OBEDIENCE, SUBVERSION AND AUTONOMY IN *TRISTANA*'S INTERTEXTS

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Beginning with the famous review published by Emilia Pardo Bazán, critics have tended to see in Galdós's *Tristana* (1892) a potentially great novel that fails to deliver on the apparent expectations raised by its first chapters. Since the present study subscribes in part to this viewpoint and offers a way to justify the very things that earlier critics had attacked, it is necessary to rehearse at the outset the principal faults that these readers have found. Such a procedure may eventually allow us to turn the alleged defects into merits and to show that Galdós's achievement and vision were radically different from what many readers up till now have assumed.

For Pardo Bazán and many additional evaluators, *Tristana*'s defect is that it soon turns away from the theme of a woman's quest for independence to concentrate on a trivial love affair and ultimately derails on a *deus ex machina* in which the sudden amputation of a leg drives off both the goal of independence and the motif of self-discovery (Pardo Bazán 49-53). Leopoldo Alas, writing as "Clarín," disagreed, faulting the novel for what he termed the uninteresting, dreamy nature of its heroine, who lacked sufficient will to realize her ambitions (Engler 95-96). Casalduero objected to Galdós's manipulation of the plot, especially the leg infection that suddenly befalls Tristana (106). There would appear to be a sound theoretical basis for such an opinion, since Galdós originally meant the decrepit and increasingly dysfunctional Don Lope to be the victim of the amputation (Sinnigen 55-56), which makes far more sense given the obvious castration symbolism of the act (57). Berkowitz (*Pérez Galdós* 314), like Pardo Bazán, finds the motif of freedom truncated, while Sánchez (121-22) finds it largely illusory, given the limited psychological focus that Galdós actually bestows upon Tristana. Indeed, a recent study by Andrés Zamora exhumes countless other statements by more than forty of *Tristana*'s critics to demonstrate the almost unanimous belief that, via the amputation of Tristana's leg, either Galdós or his implied author or both interfere with her growing achievement of self-reliance (191-213). Writing against all of these criticisms—almost by himself for a long while—is Ricardo Gullón (8-17), who maintains—rather unconvincingly, I think—that the protagonist of the novel changes due to an eight-step process of personality evolution that would be natural to her and women in her position. Germán Gullón (81) suggests that such a startling evolution, punctuated with several sudden changes, might have been intended to give a hint of the "eternally feminine" in an otherwise depressed character. This is an idea that we will revisit in our concluding section. Since the statements by the Gullóns, a modest but growing body of critics has highlighted the ways in which Galdós uses the novel's inconsistencies to underline both the near insanity to which the absence of rights drove nineteenth-century Spanish women and the jumble of inconsistent roles men assumed in order both to oppress and seduce those of the opposite sex. The thrust of this criticism—presented in earlier studies by Bieder, Jagoe, Gold, and Aldaraca—is included in the guidebook to the novel,

Pérez Galdós, Tristana (2000), written by Condé (24-35), and it makes overwhelming collective sense.

These varied and at times contradictory critical responses may be profitably seen in the light of *Tristana*'s particularly rich and conflictive intertextuality. Ricardo Gullón himself admits in his vitally important diagnosis a certain "contradicción en la intertextualidad" (19). It is, indeed, Gullón's contention of a "contradiction" that gives rise to the present study, which will extend Gullón's list of contradictory Don Quijote and Don Juan intertexts (applied to Don Lope) to include others that are equally or even more prominent. Throughout the novel, one also finds a continual reference to Dante that is mentioned by many critics; but there are also—and more prominently—a large number of allusions to works by Rossini, Verdi, Dumas *fils* and Juan Valera, including strong allusions to several of their creators. The impact of all of these latter composers/writers on other works of Galdós has been thoroughly documented in the critical literature.[1] The structure, themes, and characterizations in these works additionally affect the characterization "messages" and coherency of *Tristana*. The references to these works and creators may, in other words, provide another explanation of why *Tristana* fails to satisfy so many readers: a plethora of contradictory allusive and intertextual material. While this material may be seen to rob the novel of direction and consistency, it could also—conversely—provide a considerable degree of indeterminacy that results in characters and motivations that seem more "human" than they would if all were harmonious. Let us look for a moment at the web of references that *Tristana* extends to these persons and artifacts and try to decide whether or not they contribute positively to the verisimilitude of its characters. By eventually turning the novel's contradictions and unfulfilled expectations on their head, through making contradiction and unfulfillment themselves the focus of the text, we may achieve our aim of rescuing *Tristana* from the clutches of its worst doubters. In this light, let us consider a representative selection of the most frequently recurring intertexts.

Rossini

It is apparent from *Tristana*'s first few chapters that the aging Don Lope Garrido has complete dominion, including sexual control, over his orphaned ward, Tristana Reluz. After the failure of her romantic interlude with the idealistic young painter Horacio Díaz and the amputation of her leg, Tristana ends up marrying Don Lope despite the latter's, by now, conjugal incapacity, bringing closure to Don Lope's life of incontinence. In Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (1775), possibly the best-known opera in Spain during the age of literary realism (Pérez Vidal 74), the aged Dr. Bartolo leers at his orphaned ward Rosina and secretly dreams of steering her toward an incongruous marriage with him. When Bartolo produces a letter allegedly written by a mistress to her would-be lover, the young Count Almaviva, Rosina momentarily promises to wed Dr. Bartolo. In similar fashion, in Verdi's *La Traviata*, to which Galdós alludes repeatedly in his novelistic and didactic prose (for example in *Doña*

Perfecta [1876], Miau [1888], and *Torquemada en la hoguera* [1889]), the heroine Violetta is orphaned early in life and becomes a courtesan maintained by the aged Baron Duphol, whereupon, like Tristana and Rosina, she meets a much younger man, Alfredo Germont, with whom she tragically falls in love. Because some of this characterization and plotting is similar to those of *Il Barbiere*, we initially mention them here, but they will also be taken up more fully in the following section.

In chapter 10, the narrator informs us concerning the increasingly liberation-minded Tristana ("la esclava") and the oppressive, controlling Don Lope ("el tirano") that "La desavenencia entre cautiva y tirano se acrecentaba de día en día" (1561). From this point on until the illness and amputation of her leg, the text consists of a series of increasingly emotional confrontations, a structure much like that of the Pepe Rey/*orbajosenses* shouting matches of *Doña Perfecta* that can only be termed a crescendo, a term uniquely associated with the musical style of Rossini, most notably in his many overtures and in the aria "La colunnia è un venticello" that Dr. Bartolo sings in act I of *Il Barbiere*. The narrator's term "el tirano" referring to Don Lope is identical to the expression "il mio tiranno" used by Rosina in reference to Dr. Bartolo in act I, scene 3 of *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (*The Opera* 438).

Verdi and Dumas *fils*

When Tristana turns twenty-two, a new sense of self comes over her, and she determines to find a way to obtain freedom in her life. As she says to the servant Saturna:

—Yo . . . te lo confieso, aunque me riñas, creo como él [i.e., Don Lope] que eso de encadenarse a otra persona por toda la vida es invención del diablo. . . ¿No lo crees tú? Te reirás cuando te diga que no quisiera casarme nunca, que me gustaría vivir *siempre libre* (*OC*, V,1549; ch. 5; emphasis ours).

