sino en la atmósfera y en la decoración—con ambiciosas intenciones simbólicas. Si en la descripción de medios aristocráticos, puesto que eran los suyos, la Condesa de Pardo Bazán podía pisar terreno firme, en la pintura de medios artísticos no sucedía lo mismo. . . . El caso es que unos y otros nos parecen hoy tratados con idéntico convencionalismo, y la sensación de inverosimilitud o impropiedad que experimentamos es pareja.60

On the other hand, many critics express high regard for the novel and the breadth of Pardo Bazán's literary skill. César


60de Torre, "Emilia Pardo Bazán," Cuadernos Americanos, p. 257.
Barja discerns an underlying unity and simplicity in the work that reveal doña Emilia's literary evolution. C. C. Glascock sees a consistency in La Quimera: "It sums up the author's experience in life, in art and in faith; it expresses her aesthetic and her religious creeds. . . . It should have been her swan-song; it is fraught with meaning from the first word to the last." José A. Balseiro compares the structure of the novel to that of a symphony. The variety of human existence is captured skillfully:

Es La Quimera fruto el más jugoso de Pardo Bazán. Donde maduró su conocimiento de la vida, de los hombres, de los viajes, de las artes plásticas, de los libros. Sazonándolo la facultad imaginativa de crear almas superiores y la enseñanza extraída de los laberintos de la conciencia humana, en trato con individuos de diversa condición y con grupos y medios heterogéneos: el de los salones aristocráticos y cosmopolitas, con sus refinamientos y pecados; el de los artistas, con sus generosos sueños, con sus mezquinas luchas; el de la Galicia rural, con sus costumbres patriarcales y su acariciante paisaje. . . . De esa manera, la más voluminosa de sus ficciones viene a ser la más quinqeensenciada de sus obras. Resumen de todo su saber literario y psicológico: de todos sus lucubraciones ideológicas; de toda su fe católica; de toda su belleza cordial; de toda su elegancia de espíritu.

Unamuno compares Silvio Lago and his idealistic illusions to don Quijote:

Y en esa lucha horrible, en ese duelo a muerte por el pan del cuerpo y el pan del alma, Silvio sufría desmayos, y se refugiaba en la ilusión idílica. . . .

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61 Barja, Libros y autores modernos, p. 570.
62 Glascock, Two Modern Spanish Novelists, pp. 35-38.
63 Balseiro, Novelistas españoles modernos, p. 310.
Tenía, como don Quijote, sus desmayos. . . . Y Silvio, como el Caballero, volvía a su quimera, a su ensueño, a su sueño.64

Gómez de Baquero also views La Quimera as an expression of the quixotic myth:

La Quimera seems to embody Gómez de la Serna's comment upon Pardo Bazán's literary creed: "El gusto de vivir sin alcanzar la locura del arte es lo que está en su obra como si embresase sus páginas."66 Whatever the prevailing opinion might be, the work stands as one of the first modernist novels and a beautiful tribute to an idealistic young artist. The feminine portraits in the novel are exquisite sketches of the twentieth-century woman: Clara is the self-sacrificing woman who refuses to live for herself, Espina is the completely egotistical woman who disregards everyone around her, and Minia, especially, is a powerful conception of the "new woman" in her mature serenity and equanimity. The feminist statement in this novel, however, is overshadowed by the philosophical issues which fill its pages.


65Andrenio (Gómez de Baquero), De Gallardo a Unamuno, p. 156.

66Gómez de la Serna, Nuevos retratos contemporáneos, p. 142.
CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

In 1906 Pardo Bazán was named president of the Literary Section of the Ateneo, which partially mitigated her disappointment at being refused an appointment to the Royal Academy. While organizing conferences in homage of famous literary figures, doña Emilia also turned to the theater as an outlet for her artistic fecundity. Her dramas were not accepted by the public, but this rejection did not seem to offend Pardo Bazán, so long accustomed to criticism. Magnanimously accepting defeat in this area, Pardo Bazán devoted her energies to the remodeling of the Torres de Meirás and the attainment of the pontifical title of countess. She achieved this latter goal in 1908 and from then on insisted on using the title as part of her signature. As Bravo-Villasante explains, Pardo Bazán felt the title was granted because of her renown as a writer:

