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ARTISTIC UNITY AND AESTHETIC RESPONSE
EN "LOS PAZOS DE ULLOA" Y "LA MADRE
NATURALEZA"

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ARTISTIC UNITY AND AESTHETIC RESPONSE IN *LOS PAZOS DE ULLOA* AND *LA MADRE NATURALEZA*

It seems logical that today's structure-oriented reader should be struck not by the moral code implicit in Emilia Pardo Bazán's "Cebre sequel," which many of her contemporary readers found objectionable,¹ but rather by what some consider to be deterrents to the formal cohesiveness of these novels.² In *Los pazos de Ulloa* (1886), for example, the perspective shifts abruptly from the protagonist to a secondary character, Perucho, at the plot's climax, whereas the final chapter is set ten years beyond an otherwise temporally unified plot. At that time, Julián Álvarez returns to the *pazo* and discovers Perucho and his half-sister Manola, the same couple whose meandering through the woods prefaces the arrival of the protagonist in *La madre naturaleza* (1887).³

Features that may appear marginal in a separate reading of each novel become part of a unifying pattern when the novels are read together and thus prove to be essential for the cohesiveness of the sequel. A brief summary will help to clarify this point.

Los pazos opens with the arrival of Julián Álvarez at the country estate where he will serve as *capellán*. He plans to organize the family archives but soon abandons this project for the equally impossible challenge of finding moral salvation for the Marqués de Ulloa, Don Pedro Moscoso, whose dissolute behavior shows him to have succumbed to the mandates of nature. Julián's initial success – he arranges a Christian marriage for Don Pedro – is followed by defeat. Don Pedro falls prey once again to the influence of his hired hand, Primitivo, forsaking his legitimate family for concubinage with Primitivo's daughter, Sabel. Nature's triumph over Julián is sealed when he is banished (by the bishop) to a remote mountain parish for having become involved in affairs unbecoming to his office.

Julián's experience at the *pazo* foreshadows that of Gabriel Pardo de la Lage at the same estate in *La madre naturaleza*. The protagonist is again bent on a moral crusade

¹ In the *Diario de Barcelona* (August 15, 1891) Mañé y Flaquer claims that "la autora gallega prodiga en exceso el recurso del beso entre personas de distinto sexo," whereas in *El Imparcial* Pereda attacks the *condesa's* inmoral presentation of characters "viviendo amancebados a la vista del lector, con minuciosos pormenores sobre la manera de pecar." Doña Emilia describes these polemics in *Nuevo teatro crítico*, 10 (1891): 91, and *Polémicas y estudios literarios*, 45. The quotes are taken from Mariano López-Sanz, *Naturalismo y espiritualismo en las novelas de Galdós y Pardo Bazán* (Madrid: Ed. Pliegos, 1985): 98.

² Robert Scari refers to the "vacilante desorden de *Los pazos de Ulloa*" (in "Insolación y el naturalismo," *SimN*, II [1974]: 84) whereas Mariano López ("A propósito de *La madre naturaleza* de Emilia Pardo Bazán," *BHS*, 83, 1-2 [Jan.-June 1981]: 92) considers the first four chapters of *La madre naturaleza* to be a "prenovela" that would be more appropriate either at the end of *Los pazos* or after the protagonist's arrival in chapter V of *La madre naturaleza*.

³ *La madre naturaleza* was published in 1887 with the subtitle "segunda parte de *Los pazos de Ulloa*." One of Doña Emilia's first readers, Lorenzo Benito de Endara (see "*Los pazos de Ulloa*" *Revista Contemporánea*, 65 [1887]: 397) claimed to see in the first novel the "seeds" of the second before it was published. On this and related matters, see: Mariano López, "A propósito de *La madre naturaleza*..." pp. 82-83.

against nature. Manola (the *marqués's* legitimate daughter) and Perucho have been raised in isolation, a situation that has led to their committing incest, since they are unaware of their kinship. Gabriel's goal is to "desbrozar esa maleza" by revealing the truth, breaking up the affair, and marrying his niece. His plan backfires, however, since instead of accepting his proposal, the girl chooses to retire to a convent while she "banishes" her uncle to Madrid to care for her distraught lover, Perucho.

Julián's final vision in *Los pazos* of the couple that proves to be Gabriel's nemesis in *La madre naturaleza*, the genealogical and spacial unity of two novels that treat the same family at the same patrimonial estate, and the symbolism of nature as a proving ground for man's will signal the cohesiveness of this sequel, a problem that is yet to be fully explored. Nor have scholars noted the aesthetic effect of the repetitive or symmetrical patterns of these novels when read as intended by the author. In moving from the first novel to the second, we become increasingly self-conscious as readers since we find ourselves interpreting Gabriel Pardo in ways preconditioned by our understanding of Julián Álvarez. Furthermore, references to reading reinforce our cognizance of the interpretative process. Julián "reads" Nucha as the "perfecta esposa de Cristo," a situation that foreshadows the treatment of Fray Luis in *La madre naturaleza*. In the library at the *pazo*, Gabriel finds Fray Luis's *Los nombres de Cristo* and *Cantares de Salomón*. In the latter he ascertains (so he claims) how Perucho and Manola learned to read when he discovers their scribbling in the margins of a book that is itself a reading of another text: "«Según los garrapatos que he visto en la edición, Manuela y su..., ilo que seal, aprendieron a leer por ese libro... Tiene algo de simbólico... La más negra no es el texto, sino los comentarios...»"⁴ By calling our attention to the intertextual nature of all works of literature, such references transform the characters into instruments of intertextual commentary and thereby foreground reading itself as a basis for the sequel's unity.⁵