She later characterizes herself as "una mujer deshonrada pero libre" (V, 1564; ch. 11). In act I of Verdi's *La Traviata*, in her aria "Sempre libera," Violetta greets Alfredo's ingenuous profession of love with words that are almost identical: "Sempre libera degg'io / follegiare di gioja in gioja. / Vo' che socorra il viver mio / pei sentieri del piacere?" (111)

When Tristana surmises that the still innocent Horacio may entertain hopes of marrying her, she warns him:

Según las reglas de la sociedad, estoy imposibilitada de casarme. No podría hacerlo, ni aun contigo con la frente alzada, pues por muy bueno que conmigo fueras, siempre tendría ante ti cierto resquemor de haberte dado menos de lo que mereces [. . .] (V, 1570; ch. 13).

This is Violetta's great problem in *La Traviata* (as well as that of her counterpart, Marguerite Gauthier, in Dumas *fils*'s play *La Dame aux Camélias*, 1852), for when Alfredo attempts to save her (or Armand tries to save Marguerite), via a respectable relationship, from a debilitating series of liaisons with older, monied men, she must point out to him that society will not sanction such a match between a fallen woman and a man of good family,

a point in which she only half believes until Alfredo's father Giorgio (or Armand's father Monsieur Duval) appears at the end of act II (in *La Dame* in act III) and informs her that his oldest daughter will be unable to marry her fiancé if she persists in her scandalous relationship with Alfredo (in *La Dame*, with Armand).[2]

In chapter 14 we learn that Tristana is a spendthrift, totally unable to live within her means, a defect paralleling that of Violetta (and Marguerite), whose lover Alfredo (or Armand) must eventually separate from from her (or from Marguerite) in order to sell possessions so as to redeem her debts. Like the female heroines of Verdi and Dumas *fils* in their sometimes unrealistic amorous transports, she now dreams of spending the rest of her life in the arms of Horacio with "independencia" and "Libertad honrada" (1572), forgetting that there is no freedom or honor without the linked prerequisites of money and respectability. All of these idyllic daydreams come to an end when Horacio is called away to a protracted stay in rural Villajoyosa to care for an ailing aunt (ch. 15).

The intertexuality of *Tristana* with the other works we have been describing becomes here particularly pronounced. Horacio's trip to Villajoyosa and the long series of letters dispatched by the two lovers from the countryside and from Madrid recalls both the act II idyll in *La Traviata* and the act II interlude of *La Dame aux camélias*, where Alfredo and Violetta (Armand and Marguerite) have gone off to the Versailles countryside both to enjoy the raptures of their love and alleviate Violetta's (Marguerite's) worsening health. (The ultimately fatal malady of the two heroines that destroys the love of their lives parallels the leg infection of Tristana that ends in amputation and loss of beauty and succeeds in banishing Horacio's love forever.) In one of her letters to Horacio, Tristana quotes Alexandre Dumas *fils*, author of *La Dame aux camélias*, to the effect that Shakespeare was the greatest creator after God (ch. 18). Shakespeare, of course, was also the great fixation of *La Traviata*'s creator, Giuseppe Verdi, having written three of his best operas based on the bard's plays and having contemplated a fourth (Franz, "Galdós's *Tristana*" 48).

The Dumas/Verdi intertext continues in short order, for in the next letter Tristana quotes from an unidentified Italian text that "E se non piangi, de che panger suoli" (1584). The text—which also relates to the next section of our exposition—in fact is from canto XXXIII, line 42 of the *Inferno* that has a sinner asking Dante whether his story does not inspire compassion, an allusion that in *Tristana* refers sarcastically to Don Lope's manipulative attempts to inspire compassion for his growing decrepitude. We also, however, need to recall a point previously discussed, namely that in act II of *La Traviata* and act III of *La Dame aux Camélias* the father of Alfredo/Armand arrives at the lovers' countryside hideaway and begs Violetta/Marguerite to abandon her love so that Alfredo's /Armand's sister can marry without scandal. (This is a situation that *Tristana* duplicates by having Don Lope's sanctimonious relatives implore the mutilated Tristana to consent to marry the dying Don Lope in order to save his soul [ch. 29].) When Alfredo's father sees how great a sacrifice he is asking of Violetta, he says something linguistically similar to the Dante verse quoted by Tristana:

Piango, piangi, o misera,
Supremo il veggo è il sagrifizio
Ch'orati chieggo.
Sento nell' anima già le tue pene
Coraggio, è il nobile cor vincerá
(120)

There is no similar line in *La Dame aux camélias*, but in her next letter Tristana says that she will not complain about the pain in her leg the way Dumas's Marguerite cried about her tuberculosis: "¿Pensarás que estoy tísica pasada, como la *Dama de las camelias*? No, hijo mío" (V, 1585; ch. 19). The intertext is thus reestablished. Tristana then decides that she must become an actress, a self-conscious allusion to the same French romantic play that is guiding both Galdós's pen and her own literaturized behavior, and she goes on to prefigure her anticipated actress's life in terms of Violetta and Marguerite: "—Sí, sí, ¿por qué no he de ser actriz? Si no, seré lo que quiera . . . Viviré con holgura decorosa, sin ligarme eternamente a nadie, ni al hombre que amo y amaré siempre. Le querré más cuanto más libre sea" (V, 1590; ch. 21).

Other Italian References

Tristana's important Italian connection is suggested by various additional details. Beginning with chapter 15, Tristana begins to read voraciously in Italian literature, and throughout much of the remaining text she insists on discussing with her lover Horacio Díaz the work of many Italian writers, including Leopardi and the aforementioned Dante, whom Tristana quotes in their original Italian versions. In order to justify such unusual communication between lovers, Galdós must give the painter Horacio an Italian education that will also be necessary to make other associations between Horacio and additional Italian material. This is not an unreasonable detail, since most Spanish painters of the day attempted to study in Italy. The Italian connection is also present in passages supplying biographical background about the twenty-five-year-old painter, whose given name (Horacio) recalls a famous Roman (i.e., Italian) poet. His Austrian mother comes, he tells us, "del país que llaman *Italia irredenta*," (i.e., Austria) a possible allusion, as we shall see, to Mozart, whose "Italian" opera, *Le nozze di Figaro* (1786), tells the conclusion of the Beaumarchais story of Count Almaviva's escapades that we find in Rossini's *Il Barbiere*. (The libretto of *Il Barbiere* is based on Beaumarchais's *Le Barbier de Seville* [1775] and *Le nozze* on the same author's *Le Mariage de Figaro* [1784].) Horacio in various places lets it be known that, in Barroso's words, "vivió bajo el fuerte dominio de su padre [. . .]" (222). The situation may in an offhand way prompt one to think of Leopold Mozart, the father of *Le Nozze*'s composer, who not only was unhappy with his son's morality (as Horacio's curmudgeonly grandfather also was [1558; ch. 10]) and musical tastes but, more importantly, tried to manipulate his behavior and techniques of composition (Steptoe 102-

04). It also recalls Verdi's father, Carlo (Southwell 72, Weaver 217), who tried to exert his will in every facet of the young composer's career. When Horacio informs Tristana of his earlier life, he adds: "del primer tirón me planté en Italia" (V, 1559; ch. 9). The statement curiously also applies to Galdós's contemporary and sometime adversary, Juan Valera, who began his long diplomatic career with a carefuly-arranged appointment to the Duque de Rivas, when the latter served as the Spanish minister in Naples.

