

ABSTRACT

Exploring Questions of Spanish National Identity in Selected Works of Miguel de Unamuno, Azorín, and Antonio Machado

Ross D. Natividad, M.A.

Committee Chairperson: Frieda H. Blackwell, Ph.D.

Critics of *La Generación de 1898* claim that the group's aims were purely philosophical and intellectual – thus having no practical applications for the country. However, a careful examination of the respective works by Miguel de Unamuno, Azorín, and Antonio Machado indeed reveal how each author specifically strove to rediscover and to resolve the issue of Spanish national identity. A nation is a collective identity engendered by a united moral consciousness. Thus, acting as nation-builders to a nation suffering from longstanding decadence, confusion, and humiliation, these *noventaochistas* not only offered diverse interpretations of Spanish identity during the crises at the end of the nineteenth century but also sought to awaken the moral consciousness they believed Spaniards were seeking.

Exploring Questions of Spanish National Identity in Selected Works of
Miguel de Unamuno, Azorín, and Antonio Machado

by

Ross D. Natividad, B.A.

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Heidi L. Bostic, Ph.D., Chairperson

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Approved by the Thesis Committee

Frieda H. Blackwell, Ph.D., Chairperson

Jaime L. Diaz-Granados, Ph.D.

Jan E. Evans, Ph.D.

Michael D. Thomas, Ph.D.

Accepted by the Graduate School
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J. Larry Lyon, Ph.D., Dean

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	v
CHAPTER ONE	1
Introduction: Crisis and Reaction to Spain's <i>Gran Desastre</i>	
CHAPTER TWO	13
Unamuno's <i>En torno al casticismo</i> : Castile as the Foundational Bedrock of Spanish National Identity	
CHAPTER THREE	26
Azorín's <i>Castilla</i> : An Argument for the Europeanization of Spain	
CHAPTER FOUR	38
Machado's <i>Campos de Castilla</i> : Discovering National Identity through Landscape	
CHAPTER FIVE	53
Conclusion: <i>La Generación de 1898</i> in Context	
WORKS CITED	62
BIBLIOGRAPHY	64

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction: Crisis and Reaction to Spain's *Gran Desastre*

At the turn of the twentieth century Spain experienced a series of domestic and international catastrophes. Stemming from the defeat in the Spanish-American War, the loss of its last overseas colonies, and the criticism surrounding the Bourbon monarchy, Spain found itself confronted with a national identity crisis. This period saw the emergence of a new imperial power and the demise of another as the United States ultimately replaced Spain as having global hegemony, especially marked by the outcome of the Spanish-American War. Consequently, some Spaniards not only criticized their own country throughout this period of transition but also attempted to understand Spain's loss of empire and define the nation's new role in the world. Among the foremost voices of domestic criticism at the time was *La Generación de 1898*, an intellectual group of poets, novelists, and philosophers who sought to analyze the causes of their country's decline, find ways to respond to the ongoing national crises and, in the process, understand what it truly means to be Spanish.

In order to investigate Spanish national identity during this period of moral, political, and social depression, this thesis explores key works by members of *La Generación de 1898* such as Miguel de Unamuno, José Martínez Ruiz (Azorín), and Antonio Machado. Since Unamuno's essay *En torno al casticismo* (1895) as well as selected poems, Azorín's collection of essays, *Castilla* (1912), and Machado's poems from *Campos de Castilla* (1912) all focus directly on issues of Spain's decadent identity, an examination of these representative works can lead to a clearer understanding of how

this generation perceived Spain's identity, diagnosed *el problema de España*, and suggested remedies to its national crisis.

Historians point to several factors leading to Spain's decadence at the end of the nineteenth century. Herbert Ramsden perceptively diagnosed Spain's condition at the turn of the century: "[The country was] in a state of mental and spiritual crisis, confused, disoriented, unable to find its direction amidst a profusion of often irreconcilable elements... and in a state of near paralysis of the will and understanding that [resulted] in general apathy" (14). A review of Spain's turbulent nineteenth century reveals how a variety of social, political, and economic factors all played decisive roles in creating the sense of a national identity crisis.

Starting in 1868 with the Glorious Revolution, or *La gloriosa*, that cost Isabel II her throne, Spain suffered a series of destabilizing political, economic, and social changes. These included the reign of the Italian Amadeo de Saboya from 1870 to 1873, the creation of the First Republic from 1873 to 1874, and finally the restoration of the Bourbon dynasty under Isabel II's son, Alfonso XII. When he died unexpectedly in 1885, Spain experienced further instability. His son Alfonso XIII had not been born at the time of the father's death, thus requiring a regency under his mother, María Cristina, from 1885 to 1902. As a result, Spaniards witnessed political chaos during this particular period and the situation would only continue to worsen as the turn of the century approached.

One momentous event that heightened this state of depression in Spain was the defeat in war by the United States and, consequently, the loss of Cuba, Puerto Rico, Guam, and the Philippines in 1898 – popularly known as *La Guerra de Cuba* and *el gran*

desastre. The Spanish media made certain to voice the contempt, disdain, and perhaps most notably, bewilderment of the general public, who responded critically to the outcome of the Spanish-American War and the loss of Spain's last colonies. This attitude comes through strongly in an editorial printed by *El Correo*, a newspaper circulated daily in Madrid, in which the author expressed how "everything is broken in this unhappy country; there is no government, no electorate, no political parties; no army, no navy; all is fiction, all decadence, all ruins" (Balfour, 1995: 406).

The way in which the United States defeated Spain proved to be a humiliating blow for Spaniards. According to one historical account, the Spanish military in the colonies actually outnumbered American occupation forces; Spain had 200,000 troops in Cuba, 30,000 in the Philippines, and 8,000 in Puerto Rico compared to the 28,000 the United States had conscripted for the war (Balfour, 1997: 39). Historians have proposed several explanations for Spain's devastating defeat in the Spanish-American War. For example, while the Spanish army was widely dispersed and isolated in each of Spain's colonies, American occupation forces were extremely well-organized and had the advantage of directing troops to strategic points to combat the Spaniards. In fact, the Americans were further aided by the insurgents who informed them of the local terrain and the location of Spanish forces. The ability to provide troops essential provisions, such as medicine, ammunition, and food supplies, proved to be another challenge for the empire. However, several historians argue it was the superior American naval advantage that led to Spain's crushing defeat: "Part of the problem for Spain was that its programme of naval construction and renovation was far from complete as the war began. To some extent, this was a reflection of Spain's relative industrial backwardness" (Balfour, 1997:

41-42). The once-great empire had not kept pace with advances in warfare and technology.

While evident that the secession of the colonies was traumatic for Spaniards, perhaps the most detrimental consequence of their loss was the damage done to Spain's economy. Cuba had historically been a source for raw materials and a market for Spanish goods; the Cuban colony in 1897, for instance, took in more than a third of all exports from Spain (Balfour, 1995: 406). In addition, the loss of the colonial market brought about significant shortages to the Spanish economic sectors that were dependent on it – such as the flour, wheat, and textile industries (Balfour, 1997: 54-55). Thus, the war with the U.S. caused not only the loss of Spain's remaining colonies and its imperial status but, perhaps more importantly, it caused the loss of Spain's identity as an economic power.

The crisis of political legitimacy proved to be another destabilizing force in Spain at the end of the nineteenth century. “By the beginning of the century,” explains historian Sebastian Balfour, “there was a new climate of popular disenchantment with the established order and its local representatives in many parts of the country” (Balfour, 1995: 410-411). After Spain restored the monarchy after the demise of the First Spanish Republic in 1875, public dissatisfaction with Spanish politics became increasingly evident at the time. New political factions arose that not only criticized the established regime for the failures of the Spanish-American War but also advocated the removal of the Bourbon monarchy. As noted by one political historian, these new political movements such as *El regeneracionismo* criticized the Bourbon monarchy for governing the country both inadequately and ineffectively: “España había perdido la Guerra, las

colonias, el prestigio internacional y el rango de gran potencia porque era un país débil; y era débil a causa de un régimen político desfasado, ineficaz y corrupto” (Ruiz 156). For several critics of the time, the Bourbon monarchy represented an outdated and inefficient ruling class which ultimately prompted the loss of the nation’s prestige and status.

As a result of these political, economic, and military catastrophes, a distinctive intellectual movement began taking shape in the final decades of the nineteenth century, which concerned itself with the continued degradation of Spain as an imperial power, academic authority, and cultural influence. Comprised of poets, novelists, and philosophers, members of *La Generación de 1898* essentially came to the defense of their country by aspiring to rediscover Spanish values that would not only unify the country but also raise its own self-image. *La Generación de 1898* constituted a considerable voice of criticism at the time as the group primarily engaged issues such as the domestic problems plaguing Spain, the debate between encouraging Europeanization or maintaining Spain’s unique traditions, and the existential search for a national identity. While this particular debate concerned intellectuals, Spain’s identity crisis also evoked concern among several other social classes.

Turning to the origins of *La Generación del 1898*, José Martínez Ruiz, or Azorín, was a prominent member of this assembly of intellectuals and popularized the group’s name. Though the views and opinions of members were not always in agreement, according to Azorín, he and his colleagues shared two main characteristics in their outlook: first, *La Generación de 1898* possessed “a new, more objective vision of reality; a new interpretation of Spain’s artistic tradition; a new interest in the Spanish landscape; and a new literary style” (Shaw 3). And secondly, the generation’s spirit manifested

itself towards social and political criticism in order to regenerate the Spanish national consciousness. The key figures of *La Generación de 1898* sharing these common characteristics included Miguel de Unamuno, Antonio Machado, Azorín, Ramón del Valle-Inclán, Pío Baroja, along with secondary members such as Ramiro de Maeztu and Ángel Ganivet.

Though many Spaniards assessed their country's problems as purely political or economic, *La Generación de 1898* perceived them in more philosophical terms. As one historian commented, "underlying economic factors are scarcely touched upon... [and] emphasis throughout is on 'el estado mental de nuestra patria' and the nation's 'conciencia colectiva' (Ramsden 13). In other words, members of the generation sought to understand and resolve Spain's problems through life-directing ideals and beliefs supplied by philosophy. And *La Generación de 1898* was not short on philosophical influences. Members drew from a wide variety of philosophies such as the positivism of Auguste Comte, the *krausismo* of Karl Friedrich Krause and Sanz del Río, the systematic pessimism of Schopenhauer, the Social Darwinism of Herbert Spencer, and others such as William James, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Nietzsche (Shaw 13). In a sense, this group of intellectuals did not want to define nor confine the examination of Spain's problems to practical perspectives; rather, *La Generación de 1898* concerned themselves with "the unavoidable issues of truth, duty, and finality... They sought reassurance that an unchanging, universal criterion of judgment existed, that there was some kind of ethical absolute to safeguard the direction which action might take, and that action itself could be purposive" (14). According to the *noventaochistas*, Spain's problems stemmed from more than just political or economic causes – it was a collective psychological crisis.

Members of *La Generación de 1898* were also greatly concerned about the course and trajectory of the Spanish state. One particular concern the movement emphasized was the debate between Europeanization and traditionalism. “Spain had been torn between upholders of the national tradition and advocates of Europeanization,” explains Herbert Ramsden, “[the movement] saw Spain’s crisis of lost directions in terms of a conflict between tradition and Europeanization. The question is, where should Spain take its stand?” (Ramsden 33). For the more conservative critics of the time, such as Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo, Spain had lost the empire because it had abandoned the original virtues which had once made it great: unity, hierarchy, and militant Catholicism (Balfour, 1995: 25). Critics such as Menéndez y Pelayo particularly blamed the Habsburg and Bourbon monarchies for introducing “corrosive effects of reforms based on foreign models... and the French Enlightenment” (25). In other words, they believed that the continued Europeanization of Spain would be a detriment to their country’s posterity; thus, the nation needed a return to Spain’s distinctive virtues to solve the national identity crisis.