These features suggest the need to reorient the analysis of these novels away from what happens at the *pazo* and toward the more abstract issue of how they generate meaning. This may be accomplished by describing the patterns in style and plot structure that sustain their unity and that help to condition the way in which the reader "concretizes" or "processes" the text into "aesthetic object."⁶ The description of these patterns should lead us, as Jauss has suggested, to understand the ideological axioms that are basic to this sequel and that may be related to the author's historical crossroads.⁷

⁴ Emilia Pardo Bazán, *La madre naturaleza* (Madrid: Alianza Ed., 1972; 3rd ed., 1982): 240. Quotations cited parenthetically in the text refer to this edition.

⁵ This is not the first work by the *condesa* in which reading plays a central role. In "Pardo Bazán's *El cisne de Vilamorta* and the Romantic Reader" (forthcoming in *MLN*) Noël Valis studies the figure of the reader-protagonist as a sign of Pardo Bazán's ambivalence regarding Romanticism.

⁶ Roman Ingarden introduces the notion of "concretization" in the following essays: *The Literary Work or Art*, trans. G. G. Grabowicz (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern, 1973), and *The Cognition of the Literary Work of Art*, trans. R. A. Crowley and K. R. Olson (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern, 1973). Useful summaries of Ingarden's theories are offered by Diana Sorensen Goodrich in *The Reader and the Text: Interpretative Strategies for Latin American Literature* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Pub. Co., 1986): 76, and by Robert C. Holub in *Reception Theory: A Critical Introduction* (London: Methuen, 1984): 25-29.

⁷ Hans Robert Jauss, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," in *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception*, trans. Timothy Bahti (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota, 1982): 3-45, and

The pertinence of tracing such referential links derives from the magnitude of those crossroads. The *condesa* was a key spokesperson for a generation whose self-assumed mission was to rebuild a dormant narrative tradition. Her essay on Naturalism, *La cuestión palpitante* (1883), appeared three years before *Los pazos* and is but one example of a newfound interest in literary theory among Spanish intellectuals of this period. The ongoing, heated debates on narrative style and technique, an awareness that Spain possessed no novel other than "la del Siglo de oro y la hoy floreciente,"⁸ the rediscovery of Cervantes, and the influence of the French and Russian novel reflect further the context of foment and rebirth in which these novels were written. These factors signal the beginning of a tradition that, as we see it, continues into the twentieth century. Our intention is to reread *Los pazos* and *La madre naturaleza* not according to nineteenth-century expectation, that is, as a naturalistic masterpiece, but in light of the modernist tradition they helped to generate.⁹

READING FOR QUEST

Our analysis is divided into two parts, the first of which adheres to Iser's phenomenological notion of reading as a temporally-based process in "consistency-building" during which the reader "travels through the text," formulating ("actualizing") the novel's unity ("harmony").¹⁰ This reading needs to be studied in relation to the protagonist's quest, since the stages of that quest become the reader's tools for formulating the cycle's unity. At successive stages we reconfirm our interpretation of the plot as we measure the broadening of our mental horizons. We thereby become increasingly self-conscious of our own process of discovery and of how it parallels the protagonist's.

The first stage in the protagonist's quest is his *descent* into Ulloa. In both novels, the descent is presented as reckless due to the unruly nature of the traveler's horse. Julián loses control of his steed, whereas the team that draws Gabriel's stagecoach forces its travelers to crash at the bottom of the hill. The horse is thus the first omen of nature's dominion over man at the beginning of his journey into the unknown.

"Sketch of a Theory and History of Aesthetic Experience," in *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: U. of Minnesota, 1982).

⁸ Quoted from *La cuestión palpitante* by Mariano López-Sanz, in *Espiritualismo y naturalismo*, 41-42. Intellectual ferment in Restoration Spain is described by Gifford Davis in "The Spanish Debate over Idealismo and Realism before the Impact of Zola's Naturalismo," *PMLA*, 84 (1969): 1649-1656, and by Mariano López in the following articles: "El fin de siglo y los escritores de la Restauración," *NRFH*, 27, 258-75, and "Los escritores de la Restauración y las polémicas literarias del siglo XIX en España," *BH*, 81, 51-74.

