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Irrational Maps: The Gothic *misterios* of Madrid and Barcelona

By

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Doctor of Philosophy

Spanish

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Irrational Maps: The Gothic *misterios* of Madrid and Barcelona

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M.A., University of South Florida, 2005

Advisor: Hazel Gold, Ph.D.

An abstract of
A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the
James T. Laney School of Graduate Studies of Emory University
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Abstract

Irrational Maps: The Gothic *misterios* of Madrid and Barcelona
By Cristina Delano

The dissertation analyzes the *misterio'*s use of the Gothic mode in an expression of the anxieties endemic to urban life and modernity. The Spanish *misterios* were first inspired by Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*, and are representative of an era when Spanish readers were avid consumers of European literature. The *misterios* portray urban spaces as sinister and often uncanny by revealing the depravity and intrigue beneath the façade of the rational modern city. In the dissertation I analyze four *misterios*: *Los misterios de Madrid* by Juan Martínez Villergas (1844-1845), *Los misterios de Barcelona* by José Nicasio Milà de Roca (1844), *Los misterios de Madrid* by Antonio Muñoz Molina (1992) and *Los misterios de Barcelona* by Antonio- Prometeo Moya (2006). In my discussion of the nineteenth-century *misterios*, I argue that the novels employ the Gothic to explore issues of political legitimacy and the transition from the *antiguo régimen* to a modern nation-state. The *misterio* genre returns at the end of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century, and while these novels self-consciously and often comically adopt the tropes of the nineteenth-century *misterios*, they also reveal the anxieties brought about by Spain's place in the globalized world as well as the lingering legacy of Francoism.

The Gothic is a discourse that expresses unease about the consequences of modernity. I propose that the Gothic mode provides a forum for the Spanish *misterio* writers to explore the traumas of history while also navigating the trepidation felt towards progress.

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INTRODUCTION

IRRATIONAL MAPS:

THE GOTHIC *MISTERIOS* OF MADRID AND BARCELONA

The urban mystery novel was one of the most popular and influential literary genres of the nineteenth century. Inaugurated by Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* (1842-1843), the mystery genre spread throughout Europe and the Americas, both in the form of translations of Sue's novel and works inspired by *Les Mystères de Paris*. Spain was one of the foremost consumers of this literary sensation. Wenceslao Ayguals de Izco is credited for bringing the *misterios* genre to Spain; Ayguals's publishing house distributed the Spanish translation of Sue's novel and Ayguals's own literary works, the most famous being the Sue-inspired *María o la hija de un jornalero* (1845) (Benítez 11).[1] Ayguals's popularity is indicative of the growing readership and publishing industry, especially of the *folletín,* the original publication format for much of Ayguals's work. Juan Ignacio Ferreras estimates that between 1840 and 1900, two to three thousand *folletines* were published in Spain (12). As Marshall Berman notes, the *folletín* was

[1] Fluent in English and French, Ayguals de Izco translated various foreign novels into Spanish (Benítez 11). The first printing of *María* sold out in a matter of days, and by 1849 there were seven editions of the complete novel in print (Benítez 45). Ayguals was acclaimed for bringing about a literary renovation in Spain; in 1845, the periodical *El Español* declared that because of Ayguals de Izco's work, Spanish novels would be "el objeto de examen de parte de críticos extranjeros" (Benítez 1). Indeed, before the emergence of Fernán Caballero, Ayguals de Izco's was the Spanish author with the widest European distribution.

essentially an urban genre, appearing in newspapers to a vast audience (147-148).[2] In Spain, Madrid and Barcelona were the centers of the publishing industry and its citizens were also its intended audience, followed by the denizens of the provinces (Ferreras 23-24).[3] This was in part due to economics; publishers of serial novels typically produced 10,000 copies per week, to be bought by subscribers and weekly buyers; this number of readers was typically found in the cities (31).

Edward Baker has defined some general characteristics of the mid-century *folletines*. First, many are set in a relatively contemporary historical context. With their urban settings, most *folletines* doubled as city guides and, along with their portraits of local residents, they served as *cuadros de costumbres*. Many of the discourses of the *folletín* serve the social or political message that the author explicitly transmits throughout the novel. The *folletines* are episodic in nature, and combined with the multiplicity of genres, the result is often a markedly incoherent text (90). Baker sees the *folletines* as foundational narratives, recording the establishment of the new order (103).

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[2] Antonio Fernández García has highlighted the importance of the daily press to Spain's modernization process. In the nineteenth century the newspaper was the primary source of social communication that was of supreme importance to the political engagement of the literate middle classes ("Introducción" 41). The press was essential to the liberal movement; Deane E. Neubauer considers newspapers to have been fundamental to the transition from the *antiguo régimen* to the liberal age (42). Newspaper readers were primarily an urban public; as Fernández García notes, in the countryside oral transmission of information, via the pulpit, was still the predominant form of social communication (42). Benedict Anderson (*Imagined Communities*) has also highlighted the role of the press in nation formation.

[3] Effectively all serial novels were published in Madrid or Barcelona; this was due in part to the viability of the two cities' publishing industries, but also because the novels were marketed to urban readers (Ferreras 23-24). Botrel has noted that Spain's literacy rates were notably uneven; there were far more readers in the cities than in the provinces. This also had social implications; while in Madrid Dumas's and Sue's works were consumed by a range of social groups, in the provinces the same works were only read by the upper classes (Botrel 52-53).

In this sense, the 'misterios' presented by the novels are in part the mysteries of the new society, one that the *folletín* readers are learning to navigate (104). Indeed, it is the task of the author to "reveal" these mysteries to the reader, and to guide the reader through what Baker calls the "laberinto" of discourses and plots of the *folletín* (99). For Baker, author and reader create a complex relationship in which the author tantalizes the reader with evermore maze-like mysteries, while the reading public demands more of the same from the author (107-108).

It is interesting to note that Baker's description of the *folletín* itself is of a labyrinth, a foundational Gothic space. For Baker, the *folletín* is itself a structural mystery that causes bewilderment and exhilaration, both effects of the Gothic sublime. The Gothic mode is an essential component of the urban mystery novel.[4] In his 1870 "Observaciones sobre la novela contemporánea en España" Galdós remarks that the public's taste for Gothic melodrama is insaitable: "El público ha dicho: Quiero traidores pálidos y de mirada siniestra, meretrices con aureola, duquesas averiadas, jorobados románticos, adulterios, extremos de amor y odio" (Pérez Galdós "Observaciones" 319-320). In other words, Gothic motifs sold novels. The urban mystery novel portrays the city as a Gothic space for the quintessential modern reason: to make a profit. However, the Gothic mode also reflects the anxieties caused by the modernity that the *misterio* genre helps its readers navigate.

In his text, *The Urban Revolution*, Henri Lefebvre proposes that society has been completely urbanized in the sense that the "urban society" that arises from

[4] Critics of the Gothic prefer the term "mode" to "genre" to describe the Gothic. A mode is a "broad, but identifiable literary method, mood or manner, that is not tied exclusively to a particular form or genre" ("mode").

industrialization has taken over and absorbed agricultural production (2-3).[5] Lefebvre describes the city as both transparent and mysterious; the city contains visible and legible signs of authority and wealth, but there are also hidden powers that conspire behind the façade of the ordered city (120). Lefebvre sees urban life as sending constantly ambiguous messages that threaten to collide (121). Lefebvre does not see the urban as a clearly defined "object" (what he associates with the word "city") but rather as a "virtual object," an "ongoing social practice, an urban practice in process of formation" (16-17). By seeing the urban as a phenomenon rather than a discrete object, Lefebvre attempts to decipher the contradictions and the political operations of the city. Lefebvre finds the urban to be rife with contradictions; the city is 'quantifiable' and 'calculable,' except when it is not. Everything is legible, except when it is hidden. The urban *misterio* genre functions in this context as a guide to the urban environment. By locating the mysteries in areas known by a majority of the readers, the *misterios* create a common ground among the various readers of the *folletines*. Benedict Anderson and Jürgen Habermas have both discussed the importance of the press in the creation of the public sphere, and the *folletín* functions in much the same way. The *misterios* propose to be the reader's guide to the hidden and unknown aspects of urban life. The *misterios* simultaneously prey upon the

[5] Louis Wirth defines urbanization as not only "the process by which persons are attracted to a place called the city and incorporated into its system of life. It refers also to that cumulative accentuation of characteristics distinctive of the mode of life which is associated with the growth of cities" (61). He defines 'urbanism' as the "complex of traits which makes up the characteristic mode of life in cities" (63). It simultaneously refers to the physical space of the city, the social organization of the space, and a set of attitudes and ideas that create certain kinds of collective behavior (74). Wirth notes that urbanism, while most often found in cities, is not exclusive to these spaces; any place that feels the influence of the city way of live experiences urbanism.

urban dweller's fears of the uncontrollable city and provide a public sphere that unifies the fragments of urban life.

In this dissertation I will examine the Gothic mode in the Spanish *misterio* novel. I will analyze two *folletines* from the nineteenth century, *Los misterios de Madrid* by Juan Martínez Villergas (1844-1845) and *Los misterios de Barcelona* by José Nicasio Milà de Roca (1844). I will then look at two postmodern *misterios*, *Los misterios de Madrid* by Antonio Muñoz Molina (1992) and *Los misterios de Barcelona* by Antonio-Prometeo Moya (2006). I have chosen to situate my study of the urban Gothic in narratives of the cities of Madrid and Barcelona; as the largest cities in Spain they have received the most narrative attention, and they also have claimed historically larger readerships than other areas of Spain. Physically and architecturally, the two cities contain both remains of their medieval past and nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century attempts to modernize and control the urban space. I am also interested in what these two cities have to say in terms of modernity, for in some ways the two cities represent competing experiences of modernity; Madrid has historically been the political and hegemonic center of Spain, while Barcelona experienced a stronger economic and industrial modernization. In a certain sense Madrid and Barcelona have been involved in their own Gothic family narrative; much of the narrative of Barcelona's imaginary deals with real or felt repression from Madrid, which itself raises questions of power and legitimacy. Part of Barcelona's resentment towards Madrid has stemmed from the belief that Madrid is an illegitimate capital and the cause of all Spain's ills. As Santos Juliá notes, Madrid is characterized as a "capital artificial" that failed to become the dynamic urban center Spain needed (317). Madrid's perpetual rival, Barcelona, has historically

positioned itself as the opposite of Madrid: more European, more modern, more sophisticated. The two cities' rivalry is also inscribed in the struggle that has marked Spain's political history: the choice between a strong centralized government in Madrid, or the preservation and expansion of regional autonomies. The city and urban literature have had a problematic position in the Spanish imaginary. The city has often been seen as the source of corruption and vice, while the countryside has been portrayed as the site of what was good and authentic about Spain (Wynn 135). Consequently, urban literature (i.e., the popular novel) was seen as exemplifying inferior mass culture, while literature associated with traditional folk culture has been viewed more favorably (Sieburth 6). The Gothic *misterios* of Spain's two largest cities provide a forum to examine the tensions and anxieties of Spain's experience of modernity and its own identity.

The Gothic Mode

The Gothic is perhaps the quintessential literary mode of the modern age. It emerges in eighteenth-century England in response to radical paradigm shifts brought about by the Enlightenment. The Gothic sought to express what was not "reasonable" about the world and human existence; it is a mode that at its core questions the "progress" and "improvements" of modernity by suggesting that the allegedly dark and barbarous past has not completely vanished. The earliest Gothic writers looked to the literature of the Middle Ages to find a way to express their "disordered" thoughts, medieval literature represented the non-Enlightened and un-modern worldview. These writers also looked to the ruins of medieval monasteries and churches that were scattered across the English countryside; these ruins were the uncanny presence of the medieval past in the

enlightened present.[6] Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* is considered to be the first Gothic novel, and it establishes most of the conventions that have defined the mode. Walpole presents his novel as a translation of an Italian manuscript found in the ancestral home of a Catholic family in the north of England, which begins the Gothic trope of introducing "found" and translated documents as part of the narrative. *The Castle of Otranto* tells the story of a ruling family that is governing illegitimately; the ancestor of the current king, Manfred, usurped the throne from the rightful heir, and the family is punished for its sin with the mysterious death of the king's only son. Walpole's novel reveals the fears of corrupt nobility and its abuse of authority, and in so doing raises questions of legitimacy that will preoccupy the transition from the feudal society to the modern liberal state.

David Punter describes the Gothic as a post-Enlightenment mode where the irrational past returns to haunt the modern present. One of the hallmarks of the nineteenth century is the negotiation of emerging modernities with the traditional ways of life that had existed since the Middle Ages. As Berman has noted, the Western public, beginning in approximately 1790, has an acute sense of living in an historic and revolutionary age. However, this public can also "remember what it is like to live materially and spiritually in worlds that are not modern at all" (17). It is through this tension between the rapid arrival of the new and the endurance of the old that the Gothic comes into play. The Gothic is essentially a modern mode but it is preoccupied with the past that modernity struggles to leave behind. Thus, the nineteenth-century *folletines*, with their modern

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[6] In his essay "The Uncanny," Freud defines the uncanny (*unheimlich)* as something familiar that is rendered unfamiliar through repression (214). Freud considers literature uncannier than real life, and literature that takes place in 'real life' is uncannier still (214).

system of mass circulation and references to recent political events, clearly fall into what was ‘modern’ in the nineteenth century, but, by the same token, their Gothic motifs and plot structures reference an earlier, un-modern time.

Gothic literature is generally defined by an accepted set of motifs, plots, and effects. In her seminal study *The Coherence of Gothic Conventions*, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick demonstrates how Gothic conventions navigate three types of ‘content’: the phenomenological, dealing with the spatial and the temporal; psychoanalytic, dealing with sexual repression; and the structuralist, dealing with words and the relationships between signs and meanings (6). A text can be considered ‘Gothic’ if it presents forbidding or mysterious environs, such as dark, narrow streets, haunted houses, and dangerous neighborhoods. Gothic narratives are populated by ghostly or cadaverous figures, lecherous and corrupt aristocrats, and pursued young women. The plot structure of a narrative can also mark it as Gothic; one of the most prevalent themes of Gothic literature is legitimacy, which is often explored via a family narrative featuring a long-lost son or daughter of doubtful or unknown parentage. This family narrative often involves questions of inheritance, monetary or not, that need to be resolved to restore order to the family. Another marker of the Gothic is the attempt to produce a sublime effect in the reader. Edmund Burke’s essay, “A Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful,” proposes that the sublime is achieved at the moment of terror, when the self is at the precipice of the unknown. The Gothic takes this notion a step further; instead of resulting in transcendence, the Gothic sublime leaves nothingness.

As Anne Williams notes, it would seem the Gothic, like the Western and the pastoral, is a genre that is defined primarily by its setting (14). However, a work may be Gothic despite lacking any or all of its classic motifs. What makes a text Gothic appears to be something almost ineffable; the Gothic mode itself is the "other" that language cannot fully describe (23). Williams defines the Gothic as a "narrative… organized by the implied latent structure of the patriarchal family—and its related symbolic manifestations" (249). The Gothic tale often revolves around the revelation of a secret that changes the nature of familial relationships. These mysteries are constructed around the notion of social boundaries and the consequences of transgression (12). The Gothic is concerned with the patriarchal systems of society, such as family, monarchy, and the Church. The existence of family secrets, illegitimate heirs, and corrupt priests and aristocrats points to the emerging sense of the instability of the pillars of the *antiguo régimen*.

Despite the predictability of their main elements, the stories of Gothic novels often have a difficult time getting told; there is often missing information, such as a manuscript that is incomplete, or the story is told from multiple perspectives or narrators. Here one of the Gothic's most notable themes, the "unspeakable," appears; for all of its apparent predictability, the Gothic is anything but a transparent mode, and its relationship to language is often tenuous and indirect (Sedgwick 15). The unspeakable, whether it emerges at the horror felt upon witnessing a terrible scene, or a dark secret that has struggled to be revealed, reveals the limits of language to fully communicate; as Sedgwick notes, "here is an interpersonal barrier where no barrier ought to be—language is properly just the medium that should flow between people, mitigating their physical

and psychic separateness—but once this barrier has come into being, it is breached only at the cost of violence and deepened separateness" (17-18). The Gothic explores the possibilities and limitations of language and meaning. Gothic narratives often feature manuscripts, translations, and embedded stories that "dramatize both the materiality of writing and its implicit inadequacies" (Williams 67). Gothic language is often evasive and contradictory, and plots are inspired by misunderstood or malfunctioning words (69). These tricks of language produce what Williams calls an "uncanniness of meaning" (81) that is fundamental to the Gothic.

Many readings of the Gothic have employed psychoanalysis to explain the 'otherness' of the Gothic and its effect on the reader. Freud's theory of the uncanny, a term which is used to describe the familiar unfamiliarity of Gothic anxiety, posits that we consider uncanny anything that "fulfills the condition of touching those residues of animistic mental activity within us and bringing them to expression" (240-241). Freud also explores the idea of the double, which occurs when part of the ego is treated like an object (235). The uncanny is something familiar but long repressed. Freud's theory of the "family romance" also resonates with the Gothic's concerns with legitimacy and the revelation of secrets. According to Freud, in the process of a child's attempt to differentiate himself from his parents, the child fantasizes about his 'real' parents, who inevitably belong to a higher social class. The motif of family romance in literature features the appearance of a long-lost child or the revelation of hitherto unknown aristocratic or wealthy parentage. Williams employs Lacan's theory of the Law of the Father or "the Symbolic" and Kristeva's theories on abjection in her reading of the Gothic. Both Lacan and Kristeva's theories build on Freud's theories on the rejection and

the repression of the mother and the female. In the Law of the Father, the signified is linked to the prohibited maternal body (46). In Kristeva's *Powers of Horror: An Essay on Abjection* (English version 1982) horror comes from the pre-self's separation from the mother. The abject is the reaction caused by the confrontation of the self with one's materiality and the crisis of meaning when the self confronts the other (75). Williams's central thesis on the Gothic is that it derives its effect of fear and horror from the presence of the female "other" in the ruins and dark spaces (xi).

Williams asserts that the Symbolic is what gives romance and the Gothic their ambiguous relationships to meaning:

> Like the Freudian uncanny, the conventions of romance reinstate primitive, pre-Symbolic modes of significance. They place us in a world where coincidence is no accident, where magic substitutes for causality, and where (because the wish is as strong as the deed), the very boundaries between mind and nature become doubtful. […] The conventions of romance are thus literally "unrealistic," because they ignore the principles that constitute "reality." In psychoanalytic terms, romance regresses us toward the moment at which the infant emerges from the pulsions of the Semiotic into its *procès* as speaking subject—the realm of the Kristevan "poetic."
>
> Thus everything in romance *seems* potentially meaningful because its conventions evoke that stage of development where everything *is* perhaps meaningful. One recognizes (re-cognizes) that moment in the speaking subject's history when one knows that "meaning" exists, but has not yet fully internalized the Symbolic order's "rules" about which things signify and which do not. (82)

Beyond the psychological labyrinth of its characters, the Gothic is primarily concerned with the effect it produces in the reader. The concept of the sublime is also essential to the Gothic. The word "sublime" derives from the Latin *sub+limen*, "up to the limit." The Kantian conception of the sublime is vast and oceanic, while the Gothic sublime is dark, subterranean, and claustrophobic (39). Kant's idea of the sublime addresses the mind's confrontation with "an idea too large for expression, too self-consuming to be contained in any adequate form of representation, but which idea, as representation, in a momentary surrender of the law of reason the mind nevertheless grasps" (Mishra 19). Edmund Burke posits that the sublime is felt when the subject feels the tension between mortal danger and the knowledge that she herself is not actually in any danger at all. Later conceptions of the sublime would lean towards the Gothic:

> In this respect Schiller's connection of the sublime with "the pure daemon" in us, as both an ontology and a phenomenology, Hegel's incorporation of negativity in the miserable corporeality of the Real, and Schopenhauer's decisive rewriting of the sublime through the nirvana principle (an oceanic consciousness that is clearly linked to the Indian sublime […]) begin to shift the sublime toward the Gothic. (Mishra 36)

The Gothic sublime is inscribed with the threat of violence. Mishra notes that the traditional definitions of the sublime are geared towards the male subject, but the female sublime is charged with the threat of violation (9). While Burke's and Kant's conceptualizations of the sublime involve an encounter with danger, vastness, and the indescribable, they both result in a feeling of human transcendence. The Gothic sublime,

however, provides no such relief. Meaning is never given, and beauty is not achieved, for the Gothic only finds confusion and terror (17).

A similar distinction can be made between the Gothic and its sister mode, melodrama. Peter Brooks, in his study *The Melodramatic Imagination*, has delineated the links between melodrama and the Gothic. After defining melodrama as a mode of "excess" and "heightened dramatization" (ix) characterized by the "desire to express all" (4), he goes on to show how the Gothic and melodrama share "the preoccupation with evil as a real, irreducible force in the world, a constantly menacing outburst" (20). Both modes are fundamentally political; both emerge in the aftermath of the Enlightenment and the French Revolution and address the breakdown of traditional power structures and the emergence of new political orders. The difference between the two modes lies in the ways they address this issue. Melodrama is concerned with morality and the triumph of virtue; it aims to articulate and reveal what is just in an age where the sacred has been discredited (15). The Gothic is decidedly less optimistic; it does not reveal, but instead obscures. Both the Gothic and melodrama provide forums to explore the complex anxieties of the modern world, but where melodrama gives the reader resolution, the Gothic provides none. Following Brooks, Wadda Ríos-Font states: "If melodrama is ultimately an attempt to eradicate all evil and to make moral reality the whole of reality, the Gothic can be seen as its negative, even the result of its failure" (174-175).

Just as Brooks sees melodrama as the "principal mode for uncovering…the essential moral universe in a post-sacred era" (15), the Gothic mode has provided a vocabulary for thinkers to describe the complexities of the modern world. Marx famously declared that the "specter" of communism was haunting Europe, and the motif of the

ghost has become part of the discourse used to describe the persistence of the past as well as the fears of the future. Following Marx, Derrida coins the term "hauntology" to describe the nature of the specter: that which exists but is at the same time a simulacrum of existence. When a ghost appears, it does so for both the first and last time, for "a specter is always a *revenant*. One cannot control its comings and goings because it always *begins by coming back*" (Derrida 11). *Specters of Marx* aims to analyze the "certain haunting obsession that seems […] to organize the *dominant* influence on discourse today" (45). Hauntology is that state of being-yet-not-being.[7] Derrida notes that when Marx was describing the specter of communism, he was being more prophetic than descriptive; the ghost of communism was not yet present, it was "there without being there" (125). The specter is "what one imagines, what one thinks one sees" (125). An alliance is formed to fight the specter, and it believes that although the specter was left in the past, the alliance must conjure away the specter when it returns to menace the future (48).

Later, Derrida explores the various meanings of the word 'conjuration,' which in French contains the meaning of two English words. 'Conjuration' is derived from the Latin *conjurare* "to swear together." Its first meaning in both French and Spanish is a conspiracy, "an alliance […] sometimes a political alliance, more or less secret, if not tacit […]. It is a matter of neutralizing a hegemony or overturning some power" (58). Conjuration also has a more fantastic meaning: "the magical incantation to evoke or to bring forth the voice, to convoke a charm or spirit" (50). Conjuration also contains the opposite action; it can mean to exorcise or destroy a demonic force (59). To conjure is a

[7] Jo Labanyi and others have used Derrida's ideas on hauntology and specters to analyze the *memoria*/*desmemoria* of the post-Civil War and post-Franco eras.

performative statement; the words of the conjuration bring forth or expel the spirit. However, the conjuration often has the opposite effect; while its intent can be to neutralize the power of the spirit, Derrida reminds us "the dead can often be more powerful than the living" (59-60). The 'ghost' of the exorcised spirit remains, for nothing is ever really dead and gone. The double meaning of 'conjuration' and the double existence of the specter reveal their Gothic nature. All of the *misterios* in this dissertation attempt to both invoke and exorcise various specters, whether they be the specters of the *antiguo régimen*, specters of revolution, or specters of Franco.

The Gothic is a contradictory mode; while often formulaic and predictable, it possesses at the same time a certain narrative evasiveness that reflects the anxieties it struggles to portray. The fear of the unknown and the sense of incomprehensibility are palpable in many of these urban narratives; therefore, a text may not have haunted houses or dark narrow streets, but the sense of anxiety caused by the unknowable of urban life places these texts within the Gothic mode. The Gothic mode emerged alongside the discourses of modernity, and it has proved to a mutable literary mode; the Gothic transgresses traditional categorization and is seen in movements as diverse as naturalism and postmodernism and goes beyond the notions of high and popular culture. It is fitting then that the *misterio* genre should also adapt to the times; in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, the Spanish *misterio* returned with a decidedly postmodern and self-referential character.

Gothic Spaces

Spaces are among the chief conveyers of Gothic dread; in many cases the Gothic castle or monastery becomes a character in its own right, affecting both characters and readers with the potency of its presence. Gothic spaces convey the uncanny presence of the past, the vastness of power and time, and a sublime uneasiness that permeates all Gothic literature. They are spaces of transgression where irrational and base impulses are able to escape the confines of rationality. Walpole's novel inaugurated the medieval castle as the archetypal Gothic space. While a castle is usually built to ensure the security of its inhabitants, in the Gothic novel it can become an oppressive incarcerator (Punter "Gothic" 262). The Gothic castle is always charged with meaning; a reminder of feudal times, it often symbolizes abusive and absolute power and the submission of individual rights and will (Miles 49). Within the castle walls, "one may be subjected to a force that is utterly resistant to the individual's attempt to impose his or her own order" (Punter "Gothic" 262). The identification of the castle with feudalism and corrupt aristocrats is in keeping with the Enlightenment view of the Middle Ages as barbaric and evil (Botting 5). The decay of the castle conveys notions of decadence and desolation; these castles are not productive, healthy spaces but rather are infirm and perverse. The character of the castle also infects its inhabitants; the denizens of the castle are haunted, physically or psychologically, by the secrets contained within the castle walls (Hogle 2). The castle also weakens the characters' rational defenses; they "seem to distort perception, to cause some slippage between what is natural and what is human-made" (Punter "Gothic" 259). The inhabitants of a Gothic castle often do not know what is real and what is imagined;

the darkness and irregularities of the architecture play with the character's sensibilities and force them to doubt their sense of reason.

Perhaps the most notable space that projects the oppressive chaos of the Gothic is the labyrinth. The darkness and confusion produced by the winding passages reflects the irrational and mysterious nature of the Gothic plot, as well as of the mentality of the protagonists. Often a subterranean structure, the labyrinth has clear connotations of the subconscious. In *Poetics of Space*, Gaston Bachelard notes that while "a house constitutes a body of images that give mankind proofs or illusions of stability" (47), the extreme poles of the house, the attic and the cellar, belie this stability; Bachelard cites Jung's assertion that the attic and the cellar harbor the "fears that inhabit a house", and the cellar figures the fears of the subconscious (18). For Bachelard, the cellar is "the dark entity of the house," a place where "rationalization is less rapid and less clear; also it is never definitive" (19). The cellar, like the underground labyrinth, is a place that is always dark, day or night, and even with a candle "we see shadows dancing on the dark walls" (19). Labyrinths did not always have such a reputation; in the earlier decades of the eighteenth century, for writers like Pope, Smollett, and Fielding, the labyrinth was a symbol of society, complex but unified. In the Gothic mode, the labyrinth is marked as a subversive site that challenges social rules and boundaries (Botting 81, 83).

One of the most notable adaptations of the Gothic is the shift from provincial settings to urban ones. As cities throughout Europe grew during the nineteenth century, the city became the source of newfound anxieties that the Gothic was perfectly equipped to address. Where there were once castle labyrinths and gloomy forests, now there were dark, winding streets. The menacing aristocrats or evil monks became criminals that

roamed the city while looking for victims (Botting 123). While the city has traditionally been the source of order, progress, and rational ideas, in opposition to the 'backwards' and superstitious countryside, the Gothic reveals the threatening and sometimes mysterious side of urban life. The Gothic transforms the city into a subversive space; it breaks from order and rationality to privilege instability and uncertainty (Punter "Introduction" 3). Robert Mighall has noted the contradiction inherent in the term "urban Gothic." Initially, the Gothic portrayed what was supposed to be rejected from the city (54). Victor Sage concurs, stating that the "paradigm of the horror-plot is the journey from the capital to the provinces" (8). The British Gothic authors located their tales of terror outside of the city, with the notable exception of foreign cities such as Rome or Madrid. For the British reading public, these Catholic, Southern European cities were as removed from modern London as the untamed countryside.