Unamuno, whose position is discussed at length in the next chapter, was a critic of European modernization and opposed the idea of a modernized Spain. However, early in his writings, Unamuno also disagreed with Menéndez y Pelayo’s traditionalist approach of endorsing a return to the times of *la España gloriosa*. Menéndez y Pelayo basically called for the imitation of the past glories and virtues of the once-great Spanish empire. Unamuno did not see a return to *la España gloriosa* as a priority; rather, he believed in the concept of *la intrahistoria*. A word coined by Unamuno himself, *la intrahistoria* focused on the common people, customs, and their lands; and thus, by studying *la*

intrahistoria of a nation, Unamuno argued, one could better understand its true virtues and desired direction as a people.

On the other hand, others believed that it was precisely Spain's failure and reluctance to modernize that contributed to its current decadent state. Azorín was a proponent of this view and, unlike Unamuno, praised the effects of European modernization in his country. Subsequent chapters will reveal how Azorín's essays, in fact, dealt with the encouragement of Europeanization in Spain. One of the most notable group of critics at the time supporting this pro-modernization view was 'the regenerationists,' or *El Regeneracionismo*, a political movement primarily concerned with criticizing the Bourbon monarchy, instituting democratic reforms, advocating for the complete modernization of the country, and forming a renewed sense of nationalism.

One of the first attempts to regenerate Spain came from within the already-established political system. The Bourbon dynasty, which was restored after the fall of the First Spanish Republic in 1875, became a common source of criticism after the country's defeat in the Spanish-American War. Critics generally blamed the monarchy for losing the war, for selling out the colonies, and for prompting the ensuing national crisis. Regenerationists perceived the Bourbon monarchy as authoritative in nature due to the questionable institution of the *cacique* system: "Regenerationists did not seek an authoritarian solution... in the first place, for them, patronage and the corruption of the bosses fed on an indifferent and demoralized public opinion" (Ortega 327). Thus, members of the *Regeneracionismo* movement not only attempted to delegitimize the established political system, but also aimed at creating a new, democratic government.

Sebastian Balfour provides an accurate account of the beginnings of this primarily political movement:

The first essay at regeneration came from within the political system. In the immediate aftermath of the disaster, the politicians who came to the fore were those least tainted by the catastrophe or those most critical of the policies that had led to it. A few months after the signing of the Paris treaty by which Spain lost the last remnants of its empire, Francisco Silvela, a conservative politician who had dissented from his party's colonial policy, formed his first cabinet with a flourish of promises to reform the country. (Balfour, 1995: 411)

Concerned with the trajectory of their country, intellectuals and politicians alike engaged in this issue of modernizing and democratizing Spain.

Yet the dispute between whether to return to Spain's supposed original virtues or to modernize according to the European model exemplified only one of the main preoccupations of *La Generación del 1898*. Another relevant issue for members such as Unamuno, Azorín, and Machado was the concept of national identity and the search for its origins. However, this particular issue was not confined to just academic circles; the ongoing crises at the turn of the twentieth century seemed to stimulate Spaniards from all socio-economic backgrounds to discuss what it truly meant to be Spanish. Spaniards did not have a completely unified perspective on their history as a nation. In fact, there were several conflicting interpretations of the actual origins of the Spanish nation. Some perceived the union between the Catholic Monarchs, Ferdinand and Isabella, and the expulsion of the Moors from the Iberian Peninsula in 1492 as momentous events signaling the end of nearly eight-hundred years of Islamic occupation and, consequently, the birth of a Christian, Spanish nation. Others pointed to Ferdinand and Isabella's marriage in 1469 that united the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon as marking the birth of modern Spain.

Some Spaniards argued that the concept of Spain as a nation would not develop until much later during *Las guerras de la independencia* (1808-1814) which involved the crafting of the *La constitución de Cádiz* (1812) and the rebellion against French occupation forces. According to proponents of this view, these events formed and consolidated the sense of Spanish national consciousness. For example, as commented by Henry Kamen, “if a common enemy can help people to bond together and form a nation, then Spain had a good opportunity to emerge as one when it faced the occupying French army that kept Joseph Bonaparte on the throne” (1). Moreover, *La constitución de Cádiz* utilized phrases such as ‘the Spanish nation’, ‘sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation,’ and ‘the religion of the Spanish Nation is and shall forever be the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman, the only true one’ (3). They argued that the constitution encouraged common aspirations and successfully awakened the spirit of their nation.

Other Spaniards claimed that Spain was not even a nation, but rather a conglomeration of various distinct regions, each with its own history, language, and culture. In other words, ‘Spain’ was composed of different identities: Basques, Navarrese, Aragonese, Castilians, Catalans, and Valencians. Advocates of this interpretation believed that “in Spain, there was no national monarchy, and peripheral provinces were judicially distinct nations” (Kamen 14). Those associated with the regional nationalisms of Catalonia and the Basque Country were particularly discontented with the Bourbon monarchy and its “Castilian-centric ideology” (Fox, 1999: 24). Thus, this regionalist view of Spain only complicated the idea of constructing a common national identity.

Members of *La Generación de 1898* responded to the challenge of constructing a national identity and, consequently, served as nation-builders seeking to define and explain what they believed it truly meant to be a Spaniard. As noted by E. Inman Fox, “nations are the artifacts of a people’s convictions and loyalties and solidarities... Boundaries of nations are not dictated by language, geography, race, religion, or anything else. Nations are made by human will; a nation is a ‘moral consciousness’” (Fox, 1999: 24). Therefore, in an effort to reawaken or rediscover Spain’s moral consciousness, Unamuno, Azorín, and Machado sought to understand Spanish identity better by analyzing the crises in a more philosophic and abstract context. They attempted to diagnose their country’s ills, distinguish the inherent and collective characteristics of Spaniards, and offer solutions to the existential problem of Spanish identity.

Chapter Two explores Unamuno’s perspective on Spain’s national crises and identity by examining his essays “La tradición eterna” and “La casta histórica Castilla” from *En torno al casticismo* (1895) and by analyzing his panegyric poems “Castilla” and “Salamanca,” both of which exalt the Castilian landscape. The concepts of *intrahistoria* and *lo castizo*, principal terms associated with the philosophy of Unamuno, appear frequently in these works and play an integral role in defining what he believed it meant to be Spanish. Chapter Three shifts attention to Azorín and his observations on Spanish national identity. Stressing the ongoing tension between *lo europeo* and *lo español*, Azorín turned considerable attention to the debate between European modernization and Spanish traditionalism. His essays “Los ferrocarriles,” “Los toros,” and “El mar” from *Castilla* (1912) diverge from Unamuno’s views since he essentially encourages the modernization of Spain and recognizes Europe’s significance to the

identity of his country. Chapter Four studies selected poems of Antonio Machado from his *Campos de Castilla* (1912). “A orillas del Duero” (XCVIII), “El mañana efímero” (CXXXV), and “Una España joven” (CXLIV) all address either implicitly or overtly Machado’s search for a national identity amidst Spain’s collective psychological crisis. Machado uses the Castilian countryside not only as a backdrop to his poetry but also as a way to discover identity through landscape. Machado’s views, in a sense, offer a midpoint between Unamuno’s *intrahistoria* and Azorín’s more European outlook.

A general criticism of *La Generación del 1898* concerns the opinion that their aims were purely philosophical and intellectual – thus having no practical implications for the country. However, a careful examination of these respective works by Unamuno, Azorín, and Machado indeed reveal how each author strove to rediscover and resolve the issue of Spanish national identity. As defined previously, a nation is a collective identity engendered by a united moral consciousness. Thus acting as nation-builders to a nation suffering from decadence, confusion, and humiliation, these *noventaochistas* not only offered diverse interpretations of Spanish identity during the crises at the end of the nineteenth century but also sought to awaken the moral consciousness for which Spaniards were searching.

CHAPTER TWO

Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*: Castile as the Foundational Bedrock of Spanish National Identity

The eldest and probably the best-known of *La Generación de 1898*, Miguel de Unamuno was also the first to address the issue of Spain's ongoing decadence as a political power and its evolving cultural identity. Even before *el gran desastre*, which referred to the country's defeat in the Spanish-American War and subsequent loss of its remaining colonies in 1898, Unamuno foresaw the troubling position in which Spain would find herself at end of the nineteenth century. The essays, "La tradición eterna" and "La casta histórica Castilla," from *En torno al casticismo* (1895) and the poems, "Castilla" and "Salamanca," provide a representative understanding of Unamuno's own views of Spanish identity – defining the true essence of the Spaniard, identifying the country's collective problems, and suggesting their possible remedies.

Unamuno, in many respects, was a man typical of his era. Born in 1864, Miguel de Unamuno y Jugo lived in his native city of Bilbao until the age of sixteen when he left for the University of Madrid in 1880. Unamuno demonstrated considerable talent as a young scholar and graduated from the university in three years; he earned his doctorate of philosophy in linguistics the next year at the age of twenty. Unamuno's formative years were deeply religious; however during the four years he spent in the capital, he suffered a kind of religious and intellectual crisis. Unamuno constantly sought to understand the relationship between faith and reason and struggled with two great enigmas: the immortality of the soul and the maintenance of faith in a Spain that had lost faith in itself

(Patt and Nozick 18). His philosophy ranged from “acute anguish to the temporary reacquisition of religious confidence” and he became particularly interested in self-exploration, self-confession, and self-identity (Shaw 171). In 1891, Unamuno became the chair of Greek at the University of Salamanca and married Concepcion Lizárraga, with whom he later had nine children.

Appointed as rector of the University of Salamanca in 1901, he later lost this esteemed post due to his strong anti-German sentiments, his criticism of Alfonso XIII, and his fight for agrarian reform. In fact, Unamuno was later exiled to the island of Fuerteventura for his political criticisms of the General Miguel Primo de Rivera dictatorship in 1924. With the end of Primo de Rivera’s *dictablanda* in 1930 and the formation of the First Republic in 1931, Unamuno returned to Spain and reassumed his role as rector of the University of Salamanca. However, as one biographer commented, “Unamuno came to regard the new government with a violent distrust as he had felt toward the monarchy” (Patt and Nozick 17). Initially supporting the Falange movement of Francisco Franco, he would later denounce the Nationalists during a public ceremony – thus causing him to lose his post at the university and later to be put under house arrest. Unamuno died shortly thereafter in December 1936.

Published in 1895, during the aftermath of the last *Guerra Carlista* and before Spain’s loss in the Spanish-American War, *En torno al casticismo* is a compilation of five philosophical essays that reflect not only a search for Spain’s essence through the rediscovery of its universal traditions but also an attempt at national regeneration. Though the work was published before the actual formation of *La Generación de 1898*, Unamuno was already concerned with the country’s decadent trajectory and, in fact,

anticipated the crisis to come in the following years. Herbert Ramsden provides an accurate synopsis of Unamuno's collection of essays:

[Unamuno] is concerned basically with what has come to be called 'the problem of Spain.' Formerly Spain was great; now it is in decline. Why did it fall into decline, how does that decline reveal itself, and by what means can the nation be regenerated? These are the basic questions. Past, present and future. [He] is happily free from any nostalgic emphasis on the manifest greatness of Spain's past. But [he] is concerned primarily to probe the less joyful aspects of the country's past and present and, in the light of [his] findings, to offer guidance to a better future. (Ramsden 12)

Thus, Unamuno does not intend to undertake a historical study of Spain which highlights past glories or achievements; on the contrary, he sets out to examine and discover the national conscience of his country: "Volviendo a sí, haciendo examen de conciencia, estudiándose y buscando en su historia la raíz de los males que sufren, se purifican de sí mismos, se anegan en la humanidad eterna" (Unamuno, 1968: 35). In doing so, he examines problems of the past with the hopes of regenerating and improving his country's future.

Throughout *En torno al casticismo*, Unamuno uses two key terms – *lo castizo/el casticismo* and *la intrahistoria* – on which he builds much of his discussion of national identity. As the title of the collection clearly indicates, these terms serve as indispensable elements in Unamuno's definition of Spanish national identity and are developed at length in the two essays to be analyzed, that typify all the essays of the collection.