⁹ The following critics have taken the psychological treatment of character as a sign of Pardo Bazán's modernity: Mariano López, "A propósito de *La madre naturaleza*": Darío Villanueva, "Los pazos de Ulloa, el naturalismo y Henry James," *HR*, 52, 2 (Spring 1984): 121-39; and Maurice Hemingway, *Emilia Pardo Bazán: The Making of a Novelist* (Cambridge: Cambridge U., 1983). Aspects of the *condesa's* influence on twentieth-century writers are outlined by: J. Rubia Barcia, in "La Pardo Bazán y Unamuno," *CA*, 113 (1960): 240-63; Olga Guerrero, in "Sobre las 'comedias bárbaras,'" *CHA*, 199-200 (julio-agosto, 1966); and Darío Villanueva, in "Más sobre la novela lírica," *Ínsula*, 461-11.

¹⁰ Wolfgang Iser, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response* (Baltimore: John Hopkins, 1978): 118 ff.

The appearance of a *guide* at the bottom of the hill marks the second stage of the protagonist's quest. Julián meets three hunters, Primitivo, the *marqués*, and a priest, who accompany him through the gates leading to the *pazo*. Indistinguishable at first, the men are described as "quemados del sol," the priest as revealing "el sello formidable de la ordenación" that defies even the flames of Hell.¹¹ As guides, they foreshadow Máximo Juncal, the village doctor who accompanies Gabriel to the *pazo* and whose Darwinist theories link him to the "sunburnt/Hell-burnt" world into which the newcomers are initiated.

The various paths that crisscross the estate can be related en masse to the third stage of the protagonist's quest. Although they are described in *Los pazos* as being "casi impracticables" and buried "en las oscuras profundidades del pinar" (PU, 9), their quest-related symbolism is developed most extensively in *La madre naturaleza*, a novel in which the characters spend much of their time walking through the woods. While the journey may be taken as this work's prime incident, the lengthy descriptions of the deep and mysterious byways that follow the Avieiro river reveal that journey to be predestined by nature.

As the initial stages of a quest, the descent, guides, and paths create an allegorical context that structures our reading of these novels.¹² The forebodings are particularly important in this regard. On the one hand, they reflect Schopenhauer's influence on the novelist, revealing man's journey to be a destiny, his will as something perceptible in the accidents of nature.¹³ Moreover, they reveal reading, like Julián and Gabriel's experience at the Pazo, to be predetermined, since each step of the plot informs our interpretation of what follows within the progressive dimension of the quest. The descent conditions our interpretation of the hunters, the hunters of the forest, the horse of the river. Together these initial stages predispose us to read what happens at the *pazo* symbolically and to fathom the archetypal value of certain images that, within this context, are crucial for our actualizing the sequel's harmony.

The first in order of appearance is the *cross* that Julián notices as he enters the estate: "divisó (...) algo que le hizo estremecerse: una cruz de madera, pintada de negro con filetes blancos, medio caída ya sobre el murallón que la sustentaba" (PU, 11). Because of its appearance at the beginning of the novel, the cross prefigures the *cruceiro*, located nearby, that Gabriel observes upon his arrival (MN, 108). Curiously, both the cross and the *cruceiro* are associated with Primitivo. At the beginning of *Los pazos* he hides near the cross to spy on Julián. At the end he is killed near the *cruceiro*.

¹¹ Emilia Pardo Bazán, *Los pazos de Ulloa* (Madrid: Alianza Ed., 1966, 4th ed., 1974): 12-13. Further quotes, cited in the text in parentheses, correspond to this edition.

¹² Darío Villanueva ("Los pazos de Ulloa, el naturalismo y Henry James, 127-28) describes the protagonist's "laberíntico camino hacia la experiencia de la vida" that includes "el mitema de la caída o el descenso a los infiernos. [...] El último capítulo remata el ciclo mítico con el regreso del héroe al escenario de su doloroso maduramiento, de su personal pasión. [...] Está claro que este capítulo, aunque sirva de pórtico a *La madre naturaleza*, desempeña también la función de cierre a ese periplo formativo del héroe en que consiste fundamentalmente *Los pazos de Ulloa*."

¹³ It is sometimes forgotten that Schopenhauer, who was [...] one of the fathers of the crisis of the twentieth-century novel, was enormously influential on many of those writers who are commonly classed as Realist or Naturalist. Pardo Bazán herself makes an indirect reference in *Una cristiana-La prueba* to Schopenhauer's belief that the external world is but an illusion of the senses." (Hemingway, Emilia Pardo Bazán, pp. 2-3.)

Julián discovers Primitivo's body there upon departing from the *pazo* whereas Juncal tells Gabriel Pardo about the murder as they pass the same spot.

According to archetypal theory, the cross is taken psychologically to represent man's vision of his life in its wholeness or as a destiny.¹⁴ It functions accordingly in Pardo Bazán's novels since it acts as both an omen of the protagonist's downfall ("negro," "medio caído") and a reminder of his journey through a "primitive" reality. It signals both future and past and thereby achieves a degree of atemporality that is consonant with its value as archetype. By appearing at the beginning and end of both novels, it also links the protagonist's and reader's "journeys" and can be seen therefore as a crucial tool for formulating the sequel's unity. For both, the cross designates the "spot" – the borders of the text, the boundaries of the estate – where reality is transcended, disbelief suspended.