Mighall locates the emergence of the urban Gothic following the appearance of discourses on urban reform (54). Many of these treatises included accounts of the underbelly of urban life, and these subcultures, or the 'otherness' of the city, were in the consciousness of the otherwise unaware bourgeois public. Mighall also emphasizes the importance of historical memory in Gothic fiction, which continues to have resonance for the urban Gothic. For Mighall, to create a truly urban Gothic text, a Gothic that is of the city and not just in the city, the city needs "a concentration of memories and historical associations…[i]deally these would be expressed in an extant architectural or topographical heritage, as these areas provide the natural home for ghostly presences of imagined/projected meanings" (57).

Spanish Gothic

The Spanish Gothic has received relatively little critical attention; it has only been in the last fifteen years that studies on the Gothic in Spain began to appear. This is due in part to the dismissal of the Gothic on the part of many Hispanists. As Brad Epps and Luis Fernández Cifuentes have noted, the processes of creating literary histories have been inexorably tied to notions of nationalism and origins (12); thus, it is not surprising that a literary mode that did not "originate" in Spain has historically found little support among literary historians and critics. Another issue that has inhibited the critical reception of Spanish Gothic texts is the Gothic's association with "low" literature and culture. The Gothic has always been a popular mode, and in Spain much of the early Gothic literature was published in the *folletín* section of the newspaper or in literary magazines. Given its popularity and the nature of its publication, Gothic literature was long viewed as a low-quality entertainment for unsophisticated middle-class readers, and certainly not the kind of highbrow literature that serves to create the national canon. The renewed critical attention to the English Gothic in the late twentieth century has inspired studies on the Gothic in many other contexts, and the exploration of the Spanish Gothic seems to be well underway. David T. Gies, Rebecca Haidt, Sylvia López and Janet Pérez are among the scholars who have examined Spanish texts that exhibit Gothic characteristics.[8] José B. Monleón's 1990 monograph, *A Specter is Haunting Europe*, while principally a study of

[8] See David T Gies, "Larra, *La galería fúnebre* y el gusto por lo gótico," *Atti del IV Congreso sul Romanticismo Spagnolo e Hispanoamericano*, 4, 1987, pp. 60-68; Rebecca Haidt, "Gothic Larra," *Decimonónica: Journal of Nineteenth Century Hispanic Cultural Production,* 1.1, 2004, pp. 52-63; Sylvia López, "The Gothic Tradition in Galdós's *La sombra,"Hispania,* 81.3, 1998, pp 509-518; and Janet Pérez, "Contemporary Spanish Women Writers and the Feminine Neo-Gothic," *Romance Quarterly,* 51.2, 2004, pp. 125-140.

the fantastic, also examines the Gothic mode in Europe and in the Spanish context. In this decade there have been three doctoral dissertations that deal with the Spanish Gothic: Alan Parker-Suárez Bertsche (2000), Francisco Fernández (2004) and Leonor Juárez (2005).[9] Abigail Lee Six has recently published *Gothic Terrors: Incarceration, Duplication, and Bloodlust* (2010), a study of Gothic motifs in nineteenth-, twentieth-, and twenty-first-century Spanish literature.[10] Lee Six asserts that the Spanish Gothic is a fundamental part of modern Spanish literature, a presence "lurking in the shadows of Spanish realism, naturalism, *noventayochismo, tremendismo*, fantasy, and historical fiction" (19).

Elisa Martí-Lopez, in her book *Borrowed Words*, has studied the issue of imitation and autochthonous literature in the translations of Eugène Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* and its Spanish imitations. Martí-López focuses her analysis on *Los misterios de Barcelona* by Milà de Roca and emphasizes the political allegory present in the popular novel. Martí-López contends that the Spanish *misterios* were not just mere copies, but rather adapted Sue's model to reflect the political and social concerns of the contemporary Spanish reading public; these "imitations" formed the context from which the celebrated Spanish realist novel emerged. Martí-López does not center her discussion on the Gothic nature of the *misterios*; her discussions of genre or mode center mostly on the melodramatic aspects of these works. Martí-López's analysis does point towards issues of political legitimacy that I will argue are fundamentally Gothic concerns. My

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[9] Alan Parker-Suárez Bertsche, "The Unseen Spectre: The Gothic Mode in Nineteenth-Century Spanish Narrative;" Fernández, Francisco. "Gothic Manifestations in Late Nineteenth- and Early Twenieth-Century Spanish Writers;" and Juárez, Leonor. "Ghostly Traces: Gender and Genre in Popular Gothic Fiction of Early Nineteenth-Century Spain."
[10] Lee Six has also written *The Gothic Fiction of Adelaida García Morales: Haunting Words,* Woodbridge, UK, Tamesis, 2006.

analysis of the Spanish *misterios* will build on Martí-López's reading of the *misterios* as politically engaged novels, and I will aim to show how this political discourse is conveyed through Gothic conventions.

Gothic literature in Spain is considered to have begun with Manuel Quintana's short work *El Duque de Viseo*, a work inspired by Matthew Lewis's *Castle Spectre*. It is fitting that the first Spanish Gothic work is a reworking of an English text, for it highlights the issues of translation and appropriation that are inherent not just to the Spanish Gothic but to the Gothic itself. The first English Gothic novel, *The Castle of Otranto*, claims to be a translation of an old Italian manuscript found in the north of England; thus from its very beginnings the Gothic has toyed with notions of origin and originality. As Andre Lefebvre declares, "[t]ranslation has to do with authority and legitimacy, and ultimately with power" (cited in Hale 17). One of the reasons the body of *folletín* literature was dismissed for so long was its origins in translation and imitation. As Jo Labanyi has discussed, the foreign-inspired popular and serialized fiction of the nineteenth century was not considered "national literature" and therefore not "good literature" ("Relocating" 171). Prior to 1850, most of the European Gothic novels that appeared in translation in Spain were 'sentimental' Gothic romances. Among the earliest were Mrs. Helme's *Louisa; or, The Cottage on the Moor* (1787), which appeared in 1803 in Spain as *Luisa o la cabaña en el valle*, and Mrs. Roche's *The Children of the Abbey* (1796), published in 1808 as *Los niños de la abadía*. Ann Radcliffe's work first appeared in Spain in 1819 with *Julia o los suterráneos del Castillo de Mazzini* (*A Sicilian Romance*). The Spanish edition of Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* appeared in 1832, and M.G. Lewis's *The Monk* (*El fraileo historio del Padre Ambrosio y de la bella*

Antonia) was published in 1821. Both of these works were published in Paris, which suggests that the exiled Spanish liberals were the consumers of these texts (Hale 32). As Joan Curbet notes, the censorship of Fernando VII's regime prohibited the circulation of many Gothic texts, which is not surprising given the anti-clerical tenor of many of these works (174).

With the death of Fernando VII and the rise of the liberal state, Spain was much more open to the foreign reading market. However, the consumption of these novels presented a challenge to the nation-building discourses of the nineteenth century. Returning to Labanyi's argument, foreign translations or imitations were seen as un-Spanish literature, and therefore not "what people should read if they wanted to be considered worthy members of 'Spanish society'" ("Relocating" 171). Benedict Anderson's well-known discussion of the importance of the realist novel in creating a sense of nationhood has led many literary critics to privilege this form of literature and dismiss popular literary forms. However, over-reliance on the realist novel gives only a limited view of the literary culture of nineteenth-century Spain. In order to have a more complete understanding of the Spanish nineteenth-century reading public and the multitude of discourses that created a sense of the national and the modern, it is necessary to include popular literary production (Labanyi "Relocating" 180).

My discussion of the foreignness of the Gothic does not mean that every Gothic work in Spain was a translation or an imitation of a foreign model. José Cadalso's *Noches lúgubres* (1789-1790), which Russell Sebold has proclaimed to be Europe's first Romantic literary work, uses the Gothic tropes of the cemetery, grave robbing, and necrophilia (80-84). José de Espronceda's *El estudiante de Salamanca* provides a

macabre twist to the traditional Don Juan seduction narrative. Authors as diverse as Blanco White, Pardo Bazán, and Galdós all employ Gothic tropes in their writing, a phenomenon that supports the assertion that the Gothic, rather than being the black sheep of nineteenth-century letters, was in fact one of the principal literary discourses of the century. Agustín Pérez Zaragoza's *Galería fúnebre* presents several short Gothic tales, but the author insists that he will not commit an "exhumación de los sueños nocturnos de la sepulcral Radcliff ni los misterios de Udolfo" (55). Instead, Pérez Zaragoza claims that he will only present tales that are "horrorosos y verídicos" (47). Pérez Zaragoza asserts that he has little want for material: "¿no tenemos bastante recorriendo las atrocidades que han cometido los puñales en épocas más modernas… La Europa moderna es una fuente inagotable de fenómenos y de prodigios innumerables" (60). Many of the atrocities to which Pérez Zaragoza refers are the result of the seemingly endless stream of wars suffered by Spain in the nineteenth century. Pérez Zaragoza's insistence on only using 'true' horrors for his collection highlights one of the important functions of the Gothic: the Gothic provides a discursive vocabulary and imaginary to portray the tumultuous events of a society experiencing radical social, political, and cultural changes. These changes were often coupled with violence, which produced a sense of chaos and disorder. Pérez Zaragoza felt he did not have to resort to fantasy to convey this sense of anxiety, for the modern world was proving to be a font of terrible events. Pérez Zaragoza wrote in response to the Spanish War of Independence, which Francisco de Goya also portrayed in his series *Los desastres de la guerra*. Goya's nightmarish landscapes of cadavers, disorder, and devastation use Gothic horror to portray the harsh reality of modern war.

The Gothic mode is one discursive space where the hegemonic European countries were able to express their doubts about the consequences of modernity. For this reason I find it especially interesting to study the Gothic in the Spanish context, and one of the central questions of this dissertation will be to examine how a mode that contests many of the narratives of modernity functions in a country that has itself experienced a problematic modernity. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century Spain functioned in the European imagination much as the Gothic did: a familiar yet uncanny projection of modern anxieties. Instead of entering into the debate on questions of the authenticity of the Spanish Gothic, I instead propose to view the Spanish *misterio* genre and its Gothic mode as a manifestation of its dialogue with modernity.

The Spanish *folletín*

The *folletín* and the Gothic have both suffered from a perceived lack of literary respectability. Scholars of serial novels have often emphasized their reductive nature and criticized their lack of originality. This is often contrasted with their popularity; Juan Ignacio Ferreras describes Rafael del Castillo as both one of the most popular *folletín* authors as well as one of the most un-original. Indeed, the perceived lack of originality or the Romantic notion of genius-inspired authorship has been one of the main criticisms of the genre. Umberto Eco, in his study of Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*, describes the novel's structure as "tension, resolution, renewed tension, further resolution, and so on" (560). Nineteenth-century serial writing was seen as a by-product of the industrialization of the publishing industry, thus serial novels were often portrayed as 'assembly-line' literature rather than the product of one author-artist. Ouimette describes the production

of nineteenth-century Spain's most prolific author, Manuel Fernández y González, as a group of secretaries transcribing the various novels that he was simultaneously juggling. A notable by-product of this system was that Fernández y González was able to make a living off his writings; the serial author was thus one of the earliest professional writers (391).

Popular culture can be loosely defined as the mass culture produced by an industrialized capitalist society (Strinati xvii). The production of popular or mass culture is also part of the commercial culture, for one of the primary goals and reasons of the production of popular culture is to make a profit (10). In order to insure that a mass cultural product is lucrative, it must appeal to a wide range of potential consumers. To some critics of popular culture, this commoditization of cultural production results in "bland and standardized formulas" (12) that discourage creativity and innovation. On the other hand, Dwight MacDonald has noted that popular culture is a "dynamic, revolutionary force, breaking down the old barriers of tradition, taste, and dissolving all cultural distinctions" (cited in Strinati 16). Antonio Gramsci introduced the concept of hegemony to the study of popular culture. For Gramsci, hegemony is a cultural and ideological tool used by the dominant social groups to exert control over other groups of society. A group achieves hegemony once it convinces other groups to accept its cultural and moral values. Popular culture can thus serve as an instrument to secure hegemony by diffusing the values of the producers to the consumers. The Frankfurt School sees popular culture as a force that secures the stability of the capitalist system (Strinati xvii). Like the Gothic, the Frankfurt School sees the project of Enlightenment as a "nightmare" that uses rationality to eliminate human freedom (54). While the Frankfurt School sees popular

culture as an instrument of oppression, Walter Benjamin instead stresses the participatory nature of popular culture (85). The nineteenth century *folletines* in this dissertation show the diverse ideologies of serial novels; while Villergas seeks to radicalize his readers, Milà de Roca advocates status-quo stability. While part of the capitalist, profit-making system, these novels are still impregnated with immediate political and social concerns.

The *folletín* rose to prominence in the 1830s, traveling from France into Barcelona via translations from French newspapers. *Folletines* were published sporadically in Spain during the eighteenth century, the most notable example being José Cadalso's *Cartas marruecas*, which appeared in the *Correo de Madrid* in 1789 (Ouimette 387). The novels of Alexandre Dumas, which first appeared in 1837, were among the earliest best sellers (Montesinos 91). Most novels that appeared in Spain during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were translations or imitations of French novels and usually possessed a moralizing and didactic tone. Novels were regarded with suspicion; moralists accused them of stirring up passions and corrupting impressionable youth. The tumultuous years of the Napoleonic invasion, the War of Independence, and the repressive reign of Fernando VII further inhibited the development of autochthonous novels. However, at the popular level there was a thriving industry of the *literatura del cordel*. A precursor to the *folletines* and the *novelas por entregas* of the nineteenth century, the *literatura del cordel* were broadsheets attached to cords and featured historical and sensational tales (Ouimette 383-4). This popular literature would pave the way for the market of nineteenth-century popular novels, which in turn helped Spain develop the realist novel of the second half of the nineteenth century. Ouimette has enumerated the different publishing formats of nineteenth-century popular literature: the

folletines, published in newspapers; the *novela de entregas*, individual chapters purchased by subscription, and the *colección*, a subscription to a selection of works published in a uniform format (386). Ouimette differentiates the *folletín* and the *entrega* by their delivery method; the *folletín* came to the reader with the purchase of a periodical, but the *entrega* had to be intentionally and individually purchased, usually by subscription (386, 389). For the purposes of this dissertation, I will use the term *folletín* to describe the genre of literature to which the nineteenth-century *misterios* belong—serialized, popular literature, regardless of its means of publication. Indeed, it is possible that the same novel could be published as a *folletin*, in *entregas*, and in traditional book form.[11]

Jean-François Botrel, in his study "Los nuevos lectores en la España del siglo XIX," notes that between 1830 and 1900, the number of literate Spaniards increased tenfold from approximately 600,000 to 6,000,000 (50). As the number of readers increased, so did the capacity of Spain's publishing houses and the variety of publications they produced. Throughout the nineteenth century there was a steady increase of "recreational" literature that coincided with the general "secularization" of the publishing industry (51). The increasing numbers of readers and the increasingly leisure-oriented reading was cause for concern for conservative elements of society; the Catholic publication *La Censura* (published 1844-1853) denounced the "peligros de la seducción" of leisure reading (cited in Botrel 54). Botrel has noted the importance of female readers to the "new" readers of the nineteenth century; they too were the target of campaigns

[11] For further discussion on the development of the *folletín* in Spain, see Jean- François Botrel, "La novela por entregs: unidad de creación y consumo," *Creación y público en la literatura española,* Ed. Jean-François Botrel and Serge Salaün, Madrid, Castalia, 1974, pp. 111-115 and Leonardo Romero Tobar, *La novela popular española del siglo XIX,* Madrid, Fundación Juan March, 1976.

concerned for the moral standing of "las futuras madres de familias responsables en el seno del hogar de la educación de los niños" (Botrel 58). Ferreras proposes that the preponderance of female protagonists and "problemas 'femeninos'" of *folletines* (marriage, children, adultery) would indicate that serial novels were written for a female audience, despite the nearly all-male authorship (25-26). Part of the rhetoric that diminishes the importance of popular novels centers on their appeal to women readers. Tania Modleski has highlighted the inherently 'feminine' portrayals of mass culture, which is qualified as passive, emotional, sentimental and is associated with consumption, while high culture is linked to production, creativity, and reason, all stereotypically masculine traits. Stephanie Sieburth, in her monograph *Inventing High and Low*, has also noted that many of the *folletín* readers were imagined to be women by both their critics and their authors (7). Ouimette, using Goldman's figures, estimates that in the mid-nineteenth century Spain possessed around 775,000 female readers—not enough to absorb the publication of thousands of serial novels over the course of 60 years (390). Serial novels were clearly read by men, but their 'feminine' characterization marks them as inferior literature.[12]

While recognizing the contribution of serial novels to the Spanish publishing industry and the novels of the later nineteenth century, Ferreras dismisses both their quality and their authorship. Ferreras declares serial novels to possess little quality (21) and describes serial authors like Rafael del Castillo as "uno de los escritores más inauténticos de la literatura por entregas" (184). Ferreras is also skeptical of the business

[12] On the subject of the feminization of serial novels, see also Alda Blanco, "But Are They Any Good?," *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos,* 23, 1993, pp. 463-70 and Cristina Enríquez de Salamanca, "Calidad/capacidad: valor estético y teoría política en la España del s. XIX," *Revista de Estudios Hispánicos,* 23, 1993, pp. 449-461.

model of the serial publishers. The worker-reader model espoused by Iris Zavala proposes that the *entregas* were cheap and available enough to be purchased by the proletariat; the socialist slant of many of the *folletines* is thus seen as a type of political indoctrination for Spain's urban workers. Ferreras points out that one *entrega* cost one *real*, and they were published on Saturdays or Mondays, around the time workers would receive their wages. Urban workers earned around 50 to 60 *reales* a week; after expenses, Ferreras claims they could little afford the *real* to purchase the *entrega*. The physical characteristics of the *entregas* also suggest that they were intended for a more sophisticated public; many contained cursive script and other variations in font (237). Ferreras finds the serial novel business to be an "estafa" (77) whose only concern is to make money. Thus, for Ferreras, the literary quality is nil, for the novel's plot and extension depends not on the author's creativity but on the number of subscribers (77). Indeed, Ferreras goes as far as to say that the true author of the *novela por entregas* is actually the reader (22).

Many scholars of the Spanish *folletín* have been drawn to the political ideology of Ayguals de Izco and other authors. Iris Zavala's study *Ideología y política en la novela española del siglo XIX* identifies Ayguals as a socialist. Ayguals defended the right of universal suffrage (for men) and was firmly anti-monarchy (Benítez 77-78). Questioning Zavala's categorization of Ayguals as a socialist, Benítez sustains that Ayguals did not believe that poverty was caused by industrialization; instead, he saw the cause to be excesses of bad government (84). Additionally, Benítez notes that in Ayguals's novels there is an idealization of nobility (99). Peter Goldman notes that Zavala's error lies in "her attempt to raise Ayguals de Izco to the status of revolutionary folk hero" (206).

Ayguals was anticlerical, antimonarchy, and antimilitary (Benítez 118), but he was a shrewd capitalist, and he knew that social novels sold well. Ayguals de Izco's social platform was paternalistic and his economic ideology was conservative. While his novels portray the lower classes with sympathy, it is nobility that is idealized (96). Social change is brought about by a sudden revelation of true nobility, rather than meaningful social reform. Indeed, Ayguals de Izco and other *folletín* writers had ambiguous or contradictory political ideologies (Zavala 121).

Despite the lack of radical socialist politics in serial novels, it is important to note that Eugène Sue, Ayguals de Izco, and other *folletín* writers were perceived as socialists or revolutionaries. Ever the savvy capitalist, Ayguals de Izco knew that a bit of controversy is good for sales, and thus promoted this aspect of the novels (Ouimette 396). In 1845, Eugène Sue published a letter praising Ayguals de Izco's novel *María, o la hija del jornalero* (which Ayguals dedicated to Sue) for its advocacy of Spain's downtrodden:

> Me considero igualmente dichoso al ver que las clases menesterosas del pueblo español tengan tan buenos padrinos como vos. Servimos a la causa de la humanidad entera; vuestro libro tendrá un éxito brillante y es ciertamente muy dulce y bello pensar que los desgraciados de las clases populares en España tengan en vos tan generoso y entendido abogado. (cited in Benítez 43)

Whether the social messages of their novels were sincere or not, the *folletines* did succeed in bringing about interest in the social problems of the city (Zavala 121). While Ouimette notes that *folletines* were poor means of spreading ideology (388), the *folletines'* reputation as political instigators caused them to be eviscerated by the *moderado* press. As Goldman notes, after the *moderado* ascendancy in 1844, and

especially after 1848, *moderados* consistently exploited middle- and upper- class fears of revolution and social instability, all to ensure their own political dominance. *Folletín* writers were seen as fomenting the seeds of revolution. Fernán Caballero, Spain's next best-selling author after Ayguals de Izco, was at the forefront of the movement for a literature that supported the monarchy and the Church (191). In a sense, the *moderados* were right to fear the *folletines*, for as Zavala notes, the serial novels of the nineteenth century succeeded in politicizing the reading public (191). In this dissertation, I read the *misterios* as politically charged novels that explore questions of legitimacy, nationhood, and democracy.

Urban Gothic *misterios*

Michel de Certeau has noted that cities suffer from a "gothic novel scenario" (134) where the ghosts of the past haunt daily life. Cities can be said to possess a certain uncanniness, remains of a past that does not completely disappear, that shapes both its physical character and its narrative of urban life. As Freud notes in his essay "Civilization and its Discontents," the city is a palimpsest of both buildings and memories, and although it is the quintessential representation of modernity, the past still survives under the surface. Like the Gothic, the world portrayed in the *folletines* is fraught with ambiguity. The characters are surrounded by deception and intrigue (Lefebvre 175). This instability of meaning marks the *folletín* as an urban genre, a reflection of the confusion of urban life. The Gothic presents a counter-vision of the ordered, rational city. By appropriating the discourse of nineteenth-century urbanization treatises, the Gothic portrays a perverse vision of the urban landscape. The urban Gothic reveals what the

ordered city tries to discard. The return of the *misterio* genre in the late twentieth century reflects the mutability of both the Gothic and the *folletín*. Just as the nineteenth-century serial novel served as a guide to the emerging modern age, the postmodern *misterios* navigate the fledgling 'New Spain' of the post-Franco era. In the last thirty years, Spain has had to redefine itself as a modern, democratic, European country; however, Spain has also had to contend with the ghosts of the past. The *misterio* genre re-emerges at this moment as the literary mode that portrays the disorder, the uncanniness, and the anxieties of contemporary life.

Each chapter of this dissertation examines a different *misterio* and its political and social context. In the first two chapters, I examine two nineteenth-century *misterios.* In Chapter One, "Carlist Specters and *moderado* Monsters in Juan Martínez Villergas's *Los misterios de Madrid* (1844-1845)," I explore how Villergas's *misterio* gothicizes the First Carlist War (1833-1839) and the *moderado-progresista* conflict of the mid 1840s. Villergas was a staunch *progresista* liberal and a noted political satirist; he was also Ayguals de Izco's publishing partner. Villergas uses the *folletín* format and the *misterio* genre to portray the threats to the fledgling liberal project and the *progresista* agenda. Villergas's Madrid is the home of violent uprisings, corrupt nobles and clergy, and Carlist conspiracies that attempt to evoke the not-yet-dead ghosts of the feudal past. While Villergas is supportive of Spain's modernization project, his novel also reveals that the transition from the *antiguo régimen* to modernity is fraught with anxiety. Villergas contests the image of the enlightened capital by mapping Madrid as an irrational Gothic city. In this chapter I will examine how Villergas's urban Gothic tale subversively mimics the Enlightenment desire to order and map the city in order to suggest the

ultimate impossibility of controlling urban space and to bring to light the consequences of Spain's emerging modernity.

Chapter Two, "The Threat of Revolution, Colonial Others and Family Romance in José Nicasio Milà de Roca's *Los misterios de Barcelona* (1844)," examines a *misterio* that takes a vastly different political stance than Villergas's *misterio*. Set in Barcelona, a city whose economy relied on Spain's American colonies, Milà de Roca's *misterio* is more politically conservative; the novel gothicizes radical and *progresista* liberals and marks them as threats to Spain's stability. The Barcelona of the 1840s feared the loss of Spain's remaining colonies due to internal strife, thus the city's bourgeoisie supported the ruling *moderado* party. The novel also explores Barcelona's uneasiness over the source of the city's wealth, namely money from Caribbean plantations, and the presence of colonial 'others' in the city. I examine how Milà de Roca uses Gothic family romance and monstrous colonial subjects to represent the anxieties of empire control.

The final two chapters jump to the return of the *misterio* genre in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. In Chapter Three, "Conjuration and Corruption in Antonio Muñoz Molina's *Los misterios de Madrid* (1992)," I examine how Muñoz Molina's postmodern parody of *misterio* fiction uses the Gothic to level a scathing criticism of the Socialist party's leadership and Madrid's self-proclaimed identity as a modern, democratic, European city. The novel follows the trials of Lorencito Quesada (a native of Muñoz Molina's imaginary Mágina) and his attempts to recover the town's stolen processional statue and relic. In his quest Quesada travels to present-day Madrid and finds the city to be full of immigrants, heroin addicts, and criminals. Muñoz Molina

presents a conspiracy of business, government, and nobility that conjures up the corruption of the Francoist past that Madrid wishes to forget.

In Chapter Four, "Ghosts of the Past and Gothic Families in Antonio-Prometeo Moya's *Los misterios de Barcelona* (2006)," I examine a postmodern pastiche of Gothic tropes set in late 1990s Barcelona. Post-Olympic Barcelona has been hailed as a paradigm of modern urbanism, but Moya's novel portrays the city as though the nineteenth century had never ended. Instead of the sunny, glamorous Mediterranean city, Moya's Barcelona possesses uncanny houses, underground passageways, and a vampire-like serial killer. The dystopian vision of Barcelona contradicts the discourse of the "New Barcelona" that celebrates the city's transformation since the 1992 Olympics. Through the portrayal of the corrupt and powerful Valdecristo family, Moya contests the image of the Catalan family, and, by extension, Catalan nationalism.

The *misterios* examined in this dissertation attempt to plot the mysteries of the city in a way that echoes the modern desire to map and order urban space. A map aims to make a city legible and accessible to its inhabitants, and, in part, the maps of the *misterios* do the same: they profess to reveal the mysteries of the city to their unknowing readers. In *City Codes* (1996), Hana Wirth-Nesher states that in urban novels, the author, the reader and the characters are all engaged in "verbal cartography, plotting cities through language" (4). Wirth-Nesher emphasizes that the inclusion of 'real' places into the realm of fiction can have a whole range of meanings to a reader who is familiar with the urban landscape. The maps created by these novels locate haunted houses, dark and labyrinthine streets, and underground corridors. The *misterios* are uncanny texts, for they portray spaces familiar yet mysterious to their readers. The postmodern *misterios* are

doubly uncanny, for they portray the contemporary urban landscape through the familiar, yet distant, lens of nineteenth-century literature. The *misterios* map the irrational sides of Madrid and Barcelona to reveal the *ángulo de horror* (to borrow Cristina Fernández Cuba's phrase) of the modern urban experience.

CHAPTER ONE

CARLIST SPECTERS AND *MODERADO* MONSTERS IN JUAN MARTÍNEZ VILLERGAS'S *LOS MISTERIOS DE MADRID* (1844-1845)

El carlismo es algo que se cura leyendo.
Benito Pérez Galdós

Los misterios de Madrid begins on January 1, 1836, when a coach containing Miguel Ángel, Laura Castro-Nuño, and her servant Lorenzo arrives at Madrid's Plaza de Oriente. The group is arriving from Burgos, and during the journey we have learned that Laura is the motherless daughter of the Duque de Castro-Nuño, and that she distrusts her father's best friend, the Marqués de Calabaza. Miguel Ángel is a young artist who does not know who his parents are, but he does have a mysterious benefactor who has helped him throughout his life. When Miguel Ángel shows Laura a portrait he has made of his unknown sponsor, Laura is shocked to see the face of the Marqués de Calabaza. Thus begins the first mystery of a three-volume novel in which the lives of Laura and Miguel Ángel will intertwine with the dark underbelly of Madrid. Villergas portrays the Spanish capital as the site of crime, vice, and conspiracy. *Los misterios de Madrid* consists of several Gothic tales that, while clearly intended to tantalize the reader, also display a keen concern for contemporary social and political changes. Indeed, Villergas weaves both historical events and personalities into his fictitious world; this mix of reality and fantasy produces a work that aims to reveal some of the "real" mysteries of the capital. [13]

[13] Both Mariano José de Larra and the famous bandit Luis Candelas make appearances in *Los misterios de Madrid*. Today Candelas is a sort of legendary creature, a benign thief in

Villergas employs both Gothic plot structures and motifs throughout *Los misterios de Madrid*. As is common among *folletines*, there are various plot lines that course through the novel. The first mystery is the story of Laura, the beautiful orphaned aristocrat, and Miguel Ángel, the noble young artist who must save her from the clutches of the Marqués de Calabaza, who has murdered her father in order to steal his fortune and to pursue Laura. Here Villergas follows the typical Gothic plot of the lecherous aristocrat and the distressed virginal heroine. One of Villergas's stated intentions in writing his novel is to censure the corrupt aristocracy; by portraying the nobles as villains and presenting the hero as a liberal, Villergas is also writing the story of the transition from the *antiguo régimen* to the new order. Villergas does not only rely on traditional Gothic plot lines to serve as an allegory for this transition; in another plot development, it is revealed that the Marqués is a Carlist and is involved in a plot to bring Carlos, the pretender to the throne, to Madrid. The Gothic tale becomes the story of the First Carlist War, and Miguel Ángel and the urban liberals are now the potential victims of the Marqués. In yet another plot shift, the Marqués, after the failure of the Carlist conspiracy, becomes the victim of a malevolent Jesuit who aims to murder him and his wife in order to steal his fortune and thus strengthen his order. In these intertwined mysteries, Villergas portrays the dangers lurking in Madrid that threaten the liberal project and the bourgeois reading public for whom he writes. *Los misterios de Madrid* is a fundamentally political

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the vein of Robin Hood, but in the novel his name inspires fear. Laura admits that her vision of Candelas was of a "ser fantástico": "Yo creía que Candelas era feo como una lechuza con una cara llena de costurones; negro, seco, virueloso y cejijunto" (I: 99). In Laura's imagination, Candelas is a Gothic monster, but in the novel Candelas helps Miguel Ángel and Laura in their quest to expose the Marqués de Calabaza. Larra is an acquaintance of Miguel Ángel. Notably, both men's deaths, Candelas's execution and Larra's suicide, are narrated in the novel.

and social novel that narrates the anxieties of a changing society with an emerging sense of modernity and fears of the past that returns to undo the liberal project.