The first essay in the compilation, "La tradición eterna," discusses the idea of tradition and provides a distinction between the national and the universal interpretation of the term. The essay also begins with definitions of key terms in Unamuno's philosophy. For example, he defines *lo castizo/el casticismo* in the following way: "Tomo aquí los términos *castizo* y *casticismo* en la mayor amplitud de su sentido

corriente. *Castizo* deriva de *casta* del adjetivo *casto*, puro. Se aplica de ordinario el vocablo *casta* a las razas o variedades puras... De este modo, *castizo* viene a ser puro y sin mezcla de elemento extraño” (Unamuno, 1968: 13). Therefore, according to Unamuno, *lo castizo/el casticismo* refers to the embodiment of all the pure and unblemished features that make up the Castilian people.

The essay then turns attention to *la intrahistoria*, which Unamuno identifies as: “el sedimento de las verdades eternas de la eterna esencia... Esta es la manera de concebirla en vivo, como la sustancia de la historia, como su sedimento, como la revelación de lo intrahistórico, de lo inconsciente en la historia” (Unamuno, 1968: 14). Thus in effect, *la intrahistoria* is the collective sum of traditions and customs, inherently linked to the Spanish essence for which Unamuno was searching. As observed by one critic, “*Intrahistoria* for Unamuno is then almost a material body of tradition, the sediment of human customs that persist unconsciously throughout history as a pseudo-biological organism” (Izurieta 94). In evaluating these key terms, one should not focus on the differences between the two but rather recognize their similarity in function. Although *casticismo* focuses on the traits and features of the Castilian and *intrahistoria* emphasizes shared, historical customs and traditions, both serve to discover what exactly constitutes the essence of Spain.

The region of Castile plays an integral part of Unamuno’s conception of *el casticismo*. Another essay in *En torno al casticismo*, “La casta histórica Castilla,” provides evidence of Unamuno’s emphasis on Castile in conceptualizing Spanish national identity. He begins the essay by providing descriptive accounts of the geography of this particular region of the Iberian Peninsula. The narrative voice throughout the essay does

more than identify the various features of Castile; it praises the *sierras, mesetas, llanuras, arroyos, orillas, and ríos* found within this region. In fact, Unamuno even recommends that his readers join him on this philosophical journey to the heart of Spain: “penetrad en uno de esos lugares donde la vida parece discurrir calmada y lenta en la monotonía de las horas... y allí dentro hay almas vivas, con fondo transitorio y fondo eterno y una intrahistoria castellana” (Unamuno, 1968: 56-57). Essentially though, Unamuno believed that the Castilian region served as the foundation of Spain’s true spirit.

In addition to his admiration of the Castilian landscape, Unamuno also places significant importance on the people connected to and living on the lands of Castile. The narrative voice, in keeping with its panegyric tone, admires the pastoral life of these inhabitants. Unamuno gives specific character descriptions of the Castilian people:

Allí dentro vive una casta de complexión seca, dura y sarmentosa, tostada por el sol y curtida por el frío, una casta de hombres sobrios, producto de una larga selección por las heladas de crudísimos inviernos y una serie de penurias periódicas, hechos a la inclemencia del cielo y de la pobreza de la vida... La socarronería es el castizo humorismo castellano, un humorismo grave y reposado, sentencioso y flemático; el humorismo del bachiller Sansón Carrasco que se bate caballerosamente con Don Quijote con toda la solemnidad que requiere el caso, y que acaba tornando en serio el juego. Es el *humorismo* grave de Quevedo, el que hizo los discursos de Marco Bruto. (Unamuno, 1968: 56-57)

Castilians, according to Unamuno, are a robust people having withstood ‘long, crude winters’ and ‘intermittent periods of scarcity.’ Thus, in a sense, Unamuno esteems the resilient nature of the Castilian people and indicates their ability to endure even in times of crises. And by alluding to Don Quijote and Sansón Carrasco from Miguel de Cervantes’ *El ingenioso hidalgo don Quijote de la Mancha* and Marco Bruto from Francisco Quevedo’s *La vida de Marco Bruto*, Unamuno identifies these literary characters as model representatives of *casticismo*. In his attempt at national regeneration,

which is a recurring theme throughout the essays, Unamuno portrays the Castilian people and region as the undeniable essence of Spain.

The *noventaochistas*, as noted in Chapter 1, engaged in an ongoing debate between traditionalism and Europeanization as a model for Spain's future. Indicating the true complexity of this issue, historians offer a variety of interpretations of Unamuno's respective view. On one hand, Donald Shaw emphasizes Unamuno's early writings which develop the idea of the ideal, traditional Castilian spirit; and in addition, he claims that Unamuno downplayed the role of Europeanization in Spain while exalting the role of Castile in Spanish national identity. "In his interpretation, the unification of Spain under the Catholic Kings, the prelude to the nation's greatness, was the work of Castile," avers Shaw. "[Unamuno] proved that the true national spirit was that of Castile, operating as a recognizable historical force" (44). As seen in the insistence on the Castilian region and people as the essence of Spain, critics such as Shaw are convinced of Unamuno's anti-Europeanization sentiments.

Returning to his first essay, "La tradición eterna," Unamuno discusses the expansion of Europeanization and modernization occurring during the second half of the nineteenth century and also warns of its possible dangers for Spain: "Elévanse a diario en España amargas quejas porque la cultura extraña nos invade y arrastra o ahoga lo castizo, y va zapando poco a poco, según dicen los quejosos, nuestra personalidad nacional. El río, jamás extinto, de la invasión europea en nuestra patria, aumenta de día en día su caudal y su curso, y al presente está de crecida" (Unamuno, 1968: 15). Basically, Unamuno expresses a fear that too much contact or influence from European neighbors would be detrimental to his country's future and, as a consequence, would threaten the

very essence of Spain. Thus, Shaw interpreted Unamuno's sense of *lo castizo* not only as a resistance to the forces of Europeanization but also as a necessary and definitive feature of Spanish identity to be protected at all costs.

However, other critics read Unamuno's works as more favorable to and accepting of European models – which is apparent in his later writings. In direct contrast to Donald Shaw's interpretation, Herbert Ramsden perceives Unamuno as not only advocating for a traditionalist approach in Spain but also encouraging the Europeanization of the country. “One is tempted to believe that the landscape-formed Castilian character reveals certain persistent, distinctive characteristics [of Spain],” affirms Herbert Ramsden, “but this is not Unamuno's view” (30). Ramsden better justifies his claim by citing a passage from “Sobre el marasmo actual de España,” another essay from *En torno al casticismo*:

Sólo abriendo las ventanas a vientos europeos, empapándonos en el ambiente continental, teniendo fe en que no perderemos nuestra personalidad al hacerlo, europeizándonos para hacer España y chapuzándonos en pueblos, regeneraremos esta estepa moral. Con el aire de fuera, regenero mi sangre. (Unamuno, 1968: 58-59)

Ramsden argued that Unamuno recognized a duality, not exclusivity, of national character in Spain. On one hand, there was *lo castizo* representing the distinctive aspects of Castilian character while, equally significant, on the other hand was *la tradición eterna* which embodied the necessary attachment between Spaniards and common humanity (Ramsden 31). In other words, according to Ramsden's interpretation, Europe represented “freedom, energy, personality, youth, [and] sympathy”; thus, interaction with the other European countries would ultimately “help Spain to discover its own potential vitality” (34). Though Unamuno's actual opinion in the debate between isolationism and Europeanization remains ambiguous, what does become evident is that Unamuno

perceived and recognized Castilian attributes, represented by *lo castizo/el casticismo*, as indispensable to the preservation of Spanish identity during its time of crisis.

Another theme developed by *La Generación de 1898* was the reexamination and the reinterpretation of Spanish history. These writers, including Unamuno, seemed to downplay the past, national achievements of Spain and, as a result, shifted their focus to the common man living in “el pueblo que nos sustenta a todos” (Ramsden 118). In reaction to the crisis, and perhaps in an attempt at nation-building, Unamuno encouraged the search for Spain’s *intrahistoria*. As accurately observed by Ramsden, Unamuno believed there to be “too much emphasis on the great figures and great events of history and not enough on the lives of the common people” (119). This reconsideration of Spanish historiography is developed at length in Unamuno’s *En torno al casticismo*.

Unamuno establishes an antithesis between *la intrahistoria* and *la condenada historia* in the essays. He actively critiqued and criticized what he called *la condenada historia*, or accursed history, which was Spain’s traditional way of interpreting history at the time (Nozick 77). Discussed thoroughly in “La tradición eterna,” Unamuno disparaged this particular way of understanding history since it emphasized past glories irrelevant to Spain’s situation and, secondly, it created a false sense of national pride. Unamuno basically attacked the way in which *la condenada historia* seemed to distort the actual, immediate crisis occurring in Spain in the years after the three Carlist Wars. On the contrary, Unamuno argued, Spaniards must acknowledge the predicament of their country and ultimately find true national strength in “the vital energies of the masses and ‘el pueblo’ (78). This recognition of the crucial role of the Spanish countryside and its residents as a distinguishing quality of Spain’s identity was an integral theme promoted

by many in *La Generación de 1898*, as affirmed by Ramsden: “A fundamental characteristic of Spanish writing around 1900 [was] the turning away from big-drum history with its ‘*glorias castizas*’ and ‘*venerandas tradiciones*’... in order to find the allegedly real Spain in the everyday lives of ordinary people” (Ramsden 123). The *noventaochistas* avoided this ‘big-drum history’ since it led to the fragmentation of Spain’s history – that is, only emphasizing her bygone glories and ignoring other components of her history.

Unamuno did not stress the *condenada historia* of Spain but rather her *intrahistoria*. As defined in “La tradición eterna,” *la intrahistoria* focuses on the collective sum of traditions and customs inherently linked to the essence of the country: “En este mundo de los silenciosos, en este fondo del mar, debajo de la historia, es donde vive la verdadera tradición, la eterna en el presente, no en el pasado, muerto para siempre y enterrado en cosas muertas” (Unamuno, 1968: 29). In other words, one searches for Spain’s *intrahistoria* and true essence not in the historical past but in the various traditions of the country still extant in its peoples.

Other critics offered other explanations of Unamuno’s position. Ibon Izurieta provides an accurate analogy demonstrating how Unamuno perceived the idea of ‘tradition.’

Current literary theory would qualify that the concept of tradition actually changes according to each different historical moment. For instance, the meaning of a summer break from school began as a need to accommodate harvesting and the necessity for children to help their parents. Nowadays, it has completely changed to ‘vacation.’ Summer break is a tradition that we identify as the same event throughout history even though its functions and meanings have changed throughout time. (Izurieta 94)

Unamuno recognized that the traditions of Spain were constantly changing and shifting with the passage of time; however, he also knew their original meaning still existed. This substrata is what constituted *la intrahistoria* and, for Unamuno, the spirit of Spain. For example, using Izurieta's convenient example of summer break, Unamuno would investigate the original functions of traditions and would claim that they represented an essential piece of the respective society's identity.

Though most recognized for his essays, novels, *novelas*, and plays, Unamuno considered himself first and foremost a poet. But he did not begin to publish his poetry until the age of forty-three. Many acclaim *El Cristo de Velázquez* (1920) as his greatest work of poetry, which uses the Diego Velázquez painting of *Cristo crucificado* (1632) as a point of departure for investigating the figure of Christ from different perspectives. His first compilation of poetry, *Poesías* (1907) contains two representative poems "Castilla" and "Salamanca" relevant to Unamuno's discussion and construction of Spanish national identity.

"Castilla" consists of five quartets with consonant rhyme and is structured as an apostrophe directed towards the Castilian countryside. By definition, an apostrophe is a rhetorical figure of speech in which the poetic voice directly addresses an abstract idea or concept. And generally, as is the case in "Castilla," an apostrophe shows praise and admiration to the intended recipient. Utilizing a similar panegyric tone displayed in his essays in *En torno al casticismo*, Unamuno once again uses the Castilian region as the setting of his literary work. However, in analyzing the poem, one can see that the lyrical voice does more than pay tribute to *Castilla*; more importantly, it perceives the land as a source of national renewal, regeneration, and inspiration.