The female character is portrayed archetypically through man's perspective and therefore acquires a function parallels to that of the cross. Nucha is typified in Julián's eyes as the "perfecta esposa de Cristo" whereas in Gabriel's memory she is the "mamita" who protected her younger brother when he was a child. In Gabriel's dream, which follows his reading Fray Luis's exegesis of the *Song of Solomon*, Manola is transformed similarly into her uncle's "perfecta casada." Therein she leads Gabriel through vineyards and fields of opulent wheat to drink fresh water from a jug held by the "paternal y venerable" Julián (MN, 222). The trinitarian symbolism – woman guides man toward an ablutionary epiphany – and the intertextual link to the author of *La perfecta casada* contribute to the subliminal intertwining of mother, sister, wife, niece, and Virgin as an archetype of womanly "perfection."

Woman can thus be taken as the *terminus ad quem* of the protagonist's quest and the key to the sequel's psychological unity. This is conveyed implicitly in Julián's ill-disguised affection for Nucha, explicitly in Gabriel's intention to marry his niece (to "desbrozar esa maleza"), and symbolically in Gabriel's dream. This meaning is projected most dramatically, however, in two scenes at Nucha's tomb.

The first occurs at the end of *Los pazos* when Julián returns to the *pazo* after ten years of "entierro" and is led by a white butterfly to the "mezquino mausoleo" of the "cándida y celeste virgencita" (PU, 291). The second appears in *La madre naturaleza* when Gabriel visits the same "mezquino mausoleo" during a "puesta de sol inverosímil." In both cases, the protagonist seems drawn to the spot by an ineffable force. In both, words like "celeste" and "cándido" suggest the mystical dimension,¹⁵ "confusión," "halucinación" and "inverosímil" the subconscious realm. The most important aspect of these episodes, however, is Gabriel's "inverosímil" vision of Julián praying before Nucha's tomb, as if enshrouded in an "hálito de amor" on this "noche nupcial" (MN, 248).

The nocturnal, graveyard wedding constitutes an epiphany for both reader and protagonist. For the reader, it provides the definitive clue within the series of Dantesque-Orphic elements – arrival, entrance, and journey through an infernal labyrinth – that allows us to understand the symbolic code as a key to the sequel's unity. The two novels are linked through the symbolic convergence of the under-

¹⁴ Edward Edinger, *Ego and Archetype* (New York: Pelican, 1973): 135.

¹⁵ Color – in this case, white – is an important aspect of Pardo Bazán's symbolic code as studied by Mary Giles in "Color Adjectives in Pardo Bazán's Novels," *RomN*, 10 (1968): 54-58, and "Symbolic Imagery in *La Sirena Negra*," *PLL*, 4 (1968): 182-91.

world's paths and the concomitant (con)fusion of the two men's egos. Gabriel reinforces our sense of discovery by affirming his own in his vision of Julián, a vision that he interprets as the "clave de algún misterio" (MN, 249). Gabriel begins to unravel the mystery moments later when he discovers Perucho and Manola walking among the trees. Only then is he fully aware of the couple's unrelenting bond, of his self-deception – that he has been motivated by egocentrism rather than the altruistic goal of "saving" Manola – and of the means – sincerity – of his own "salvation" (MN, 250).

The idealization of woman through the male perspective, her association with the arcane, and the Orphic plot structure lead us to understand woman's role in these novels according to Jung's theory of the *anima*. She represents man's internal voice that possesses "the secret knowledge of the unconscious."¹⁶ She facilitates his recognition of an over-inflated ego, or *conscious* personality, when that ego is alienated from the Self, that is, his *transpersonal* being. She thereby initiates the stabilization of the ego-Self axis, the process of individuation, that can only occur after man recognizes his state of alienation. In brief, she is the *stella maris* on man's road to ablutionary self-awareness.

In Pardo Bazán's sequel, Jung's notions of alienation and individuation may apply to the protagonist's experience at the *pazo* if we understand that experience as a cycle of temptation, transgression, and penance. As mentioned previously, Julián's involvement with Nucha leads ultimately to his being banished by the archbishop to a remote mountain parish to do ten years of penance. Gabriel's design to marry Manola result in her "banishing" him to Madrid where he will do "penance" by looking after Perucho. For the modern-day Odysseus, humiliation and expulsion are the consequences of both his transgression against nature and a misplaced or overzealous affection.

At the same time, humiliation occasions the protagonist's deepest level of introspection, another feature that supports the Jungian interpretation. When Julián returns to the estate in the last chapter his perspective telescopes time and experience as he looks back into *Los pazos de Ulloa*, studying in detail the place where his drama took place, and forward into *La madre naturaleza*, when he discovers Manola and Perucho playing among the trees. Similarly, Gabriel "buries" ("sepultó") a last glance back into the valley from a distant hilltop as he bitterly acknowledges his defeat at the hands of "stepmother" nature. The panoramic intensity of these final visions suggests the outcome of these plots to be man's most penetrating understanding of his personal experience.