Juan Martínez Villergas (1816-1894) was a fervent liberal and prolific author. Villergas was well known as a political satirist, playwright, and novelist.[14] Villergas also worked as a journalist, founding newspapers in Cuba and Argentina (Álvarez Barrientos 117), and he served as the Spanish consul to New Castle and Haiti (Alonso Cortés 83-84). As in *Los misterios de Madrid*, Villergas's political convictions often found their way into his literary works. Villergas was a colleague of Wenceslao Ayguals de Izco, and together they founded the publishing house La Sociedad Literaria de Madrid that printed Spanish translations of Eugène Sue and other original *folletines* in Spanish. In the prologue to *Los misterios de Madrid*, Villergas writes a tongue-in-cheek poem describing the decidedly bourgeois inspiration for his work. While resting in his home, Villergas receives a visit from Juan Manini (of the publishing house Establecimiento Artístico Literario de Manini y Compañía), who proposes a moneymaking deal: Villergas will write *Los misterios de Madrid,* and they will earn "dinero y fama" (Villergas vii).[15] Villergas agrees to the proposal, and goes on to describe how he will truthfully "pintar" the mysteries of the court. Villergas provides a geography of Madrid that he will include in his work: "Desde el Rastro a Maravillas / Desde Atocha al Noviciado" (ix). The neighborhoods mentioned here by Villergas, geographical opposites, indicate that he intends to give a global view of the city. The author recognizes the difficulty of his task:

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[14] Villergas's biographer, Narciso Alonso Cortés, considers his plays and novels "el punto débil" (141) of his body of work.

[15] The moneymaking opportunities represented by a *folletín* like *Los misterios de Madrid* infiltrate the text itself. In the second volume of the novel, there is an advertisement in the footnotes for a brand of chocolates that are sold in the office of Villergas's publisher, Manini y Compañía (II: 95).

"Mi descaro es sin igual / Ya conozco, amigos míos / Que la empresa es colosal" (ix). Villergas also acknowledges his debt to Eugène Sue, who he describes as a "gran hombre," while at the same time referencing the economic disparities between Madrid and Paris: "… ahí está el quid / Si quien lo vió no me engaña / París mayor que Madrid / Y Francia mayor que España" (ix).

Despite Villergas's claim that he writes only to make money, Villergas's works are strident in their social and political critique, and are more openly anti-aristocratic and populist than those of his partner Ayguals de Izco (Álvarez Barrientos 118). In *Los misterios de Madrid*, Villergas often deviates from the storyline to offer political and social commentary. For instance, when the carriage carrying Laura and Miguel Ángel arrives in Madrid, they see the Teatro de Oriente, now the Teatro Real, under construction in the Plaza de Oriente. Villergas insinuates that public projects like these only serve to make government officials rich, while the *pueblo* is denied the right to know how its money is being spent. Villergas is also adamant in his condemnation of the aristocracy: "en España la aristocracia es el símbolo de la estupidez por los mismos que confía en los bienes de loca fortuna" (88). The author contrasts the greed of the Marqués de Calabaza with the poor, who "mueren estenuados de hambre y de miseria" (I: 68). Villergas advocates for a society where social rank is irrelevant; in this regard it is significant that the hero of the novel, Miguel Ángel, is, at least in the beginning, of indeterminate social rank and parentage and espouses the liberal political platform. Miguel Ángel represents a new kind of political leader whose authority rests not on his lineage but rather on his intelligence and talent. Elsewhere in the novel, Villergas defends General Espartero, a liberal political leader, from criticisms based on his plebeian origins.

Indeed, Villergas finds these class-based denunciations preposterous: “Esto parece increíble que se haya impreso en el siglo XIX” (I: 216). Implicit in this statement is a consciousness of progress and modernity, and of a new conception of legitimacy. For Villergas, the inequality that plagues Spanish society is grotesque: “Pero la esperiencia ha demostrado que ante la ley no todos somos iguales, y que estamos condenados a vivir en una sociedad vieja y carcomida cuya deformidad espanta” (I: 68). He cites the example of La Moncloa, the royal park forbidden to plebeians as “una de las preciosidades de Madrid que miran con asombro y repugnancia” (I: 49). Villergas gothicizes the injustices of society to show its inherent corruption as evil and repugnant. The Gothic, a mode fundamentally concerned with issues of power and legitimacy, is an apt vehicle for narrating the transition from antiquated notions of legitimacy to more modern and democratic ones.

Villergas wrote *Los misterios de Madrid* during the years of Isabel II’s reign, which were extremely significant for the city of Madrid. It was during these years that the program begun in the eighteenth century to make Madrid the symbol of national government and culture was renewed. Madrid in the 1830s and 1840s was in dire need of reform. As Santos Juliá describes, nineteenth-century Madrid was “una ciudad sucia y oscura, con calles angostas e insalubres, con un caserío mezquino, sin servicios, sin policía” (323). While David Ringrose asserts that it is possible to classify late eighteenth-century Madrid as “una de las ciudades más salubres de Europa,” (236) due to reforms such as street paving and regular waste removal, by the nineteenth century many of the old urban blights had returned. Abandoned children, the infirm, and the mentally ill roamed the streets (Juliá 367). In addition, Madrid was suffering from an image problem.

By the 1830s Spain had lost the majority of its colonies in the Americas and, according to Juliá, Madrid appeared to be "inmóvil…encerrada…complaciente" (322). By 1846, poor conditions combined with a steady population increase led to the first Real Orden for the construction of the *ensanche.*[16] However, the construction plans were slow to get off the ground, and it wasn't until 1860 that another Real Orden approved the *Plan de Castro*.[17] The Castro plan included all the hallmarks of modern nineteenth-century urban planning: provisions for ventilation, light, and hygiene. Unfortunately, six years later most of Castro's plans were thrown out, and much of the *ensanche* was constructed without a coherent plan (Juliá 350, 379).

Nineteenth-century Spain is characterized by the drive to organize and categorize urban space.[18] In Madrid, Ramón de Mesonero Romanos was perhaps the best-known proponent of urban reform. Mesonero wished to recreate Madrid on the level of other European capitals. Mesonero's plans are part of the bourgeois cultural revolution; he unequivocally associates urban improvements with middle-class economic growth. Another goal of Mesonero's project was to create a more cultured population. Mesonero

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[16] The *ensanche*, or extension, was the name of nineteenth-century Madrid's newly constructed districts. The districts of Argüelles, northwest of the old city, and Salamanca, to the northeast, were part of the *ensanche.*

[17] Carlos María de Castro was the urban planner for Madrid's *ensanche*. The *Plan de Castro,* inspired by Cerdà's plan for Barcelona, featured wide streets and limited the height of buildings. The high value of land in the *ensanche* caused most of the plan to be discarded, and the real estate speculation caused the district to become much denser than originally planned.

[18] One of the most significant developments in urban planning during the Isabeline years was the *desmortización* of Mendizábal in 1830. The disentitlement created unprecedented opportunities for urban reform in the city center. With the sale and destruction of religious houses, streets were extended and widened, more housing was created, and the crowdeding of the city center was alleviated (Prados de la Plaza 160). Madrid had previously hosted 65 convents and monasteries; after the disentitlement, there remained only eleven (161). Between 1836 and 1845, a total of 672 properties that had belonged to the Church were sold in the province of Madrid (Marichal 280).

believed that urban order and regulation could also regulate society (Frost 47-48). In a greater sense, Mesonero's plans point to one of Madrid's essential problems: its lack of a coherent ideological and physical position in relation to the rest of the Spanish nation (Frost 32). Elisa Martí-López has aptly pointed out the problems with positioning Madrid as a symbol of the Spanish nation; however, there were those such as Mesonero who believed that Madrid should be the center of the nation's culture (Frost 56).

For Edward Baker, Mesonero's writings on Madrid represented a shift in the image of the city from the seat of the monarchy to the capital of an emerging modern nation (56). Mesonero's 1831 *Manual de Madrid* was among the first urban guides presented from the perspective of civil society. Mesonero's work also marked an important change in the reception of urban writing; urban guides to Madrid existed before Mesonero, but, as Baker asserts, Mesonero's urban guides had "no solamente usarios sino lectores" (57). Mesonero's urban writings aim to present Madrid in its totality, offering the reader an opportunity to approach the city as an object of study, in other words, to know the city in a new way (Baker 57, 62). The work of Mesonero was the foundation on which the urban *folletín* genre was built; Baker asserts that it was the *folletín* that first took the city of Madrid as "materia prima" of novel writing (91, 94). Mesonero Romanos, like many other writers of his time, was keenly aware that he was living in an era of historical importance and social change: "El reinado de Isabel II…encierra el período de renovación casi completa de la Antigua villa capital. Los graves sucesos políticos acaecidos… no han influido por fortuna en detener el progreso material y social de Madrid" (cited in Prados de la Plaza 190). Born in 1802, Mesonero Romanos lived through most of the nineteenth century's urban reforms until his death in 1882. Mesonero

was actively involved in both the literary and civic social groups of his day. He was friends with Larra, Bretón de los Herreros, Hartzenbusch, and other notable literary figures. Mesonero's friendship and admiration of Larra naturally inspires a comparison between the two authors and their work; both were essentially urban writers whose writings on Madrid helped to form the literary vision of the city. Azorín saw the two as exemplifying the two currents of nineteenth-century thought and culture: "Si Larra simboliza la sociedad de su tiempo, exaltada, impulsiva, generosa, romántica, Mesonero representa la sociedad burguesa, práctica, metódica, escrupulosa, bien hallada […] los dos nos dan la síntesis del espíritu castellano" (Prados de la Plaza 33). If Mesonero and Larra represent two aspects of Madrid's nineteenth-century urban culture, perhaps Villergas is a perverse synthesis of the two; in *Los misterios de Madrid*, we see a Mesonero-like urge to map and catalogue the city's mysteries, while, like Larra, Villergas uses his work as social and political commentary.[19]

Villergas's novel narrates the shift from the *antiguo régimen* to modern, bourgeois-dominated society. Enric Sebastiá has placed the "bourgeois revolution" in Spain between 1834 and 1843 (13); however, many historians have debated both the success and the existence of a Spanish bourgeois revolution, and find Spain's transition to modern bourgeois society slow, especially when compared to other European countries.

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[19] Rebecca Haidt has examined Larra's use of Gothic conventions, despite his expressed disdain for many Gothic works. Haidt posits that Larra's use of the Gothic was part of his attempt to express his political and artistic criticism while still attracting a wide readership. While Haidt does not claim Larra to be a Gothic writer in the strictest sense, she does show that Larra was acquainted with Edmund Burke's theories on terror and the sublime, and that he used these ideas along with Gothic conventions in many of his essays to express his despair over the state of Spain. As Haidt concludes: "If Larra wanted readers to recognize contemporary political failings and comprehend the importance of history to their contemporary situation, then working Gothic and sublime conventions was an ideal way to lead them toward that goal" (66).

There are two traditional models that historians have employed to explain Spain's supposed backwardness. The first model proposes that between 1812 and 1843 the bourgeoisie came into power and liberalized society to promote capitalism. However, the bourgeoisie, faced with the threat of a proletarian revolt, formed a pact with the aristocracy, thus becoming more conservative and derailing the progress towards industrialization and democracy. The second model, which complements the first, points to the failure of the agrarian revolution in Spain that consequently inhibited the development of an industrial revolution (Cruz 4-5).

The second model has been reworked by historians, who have concluded that Spain's agricultural production actually grew steadily from the 1830s until 1931, and it was Spain's lack of access to foreign markets that was in fact to blame for Spain's lackluster industrialization. Jesús Cruz has addressed the necessity of re-examining the first model in light of the revised model of Spanish economic growth (5-6). While Cruz, following Gramsci and E.P. Thompson, recognizes the importance of ideology and culture to the conception of social class, he examines how social practices change in the years of the so-called "bourgeois revolution." Cruz establishes a distinction between public and private discourses of the bourgeois revolution, and concludes that the social practices of the old regime, those of a society based on patronage and property ownership by a small elite, continued to exist even after the reforms of liberal governments (257). This is not to say that the Spanish bourgeoisie did not exist; however, Cruz disputes the notion that their presence constituted a full-fledged revolution. Instead, Cruz proposes the alternative designation of "liberal revolution" to describe the changes that took place in the first half of the nineteenth century (276).

Cruz's assertion that Spain did not experience a true bourgeois revolution does not discount the liberal-bourgeois discourse that permeated the public sphere. Cruz notes that the progress towards modernity and the values of the bourgeoisie were part of the rhetoric of Spain's elites from 1750 to 1850. Cruz identifies the "public sphere" as the parliament, the cafes, the *tertulias* and *salones*, and the reading groups frequented by *ilustrados* and later liberals (173). Villergas's work is clearly part of the public sphere, but as reading is often a private practice, a literary *folletín* represents an entry of the public into the private realm. Villergas's anti-aristocratic stance and his liberal and egalitarian ideals are transmitted to the urban reader, who may or may not be part of the bourgeoisie. Whatever the social status of his readers, Villergas's text encourages them to adopt bourgeois ideals, which recalls Marshall Berman's observation that one can be modern without actually experiencing modernity itself. Therefore, when I refer to Madrid's bourgeoisie, I mean not only those who experienced urban life as members of the middle class, but also those who identified with them ideologically.

Mesonero's statement that Madrid's progress in the nineteenth century occurred despite "los graves sucesos políticos acaecidos" points to another notable characteristic of these years; Isabel's reign was fraught with instability and uncertainty, due both to the threats of Carlism and conflicts among the liberals themselves. I propose that the urban Gothic nature of the *misterio* genre is used to express the anxiety surrounding the fledgling liberal revolution. In this chapter I will explore how Villergas portrays Madrid as a Gothic space as a counter-narrative to Madrid's claim to be the source of reason in Spain. I will then examine how Villergas retells two key phenomena of nineteenth-century Spanish history: the First Carlist War and the *moderado-progresista* struggle for

power. Villergas employs Gothic conventions to represent the recent past to convey the dangers that threaten to derail Spain's progress towards becoming a modern nation-state.

Gothic Madrid

In 1845, the newspaper *El Heraldo* declared Madrid to be the source of reason in Spain: "en Madrid es sólo donde se conjuran las revoluciones, se desbaratan las redes de la intriga y donde se negocia y se gobierna con autoridad y buen juicio" (cited in Prados de la Plaza 196). In the assessment of Luis Prados de la Plaza, the implication of this statement is that while in the provinces there still ruled the *caciquismo* of the *antiguo régimen*, the role of Madrid was to provide a good political example (196).[20] In the city vs. country binary, famously examined by Raymond Williams, Madrid would become the symbol of liberal centralization and government bureaucracy, while the provinces were the source of anti-modern movements such as Carlism. Villergas concurs that Madrid is the "pueblo más ilustrado de España" (II: 36); however, he does recognize the contradictions of urban life. He states that in Madrid "lo sublime y lo ridículo marchan a la par" (II: 39) and that "[d]espués de un espectáculo majestuoso y sublime, el pueblo se entregaba a la algazara de las costumbres más ridículas y grotescas imaginables" (II: 39-40). This ambivalence towards Madrid's character is demonstrated in Villergas's representation of the city. While on the one hand advocating Madrid's modernity, Villergas portrays the capital as the site of conspiracies, horrific crimes, and monstrous figures. Villergas's Madrid seems to suffer from the return of the irrational past that modernity seeks to stamp out. There is an inherent tension in the novel between the fear

[20] *Caciquismo* refers to the tradition of 'strong-man' (*cacique)* politics as opposed to participatory democracy.

of the return of the past and an anxiety about the consequences of contemporary political and social changes. Frederic Garber has described the Gothic as "the site of constant collisions" (cited Mishra 49); the Gothic can, at times, seem contradictory, but these very contradictions are what reveal the inherent instability of the Gothic text. The Gothic denies the possibility of unproblematic representation (Mishra 49); thus the Madrid of Villergas's *misterio* can be both modern and un-modern, and both the past and the future can be frightening.

In most Gothic novels, the journey that begins the narrative is one from the rational city to the disordered countryside (Mighall 9). In the case of *Los misterios de Madrid*, this premise is reversed; it is upon the arrival to the city when the mysteries and danger begin for Laura and Miguel Ángel. In the first chapters of the novel when the carriage arrives in Madrid, the passengers find an ominous scene. As they enter the Calle Mayor, they encounter an enormous funeral procession:

> Una música lúgubre llamó la atención de los viajeros. Dos filas de hombres que caminaban lentamente por las aceras con hachas encendidas; en medio de las dos filas la marcha pausada en un carro fúnebre que conducía un ataúd cerrado. (I: 15)

Both Miguel Ángel and Laura ask the identity of the deceased; Laura is told that it is the Duque de Castro-Nuño, her father, while Miguel Ángel is told that it is the Marqués de Calabaza, his supposed benefactor. Lorenzo spots a mysterious man, "embozado hasta las cejas, como temiendo ser conocido" and asks him the identity of the deceased; the cloaked man points to the coffin and says "Aquel" (I: 16). This scene introduces Madrid as the setting of mysterious happenings. On one of the city's most central and open

streets, a gloomy procession and disguised men present the capital as a Gothic space full of frightening spectacles and secrets. That uncertainty surrounding the identity of the deceased is one of the first mysteries presented in Villergas's novel also points to the multiplicity of meaning and the instability of knowledge. As Villergas writes in his introduction to the novel, it is his task to reveal these mysteries to the reader, and he thus serves as a guide who interprets urban phenomena for his readers. This scene is also significant in that it presents the funeral of a noble on the Calle Mayor; as described by David Ringrose, the Calle Mayor was one of the streets used for the royal processions. Ringrose proposes that these royal processions created a "magical" urban space, a setting that is part of everyday life but that takes on an almost otherworldly character with the presence of royal majesty (214). Here Villergas also creates a magical space out of the everyday, but instead of communicating power and authority, this procession portrays death and confusion. It is also telling that the funeral procession is for a noble; locating the procession on the stage of royal authority suggests the demise of the *antiguo régimen* for which it was built to empower. Thus in this scene Villergas establishes both the Gothic tenor of the novel and the theme of the end of the *antiguo régimen*.

When it is discovered that the deceased is in fact the Duque, Laura finds herself the object of the Marqués's evil machinations. Laura, who never trusted the Marqués, learns that her father's fortune has disappeared. She tells Miguel Ángel:

> --Hay un hombre, dijo Laura, más malo que las hienas feroces. Hay un Satanás en la aristocracia, abortado del infierno para castigo de los hombres, para baldón y oprobio de la sociedad que le tolera. ¡Ese hombre funesto ha envenenado a mi padre! (I: 31)

Before murdering the Duque, the Marqués forces him to sign over his money and land. Laura describes the Marqués as a Gothic monster, one who violates the concept of a benevolent aristocracy and abuses the social bonds that regulate and unite the aristocracy.

Miguel Ángel vows to help Laura recover her rightful inheritance, and he soon learns that Lorenzo and a group of thieves plan to rob the Marqués and his newly acquired fortune. Miguel Ángel plans to infiltrate the group while also 'warning' the Marqués of the impending robbery; by gaining the trust of both groups, he hopes to recover Laura's inheritance. However, what he does not know is that the Marqués is obsessed with Laura and plans to kidnap her. In preparing to recover Laura's fortune, Miguel Ángel encounters Tía Sin Huesos. As her name suggests, Sin Huesos is a grotesque character; her body is nearly skeletal, and she inspires fear and revulsion. She is described as "el fruto de una maldición ó conjuro… el esqueleto más reducido que han presentado las sombras chinescas y aun para convencerse que tenía forma humana se necesitaba mirar su cara de perfil" (I: 59). Sin Huesos is a spectral presence in the neighborhood: "Cuando salía a la calle…no había gato que no la bufase, perro que no la mojara la basquiña, niño que no temblase, mujer que no la mordiera los zancajos, ni hombre que no hiciera la señal de la cruz" (I: 60). Sin Huesos is notorious for kidnapping the children of the rich and holding them for ransom. Sin Huesos also runs a brothel in the center of Madrid, and her house inspires as much dread as its owner. The house features "un portal oscuro como boca de lobo… una escalera de caracol, estrecha como la de un púlpito y alta como la de una torre" (I: 58). The residence of Sin Huesos is a veritable *casa embrujada* that appears to have more in common with a medieval castle

than with a dwelling in nineteenth-century Madrid. When Miguel Ángel enters the house, he is overcome with feelings of dread and almost loses himself in the maze-like passages:

> Miguel Ángel no oía nada: el horror, el asco y la indignación de lo que veía le embargaban los sentidos: abrió la puerta y empezó a oscuras a rodar por aquella escalera tortuosa. La escalera parecía de una casa encantada; estaba interceptada por algunos pasillos en forma de espiral que conducían á otras escaleras, y al fin de estas salían puertas que venían a dar á la principal…anduvo un cuarto de hora sin saber donde estaba…hasta que por fin sin saber cómo ni cuándo se encontró en una calle que desconoció por el pronto; porque él había entrado en la casa por la calle Estrecha de Majaderitos, y al salir de aquel enmarañado laberinto, se encontró en la calle Ancha. (I: 64)

Villergas's description of the staircases in the house of Tía Sin Huesos recalls the famous staircase images of Piranesi, which were well known to many Romantic writers. In her reading of Thomas De Quincey, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick examines the influence of Piranesi's *Carceri d' Invenzione* prints on his Gothic writings. Piranesi's *Carceri* (the title means "Prisons of Imagination/ Imaginary Prisons") is a series of sixteen prints begun in 1745 which depict massive subterranean spaces with staircases, vaults, and machines which appear to be without direction and without end. In *Confessions of an English Opium Eater*, De Quincey describes hearing of the drawings from Samuel Taylor Coleridge, who experienced visions similar to the *Carceri* during a delirium-inducing fever (Mishra 225). De Quincey writes that the drawings had the "power of endless growth and self-reproduction" (De Quincey 114). For Sedgwick, both De Quincey's description of the drawings and the drawings themselves create the sense of the Burkean

sublime: “the viewer participates in the power of infinity even while he is awed by it. If one could look only at the far distant ground of almost any of these prints, one’s response would be a dizzy exhilaration” (Sedgwick 27). These drawings also produce an effect of horror; the seemingly endless stairways and passageways provide no refuge or exit; the drawings, executed in black, white, and gray, are dark and ominous. As Sedgwick notes, the drawings are true prisons, nightmarish landscapes from which there is no escape. In *Los misterios de Madrid*, Miguel Ángel does manage to escape Sin Huesos’s multi-storied maze, but its presence in the center of Madrid recalls the clandestine underground world of mystery and danger lurking behind the facade of the modern city. Villergas gives an actual address for the house, Calle Estrecha de Majaderitos, number 4, which provides authenticity to the narrative. Calle Estrecha de Majaderitos is a narrow street off the Calle Carretas near the Puerta del Sol, street running east to west; the Calle Ancha de Majaderitos runs north to south and is perpendicular to the Calle Estrecha.[21] Miguel Ángel curiously enters the house from one street and exits the house on another; this would suggest that the house is indeed an anomaly, for it seems to hover over the entire neighborhood, with no clear limits or demarcations. With Villergas’s use of authentic locations for his mysteries, he also creates a “Gothic” map of Madrid that takes the work of urban cartographers and employs it to map the city’s mysteries.

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[21] In the mid-nineteenth century, Calle Estrecha de Majaderitos and Calle Ancha were renamed Calle de Cádiz and Calle de Barcelona, respectively. Their renaming was part of an urban improvement project that followed the destruction of the Convento de la Victoria and the Teatro de la Cruz, which also created the Calle Espoz y Mina, named after a military general of the Peninsular and Carlist Wars. It was Mesonero Romanos himself who suggested the new names, which remain to this day (Mesonero *El antiguo* 291).

Another Gothic character in the novel is the unnamed "*hombre misterioso*" who appears at many opportune moments in the novel. Like the Tía Sin Huesos, the mysterious man is a spectral presence: "parece… el demonio en figura de hombre que acecha la ocasion de llevarle á los infiernos en cuerpo y alma" (I: 143). This mysterious man appears to be the scourge of criminals, and he appears in all sectors of society, which itself raises questions about his identity and social position. The *hombre misterioso* is a sort of avenger of the downtrodden and scourge of criminals:

> A la verdad que este es un hombre muy original, en todas partes se le encuentra, oye todas las conversaciones, espía los pasos de todos los criminales a quienes ha debido escarmentar más de una vez por el miedo que le tienen y aprovecha a todas las ocasiones de ser útil a los desgraciados. (I:142)

The narrator conjectures that he might be a prince, which recalls the character of Rodolphe from Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*. The fact that he at least partially renounces possible noble origins to associate with the lower tiers of society, and that he moves freely between different geographical and social barriers, suggests a new type of citizen in a new type of society, where class barriers fall aside. In the 1830s this type of society was still emerging, so the characters that engage in this behavior are still marginal and often Gothic in nature.

Laura's servant Lorenzo is another gothicized character. Like Miguel Ángel, he does not know who his parents are, but without a mysterious benefactor of his own, the circumstances of his life have been considerably less favorable. Lorenzo became a *granuja*, a kind of street urchin who grows up to become a criminal. The narrator states that there are wartime *granujas* and peacetime *granujas*, and Lorenzo was of the wartime

variety. A wartime *granuja* would infiltrate the troops on both sides, stealing both provisions and secrets (Villergas I: 20). Lorenzo's life as an orphan in the city "represents the social cost and human suffering of industrialization as well as the alienation brought about by the new cities—the loss of an individual sense of family and community" (Martí-López 71). Later, Lorenzo returns to Madrid as an adult, and joins the *realista* side not for political reasons, but because they were giving away free uniforms. Lorenzo's apathy toward any cause seems to suggest the fragmentary nature of urban life, where the need to survive trumps the need to build authentic communities. Relating Lorenzo's depravity with his poverty is a trope common to nineteenth-century urban Gothic novels; as Gertrude Himmelfarb has noted, the Gothic-mystery genre makes poverty Gothic by portraying it as "barbarous, grotesque, macabre" (452).