Valera

This is not the only possible allusion to Valera, for *Tristana* contains material that seems to be intertextual with both the Andalusian's fiction and his life. The literary and biographical intertexts are not, however, separate. The most obvious and well developed motif in *Tristana* is the very problematic conjugal relationship between lovers of vastly differing age. In 1867, Valera, age fifty-three, married Dolores Delavat, thirty-three years his junior. It was not a happy marriage, a fact that Valera broadcast widely over the ensuing years. He already had been intimate with many women over the first two-thirds of his life, and he brooded over the risks he would run in indulging, within marriage, his preference for younger women. This preoccupation was visible in a series of novels that Galdós clearly knew prior to his writing of *Tristana*. They constituted a pattern that would become even more pronounced after the writing of *Tristana*, as Valera definitively settled into old age. *Pepita Jiménez* (1874), which Galdós parodies in *Doña Perfecta* (1876), has Pepita, like Dolores Delavat only twenty years old, obliged to marry her octogenarian uncle Don Gumersindo and to endure his impotence. In *Las ilusiones del doctor Faustino* (1875) Faustino, age forty-five and mired in a dead-end job, recommences an affair with the much younger María and eventually marries her. When he becomes bored with married life and enters into a second affair, his wife dies of grief, whereupon Faustino commits suicide prompted by his inability to hold time and disillusionment at bay. In *El comendador Mendoza* (1876-1877) Doña Blanca tries unsuccessfully to marry her illegitimate daughter Clara to the mother's aged and infirm cousin Casimiro. To avoid such an odious and unworkable marriage, Clara temporarily enters a convent but finally gets to marry a handsome man of her own age. Casimiro meanwhile marries a much younger woman and inconveniently dies after she gives birth to three boys. In the novel's conclusion, the past-fifty Don Fadrique (the Comendador) marries his young niece Lucía, and they seem destined for happiness. However, in his review of the novel, Clarín attacked Valera's forced plotting in this matter of age (DeCoster 115), and it is likely that his friend Galdós heartily agreed. Valera's next novel, *Pasarse de listo* (1877-1878), finds forty-five-year-old Don Braulio married to Beatriz, only half his age. When someone erroneously informs him that his wife is carrying on an affair with a rakish nobleman, the despairing Braulio commits suicide. After one more novel, Valera gave up writing fiction for seventeen years. Although *Juanita la Larga* (1895) appeared three years after *Tristana*, it demonstrated Valera's continued obsession with the same theme. In *Juanita*, the fifty-three-year-old widower—the same

age as Valera when he married Dolores Delavat—falls in love with seventeen-year-old Juanita. Although she first rebuffs him, she finally falls in love. In *Genio y figura* (1897) Rafaela makes advances to the aged Barón de Castel-Bourdac only to find that he concocts a ludicrous excuse to avoid intimacy on account of his impotence.

There are various further specific parallels to Valera's works. When Tristana falls in love with Horacio, she begins to pen him a series of melodramatic love letters in which she repeats in various formats the phrase "Te quise desde que nací" (1555, 1556), which duplicates the statement of Pepita Jiménez to Don Luis de Vargas immediately prior to his seduction at her hands in the "Paralipómenos" section of the 1874 novel: "Yo también creo que amaba a V. antes de verle" (*Pepita* 165), a line that Galdós later parodied in *Doña Perfecta* (1976), his realist remake of Valera's largely idealist novel, specifically in chapter 9, where Rosario says to Pepe Rey: "—Desde antes de conocerte, te quería . . . " (IV, 428). After the amputation of Tristana's leg, the now fully decrepit and obliging Don Lope helps her write a letter to Horacio in which, after addressing her lover as "ángel mío," he rejects the phrase because "esto de ángel es un poquito cursi" (V, 1599; ch. 24). "Cursi" was the favorite pejorative term of Juan Valera, seen repeatedly in the mouths of his male characters and in his own correspondence (Franz, *Valera in Dialogue* 30).[4] Horacio, who falls head over heels in love with Tristana, tells her that as an even younger man in Italy, "Era yo como un seminarista" (V, 1559; ch. 9), which recalls the character, the young seminarian, Don Luis de Vargas, who falls in love with the heroine of Valera's *Pepita Jiménez* (1874). Galdós has Tristana passively agree to marry the decrepit Don Lope as a sacrificial lamb offered up by the old man's hypocritical relatives: "Contra lo que él creía, la señorita no tuvo nada que oponer al absurdo proyecto. Lo aceptó con indiferencia [. . .]. Casi no se dio cuenta de que la casaron [. . .]" (V, 1611; ch. 29). The note of stoicism vividly recalls the self-abnegation of Pepita Jiménez when her mother insists on marrying her to the eighty-year-old usurer Don Gumersindo: "dicen que salió [el "sí"] casi mecánicamente de entre los trémulos labios de Pepita, cediendo a las amonestaciones, a los discursos, a las quejas, y hasta al mandato imperioso de su madre" (*Pepita* 11).

Villajoyosa would appear to be a phonetic parody of the fictional Villalegre, the narratively idealized but socially seething town where so many of the novels of the aristocratic and cosmopolitan Juan Valera are somewhat incongruously set (Miralles García 32). It is this same ironic name that Galdós seems to have intensified in the parodic coinage of Villahorrenda and Orbajosa for his setting of *Doña Perfecta*, some sixteen years earlier (Chamberlin, "*Doña Perfecta*" 11-21). Like the amorous Luis de Vargas of *Pepita Jiménez* in his strained missives to the Dean of the monastery where he is soon to be ordained, Horacio gradually loses interest in his long-distance correspondence with Tristana.

Trimble (52-53, 60-61, 85, 101) identifies most of the older male characters we have adduced with Valera himself, suggesting that they are sometimes even a reflection of the author's unhappy married life. This unhappiness is repeatedly mentioned throughout Valera's correspondence, whose intimate contents its recipients almost immediately broadcast to an audience comprised of both Valera's friends and enemies.[3] It seems

reasonable, therefore, that Galdós, too, would take note of Valera's use of the old man/young woman motif and that he would not only associate it with Valera's own life but with a pattern created in four of the latter's novels that were published before the writing of *Tristana*.

Galdós obviously did not initiate the old man/young woman dimension of *Tristana* with his mind on Valera's fiction. The work of Cervantes and Moratín provided much clearer models, and Lope de Vega, whose first name Galdós's antagonist posesses, provided some biographical patterns. What would have made Galdós associate his idea—whatever its origins—with Valera were probably the well-known details of Valera's own "private" life and the fact that the sophisticated, formerly rakish, largely unbelieving, and now doddering novelist was constantly paraded before the public, clearly an anachronism and a travesty of his former self. Galdós would see him weekly at the work sessions of the Real Academia, while friends would be invited to the *tertulias* at Valera's home and report what they had seen and heard.