The outcome, that is, is tantamount to man's act of contrition before the memory of a "transpersonal" Nucha, a sanctified Euridice who facilitates introspection from the altar of the subconscious. At the end of *Los pazos*, Julián passes death's boundaries, "enterrado" for ten years, to reach the tomb to which he returns throughout *La madre naturaleza*. In the final episode of the latter, Gabriel passes through death ("sepultó la mirada") to be portrayed remembering Nucha's tomb from Madrid in *Insolación*, Pardo Bazán's next novel.¹⁷ Both men progress from an attraction to woman *in vita*, the

¹⁶ Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 100.

¹⁷ "Mientras hablaba el comandante, su fantasía, en vez de los plátanos del jardincillo de Madrid, le representaba otras masas de sombrías de follaje, robles y castaños; y el olor fragante

mark of their over-inflated ego, to meditating upon her *in morte* as the inner voice that guides them toward spiritual and psychological stability. Both men appear as if suspended in the aftermath of their experience at the *pazo* in the timeless contemplation of Nucha. Both plots lead to the image of man undergoing individuation.

As to the effect of this pattern on the reader, we must note in conclusion those aspects of Pardo Bazán's narrative style that afford the reader a sense of involvement in the protagonist's progression toward this goal. Most important is the treatment of perspective, which is gradually reduced to the protagonist's and thus leads us toward his concluding panorama. The emergence of a monolithic point of view transmits the protagonist's psychological growth, causing the reader to experience it as a progression. Perspective thus becomes a heuristic device for sensitizing the reader to the protagonist's quest for self-awareness.

Pardo Bazán's use of the second-person subject pronoun ("tú") merits special attention here since it has a similar effect. As is the case in novels published during the 1960's and '70's, this device gives testimony to the protagonist's awareness of his divided ego while it enhances the reader's sense of complicity in that awareness. In *La madre naturaleza*, however, it appears only after Gabriel's revelation at Nucha's tomb, when Gabriel is most acutely self-conscious. It is yet another element of style that guides the reader toward the inner-most circle of the protagonist's being.

The above leads us to see how the rendering of imagination forms the basis of this sequel's unity, be it through style, the manipulation of perspective, the description of dreams or of the act of reading. The latter, itself an imaginative activity, is but one of the bridges that links reader and protagonist. It joins with the parallel quests in drawing attention to a subjective complicity whereby reading mirrors fiction as a process in self-realization. The *progressive* dimension of our reading serves to emphasize the illusory nature of this process since we approach the end of the quest only to reach an outcome defined as yet another beginning. Individuation, it must be remembered, is a process and not a goal.¹⁸ As such, it establishes the openended or indeterminant status of these novels, an affirmation of the fallacy of our search for definitive meaning in life and reading, and can thus be taken as a sign of the modernity that we will explore further in the second part of this study.¹⁹

READING OPPOSITION

We turn now to the framework known in cognitive psychology as a *schema*. The concept refers to an abstract knowledge structure that masks itself in elements of style, image, and motif that are repetitive and can therefore be construed as a pattern. In such a pattern the reader is able to intuit a mode of awareness that is related to the work's mode of representation. We therefore take representation to be the imitation not of an external reality itself but of a way of knowing that reality, not of the world

de las flores de acacia le parecía el de las silvestres mentas que crecen al borde de los linderos en el valle de Ulloa" (*Insolación* [Madrid: Taurus, 1970]: 129).

¹⁸ Edinger, *Ego and Archetype*, 103-193.

¹⁹ Roman Ingarden discusses the notion of "indeterminacy" in *Cognition*, 50. Wolfgang Iser defines the evolution of literature in terms of the increase in indeterminacy, nothing its greatest intensity in modern literature (*The Act of Reading*, 219).

but of our experience in it. The *schema*, then, is equivalent to the implied reader's world knowledge that can be related to the "culture code," the connoted link between text and context. In this regard, the *schema* provides the textual mechanism for defining a work's synchronic status – the "historical crossroads" mentioned earlier – within the diachronic crosscurrents of literary history.²⁰

The representation of consciousness, a key to the sequel's unity, may serve to relate the two reading models established herein. Whereas consciousness in the first model is defined as a dynamic progression that parallels the temporally-based dimension of reading, in the second it functions in relation to patterns that are repetitive and, consequently, atemporal. Stated metaphorically, the portrait of consciousness in Pardo Bazán's sequel is a two-dimensional bridge that allows us to read the linearity of the quest into the lateral surface tensions formed by an vast pattern of binary opposition.