In a purely folletinesque plot twist, Lorenzo turns out to be the long-lost son of the Duque de Mambrú, who thought his son to be dead. As a poor servant and petty criminal, Lorenzo had been a "malhechor, un perdido, un hombre que no se puede decir de la hez del pueblo, sino de la hez de los criminales, [un] aborto mónstruo del cieno de la sociedad" (III: 44-45). With his newfound wealth, Lorenzo becomes addicted to gambling. While Villergas has few kind words for the aristocracy, his portrayal of Lorenzo as *nouveau riche* is just as negative. Despite Villergas's complaints that in Spain "la propiedad está muy mal repartida" (I:50), the portrayal of Lorenzo's social mobility is not figured in positive terms. Lorenzo's base tendencies are only exacerbated by his wealth. His activities attract the attention of the *hombre misterioso*, who begins to follow him around Madrid. The *hombre misterioso* provokes fear and dread in Lorenzo:

Este hombre le parece su sombra; sino le diera miedo le tendría por el Ángel de

> la Guardia; pero con su imponente mirada le hace estremecerse, no le parece sino el demonio en figura de hombre que acecha la ocasión de llevarle a los infiernos en cuerpo y alma (I:143)

Figures like Lorenzo and Sin Huesos indicate a shift in the Gothic mode that manifests itself in the nineteenth-century urban Gothic narratives. The urban Gothic begins to move away from aristocratic villains and portray criminals as the monsters who roam the labyrinth-like city streets in search of prey. Villergas portrays Madrid as full of thieves: "La sociedad de ladrones está efectivamente tan bien organizada, que tiene apostados sus vigilantes en todos los barrios de Madrid" (I: 196). He goes on to mention the "posts" of Cebada, the Prado, and the Puerta del Sol. In this, one of the occasions in the novel where the author plots a map of Madrid, Villergas paints a web of criminal activity that extends to all points of the city. The vision of Madrid in Villergas's novel is that of a city where irrationality reigns and crime, vice, and terrifying figures lie at every turn. Villergas's Madrid is the nightmare of modernity, where the disorder that was once suppressed returns to haunt the present. Urban disorder is not the only threat to Madrid and modernity; as the novel progresses, we find that Spain's political turmoil represents a palpable threat to the country's modernization.

The Specter of Carlism

As Miguel Ángel investigates the Marqués, he learns that he is a fervent Carlist. Carlism was the most explicit ideological threat to Spanish liberalism. Spanish Carlism has been described as "the oldest continuously existing popular movement of the extreme right in Europe" (Flynn 98) as well as "el más importante movimiento político-social de la

España del siglo XIX" (Álvarez Junco 361). Carlism's formal beginnings in the 1830s were in response to Fernando VII's declaration of his daughter, Isabel, as his heir, instead of his brother, don Carlos.[22] However, the seeds of Carlism can be traced to the Cortes de Cádiz, with political groups who were opposed to liberal ideology (Aróstegui 31). The Constitution of 1812 laid out the model for a democratic parliamentary government with the monarch as the head of the executive branch, denying the monarchy the absolute power it had held for generations. Fernando's rejection of the Cádiz Constitution instigated years of repression and exile for Spanish liberals. In 1820 General Quiroga and Coronel Riego led a liberal uprising in Cádiz that forced Fernando to honor the Constitution. Thus began three years of liberal rule known as the "Trienio Liberal." The liberal government managed to elect a new Cortes, but could not keep order long enough to implement a lasting liberal government (Holt 20). Throughout the Trienio there were skirmishes between the army and pro-Fernandine groups—groups that would ironically morph into Carlist groups in the decade to come. In 1823 Louis XVIII of France sent troops to Spain to restore Fernando to the throne, and the three short years of liberal rule came to an end.

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[22] Don Carlos's claim to the throne has its roots in the complicated Spanish history of the rights of succession. The right of female succession had been recognized in Spain since the times of Alfonso el Sabio. Felipe V, the first Bourbon ruler, introduced the Salic Law, which required a male heir to the throne. Carlos IV, despite having male heirs of his own, decided to revoke this law, but his decision was never officially proclaimed (Holt 13-14). Before the birth of his first child, Isabel, Fernando VII decided to publish his father's decision, known as the Pragmatic Solution. Don Carlos and his supporters argued that since he was born in 1788, before Carlos's reversal, he could legitimately claim the throne under the Salic Law and that no subsequent changes could void this right (Holt 29). In 1829, Fernando married his niece, María Cristina. María Cristina soon became pregnant. Fernando's desire that his progeny rule Spain inspired the publication of the Pragmatic Sanction. Isabel was born on October 10, 1830, and Fernando soon proclaimed her the Princesa de Asturias, the title of the heir to the throne. Upon Fernando's death on September 29 of 1833, Isabel was declared queen and her mother the queen-regent.

Fernando's restoration meant more severe repercussions for supporters of the liberal cause. Para-military groups such as the Army of the Faith and the Royalist Volunteers hunted down suspected liberal sympathizers, and thousands of liberal Spaniards were arrested, exiled, or executed (Holt 22). It was also during this restoration period that the Carlist party began to take shape. Despite having three successive wives, Fernando had no children, and it was widely assumed that his brother Carlos would be the next king. Indeed, in 1824 a plot was uncovered in Zaragoza that aimed to put Carlos on the throne at once, and in 1827 a pro-Carlos insurrection in Catalonia rallied around the slogan "Religion, King, Inquisition" (Holt 24). Carlos was perceived to be a more pious man than his brother, and the Church leaders felt that he would be a stronger ally of the Church. What ostensibly began as a succession dispute turned into a nationalist cultural movement. M.K. Flynn characterizes Carlism as a modern phenomenon, despite its emphasis on traditional values and political systems (103). If Carlism is a modern phenomenon, it can be seen as a contestatory movement to the modern phenomenon of liberalism. The Carlists opposed not the unity of the Spanish state, but the liberal tendencies that they believed corrupted the nation (1). Flynn goes as far as to call the Carlists revolutionaries, for their goal was to completely renovate Spanish politics.

The Carlists favored a system of foral monarchy. Under the foral system, individual regions retained their right to *fueros*, or local authority. The king would need authorization for certain measures such as military conscription and taxation, and thus the regions maintained some autonomy and limited royal power (Flynn 110). As Flynn notes, the Carlists believed that foral democracy "provided a historically justified alternative to the centralizing forces of liberalism" (110). The Constitution of 1812 regarded the *fueros*

as a force of liberty under absolutist regimes; however, the Constitution did not continue the foral tradition (113). This was principally due to the fact that regional interests posed a serious threat to the emerging modern Spanish state (112). Spain's slowness to industrialize and modernize in the nineteenth century was due in part to the lack of a developed, broad-based economy supported by a statewide infrastructure. By focusing on regional issues, Spain failed to adopt an extra-regional perspective that would have ensured a more uniform modernization (112). Flynn points to the failure of Spanish liberalism to create a pan-regional sense of nationalism and the resultant lack of popular legitimacy for its political projects (115).

Carlists consisted of three basic groups: day laborers, farmers, and artisans who were most affected by the socioeconomic changes of the early nineteenth century. While the Carlists' resistance to liberal ideology and the *aburguesamiento* of society would seem to indicate that the movement was deeply aware of class discrepancies and economic exploitation, in fact the movement transcended social class and instead based its ideology on universal abstract concepts, such as God and King (Aróstegui 144-145). A common generalization regarding the Carlist Wars is that it was a class conflict, with the poor of Spain fighting against the aristocracy and the bourgeoisie. In reality the Carlists were an interclass group that reflected the diversity of Spain's population. If most of the soldiers were *campesinos*, it was because the majority of Spaniards belonged to rural populations (Bullón de Mendoza 648). The inclusiveness of the movement shows that the anxieties brought about by liberal modernity were felt amongst a wide spectrum of society.

The concept of legitimacy was at the core of Carlist ideology. The Carlists firmly denied the legitimacy of monarchies that supported liberal political platforms. This idea was based on a theocratic vision of monarchy, where the monarch ruled by divine right and traditional social and political structures where upheld. Carlism was also a struggle against the emergence of an urban bourgeois hegemony, which was poised to change traditional society (Aróstegui 16). Carlism can thus be seen in opposition to urban culture and modernity (17). However, the mere existence of Carlism points to the weakness of the Spanish bourgeoisie, who failed to secure enough cultural and political hegemony to gain popular legitimacy throughout the country. Indeed, Coverdale has pointed out that a movement like Carlism could only have been possible in a society where agrarian society was still viable (Aróstegui 149).

Meanwhile, the liberals and the royal family had formed an uneasy alliance both to secure Isabel's right to the throne and to continue the liberal project. María Cristina was convinced by her liberal generals that the best way to fight the Carlists was to appoint a strong liberal ministry and to establish an elected parliament (Holt 50). María Cristina named Martínez de la Rosa as head minister, although he ended up being more moderate in the end. The more progressive liberals were not satisfied with Martínez de la Rosa, and there were threats of a liberal revolt. Martínez de la Rosa resigned his post, and was replaced briefly by the Conde Torero (Holt 100). The Conde Torero's successor would prove to be one of nineteenth-century Spain's most influential politicians: Juan Álvarez Mendizábal. Mendizábal, a native of Cádiz of Jewish ancestry and a Mason, instituted a more progressive liberal government that would permanently change the face of Madrid. For years the government had been plagued by financial shortages, and the

war provided another need for money. Mendizábal's solution to these money woes was to confiscate Church property and sell it to the private sector. Later, Mendizábal would authorize the confiscation of property and goods of supporters of the Carlist cause in a further attempt to raise money to fight the war. Mendizábal's legacy was also his political downfall; despite her alliances with the liberals María Cristina was deeply religious, and her disapproval of Mendizábal's progressive policies ended in his resignation. María Cristina appointed Istúriz, a more moderate head minister, to lead the government (Holt 135).

The First Carlist War (1833-1840) is the longest civil war in Spain's contemporary history and, in terms of the ratio of deaths to the total population, Spain's bloodiest civil war. Alfonso Bullón de Mendoza estimates 150,000 to 200,000 deaths (Bullón de Mendoza "La primera" 3, 647). The death of Fernando VII on September 29, 1833 instigated the uprising of the *realista* troops that had been suppressed by Fernando's army before his death. Bullón de Mendoza situates the beginning of the First Carlist War in October of 1833, when news of Fernando's death reached the *realista* strongholds in the north of Spain. Testimonies from the era indicate that the supporters of Don Carlos outnumbered the supporters of the liberals, although the liberal armies counted upon greater numbers than the Carlists (479). Despite this popular support, Bullón de Mendoza considers a Carlist victory to have been virtually impossible given the lack of a regular unified army (645).

The Carlist Wars are remembered as provincial wars,[23] but Bullón de Mendoza notes that cities were not removed in the least from the conflict. The provincial reputation of Carlism is due in part to the fact that the Carlist troops never succeeded in maintaining control over any city for a substantial period of time (469). Cities such as Bilbao and Zaragoza contained many supporters of the Carlist cause, but even Madrid had its own supporters of the Pretender. Madrid, while never seen as a Carlist stronghold, was the site of Carlist conspiracies and revolts in the streets (474).[24] Notably, in March of 1834 there was an uprising in the Calle Toledo by Carlist supporters who attempted to establish a "fort" in a local home, calling it the "Castillo de Carlos V" (447). Carlism did find some aristocratic supporters in Madrid; in 1838 a list of 111 Carlists to be expelled from the city included 6 nobles and 100 with the title of "Don" (447). A captured Carlist testified that outside the Puerta de Alcalá there was a house owned by a noble where communications from Carlists were sent and received, as well as a noble residing in the Calle Ancha de San Bernardo who was a *partidario* of Don Carlos (487). While the first phase of the war, 1833-1835, principally occurred in the periphery of the country, from

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[23] Initially, officials in Madrid took the war to be provincial rebellions. The first uprising of what was to become a seven-year civil war occurred in Talavera de la Reina in Castilla, where the postmaster overthrew the local government and declared Don Carlos to be Carlos V, the true king of Spain. Various other uprisings occurred in Bilbao, Álava, Guipúzcoa, Galicia, Catalonia, and Navarra, but they were disconnected and lacked any formal organization. The government in Madrid began to take the imminent war more seriously when the priest-general Merino marched 11,000 men from Logroño in an attempt to reach Madrid (Holt 42).

[24] The First Carlist War coincided with the cholera epidemic of 1834. The combination resulted in popular uprisings, especially in urban areas, where the dual events caused prices to rise and food to be scarce (Fernández García "La sociedad" 219). An estimated 300,000 people died in the 1834 epidemic, more than all the deaths of the entire First Carlist War (218). The cholera epidemic was itself a result of modernization; originally from India, the advancements in exploration and transportation enabled its arrival to Europe (218).

1835 on the Carlists made more and more excursions into the interior of the Peninsula, and thus earned more and more urban supporters. While the battles were fought in the countryside, the cities were the sites of conspiracy (648).

More than a conflict of country vs. city, the first Carlist war was a conflict between the people and the state (Bullón de Mendoza 476). Carlists believed that they were fighting for their freedom from a despotic government run by a corrupt minority (637). One of the central tenets of Carlism was religion. One of Don Carlos's expressed goals was to restore the influence of the Church in Spain. For Don Carlos, the desire to rule was motivated not just by political beliefs, but also by a sense of religious obligation (565).

The fervent beliefs of the Carlists led to their idealization in popular culture. Undoubtedly the most significant personality of the First Carlist War was General Zumalacárregui. In the first phase of the war, Zumalacárregui was responsible for turning countrymen into a trained army (Bullón de Mendoza 167). Upon his death in Bilbao in 1835, Zumalacárregui was converted into a mythical figure and a hero of Romantic freedom. Zumalacárregui's Romantic image translated easily to literary representation. Benjamín Jarnés's novel *Zumalacárregui: el caudillo romántico* (1931), part of the series "Vidas españolas e hispanoamericanas del siglo XIX" established by Ortega y Gasset, cemented the general's status as a Romantic hero. In the nineteenth century, the Romantic aspect of the Carlist cause inspired Ayguals de Izco to publish *El tigre del Maestrazgo* (1846-1848), narrating the exploits of the Carlist general Cabrera. Galdós dedicated the third series of his *Episodios nacionales* to the First Carlist War, and, in the twentieth century, Valle-Inclán's work explores the enduring Carlist cause in Galicia.

The rhetoric of the Carlist cause was impregnated with ideas of Romantic medievalism. In the earliest days of the Carlist war, Valentín Verástegui made a proclamation in Vitoria that contained the central tenets of the Carlist cause: loyalty to God and King:

> *Lealtad, realismo, y fidelidad* deberán ser nombres sinónimos entre vosotros: pero el amor al orden y a la justicia debe ser vuestro carácter. Tenéis un rey que os mande, aquel que justamente habéis deseado.
>
> […]
>
> Elegid, alaveses; españoles, elegid. De vuestra decisión depende la existencia del trono español: en vuestras manos tenéis la felicidad y la ruina de vuestra patria. Católicos sois, y la causa de Dios os llama protectores del altar; sois leales y fieles vasallos, y el mejor y más deseado de los reyes espera vuestro auxilio para exterminar la canalla liberal, y consolidar su trono: nada os detenga; cooperar todos del modo posible a la defensa de la causa más justa que los hombres han defendido. (Bullón de Mendoza "Documentos" 29)

Verástegui's proclamation highlights the relationship between monarch and subjects that had existed in Spain since the Middle Ages and that the Carlists were fighting to preserve. Carlists saw themselves as "good vassals" who were fighting to save their country from ruin.

Zumalacárregui's words in 1834 reveal the suspicion and mistrust with which the Carlists viewed the liberal supporters of María Cristina and Isabel: "No lo dudéis: siempre han sido enemigos de la monarquía, y es imposible que ahora puedan ser sus defensores" (Bullón de Mendoza "Documentos" 31-32). It is clear that they saw the

cristinos not as supporters of one monarch over another, but as proponents of the destruction of the monarchy as Spain had known it. In the declaration of Antonio Taboada de Moreto, the liberals are portrayed as despots who wish to eliminate the freedoms that Spaniards have enjoyed under absolute monarchy:

> La libertad de los Españoles es muy antigua, y el despotismo, con que se les oprime, muy moderno. La libertad nacional, que proclaman, y a que aspiran los defensores de la legitimidad, se halla consignada en las leyes fundamentales de la monarquía: es obra de sus abuelos, que la han conservado y transmitido intacta de una generación a la otra, bajo la protección de su religión y de sus reyes legítimos. (Bullón de Mendoza "Documentos" 43-43)

Taboada de Moreto sees the liberal project of centralization as a menace to the integrity of Spanish society and traditions:

> El nuevo despotismo centralización, introducido con la dominación Cristina [sic] por los mismos autores de la constitución gaditana, ha cambiado todas las instituciones protectoras de nuestra libertad; y a pesar de sus fementidas protestas, sin respetar fueros, costumbres ni privilegios ha destruido el respetable patrimonio de nuestros abuelos. La mayor arbitrariedad, la destrucción de las leyes fundamentales, de que más adelante hablaré, el terror, el asesinato, la desmoralización, y la más dura esclavitud han sido los funestos resultados de tan criminal innovación. De consiguiente, de la violación de las leyes fundamentales nace ese moderno despotismo. (Bullón de Mendoza "Documentos" 44)

It is of note that Taboada considers despotism synonymous with terror, anarchy, and slavery—and that he considers despotism a fruit of modernity. Taboada and other Carlists

demonstrate a deep-rooted fear of modernity, and a belief that any reform or innovation that can be classified as modern would only be a destructive, negative force rather than a productive one.

In his manifesto to the Spanish people given in Durango in February of 1836, Don Carlos (or Carlos V, as his supporters called him) declared that the liberal government offered only "espanto" and "anarquía" and had brought only repression and suffering to Spain: "Los revolucionarios, llevando por todas partes el llanto y la muerte, han hecho prevalecer a la impiedad, la cual deja el sello de la desolación, han impuesto a nuestra patria un yugo pesado y cruel" ("Documentos" 44-47). Don Carlos characterizes the liberals as imposters who have tried to sell the Spaniards a sham narrative of freedom and rights when in fact they only impose tyranny. He implores Spaniards to see the truth about the liberals and not to succumb to the ideas of "hombres sin religión, sin rey y sin patria" (47).

Despite the fact that most of the fighting took place in the provinces, Madrid was the scene of clashes between Carlists and Liberals. Charles Didier, in his 1837 account *Un année en Espagne* (1837), relates the violent episodes he witnessed in Madrid:

> Yo vi de estas bandas homicidas sablear así en la calle Mayor tres transeúntes inofensivos y otra asesinar en la calle del Pez a un pobre viejo, cuya sangre casi saltó sobre mí. Las mujeres no eran perdonadas, y se asesinaban entre ellas. ("Documentos" 55)

Didier describes an atmosphere of danger and dread that permeated the capital during skirmishes between Carlist supporters and the *milicia urbana*, a local militia that defended the progressive liberal cause:

> Toda esta jornada del 17 ha sido para Madrid un día de terror: las boticas estaban cerradas, las calles desiertas, incluso la Puerta del Sol; se diría una ciudad tomada al asalto o a punto de serlo. El terror público estaba bien justificado, porque nadie que saliese de casa podía estar seguro de regresar; una sonrisa, una mirada, bastaban para ser asesinado, y a cada paso estaban los urbanos que asesinaban a los carlistas, o los carlistas que acuchillaban a los urbanos. ("Documentos" 56)

The Carlist war had become a horrific nightmare; both the city and the countryside were the stage to brutal killings, suspicion, and dread. Villergas, writing nearly ten years after the First Carlist War, utilizes the threat of Carlism to create a Gothic tale that would frighten the urban reader and remind the public of the dangers to the liberal revolution.

In Chapter XI of *Los misterios de Madrid* it is revealed that the Marqués is involved in a plot to bring Carlos to Madrid. There is one hindrance to his plan: a set of papers communicating the plot has been intercepted by a liberal *diputado*. When Miguel Ángel breaks into the Marqués's Madrid home to both catch the robbers and convince the Marqués to return Laura's inheritance, it is discovered that he is the *diputado* who possesses the papers. The Marqués, wishing to avoid the discovery of his plot, has Miguel Ángel taken to his estate on the outskirts of Madrid. The Marqués's home has a sinister aspect; it is also the seat of the Carlist conspiracy. As Luis Candelas, who is protecting Laura, explains, he knows where the house is:

> […] pero no lo puedo decir. Está en un sitio donde nunca da el sol, está en una mansión infernal, lóbrega, aterradora como la muerte, donde sólo pueden ofrecerse a sus ojos escenas dolorosas y sangrientas porque aquella es la tumba de los buenos y el refugio de los malvados. (I: 103)

Candelas describes the house as the epitome of the Gothic sublime; the house projects death and pain and offers no hope of transcendence. For Candelas, the house is also something unspeakable; its horrors are such that he cannot reveal it in its totality. Although the Marqués's house is not in the center of Madrid, its proximity to the capital places in within the sphere of the capital's supposed liberal and progressive politics. While it would seem that this is a return to the more traditional Gothic location of the wild countryside, for the nineteenth-century reader the outskirts of Madrid were considered part of the city. Indeed, Madrid's periphery provided many critics with proof of Madrid's failed urban projects; both Mesonero Romanos and Ángel Fernández de los Ríos saw the disorder of the outskirts as a sign of Madrid's failure to spread civilization and progress (Frost 159). Throughout nineteenth-century fiction, Madrid's periphery is portrayed as unorganized, unpleasant and often dangerous (Frost 132). By locating the specter of Carlism so close to the city, Villergas emphasizes the danger of regionalist interests to the centralized, liberal democracy, and creates a looming threat to Carlism's implied target, the urban bourgeois liberals.

The Marqués imprisons Miguel Ángel in an underground cave on his property. Villergas's description of the cave recalls the subterranean prisons and labyrinths of Gothic castles:

> El interior de la cueva está débilmente alumbrado por una lámpara fúnebre que refleja una luz pálida y siniestra, como el rayo de la luna en un cementerio. La cueva es inmensa, y á lo que parece tiene comunicación en muchos puntos por largos y torcidos callejones subterráneos que sólo pueden conocerse á fuerza de años. (I: 183-184)

In his description of this gloomy prison, Villergas employs the present tense, in contrast to other, more narrative moments in the novel where the author uses the preterit or the imperfect. It would seem that the change in tense is designed to heighten the effect of terror and dread for the reader, and to create the sensation that the reader is actually present in that ominous place.

In addition to serving as a prison, the cave is also the headquarters for various illegal activities sponsored by the Marqués:

> En este subterráneo, propiedad del Marqués de Calabaza, hay proporción para todo; los facinerosos se abrigan allí, celebran sus conciliábulos, y tienen sus sitios mas recónditos para ocultar el fruto de sus rapiñas…espacio… para el congreso de carlistas, y allí tienen sus sesiones de cuando en cuando los conspiradores mas fanáticos y terribles de Madrid. (I: 184)

Villergas places both thieves and Carlists in the same space, suggesting that the Carlists are also thieves themselves. The location of these villains in the subterranean quarters of the house suggests irrationality; as Gaston Bachelard has noted, following Jung, the underground represents fear and contests the supposed stability and rationality of the house (18-19). Villergas thus characterizes Carlism as an illegal, illegitimate, and evil activity.

While imprisoned in the cave, Miguel Ángel encounters a fragile woman, Lucía, who has been held captive for years. Lucía tells Miguel Ángel her tale of woe, equating her life in the cave with being buried alive:

> […]sepultada en este rincón del olvido, sólo he visto delante de mí monstruos que se complacen en mi desventura; sólo he podido confiar mis secretos a la

> soledad en este retiro, donde ni un solo acento, ni un solo '¡ay!' responden a mis gemidos. (I: 202)

Lucía is from a noble family, and was deceived by a suitor who only wanted her money. Her suitor and an accomplice stole her family's money, killed her father, and imprisoned her in the underground. As Miguel Ángel listens, "la historia de Lucía le espantaba" (I:211). It is not immediately clear why this story is so frightening to Miguel Ángel; he experiences a sensation of the uncanny that he cannot explain. Lucía reveals that her suitor's accomplice adopted the title of the Duque de Castro Nuño—the accomplice was Laura's father. Later, Miguel Ángel experiences a sense of horror when it is revealed that the Marqués, Lucía's suitor, is his father, and Lucía is his mother. The revelation of this family secret emphasizes the corruption and illegitimacy of both the Marqués and the Carlist cause. With the revelation of Miguel Ángel's lineage, Villergas solidifies his argument that the aristocrats are stealing the country from the rest of the population.

Miguel Ángel and Lucía attempt to escape, but they are first met with one of the Marqués's henchmen, Matalobos. Matalobos is a horrific, monstrous creature:

> […] vio salir al viejo Matalobos colérico, con los ojos encendidos de rabia, buscando nuevas víctimas que sacrificar con devorador encono. Al ver a Miguel Ángel, dio una carcajada feroz que repitió el eco de aquellas bóvedas sombrías con estruendo siniestro. (I: 243)

Miguel Ángel kills Matalobos, but they still need to make their way out of the subterranean prison. Miguel Ángel and Lucía pass through the horrific passageways that seem almost unreal:

> A todo esto habían penetrado por un eterno callejón que conducía por un lento

> desnivel a una profundidad inmensa. El pico estaba húmedo y colorado, como si le hubieran regado con sangre; en las paredes había embutidos de huesos humanos, y el eco de las voces de los bandidos se prolongaba tristemente a lo lejos, de modo que parecía el santo y seña transmitido lúgubremente de unas calaveras en otras. Por fin llegaron a un cuarto grande y pavoroso, donde los mismos ladrones temblaban y se temían unos a otros, porque una atmósfera siniestra infundía en sus corazones el dolor, el miedo, la sed de sangre, la locura y el horror de sí mismos. Aquella mansión fatídica estaba llena de bultos negros y blancos. Al ver Miguel Ángel una multitud de objetos que se movían y lanzaban sonidos extraños en un murmullo incomprensible, creyó estar en un sueño profundo que le representaba un cementerio de encantamientos, visiones diabólicas, cadáveres animados y sombras ensangrentadas. El cielo de la mansión infernal era alto y estaba eclipsado por una niebla espesa y azulada semejante al humo que despide el horno de un tejar. En lo alto se oían bramidos furiosos y lamentos tristemente prolongados como el canto de mochuelo acompañado por el zumbido de un huracán. (I: 305)

The Marques's mansion, with its underground passageways and macabre scenes, presents a vision of the Gothic sublime: a hell-like site of repression and death.

After escaping the Marqués's cave with help of Candelas at the end of the first volume, the beginning of the second volume finds Miguel Ángel in the Café Nuevo in Madrid on the 5th of January of 1836. The café is a popular meeting place for liberals, but during the years of absolutism, the café was the site of fear and suspicion: "Cada hombre parecía un traidor, cada traidor vistió muchos disfraces de leal; […] Tan pronto como

estos amigos alborotaban un poco, ya se veían ocupadas las columnas por hombres de mal semblante" (II: 7). On this day, the café is ebullient with news of General Espartero's victory over the Carlists in the fields of Navarra. The celebrations are short-lived, however; according to what Miguel Ángel has learned, the Carlists plan to initiate their plot on this day, and a heavy atmosphere soon hangs over Madrid:

> Imponente esa una noche de alarma en Madrid. Todo respira melancolía y horror. En cuanto suena el tambor por esas calles todo bicho viviente se retira, los comerciantes cierran sus puertas, las patrullas de caballería recorren las calles causando un ruido monótono, interrumpido de cuando en cuando por los gritos sediciosos de amotinados, y por el lúgubre lamento de las cornetas.
>
> (II: 29)

The ominous atmosphere is accompanied by horrendous acts of violence; the narrator describes a woman whose child was "arrebatado de los brazos, porque el padre ha sido nacional" (II: 52). On the same page, Villergas provides a footnote, explaining that in the year 1836, a woman called Tía Cotilla was executed for killing the child of a liberal by bashing his head on the ground. The use of the historical footnote serves to augment the reader's terror and repugnance towards this event, and to prove that Villergas doesn't have to invent all of the horrors that appear in his novel.

The chaos dies down once it is clear that the Carlists failed in their attempt to seize Madrid. The Carlist War ends; the Marqués, ever the opportunist, switches to the side of the *moderado* liberals against the more radical *progresistas*, and the Carlists no longer threaten Villergas's Madrid. As in the novel, in 1837 the Carlist troops approached Madrid, hoping to attack the city, but they were ultimately pushed back to the

countryside. The Carlists didn't disappear after their defeat in 1839; Spain would see two more Carlist Wars in the nineteenth century, the next war beginning in 1846, just one year after the publication of the third volume *of Los misterios de Madrid*. In the final volume, Villergas admonishes his readers not to forget the seven years of civil war, and reminds them of the cruelty of the Carlist forces and their generals:

> Los nombres de Merino, de Tristany, de Batanero y de Cabrera son pronunciados con horror hasta por sus mismos partidarios; porque los fusilamientos de tantos inocentes, las bacanales con que estos hombres han celebrado el derramamiento de sangre humana, los actos inauditos de crueldad que han cometido, tantas y tantas iniquidades, son cosas que no puede disculpar el espíritu de partido. (III: 169-170)

Villergas's Gothic retelling of the Carlist War serves as a warning to his readers that despite the defeat of the Carlists, the movement was still a lurking threat to the liberal project.

In *Imagined Communities*, Benedict Anderson notes the importance of newspapers in creating and unifying a nation. In the same sense, *folletines* like *Los misterios de Madrid* both created and united an urban bourgeois reading public. Villergas, a staunch liberal, wrote his novel to tantalize his public and to make a profit, but also to educate and in a sense modernize his readers. By making a specter out of Carlism, Villergas was indoctrinating the urban classes in the liberal, reformist ideology and inviting them to reject the antiquated outlook of the Carlists. Organizations such as the *milicia urbana* of Madrid served to keep Carlists supporters at bay, but riots and other small uprisings were inevitable. Even more important, the feeling of foreboding and

dread that hung over the city, given that Madrid was the ultimate desired target for Don Carlos's supporters, made the threat of the Carlist war feel very close to Madrid and its citizens. The specter of Carlism was the specter of the past, that is, the return of the *antiguo régimen* to undo the work of the persistent if often uneven liberal project of modern Spain.