Emilia está orgullosa de que la escritora le haya conducido a la aristocracia. El título es un galardón a su pluma, y puede decir con seguridad a la manera de Alvaro Alcalá Galiano, que su sangre

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1 Carmen Bravo-Villasante notes that doña Emilia's narrative style was not readily transferred to the dramatic genre: "Toda la soltura que Emilia Pardo Bazán tiene para escribir narraciones, en el teatro se transforma en afectación y envaramiento discursivo." Carmen Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, p. 266.
es azul de tinta de escribir antes que azul nobiliaria.  

Doña Emilia also won recognition by her appointment to a high post in the Department of Education, previously restricted to males, and by helping to found the Biblioteca de la mujer. Pardo Bazán also became the first woman faculty member of the Universidad Central. Don Julio Burrell, who signed the decree permitting women to hold teaching positions there, was harshly criticized by the other members of the faculty. The controversy surrounding her appointment was such that the students boycotted her classes. Chandler and Schwartz describe the scene in pathetic terms:

She was named to the chair of Modern Literature at the University of Madrid, the first woman to be so honored, but her classes were not well attended. One story relates that one lad did attend her classes, despite the boycott of his peers, but that he soon died and was not replaced.

Despite the endless quibbling over her merits, doña Emilia felt sufficiently encouraged by new honors and awards to attempt once again to enter the Royal Academy. Her new campaign brought support from many of the younger generation of writers, who ardently defended doña Emilia's right to the position. Andrade Alejandro Coello was one of her most vociferous supporters: "Con la décima parte de lo que ella ha escrito y de lo que sabía ella, han ingresado en el

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2 Ibid., p. 270.

3 Chandler and Schwartz, A New History, p. 226.
vetusto tabernáculo cien conspicuos varones momificados ya por la ironía del tiempo."  

4 César González-Ruano, another neophyte writer, comments upon Pardo Bazán's popularity with the younger generation: "Más famosa y discutida [mujer] no la tenía España. Además, a nosotros nos gustaban sus ideas, que apenas intuíamos, y todo aquel lio de si podía o no entrar en la Academia siendo mujer."  

5 But this youthful enthusiasm did little to counter the prejudices of the staid Academicians, exemplified in this statement by Valera: "Por poco que abriésemos la mano, la Academia se convertiría en aquelarre."  

6 Needless to say, conservative traditionalism prevailed and doña Emilia was denied the coveted position. In the words of Guillermo de Torre, "Su afán de reconocimientos académicos hubo de estrellarse contra muros de prejuicios. Vio así como se le cerraban a piedra y lodo las puertas de la ciudadela que más ansiaba conquistar."  

7 Doña Emilia did not hide her profound disappointment:

Para saber lo que es vocación artística, y hasta que punto puede dominar y regir la vida entera, hay que haber nacido mujer, y mujer de alguna posición social. Para el hombre son flores lo que para nosotras espinas;


6Juan Valera, Epistolaria, p. 434.

7De Torre, "Emilia Pardo Bazán," Cuadernos Americanos, p. 244.
cada paso hacia el Arte, nos cuesta algún dolor y alguna herida.  

The poignancy of these lines suggests the importance that doña Emilia had attached to membership in the Royal Academy; more precisely, it attests to the significance she attributed to her very failure to achieve it. A place in that prestigious society might have meant the ultimate recognition due her as a literary figure equal among men. Conversely, denial of this recognition symbolized to Pardo Bazán the inevitable barrier against women in a male-dominated world.

To appreciate doña Emilia's place in the literature of her day, the modern observer has merely to consider the stature of her most incessant critics. How exquisite—if subtle—a praise, the fact that such illustrious contemporaries as Menéndez y Pelayo, Juan Valera, Cejador y Frauca, and others, should choose to dwell tirelessly upon doña Emilia's faults. She, however, could not savor the compliment implicit in the vehemence of their position. Devastated by the impact of their negative stance in the Academy issue, she allowed her frustration to alter her perspective concerning the entire issue of feminism. In an interview subsequent to her second rejection by the Academy, Pardo Bazán confessed to José María Carretero:

Yo soy una radical feminista. Creo que todos los derechos que tiene el hombre debe tenerlos la mujer.