This naturally brings us to the intertext that Galdós's novel seems to create with Valera's own life. The first chapters of *Tristana* make repeated reference to Don Lope's eye for women, his many love affairs, and his disregard for church teachings about the sanctity of matrimony. In chapter 3 the narrator informs us that Lope had an uncle who had emigrated with the Duque de Rivas (the same nobleman who, in Naples, had initiated the young Valera into the pleasures of wayward wives and international courtesans) and Alcalá Galiano (Valera's uncle) and who "detestaba las modernas tendencias realistas; adoraba el ideal y la frase noble y decorosa. Creía firmemente que en el gusto hay aristocracia y pueblo" (V, 1545-46). The first statement could allude to Valera's well-known idealism, while the second describes the unusual combination of aristocratic tastes and rural action that characterizes some of Valera's best-known novels. There are also repeated descriptions of Lope's silver-tongued art of seduction and mention of the fact that the "maduro galán" could easily teach a young woman to "idealizar las cosas, para verlo todo como no es" and to do this from a vantage point of far greater astuteness and age, an age which, in the case of Tristana's seduction, "casi triplicaba la suya" (V, 1548; ch. 4). This phrase may constitute an allusion to the celebrated case of Katherine Lee Bayard, daughter of the American Secretary of State during Valera's stint as Spanish minister in Washington, a young woman whom Valera captivated and possibly seduced and who, finally, committed suicide after Valera (at his own instigation) was transferred to another diplomatic post (Bravo-Villasante 184-91 and especially Trimble 130-43). In 1885 Katherine Lee Bayard was twenty years of age and Valera sixty-one, thus paralleling the tripled age of Don Lope in comparison to that of Tristana. The narrator refers to Lope as a "Don Juan caduco" and "el don Juan en decadencia" (V, 1562, 1565; chs. 10, 12).

Valera was born in Cabra and maintained ancestral property there during the rest of his life. It is the setting of most of his novels, though the place names are changed. Galdós plays masterfully with the name Cabra in chapter 18, where, in a letter to Tristana, Horacio says: "Se me olvidó decirte que tengo tres *cabras* con cada ubre como el bombo grande de la lotería. No me compares esta leche con la que venden en la *cabrería* de tu casa, con

aquellos *lácteos virgineos candores* que tanto asco nos daban. *Las cabritas* te esperan [. . .] " (V, 1582; ch.18; emphasis ours except for Latin phrase). Horacio's father, like Valera, had been a diplomat and, also like Valera, had been stationed in many countries, including the United States (1556; ch. 5). It is also suggestive that Tristana's family lives in Andalusia (V, 1593; ch. 22), where Valera's Cabra is located.

It could be argued that the foregoing suggestion of an intertextual relationship between Valera's life and works, on the one hand, and *Tristana*, on the other, associates Valera's style, characters, and personal habits with far too many different personages in Galdós's novel. The answer to such an objection is that authors frequently do establish intertexts in this way. The *bovarismo* of *La Regenta* does not rest only on Ana, but also on Vetusta and on all of Ana's would-be seducers. In Unamuno's *Amor y pedagogía* (1902), not just one but several characters—Avito, Fulgencio Entrambosmares, Marina—reflect different facets of Unamuno's own personality so that the reader may appreciate them—a technique facetiously criticized in the novel's prologue. In Galdós's many novels, the intertexts with the *Quijote* affect not one, but many of the characters. In *Miau*, for example, not only Villaamil, but also Pantoja and Luisito are quixotic. The idea is not that there are always one-to-one correspondences between Valera, Rossini, Verdi, Dumas *fils*, Italian literature, and something in *Tristana*, but that Galdós's novel is absorbed into and created according to a greater or lesser paradigm suggested by one or all of these remembered contexts.

Galdós's Use of Intertexts

Why would Galdós forge intertexts in his writing of *Tristana*, and what do the intertexts with *Il Barbiere*, *La Traviata*, *La Dame aux camélias* and *Pepita Jiménez* and its author have in common or in conflict? The answer to the first part of this question is that it is impossible for an author to write without reflecting other textual material. As Unamuno demonstrated in his essay "Cosas de libros," modern humans cannot think or even *be* without visualizing themselves in terms of the common treasury of textualizings that preceded and surround them (437-40). Barthes's *S/Z* continues Unamuno's existentialist argument about shared language, but the Basque's ideas on writing achieve their ultimate literary development in Kristeva's *Semiotikè:* Every text "takes shape as a mosaic of citations, every text is the absorption and transformation of other texts" (Culler 139). For Alan Smith, the entire genre of realist narrative is a "conjunto de anécdotas" (*Galdós y la imaginación* 13). This combining of semi-distinct linguistic sets creates an advantageous situation in which "each mind may transcend its own limits and share the minds of others" (Valdés 6). Galdós always thought with and then freely (creatively) rhapsodized configurations of other texts. Beginning with *La sombra* (1867) he alluded to and reconfigured the classical myths (A. Smith 15, 34-36), suffusing his modern characters with both society's and his own art's remaking of the past's figures and motivations. *Doña Perfecta* adopted the terminology and form of a classical tragedy (Gilman, "Las referencias

clásicas" 353-62). *La Fontana de Oro* (1867-1868) began a lifelong practice of shaping scenes, characters, motivations, and (sometimes) outcomes in accord with the icons bequeathed by other Western novelists: Cervantes, Balzac, Dickens, Tolstoi, Zola, and countless others (Gilman, *Galdós and the Art* 53, 91-102, 127-29, 218, 249). These intertextual matters are simply in Galdós's head along with the other things out of which he forges his narratives: streets, monuments, issues, current events, his own life. But as we see from the metaliterary focus that gradually came to occupy an extremely important position in his mature fiction, not all of these phemonena are equal. The literary text and the entire concept of literature eventually come to subsume and remake all the other classifiable "things." These things or objects, like city buildings or streets—which as true phenomena are not, even at the beginning, "real" things but rather appearances or subjects in the author's mind—become further transformed through their association with the texts he has absorbed. In *Misericordia* (1897), Madrid's church of San Sebastián, adopting a mythic persona, incarnates a Janus figure capable of representing both the gulf between social classes and the apparent—but only apparent—separation of the material from the spiritual (Ribbans 203). The new avenues of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, through association with the Vetustan promenades in Part I of *La Regenta* (1883) eventually become the places where classes mix and society becomes dynamic. Obviously much of this is unconscious, but much is also by design. Allusions to *La Dame aux camélias* or *La Traviata* may be spontaneous, but a pastiche carved out of biographical details and literary motifs of Juan Valera appears planned.