The Internal Other: The *Moderado* Monster

The third volume of *Los misterios de Madrid* finds the city safe from the Carlist threat. However, in a city where "[l]os acontecimientos políticos se suceden con rapidez y ofrecen tanto interés como inquietud" (III: 5), a new threat has emerged. Mendizábal has fallen from power, and the new *moderado* regime is attempting to suppress the supporters of the *progresistas*:

> El general Quesada, capitán general de Madrid, al frente de sus tropas recorre también la capital, queriendo imponer miedo con el aspecto militar de sus subordinados á un pueblo que por do quier le recibe con silbidos y otras manifestaciones no menos ostensibles de odio y de desprecio. (III: 6)

Here the terror comes not from the anti-urban Carlists but from within the liberal revolution itself. Villergas was a staunch supporter of the *progresistas*, and in this third volume, he presents the ascendancy of the *moderados* as a tale of urban terror. In addition to the visible military presence, Madrid is now populated by secret police that aim to discover *progresista* sympathizers. Villergas describes the secret police using the popular pseudoscience of phrenology:

> …los frenólogos leerían fácilmente en las protuberancias de su cráneo la astucia, la perversidad y la perseverancia en el mal; sus cabellos canos infunden mas temor que respeto, y parece que han emblanquecido menos por la fuerza de los años que por las cavilaciones y los remordimientos. (III: 7)

Phrenology was commonly used to categorize "types" that populated urban areas; once again Villergas employs the rhetoric of the urban guide in the mystery genre. One of the members of the secret police turns out to be the Marqués de Calabaza, who has opportunistically joined the *moderados* after the failure of the Carlists' plot.

Villergas draws a new map in the third volume, but instead of a map of crime, he maps the resistance to the *moderado* regime:

> En la plazuela de Santa Ana hay un grupo de paisanos que gritan desafortunadamente: ¡A las armas ciudadanos! ¡A las armas!! ¡viva la libertad!!! Otro tanto sucede en la plazuela de Santo Domingo, en la plaza Mayor, en la calle del Desengaño, frente al convento de los Basilios. (III: 13)

While the Marqués is watching the city, a group of rioters fills the Calle del Desengaño shouting "¡Viva Mendizábal! ¡Viva la Constitución!" (III: 13). Leading the group is Miguel Ángel, who is soon arrested and sentenced to death.

In typical *folletín* fashion, we learn nothing of Miguel Ángel for several chapters (there is a lengthy interlude narrating the romantic troubles of Larra and his subsequent suicide), until, finally, chapter X opens at eleven in the morning on August 15, 1836. Miguel Ángel and other *progresista* supporters are to be executed on this day, and crowds have filled the streets surrounding the Puerta del Sol and the Plaza de la Villa. As the executions are about to begin, there is a dramatic interruption:

> --Señores, ¡alto! la reina ha jurado la Constitución!
>
> --¿Quién lo dice? preguntó el oficial de la guardia.
>
> --Yo, contestó Aguirre; yo que traigo el parte telegráfico de la Granja. Aquí está.
>
> Por el parte telegráfico constaba la verdad del hecho. La reina había jurado la Constitución en la Granja, y entre otros nombramientos enviaba uno para Miguel Ángel elevándolo á uno de los primeros puestos del poder ejecutivo.
>
> Desde este momento las calles se vieron cuajadas de gente; paisanos y militares, todos mezclados, pero todos con una cinta verde en el sombrero, en que estaba escrito el juramento de defender el código de Cádiz, y no se oye otra cosa que vivas á la libertad, a la Constitución y á la Independencia nacional. (III: 188-119)

Villergas intertwines the fates of his characters with Spain's recent history. In the summer of 1836 liberal soldiers, backed by the progressive party, staged a revolt at La Granja, the royal residence outside Madrid. They demanded the full enforcement of the Constitution of 1812 and the resignation of Istúriz, the *moderado* minister. General Espartero was named commander-in-chief, and Mendizábal was instated as the finance minister. In the midst of a civil war, the progressive liberals managed to stage a successful revolution (Holt 148). Miguel Ángel is saved by the timely uprising, and Villergas establishes an inextricable connection between the lives of his characters and the course of history, a phenomenon that would characterize the realist novels later in the nineteenth century.

In Volume III, a new villain appears: the evil Jesuit Don Toribio, who is out to obtain the Marqués's fortune by murdering both him and his wife. The Jesuit is described as a repulsive figure:

> es un hombre de avanzada edad; los cabellos blancos y las arrugas de su frente anuncian un alma aniquilada por el peso de los años, al paso que la viveza de su mirada penetrando con trabajo por entre sus largas y desmadejadas pestañas como el fuego del cañón entre el humo de la pólvora, el color encendido de sus enjutos labios y otras señales que contrastan horriblemente entre sí, son una muestra palpable del fuego que derrama en todas sus extremidades la caduca lujuria de su corazón. (III: 22)

Villergas avails himself of the Gothic trope of the evil Catholic priest (especially a Jesuit) popular in English Gothic novels (most notably seen in Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*, which is set in sixteenth-century Madrid). While not completely anticlerical, Villergas admonishes the Church for employing uneducated and ignorant clergymen: "en vez de clérigos fanáticos queremos religiosos razonadores, y no puede razonar bien el que carece de los conocimientos indispensables para ello. No exigimos ilustración, pedimos siquiera instrucción y en eso no creemos extralimitarnos" (III: 167). For Villergas, the greatest danger of the clergy is their virulent support of counter-liberal movements such as Carlism. Villergas reminds his readers that during the First Carlist War many priests "irritaban las pasiones dominantes entonces, y no solo anatematizaban é insultaban á los vencidos, sino que predicaban el homicidio como una obra heroica y santo á los ojos del Dios de la misericordia" (III: 171). Villergas considers the greatest sin to be hypocrisy, and his portrayal of Don Toribio, while not exemplary of all priests, is meant to represent a certain type of clergy who use their power and authority to incite or even commit murder.

Don Toribio's aim in murdering the Marqueses is to obtain their fortune so the Jesuits can "llevar a cabo sus fines" (III: 154). While Villergas does not elaborate on what these ends might be, the history of the Jesuits in Spain and the rest of Europe may indicate what a nineteenth-century reader might have understood by Don Toribio's cryptic statement. The Jesuits play an important role in the history of European Enlightenment; their international expulsion by Carlos III and other European monarchs in the late eighteenth century is seen as a move by the emerging modern nation-states for more economic control over their various territories as well as a sign of the secularization of European governments and societies. The Jesuits were reinstated by the Church in post-Napoleonic Europe in an attempt to mitigate the effects of the liberal revolutions. Thus the presence of a Jesuit in Villergas's Madrid is a sign of an anti-liberal organization that has infiltrated the capital with the goal of increasing the Church's power and limiting secular government. It is significant that the Jesuit enters the Marqués's life only after he has abandoned Carlism and become a *moderado* for his own protection. Villergas is firmly against the *moderado* liberals, and thus uses the mystery of the Jesuit and the Marqueses de Calabaza to reveal both the dangers that the clergy present to the liberal project and the vulnerability of the *moderados* to the influence of anti-liberal organizations.

Don Toribio succeeds in murdering the Marquesa de Calabaza by slowly poisoning her with what she believes to be medicine. In another moment of anagnorisis, it is revealed that Don Toribio is the father of the Marquesa, but he kills her with little regret and moves onto the Marqués. The Jesuit's encounter with the Marqués is one of the most violently graphic scenes of the novel:

> Horrible era el espectáculo que se presentaba á la vista. El marqués de Calabaza todo ensangrentado, el cabello desgreñado y el rostro pálido como la muerte, se encontró cara á cara con el jesuita, que pálido y desgreñado también le aguardaba con una luz en una mano y un puñal en la otra. Estos dos hombres que por la disipación de sus carnes parecían ya dos esqueletos, y por la agitación espantosa de sus rostros dos furias del averno…
>
> …ocurrió un accidente horroroso. El perro, herido en la vista por los rayos de la luz y despedazado por los dolores de la hidrofobia que acababa de desarrollarse, se lanzó al marqués de la Calabaza y le derribó, arrancando de su cuerpo gruesos pedazos de carne palpitante. El jesuita entonces dio un salto y salió de la casa, no tan pronto que el perro no le pudiera seguir. (III: 178)

The rabid dog escapes, and the terror soon spreads to the streets: "Poco después reinaba gran consternación en las calles más principales de Madrid; por todas partes se veía correr la gente gritando:--¡El perro rabioso! ¡El perro rabioso!" (III: 179).

After the apparent deaths of the Marqués and the Jesuit, Miguel Ángel, Laura, (now married) and Lucía visit Aranjuez, the "sitio que más objetos bellos ofrece en el mundo a la disipación de la melancolía" (III: 307). The trip to Aranjuez is an escape from the intrigue of the city, but Miguel Ángel spends most of the trip trying to come up with economic reforms. However, as the title of the chapter, "Intrigas contra reformas," suggests, the liberal project still faces many obstacles. While Villergas gives a somewhat normative ending for his *misterio* (the hero and the heroine are married, the Marqués and the Jesuit have been eliminated), Villergas implies that the intrigues will continue with the new government.

In late 1843 and early 1844, another revolution occurred when the *moderado* liberals took control of the government. The *moderados* took drastic measures to wipe out any *progresista* resistance. The *moderados* shut down all periodicals that opposed *moderados*, dismantled the Milicia Urbana, and removed all *progresistas* from municipal governments. The army quelled uprisings that occurred throughout Spain, and the *moderado* party reinstated many of the aristocratic ideas of government (Marichal 267-268, 270). For a *progresista* like Villergas, these developments represented the undoing of the *progresista* egalitarian agenda. This also affects the publication of *Los misterios de Madrid*, as Villergas explains in the epilogue:

> Había pensado extenderme en esta obra hasta completar cuatro volúmenes, que según mi cálculo necesitaba para recorrer y descorrer los misterios de la capital de España de un extremo al otro, desde los sótanos á las bohardillas, desde el hospicio al palacio real… ha querido que esta obra se escriba en una época bien triste para España…
>
> Si la libertad de imprenta hubiera sufrido menos ataques del poder habría intentado desenvolver mis teorías en política y moral. (III: 313)

Villergas promises to reveal more mysteries when "recobramos un día el derecho de imprimir libremente nuestras ideas" (III: 316). Villergas never wrote the fourth volume of *Los misterios de Madrid*, and while his silence is due to political concerns,[25] it recalls one of the fundamental characteristics of Gothic narrative: the missing or interrupted text.

[25] Alonso Cortes notes that "a consecuencia de sus campañas políticas, nuestro poeta no podía vivir sin un momento tranquilo" and that Villergas was "uno de los que fijaron la atención de la policía secreta" (50).

CHAPTER TWO

THE THREAT OF REVOLUTION:

COLONIAL OTHERS AND FAMILY ROMANCE IN

JOSÉ NICASIO MILÀ DE ROCA'S *LOS MISTERIOS DE BARCELONA* (1844)

Barcelona has seen more barricade fighting than
any other city in the world.
-Friedrich Engels

Allá en la Habana
son más dulces los besos de las cubanas
Allá en la Habana
pasan las mismas cosas, vidita mía,
que aquí en España
-Popular *habanera*

Published the same year as Juan Martínez Villergas's *Los misterios de Madrid*, José Nicasio Milà de Roca's 1844 *Los misterios de Barcelona* notes that a "manía Misterial" has swept Europe after the success of Eugene Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*: "como por encanto brotaron por do quier Misterios" (iii). Milà de Roca believes that Barcelona deserves its own mysteries: "¿Y había la patria de los Berenguers y Requesens, que tantos arcanos encierra, tener menos que los finos y elegantes parisienses… y que nuestros cucos madrileños?" (iii-iv). The implication, of course, is that Barcelona is just as important as Paris and Madrid; in addition, the act of writing a *misterio* for Barcelona endows the city with a certain prestige and cosmopolitanism. *Los misterios de Barcelona* is certainly a novel of the *ciudad condal*; the presence of the sea, the port, ships, and sailors quickly establishes the Mediterranean setting. *Los misterios de Barcelona* was written by a Catalan and published in Barcelona for the local reading public; the novel

offers a version of the *misterio* genre that is specific to the political and social concerns of Barcelona. Like Martínez Villergas, Milà de Roca sets his novel in the tumultuous 1830s, and explores the tensions caused by the Carlist War and the *moderado-progresista* conflict. However, the two authors' political affiliations differ greatly. Villergas was a strident supporter of the *progresista* cause, while Milà de Roca aligned his political beliefs with the more conservative *moderados.* Both novels weave political conflicts into the plot of their *misterios*, but with opposing intentions; where Villergas demonizes the *moderados*, Milà de Roca vilifies the *progresistas* and the radical liberals. The *moderado-progresista* conflict was felt particularly violently in Barcelona. The city was the site of several violent uprisings followed by harsh punishment from the central government and the military. *Los misterios de Barcelona* provides an opportunity for conservative Barcelona to portray its perspective of the 1830s conflicts.

In the midst of this political turmoil, the novel's central mystery unfolds: a Cuban orphan is dispossessed of her inheritance by her corrupt guardian, and seeks to recover her fortune and discover her true parentage. This mystery highlights the crucial connections between Barcelona and Spain's Caribbean colonies. *Los misterios de Barcelona* is an inherently imperial text, and the fears it reveals have as much to do with Barcelona's economic dependency on the colonies as they do with political instability on the Peninsula.[26] Milà de Roca employs the Gothic family romance to represent the

[26] The anxieties of empire have been a recurring theme in Gothic literature. Carol Margaret Davison, in her discussion of the British Colonial Gothic, identifies Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Charles Dickens's *Great Expectations* as displaying "economic anxieties regarding [the colonial] source of English wealth" (137) in their portrayal of uncanny colonial characters. These novels paved the way for the late nineteenth-century Imperial Gothic, which explored "the degeneration of British institutions, the threat of going native and the invasion of Britain by demonic colonial forces" along with the

problematics of empire control when the metropolis struggles to maintain its own stability. The Gothic has always explored the uncanniness of the colonial, and represented "colonial settings, characters, and realities as frequent embodiments of the forbidding and frightening" (Paravisini-Geber 229). The colonial space, a "bifurcated, ambivalent space" (233), is a strange mix of the familiar and the foreign, and the inhabitants of these spaces also possess this ambivalence. Milà de Roca's novel is populated by *criollos*, *indianos*, and *mulatas*, all figures of the colonial era that problematize Spain's notions of national identity.[27] *Los misterios de Barcelona* reveals the tensions in play in the midst of the early years of the liberal nation-state, where the threats come from both outside and from within.

Milà de Roca begins his novel on a beautiful summer day in one of the city's most accessible and picturesque locales, the hill of Montjuïc that overlooks the Mediterranean. He breaks the peaceful scene with the image of a young woman attempting to commit suicide. As with Villergas's Madrid *misterio*, Milà de Roca's novel begins in an open, accessible space that is confronted with a mystery. The novel begins on July 24, 1835. Milà de Roca's readers would recognize the date: an uprising in Reus, a Catalan city south of Barcelona, had occurred just the day before and was met with crushing opposition from the central government (Martí-López 106). The heroine, Carolina, attempts to throw herself off a cliff into the sea when a young naval officer, Torrellas, spots her and rescues her. She soon confesses to Torrellas her tale of woe:

Inhumanamente engañada por un joven a quien creí honrado y cruelmente

---

postcolonial Gothic of the twentieth century, which re-writes the violence of a country's colonial past (137).

[27] The term *indiano* refers to a Spaniard who returns rich from the Americas.

> perseguida por un tío y un primo altaneros, apelé al desesperado recurso que V. ha presenciado; hoy mismo, tal vez a esta misma hora, habrán recibido ya mis desapiadados parientes una carta mía en que les participo mi triste fin. (Milà de Roca 14)

It is noteworthy that Carolina's suicide attempt occurs in front of Montjuïc, for the mountain occupies a complicated space in the imaginary and history of Barcelona. For Martí-López, rather than a venture into the city's sinister underbelly à la Sue, Montjuïc provides a more comforting setting for the *misterio*:

> The exoticism of the gothic and wild landscapes characteristic of Sue's novel has been replaced in the imitation by a space of collective significance with old and recent history. Milà's Barcelona is both a familiar and ideal space for Milà's readers: a highly rhetorical description of a well-known place, and, at the same time, the peaceful setting of a dream world. (104)

Montjuïc was not just a site of peaceful recreation, however; it is also the location of a military fortress that occupied a significant place in Barcelona's cultural memory. The Castell de Montjuïc was constructed in the seventeenth century in an effort to control the rebellions of Barcelona against the monarchy in Madrid. In the nineteenth century, it represented the support of the monarchy of the Regent María Cristina (Martí-López 104-105). During the Carlist conflict, the fortress bombed parts of the city, and dissenters were jailed or executed within its walls. Thus Montjuïc is inscribed with a double meaning. On the one hand, it is a bucolic, idyllic natural space; on the other, it is the site of Castilian oppression looming over the city. Montjuïc was only one of the structures that watched over the city. Nineteenth-century Barcelona was surrounded by four

additional forts: Drassanes, the Ciutadella, the fort of Don Carlos and the Fort Pius (Romea Castro 215). As Robert Hughes has noted, by 1842 "the military installations of Barcelona covered almost as much land as its civilian buildings. The city had become one enormous fort" (190). Manuel Vázquez Montalbán writes: "Montjuïch became a sinister, fortified monster looming over the city through centuries of repression, its dungeon filled with military and political prisoners" (16).[28] As with all urban novels, *Los misterios de Barcelona* creates a map of Barcelona; this map both draws on the collective memory of its readers and reveals new meanings for familiar places. The ambivalence of Montjuïc's meaning for Barcelona, along with the shock of Carolina's suicide attempt on a beautiful summer day, set the stage for the contradictory, confusing world that nineteenth-century *barceloneses* navigated.

While Carolina is confessing her miseries across town, a confession of a more sinister nature is taking place. In a dark, tomb-like bedchamber, an old man lies dying, accompanied by his wife and his priest, the Dominican Padre Tomás. The yet to be named dying man is eager to turn over a set of papers to the priest which reveal a "funesto secreto" (25). At Padre Tomás's urging, the man confesses his sin:

> Padre, yo he robado a una huérfana inocente su familia, su nombre y su fortuna; he hecho padecer a esta infeliz criatura por largos años los caprichos de un hombre altanero, a quien he hecho creer que mi víctima era hija natural de un hermano suyo; para persuadirle de ello falsifiqué la firma de aquel hombre que

[28] Montjuïc has experienced many transformations over the years, the latest of which occurred during the massive urban renewal projects of the 1992 Olympic Games. Montjuïc is now a tourist attraction, affording prime views of the city and the sea. On the other side of the mountain, however, lies the New Cemetery, a sprawling necropolis of the twentieth century's dead.

> había sido mi protector. No contento con haber robado a mi inocente víctima, abusé de la confianza de mi amigo entregando a sus parientes, y esto como depósito y caudal propio de la que supuse hija de aquel, la quinta parte de los tesoros que fiara a mi fe. Siempre que veía a mi víctima los remordimientos me desgarraban el alma […] había llegado a creer que desapareciendo aquella de mi vista viviría tranquilo, y mil planes había formado para quitarla la vida.
>
> (Milà de Roca 30-31)

Instead of killing his victim, an opportunity for her ruin presents itself in the form of a young "libertino" from Havana:

> mi víctima estaba en casa, y como yo no anhelaba más que su ruina, propuse al jó…ven…per…don…Padre… per… don… salvad si hay tiem…po a mi……..
>
> (Milà de Roca 31)

The man dies before he can finish his confession; his inability to articulate the horror of his sin recalls the Gothic unspeakable. The Gothic explores the point at which words fail to describe the enormity of experience; the Gothic "denies the capacity of words to express the extremes of feeling" (Robertson 81). Gothic narrative is often characterized as much for what is not said as for what is said; often the secret or mystery of the narrative is unutterable. In Maturin's *Melmoth the Wanderer* (1820), the novel's secret is so powerful that those who try to speak it fall into fits or even die (Lutz 35). In Gothic literature, language "is the medium suspended and weakened by the abuse of power" (Robertson 82). The confessant's abuse of his guardianship violates the patriarchal family structure, which is reflected in the breakdown of language.

The orphan is, of course, Carolina, and we soon learn the story behind the deathbed confession. Milà de Roca's novel employs many shifting frames of time and space; this constant wavering between the past and present creates a dislocated sense of time that is one of the hallmarks of Gothic fiction (McEvoy 22). The dying man is Francisco Piló, who as a young man met José Bardisa, a jealous, greedy man who aims to corrupt Piló. After Piló is ruined by gambling, he travels to Cuba and continues his licentious ways. Piló befriends Bardisa's honorable brother, Juan, who is the guardian of a young orphan, Carolina. The trope of the two brothers, one honest and one corrupt, recalls the Gothic notion of the double. As Abigail Lee Six has discussed, the Gothic trope of the double addresses what is perceived as threatening at any given historical moment; fears of Darwin's theories manifested themselves in characters with animal-like doubles (65). The Bardisa brothers reveal the anxieties surrounding colonial wealth; Juan Bardisa represents the honorable custodianship, while José Bardisa represents greed and speculation. Carolina is the daughter of a wealthy Catalan plantation owner, Pedro Palmas, and his slave, Encarnación. Palmas recognizes his daughter in his will and provides her with an inheritance of 100,000 *duros*. After Palmas's death, Juan Bardisa becomes her guardian. However, Juan Bardisa soon dies, and Piló usurps Carolina's fortune for himself. Piló returns to Barcelona with Carolina, and delivers her to José Bardisa, telling him she is Juan's daughter. Carolina is raised by her corrupt "uncle" and her true identity is hidden by Piló's lies. Piló attempts to cover the corrupt origins of his fortune beneath a façade of piety. The presence of Carolina becomes for Piló the specter of his guilt, and he resolves to permanently rid himself of Carolina. Piló pays a nefarious

criollo, Jorge Gollo, to seduce and abandon Carolina, and in so doing he destroys her honor and provokes her suicide attempt.

The plot of Milà de Roca's *misterio* echoes both Sue's *mystère* and Walpole's *Otranto*: a hidden, secret, or usurped inheritance and the repercussions this action has on its innocent victim (Amores 5). The story of the helpless orphan "often represents the social cost and human suffering of industrialization as well as the alienation brought by the new cities—the loss of an individual sense of family and community" (Martí-López 71). The figure of the orphan also represents the subject without origins. In the modernizing world, the old systems of patriarchal family ties begin to shift, and the subject emerges as an individual. This change is not without anxiety, thus orphans and orphanages appear often in Gothic tales. Their status as subjects without clear ties to the patriarchal system figures them as semi-outcasts of society (Heathcliff from *Wuthering Heights* is perhaps the most notable example of the wicked orphan). It is thus crucial that Carolina reincorporate herself into the 'family' by discovering her true identity. However, the recovery of her origins is inhibited by Barcelona's political and social tumult.

Los misterios de Barcelona is set in the 1830s, a tense era for Barcelona. Decades of conflict between Barcelona and the central government in Madrid were coming to a head with both the radical protests and the Carlist cause. Bourbon rule was not welcomed in Barcelona as it had been in Madrid. During the War of Spanish Succession (1701-1714), Catalonia joined England, Holland, Austria, and Savoy in the fight to dethrone Felipe V, the Bourbon successor to Carlos II, and replace him with Archduke Carlos of Austria. For the foreign powers, the purpose of the war was to stem further expansion of

Bourbon power, but for Catalans the war was about preserving their local government against the increasingly more centralized government in Madrid. The Catalans fought until they had no allies left, and once they were defeated, Felipe V wasted little time to insure that Barcelona did not rise up against his authority again. The Consell de Cent, Catalonia's representative body, and the *drets* and the *furs*, the traditional laws and privileges of self-government, were abolished. Publication in Catalan was prohibited, the universities were closed, and the city was taxed to fund the construction of the Ciutadella, a star-shaped fort (Hughes 187-189). From 1714 into the nineteenth century, Barcelona was an occupied city. From the fortress atop Montjuïc on one side of the city, the Ciutadella on the other, and the city walls, Barcelona was surrounded by symbols of Castilian repression.

Bourbon rule was not Catalonia's first encounter with Castilian hegemony. During the Middle Ages, while the rest of the Peninsula was preoccupied with the *Reconquista*, Catalonia established itself as a powerful force in the Mediterranean trade, and even amassed a small empire of Mediterranean islands. As the capital of Catalonia, Barcelona was politically powerful and progressive; Catalonia had the first written bill of rights in Europe, the Usatges, and with the Consell de Cent, the beginnings of democratic representative government. Unlike Madrid, Barcelona had a strong tradition of guilds that formed the backbone of the city's economic life (Hughes 154). Catalonia's union with Aragon formed a power bloc against Castile's growing hegemony; ironically, however, it was also this union that would eventually lead to Barcelona's submission to Castilian authority (Hughes 103). When Fernando of Aragon (and of Catalonia) married Isabel of Castile, he united all three kingdoms. Fernando established the Inquisition in Barcelona,

driving out the city's substantial Jewish population and source of economic revenue. While for Madrid the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are often referred to as the "Siglo de Oro,*"* for Catalans it is known as "*La Decadencia*" (Hughes 175).

Barcelona did not benefit from Carlos III's enlightened despotism as had Madrid; while Madrid was cleaned up to become the symbol the central government, Barcelona was left to languish in chaos and filth. Pierre Vilar describes the conditions in the walled-in nineteenth-century city:

> The continuous reconstruction of houses made derelict by the sieges and bombardments sustained by the city between 1691 and 1714, the demolition of a large number of old houses which had remained intact, and the construction of other buildings designed specifically to accommodate more and more people in the same meager space led to the concentration of the population in an increasingly restricted area. The military fort and the walls prevented the city's expansion. Allotments and what had been spacious patios became progressively smaller and streets narrower. This city, where any extension takes an upwards direction, has become a dense cluster of houses, domes, vantage points and roof terraces which, nevertheless, make up an extraordinary landscape if seen from above or from a good distance. Seen from within, the spectacle is less attractive. (cited in Vázquez Montalbán 68)

The urban reforms of Ildefons Cerdà and the city's famous expansion were still decades away when Milà de Roca wrote *Los misterios de Barcelona*. Nineteenth-century Barcelona was a curious mix of medieval daily habits coupled with modern concerns for order and hygiene. The *Diario de Barcelona* of June 29, 1846, citing the periodical *El*

Fomento, acknowledges that Barcelona needs to catch up to the urban plans underway in Madrid:

> En vista de las irregularidades que se han creado en las calles de esta ciudad, y de los ángulos entrantes o salientes que aparecen algunas veces en sus aceras so pretesto de rectificarlas, pide la formación de un plan general de mejoras relacionadas entre sí, a imitación del que acaba de trazar para la corte el Sr. de Mesonero Romanos, y conforme lo propuso el Boletín enciclopédico de bellas artes de esta ciudad. Y no pide un plan limitado al recinto actual de esta ciudad con esclusiva relación a su estado presente; le desea mas grandioso, mas previsor; quisiera que se formase con aplicación a la mejora capital del ensanche, a darse por el progresivo desarrollo de la producción de nuestro suelo; quisiera que comprendiese el caserío de estramuros lastimosamente desatendido hasta ahora por nuestra municipalidad: quisiera que alcanzase el plan a impedir la antojadiza construcción de edificios, en calles que algun día pertenecerán a Barcelona. (180: 2722)

The passage shows a keen awareness of the necessity of urban planning to Barcelona's growth and prosperity, and well as foresight into Barcelona's future expansion beyond the city walls and its absorption of outlying towns.

Barcelona was not freed from the constraints of its walls because, in the eyes of the Madrid government, it needed to be controlled. Walled cities have long been a physical manifestation of authoritarian rule; in the nineteenth century "liberalism was spatially marked by the transition from walled to open cities" (Resina 63). The opening of Barcelona's walls would signify a more equal political footing with Madrid, and

unleash an economic growth that was steadily giving more power and wealth to the Mediterranean city. Barcelona was indeed becoming a fierce competitor of Madrid; Richard Ford's travelogue of Spain describes Barcelona as the "Manchester of Spain" (Busquets 101); Barcelona's access to the sea and two rivers provided a natural setting for industrialization that Madrid's landlocked and arid terrain lacked. This is not to say that Barcelona's industrialization was smooth, or even that it was welcomed by most of its inhabitants. The burning of the Bonaplata factory in 1835, depicted in *Los misterios de Barcelona*, was carried out by Catalan luddites in protest of the installation of steam-powered looms (Resina 25). The protesters were supporters of Barcelona's old artisan tradition, and they resented the usurpation of their tradition by technology. Barcelona seems to embody the double face of the Gothic; there is both a fear of the irrational past and a fear of the inhuman present.