8Emilia Pardo Bazán cited in Miguel Ultrillo, "Las 'espinas' de doña Emilia Pardo Bazán," La Estafeta Literaria, III (April, 1944), 17.
En los países menos adelantados, es donde se considera a la mujer bestia de apetitos y carga. Los hombres en España alardean de aparecer siempre preocupados por el amor de las mujeres, y no puede haber mayor obstáculo que éste para el avance de la mujer; porque mantiene el estado de guerra entre el macho y la hembra de los tiempos primitivos; para que la mujer adelantase aquí sería necesario, en primer lugar, que ella quisiese, y en segundo que encontrase algún terreno preparado, alguna ayuda en el hombre también... A mi ver hay que reírse de los demás problemas nacionales; la clave de nuestra regeneración está en la mujer, en su instrucción, en su personalidad, en su conciencia. España se explica por la situación de sus mujeres... Tengo en contra mía a todos los escritores y a todas las mujeres.

After years of writing to inform Spanish women of their opportunities for self-advancement and to educate Spanish men to their obligation to aid the cause of feminism, Pardo Bazán felt that her efforts had achieved very little. The "new woman" of doña Emilia's dreams did not have a counterpart in the reality of Spain, for she could scarcely combat the blatant intolerance of a male-oriented society. In the last analysis, even a most exceptional woman could not receive acceptance among her literary peers.

While not withdrawing completely from the literary world, doña Emilia spent the last years of her life in the seclusion of her Galician country home. Her death on May 12, 1921 brought tribute from many sectors of Spanish society and accolades from her fellow writers. Since that time, her novels have gained increasing attention and favor. Modern

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9Emilia Pardo Bazán from an interview with José María Carretero (Galería, 1943), cited in Carmen Bravo-Villasante, Vida y obra, pp. 287-88.
critics praise her brilliant style, which captures the special quality of nineteenth-century life. With a penchant for beautiful descriptive passages, Pardo Bazán relentlessly sacrificed the complexities of plot to the lyric exaltation of a particular environment and its characters. If her regional novels best illustrate this descriptive finesse, doña Emilia, as a member of the aristocracy, had ample knowledge of European lifestyles that impart a strong note of veracity and charm to all her novels. She was as comfortable writing about the haut monde of French society as she was describing the Galician peasant. César Barja recognizes her talent for the eclectic, her skillful blending of the apparently irreconcilable:

Cristiana católica, un poco romántica, como mujer; muy pagada de modas extranjeras, también como mujer; con preferente simpatía por las escuelas francesas naturalista y realista; en fin, mezcla de contrarios, como española, la novela de doña Emilia es eclecticá, si no porque concilie lo que no admite conciliación de ninguna clase, porque la mezcla como buenamente puede. Su novela, todas sus novelas son naturalistas y realistas, idealistas y románticas, cristianas y hasta místicas.10

Certainly, the diversity of Pardo Bazán's literature is mirrored in the assortment of intellectual activities which

10 Of course, many of her compatriots condemned Pardo Bazán for her cosmopolitan proclivity. See José de Cuellar, Dioses caídos: Clarín, Pardo Bazán, Caldós (Madrid, 1895), p. 26; Emilio Bobadilla, Triquitraques (Madrid, 1892), p. 112; and Menéndez y Pelayo, Obras completas, X (Santander, 1942), 32.

11 César Barja, Libros y autores modernos, p. 554.
characterized her life. M. Gordon Brown evaluates the versatility of doña Emilia's pursuits:

Of her myriad interests perhaps none was so intense, so intimately vital as her devotion to the feminist cause. Dynamic in every aspect of her writing, susceptible to new currents, styles, and trends, sensitive to a wide range of settings, characters, and social levels, one element remains constant in Emilia Pardo Bazán's novels and constitutes a unifying thread: her concern for the destiny of women.

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12 M. Gordon Brown, "La Condesa de Pardo Bazán y el naturalismo," *Hispania*, XXXI (May, 1948), 156.
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