As previously discussed in the analysis of *En torno al casticismo*, the Castilian region, people, and traditions play integral parts in Unamuno's conception of Spanish national identity. The first two stanzas represent the interplay of these indispensable elements to Spain's essence:

Tú me levantas, tierra de Castilla,
en la rugosa palma de tu mano,
al cielo que te enciende y te refresca,
al cielo, tu amo,
Tierra nervuda, enjuta, despejada,
madre de corazones y de brazos,
toma el presente en ti viejos colores
del noble antaño. (Unamuno, 1966: 176)

The lyrical voice, according to one critic, expresses its deep reverence for the region by picturing Castile as “a land that raises and invigorates the human spirit, exposing it to a sense of tradition and eternity” (Young 8). The description of “*madre de corazones y de brazos*” as the mother of the inhabitants of the region, in a sense, also creates an image of Castile as the motherland of all Spain. And furthermore, the reference to “*viejos colores del noble antaño*” infers Castile's antiquity and traditions upheld throughout Spanish history. Thus with a careful reading of “Castilla,” one can see Unamuno's attempt not only to praise the Castilian landscape but also to incorporate elements of *el casticismo* and *la intrahistoria* into his poetry as well as his essays. By doing so, readers become inspired to recognize Castile as the indisputable foundation of Spanish national identity.

“Salamanca” represents another notable poem in Unamuno's *Poesías* (1907) and is relevant to the *noventaochista*'s search for Spain's essence. Consisting of thirty stanzas of consonant rhyme, on a literal level, the poem offers Unamuno's impressions of the countryside around Salamanca, a rustic city within the province of Castile. For example, the lyrical voice provides ample details of the shifting skies, the stony forests,

the Tormes river, the ageless stones, the dusky foliage of oak trees, and the sun.

However by examining the poem from a metaphorical perspective, the reader quickly discovers again that Unamuno finds the essence of Spain in the Castilian region.

A prevalent motif throughout the poem is the images of the stones found in and around the city of Salamanca. However, these stones of Salamanca are more than ordinary building material and offer another look into the perception of Spanish identity.

The second and third stanzas of the poem reveal this particular use of stone imagery:

Bosque de piedras que arrancó la historia
a las entrañas de la tierra madre,
remanso de quietud, yo te bendigo,
¡mi Salamanca!
Miras a un lado, allende el Tormes lento,
de las encinas el follaje pardo
cual el follaje de tu piedra, inmoble,
denso y perenne. (Unamuno, 1966: 179)

This emphasis in the imagery of “las piedras” not only symbolizes the stones that makeup the foundation of the famed university and cathedral in Salamanca but also serve as representations of Castile as the symbolic foundation of Spain. Moreover, the reference to “la tierra madre” closely relates to the previous analyzed poem, “Castilla,” in which the region was symbolically portrayed as the motherland of Spain. As carefully observed by one critic, “the metaphors of stone jut forth from the golden haze surrounding the university town... Unamuno hoped his own verse would fasten itself in the rocky recess of eternity. The symbol of endurance and resistance is clear enough” (Young 12). With the use of such imagery, it can be argued that Unamuno viewed Castile as the enduring bedrock and foundation of Spain’s national identity.

Miguel de Unamuno, typical of other members of *La Generación de 1898*, persistently searched for the true spirit of Spain. By examining his essays and poems,

one develops a better understanding of his views on Spanish national identity. As observed in *En torno al casticismo* (1895), Unamuno constructed concepts such as *lo castizo/el casticismo* and *intrahistoria* in order to focus on the unique traits, features, customs, and traditions that made up the Castilian (and therefore, Spanish) identity. And through his poems “Castilla” and “Salamanca,” Unamuno created panegyric landscapes of Castile that not only described the physical features of the region but also symbolized its indispensability to Spain as her true foundational bedrock and source of her history and *intrahistoria*. Spain’s national identity, for Unamuno, is inherently linked to the lands, people, and traditions of *Castilla*.

CHAPTER THREE

Azorín's Castilla: An Argument for the Europeanization of Spain

Though not attaining the same fame or recognition as that enjoyed by Miguel de Unamuno in Spain, José Martínez Ruiz was another *noventaochista* concerned with Spain's decadent disposition at the turn of the twentieth century. Martínez Ruiz, better known as Azorín, coined the name *La Generación de 1898* and shared the group's impulse not only to search for the meaning of Spanish identity but also to reawaken the moral consciousness for which his countrymen were searching during a time of national crisis. The essays "Los ferrocarriles," "Los toros," and "El mar" from *Castilla* (1912) offer a representative look into Azorín's own understanding of national identity that both corresponds with and diverges from many of Unamuno's views discussed in the previous chapter, in that Azorín held a much more European focus than his fellow author. Azorín essentially crafts his concept of a national identity by criticizing Spain's reluctance to modernize and advocating the need for Europeanization.

In regards to his early life, José Augusto Trinidad Martínez Ruiz was born in June of 1873 in the town of Monóvar, Alicante. The first of nine children of Isidro Martínez and María Luisa Ruiz, he enjoyed a comfortable, middle-class childhood due to his father's position as the town mayor. The young Martínez Ruiz possessed an estranged relationship with his father and preferred the company of his mother who would prove to be a significant influence in her son's writing style. As noted by one biographer, "María Luisa Ruiz's desire that everything be neat and in its proper place affected his prose style... this attention to detail and to the commonplace is also found in her son's writing"

(Glenn 15). Martínez Ruiz attended a boarding school run by the Piarist teaching order for eight years which he later described in an autobiographical piece as the best of his life. In the fall of 1888, he enrolled in the University of Valencia to study law but did not show any interest in or enthusiasm for his legal studies; instead of studying, he occupied himself by attending theatrical plays, watching bullfights, browsing bookstores, and visiting the neighboring countryside (16). Martínez Ruiz would abandon his law studies in 1896. Deciding to begin a journalistic career, Martínez Ruiz journeyed to Madrid determined to find success as a writer and would soon assume the penname ‘Azorín’ for his literary works.

During this particular time in his life, Azorín was attracted to the idea of the “anarchist dream of an ideal society in which all forms of coercive control and authority would be abolished, enabling men to coexist in fraternal love and freedom” (Glenn 16). His early articles attacked various institutions such as the church, the state, and even the journalism industry because of the social ills and stagnancy they allegedly promoted in Spain. This subversive, anti-establishment attitude brought him a number of financial problems and publication rejections from major journals throughout his early years in the capital city (Servodidio 56).

He did, however, find a group of writers that shared similar views, and they gathered in *tertulias* to discuss their dreams and aspirations of an improved, renewed Spain. This group, which was comprised of poets, philosophers, and writers such as Pio Baroja, Ramiro de Maeztu, Miguel de Unamuno, Ramón María del Valle-Inclán, Jacinto Benavente, and Antonio Machado, would come to be known as *La Generación de 1898*. The name was first coined by Azorín in an article he wrote in 1910, entitled “Dos

generaciones,” that outlined a set of common characteristics shared by the members (Wohl 125). These traits included the profound love of art, the spirit of protest against existing formulae, the spirit of independence, and the dream of an ideal Spain (Fox, 1960: 140). *Noventaochistas*, according to Azorín, concerned themselves with these central themes that directly responded to the ongoing political, economic, and social crises in Spain during the early twentieth century.

At the height of his literary career, Azorín had contributed to nearly thirty magazines and newspapers and had also written five books: *La voluntad* (1902), *Antonio Azorín* (1903), *Las confesiones de un pequeño filósofo* (1904), *Los pueblos* (1904), and *La ruta de don Quijote* (1905). In 1907, Azorín decided to participate in politics and, abandoning his anarchist philosophy, served five terms as a conservative congressman under the leadership of Antonio Maura. One biographer commented, “[Azorín’s] decision to serve Parliament under the conservative banner scandalized many of his colleagues. His political about-face apparently was the result of having relinquished his early dreams of sweeping changes and his having decided that a policy of gradual modifications and small reforms imposed from above was more practical” (Glenn 19). This shift from idealistic rebel to pragmatic politician, nevertheless, did not stop Azorín from criticizing Spain. He would later marry Julia Guinda Urzanqui, who served as inspiration for many of Azorín’s works, and both moved to Paris after the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War. Azorín returned to Madrid in August of 1939 and published six novels within the next thirteen years. Although announcing that he would retire from his literary career in 1952, Azorín continued to write until his death in 1967 – making him one of the longest living members of *La Generación de 1898*.

Published in 1912, *Castilla* is a collection of fourteen essays linked together by various themes. One critic accurately conceptualizes the compilation with the following:

[*Castilla*] presenta muchos rasgos comunes. Veamos aquí rápida y esquemáticamente, en qué puede consistir, aparte de Castilla como escenario, esa comunidad. Primero, una preocupación por lo español, por España en su historia; segundo, cierto tono de melancolía o tristeza; y, tercero, un fondo temporal que acaso abarca lo anterior. (Coventry 73)

Throughout the essays exists an ongoing interplay between the passage of time and the region of Castile. Azorín demonstrates this idea through his characters that are riding a train or carriage and peering through windows to look out onto the Castilian countryside. This strategy “focuses on the movement that can be perceived through them” and then uses these mundane events “to resonate with the broader concerns of more specific manifestations [of] *La Generación de 1898*” (Erickson 17). In other words, what Azorín’s characters see through the windows oftentimes serves as more than just a descriptive and detailed account of the landscape; on the other hand, they are also a point of departure for contemplative discussion about the Spaniard’s reluctance to change, the growing influence of European modernization, or the dire situation of Spain. Though various topics such as these are advanced in the fourteen essays, they are all directed to finding the true essence of Spain. Analyzing “Los ferrocarriles,” “Los toros,” and “El mar” in *Castilla* provides representative insights into Azorín’s understanding of, criticism towards, and solution to forming Spanish national identity.

“Los ferrocarriles,” the first essay in *Castilla*, revolves around a discussion over the growing number of railroads throughout Europe. As previously discussed, the *noventaochistas* were seriously concerned about the trajectory of the Spanish nation and one of their particular concerns was the debate between Europeanization and

traditionalism (Ramsden 33). Though Unamuno's respective opinion in this debate remains ambiguous and vague, Azorín offers a clear position in favor of the complete modernization of his country – a major theme established in “Los ferrocarriles.”

For Azorín, the creation of a railway system symbolized a necessary step towards not only modernizing Spain but also joining the ranks of other advanced European countries. Railroads, which expedited travel, communication, and trade, were a sign of progress and a desirable goal for Spain, in the author's opinion. While the rest of Europe enjoyed the railway system throughout the nineteenth century, Spain was the last European country to employ such a mode of transportation. The first railways in Spain, built by a British company in 1848, were not for public transit but rather for Isabel II and her entourage to facilitate ease of travel to the royal summer palaces. “Los ferrocarriles” advertises the need for a public railway system by using the country of Belgium to exemplify an ideal European city that should be imitated and praised for its highly-developed, advanced stage as a nation:

Toda Bélgica es una gran ciudad. Todo el mundo viaja con una facilidad extraordinaria. Frecuentemente se ve a una linda joven, elegantemente vestida, penetrar en un coche del tren. Aun estando el carruaje lleno de hombres, no hay miedo de que nadie se desmande ni haga ni diga nada que pueda ofender o ruborizar a la viajera... El ruido de la máquina junto con el estrépito de los coches, resuena horridamente bajo la bóveda; sólo acá y allá una lucecita rompe la densa oscuridad... inmensas estaciones de las grandes urbes, con su ir y venir incesante – vaivén entero de la vida – de multitudes de trenes; los silbatos agudos de las locomotoras que repercuten bajo las vastas bóvedas de cristales; el barbotar clamoroso del vapor en las calderas. (Azorín, 1980: 22-23)

Though somewhat exaggerative and verbose, Azorín's description of the Belgian railway system reveals that his orientation is truly towards Europe and encourages the process of modernization as a solution to Spain's problems (Servodidio 57). For example, the

narrator admires Belgium as a “*gran ciudad*” where everyone seems to be able to travel with extraordinary ease and efficiency. And even the various noises (“*el ruido de la máquina junto con el estrépito de los coches*”) of the train traveling throughout the countryside, stopping at various bustling stations, are portrayed as a poetic and inspiring experience. Scenes such as these, which utilize positive imagery and adjectives describing the railways, epitomize Azorín’s favorable view toward Europeanization.