The pattern of opposition begins to take shape in the description of Julián's arrival, where a confrontation between a perceiving subject and external reality is conveyed through the style of the narrative discourse. The use of *aquel* in reference to the "repecho" down which Julián rides projects his impression of Ulloa as a distant reality. The juxtaposition of the "*palabrillas*" that he whispers to the horse and the "trancos *desigualísimos*" that "desencuadernaba" his "intestinos" (*PU*, 7) transmit further the connection between the prose style and the rider's perception. The perception is eventually summarized by the narrator – "lefase en su rostro tanto miedo al cuartago" – but not before we understand the correlation between style and the "unbound pages" of Julián's entrails upon which we "read" his diminutive sense of self in the face of an imposing nature.²¹

The same effect can be noted in the description of Gabriel's arrival. His awe is implicit in the hyperbolic description of the stagecoach as an "alarmante" spectacle of "enormes baúles" and "cajones descomunales." The rhythm of the narrative discourse simulates the vehicle's movement as experienced by the traveler, first in the hypotactic portrayal of the stage's downhill race – "Del cupé (...) sobresalfan cestos con gallinas, y más líos, y más rebujos, y más maletas, y otra tanda de cajones" – and secondly in the paratactic rendering of its crash: "toda la balumba de coche y caballos *se revolvió, se enredó, se hizo un ovillo*" (*MN*, 55; italics added). The onomatopoeic "crujido espantoso" and "relinche" are additional signs of Gabriel's subjective response to an external reality perceived as threatening.

By connoting the protagonist's feelings through such elements of style, the discourse stimulates the reader's sense of involvement in the conflict between the naive newcomer and Ulloa's nature-wise residents. The conflict is dramatized in scenes that emphasize the protagonist's dismay at discovering the web of adultery, incest, and fraud that envelopes the community. This pattern of shared discovery begins, furthermore, with the delayed revelation of the traveler's identity in the opening scenes. The "curita barbilindo" is introduced according to his "limphatic

²⁰ "Culture code" is adopted from Roland Barthes, *S/Z*, trans. Richard Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1974): 97. E. H. Gombrich applies the notion of *schemata* to painting in *Art and Illusions: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*, 2nd ed. (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton U., 1969). For a useful summary of this notion, see Goodrich, *The Reader and the Text*, 27 ff.

²¹ For a complementary analysis of the same episode, see Hemingway, *Emilia Pardo Bazán*, 35-36.

disposition, delicate limbs, and flushed reddish color, "no como un pimiento, sino como una fresa" (PU, 7). Gabriel is simply an anonymous "señorito enguantado." As the strawberry-red priest and elegant dandy discover Ulloa, we learn to read the antithetical relationship between the gentrified point of view and the natural backdrop and to see the relationship between the protagonist as subject and Ulloa as object as an antithesis basic to the sequel's knowledge structure.

We also learn to read this antithesis as a device for probing the limits of consciousness. As such, it is related to the contrast between the protagonist's impressions of Ulloa's residents and theirs of him. This contrast proves important for the sequel's unity since in both plots the mainstream perspective is momentarily subverted in climactic scenes in an unexpected refocusing of the action through the limited awareness of a previously marginal character. The "reto provocado por el insulto del bárbaro marqués" that leads to Julián's exile is transmitted through the imagination of the six-year-old Perucho.²² Perucho's argument with his father, after learning from Gabriel that he and Manola are siblings, is barely audible to "El Gallo," Sabel's husband, who eavesdrops from behind a closed door. Both scenes remain ambiguous, showing Perucho and "El Gallo" to be imperfect focalizers through whom we experience the relativity of perception and the indeterminacy of fiction at the plot's most crucial juncture.

The treatment of perspective dramatizes a notion that is implicit in the prose style and essential to the conceptual unity of the sequel: that absolute truth, a fallacy, is to be subordinated to the interplay of dichotomous modes of understanding and to the relativity of aesthetic response. A further coordinate of this notion can be traced in the interweaving of the third-person narrative and interior monologue. Although Pardo Bazán's reliance on the latter increases with time,²³ the degree to which the former predominates in *Los pazos* and the latter in *La madre naturaleza* can be compared with the antitheses embodied by two character types: the priest, characterized by his actions, and the soldier-scholar, who is portrayed as one who reads and meditates. Their meeting at Nucha's tomb is fundamental for the implications of this dichotomy. The sensorial description of the starry sky, dark woods, aromatic flowers, and "fatuous" human forms glosses the battle between "la imaginación" and "la razón" waging "en el espíritu de Gabriel" (MN, 246-47). As "reason" gazes upon "faith," we experience the synthesis of diverse modes of consciousness cast in a stylistic framework that is thoroughly impressionistic.

Such a synthesis is a prime example of the influence Cervantes began to exercise on Pardo Bazán's writing in particular and the Spanish novel in general during the

²² In "Los pazos de Ulloa el naturalismo y Henry James" (135-36), Darío Villanueva describes Perucho as an "observador imperfecto" and states that "esta burlona sustitución de adanismo por infantilismo representa más un juego de ocultamiento y desdén hacia la 'objetividad' de la supuesta novela experimental que 'a symbolic affirmation of primeval innocence,' como afirma en su perspicaz artículo Maurice Hemingway." See also M. Hemingway's "Grace, Nature, Naturalism and Pardo Bazán." *FMLS*, 16, 346.