One answer to why Galdós might create particular intertexts in his writing of *Tristana* appears to be that there is, in certain works, a concrete presence of rather stereotypical older males and young females upon which to base parts of his Don Lope and Tristana in conformity to some intuited but as yet formless vision of them. Don Bartolo, in his temporary banishment of Almaviva and attempts to coerce the inexperienced Rosina to commit to his possession, would appear to be an excellent way to bulk up an intuited course of action for Don Lope in regard to Horacio and Tristana. Rossini's Count Almaviva, if we move on to Mozart's later opera, *Le nozze di Figaro*, which continues the story created by Beaumarchais that was the basis for the libretto of *Il Barbiere*, eventually becomes a rake and, as a somewhat older man, ends up mistakenly trying to seduce his own wife. This is essentially what Don Lope is forced to do with his mistress Tristana after he has temporarily lost her to Horacio. Rossini himself was a hedonist, an overage gallant and an idler like Don Lope. Once Don Benito had apprehended the outlines of Don Lope's relationship with Tristana and Horacio, and once this relationship became associated with *Il Barbiere*, Mozart's *Le nozze*, Rossini, and his hyperbolic depiction in some of Galdós's previous novels, Galdós could develop this dimension of *Tristana* along already familiar lines.

Both *La Traviata* and *La Dame aux camélias* also have prominent, older rakes, Baron Duphol, the Duc de Garay, and the Comte de Mornay, who are able to command the sexual favors of the—were it not for their patrons—financially strapped Violetta and Marguerite. Each of these courtesans is based on the real-life Marie Duplessis, one time lover of

Alexandre Dumas *fils* and, like Tristana, a later vicim of poor health and the product of a single-parent home (Clark 10-12). For her part, Dumás's Marguerite alludes to the Duke's declining attractiveness and sexual prowess (*La Dame* 76; I.vii), thus paralleling the effects of age on Don Lope in *Tristana*. The reflection of the real-life Marie Duplessis in the fictional Marguerite is a relationship that Galdós knew and mentioned prominently in the late-discovered novel *Rosalía* (ca. 1872) (Servén Díez 86) that Alan Smith offered to the public in 1983. In *Rosalía*, the young woman Charo is drawn into a liaison with Mariano Gibralfaro through her quixotic response to the reading of a great deal of romantic literature, including *La Dame aux camélias*. As in the case of Horacio's abandonment of Tristana, Mariano gradually withdraws from Charo, but for a while she mistakenly and quite parodically expects her lover's angry father to object to her corruption of his son in the way that Armand's father does in *La Dame*. Meanwhile, Rosalía has entered into a sentimental relationship with Horacio Reynolds, whose complete name, alluding to a Latin poet and an English painter, may be the origin for that of the Italy-loving painter Horacio Díaz, who falls in love with Tristana. It is clear, therefore, that *Tristana* enjoys a strong intertextual relationship with *Rosalía* as well as with its French and Italian predecessors, especially when one recalls how Tristana's readings spur on her romantic imagination. In both *La Traviata* and *La Dame*, a younger lover—respectively, Alfredo and Armand— comes along, and in each work the liaison with the young man is tragically shortened by a life-threatening condition. Also in both of these works, the heroine repeatedly emphasizes the importance of freedom in her life, her willingness to flout society's conventions (i.e., Tristana's denigration of marriage, an attitude assimilated from Don Lope), and her refusal to promise life-long fidelity even outside marriage. Neither of these situations relates to those of *Rosalía*, which uses the Dumas-Verdi story in a much more Cervantine way.

By 1892 the aging Juan Valera, whose dated elegance and seductive manner Galdós had already parodied in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, *Miau*, and *La incógnita* (Franz, *Valera in Dialogue* 23-35, 53-54, 110) was ripe for a serious, even pathetic treatment in *Tristana*. Valera now incarnated an aged and dilapidated Don Juan who, with plenty of foresight, had envisioned his own sad future in a series of his own novels. Valera and his work therefore provided fitting models for aspects of Don Lope. If an author wanted to find copious material for the creation of an older character who, throughout his entire life, sought liaisons with vulnerable younger women, he could scarcely choose a better or more well-known model or modeler than Valera. Moreover, not only had Valera repeatedly reflected his own libidinous nature and aging process within his literary creations, but he had years earlier modeled important aspects of his most famous novel, *Pepita Jiménez*—i.e., Don Gumersindo and Pepita's first marriage, her rejection of Don Pedro de Vargas's proposal, the predisposition of Pepita and Don Luis to create amorous ideals, the jealousy of the Conde de Genazahar, the useless advice dispensed by the Padre Vicario, the gambling scene, the duel between Don Luis and the Count—on *La Dame aux camélias* and possibly on *La Traviata* (Franz, "*Pepita Jiménez*" y "*La Dame aux camélias*"). Both of these works, in addition, have a dual set of older rakes of the type represented by Don Lope. Moreover,

Galdós himself had mentioned Verdi's opera in other places, such as chapter 9 of *Doña Perfecta* and chapter 7 of *Torquemada en la hoguera.*

We need to appreciate from the above recital of previous uses of similar material from the life and art of Rossini/Mozart, Dumas *fils*, Verdi, and Valera that the allusions, parallels, and intertexts present in *Tristana* involve resources firmly entrenched in Galdós's repertory of associations. Whenever a certain type of seducer-aristocrat, golden-tongued Don Juan, would-be-feminist victim, bucolic interlude, duel, salon/*soirée* setting, or crescendo effect was required, Galdós could—in the absence of more contemporaneous observations from Madrid life—simply adapt details from this repertory. Indeed, even a careful and unhurried commentator of *Tristana* like Sánchez speaks of "the allusions made throughout the novel [. . .] to stock literary situations and formulas" (115). Every writer does this type of recycling, and, even taking into account the vastness of his novelistic production, Galdós probably does it less than most writers, owing to the mimetic nature of much of his work, which does not depend so much as that of a less mimetic writer—Valera, Unamuno, Valle-Inclán—upon definable roles, classic situations, and particular types of dramatic encounters. The degree to which Galdós recycled certain characterizations and situations is not, however the major point, but rather that he did so and that the origin of the reused material frequently was literary, proceeding from both other authors and his own previous work.

Gilman theorizes that, in such situations, Galdós most frequently relied, not just on the recollection of a particular characterization or situation, but on an entire "colloquium of precursors assembled in the Parnassus of his memory [. . .]" (*Galdós and the Art* 188). But, as Gilman argues, Galdós did not only assemble a storehouse of stock situations but, like other novelists such as Balzac, Zola, and Alas, passed these on to subsequent writers and their reading public alike. Galdós did not only need to eat Balzac for breakfast, as Don Benito once said, but, in Gilman's words, allow himself to be "eaten for breakfast, lunch, and dinner by his compatriots" (200). Just as Galdós could never again read the social dimension of the *Quijote* in the same way after ingesting Alas's intense expansion of its irony and treatment of character in *La Regenta*, he needed to have his own readers do the same with the even more intensified *cervantismo* of *Fortunata y Jacinta* (160-61). This continual bequeathing and re-use of earlier narrative achievements produced a situation that Gilman refers to as "novelistic consciousness," in which select members of the literary community were able both to detect—often cued by the more recent work itself—the origins of the reused material and to sense that the newer work was utilizing the older material in a more modern and inclusive way. By locating the parameters of his own narrative and expository world within preexistent texts, Galdós thereby taught his readers to "comprehend experience from their reading and in terms of their reading" (194-95). Galdós's talent was not, however, merely his ability to use and recycle others' material but his unique ability to intensify this recycling in such a way that the newer words and world thus created were—for the contemporary reader—truer and fuller than the words and world of the original work (197, 224). "The result was a [new] collective dream of, or conviction about, reality which

surpassed the novels that contributed to it" (197).