Azorín, however, did anticipate the other side of the argument and recognized that there were many who favored a more isolationist policy in Spain: “No todos los españoles – dice Lafuente –, por lo que en muchas conversaciones he oído y observado, tienen una idea exacta de la forma material de los caminos de hierro” (Azorín, 1980: 20). His comment points not only to Spaniards’ fear of losing Spain’s identity but also simply to their ignorance; for instance, Azorín’s use of the old-fashioned term “*caminos de hierro*” rather than the term *ferrocarriles* reveals clever criticism through diction by characterizing those against Europeanization as being too close-minded. During this time, many Spaniards feared that too much contact with or influence from European neighbors would prove detrimental to Spain’s posterity and, therefore, would threaten the very essence of Spain. Azorín countered that embracing modernization would have not just practical economic advantages but universal ones as well: “Los ferrocarriles propagadores de la paz universal... dice hoy el proletariado internacional, podemos hacer que cesen de marchar los trenes, la paz del mundo será un hecho. Los ferrocarriles serán la paz” (25-26). Thus the creation of railway systems in Spain, which symbolized joining the ranks of modernized countries in Europe, would bring about peace and progress throughout the continent. Azorín believed that by opening Spain’s doors to

modernization, the conflict and violence that frequently occurred between European countries would cease and a kind of universal peace would reign. The final paragraphs of the essay provide a utilitarian and humanitarian aspect to Azorín's argument for Europeanizing Spain; in other words, constructing railroads in Spain would not only benefit Spaniards but also ensure global political stability. By concluding in this particular way, Azorín exhibits a clear preference for a modernized Spain and expresses his idealistic outlook on the advantages of such an action.

"Los toros" is another essay providing additional insight into Azorín's preoccupation with the national crisis. Similar to his colleagues in *La Generación de 1898*, Azorín focused many of his writings on the region of Castile. However unlike Unamuno, Azorín described the attitudes and customs of the Castilian people, not as an example for admiration, but rather as cause for criticism. "Los toros" displays this negative attitude toward the region and is, at best, skeptical to the claim that Castile epitomizes Spain.

The essay begins with a detailed description of a Castilian *pueblo* that could be found in either "Vaciamadrid, Jadraque, Getafe, Pinto, or Corcóles" where bullfights are a common and celebrated activity in the town's *Plaza Mayor* (Azorín, 1980: 43-44). The narrator then provides a realistic account of a bullfight and details the trumpets sounding, the loud, cheering crowd, the blood-stained arena, and the eventual slaying of both a child and the bull. At this point, the trumpets sound once more and the narrator comments how the entire process will repeat again. The conclusion of the essay reveals the narrator's true attitude toward the event which seems to satirize, rather than empathize with, the violent, savage display of events: "Lo que no nos ha dicho son las

reyertas, los encuentros sangrientos entre los mozos; las largas, clamorosas borracheras, de vinazo espeso, morado; el sedimento inextinguible que en este poblado de Castilla dejarán estas horas de brutalidad humana” (Azorín, 1980: 45-46). The violence, debauchery, and bloodshed associated with bullfights leave the reader to question the morality behind one of Spain’s most recognizable and historical customs.

By examining the essay on a metaphorical level, it becomes apparent that Azorín is concerned about and preoccupied with the ongoing deterioration of Spain as a nation (Glenn 77). Azorín uses the backdrop of the bullfight as a point of departure to criticize the backwardness and aloofness of the Spanish character. In direct contrast to Unamuno’s reflections in *En torno al casticismo*, this essay by Azorín focuses on less favorable characteristics found in the Castilian, or Spanish, way of life. The *pueblo* is portrayed as a blood-thirsty and savage people who enjoy the violence that occurs in the bullfight. One critic argues, “the cruelty displayed in the ring and in the stands is for Azorín an indication of the barbarism of his country... and that [any foreigner] who attended a *corrida* would have been unable to comprehend the public’s wild enthusiasm” (Glenn 77). Though literally attacking the practice of bullfighting as a violent and barbaric practice, Azorín also metaphorically criticizes all the Spanish customs that perpetuate the country’s lack of human progress. The conclusion of “Los toros” not only provides a detailed account of the slow and agonizing death of the bull at the end of a bullfight but also expresses the lyrical voice’s repulsion of the bullfight:

El toro, jadeante, extenuado, chorreando sangre, vuelve al redondel.
Tornan a pincharle de nuevo... ¡Encono bestial!... Dejadme – añade el poeta – dejadme escapar. Ya basta. No quiero más toros; me dan angustia. ¿Cómo podré yo gozar viendo al caballo, leal y sumiso, pisarse sus propias entrañas? “Españoles, compatriotas, adiós; quiero ver mejor moras que no matar toros. (Azorín, 1980: 46-47)

Such a dramatic visualization in the essay's concluding paragraphs entices the reader to believe that Azorín makes a direct connection between the dying bull and the deteriorating disposition of Spain at the end of the nineteenth century. Due to the barbarism and backward customs that impeded the country's future development, according to Azorín, Spaniards were dying a slow, collective death.

"El mar" represents another one of Azorín's essays that provide insight into his concept of Spanish national identity. The narrator begins by referencing *El poema del mío Cid* (1100 AD), the epic poem recounting the exploits of the Spanish national hero El Cid during the *reconquista*, and then gives a panoramic, descriptive account of the Castilian landscape. The descriptions of the land, however, do not possess the same panegyric or admiring attitude displayed by Unamuno in *En torno al casticismo* or in Unamuno's poetry like "Castilla" or "Salamanca." On the contrary, Azorín characterizes the Castilian scenery as a barren, sterile, and landlocked region: "No puede ver el mar la solitaria y melancólica Castilla. Está muy lejos el mar de estas campiñas llanas, rasas, yermas, polvorientas; de estos barrancales pedregosos; de estos terrazgos rojizos, en que los aluviones torrenciales han abierto hondas mellas; las auras marinas no llegan hasta estos poblados pardos" (Azorín, 1980: 65-66). The use of such dismal and discouraging imagery, such as the adjectives "*solitaria*," "*melancólica*," and "*polvorientas*" depict a land deprived of any hope for progress. The fact that "*las auras marinas*," or sea breezes, cannot reach Castile not only refers to its geographical isolation but also references another negative feature of this hopeless land. Castile's landlocked nature serves as the crux of the essay and is apparent by the repetition of the phrase: "[Castilla] no puede ver el mar" (65, 66, 69). As will be later discussed, Azorín believed that Spain

was landlocked not only geographically but also mentally in her refusal to embrace the forces of Europeanization during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Azorín creates a key antithesis in this essay between the sea and the land. Castile, representing the land, is portrayed as an antiquated and archaic territory with idle inhabitants: “No puede ver el mar la vieja Castilla. Castilla, con sus vetustas ciudades, sus catedrales, sus jardines encerrados en los palacios, sus torres con chapiteles de pizarra, sus caminos amarillentos y sinuosos, sus fonditas destartadas, sus hidalgos que no hacen nada... sus clérigos con los balandranes verdosos, sus abogados que todo lo sutilizan, enredan, y confunden” (Azorín, 1980: 66). Similar to “Los toros”, Azorín criticized any backwards custom or mindset he perceived as an impediment to Spain’s posterity – in this essay he targets, just to name a few, the clerics, the lawyers, and the *hidalgos* that seem to contribute nothing to their society; his adjectives like “*vetustos*” and “*destartadas*” underscore the decay within Castile. In direct contrast to the land, Azorín creates favorable and encouraging imagery of the sea: “¿Cómo es el mar? ¿Qué dice el mar? ¿Qué se hace en el mar?... el mar se aleja inmenso, azul, verdoso, pardo hacia la inmensidad... Nada turba el panorama. La suave arena se aleja a un lado y a otro lado hasta tocar en dos brazos de tierra que se internan en el agua” (67). The reader, thus, perceives a more positive attitude indicated by the tranquil and idyllic descriptions associated with the sea. The antithesis is established between the land of Castile, described as an isolated, solitary, and deprived terrain inhabited by backward-thinking simpletons, and the sea, characterized as an immense, bountiful paradise possessing a kind of celestial quality to be respected.

This antithesis between land and sea, on a metaphorical level, can be interpreted as an extension of Spain's debate between traditionalism and modernization. Castile and its residents are essentially landlocked geographically and mentally. The descriptions of the antiquated Castilian cities and their inactive inhabitants represent the symbolic idleness of the country as a whole and dramatize the reluctance to modernize. On the other hand, the sea symbolizes the connection and interaction with the modern world and, as a result, the possibility for progress. As it has been discussed, Azorín advocated the need for foreign stimulation in Spain in order to revitalize its economy and regenerate its national consciousness (Fox, 1960: 143). Azorín references "*el claro Mediterráneo*" and "*el misterioso Atlántico*" to emphasize the need to communicate and share ideas with Spain's maritime neighbors (68). As reiterated throughout the essay, Spain cannot see the sea, or enjoy the benefits of modernization, unless she changes her idle and antiquated attitudes.

Azorín, like many of his contemporaries in *La Generación de 1898*, devoted much of his literary career to understanding and criticizing the disposition of Spain at the turn of the twentieth century. Our analysis of these three representative essays from *Castilla* (1912) reveals and clarifies Azorín's concept of Spanish national identity. In the essay "Los ferrocarriles," Azorín presents the debate between traditionalism and modernization, symbolized by the image of the train, and furthermore advocates for the need for the complete modernization of Spain by contrasting modern European railways with Spain's few "caminos de hierro." "Los toros" shifts attention to the barbarism of the Spanish character, reflected in the traditional bullfight, and questions the morality and relevance of such cultural practices in the present day. Such antiquated customs, as the

author argues, may account for Spain's continued backwardness. And lastly, "El mar" creates an antithesis between land and sea that not only criticizes the idleness of the Spanish people landlocked physically and mentally, but also endorses contact with Spain's maritime neighbors which would bring desirable progress to the country. Unlike Unamuno who uses the region of Castile as his foundation, Azorín bases his idea of Spanish national identity on the necessity of foreign interaction that he believed would usher in a political, economic, and symbolic regeneration of the country. Spain needed to break through its landlocked mentality, epitomized by antiquated traditions such as bullfights, and embrace the benefits of modernization. Only by rejecting such archaic mindsets and opening the doors to its European neighbors, according to Azorín, would Spain be able to solve her collective crisis and rediscover her national identity tied to her identity as a part of modern Europe.

CHAPTER FOUR

Machado's *Campos de Castilla*: Discovering National Identity through Landscape

Living during some of Spain's most tumultuous years, Antonio Machado was another *noventaochista* who lamented the particular trajectory of his country at the end of the nineteenth century and also pursued the difficult task of renewing Spain without losing her traditional values. Critics consider Machado one of the youngest members of *La Generación de 1898* and its most recognizable poet. Through his collection of poetry, *Campos de Castilla*, published in 1912, he offers his own personal insight into Spain's crisis and quest for national regeneration. His poems "A orillas del Duero" (XCVIII), "El mañana efímero" (CXXXV), and "Una España joven" (CXLIV) all address either implicitly or overtly Machado's search for a renewed national identity amidst Spain's collective psychological crisis. Machado uses the Castilian countryside and towns not only as a backdrop to his poetry but also as a way to discover identity through landscape. Machado's views, in a sense, offer a midpoint between Unamuno's conservative concept of *intrahistoria* and Azorin's more European outlook.