Many other nineteenth-century discourses employed Gothic tropes to describe the political turmoil and frequent episodes of violence. The *Diario de Barcelona*, a conservative, pro-Isabeline publication, portrays rebellions against the crown as though they were a persecution of a romantic heroine: "Los enemigos del trono de nuestra inocente Reina, que lo son del orden público, han levantado el negro pendón de la rebelión en Alicante y Cartagena" (56:838). The *Diario* describes the presence of incendiary pamphlets as agents of terror and disorder in an article from the 16th of August, 1835 by the Comandante General, Pedro María de Pastors:

> El espanto y la indignación que os ha causado la malignidad y descaro con que ayer se esparcieron papeles subversivos para introducir el desorden, y entregaros a los horrores de un tumulto, movido por agentes de los enemigos de nuestra

> industria y bien estar, ha penetrado del más profundo dolor a mi corazón; y de acuerdo con las demás Autoridades y Junta auxiliar consultiva he dictado las providencias mas enérgicas, por cuyo medio el promotor principal de los atentados que se temían y consternaban toda esta benemérita ciudad queda entregado al imperio de la Ley. (228: 1819)

Many of the announcements and articles of the *Diario de Barcelona* are related to the establishment and maintenance of order. In the *Diario de Barcelona* of August 7, 1835, the first announcement claims that "los que ahora se propasen al desorden no tienen otra mira que el pillage y el asesinato" and warns of the consequences to those who choose to revolt:

> los Buenos ciudadanos se unen al Ejército para su esterminio, pues son muchos los que se me han presentado al efecto. Por consiguiente encargo estrechísimamente a todos los Comandantes de la fuerza, tanto de la benemérita Milicia como del Ejército, que guardando la debida unión y armonía, hagan uso de las armas en cualquiera grupo de amotinados destryuéndolos y conduciendo a los que capturen a la Real Ciudadela a disposición de la Comisión Militar. (219: 1744)

Perhaps even more than the fortress of Montjuïc, the fort of the Ciutudella was one of Barcelona's most hated symbols of repression. Built after the Spanish War of Succession, its specific purpose was to patrol and control the city of Barcelona and suppress any rebellions.

In the same August 7 issue, the *Diario de Barcelona* warns against the consequences of disobeying the government by opposing order with a Gothicized vision of chaos:

> El orden es elemento de vida para las sociedades si él todo fuera caos, todo confusión, todo disolución social. La misma libertad, esta divinidad protectora del hombre, no quiere sangre ni desórdenes: quiere sí, energía, hija de los nobles sentimientos de los patriotas. Sí Barceloneses: orden, libertad, pruebas tenéis dadas de que no queréis el orden de la degradación, el orden de las tumbas y en este momento manifestaréis a la faz de las naciones, que sois acreedores al dictado de hombres libres. (219: 1744)

The *Diario de Barcelona* was the vehicle for many open letters to the citizens of Barcelona, which urged them to embrace the legitimate rule of Isabel while simultaneously threatening to punish any insurrection. A letter from Josef María de Santocildes, the captain general of Catalonia, on December 5, 1834 urges Catalans to support the authorities in maintaining order:

> Enemigo de todo elemento contrario al orden, no menos castigaré las rebeliones Carlistas, que las asonadas revolucionarias. Confío en la cooperación de las Autoridades, en la lealtad del ejército, en las virtudes cívicas de la milicia urbana, en la cordura de las demás clases, para el desempeño feliz de tan importante Ministerio, pues a todos igualmente interesa que prevalezcan el Estatuto Real, las leyes que de él emanan, y la paz y el orden tan necesario en un país industrioso,

> contra cualquier género de anarquías.[29] (340: 2810)

For Barcelona, the radicals and anarchists represented as much of a threat as the Carlist movement. Nineteenth-century Barcelona was a battlefield for the competing political ideologies of the day.

The Barcelona of the 1830s possesses a complicated political landscape. While the city, especially its bourgeois population, was largely in support of María Cristina and Isabel, the working class and poor aligned themselves with the more radical *progresistas* or Carlist elements (Romea Castro 60). Milà de Roca's harshest criticisms are not for the Carlists, as with Villergas, but for the *progresistas*. Indeed, Milà de Roca shows himself to be almost tolerant of the Carlists. However, the fact that Milà de Roca's novel is set in Barcelona inscribes these uprisings with questions of loyalty to the central government versus loyalty to the historical rights of Catalonia. Thus, Milà de Roca's novel suggests a certain ambivalence toward the Carlist conflict; while not explicitly praising the Carlists, the novel does on one occasion portray the enemies of the Carlists as barbarians who engage in an "infernal orgía de salvajes" (129):

> El 6 de enero de 1836 estalló un motín o bullanga, precursor de las terribles revoluciones que debían pesar sobre la infortunada Barcelona, en que los sublevados, asaltando la Ciudadela y el fuerte de Atarazanas y apoderándose

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[29] The 1834 Estatuto Real, proposed by Prime Minister Francisco Martínez de la Rosa, was a compromise between the Crown and the *progresista* liberals. During the absolutist reign of Fernando VII, the liberal Constitution of 1812 was abolished. After Fernando's death, María Cristina's regency did not reinstate the Constitution. The Estatuto, with its two-chamber parliament, allowed for the participation of wealthy bourgeois in Spain's government while still maintaining the monarchy's power (Vicens Vives 128). Thus María Cristina won the crucial support of the liberals in the First Carlist War. The Estatuto remained in effect until María Cristina was forced by the military to reinstate the 1812 Constitution in the 1836 *Motín de La Granja.*

> del hospital militar, so pretexto de horrorosas represalías, fusilaron vil y cobardemente, no sólo a los prisioneros de las filas carlistas sino que también a los desgraciados enfermos que gemían en el lecho del dolor lamentando sus heridas y su cautividad. Los revoltosos, en su ciego frenesí y en su devoradora sed de sangre y matanza, confundieron entre facciosos algunos infelices, que por deudores de contribuciones se hallaban en Atarazanas. (Milà de Roca 128-129)

Milà de Roca includes the historical event of the burning of the convents in 1835 to complicate the mystery of Carolina's parentage. Chapter IV opens with a description of a clear Barcelona night that is quickly obscured by "opacas bocanadas de humo que van ennegreciendo lo despejado de la atmósfera," and when the city is illuminated, it is no longer by the light of the stars but by "las rojas llamas que […] iluminan tristes escenas de sangre y destrucción" (40). Destroyed in the flames is the cell of Padre Tomás, confessor to Francisco Piló, who entrusted him with the papers that reveal the true identity of Carolina. Padre Tomás nearly dies in the flames, and the papers are left behind in his cell. Soon it is discovered that the papers were recovered by another priest, who has abandoned his order to follow the Carlists in Navarre. This narrative twist is exemplary of Milà de Roca's ambivalence regarding the Carlist cause; has the priest purloined the letter, or rescued the letter from certain loss or destruction? His affiliation with Carlism, a movement based on the idea that a birthright has been stolen, and represented as a movement that contests the legitimacy of authority, suggests that he is replicating the usurpation of birthright and power with his postponement of the restoration of Carolina's inheritance. The Carlist priest is an impediment to the resolution of the novel's mystery, but he is no monster; at most, he is misguided but sincere in his convictions.

There is no such ambivalence in the novel's portrayal of *progresistas* and radicals, however. As Celia Romea Castro has noted, Milà de Roca associates *progresista* actions and ideas with negatively portrayed characters: "personajes libertinos que vivían sin trabajar, gastándose un patrimonio o a cuenta de otros" (159). The *progresista* cause is portrayed as violent and unjustified; in the novel "no hay quien represente la revolución que Barcelona vivía en esos meses, ni con inteligencia, ni con la voluntad de cambio que la situación conyuntural pretendía conseguir" (Romea Castro 160). Milà de Roca presents the liberal revolts as monstrous and barbaric. Milà de Roca's newspaper, *El Papagayo*, served as a platform for criticisms of Espartero and the *progresistas* who, in the words of Romea Castro, Milà "odiaba visceralmente" (Romea Castro 43). Milà de Roca's description of the café del Rincón further develops his damning of the *progresista* cause. The café, next to the Teatro del Príncipe, was a well-known meeting place for *progresistas*. Milà de Roca portrays these bars as dens of corruption and gambling (Romea Castro 236). As with capitalist speculation, gambling is portrayed as an illegitimate means of earning money:

> The Café is the site of new economic encounters where new social relations and radical politics are constituted; it is the locus where the cancellation of traditional morality unequivocally signifies class struggle and speculation capitalism. (Martí-López 132)

Unlike Eugène Sue's carefully segregated centers of urban vice, Milà de Roca's novel portrays Barcelona as a space open to all social classes (122). This too revolves around a question of origins; in gambling and speculations, "money no longer has origin" (Martí-López 133). The dual fear of and longing for the past that is present in the Gothic is also

linked to economic systems; in the nineteenth century, money is no longer exclusively linked to noble families and landowners. Wealth can exist without relation to land or family, hence, without origin. This represented a drastic change in the conception of money and class, and enabled those outside the landowning nobility to gain access to wealth and, by extension, the upper castes of society. The café is a prime example of the intermixing of different social groups. The café is frequented by a whole host of Barcelona's marginal characters: "los parroquianos del café del tío Curro eran contrabandistas, desertores, barateros, mujeres perdidas y relajadas" (Milà de Roca 85). The intermingling of different social classes provides a ripe environment for vice and illicit activities. For Milà de Roca, the *progresista* movement provides too much social mobility; the novel favors the traditional bourgeoisie, not the social climbers.

José Bardisa's back story is another of the novel's examples of capitalists who place profit above morality. Bardisa convinces his wealthy employer, Bashy, that his daughter Adela has been impregnated and abandoned by her lover. In a rush to protect his family's honor, Bashy agrees to let Bardisa marry Adela, which provides him with access to her family fortune. Adela experiences feelings of terror at the prospect of her malevolent husband: "fue arrastrada al templo donde el miedo y el terror le arrancaron un fatal juramiento" (66). Adela, of course, was not actually pregnant, but it is too late; Bashy dies soon after the wedding and Bardisa takes over the family business. However, his greed is not satisfied by conventional business:

> Para aquel hombre ambicioso y avaro un comercio legal y honroso no era suficiente. Anhelaba negios de segura ganancia, que los intereses o réditos

> escedieran al capital; negocios que le proporcionarán a la vez una usura desmedida y el complacer a sus instintos de fiera, cebándose en atormentar y sacrificar a sus semejantes. (Milà de Roca 68)

Bardisa's portrayal as a usurer marks him as culturally other. For centuries usury was forbidden by the Catholic Church and seen as an illegitimate source of wealth, and therefore was primarily practiced by non-Christians. The term *usurero* became a code word for Jew, Spain's internal other, and those who earned money through interest were held in contempt by "good" families. Bardisa and Piló are portrayed as illegitimate owners of wealth.

Milà's condemnation of *progresista* politics and the dangers of social mobility are embodied in the story of Gancho, the humble fisherman who helps save Carolina at the beginning of the novel. Due to the duplicity of Bardisa, his father's former business partner, Gancho is burdened with debts. Gancho "belongs to that old social group of small entrepreneurs […] that is rapidly disappearing from the city's social spectrum due to the transformation of its mercantilist economy into speculative capitalism" (Martí-López 126). In a stroke of luck, and in another example of the speculative nature of the new economy, Gancho wins the lottery and is able to open a profitable store. At first Gancho's success seems to be a restoration of his proper place in society; however, Gancho's newfound wealth also brings with it political ambitions, and soon Gancho is involved in the city's *progresista* political machine. Gancho becomes haughty and arrogant, and wins office by distributing alcohol to voters. However, Gancho is ill equipped for a political career, and he soon makes mistakes that threaten to provoke the resentment of his enemies. It is only when Beltrán, the conservative member of

Barcelona's bourgeoisie, untangles his political messes that Gancho returns to his role as a shopkeeper. Milà's depiction of *progresistas* as excessive and catering to the whims of the masses shows them to be a threat to the political order and stability of Barcelona. Milà's treatment of Gancho's story also reveals the limits to class mobility; Gancho can return to the mercantile class his father once occupied, but he can go no higher. General Espartero, as noted in Villergas's *misterio*, was often criticized for his plebeian origins. While Villergas criticizes those who "en el siglo XIX" would belittle a man for his origins, Milà de Roca, does not show the same generosity to his working-class characters. His portrayal of Gancho as a lower-class politician in over his head after a sudden rise to the upper economic echelons of society echoes many *moderado* criticisms of Espartero and their wish to limit popular participation in government. Gancho represents the middle-class ambitions that threaten Barcelona's patrician democratic order (Martí-López 128).

Elsewhere in the novel, Milà de Roca idealizes Barcelona's pre-capitalist society, with a rhetoric that prefigures the *Renaixença* of the later decades of the nineteenth century:[30]

> En aquella época que llamamos ahora, bien que impúdicamente, de ignorancia y oscurantismo, existía en Barcelona una verdadera representación popular compuesta de todas las clases de la sociedad en los colegios y gremios […] Estas instituciones […] producían bienes inmensos así a la nación en general como a

[30] The *Renaixença* was a nineteenth-century Catalan medieval-revival movement. The *Renaixença* aimed to reclaim the glory days of Catalan culture before the years of the *Decadència.* The *Renaixença* revived interest in Catalan language, literature, and history. The movement also fostered the emerging Catalan nationalist movement of the late nineteenth century.

> sus mismos componentes; eran un centinela avanzado del orden; una firme garantía al honrado y operario y, por fin, una verdadera policía que alejaba de Barcelona esos inmensos enjambres de tunos y vagos que ahora la infestan. (52-53)

Milà de Roca sees the new capitalist order as illegitimate, for it is based on a system of money "without origins," i.e., speculation, rather than the craftsmanship of guilds. In Milà's politically conservative *misterio,* the threat to Barcelona is just not the return of the past; the present, with its greed and excesses, also endangers the city.

The Colonial Other: The *indiano* and the *criollo*

The Gothic expresses the encounter with the Other, and often that other turns out to lie within. In the case of nineteenth-century Barcelona, the port city was teeming with others who had been incorporated into the community: *indianos, criollos* and sometimes *mulatos*. The figure of the *indiano* has been a part of Spanish literature since the sixteenth century. Indeed, George Mariscal has noted that the *indiano* "was invented through writing" (59) because he presented such confounding notions of otherness. In the early modern period, the *indiano* represented a radical break with the traditional economic and social structure:

> As a product of contact with the colonies and thus one of the first transatlantic constructs, the *indiano* would be textualized through a complex semiotic field of difference and in some cases linked, as Castro has taught us, to the alterity of previously othered groups such as the *conversos*. In effect, although the majority

> of indianos were native-born Spaniards, aristocratic writers would consistently represent them as "ethnically other." (Mariscal 56)

The otherness of the *indiano* extended to the categorization of his behavior and moral fiber. An *indiano* was morally suspect, cast as an interloper or threat to the social body (55-56). In Lope de Vega's *La Dorotea*, the *indiano* Don Bela is killed for trying to seduce a noble Spanish woman (55). The instability of the idea of the *indiano* led to often contradictory representations. The *indiano* was also portrayed as graceful and charming, due to his contact with the climate of the Americas. It was believed that the hot and humid air of the colonies altered the character of native Spaniards, and often made them superior to those who had never left the metropolis. Juan de Cardenas's *Primera parte de los problemas y secretos maravillosos de las Indias* (1591) declared that *criollos* possesed an "agudo, trascendido y delicado ingenio" (Mariscal 58).

The representation of Jorge Gollo concurs with this image. The son of a wealthy Havana landowner, Jorge has been sent to Barcelona to continue his law studies. He is extremely charming and intelligent: "dotado …de esta rara y preciosa compresión con que la naturaleza ha dotado a los hijos de las Antillas, poseía perfectamente los idiomas francés e inglés y era de los más adelantados y sobresalientes de las cátedras a que asistía" (Milà de Roca 142). But this charm is deceptive, and allows Gollo to seduce Carolina and other vulnerable women. Despite his charm, Gollo has a darker side, and is also a "libertino y jugador" (142). He soon accumulates gambling debts, and to settle them, he resorts to a life of crime. He begins by falsifying letters, and soon he joins a group of criminals, and together they "saben vestir todos los trajes, adoptan todos los caracteres, disfrazan sus rostros y cambian su voz" (145). Gollo's Jekyll-and Hyde-like

nature is the double character of the Gothic villain, who embodies both familiarity and otherness. Gollo's principal *modus operandi* is to seduce rich women and steal their money. When the heroes of the novel set out to rescue two women who have been seduced by Gollo and his accomplice, the environment of the city reflects the ominous mood:

> Negras, densas y espesas nubes cubren el cielo con que la naturaleza dotó a la feraz campiña de Barcelona y la clara luna de enero apenas puede reflejar sus fulgores por entre los cargados y densos nubarrones que el impetuoso nordeste lanza de oriente a occidente […] ni un ser viviente transita por el frondoso y ameno paseo de Gracia. (Milà de Roca 271-272)

Gollo's charm disguises a violent and malevolent character that is not only a threat to the women of Barcelona, but to the city itself. At the uprising at the Atarazanas barracks, *el pintor*, Gollo's roommate, witnesses the full transformation of Gollo into a violent monster:

> Qué horrible espectáculo se presentó a su vista! Su compañero de cuarto, *Gollo*, sin corbata ni chaleco, con el pantalón sujeto al cuerpo por un pañuelo de pita, gorra de cuartel, levita de paisano, con dos pistolas de arzon colgadas del pañuelo […] estaba capitaneando aquella horda de asesinos; siete infelices habían ya espirado víctimas de aquellos cáfres que marcharon en busca de otras nuevas. (Milà de Roca 129-130)

The image of the rebellious, murderous *criollo* stirs up the memory of colonial uprisings earlier in the century; the implication is that political instability in the peninsula will provoke anarchy and rebellion in the colonies. Gollo is thus a spectral figure, for he

embodies the return of the violent and destructive loss of Spain's colonies that never disappeared. The portrayal of Gollo is fraught with Gothic fears that the internal other will rise against up the patriarchal metropolis and lead to its undoing.[31]

The ambiguity surrounding the *indiano* reveals the mounting changes to the Spanish conception of identity as the world was shifting into the modern age. In a sense, the *indiano* is a figure of modernity, for he is " one of the earliest literary figures born of the globalization of the world economy" (Mariscal 66) as well as one of the first figures to challenge the social and economic hierarchies of the *antiguo régimen*. The *indiano* is a disruptive element that complicates Spanish discourses of purity of blood in the early modern period, and later in the eighteenth and nineteenth century, problematizes ideas of national identity. The *indianos* are not quite Spanish, not quite foreign; their riches are necessary and accepted, but also feared and looked on with suspicion. In the nineteenth century, Duque de Rivas's *Don Álvaro o la fuerza del sino* introduces a romantic representation of the *indiano/mestizo*; the son of the Spanish viceroy and an Incan princess (with clear parallels to Inca Garcilaso de la Vega) commits suicide after his failure to marry Leonor and integrate into Spanish society. Michael Iarocci has proposed that we must read the literature of the nineteenth century through the lens of Spain's imperial identity; despite the fact that by the mid-1800s Spain had lost most of its colonies, it still considered itself to be an imperial power, and even expected for a time

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[31] William Hughes points out in his discussion of *Dracula* that there are two ways to read the invading Gothic monster: the vampire as the racial or ethnic other that threatens to destroy the integrity of the nation, or the vampire as the metropolis itself, "the invading nation invaded by its own process of invasion and cultural infiltration" (96). The irony inherent in the second reading highlights the displacement of anxiety present in the Gothic: Spain and other metropolises fear the invasion of the colonial other, when they themselves are the invader.

that the new Latin American nations would be short lived and would soon be reincorporated into the empire.[32] Iarocci reads don Álvaro's suicide as a metaphor for the impossibility of this reunion (129-130).

While Spain's former colonies struggled to establish themselves as independent nations, 1840s Cuba was still a valuable possession vulnerable to loss. In 1837, the new Spanish Constitution declared that the *colonias de Ultramar* would be governed under special rules, which essentially meant that the Spanish Constitution did not apply to them. They were prohibited from having representation in government, abolishing the precedent set by the 1812 Constitución de Cádiz (Alonso Romero 17). Spain and Cuba had a close but in some ways strange relationship. The landowning elites in Cuba had strong ties to Spain, and they shared the same political views; however, economically, Cuba was closer to France, Great Britain, and the United States, for Spain was unable to absorb the sugar market nor could it meet all of the financial needs of the island (Alonso Romero 28-29). This economic independence from Spain gradually shifted into differing political views. Cubans saw other colonial models, specifically Britain's treatment of Canada, as a precedent for reforms. By 1865, the Cuban *reformistas* presented a letter to General Serrano demanding political reforms and the end of the slave trade (to increase the number of whites on the island). If their demands were not met, Cuba threatened to become part of the United States (Alonso Romero 30). It was essential to Spain, and

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[32] Spain lost most of its American possessions between 1810 and 1824. The burgeoning independence movements—inspired by the success of the American Revolution, Enlightenment ideals, and fostered by growing resentment of the *criollos* over their lack of local hegemony—took advantage of the Spain's occupation by France and subsequent war for independence to declare their own right to self-governance. During the Trienio Liberal, the fledgling Spanish republic had minimal military presence in the colonies, which helped bring about independence.

especially to Barcelona, that Cuba and the other Caribbean colonies be preserved; thus we see the integration of Carolina into Barcelona society as a sign of Cuban capital remaining with Barcelona (Martí-López 110).

The economic relationship between Catalonia and the Americas was solidified in the eighteenth century, when Carlos III gave Catalans the authorization to trade in the colonies. By the nineteenth century, La Compañía de Barcelona possessed a trade monopoly in Santo Domingo, Puerto Rico, and Margarita. The Company exported oil, rice, salt, soap, and other goods to the Americas while importing coffee, sugar, and cocoa (Gil 15). The capital from this trade monopoly, along with the *indianos*, brought great wealth to Barcelona, as Valentí Almirall described in 1886:

> La parte nueva de la ciudad de Barcelona […] se debe casi en su totalidad a los indianos y a los americanos que durante la Guerra de Cuba y la gran crisis que vino después realizaron sus fortunas y volvieron a establecerse entre nosotros. Cuando se recorren las calles anchas y largas, aún a medio edificar, de la Barcelona nueva, se pueden apreciar fastuosas y elegantes construcciones […] los habaneros, llegados de América, y algunos arribistas de la Bolsa, son dueños de la mayoría, no, mejor dicho, casi la totalidad de tan suntuosos edificios. (cited in Rodrigo y Alharilla 261)

As Milà de Roca's novel demonstrates, many well-to-do Catalans earned their fortune in the Caribbean, and the ambiguous nature of their fortune and the manner in which it was earned was a source of suspicion and anxiety in Barcelona. *Los indianos,* or *les indians* in Catalan, were often thought to have obtained their fortune through nefarious means. In

Los misterios de Barcelona, the benevolent *indiano* don Cristóbal describes the rumors surrounding Francisco Piló:

> Pues ahora se confirman más mis sospechas; recuerdo perfectamente que Piló anduvo algunos años divagando por la isla de Cuba hecho un aventurero; que la primera vez que vine yo de aquella isla a Europa, no se le sabía capital ninguno; y la gran fortuna que llevó viniendo aquí dos años después. Me hacen sospechar una de esas terribles infamias o de esos atrevidos golpes que roban a una familia entera su felicidad y su honra; por lo que es muy factible que la señorita por quien tanto Uds. se interesan, será la dueña del capital de Piló y la misma persona a quien confesó él que había robado su nombre y sus riquezas. (Milà de Roca 250)

Milà de Roca's novel serves to "desacreditar la reputación de buena parte de la burgesía barcelonesa" (Romea Castro 155) by revealing their fortunes to be the product of betrayals and theft. The act of earning a fortune in America produces anxiety because it is a way of earning money outside the parameters of the *antiguo régimen* economic system. The ghost of slavery is also inscribed in the wealth of the *indianos*, for their fortune was associated with human misery. Studies have suggested that a great deal of Barcelona's economic success in the nineteenth century, especially its *febre d'or* in the later decades of the century, would not have been possible without the *indianos* who made their fortune in the Caribbean and returned to invest it in Barcelona. As Carmè Riera declares in her novel *Por el cielo y más allá*, Spain's two bourgeois and industrial successes, Catalonia and the Basque Country, were created, "en gran parte, con capital proveniente de los ingenios esclavistas" (452). The Güell family is one of the most famous examples of

indiano wealth. The founder of the Güell family dynasty earned his fortune in Cuba and returned to invest it in Barcelona's manufacturing industry. Other notable Catalans who ushered in Barcelona's nineteenth-century growth were also *indianos*: Josep Xifrée Casas, Barcelona's largest landowner, and Miguel Biada Bunyol, the builder of Spain's first railroad (McDonogh "Good Families" 71). Martín Rodrigo y Alharilla notes that the returning *indianos* were not initially welcomed into Barcelona society:

> […] aquests Indians eran incialment uns estranys a Barcelona. Acabats d'arribar, la gran majoria no podia amargar el seu origin humil. Gairebé no n'hi havia cap de hagués nascut a la ciutat comtal, peró tots necessitaven integrarse en les bones famílies locals. Per à això comptaven amb els seus capital. (265)

The humble origins of many *indianos* is perhaps part of what caused them to be such complicated figures. The source of an *indiano*'s fortune was often shrouded in mystery, and his fortune enabled them to enter into "good familiesto which they would not have had access. Their integration, especially the integration of their wealth, was essential to Barcelona and Spain's economy and modernization.

Carolina is also an internal "other" in the novel; as the daughter of a plantation owner and a slave, Carolina represents the new type of subject brought about by colonialism. Carolina is neither entirely Cuban nor entirely Spanish, and her race is treated in an ambiguous manner throughout the novel. Her origins are well known to the readers early on in the novel, but her racial otherness is not emphasized. As Lisa Surwillo has examined, notions of authenticity and passing are central to *Los misterios de Barcelona*. Carolina effectively passes for a white woman; her race is not a secret, but neither is it a subject of much discussion. When Torrellas rescues Carolina after her

suicide attempt, he cuts off her restrictive dress and corset and clothes her in men's attire. Carolina re-enters Barcelona passing both as a white man and as a relative of Torrellas (Surwillo 77-78).[33] Carolina's sexual past also experiences a similar treatment as her race; her future husband is aware of her seduction and abandonment, but this does not prevent her from marrying as any virginal woman would. By marrying into one of Barcelona's "good families," Carolina's difference is erased into non-difference, and she is able to function in Barcelona society as a fully legitimate member.

The presence of counterfeit goods in the novel mirrors Carolina's own passing; the secondary characters, including Gancho, are involved in the smuggling of contraband tobacco from Cuba into Barcelona. Gancho claims that he could reveal the identities of smugglers who pass undetected through society (Surwillo 109). Just as smugglers and contraband tobacco pass through Barcelona undetected, so do Carolina and other sons and daughters of white Catalans and black Cubans. As don Cristóbal reveals, he

> conoce allí [Havana] mucha gente y que está enterado de la vida y milagros de todos los catalanes que por allí han estado, y que también sabe que algunos que sin temor de Dios ni consentimiento de la iglesia tienen hijos de mulatas y negras, á los que se avergüenzan de llevar consigo cuando se viene para sus tierras; y hasta que los ha habido que han dado mucho dinero á otros para que hiciesen pasar por propios hijos de ellos. (Milà de Roca 240)

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[33] Barbara Fuchs has explored the theme of passing in Cervantes; she notes that in early modern Spain, passing as another gender, race, or religion "challenge[s] the attempt to identify and categorize 'proper' Spanish subjects"(3). Fuchs cites Francesca Royster's study of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* and her proposal that "the depiction of racial passing […] reflects a deep cultural anxiety about imposters and invasion"(7). In Spain's colonial context, passing was even a legal phenomenon; a *mestiza* woman might become a white Spaniard by marrying a Spanish male.

As Surwillo notes, the prevalence of passing in the novel could produce doubts in the minds of its readers about their fellow *barceloneses*; any one of them could be smugglers of counterfeit goods or the children of landowners and slaves. The result is a dismantling of the imperial discourse of racial categories; Spaniards can no longer "claim to know or trust exactly what or who is white, Spanish, black or mulatto" (83). Surwillo calls this the "anxiety of mutable whiteness" (83) that is the result of the subversion of colonial power structures. The colonial system, not unlike feudalism, relied on strict categories of difference: metropolis versus colony, colonizer versus colonized, etc. The presence of Catalan-Cubans who pass as full-fledged members of Spanish society represents the fragility and ultimate undoing of these systems of difference.