We would add, however, that one disadvantage of this type of repertorial re-use is that the material culled from one's storehouse of borrowed characters and contexts may not fit the specifics of every new situation. This is especially true if one is working in haste, as we know that Galdós was in the composition of *Tristana*, completed while he was struggling to stage his production of *Realidad* (Schnepf 91; García Domínguez 76-78). As Sinnigen points out, Galdós became increasingly hurried, as the fewer and fewer changes in latter parts of the only (undefinitive) manuscripts make clear (54). But there are many potential explanations for haste, one of which is a dawning sociological (Durkheim's *anomie*) and esthetic (Galdós's 1897 Royal Academy address) credo holding that consistency, clear distinctions, and refinement are no longer talismans, or even plausibilities, of modern life.

The heroine of *Tristana*, moreover, differs markedly from her many literary antecedents. Her increasingly strong personality and quest for independence have no similarity whatsoever to the repressed excitability of Rossini's Rosina, despite the obvious congruity of their entrapped situations. Tristana is rather direct, not discrete; poor, not rich, like Pepita Jiménez. Instead of being a professional actress like Galdós's mistress, Concha-Ruth Morell—upon whose letters to Don Benito parts of Tristana's correspondence and personality are based (G. Smith 92ff)—or a natural thespian like Pepita, Tristana merely dreams of becoming an actress after her fantasies of being a painter turn boring. Nor is she decisive like Mozart's Countess Almaviva. Dumas *fils*'s Marguerite and Verdi's Violetta are saints, who sacrifice their happiness and their very lives for the joy and respectability of others. Tristana specifically states that she refuses to be like either of them. Indeed, there is no *Dame aux camélias*-like character in Restoration fiction that does not derisively reject the notion of redeeming the "sinfulness" of her life through surrender to selfless sacrifice the way the ultimately depressed and docile Tristana does. These rebelliously parodic characters include Charo in Galdós's then unpublished *Rosalía*, Lucía Población in Palacio Valdés's *Riverita* (1886), and Rafaela in Valera's *Genio y figura* (Servén Díez 83-100). They also include the *tenorio*, Alvaro Mesía of Alas's great *La Regenta*, who is seen by the idiotic Marqués de Vegallana as a masculine courtesan capable of self-redemption through love (101-03). So common were these anti-*Dame aux camélias* characters during the period of the Restoration that a noun, "traviata"/"traviato" was coined in reference to them, a noun that Galdós himself uses in *Crónica de Madrid, III* (1865) and in *Lo prohibido* (1885) (Servén Díez 83). Tristana, as said, is unlike them, incorporating more of the serious, self-sacrificing nature of Dumas's and Verdi's feminine personages than other similar Spanish female characters. This is ostensibly what Pardo Bazán did not like. Tristana, despite her growth in experience and wisdom, is still mid-way between the traditional romantic (i.e., "feminine") character and a liberated woman like Rosalía de Bringas, who had appeared as a veritable entrepreneur of both her husband's money and her own body eight years earlier. One might, with the latter details of his character Tristana, accuse Galdós of backsliding into an older paradigm for proper feminine behavior—no nineteenth-century reincarnation of Violetta and Marguerite, including Tristana, goes unpunished for her transgression of public

morality (Emerson 251-53; Hemingway 257; Fuller 263-65)—or he could be seen to create a character that is not rectilinear in her development. Rather than rectilinear she is dialogical: articulating an assertive and resolute personality but still conserving definitive parts of the old self that did not dare to embrace things that are new and different.

For his part, Don Lope is nowhere so possessive as Rossini's Dr. Bartolo. Though doing everything possible to hold on to Tristana, he not only exhibits no jealousy toward Horacio but encourages Tristana in her affair, knowing through experience that most young men cannot deliver a reality commensurate with the illusions they rhetorically spin. This is another example of the way Galdós had abandoned much of both romantic superficiality and most of its parody. It is highly significant that in the A (earliest known) manuscript of *Tristana* Galdós has Lope forbid Tristana to leave the house upon intuiting another man in her life (García Domínguez 88). Had the B manuscript not prevailed, this prohibition would have made the novel adhere much more closely to the Bartolo/Rosina model of *Il Barbiere*, where the "esclava" truly is imprisoned at home. Indeed, Galdós appears to do everything necessary to destroy this intertext after having done so much to create it. He seems to do this out of a new desire to explore seriously what he had only derided on earlier occasions. In this same vein, Dumas *fils*'s Duc de Garay and Comte de Mornay are mere names in other people's conversation and thus exhibit no psychology that could be judged the way Lope's so clearly is. The A manuscript of the novel actually has Horacio making decisions to seek out the possibility of a relationship with Tristana—thus paralleling the active and clearly stereotypical masculine roles of the enthralled Alfredo and Armand in Verdi and Dumás *fils*—but then, once more Galdós changes strategies in B and has Tristana seek out Horacio (García Domínguez 85-86), though other bits apparently culled from the opera and play remain intact. Here Galdós is allowing his heroine to freely reflect the type of societal change that, in his 1897 Royal Academy address, he insisted must create an entirely new type of character free from the rigid romantic *costumbrismo* of the past. Don Lope is, in earlier life, every bit as promiscuous as Valera, but he is far too ungroomed, sloppy, poor, and *cursi* (he brings the crippled Tristana a collection of tasteless street art to compensate for the loss of her artist lover) to suggest a Valera who remained an elegant connoisseur until his death. He is, however, far too intelligent, dapper, and young to be compared in any meaningful way to Pepita Jiménez's eighty-year-old, verbally limited, and appearance-disdaining husband Don Gumersindo. He is hard to classify. Marguerite's later lover and self-imagined rival to Armand, Varville, is young, uxorious, and dreamy-eyed, everything that Don Lope is not. Horacio is disoriented, intellectually and artistically mediocre, and of short memory. He is nothing like Rossini's ardent but bungling Almaviva, nor like the idealistic, sincere, and self-sacrificing Alfredo and Armand. He has nothing of the self-deception, verbal skill, and purity of Pepita Jiménez's beloved Don Luis. (In fact, he both admits to cavorting with whores in Venice and, in his letters, gives no evidence of having read widely. In contrast to Don Luis, who studies to be a priest, Don Lope believes religion to be a superstition and priests to be manipulators.) One almost wants to characterize this disorganized assemblage of intertexts as a jumbled collection of *topoi*, stock literary

referents (like those of Dumas and Verdi) that could be found in almost any European novel, opera, or *zarzuela* of the seventies, eighties, or nineties. Such a recognition momentarily makes Galdós look even less in control, dependent on pre-existing visions. But we need to remember our previous demonstrations of how Galdós has radically modified many of these recycled materials for the filling out of his characterizations