Antonio Cipriano José María y Francisco de Santa Ana Machado y Ruiz was born in July of 1875 in Seville and came from a long line of wealthy and talented intellectuals, academics, politicians, and poets. His paternal grandfather, Antonio Machado Núñez, for whom the future *noventaochista* was named, "enjoyed a varied and illustrious career in both the intellectual and political fields [and] after failing to win fortune in the New World, he went to Paris and completed his medical studies" (Cobb 18). Antonio's father earned his law degree at the University of Seville and, although he never practiced his

profession, he became an academic authority on Andalusian flamenco song and poetry after publishing four important collections in the field. Even Machado's brothers, Manuel and José, enjoyed prosperous careers as a poet and a painter, respectively. Due to the family's many successes, members of the Machado family held socially prominent positions and were living in the *Palacios de las Dueñas* in Seville, which belonged to the Dukes of Alba, when Machado was born. The future poet spent most of his early life in the palace and considered these years a time of tranquility and stability for him.

Machado's life, however, would not always be so peaceful. In 1883, Antonio's grandfather was appointed to a chair at the Central University in Madrid, and the family decided to move to the capital city. A cholera epidemic in 1885 forced his family to move several times and close friends of the Machados were frequently arrested for their political beliefs. Given the Machado family's liberal-academic tradition, Antonio and his brother Manuel attended the *Instituto Libre de Enseñanza*, or the Free Teaching Institute, an independent school founded in 1876 by Francisco Giner de los Ríos that dedicated itself to the "free inquiry into all the problems of mankind" (Burns and Ortiz-Carboneres xix). The school was not associated with either the Church or State and it supported the beliefs of *Krausismo*. The biographer Cobb comments on the role the Free Teaching Institute's had in Spain and in Machado's own life:

The philosophy which reigned in the Free Institute was generally called Krausism, after an obscure German philosopher named Krause but developed in Spain by Julián Sanz del Río and others. The group of liberals who became followers of Krausism fought to develop a new educational system in Spain. Although the Free Institute dedicated itself to developing students of high ethical principles, social responsibility, and brotherhood, the school was unyielding in its negative attitude toward the Catholic Church as an institution. Although Antonio was only a boy during the years he studied in the Free Institute, he continued to support and develop the ideas of the school throughout his life. (Cobb 21-22)

The founding of the Free Teaching Institute symbolized Spain's changing intellectual focus at the end of the nineteenth century, as Spaniards became increasingly more secular and anticlerical. Machado would later complete his *bachillerato* at the religious Institutes of San Isidro and of Cardinal Cisneros in Madrid.

A series of familial tragedies occurred shortly after Machado's completion of his studies. Antonio's father could no longer financially support the Machado family; thus, he decided to earn more money by traveling to Puerto Rico as a recorder of property titles. However, shortly after his voyage to the Spanish colony, he became seriously ill and later died in 1893 without ever seeing his family again. And two years later, Antonio's grandfather died, leaving the Machados in dire financial straits. Due to the resulting economic difficulties, Machado took on various jobs as a theater actor, a writer, and a translator for a French publisher. While working alongside his brother as a translator in Paris in 1899, Machado came into contact with several contemporary literary figures such as Paul Fort, Jean Moréas, Paul Verlaine, Rubén Darío, Gómez Carrillo, and Oscar Wilde. These encounters made an impression on the young Machado and served as an impetus to his later decision to dedicate his life to poetry (Burns and Ortiz-Carboneres xix-xx). While in France, Machado began writing poetry and he published his first book of poems entitled *Soledades* in 1903. The work received a favorable reception in Spain. One significant follower of Machado's work was Miguel de Unamuno, the eldest and best-known of *La Generación de 1898*.

The relationship between Machado and Unamuno proved to be significant as the latter encouraged the former to completely transform his poetry:

The influence of Miguel de Unamuno on Antonio Machado is of decisive importance. In the early 1890's Unamuno had gained prominence with a series of essays through a study of Spain's history, language, and customs. In an epoch in which the artists were often retreating from life into art, Unamuno in a serious and usually strident voice was crying out for a deepening of spirit: life as a spiritual battle... In 1904, Unamuno published a long open letter to Machado in the journal *Helios*. In the letter he urges Machado directly to forsake completely the doctrine of "art for art's sake," the undue emphasis on the aesthetic, which the Spanish tend to associate with the French. (Cobb 25)

Following Unamuno's advice, Machado did change his literary trajectory and abandoned his aesthetic, semi-Bohemian style for a simpler, more lyrical style and philosophical tone. In 1907, Antonio was offered a professorship in French in Soria (in Castile) where he later met Leonor Izquierdo, the eldest daughter of the owners of the lodge in which Machado was residing. They were married in 1909: he was 34 and Leonor was 16. This small town in the northeastern region of Castile inspired Machado to write *Campos de Castilla* (1912), a work numerous critics acclaim as one of his best compilations of poetry (Barnstone xxv). Just weeks after *Campos de Castilla* was published, Leonor died of tuberculosis which then forced Machado to move to Baeza to escape his painful memories of Soria. Machado, in a letter to Unamuno, confessed that Leonor's death "shook his faith in life itself, she being 'an angelical creature cut down cruelly by death'" (Cobb 29). Her death had a singular impact on Machado's philosophy and thus, his poetry.

Between 1919 and 1931, Machado taught French at the Institute of Segovia in order to be closer to his brother Manuel. The Machado brothers worked together writing theatrical works, such as *Julianillo Valcárcel* (1926) and *La Lola se va a los puertos* (1929), which enjoyed modest success. During this time Machado also published two books that received further critical acclaim: *De un cancionero apócrifo* (1926) and *Juan*

de Mairena (1926). When General Francisco Franco launched his Nationalist insurrection in July of 1936, signaling the beginning of the Spanish Civil War, Machado was in Madrid. The war would separate him forever from Manuel who was trapped in the Francoist-occupied zone around Burgos. With Franco approaching the capital city, several residents of Madrid, including Antonio and his mother, were encouraged to move first to Valencia, then Barcelona, and finally across the French border to Collioure, when the Republic's troops had to surrender. Machado and his mother would die just three days apart in February of 1929 and both were buried in the cemetery of Collioure.

As previously mentioned, one of Machado's best known poetic works was *Campos de Castilla*, published in 1912. This work not only proved to be an economic success for Machado but also embodied the poet's new style and intent, directly influenced by Unamuno, to contribute to the *noventaochistas'* discussion of Spain's essential character. In a letter to a friend and fellow-poet Juan Ramón Jiménez, Machado provides additional context to his aims for writing *Campos de Castilla*: "I thought that if there was a useful power in me I had no right to destroy it. Now I want to work, humbly, certainly, but effectively, with truth. We have to defend the Spain that is arising, from the dead sea from the inert and crushing Spain that threatens to drown everything... From these wildernesses you have a panoramic view of Spanish barbarism and it is terrifying" (Burns and Ortiz-Carboneres xxii). Thus, in a way, Machado accurately observed the 'Two Spains' emerging from the ongoing national and psychological crisis of identity at the end of the nineteenth century; these two opposing *Españas* would later vie for control during the Spanish Civil War (Kamen 112). Containing fifty-four selections of poetry *Campos de Castilla* can be divided into three different sections. The first delves into the

problem and destiny of Spain and, furthermore, incorporates the theme of Castile throughout the poems. The next group consists of elegies in praise of worthy cultural figures that the lyrical voice venerates. And the final section relates Machado's joyous and painful memories of Leonor in Soria and his undying affection for his wife. Though perhaps addressing different topics or issues, all the poems revolve around the theme of rediscovering and rejuvenating Spanish national identity. "A orillas del Duero" (XCVIII), "El mañana efímero" (CXXXV), and "Una España joven" (CXLIV) offer a representative sample through which to examine Machado's view of Spain's true essence and his treatment of the questions of national identity.

"A orillas del Duero" (XCVIII), dramatized in first-person, narrates a journey or hike that the poetic voice takes beside the river Duero. It is one of the major rivers running through the Iberian Peninsula and serves as the primary motif throughout the poem. The lyrical voice sets off on his journey and begins to ascend a mountain he has seen in the distance. Using his shepherd's staff for assistance, he finally reaches his destination at the peak of the mountain and then describes the panorama before him. The lyrical journeyer then uses physical descriptions of the landscape as a point of departure to express his innermost thoughts and reflections concerning his native land. Belonging to the first category of poems in *Campos de Castilla*, "A orillas del Duero" reveals Machado's intense preoccupation with Spain's national stagnation and collective crises. The carefully selected diction used to describe Castile exhibits the poet's concern for his country's continued degradation. For example, the lyrical voice employs words and phrases emphasizing the decadent state of his homeland: "Oh, tierra triste y noble, / la de los altos llanos y yermos y roquedas," and "Castilla miserable, ayer dominadora, envuelta

en sus andrajos desprecia cuanto ignora” (Machado, 2004: 142-144). Machado’s deliberate use of the words *andrajos* (rags or tatters) and *tierra triste* (miserable land) to describe the great expanse of Castilian lands not only creates a dismal and dreary tone throughout the rest of the poem but also indicates the poet’s criticism of Spain’s lowly position at the turn of the twentieth century. He further laments that his country seems unaware of its fallen condition, expressed in the phrase “desprecia cuanto ignora” (Machado, 2004: 144).

Machado effectively conveys his lament by alluding to Spain’s glorious past accomplishments, from the national hero of El Cid to the conquests of the New World:

La madre en otro tiempo fecunda en capitanes,
madrstra es hoy apenas de humildes ganapanes.
Castilla no es aquella tan generosa un día,
cuando Myo Cid Rodrigo el de Vivar volvía
Ufano de su nueva fortuna, y su opulencia,
a regalar a Alfonso los huertos de Valencia;
o que, tras la aventura que acreditó sus bríos,
pedía la conquista de los inmensos ríos
indianos a la corte, la madre de soldados,
guerreros y adalides que han de tornar, cargados
de plata y oro, a España, en regios galeones
para la presa cuervos, para la lid leones. (Machado, 2004: 144)

In addition to the number of allusions that offer reminiscences of Spain’s former glories as an empire, the lyrical voice also personifies the nation in order to dramatize Spain’s turbulent disposition. Machado creates an antithesis between Castile as “la *madre* en otro tiempo fecunda en capitanes” and “la *madrstra* es hoy apenas de humildes ganapanes.” This wordplay between *mother of captains* and *stepmother of humble ne'er-do-wells* conveys the poet’s criticism of the political leadership at the time and his belief that the Church had too much influence in the trajectory of Spain (Cobb 81). In fact, this opinion may have been influenced by the education Machado received while at the *Instituto Libre*

de Enseñanza – the anticlerical and secular school that upheld the teachings of *Krausismo*.

The river Duero, as discussed earlier, plays a vital role in this poem, serving as a symbol of the Spanish people themselves. Unlike the panegyric passages in Unamuno's *En torno al casticismo*, or in his poems, examined in Chapter Two, Machado creates a feeling of melancholy and depression when describing the river and surrounding countryside:

El Duero cruza el corazón de roble
de Iberia y de Castilla.
¡Oh, tierra triste y noble,
la de los altos llanos y yermos y roquedas
de campos sin arados, regatos ni arboledas;
decrepitas ciudades, caminos sin mesones,
y atónitos palurdos sin danzas ni canciones
que aún van, abandonando el mortecino hogar,
como tus largos ríos, Castilla, hacia la mar! (Machado, 2004: 142-144)

Castile is essentially portrayed as a barren, underdeveloped, and sterile land. In this passage, the lyrical voice describes her many deficiencies; for example, her fields are unplowed (“campos sin arados”), her cities are crumbling (“decrepitas ciudades”), and her roads are without inns (“caminos sin mesons”). In other words, Castile has become an inhospitable land. And in order to dramatize and lament the sad and once-noble status of Spain, Machado uses the outflow of the Duero to express symbolically “the emigration of the best Castilians to the New World, generally considered an important reason for the impoverishment of Spain” (Cobb 81). For Azorín, the sea symbolized the need for increased contact with Spain's modernized European neighbors; however, for Machado, the sea serves as somber reminder of the consequences of too much involvement outside

Spain's borders. The river has taken Spain's best to the sea and beyond because the "motherland" had no means to sustain them – "el mortecino hogar."