Carolina, like Laura in *Los misterios de Madrid*, is the victim of a Gothic scheme; a defenseless orphan, her inheritance is threatened and she is sexually pursued by villainous men. If, as Martí-López has proposed, Carolina represents Catalan interests in Cuba and the need to naturalize and legitimize them, Carolina's representation as the pursued, sympathetic heroine enables her to become the vehicle through which Catalan anxieties about race, otherness, and colonial wealth are resolved. Carolina's difference is erased as sameness, and all anxieties about her otherness are seemingly eliminated. Thus, Carolina and her fortune (which, as Surwillo notes, has been "whitewashed" by her father; the money is not from the plantation's books and is manifested as English coin, the source of Europe's most strident abolitionist movements [80]) enable the Catalan readers to reconcile their anxieties about the source of their good economic fortune. *Los misterios de Barcelona*, as Surwillo argues, subverts the colonial authority, yet it also de-problematizes issues of difference and racial and moral anxiety. Here the Gothic twists

and turns of the plot result in a normative "happy ending," in which both Carolina and her money are seamlessly integrated into Barcelona society. As Jerrold E. Hogle has noted, the Gothic is notable for its hesitation between the revolutionary and the conservative, and while the endings of many Gothic works are seemingly conventional, the questions raised by the exploration of excess are not as resolved as they appear to be (13).

Milà de Roca was a staunchly *moderado* liberal, as was the case for many Catalan bourgeois in the nineteenth century. The bourgeoisie was not eager to end the slave system, for they were dependent upon its capital. Surwillo argues that Milà de Roca's novel reveals anti-slavery tendencies despite the fact that his novel does not call for abolition; Carolina's acceptance and passing into society is seen as a sign of a latent argument for abolition (86). The problem with this argument is that Carolina is never depicted as a slave or even as black; her passing is made unremarkable, and her racial heritage, although at first not her family origins, is no secret. Carolina enables the readers of *Los misterios de Barcelona* to encounter race without really engaging with race; her otherness is neutralized into sameness.

One of the central characteristics of the Gothic mode is the real or potential violence against women (Schmitt 11). In *Los misterios de Madrid*, the first mystery involves the threat to Laura's virginity from the licentious Marqués de Calabaza. Before the action of *Los misterios de Barcelona*, Carolina is in constant danger from Francisco Piló, who imagines multiple ways of killing her to rid himself of his guilt, and is seduced and abandoned by Gollo. The "evil seducer" figured prominently in the popular literature of nineteenth-century Europe. Usually the plot would feature an aristocrat who seduces

and abandons a lower-class girl, a representation of class struggles (Lutz 76). In the case of *Los misterios de Barcelona*, the seduction of Carolina by Jorge is also mired in issues of economic legitimacy. Her seduction was engineered by Francisco Piló to provoke her ruin and thus eliminate the reminder of his crime. Piló, the evil *indiano* par excellence, wants to eliminate Carolina just as he wants to eliminate the corrupt origin of his fortune. Carolina embodies the uncomfortable source of Barcelona's economic success; thus it is essential that she be integrated into society, so both she and Barcelona's riches are "whitewashed" into acceptable forms. Through her marriage to Beltrán, Carolina is integrated into bourgeois society and becomes a legitimate member of society. The theme of legitimacy also extends to female subjects and their place within the realm of law. For example, Anne Radcliffe's *The Romance of the Forest* features a heroine whose inheritance and place in her rightful family have been stolen from her. Without her inheritance, she is a subject outside of the protection of the law, which marginalizes her and makes her vulnerable to persecution, much like Carolina. Sue Chaplin reads these inheritance novels as the narration of the subjects' "movement towards legitimate juridical identity" (100). This is also Carolina's plight; without her inheritance and the papers that reveal her true identity, she is presented as the illegitimate daughter of the deceased Bardisa, and has no legal or economic protection.

As the novel progresses, Carolina is in danger of forever losing her inheritance. Cannon Schmitt has proposed that "threatened femininity is central to the Gothic precisely for its function as a crucial but contested site in discourses of identity, chief among them the discourse of the nation […] victimized womanhood embodies the nationalist narrative in miniature" (11). Schmitt reads the Gothic mode in the English

context as essential to the concept of nationhood in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century England. By presenting models of Continental depravity and corruption, the Gothic novelists of England created a binary system in which moral and good "Englishness" could be defined. The portrayal of pure women tends to embody the ideals of the English nation, which was also under the threat of corrupters and violence. The English Gothic's portrayal of Inquisitorial dungeons and corrupt priests served to "give shape to an irrational, sexually predatory, un-English Continental manhood" (Schmitt 17). The un-English man is the principal threat to the English woman. In *Los misterios de Barcelona*, Milà de Roca avails himself of a litany of *criollo* stereotypes to describe Jorge Gollo: uncommon charm and grace coupled with licentiousness and greed. Jorge's representation as a handsome seducer reflects the Gothic's tendency to sexualize national difference (Schmitt 83). Unlike the chaste and responsible Beltrán, Jorge's lasciviousness and gambling point to a lack of reason and control. Milà's portrayal of Jorge as the wanton *criollo* ultimately paints him as un-Spanish, and suggests the impossibility of incorporating *criollos* into Spanish society. They instead belong to the third space of the colony, which is where Jorge Gollo returns at the end of the novel. Carolina, as Martí-López proposes, incarnates the riches of the colony that are out of necessity incorporated into the national body.

One of the principal fears expressed in *Los misterios de Barcelona* is the loss of the colonies and the devastating effect it would have on Barcelona's growing industrial economy. Jorge Gollo, in his role as the instigator of rebellion, is a symbol of potential colonial rebellion in the Caribbean. Milà de Roca seems to be drawing a parallel between Spain's political instability and the potential loss of its colonies, for it was in the

tumultuous years of José Bonaparte's rule, the War of Independence, and the Trienio Liberal that Spain lost most of its colonial possessions. Barcelona cannot afford to lose the wealth from the Caribbean, and thus is invested in Spain's political and social stability. Milà de Roca's portrayal of the *moderado-progresista* conflict places the blame for instability on the *progresista* and radical side. The *moderados* wanted to bring about liberal reform but were keenly aware of the threat of revolution; the liberals needed popular support for their platforms, but they feared that the liberalization of the masses would create a powder keg. As the *moderado* minister Nicolás Garelly described:

> The ideas of liberty injected superficially in the unprepared masses only serve to create unruly men who disobey legitimate authority[…] . The Constitution protects the freedoms and the rights of all Spaniards, but the equality of wealth and intelligence would be nonsense. (cited in Burdiel 24)

The *moderados* wanted to avoid the radicalism of the Trienio Liberal, but also palpable in Garelly's remarks is the specter of the French Revolution and its bloody repercussions. Spain had already experienced its own revolutionary violence: the burning of convents, the massacre of priests, and urban uprisings all pointed to a potentially explosive revolution. As Isabel Burdiel points out, from the *moderado* point of view, radical liberalism was just as dangerous to Spain's stability as Carlism (26). The Spanish bourgeoisie, especially of Barcelona, was beginning to fear the radical elements of liberalism; the burning of the Bonaplata factory signaled that the social unrest unearthed by the liberal conflict could have damaging consequences for Spain's economy (Burdiel 27). It is no surprise, then, that at this moment in Barcelona's history the bourgeoisie would be more conservative; they relied on the government and the military to protect

their interests in Cuba, and therefore they were invested in the security and stability of the status quo.

Milà de Roca's *Los misterios de Barcelona* and Martínez Villergas's *Los misterios de Madrid* were both written after a three-year struggle between the *moderados* and the *progresistas* and the radicals following the end of the Carlist War. The Carlists had served as both a unifying and moderating force for the liberals. The Estatuto Real, instituted by Martínez de la Rosa in 1834, was an attempt to stabilize liberal rule while still maintaining the central authority of the monarchy. It was also designed to curb the radical elements of liberalism, but its own generosity towards the *exaltados* was part of its downfall: freedom of the press and a general amnesty for exiled radicals increased their presence in and frustration with Spain's political scene (Esdaile 69). The Carlists forced the *moderados* to recognize the need for popular support, which was the strong suit of the *progresistas*, but with the threat of Carlism diminished after their final loss in Valencia in 1840, the *moderados* launched a Crown-supportive initiative to limit popular political participation and *progresista* influence. In 1840, when María Cristina abandoned the Regency and fled to France, the *progresista* General Bartolomé Espartero became regent. The son of peasants, Espartero had fought in the War of Independence and risen through the ranks of Spain's army; his leadership was "the outstanding symbol of the imposition of popular sovereignty from below over the last remnants of absolutism" (Burdiel 30). Espartero's regency was not without conflict; his policies displeased the whole spectrum of liberals, even his own *progresistas* (Burdiel 30). The uprising in Barcelona of 1842 was provoked by the economic crisis, the rise in the consumption tax, and the rumors of an arrangement with England that would threaten the government

protection of Catalonia's textile industry (30). The threat to Catalonia's industry turned the bourgeoisie against Espartero, and his severe response to the revolt—bombardments and military occupation—only increased their anger towards the government. *Moderados* led uprisings throughout Spain, and soon frustrated *progresistas* and radicals joined in the fight. The revolt of the summer of 1843 spelled the end for Espartero, and soon General Francisco Serrano was made head of the provisional government. Serrano reneged on his promises to include the *progresistas* in the new government, which provoked one last uprising in Barcelona, the Jamancia of September 1843. The city was once again bombarded, and the Barcelona bourgeoisie quickly saw the writing on the wall and cooperated with Serrano's government:

> The conduct of the Barcelona bourgeoisie demonstrated what was true for the entire country: that the Moderates were the guarantors of order and security for the largest group of property owners of all types, and Barcelona the site where they could negotiate their place in the new liberal public sphere. (Burdiel 31)

Thus the Barcelona middle class chose the security of their economic interests over increased popular political enfranchisement. The *moderado* liberals would have control over Spain until the September Revolution of 1868; their rule would establish the political and administrative foundations of the Spanish liberal state (Cruz "Moderate" 33).

Gothic Readings

Martí-López reads Milà de Roca's novel as a re-working of Sue's "exotic criminality" into "the household threats of the civil war, social insurgence, and political

strife between conservative and progressive liberals of the 1835-39 period" (106). In doing so, she argues that Milà de Roca eliminates Sue's Gothic trappings and instead focuses on the recent political and social upheaval that affected all citizens of Barcelona. Martí-López reads Carolina's mystery as a figure of Barcelona's own struggles:

> Carolina's loss of innocence (she has been seduced and abandoned) stands for the city's imminent rebellion against the authority of the queen, and the mystery of her birth (her lack of father) for the absence of a king […] Carolina's eventual recovery of name and fortune echoes the legal and military triumph of Queen Isabel II over don Carlos. The legitimacy avowed to the fictive orphan is metonymically conferred to that of the queen and the irregular birth of liberalism is, thus, redeemed. (Martí-López 117, 120)

Indeed, Carolina's birthright is restored only after the end of the Carlist War and the return of the priest who absconded with the papers.

Unlike Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris* or Villergas's *misterio*, Milà de Roca's novel lacks many of the physical tropes of Gothic fiction; there are no dark streets, underground labyrinths, or grotesque monsters. Milà de Roca's novel embodies a different type of Gothic. I argue that despite the shortage of Gothic cityscapes, Milà de Roca's novel, as well as Martí-López's reading of it, is fundamentally a Gothic family romance, where the conflict of Carolina and the usurpation of her inheritance reveal the Gothic's preoccupation with origins and legitimacy. Martí-López states that Milà de Roca creates a text that reveals "the presumed acquaintance with the city as deceptive" and that Barcelona becomes "foreign to the reader" as it reveals its "uncanny doubleness" (123). Here again, Martí-López avails herself of Gothic tropes to describe Milà de Roca's

misterio. The city of *Los misterios de Barcelona* is indeed uncanny, for the open, well-known spaces are shown to contain secrets and mysteries. The citizens that populate this Barcelona also possess an uncanny doubleness. Carolina's racial identity and the duplicity of the *criollos* and *indianos* reveal that the people of Barcelona also guard secret information or vices.

The Gothic novels of the nineteenth century show a particular concern for legitimacy; in the post-revolutionary, post-Napoleonic landscape, many European countries experienced the return of monarchies that had been deposed by revolutions or upheaval (Robertson 8-9). One of the most dominant discourses of nineteenth-century letters is medievalism, in which the political, social, and economic structures of the Middle Ages are idealized and longed for in the face of the tumultuous societal changes of the nineteenth century. Lukács proposes that the legitimacy narratives of the nineteenth century are reactionary: "The ideal of legitimism is to return to pre-Revolutionary conditions, that is, to eradicate from history the greatest historical events of the epoch" (24). In the case of Milà de Roca's novel, the historical event he wishes to erase is the *exaltado/progresista* ascendancy and the political instability of the liberal revolution. In a way, Milà de Roca is also a medievalist; he idealizes Catalonia's medieval past and derides the new speculative capitalism. The Catalonia of the Middle Ages possessed a small Mediterranean trade empire, and in a sense this is what Milà de Roca believes this should be replicated in the nineteenth century, with Cuba forming part of a Catalonian trade empire. Rosemary Jackson has noted that many nineteenth- century novelists who use the Gothic "betray its potential for subversion, reclaiming its conventions for bourgeois hegemony"(cited in Robertson 15). Milà de Roca's novel

displays what Gary Kelly has described as "a field of struggle for self-definition of the classes who produced and consumed literature" (Robertson 15). The Barcelona bourgeoisie, mostly conservative liberals, were under attack from both the Carlists and the *progresistas*. *Los misterios de Barcelona* provides a vehicle for their anxieties to be worked out, via the usurpation of Carolina /Cuba. The threat of her inheritance, and by extension the riches from Cuba, falling into the hands of those outside the *moderado* bourgeoisie is the real threat of the novel.

At the center of the novel lies the question of legitimacy, both for Carolina and Barcelona. Milà de Roca "sets out the specific political question of to whom the city belongs" and concludes that the authority rightly belongs to the *moderado* bourgeoisie (Martí-López 107). Any other political path is portrayed in Gothic excesses: the Carlist priest who delays the acknowledgement of Carolina's identity and inheritance, and the *progresista* or radical protesters who bring chaos and death to the streets. The representatives of the *moderados*—Torrellas and Beltrán—are the saviors of Carolina, and thus, following Martí-López, the only ones who can protect Barcelona's economic interests and political stability. The *conjuración* of good Barceloneses has succeeded in exorcising the specters of *criollo* insurrection and colonial returns.

While Villergas's *misterio* clearly sides with the *progresista* liberals and laments the lack of freedoms imposed by the new *moderado* government, Milà de Roca portrays the *progresistas* as more violent and dangerous than the Carlists. Both writers set their novels in the tumultuous 1830s but arrive at radically different conclusions; Villergas's *misterio* cannot be finished because of what he cannot express due to *moderado* repression, but Milà de Roca's ends on a normative, "happy" note that finds everyone

married or appropriately punished for their misdeeds. 1844 saw the inauguration of a decade of *moderado* rule, and Barcelona continued its path to economic growth. The fears that *Los misterios de Barcelona* revealed were, for the time, resolved. However, as Derrida reminds us, the dead are often more powerful than the living; the colonial nightmare would return later in the century, and Barcelona would once again be thrown into tumult and instability.

CHAPTER THREE

CONJURATION AND CORRUPTION IN ANTONIO MUÑOZ MOLINA'S *LOS MISTERIOS DE MADRID* (1992)

No hay más que salir a la Gran Vía madrileña para darte
cuenta de que si el fin del mundo no se produce
hoy ocurrirá mañana.
Alex de la Iglesia

Yo no he inventado nada.
Antonio Muñoz Molina

On August 11, 1992, *El País* announced the publication in its pages of Muñoz Molina's serial novel *Los misterios de Madrid*. The novel, published in twenty seven *entregas* between August 12 and September 7 before being published in book form in the fall of 1992, is a return to the form and themes of the nineteenth-century *folletín*. The novel largely takes place in contemporary Madrid, and Muñoz Molina employs the motifs of the urban Gothic in the narration of the travails of the hapless Lorencito Quesada, a native of the imaginary Andalusian town of Mágina,[34] as he navigates Madrid in search of his town's stolen processional statue and relic, the Santo Cristo de la Greña. *Los misterios de Madrid* explores some of Madrid's most famous sites, but seen through the eyes of the inexperienced Quesada, the capital becomes enigmatic and often threatening. Part of Lorencito's uneasiness in Madrid is caused by the changes that the city has experienced in the years since Franco's dictatorship. Lorencito finds the Spanish capital full of foreigners, drug addicts, and prostitutes. Far from the epitome of *castizo*

[34] Mágina is Muñoz Molina's fictional recreation of his hometown, Úbeda.

culture, the Madrid of *Los misterios de Madrid* is a globalized capital where crime and vice lurk around every corner. Muñoz Molina mentions numerous streets, plazas, and landmarks known to those familiar with Madrid, and the detailed descriptions of the urban landscape enable the reader to map out all of Lorencito's movements. The mysteries in the novel reveal themselves in some of Madrid's best-known neighborhoods and locales, alongside oblivious residents and tourists.

Los misterios de Madrid is a postmodern *folletín*, self-referential and irreverent, but it also addresses the very tangible transformations brought about by democracy and the emergence of globalization. Muñoz Molina knowingly plays with the fears and prejudices many Spaniards have towards immigration and (post)modernity. Muñoz Molina employs the Gothic to represent this anxiety; the Madrid of Muñoz's novel is truly *unheimlich*, for while the street names and buildings are familiar, the people who inhabit them are not. This Madrid is confusing and dehumanized; the cars and people move at a frenetic pace, the streets are dark and maze-like, and heroin junkies roam the streets like zombies. Muñoz Molina's Gothic portrayal of Madrid is not just an examination of bourgeois fears of otherness; the novel is a direct criticism of the 'official' representation of modern, democratic Madrid. Muñoz Molina aims his criticism squarely at the Partido Socialista de Obrero Español (PSOE) by presenting an image of Madrid that contests its agenda of cultural modernity. The novel also reveals the lingering legacy of the Francoist past, which, despite all attempts to forget and repress it, has returned under the guises of democracy and economic growth.

The censure of contemporary Spanish politics and culture in *Los misterios de Madrid* has not always been grasped by critics. The novel has often been dismissed as a

trivial work by a great author; Cave Santos has characterized it as the "más desafortunada de todas, la hermana pobre, no comparable ni a *Beatus Ille*, ni a *El invierno en Lisboa*, ni a *Beltenebros* siquiera y mucho menos a *El jinete polaco*" (70). For some*, Los misterios de Madrid* does not belong in the pantheon of great Muñoz Molina novels, and the novel is considered a kind of anomaly. This reaction is not surprising given the history of critical reception of *folletines*; *Los misterios de Madrid* is a novel based on a minor genre that was long disregarded as trivial entertainment for the masses. *Los misterios de Madrid* is not the first time Muñoz Molina has employed motifs from popular culture; *Beltenebros*, for example, derives much of its flavor from pulp detective novels and *cine negro*.

Los misterios de Madrid is perhaps more openly parodic than any of the aforementioned "great" Muñoz Molina novels; the novel can sometimes read like one long inside joke, making fun of both Spanish society and the conventions of *folletines*, detective novels, and films. Parodies of the *misterios* have existed since the nineteenth century; Mesonero Romanos wrote a poem entitled "Los misterios de Madrid" mocking the abundance of repetitive stereotypes in *folletines*:

> ¿Que haga yo misterios, Claudio,
> y que me eche á discurrir
> *Rodolfos*, *Flor de María*
> *Dómines* y *Tortílis*,
> *Lechuzas*, Mancas de un ojo,
> *Ferrantes*, y *San Remis*,
> *Esqueletos, Calabazas,*

Rigoletas y *Churis*. (Alonso Cortes 141)

Mesonero's parody, which includes the Gothic motifs of "lechuzas" and "esqueletos," suggests that to write a *folletín* one need merely compile a recipe of elements, and dismisses the Gothic as a series of superficial conventions. Mesonero's derision of the nineteenth-century *folletín* parallels the initially tepid reception of Muñoz Molina's novel among critics and the tendency not to take the Gothic seriously. I would argue, however, that the use of the Gothic mode in *Los misterios de Madrid* provides Muñoz Molina with a language to describe the manipulation of power and the instability of the city as a symbol of a cultural agenda.

As David Punter has noted, in the Gothic "what is being talked about is always double," (419) the horrors or mysteries of the narrative are stand-ins for the horrors that are close to the present or to the reader's experience. The Gothic has always explored and questioned the most sacred institutions and truths: family, the nation, the Church. In the postmodern world, these sacred institutions are again destabilized and doubted. Indeed, the Gothic is a particularly apt mode to express the tumultuous postmodern condition. First, both the Gothic and the postmodern convey a sense of indeterminacy in their narratives (Smith 6). In the Gothic, the indeterminacy rises out of the desire to create suspense, but it also serves as a critical reaction to modernity's emphasis on empirical experience. In the postmodern, the indeterminacy rises out of the rejection of the master narratives of modernity. Both the postmodern and the Gothic share an "aesthetics of the surface" (Smith 8). The Gothic is known as a genre of conventions, and the postmodern employs the culture of the image to "divorce from attendant complications of reference"

(11). Both modes employ parody and pastiche; even in the Gothic, the parody is often self-referential.

Both the Gothic and the postmodern are cultural phenomena that emerged in response to a significant change in worldview; thus it is fitting that postmodernism, with all of modernity's cultural manifestations at its disposal, should turn to the genre that served as a counter-narrative to the master-narratives of modernity. The postmodern Gothic provides a useful frame for describing Spain's process of dismantling notions of cultural unity and the recognition that 'Spanishness' is not a stable, monolithic concept (Labanyi "Postmodernism" 397), as well as the simultaneous presence of past and present. The continued existence of the past is not always recognized or accepted, however, for one of the hallmarks of the Spanish transition to democracy was the lack of confrontation with the past. Nevertheless, in *Los misterios de Madrid*, the past is always present in the mind of Lorencito, who constantly compares his past experience of Madrid with his current one. While Lorencito finds the capital to be radically changed, as the novel progresses it becomes clear that many aspects of Spain haven't changed with the arrival of democracy. The Spain of 1992 is haunted by the ghosts of the past, yet also frightened of the rapidly changing present.

Madrid experienced many radical changes between the 1830s of Villergas's *misterio* and the 1990s of Muñoz Molina's novel; Lefebvre's adage "Political power dominates or attempts to dominate space" (237) is an apt description for Madrid's urbanism of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Madrid's urban history has been determined in large part by a succession of rulers eager to leave their mark on the urban landscape. As the nineteenth century progressed, Madrid's image began to reflect the

growing dominance of the bourgeoisie. Madrid's nineteenth-century leaders envisioned a city of "planned and rational space," where goods and people could circulate with ease, both for purposes of commerce and to display new wealth (Parsons 35). The bourgeois population supported new theatres, shopping arcades, cafés and promenades. The city walls constructed by Felipe II that had constricted Madrid's growth were torn down in the 1850s, opening the way for the city's expansion. In 1870, the Plan de Castro was approved, and the *ensanche* expanded the city from its 770 hectares in 1855 to 2,025 hectares by the end of the century (Calvo López 224). Castro's plan was designed to bring order and hygiene to a chaotic city; however, in practice, the plan further segregated class groups and ignored the cramped city center (Parsons 35). In *Fortunata and Jacinta* (1886), Galdós describes Madrid as being for much of the nineteenth century "un payo con casaca de gentil-hombre y la camisa desgarrada y sucia" (Pérez Galdós 154), a city pretending to be a European metropolis. Much of Madrid's urban history has been marked by external appearance and spectacle, with the creation of official symbols of power overshadowing the fundamental problems of urban life. Pío Baroja's novels *El árbol de la ciencia* and the trilogy *La lucha por la vida* portray the deplorable conditions of turn of the century Madrid with a methodical eye. There was, however, by the end of the nineteenth century the sense that Madrid was finally becoming a "señor de verdad " and that "iba a pasar en poco tiempo de aldeota indecente a la de capital civilizada" (Pérez Galdós 154). Not everyone welcomed Madrid's entry into modernity; in his *Memorias*, Azorín describes a terrifying cityscape altered by new technology:

> Hay una barbarie más hórrida que la barbarie antigua: el industrialismo moderno, el afán de lucro, la explotación colectiva en empresas ferroviarias y bancarias,

> el sujetamiento insensible, en la calle, en el café, en el teatro, al mercador prepotente. Trenes que chocan y descarrilan, tranvías eléctricos, prematuros tranvías que atropellan y ensordecen con sus campanilleros y rugidos, hilos eléctricos que caen y súbitamente matan, coches que cruzan en todas las direcciones. (cited in Parsons 78)

Azorín describes a Madrid where death, in the guise of modernity, lurks around every corner.

Madrid's modernity would continue to become more and more visible, especially when the Haussmann-inspired 1910 Gran Vía project altered or destroyed dozens of streets in the slums north of the Puerta del Sol. While the Gran Vía was one of Madrid's major efforts to address the narrow streets and substandard housing of the city center, in reality it displaced rather than solved the problem:

> A single modern avenue, slashing its way through a part of the city that had remained almost unchanged since the sixteenth century, the heights of the Gran Vía presented a symbolic and architectural façade of Western modernity, hiding not only the shabby and impoverished areas that lay directly to its north and south, but also the entrenched political and social ideology of the Spanish capital. With no attempt made to create a transitional zone between the new avenue and the older city that it bisected, it stood in sharp juxtaposition with the narrow, archaic streets and impoverished life that lay on its immediate borders. (Parsons 82)

Despite its failure to solve many of the center's problems, the Gran Vía became one of Madrid's most iconic spaces, the "ultimate manifestation of Madrid's urge to

architectural and cultural modernity" (Parsons 82). The Madrid of the early twentieth century was emerging as a center for avant-garde literature and art; the Gran Vía became the home of ever-higher buildings, movie theatres and electric lights. By the arrival of the Second Republic, Madrid was poised to assume the role of a modern, European capital.

Madrid's growth was halted by the Civil War (1936-1939), which destroyed large sections of the Ciudad Universitaria. After the war, it was necessary to rebuild Madrid materially but also symbolically, for Madrid had been a stronghold of Republican support throughout the war, and a crucial aspect of Franco's cultural re-programming of Spain was the re-fashioning of the capital city. Interior Minister Ramón Serrano Suñer stressed the need to "make a new Madrid…one befitting a capital of heroic Spain" (Ruiz 50). To commemorate the Nationalist heroes of the war, the map of Madrid was re-inscribed to reflect their victory: the Paseo de la Castellana was renamed Avenida del Generalísimo Franco, and the Gran Vía became the Avenida de José Antonio.[35] The labor used to build the new Madrid came from the defeated Republicans; the program "Patronato de Rendención de Penas por el Trabajo" sentenced thousands of Republicans to hard labor. This labor force was used to improve Spain's infrastructure and reconstruct areas damaged by the war, but also to erect monuments to honor the new regime (Núñez Díaz-Balart 41-42). The Arco de la Victoria was built in 1956 near the Ciudad Universitaria to

[35] The Gran Vía has had many names that reflect Madrid's political environment. When the street was first built, it was divided into three parts: Calle del Conde Peñalver, Calle de Pi y Margall, and Calle Eduarto Dato. The Republicans renamed the street Avenida de la C.N.T (Confederacieon Nacional de Trabajadores), and during the war, they renamed the street Avenida de Rusia and later Avenida de la Unión Soviética to honor the country's support of the Republic. The Socialist mayor Enrique Tierno Galván changed the name to the Gran Vía in 1981.

commemorate the Nationalist victory, and outside Madrid, the Valle de los Caídos was constructed to honor the Nationalist dead.[36] Despite the regime's attempt to make over Madrid in the Nationalist image, the core of Francoist ideology was decidedly anti-urban; Franco "linked national strength to the rugged native soil—in particular that of the Castilian *meseta*[…]. In opposition to the sacred soil, Franco painted a picture of the city as a site of moral depravity and political corruption" (Richardson 11). Madrid under Franco was simultaneously embraced as a symbol of unified, Catholic Spain and derided as a threat to that very same project. In Muñoz Molina's novel, Lorencito's attitude towards Madrid reflects this paradox; he expects to find symbols of unadulterated Spanishness, but instead he encounters un-Spanish immigrants and drug addicts.