²³ "The crucial factor in Pardo Bazán's development is not a change of milieu or atmosphere, but an increasing interest in psychology, and the turning-point is [. . .] *Los pazos de Ulloa* [. . .]. Whereas before she saw the novelist's activity as being fundamentally the depiction of the external world, now she saw it as being the dramatization of human psychology": Hemingway, *Emilia Pardo Bazán*, 3-4.

1880's.²⁴ Reception of the *vate* in nineteenth-century Spain appears to be conditioned by the contemporary dialectal thought structures that are reflected in the *schema* of these novels and of which the polarity faith-reason is but the first example. Another is the interplay of city and country, a problem that is latent in the line taken as Pardo Bazán's naturalist credo: "la aldea, cuando se crefa uno en ella y no sale de ella jamás, envilece, empobrece y embrutece" (*PU*, 24). Although voiced by the third-person narrator, the statement reveals Julián's urban attitude toward nature that is implicit in his reasons for taking Don Pedro to Santiago (to find a bride, to seek spiritual salvation) and, by contrast, in his first impression of the *pazo*: "no consentía la oscuridad distinguir más que sus imponentes proporciones, escondiéndose las líneas y detalles en la negrura del ambiente" (*PU*, 15). The building's mysterious, imposing, and somber appearance is diametrically opposed to the ideal city—"calles anchas, mucha regularidad en las construcciones, todo nuevo y flamante" (*PU*, 91)—as imagined by the rural *marqués*. The dichotomous rendering of these images is rooted in a conception of literary space that is manifest in the sequel's frame. Julián's arrival from and Gabriel's return to the city sets Ulloa off as a world apart, where mystery and fantasy, projected as civilization's antitheses, are understood as the basis of their experience at the estate.

The urban and rural are delineated in the conception of space much as the sacred and the profane are contrasted in the protagonist's vision of woman. This is most apparent in Julián's impression of Sabel. As one of a cohort of witch-like servants who gather for evening seances in the kitchen, Sabel dances lewdly throughout the night at the *feria* and conducts herself, as mentioned, in a lascivious manner. Her "primitive" (read: *natural*) roots, reflected in her father's name (*Primitivo*) are reinforced by his tacit consent to her behavior and make her the female embodiment of an untamed "madre naturaleza." As a sign of nature's Dionysian/Belarminian impulse—disorder, proliferation, excess—she counterbalances Julián's idealization of Nucha's civilized, Apollonian restraint.

If man, woman, and space are the coordinates by which Pardo Bazán represents reality as a totality, their meaning stems from their arrangement as a fugue of binary opposites: reason-faith, harlot-saint, country-city. Taken with the elements of style discussed above, they cause the reader to envision the protagonist's consciousness as a gestalt under which all patterns of opposition may be subsumed. This gestalt is shaped by Julián's perception of the "Hell-burnt" hunters into whose web of political, social, and religious immorality the protagonist falls. It is projected in the "maleza" of original sin, Gabriel's nemesis, lived out by Perucho and Manola. The hunters, the "maleza," Sabel, and the *pazo's* imposing facade convert Ulloa into the menacing *other* against which the protagonist's self-image is profiled. Yet since this *other* issues from the protagonist's own imagination, we may infer that the web is of his own making. It represents the threatening, subconscious drive that emerges when man abandons

²⁴ Like many of her contemporaries, Pardo Bazán saw in Cervantes's synthesis of realism and idealism the basis for Naturalism. The *Quijote* thus became a prototype and standard by which Spanish novelists tried to claim Naturalism as an autochthonous tradition. Mariano López-Sanz discusses this issue in *Naturalismo y espiritualismo en la novelística de Galdós y Pardo Bazán*, 35-53 and 137 ff.

the avenues of urban restraint, harmony and clarity, faith and reason, his tools for harnessing the will.²⁵

The protagonist's consciousness thus becomes the nucleus of a dialectical knowledge structure in which oppositions are established only to be neutralized. The immediate is distanced as "awesome," the wild is internalized in the ordered (*ordained*) mind-set, the profane is rendered dubious as a figment of Julián's prudish imagination. Self and *other* are essentially one and, as such, form the basis for the schematic unity of the sequel. The frame created by the protagonist's initial impression of the estate and departing glance back into the valley can be related to this notion. This frame establishes the metaphoric link between Ulloa's inner world and man's inner space, a metaphor that converts reality into the profile of personal experience.

Personal experience, in turn, is paradigmatic of collective experience, a fact that becomes apparent if we consider the contextual circumstances to which these patterns refer. This is apparent, for example, in the division of the literary space into city and country, a commonplace in late nineteenth-century fiction that can be related to Pardo Bazán's biography.²⁶ The author was from La Coruña, an urban enclave in an agrarian region. She was a foreigner at home, where she felt oppressed by the "fuerteras cadenas" that tied her to her "comarcas,"²⁷ no less than a resident in Madrid, where she established residence upon her father's death (in 1890, when she was 39 years old) and participated in activities at the *Ateneo*. Her aristocratic aspirations were tempered by certain proletarian sympathies that developed with time.²⁸ As a feminist she retained a certain nostalgia for the old order. The dialectical basis of Pardo Bazán's writing, rooted in the contradictions of her personal experience, can be taken as the hallmark of a society on the threshold of industrialization.