Continuing the discussion of Spain's national problems and possible remedies, "El mañana efímero" (CXXXV) offers another example from the first category of poems in *Campos de Castilla*. The first few lines of the poem already indicate the poet's intention to satirize: "La España de charanga y pandereta / cerrado y sacristía, / devota de Frascuelo y de María" (Machado, 2002: 80). According to Machado, his countrymen are blinded by the attractions of the *brass band and flamenco* – in other words, blindly enthused by customs or traditions that Machado considered meaningless. For example, the brass band is commonly associated with the religious processions of the *Semana Santa* that were fervently observed and admired by Spaniards. In addition, Machado references *Frascuelo* and *María* as symbols for the custom of bullfighting and the zealous religiosity throughout Spain. Very similar to Azorin's views, Machado believed that only by rejecting such archaic mindsets and practices engrained in Spanish culture could the nation achieve progress.

Concerned about his nation's trajectory, Machado offered an ominous warning in "El mañana efímero" and foresaw failure in the near future if Spain did not change her antiquated ways. The poet utilizes the lyrical device of repetition in order to present his warning. The phrase, "El vano ayer engendrará un mañana / vacío y ¡por ventura! pasajero," is mentioned at the start and conclusion of the poem; Machado's words emphasize the dire need for change and the empty, transient future that awaited the country if she did not do so. Machado describes one of the anticipated consequences below:

Será un joven lechuzo y tarambana
un sayón con hechuras de bolero,
a la moda de Francia realista,
un poco al uso de París pagano,
y al estilo de España especialista
en el vicio al alcance de la mano. (Machado, 2002: 80)

In other words, the poet predicted a lethargic and indolent future that followed the ways of royalist France. The reference to the “joven lechuzo y tarambana” (lazy, worthless youth) refers specifically to the young Spaniards of the day depicted so carefully by José Cadalso over a century before and satirized by Larra in “Vuelva usted mañana,” and symbolically to the country’s future generations, who would suffer due to the ongoing national lethargy at the turn of the century. And the lyrical voice characterizes France in a pejorative light, using adjectives such as “realista,” “bolero,” and “pagano.” Thus, in contrast to Azorín, Machado avers that embracing the influence of other European countries did not provide an answer to Spain’s collective crisis and, moreover, did not contribute to the poet’s understanding of Spanish national identity.

Machado’s criticism of institutionalized religion appears in “El mañana efímero.”

The poet specifically recognizes the Catholic Church as a culprit not only for Spain’s backwardness but also for her inability to progress:

Esa España inferior que ora y bosteza,
vieja y tahúr, zaragatera y triste;
esa España inferior que ora y embiste,
cuando se digna usar de la cabeza,
aún tendrá luengo parto de varones
amantes de sagradas tradiciones
y de sagradas formas y maneras;
florecerán las barbas apostólicas,
y otras calvas en otras calaveras
brillarán, venerables y católicas. (Machado, 2002: 80)

The repeated use of “España inferior” establishes an inferred antithesis in which Spain’s current decadent disposition is juxtaposed with Spain’s glorified imperial and majestic past. It is also important to note how this inferior Spain prays and yawns (“ora y bosteza”) which perhaps symbolically refers to the national malaise that Machado believed to be plaguing Spain. Spaniards are bored with religious ritual. According to the poet, institutionalized religion was another factor that played a role in Spain’s collective national crisis. Machado’s satiric tone is apparent as he continues to create and associate negative imagery with Spain’s imminent future:

la sombra de un lechuzo tarambana,
de un sayón con hechuras de bolero;
el vacuo ayer dará un mañana huero.
Como la náusea de un borracho ahíto
de vino malo, un rojo sol corona
de heces turbias las cumbres de granito. (Machado, 2002: 82)

Machado employs various similes to dramatize the problematic situation of his country. For example, he compares the images of ‘the shadow of an idle man’ and ‘the vomit of a drunkard on bitter wine’ to show that the empty yesterday can only lead to a vacuous tomorrow.

Although most of “El mañana efímero” paints a bleak picture of Spain’s national identity, Machado does offer hope in the conclusion of his poem. He believed that in order to survive, Spain needed to revolutionize itself:

Mas otra España nace,
La España del cincel y de la maza,
con esa eterna juventud que se hace
del pasado macizo de la raza. (Machado, 2002: 82)

Although the poet employs strong imagery of ‘the Spain of chisel and mallet,’ he does not advocate a violent, militaristic uprising. Here, Machado dreams of a rejuvenated and

regenerated Spain through a total revolution of ideas and practices. In other words, “Machado envisioned a destruction of the old injustices through the forces of righteous anger, and the creation of a new order based on ideas, reason, [and] light. To the end of his life, Machado clung desperately to these ideas, but hereafter expressed them in political action during the Civil War” (Cobb 84). Machado’s final words in the poem show his desired utopia for Spain:

Una España implacable y redentora,
España que alborea
con un hacha en la mano vengadora,
España de la rabia y de la idea. (Machado, 2002: 82)

Essentially, he envisions and imagines a country that redeems herself, with an axe in her avenging hand, by completely changing her antiquated mentality to that of a less clerical and more progressive one.

“Una España joven” (CXLIV) appears in the second section of *Campos de Castilla* and offers more insight into Machado’s examination of and prescription for Spanish national identity. Consisting of seven, four-line stanzas, Machado begins the poem by addressing the ongoing collective, psychological crises plaguing the country before and at the turn of the century:

... Fue un tiempo de mentira, de infamia. A España toda,
la malherida España, de Carnaval vestida
nos la pusieron, pobre y escuálida y beoda,
para que no acertara la mano con la herida. (Machado, 2004: 302)

Machado, again, uses numerous examples of pessimistic and negative imagery to portray his country’s disposition. According to the poet, Spain was suffering a period of lies and infamy and the entire nation was drunken, filthy, and wretched because of the national crisis; and moreover, Spain was dressed in the clothes of Carnival in order to hide and to

solve superficially her problems. The reference to the Catholic celebrations of Carnival represents another example of Machado's criticism of the meaningless customs and traditions observed by Spaniards, parallel to the practice of bullfighting or the religious processions of the *Semana Santa* mentioned in previous poems, that he believed were detrimental to Spain's progress. This first stanza not only embodies Machado's perspective of *el gran desastre* (the war with the United States in Cuba) but also serves as an allusion to his association with *La Generación de 1898* and their collective preoccupation with Spain's continued deterioration as a nation.

The fourth and fifth stanzas provide even more references to the tumultuous nineteenth century that Spain experienced and, most importantly, allude to a battle of ideologies developing:

Ya entonces, por el fondo de nuestro sueño -herencia
de un siglo que vencido sin gloria se alejaba-
un alba entrar quería; con nuestra turbulencia
la luz de las divinas ideas batallaba.

Más cada cual el rumbo siguió de su locura;
agilitó su brazo, acreditó su brío;
dejó como un espejo bruñida su armadura
y dijo: «El hoy es malo, pero el mañana... es mío. (Machado, 2004: 302)

Here, Machado accurately predicts the emergence of an ideologically-divided Spain with one side being clerical, absolutist, and reactionary while the other, secular, constitutional, and progressive. Though ideologically different, both Spains are portrayed as unrelenting and implacable in their mindsets; in other words, each side 'flexed its strength' and was reluctant to change its beliefs. This symbolic war of ideas would later come to violent fruition in 1936 with the onset of *La Guerra Civil*.

However, Machado does offer a remedy to his country's ominous situation. The hope of Spain, according to the poet, lies in the young generation of Spaniards:

Tú, juventud más joven, si de más alta cumbre
la voluntad te llega, irás a tu aventura
despierta y transparente a la divina lumbre,
como el diamante clara, como el diamante pura. (Machado, 2004: 302)

Spain's deplorable disposition is juxtaposed with the dream of a better tomorrow. In fact, the poet creates encouraging imagery when discussing the hope embodied by the younger generation of Spaniards; for example, "la divina lumbre," "el diamante clara" and "el diamante pura" are all positive characterizations attributed to the Spanish youth.

Violently fighting for one of the 'Two Spains' was not Machado's intended solution for his country. On the contrary, the poet saw the youth of the nation as the prescription to cure the collective, national crisis. "The poet insists on a hope in the youth of the younger generation and their 'adventure,'" comments one critic, "clearly, theirs must be a spiritual adventure" (Cobb 83). The younger generations of Spaniards, in other words, had the opportunity to learn from their forefathers' mistakes and, in turn, shape Spain's trajectory toward a more peaceful and prosperous future by avoiding those same errors.

Antonio Machado, like his peers in *La Generación de 1898*, strove to diagnose and remedy the problem of Spanish national identity at the turn of the twentieth century. As observed in *Campos de Castilla*, Machado examined the national crisis, predicted the emergence of the 'Two Spains,' and offered various prescriptions to Spain's ongoing political, economic, and psychological dilemma. Unlike Miguel de Unamuno's use of panegyric landscapes in *En torno al casticismo*, Machado portrays the Castilian landscape as sterile and barren in "A orillas del Duero" (XCVIII) in order to criticize Spain's national stagnation due to her antiquated mentality. "El mañana efímero"

(CXXXV) continues to paint a bleak picture of Spain's national identity, but does offer solutions by advocating a complete revolution of ideas and practices. And "Una España joven" (CXLIV) describes the ideological battle between 'Two Spains' emerging at the end of the nineteenth century but, at the same time, reveals optimism that the youth of Spain will lead the country out of her crises.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion: *La Generación de 1898* in Context

The selected works analyzed in the previous chapters provide a representative examination of three authors within *La Generación de 1898* that not only sought to understand Spain's decadence at the turn of the twentieth century but also strove to reevaluate the idea of Spanish national identity. These *noventaochistas*, Miguel de Unamuno, Azorín, and Antonio Machado, came to the defense of their country by acting as nation-builders during a time in which Spaniards suffered a collective economic, political, and psychological crisis. Though offering varied and, oftentimes, conflicting interpretations of what truly constituted the essence of Spain, all three authors aspired to awaken the moral consciousness for which Spaniards were searching. They examined, criticized, and rediscovered national values in order to unify the country and raise its self-image.

Miguel de Unamuno's essays "La tradición eterna" and "La casta histórica Castilla" from *En torno al casticismo* (1895) developed the concepts such as *lo castizo/el casticismo* and *intrahistoria* in order to emphasize the distinctive traits, features, customs, and traditions that made up the Castilian identity. According to Unamuno, the region and residents of Castile embodied the soul of Spain and, as well, represented the fundamental component to Spanish national identity. His poems "Castilla" and "Salamanca" from *Poesías* (1907) described the physical landscape of the Castilian region through panegyric praises in order to express the region's indispensability to Spain as her true

foundational bedrock and source of *intrahistoria*. Thus for Unamuno, Spanish national identity derives itself from the lands, people, and traditions of *Castilla*.

Azorín placed considerable attention on the debate between European modernization and Spanish traditionalism – an issue relevant to Spaniards throughout the latter half of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth century. His essays “Los ferrocarriles,” “Los toros,” and “El mar” from *Castilla* (1912) criticize the antiquated mindset and traditions of Spaniards that prevented the possibility of a modernized Spain. In direct contrast to Unamuno’s views, Azorín described the attitudes and customs of the Castilian people, not as an example for admiration, but rather as cause for criticism; due to their reluctance to change, they perpetuated their country’s collective crisis and lack of progress. Azorín satirized Spain’s landlocked mentality, characterized by obsolete traditions such as bullfights, and advocated for her complete modernization that would provide political, economic, and national regeneration, as symbolized by the train. Therefore for Azorín, Spain’s identity was inherently linked with the interaction with and acceptance of modern Europe.