Sánchez maintains that whenever Galdós establishes an intertext in *Tristana* (Sánchez's intertexts are Dante's evocations of Beatrice and her spiritualizing effects, the *Novelas ejemplares* and *entremeses* of Cervantes, Molière's *L'École des Femmes*, Moratín's *El sí de las niñas*) he ultimately subverts its expectations (116-20). This is true on a minor scale. For example, the heroine of Moratín's play is saved from marrying her aged suitor, while the disfigured Tristana is powerless to refuse the relatives' pressure to unite her with Don Lope; Tristana, unlike Dante's Beatrice, does not spiritualize Don Lope but inflames him until impotency turns him into a philosopher like Montaigne. But such a view misses many of the other glaring intertexts and allusions that do not defraud the reader (e.g., the relationship of Don Lope to Dumas's Baron Duphol and the once-removed relationship of the country-loving Horacio to his namesake, the Latin poet Horace—the friend and disciple of Vergil, author of the *Georgics*, a volume that is intertextual with Horacio's praises of the countryside). At the same time, this view also fails to note that in many cases the terms of the implied simile are not at all alike despite a few superficial similarities, even at the beginning of the comparison. For example, although *Tristana* suggests that Don Lope is like Dr. Bartolo, Don Gumersindo, Juan Valera, and the various old rakes in particular works of Rossini, Dumas *fils* and Verdi, the initial comparisons soon trail off into a series of divergent or extraneous associations that neither support nor subvert the intertexual relationship. To illustrate, the aged Don Lope requires his wife's care but not nearly to the extent that Don Gumersindo does. He takes advantage of a young woman but with neither the nonchalance nor the commercialism of Dumas's Baron Duphol. He realizes that Tristana must have a relationship with a younger man, but he never arrives at the ultimate stage of letting go like Dr. Bartolo. This situation leads to the conclusion either that the novel's narrator knows his literature and psychology far less coherently than Tristana or that Galdós was not sure who his characters were to be before he fell into the practice of developing them by analogy to contradictory and radically altered models, as a postmodern writer with no belief in a subtending reality might do. As Cahoone (17) has made clear, a postmodernist argues that the contemporaneous world—the contemporaneous world of any period as envisaged from a post-1917 perspective—is unique, untied to preceding states or models. Because of its uniqueness, it is impossible to establish foundations for and a confirmation of alleged truths or realities in a "realist" sense. A novel's internal, fictional needs must, therefore, constitute the entire pragmatic cause of its reality. Indeed, Zamora at times moves confidently in this direction by underlining *Tristana*'s "procedimientos formales post o antirealistas," its "recurso a una fábula metanarrativa," its condition as a narrative "en la que el receptor toma un papel activo," and its "discurso muy diferente al prescrito por la ortodoxia realista"

(206).

The problem with completely opting for this postmodern scenario is that the careful description of Don Lope; the minute attention to the neologisms of Tristana's and Horacio's speech (Sobejano 86); the specific referents in the lovers' letters; the detailed psychologizing of Lope, Tristana, and Horacio; and (as Zamora relishes in his dramatic use of attention-grabbing italics) the gory details of Tristana's amputation present formidable obstacles. Zamora points out that these highly realistic details can be read as "una contundente advertencia a aquéllos que desobedezcan e intenten rebelarse contra los sacrosantos principios teóricos de[l] [. . .] realismo decimonónico" (196). *Tristana*, however, while still adhering in many ways to a realist model without clear ambientation and defining descriptions for many of the characters (Condé 36-37), has one of the least developed, most amorphous narrators in all of Galdós's fiction. *Tristana*'s narrator has nothing, for example, of the biased historian we find in *Doña Perfecta*, the immoral braggart who speaks in *La de Bringas*, or the self-conscious novelizer who obscures the "truth" in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. At the end of his story he is not even sure whether Don Lope and Tristana's dreary marriage might constitute some sort of rare statement about the degree of happiness achievable in this worldly vale of tears. Anderson (61-76) goes so far as to state that the very organizing principle of the novel may be the absence of necessary details. The vagueness of the narrator's accounts and judgments, when coupled with his absence of linguistic quirks and prejudicial standpoints, makes one question whether—very rare in Galdós—the narrator does not stand uncomfortably near the real author's indecision about many particulars.

It therefore may be that one of the reasons why, despite its arresting beginning, *Tristana* does not completely satisfy is not only that Galdós diverges from what many (but not all) critics believe to be the novel's central feminist motif or that he cannot figure out how to resolve the love triangle with which he has fettered his story, but that he does not clearly have his personalities in mind before he encumbers them with the centrifugal pull of overly developed analogies pulled from various types of literature. However, although his intertexts in many instances create characters and motivations sufficiently hybridized to create somewhat unique entities, they are never so defamiliarized to the extent that they cease to be recognizable simulacra of their antecedents. It is perhaps for these reasons that the novel's narrator, as Ricardo Gullón points out, seems to us unsure of his attitude toward the details he wants to pass along (18). The categorically unanswerable question is, of course, whether this lack of realist wholeness of vision matters in the uncharted waters of invention and spirituality that Galdós was exploring in the nineties, whether, in other words, the disparity of focus is a problem of a hurried or insufficiently focused Galdós or of a reader still holding to a Restoration standard of order.

The fact that no other of Galdós's novels of this same period exhibits such a contradictory use of referents and that no other novel possesses manuscripts in which the author is simultaneously revising both the A and B variants instead of smoothly passing from one stage to the other (García Domínguez 82-83) momentarily inclines us in favor of an uncharacteristically "unfocused" author or of an author in whom notions of antecedence

and succession or character consistency in the face of crisis no longer mattered for the simple reason that he himself could no longer believe in a consistency that was increasingly difficult to pull out of the threadbare realist-naturalist hat. We are encouraged in these beliefs by Zamora's recent study, which arrives at a diagnosis of "un instante de confusión poética, fruto de las tensiones internas de la novela realista" and of "inseguridades y tal vez los nuevos derroteros que había de seguir el género" (209) via metacritical and narratological methods totally distinct from the intertextual focus that we apply here. We are also given encouragement by Chamberlin's very recent analysis of the much-criticized conclusions to *Tristana* and *Fortunata y Jacinta* ("The So-Called Problem" 12-19). In this study, after positing the loose structuring of *Tristana* according to the principles of sonata form, the critic points out that the A or "masculine" motif (represented by the controlling wishes of Don Lope) and the B or "feminine" motif (represented by the inconsistent assertion of a desire for freedom on the part of both Tristana and Horacio) ends with an inconclusive reassertion of the A theme. Quoting the musicologist Leonard G. Ratner, Chamberlin first shows that the A theme itself "'goes far afield harmonically, creating a great deal of instability [. . .]'" (15). However, in the novel, the B theme also is "undermined by a number of factors" including a certain "ambivalence" and a series of "mood swings" on the part of Tristana (16). At the end of Galdós's prose "coda," the B theme is permanently "weaker than the A theme [. . .]," but "the A theme itself, because of its constant contention and interplay with the B theme, has now ended up being considerably changed also." These symptoms of uncertainty as Galdós's art entered the decade of the nineties are not by any means the only signs of a paradigm shift during his long career. Alan Smith's suggestion (112-18) that both the much maligned original ending and the definitive conclusion to *Doña Perfecta* make sense, depending on whether one understands the novel to be based on mythic figures or on the intertext with classical tragedy laid out by Gilman, may also mark such a shift. In this earlier hesitation we may see traces of the shift from Galdós's adherence to the *novela de folletín*, with its shocking revelations (often of a parodic treatment of earlier models), to his embracing of the *novela realista* and its insistence on verisimilitude.