A similar connection may be established between the interplay of narrative styles and the transitory state of the Spanish novel which wavers during this period between realism and idealism, positivism and spiritualism, traditionalism and cosmopolitanism. As mentioned, this situation provoked a series of literary debates in which Pardo Bazán participated with her essay, *La cuestión palpitante* (1883). She thereby introduced Zola's Naturalism to the Spanish public, passing judgment on his "experimental"

²⁵ This counters Sherman H. Eoff's assertion that nature, in Pardo Bazán's novel, is exclusively external to man, portrayed as a force which "hovers over," and not in, the individual. See *The Modern Spanish Novel: Comparative Essays Examining the Philosophical Impact of Science on Fiction* (New York: NYU, 1961) Ch. 4, "The Deification of the Unconscious Process," 109-115.

²⁶ And to that of other authors from the periphery who wrote about their native provinces. One thinks of Leopoldo Alas's treatment of Asturias in "¡Adiós, Corderal," for example, and Gabriel Miró's later portrayal of "Oleza" (Orihuela) in *El obispo leproso* and *Nuestro padre San Daniel*.

²⁷ "Ya ve U. qué fuertes cadenas me ligan a estas comarcas; no necesito encarecer a V. lo poco que ofrecen para la vida interior, y supongo que no encontraré presunción ridícula que le diga que no llenan la aspiración de trato ilustrador que yo tengo (. . .)" Letter to Francisco Giner de los Ríos dated March 21, 1877. Quoted by Francisca González Arias in "A Voice not an Echo: Emilia Pardo Bazán and the Modern Novel in France and Spain" (DAI: Harvard, 1985). The latter includes valuable citations from the *condesa's* letters to Francisco Giner de los Ríos, Narcis Oller, and Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo. Also of note is Carmen Bravo-Villasante's *Vida y obra de Emilia Pardo Bazán* (Madrid: 1962).

²⁸ Leda Schiavo ("Emilia Pardo Bazán y Francisco Giner de los Ríos." *Ínsula*, 346, 1, 14) describes Pardo Bazán's transition from *carlista* to *anti-carlista*, considering this change to be typical of the upper class in Restoration Spain.

tendencias. Her declared preference for *realism*, defined as a more “complete” literary form, serves to explain the eclectic nature of her thinking as reflected in the dialectical framework of her sequel.²⁹

The notion of a “Catholic Naturalism,” taken by many as a contradiction in terms, reflects the philosophical tensions that arise in this sequel and in *La cuestión palpitante*. The influence of scientific determinism is felt, for example, in the description of character – Julián is “linfático-nervioso,” Máximo Juncal has an “amarillez biliosa” – in Nucha’s epilepsy, which recurs in Manola, in the preponderance of words like *raza* and *sangre*, and in the various elements that portray the physiological and psychological cohesiveness of the Pardo clan. Such factors contrast, nonetheless, with the author’s concern for spiritual redemption. Their synthesis is signaled by the priest’s final statement to Gabriel – “lo que la naturaleza yerra, lo enmienda la gracia” (MN, 316) – and is rendered pictorial when both the Darwinist doctor and village priest intervene in treating Manola, the first with medicine, the second by supporting her decision to retire to a convent. While recalling the episode of Nucha’s childbirth in *Los pazos*, in which Julián is as instrumental as the “representante de las ciencias humanas,” the scene anticipates Picasso’s “Science and Charity” (1896), in which the doctor and the nun represent iconographically the dialectical thinking that characterizes Restoration Spain.

These reflections lead us to posit in conclusion the sequel’s place in literary history with respect to its reception. This place may be defined according to those aspects that most facilitate our processing these texts as a unity: the protagonist’s psychological experience, understood as a quest for individuation, and the schema, which is manifest in patterns of opposition and tied to notions of relativity. The sequel thus exhibits a degree of indeterminacy that can in turn be related to the nascent modernity characteristic of Spanish culture in the 1880’s. In *Los pazos de Ulloa* and *La madre naturaleza*, this modernity is apparent in features generally associated with modernist fiction, such as the subordination of the concrete to the abstract, the material to the psychological, the typical to the quintessential, and the fixity of message to the relativity of aesthetic response.

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²⁹ “Si es *real* cuanto tiene existencia verdadera y efectiva, el *realismo* en el arte nos ofrece una teoría más ancha, completa y perfecta que el *naturalismo*. Comprende y abarca lo natural y lo espiritual, el cuerpo y el alma, y concilia y reduce a unidad la oposición del naturalismo y del idealismo racional. En el realismo cabe todo, menos las exageraciones y desvaríos de dos escuelas extremas, y por precisa consecuencia, exclusivistas” (*La cuestión palpitante*, en *Obras completas*, I (Madrid, 1891): 67-68).