Antonio Machado, considered the poet of *La Generación de 1898*, utilized the Castilian countryside not only as a backdrop for his poetry but also as a method by which to discover national identity through landscape. Machado’s views essentially offered a midpoint between Unamuno’s traditional concept of *intrahistoria* and Azorín’s more European outlook. “A orillas del Duero” (XCVIII), “El mañana efímero” (CXXXV), and “Una España joven” (CXLIV) from his collection of poetry *Campos de Castilla* (1912) provide the poet’s personal insight into Spain’s crisis and quest for national regeneration. Machado, similar to Azorín, blames his country’s malaise on her antiquated mentality

and obsession with tradition – for instance, blaming institutionalized religion and mindless national customs epitomized by his phrase “la España de charanga y pandereta.” However, in contrast with Azorín, the poet did not look to European neighbors to solve Spain’s ongoing crisis; instead he believed that the youth of the nation had the opportunity to revolutionize the country’s ideas and practices completely and, consequently, shape the national trajectory toward a more peaceful and prosperous future. He specifically employs positive imagery and characterization, such as “la divina lumbre,” “el diamante clara” and “el diamante pura,” when referring to the nation’s youth and their ability to remedy Spain’s national dilemma. Thus, according to Machado, the younger generation of Spaniards needed to engender a new national identity and culture that could then lead the country out of her collective crisis.

Miguel de Unamuno, Azorín, and Antonio Machado, however, were not the only *noventaochistas* preoccupied with Spain’s search for a national identity at the turn of the twentieth century – so were the other two principle members of the Generation of 1898, Pío Baroja and Ramon del Valle-Inclán. Even the lesser members of the group explored the question of Spain’s decadence and national identity. These included Ángel Ganivet and Ramiro de Maeztu.

Pío Baroja, a physician and novelist from the Basque Country, discussed and critiqued the “abulia,” or national apathy, that he believed was plaguing his homeland (Johnson 138). Baroja’s masterpiece, *El árbol de la ciencia*, published in 1911, is a semi-autobiographical novel that shares many of the themes analyzed in the selected works of Unamuno, Azorín, and Machado. For instance, the novel takes place mostly in the region of Castile – specifically in Madrid and Alcolea, a fictitious town in the

province of Castile – which mirrors the common trend among the *noventaochistas* who purposefully used Castile as center stage for their literary works. The protagonist of the novel, Andrés Hurtado, slowly becomes disillusioned with his life in nineteenth century Spain and, at one point in the novel, he advises a group of young republicans to “drop all thought of intervention in society and to emigrate” (Shaw 107). Similar to Azorín’s criticism of the clerics, the lawyers, and the *hidalgos* in his essays in *Castilla* (1912), Baroja criticizes various classes of Spaniards that seem to contribute nothing to their society. He satirizes the royal family, the aristocracy, and the prostitutes of Madrid for being parasites on others and, furthermore, attacks the “slave mentality of the self-respecting working class.” Baroja’s criticisms of his nation were often scathing and negative. At the end of the *El árbol de la ciencia*, the protagonist loses his wife who dies in childbirth. Distraught that his antiquated medical education cannot save her, he commits suicide – symbolizing not only the degenerate condition of Spanish education at the time but also the despair and “abulia” plaguing the nation.

The problems associated with the political and social unrest in his country, as commented by one critic, causes Andrés to slip into a kind of spiritual crisis: “The social problem is thus once more subordinated to the spiritual problem. What Andrés is looking for is not just a solution to his country’s difficulties, but an answer to his own inner dilemma... the death of his younger brother [would cause] an even deeper awareness of life’s malignity” (Shaw 108). This crisis of the soul witnessed by Andrés can be interpreted to symbolize the same dreadful disposition of Spain at the onset of *el gran desastre*. Due to a series of political, economic, and social catastrophes, Spain too suffered a mental crisis in her search for a renewed national identity.

El mayorazgo de Labraz, published in 1903, became one of Baroja's most popular novels and used descriptions of the countryside to point to Spain's decadence. Similar to the techniques utilized by Machado in his poems from *Campos de Castilla*, Baroja emphasized landscapes in order to satirize his nation's current disposition. In fact, the first lines of Baroja's novel not only describe the decaying town of Labraz but also introduce the author's intent to create an environment of decadence that reflected his country's disposition at the time:

Una tarde de agosto fui a visitar Labraz, pueblo de la antigua Cantabria. Me habían dicho que era ciudad agonizante, una ciudad moribunda, y mi espíritu, entonces deprimido por la amarga tristeza que deja el fracaso de los ensueños románticos, quería recrearse con la desolación profunda de un pueblo casi muerto. (Baroja 4)

Baroja's intentional use of phrases such as "ciudad agonizante" (declining city), "ciudad moribunda" (dying city), and "pueblo casi muerto" (a city near death) create an imagery of death surrounding the fictitious town of Labraz. In fact, Baroja dramatizes the degraded environment even more by comparing Labraz to a medieval town: "Era Labraz un pueblo terrible, un pueblo de la Edad Media. No había calle que no fuese corcovada; las casas tenían casi todas escudos de piedra" (Baroja 6). Although Baroja mentions Cantabria instead of Castile, he refers to areas that border *Castilla la Vieja* and whose landscape, including the *Picos de Europa*, is similarly inhospitable. Such archaic descriptions call to mind Machado's "A orillas del Duero" and his portrayal of Castile's inhospitable features such as her unplowed fields, ("campos sin arados"), her crumbling cities ("decrepitas ciudades"), and her roads without inns ("caminos sin mesons"). Thus much like Machado, Baroja employed descriptive landscapes of decadence in his literature in order to critique Spain's antiquated identity.

Ramón del Valle-Inclán, a dramatist and novelist from Galicia, is another principal figure of *La Generación de 1898* that develops many of the themes shared by the group. Valle-Inclán's four *Sonatas* recount fragmented memories of the fictitious life of the Marqués de Bradomín: *Sonata de otoño* (1902), *Sonata de estío* (1903), *Sonata de primavera* (1904), and *Sonata de invierno* (1905). Though these works are particularly acclaimed for their modernist approach that combines elements of music and art into a piece of literature, the work also exemplifies certain themes critiquing Spain's identity at the time.

The decadent settings and environments portrayed in Valle-Inclán's *Sonata de otoño* indicate an attempt to reflect and satirize Spain's degenerate condition at the end of the nineteenth century. As one critic accurately observes, Valle-Inclán purposefully created decadent descriptions of both characters and settings in order to draw attention to Spain's collective mental crisis:

Valle-Inclán uses a variety of decadent spaces, including (1) the physically decaying palaces, chapels, and gardens belonging to Concha and the Marqués de Bradomín, (2) temporal spaces of autumnal decay contrasting with Spain's imperial past, and (3) the corporal spaces of decay, inscribed in the aging, infirm bodies of his protagonists, especially Concha, to diagnose Spain's malaise – the total corruption of the aristocracy, who together with the Church, still dominated much of Spain at the end of the Nineteenth Century. (Blackwell 32)

This technique by Valle-Inclán is similar to that used by Azorín and Machado in their own descriptions of a decaying Castile. Just as Azorín uses, in the essay "Los toros," a typical bullfight as a point of departure to criticize the backwardness and aloofness of the Spanish character, so Valle-Inclán uses the Galician aristocracy and their crumbling palaces. Even though Valle-Inclán does not portray the *pueblo* as a blood-thirsty and savage people who enjoy the violence that occurs in the bullfight, he does portray the

lower classes as living in a feudal state. Furthermore, like Machado, Valle-Inclán uses the Galician countryside in all its seasons, in his novels *Sonata de otoño* (1902), *Sonata de estío* (1903), *Sonata de primavera* (1904), and *Sonata de invierno* (1905), to contrast with the decay of aristocrats and their palaces. Thus, Baroja and Valle-Inclán, like the *noventaochista* writers examined in detail previously, all employ the metaphor of Spain's *paisaje* to criticize and satirize the country's decadence at the turn of the twentieth century.

Ángel Ganivet, a Spanish writer and diplomat from Granada, was another figure associated with *La Generación de 1898*, albeit a lesser figure. He offered many views and opinions relevant to those discussed by the three authors studied in this investigation. In his *Idearium español* (1898), Ganivet provided a more exact and definitive opinion regarding Spain's deliberation between traditionalism and Europeanization. According to Ganivet, Spain and Europe represented two fundamentally different ideas: "on the one hand, there is Spain, religious and artistic, a land of high ideals and individual, often impulsive, actions... on the other hand, there is Europe north of the Pyrenees, materialistic and scientifically minded, the home of practical aims and collective enterprises" (Ramsden 35). Ganivet identifies a certain sense of uniqueness or distinctiveness to Spain in comparison with its European neighbors; in other words, he was pessimistic about the idea of modernizing his native country since, similar to the position Unamuno espoused, he asserted that Spanish identity relied upon the region and residents of Castile (Nozick 78).

The views of Ganivet also correspond to the ideas expressed by Machado in "A orillas del Duero" (XCVIII), which indicated the consequences of too much involvement

from outside of Spain's borders. For instance, Ganivet blamed Spain's imperial expansion as cause for the country's crisis: "The origin of Spanish decadence and prostration lay in excessive ambitions, in having attempted actions incommensurate with the real strength of the nation... We have exhausted our possibilities of material expansion" (Nozick 77). In other words, Ganivet favored a more isolated Spain with less foreign influence and interaction. Much like Unamuno and Azorín, Ganivet was active in the debate between traditionalism and Europeanization, but would have sided more with Miguel de Unamuno.

Even a minor figure of *La Generación de 1898* like Ramiro de Maeztu examines Spain's decadence and national identity. A journalist, political theorist, and literary critic, Ramiro de Maeztu analyzed national myths, such as Don Juan, Don Quixote, and *Celestina*, in order to explore issues of national identity. Maeztu's most acclaimed work, *Don Quijote, Don Juan y La Celestina*, published in 1926, provides a philosophic analysis and personal appreciation of three classical Spanish myths. According to Maeztu, Don Juan exemplifies a type of modern hero; in other words, Maeztu saw the myth of Don Juan not only as an embodiment of an ideal man but perhaps also as a possible interpretation of the identity for which Spaniards were searching. However, unlike Valle-Inclán's decadent Don Juan, the Marques de Bradomín, Maeztu's vision is more positive.

Spain's search for a national identity, consequently, was a concern for all the members of *La Generación de 1898*. From minor figures such as Ángel Ganivet and Ramiro de Maeztu to more recognizable ones such as Miguel de Unamuno, Azorín, and Antonio Machado, Pío Baroja, and Ramon del Valle-Inclán, the *noventaochistas* sought

to understand, and possibly remedy, the collective political, social, and mental crisis plaguing their country at the turn of the twentieth century. Although each author brought a unique and distinct perspective into what truly constituted the Spanish essence, they all recognized that the Spain they had once known was changing and a new, rejuvenated identity was necessary. While criticizing Spain's deplorable status, the *noventaochistas* also came to the defense of their country by aspiring to rediscover Spanish values that would not only unify the country but also raise its self-image.

Members of *La Generación de 1898* commented on the two ideologically distinct 'Spains' that had begun diverging in the eighteenth century with the *afrancesados* and the *tradicionalistas*; one having more clerical, absolutist, and reactionary tendencies while the other was more secular, constitutional, and progressive. These differences became more pronounced throughout the nineteenth century, as the three Carlist Wars pitted the *liberales* who favored a republican government against the *conservadores* who sought to install the Infante Carlos (Carlos V) as the monarch of Spain. This ideological division would later come to violent fruition in 1936 with the onset of *La Guerra Civil* and would result in the installation of the reactionary fascist Francisco Franco as dictator and *caudillo* of Spain until 1975. Although writing their works a century before, members of *La Generación de 1898* expressed views that continue to be relevant in Spain today. The transition to democracy after Franco's death and the decision to join the European Union in 1986 was not without much deliberation and negotiation between the 'Two Spains.' By studying the literature of *La Generación de 1898* one not only gains a better understanding of Spain's past but also points to an issue that has continued to trouble Spaniards into the democracy: "What does it mean to be Spanish?"

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