If we are right about the simultaneous sociological and esthetic origins of Galdós's hesitations, incomplete subversions, or outright contradictions, the definitive *Tristana* text can be seen to react against the hackneyed *topoi* habitually re-used in so many nineteenth-century narratives. This reaction appears to respond to a suspicion that the fossilized predispositions governing much of the previous decades' obedience to agreed-upon icons could no longer remain uncontested. In Gilman's view, Galdós was making the previous "novelistic consciousness" fuller, more flexible, undetermined, and—ultimately—even autonomous from its rather standardized collection of origins. We are encouraged in this belief both by the supporting statements contained in Galdós's Royal Academy address of 1897 ("La sociedad presente como materia novelable") and by the judgments of those critics (Gold 16-17, Condé 12, 15-23) who find Galdós's greatest discursive restlessness and formal experimentation in those self-conscious and playful narratives he penned well after his name

had become synonymous with realism.

The familiar world of the obedient courtesan, the womanizing "gentleman" or quixotic seducer, the proto-feminist free spirit, the uncommitted librettist, and the novel assembled from shards of previous models gives evidence in the late eighties and nineties—Galdós tells us—of coming apart at the seams. This is because both society and the narrative world that takes its cues from society are changing in confusing and still undefined ways: "Examinando las condiciones del medio social en que vivimos como generador de la obra literaria, lo primero que se advierte en la muchedumbre a que pertenecemos, es la relajación de todo principio de unidad" ("La sociedad presente" 160). Because society is changing, the novel must inevitably change, and by this concomitant change, it will give back to society and criticism a new esthetic that will modify forever our orderly views of how society and art function:

> En resumen, la misma confusión evolutiva que advertimos en la sociedad, primera materia del arte novelesco, se nos traduce en éste por la indecisión de sus ideales, por lo variable de sus formas, por la timidez con que acomete los asuntos profundamente humanos; y cuando la sociedad se nos convierte en público, es decir, cuando después de haber sido inspirador del Arte lo contempla con ojos de juez, nos manifiesta la misma inseguridad en sus opiniones, de donde resulta que no andan menos desconcertados los críticos que los autores. (163)

Galdós appears to have unavoidably recorded his narrator's and, arguably, his own confusion at this historic moment.[5] The individual reader enjoys the daunting critical privilege of deciding whether the presentation of such wholesale confusion is a satisfying literary experience or whether the novelist has the further responsibility to provide a clearer context that accounts for what he, his characters, and his narrator have failed to see more critically. Our own belief is that Galdós, intuiting the social and psychological realities made manifest by his narrative art, *could* not justify—at the writing of *Tristana*—the presentation of a clear context that neither his society nor his corollary theorizings could provide.

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NOTES

[1] See Vernon A. Chamberlin, *Galdós and Beethoven: "Fortunata y Jacinta," a Symphonic Novel* (London: Tamesis, 1977), 26; Thomas R. Franz, "*Doña Perfecta* and *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*," *Anales Galdosianos* 21 (1987): 127-33; Vernon A. Chamberlin, "New Insights Regarding the Creation and Character Delineation of Maxi Rubín and Plácido Estupiñá in *Fortunata y Jacinta*," *Anales Galdosianos* 36 (2001): 104-08; Vernon A. Chamberlin, "Echoes from the World of Rossini and Beethoven in Galdós's *Fortunata y Jacinta*," *Anales Galdosianos* 37 (2002): 91-94.

[2] Verdi and his librettist Piave worked with Dumas's play and not with the 1848 novel of the same title that preceded it (Goldin 247). Only the play concentrates on the bits of dialogue that Verdi uses in his arias and that Galdós purloins in order to create part of the dialogue between Tristana, Don Lope, and Don Lope's relatives. Neither *La Traviata* nor *Tristana* contains the gruesome details of its heroine's malady nor the descriptions of her physical decomposition in the grave that conclude Dumas's novel (Hughes-Hallett 93-96).

[3] There are many ways Galdós could have known the details of Valera's intimate life, particularly his early escapades and his relations with his wife revealed in letters (for example the hundreds of missives written from Russia or details included in letters written to Dolores Delavat Valera or other relatives while he was on diplomatic appointments) before Galdós appeared on the scene in Madrid. Valera was in St. Petersburg for six months bridging the winter of 1856 and the spring of 1857, a period during which he sent hundreds of letters to his friend, Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto, then Subsecretary of State. These letters included the details of his many seductions and love affairs, including a notorious one with the French actress Madeleine Brohan, which resulted in the expulsion of both of them from Russia. Without Valera's knowledge, Cueto circulated the letters "among his friends and even published long extracts from them in the newspaper *La España* (DeCoster 20). Valera also wrote many letters to his Andalusian friend Estébanez Calderón recounting similar racy events from his first diplomatic posts (86). Estébanez lived until 1867, when Galdós had already written his first two novels and had long made the excursions collecting gossip in Madrid's cafes. Chamberlin has collected prurient details from these sets of correspondence and has briefly traced how they made the rounds in various Madrid circles ("Juan Valera" 157-58). During these same years Valera also posted several hundred letters to Al arcón, Tamayo y Baus, his cousin José Alcalá Galiano, and Salvador Valera Freuller, Gumersido Laverde, Latino Coelho, Campoamor, and others (DeCoster 86, 142). When he was cavorting with women in Rio de Janeiro, he sent letters once more to Estébanez Calderón, who "was passing them on to his literary acquaintances in Madrid" (86). In 1872 Galdós became secretary of the literary section of the Ateneo de Madrid, succeeding Valera. Another secretary was Valera's cousin José Alcalá Galiano, who became one of Don Benito's best friends (Pattison 26-27). In 1883 Galdós made his first visit to England and Scotland, where he traveled with and stayed at the home of the cousin (Berkowitz 181). In 1888 the two men traveled together throughout Italy (188-95). All of these were excellent

sources and opportunities to learn the details of Valera's life. Regarding Valera's disastrous marital relations, letters exist from Valera to his sister stating frankly that his wife despised him and that their conjugal relations were long over (Chamberlin, "Juan Valera" 160). It is doubtful that Valera kept these agonizing details from his closest friends and that they did not allude to them in trying to excuse aspects of their friend's behavior. Thus Galdós eventually could have become privy to a great quantity of personal information.

[4] One place—and not the only one—where Valera clearly overuses the term "cursi" is in the descriptions of women and diplomatic receptions in the massive series of letters he wrote from Russia to his friend Leopoldo Augusto de Cueto during the years 1856-1857 and later published as *Cartas desde Rusia*. In 1961, when Enrique Tierno Galván published his book on changing tastes in nineteenth-century Spain—*Del espectáculo a la trivialización*—he based the pages (79-106) of his discussion of the word "cursi" on Valera's employment in chapter 5 of his 1875 novel *Las ilusiones del doctor Faustino* (Mainer 164).

[5] Ayo has recently stated that the opinions expressed by Galdós in his Academy address inevitably have their "correlato en la representación artísica." His novelistic and, later, memorialistic works evidence "la influencia de esta inestabilidad en la identidad individual, esto es, en el individuo como ser social [. . .]" (3).

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