The Madrid of the Franco years experienced its largest territorial growth in its history. The Plan Bidagor, implemented between 1948 and 1954, annexed various peripheral towns (Vallecas, Barajas, Chamartín de la Rosa) and increased Madrid's size from 6,800 hectares to 60,580 hectares with a population of 1,567,850 (Calvo López 224). A possible motive for this annexation was, in part, to control an area associated with the working class and left-leaning political groups (Carmona Pascual 335). Another source of growth was the flood of immigrants from Spain's countryside to the major cities, which resulted in the emergence of *chabolas* (slums or shantytowns) on the outskirts of the city. In 1957, an attempt to eliminate these dwellings, the government implemented the Plan de Urgencia Social, which would construct 85,000 homes (Calvo López 225). The plan was an attempt to "ordenar y acabar con el crecimiento urbano

[36] The construction of the Valle de los Caídos lasted for more than 20 years and used the labor of 10,000 political prisoners (Núñez Díaz-Balart 242). Tatjana Pavlovic has called the monument "a quintessential postwar ideological project with its nostalgic, oppressive, and dangerous romanticization of the national essence" (17).

'desordenado'" (Carmona Pascual 333). The Franco regime used this urbanism as a tool of social control; the *chabolas* and peripheral communities were seen as chaotic and corrupt, vulnerable to "toda clase de inmoralidades" (Carmona Pascual 335). The neighborhoods constructed by the regime to order the population were influenced by the "Movimiento Moderno": tall block and tower apartments surrounded by large and empty open spaces (Calvo López 236). This modern style was inspired by the work and theories of Le Corbusier, who envisioned city dwellers living in enormous skyscrapers surrounded by parks. Le Corbusier wanted to eliminate the city street, separate cars from humans, and in general create what the nineteenth-century urban planners wanted: a clean, hygienic, open city for all. However, as Alain de Botton has discussed in his *Architecture of Happiness*, the modern Le Corbusier style "forgot about architecture and, in a wider sense, about human nature" (245). The concrete block apartment building turned sterile and imposing; the wide-open green spaces became desolate and unwelcoming.

The architecture of the Franco years has been seen as cold and impersonal, the Nuevos Ministerios complex being a notable example. Joaquín Leguina Herrán judges the growth of the Franco years as incoherent and "marcados por la motivación del lucro privado" (25). He continues: "En estos años se configura Madrid como una ciudad antiarquitectura, y antiurbanismo, como una ciudad, más diría yo, como un territorio, en cierto modo, sin historia" (26). The organization Observatorio Metropolitano laments Madrid's lack of urban memory:

> Quizás pocas ciudades hayan sido más radicales en la liquidación de su memoria que Madrid. Permanentemente atrapada en un ciclo de renovación y ampliación de sus márgenes, su historia, incluso la más reciente, parece

haber sido engullida en la línea continua de su crecimiento. (329)

When the Socialist Tierno Galvan became mayor of Madrid after the Franco years, he attempted to reinstate many of Madrid's traditions. However, the PSOE party leadership and the new economic elite were more concerned with creating an image of "modern" Madrid. As in the nineteenth century, many of the Transition-era urban projects ignored the needs of working class *madrileños* and their neighborhoods and instead produced imposing simulacra of urban progress. The wide, skyscraper-lined Paseo de la Castellana became the symbol of Madrid's economic maturity. Pedro Almodóvar's film *Carne trémula* (1997) showed the contrast of the *chabolas* in La Ventanilla district that were to be torn down to make way for modern high rises. Pablo Carmona Pascual has highlighted the disintegration of the *barrio* as a source of Madrid's loss of urban memory; due to a sense of social and political alienation, the *barrio* that was once the site of human connections is now a place of "miedo y persecución […] lugares inseguros repletos de jóvenes delincuentes, 'subproductos' de la marginalidad y la heroína" (382). The fear of the *barrio* is embodied in the figure of the heroin addict, an element that has a notable presence in Muñoz Molina's novel.

The Postmodern Gothic City

Lorencito Quesada lives a quiet life working as a clerk in a dry-goods store and as a small-time reporter for the local newspaper.[37] Lorencito resides with his deaf mother,

[37] Several critics (Spaine Long, Oropesa) have remarked on the intertextual reference to the *Quijote* with Lorencito's last name. Lorencito is in many ways a quixotic figure, a naïve idealist who has set forth on an adventure that he is ill equipped to handle. Lorencito's worldview, like don Quijote's, is informed by artistic representations rather than lived experience.

and despite being over forty years of age, is only referred to by the diminutive of his name, a gesture that both seems to parody the nineteenth-century *folletines*, where Lorenzo was a popular name (as in Villergas's *misterio*) and to suggest that Lorencito is an underdeveloped adult and an unlikely hero (García de León 99). In the opening chapter, Lorencito receives a late-night phone call from don Sebastián Guadalimar, Mágina's wealthiest man and the husband of the Condesa de la Cueva. Don Sebastián informs him that the pride of Mágina's Holy Week processional, the Santo Cristo de la Greña, has been stolen, and he suspects that Matías Antequera, a famous singer and also a Mágina native, is the culprit.[38] Don Sebastián gives Lorencito the task of going to Madrid to recover the statue. He claims to be impressed by Lorencito's reputation as an intrepid reporter, which, given what the reader knows of Lorencito, is highly dubious; don Sebastián also lauds Lorencito's knowledge of Madrid, which in actuality consists of only one visit twenty years earlier. Lorencito accepts the charge and takes the train to Madrid. *Los misterios de Madrid* repeats the urban Gothic journey from the country to the city, where danger and intrigue await.

When Lorencito arrives at Madrid's Atocha train station, he finds nothing as he remembered it. Instead of the station's historic iron and glass terminal, Lorencito finds himself in a wholly unfamiliar place:

> [s]e encontró en el andén de la estación de Atocha y pensó durante casi un minuto de pavor que se había equivocado de ciudad. Recordaba una gran bóveda con pilares y arcos de hierro, un inmenso reloj y una lápida de mármol con la lista de

[38] The Santo Cristo de la Greña is both a processional statue and a relic. The Cristo's fingernails belong to a Spanish Conquistador who was killed in Florida by Seminole Indians. The Cristo thus embodies the fusion between empire and religion that characterized Spain's Golden Age and that the Franco regime tried to revive.

> los caídos por España. Y ahora estaba en un lugar que parecía hecho únicamente de lejanías descorazonadoras y paredes y columnas de cemento en las que retumbaban los avisos de los altavoces y los pitidos de los trenes que iban a perderse en el túnel mucho más grande y todavía más lóbrego que los túneles del metro. (Muñoz Molina 30)

Lorencito finds himself in the new terminal of the Atocha station, built after his first visit to Madrid. Unlike the soaring, light-filled space of the old terminal, the new train station is a series of gloomy, labyrinthine tunnels made of somber concrete that cause Lorencito to feel lost and afraid.

Lorencito's anxiety is not quelled when he leaves the train station. As Lorencito explores Madrid in his quest to find the stolen relic, he perceives a constant threat of violence and vice:

> Vio que torcían a la derecha por una calle más despoblada y más sombría y temió estar siendo conducido a una trampa, o quién sabe si a uno de esos locales oscuros que llaman whiskerías, donde mujeres venales y desnudas sirven bebidas narcóticas a los incautos….(Muñoz Molina 87)

Muñoz Molina's representation of nocturnal Madrid applies Gothic motifs to the elements of the modern city; the shadows are produced by electric street lamps, and the treacherous passageways Lorencito must cross are asphalt-paved highways:

> Una sombra alta y solitaria se proyectó hacia la medianoche sobre la calzada de la calle Bailén y la luz tamizada de niebla de la farola que la alargaba sobre el asfalto húmedo iluminó al mismo tiempo las facciones impasibles del hombre que permanecía quieto en mitad de la calle, sobre la raya blanca, mirando los

> automóviles que venían por su derecha, desde el Viaducto y la plaza de Oriente, a fin de pasar sin peligro al otro lado. (Muñoz Molina 72)

Lorencito feels little relief when surrounded by crowds of people. As he walks down the Gran Vía, he feels pushed along by the force of the crowd and dizzied by the "espectáculo inagotable de las caras y las voces de la gente" (Muñoz Molina 131). Lorencito feels so overwhelmed by the power of the city that "[s]u propia identidad, su modesta persona, su vida, le parecían ahora tan irrelevantes como las de un insecto, y por momentos se sentía como si hubiera perdido para siempre el norte de su viaje y hasta sus recuerdos de Mágina" (Muñoz Molina 131). Lorencito feels his individual subjectivity being worn away by the metropolis; as a resident of a small town, Lorencito does not possess the "blasé" attitude towards urban life that Simmel proposed develops in the minds of urban dwellers. Lorencito's senses are overwhelmed by the urban environment, much like Azorín in the early twentieth century.

Lorencito was last in Madrid twenty years earlier for the "II Festival de la Canción Salesiana," a religious music festival. During that visit, Lorencito admired Madrid's sights and monuments, all recognizably 'Spanish': the Retiro, the Mahou beer factory, and the Escorial. But now he finds himself in a city that is no longer as purely Spanish as it once was. Attempting to calm his shaky nerves with comfort food, he searches in vain for a restaurant that offers "un bollo suizo y una leche manchada, pero sólo veía restaurants chinos" (34). The presence of the foreign continues when he arrives at the *pensión* of señor Rojo. Instead of finding señor Rojo, he finds the boarding house being run by a group of Arabs. Twenty years ago, the *pensión* "olía dulcemente a cocido madrileño" but it now reeks of "una pestilencia de guisos exóticos" (37). Even the décor

of señor Rojo's has changed; instead of walls covered in tapestries depicting pastoral landscapes, the pension is now "una caótica especie de bazar" (42). Lorencito is distrustful of this new multicultural Madrid. Upon receiving a phone call from an apparently endangered Matías Antequera, Lorencito concludes "¿Cómo no iba a estar llena de peligros una ciudad poblada de moros, negros, y chinos?" (43).

The changes that Lorencito perceives are due to the evolving nature of the Spanish city. Like most Spanish cities, Madrid's core experienced a population decline from the late 1970s onward. In part, this decline was due to the decreasing birthrate and an aging population. But more importantly, the city suffered from the consequences of a cultural shift that increasingly valued suburban living, low-density neighborhoods, and modern household amenities (Puga González 80). As a result, monies were invested more and more in the peripheries and less on rehabilitating the urban core. In the 1990s, however, the center received renewed attention, as there developed "una mayor conciencia de la necesidad de recuperar el casco histórico como ámbito simbólico y una revalorización de los espacios centrales como ejes culturales" (Puga González 63). However, this renewed interest in the city did not inspire a massive migration on the part of native Spaniards; the most essential element of the urban population increase has come from immigration.

Immigrants tend to settle in city centers because of their symbolic lure, the availability of low-cost housing, and the easy access to public services. The influx of immigrants and the exodus of native Spaniards to the suburbs has radically changed the demographics of Madrid's center in only a little over ten years. In 1991, the foreign-born population of Madrid's Centro district numbered 3,948; in 2001, the number increased to

23,962 (Puga González 109). In 2001, foreign-born immigrants represented 22.6% of the population of the Sol district, 19.5% of the Embajadores district, and 18.8% of the Universidad district (Puga González 110). In 1991, a third of the foreign-born population came from countries whose level of development was comparable or superior to that of Spain's. In more recent years, an increasing number of these immigrants originate from developing countries. In 1991, 36% of immigrants hailed from Latin America; in 2000 Latin Americans made up 53% of Madrid's immigrants. About half of that number is made up of Ecuadorians, who comprise one fourth of all Spain's immigrants. The African population has remained steady at around 14%, and the Asian population has increased from 14% in 1991 to 16% in 2000 (Puga González 111-115). There is a certain degree of segregation among the immigrant groups; European and North American immigrants tend to live in the wealthier Chamartín district, while southern districts like Embajadores see more immigrants from developing countries (111). This new immigrant population has had a dramatic effect on Spain's workforce. In the first half of the 2000s, 84% of immigrants were employed, versus 60.2% of Spaniards (Montoliú Martínez 73). The Madrid that Muñoz Molina describes in his novel was on the precipice of this immigrant population boom.

Just as it was in the nineteenth century, the fear of the ethnic or cultural "other" is one of the hallmarks of contemporary Gothic fiction. Stephen King has shown how after World War II and the subsequent Cold War and space race, the horror fiction of1940s and 1950s centered on invasion and monstrous otherness (Bruhm 260). In the case of Spain, we have seen how Barcelona's economic link to the Americas fostered the presence of non-white, multi-racial, or ambiguously raced subjects in the nineteenth

century. In the years following the Civil War, immigration was kept to a minimum for both political and economic reasons, thus Spain did not see the massive influx of immigrants as England and France would. Spain did not experience large-scale, non-white immigration until the 1980s, and even then the numbers remained low until the 1990s. Spain's economic boom of the late 1980s and its entry into the European Union spurred more and more immigration. The fear and disgust that Lorenzo experiences in response to the presence of non-white immigrants indicates an anxiety regarding the "intrusion" of the other into spaces that were hitherto reserved for white, Catholic, Spanish men. The former owner of the *pensión* was the *castizo* señor Rojo; his place has now been taken by an Arab of ambiguous national origin. Since the 1960s, the Western world has experienced a steady erosion of the exclusive hegemony of "traditional values" and of white heterosexual males (Bruhm 260), and the fear and anger generated by this phenomenon has often been figured using Gothic motifs. When Lorencito first encounters the immigrant population of Madrid, he recalls the sermons of his hometown church proclaiming that "el hombre blanco se extingue por culpa de la píldora, de la sodomía y del aborto" (43-44). For Lorencito and the citizens of his conservative small town, white males have become the victims of the progressive policies and mores of the newly liberal Spain.

In 1991 the Spanish government passed legislation to control and restrict the flow of immigration; as Helen Graham and Antonio Sánchez have noted, this was a markedly first-world stance from a country that supposedly possessed a multicultural identity and that had itself experienced marginalization (415). In what could perhaps be described as a rejection of its own internal otherness, Spain's attitude towards immigrants has often

been xenophobic. A 1990 survey by the Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas (CIS) found that 64% of Spaniards felt their jobs were threatened by immigrants, and 45% associated immigrants with urban crime. However, 90% of Spaniards had never had contact with an immigrant, and 63% did not follow the news on immigration (Graham and Sánchez 414). The gap between perception and experience illustrates the extent to which immigrants functioned as a societal specter, whose presence is announced before it appears.

PSOE Villains

In search of Matías, Lorencito heads to the flamenco *tablao* El Corral de la Fandanga on the Calle de Yeseros where Matías habitually performs. At first comforted by the street, which possesses "todo el encanto del viejo Madrid" (45), he is suspicious of the *tablao*, which hints at being a "timba clandestina y tapadera de negocios ilíctictos, tal vez de tráfico de opio o de trata de blancas" (48). Rather than a center of authentic Spanish culture, the Fandanga is a tourist trap frequented mostly by Japanese tourists. The Fandanga is run by suspicious characters; when Lorencito knocks on the door and asks for Matías,

> [l]a puerta se abrió unos centímetros con gran ruido de goznes y cerrojos y en el hueco apareció una cara amarillenta, con arrugas y chirlos, con un copete de pelo negro y aceitoso entre los ojos guiñados. (Muñoz Molina 46)

The menacing figure at the door is Bocarrape, one of the bodyguards of the Fandanga. Bocarrape's boss, Bimboyo, is even more threatening:

> un hombre enorme, con la cara hinchada y roja, con una papada tan rotunda como

> panza que ceñía una faja negra con borlas laterals. El llamado Bocarrape apenas le llegaba a la pechera abierta de la camisa, de la que brotaba una pelambre ensortijada y selvática, cruzada por una cadena de oro. (Muñoz Molina 47)

Lorencito hurriedly leaves and wanders towards the Viaducto. Lorencito recognizes the Viaducto as the preferred location for suicides, and as he contemplates the incomprehensibility of city life, he is suddenly hanging over the edge of the bridge. Soon his feet are back on the bridge, and he turns to find a laughing Pepín Godino, a native of Mágina and now "Asesor Técnico Cultural" (57) for the Socialist government. Pepín, who now goes by the nickname "JJ" (Jota Jota), has made quite a success of himself in the marketing of Madrid's culture.[39] Pepín boasts to Lorencito of the progress made in Madrid:

> Con un ademán grandioso señaló el edificio, los jardines, los arbolados lejanos sobre los que surgían los rascacielos blancos de la Plaza de España--. Pero tampoco me negarás que, como digo yo, Madrid es mucho Madrid. ¡Mira qué rascacielos, qué circulación automovilística, qué Palacio Real! […]¡Hoy en día, el tema palpitante es la cultura, y Madrid es, como yo digo, la capital cultural de Europa! (57)

Pepín represents "lo peor de la cultura oficial de la etapa socialista" (Oropesa 136). Pepín is illustrated in the pages of *El País* as an enormous man with a cigar in his mouth and a pinstriped suit, like a parody of a gangster from the 1920s. His interest in avant-garde culture is predicated on the "tema subvención," and is exemplary of the commodification of Madrid's alternative culture by the PSOE government. The "tema cultural" was crucial

[39] The term "Jota Jota" is a derogatory name for a male homosexual prostitute (Spaine Long 493).

to Spain's new democratic, European identity. Spaniards equate being modern with being European (Graham and Sánchez 410-411), thus 1992-1993 was the year Spain entered Europe and modernity after the anachronistic culture of the Franco years. Spain, which for so long had been the 'other' in the European imagination, was now trying to present itself as part of a shared European culture. The notion of 'Spanishness' thus begins to prove itself problematic. During the Franco regime, a fetishized, exaggerated, and idealistic notion of Spanishness attempted to exclude all that was European; Spanishness and Europeaness seemed to be diametrically opposed. In its transition years, Spain often tried to suppress or reject any element that posed a threat to its ascension into European-ness.

The PSOE came to power in 1982 under the slogan "El cambio," and indeed its proclaimed it would change a great deal about Spanish society and government. In some ways, it succeeded; between 1986 and 1991, Spain's economy grew faster than that of any other country in the European Community and, consequently, social attitudes about money experienced a radical change. The new economic elite—bankers and investors—were treated like celebrities and regularly appeared in gossip magazines. The poverty-born Spanish virtues of austerity and sobriety were tossed aside in favor of unabashed materialism (Hooper 57-58). This expansion of wealth was not just restricted to the upper classes. By 1992, the majority of Spaniards were better off than ever (Hooper 62). It would seem that Spain's transition was a rousing success. However, some aspects of Francoist Spain never completely disappeared. The transition to democracy did not include a clean break with Francoism, and many of the same social structures that led to corruption under Franco (the high importance of family connections, the inefficiency of

the public sector, the lack of anti-corruption laws) continued under PSOE rule (Hooper 61). This was due in part to the relative weakness of Spain's Left at the time of Franco's death; the working-class movement and the labor unions were disorganized after 40 years of repression. Thus, with no strong leftist movements to take their place, the Left struggled to break from the dictatorship (Maravall 204). Indeed, the PSOE adopted many of the secretive, vindictive tendencies of the Franco regime. PSOE members who criticized the party were effectively blacklisted. Party loyalty became the dominant virtue, and it was often lucratively rewarded. Former government officials often went into consulting and grew rich on government contracts (Hooper 55). Those still in government accepted bribes for public contracts. The party's relationship with the press and other branches of government was highly guarded, to the point of secrecy. In 1984, the GAL scandal suggested a possible government connection to the death squad-like murders of ETA supporters and other Basques living in France. GAL (Grupos Antiterroristas de Liberación) emerged after Felipe González's election and was responsible for 28 murders between 1983 and 1987 ("Spain's"). The PSOE government attempted to block an investigation into government funding of the group, a move which smacked of the impunity of the Franco years.[40] The GAL scandal weakened the credibility of the PSOE government and was one of the key factors that led to its defeat in the general elections of 1996 (Heywood 43). As Teresa Vilarós declares in *El mono del desencanto,* disenchantment is the predominant feeling of the end of the dictatorship and Transition era. In 1979, the PSOE declared itself to be "no ideológico" (23) and went on to win the

[40] The investigation into the GAL case culminated in the imprisonment in 1998 of the former minister of the Interior, José Barrionuveo, and former director of state security Rafael Vera, for illegal detention and misappropriation of state funds (Heywood 43).

1982 elections by a wide margin. Spain's Left had begun to distance itself from its Franco-era idealism (24). In many ways, the PSOE seemed to be neo-liberals in Socialist clothing. The PSOE leadership did not employ wealth redistribution policies, but instead focused on economic growth in the higher sectors and the hoped-for trickle down to the bottom (Heywood 62).

Certain symbolic gestures also indicated that the PSOE was not the *cambio* the party promised to be; in 1985, Felipe González vacationed with his family on Franco's old yacht, the *Azor* (Hooper 63); in a rally, González told a crowd that Spain's national prestige was at its highest point since the reign of Carlos V (65). The reference to Spain's Golden Age and the implication of PSOE rule as Spain's new Golden Age comes straight from the Francoist discourse of re-establishing Spain's glorious past. In Sevilla, the night before Expo 92's opening, police fired on a crowd of protestors with live ammunition, a harsh reminder of the legacy that the PSOE had promised to do away with (69).

For a year of so many commemorations, much of 1992 was also about forgetting; 1992 was also the 100th anniversary of Franco's birth. On the day of the anniversary, *El Mundo* published an editorial remarking on the irrelevance of Franco to the present:

> Spaniards look at the Franco era as if from an enormous distance […]
> his memory has been blotted out of the collective present. It now serves
> as a point of reference for almost no one. (cited in Hooper 73)

In reality, the celebrations of 1992, despite their historical referent, were surprisingly a-historical and present-centered:

> Indeed, this seemed to be part of an official attempt to represent Spain's new, 'modern', democratic national identity as if it were built on a *tabula rasa*, thus

> avoiding confrontation with the cultural, social, regional, and political tensions that have plagued Spain since its emergence as a nation-state. (Graham and Sánchez 406)

1992 also marked the ten-year anniversary of PSOE leadership. Like Franco's Nationalists, the PSOE was keenly aware of the relationship of culture to power. In 1992, Spain's economic boom was about to come to an end; thus the proliferation of celebrations can be seen as a way for the PSOE to boost morale and its own prestige and distract from the looming recession (Graham and Sánchez 413). The refusal of the 1992 celebrations to meaningfully engage with Spain's past suggests that what was truly being celebrated was the ten years of PSOE rule and Spain's 'graduation' into modernity. (Graham and Sánchez 406,418). While Franco may have been "officially" forgotten, his legacy—corporatism of civil service, the inefficient public sector, the secrecy and clientelist relationships of privilege—continued to haunt democratic Spain.

Pepín embodies the duplicity of PSOE's promises of change. Although Lorencito is at first relieved to find a familiar face, it is soon obvious that Pepín is hiding ulterior motives. He invites Lorencito to the Café de Oriente in front of the Palacio Real, and in the midst of a frenetic and mostly one-sided conversation about culture and public relations, Pepín innocently asks Lorencito how he's getting along in the Pensión del señor Rojo. It is only after Pepín leaves hurriedly without paying the bill that Lorencito realizes that he never told Pepín where he was staying.

Chabolas, yonquis, and Goths

After his encounter with Pepín, Lorencito returns to the Fandanga in search of Matías. The club is now open for business, and the audience "estaba compuesto en su inmensa mayoría por japoneses" (Muñoz Molina 74). Lorencito sees a beautiful blond femme-fatale type who urgently tells him to meet her at the Café Central. The Café Central, located in the Plaza del Ángel and close to the Plaza de Santa Ana, is one of Madrid's and Europe's most famous jazz clubs, but to Lorencito's ears it is full of "una extraña música moderna interpretada por negros" (Muñoz Molina 79). Muñoz Molina pokes fun at Lorencito's provincialism,[41] but Lorencito's aversion to a modern, global music such as jazz compounds his distrust of Madrid. The woman, Olga, tells Lorencito that Matías is not the culprit and has been kidnapped, and the only clue is the phrase "el universo de los hábitos." Lorencito leaves the Café Central only to stumble again upon Pepín Godino, who invites him to another club.

When they arrive, Lorencito sees that Pepín has taken him to a sex shop on the Calle Atocha. One of the running jokes of the novel is Lorencito's sexual inexperience coupled with his guilty enjoyment of pornography. Lorencito enters a peep show cabin, and as he puts a handful of coins into the machine, the Japanese tourist he saw earlier at the Fandanga enters and tries to stab him with a knife. Lorencito knocks the man

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[41] Muñoz Molina also addresses the tendency of the metropolis to fetishize the provinces and folkloric culture. When Lorencito sees the storefront of a traditional hat store that announces "Exportación de gorras a provincias" Lorencito fumes: "¿Se imaginaba esta gente que en los pueblos aún llevamos boinas caladas hasta las cejas, que andamos en burro y nos alimentamos de ajos y torreznos?" (104). Although throughout the novel Muñoz Molina contrasts Lorencito's innocent provincialism with the city's fast pace and vice, it is of note that the notion of the backwardness of the countryside is not given full credence.

unconscious with a can of disinfectant spray, and runs into a church for refuge. Lorencito suddenly realizes that "el universo de los hábitos" is a store, and he is soon at the Calle Postas, where most of Madrid's religious articles stores are located. As he makes his way through the darkened store with a match, he finds the Santo Cristo de la Greña in the back room. As his match goes out, Lorencito hears a trap door close over his head. Lorencito feels as though he has been buried alive:

> Quedó cercado por la oscuridad absoluta, que él mismo calificó de sepulcral. […] Subió a tientas los peldaños de hierro e intentó vanamente levantar la trampilla […] estaba tan atrapado como bajo la losa de una tumba. (Muñoz Molina 108)

At first, Lorencito thinks he is being targeted because he knows too much, but he soon realizes that in fact he knows nothing at all. The only thing he does know is that "en Madrid nada ni nadie es lo que parece ser, y hay en ella más trampas y añagazas que en una película de chinos, nunca mejor dicho" (Muñoz Molina 109). Madrid causes Lorencito to feel a sense of bewilderment akin to the Gothic sublime; Lorencito knows he is in danger, but is unaware of the source of his plight. Madrid is the epitome of otherness and ambiguity of meaning; it offers no sense of transcendence, only confusion.

Lorencito is soon confronted by Pepín Godino, who informs Lorencito that he will be framed for the robbery of the Santo Cristo de la Greña and for the murder of Matías Antequera. Soon Lorencito is in a van, and thugs from the Fandanga throw him over the edge of the M-40 highway. In a moment of cruel but comic irony, when Lorencito looks up after his fall he sees an enormous sign with the phrase "Bienvenido a

Madrid, capital europea de la cultura" (119). As Lorencito gets his bearings on his surroundings, he finds that he is far from any capital of culture:

> Desde lo alto del cierro vio muy lejos el perfil azulado de los edificios de Madrid, borroso por las columnas de humo pestilente que venían de un muladar tan vasto como una cordillera. Demasiado tarde advirtió Lorencito que aquél no era un desierto inhabitado: a sus pies se extendía una miserable población de chabolas, y sin que él se hubiera dado cuenta unas figuras tan lentas y pálidas como muertos en vida lo estaban rodeando. (119)

The zombie-like creatures that approach Lorencito are junkies who live on the outskirts of Madrid, a sort of parallel city of trash and ruins, an "arrabal de los muertos viventes" as the title of the chapter describes. Spain's heroin epidemic began in the early 1980s, coinciding with the early years of the Transition. In 1980 there were an estimated 79,000 heroin addicts; by 1984, the number had reached 125,000 (Carmona Pascual 383). In Madrid, the poorer and working class neighborhoods became notorious for their heroin addicts, and thus became even more marginalized. To date there have been relatively few studies that examine the causes of such widespread heroin use; however, some scholars have identified the economic and political disenfranchisement brought about by Spain's neo-liberal policies as a source of despair and disenchantment of many of Spain's youth (Carmona Pascual 384). The "yonquis," as the heroin addicts are commonly known, became "el ejemplo de la decadencia urbana, objetivo directo de las políticas de seguridad urbana, víctima del proceso de degradación y muerte propio de la heroína y del

abandono institucional" (Carmona Pascual 387).[42] The gothicized, urban monster-*yonquis* are both a source of Madrid's social problems and a symptom of the fundamental inequalities and failures of Madrid's urban life.

As he escapes from the city of *chabolas*, Lorencito gets on a city bus, only to find it full of teenaged Goths: "[v]estían ceñidas camisetas negras con dibujos espantosos de calaveras, monstrous y cuerpos despedazados y vísceras sangrientas" (Muñoz Molina 127). The teens run amok in the bus, smoking, urinating, and even having sex. The Goth subculture, which began in London in the 1980s, is an offshoot of punk that has proven to have a more lasting and widespread resonance. Goths adopt an aesthetic that embraces death and the macabre—a dark, Byronic Romanticism that owes much of its style to Walpole and Poe. The Goth subculture reflects a dissatisfaction with the trappings of bourgeois culture; while often falsely associated with violence and racism, Goths are more often apathetic and apolitical. The Goth subculture is in essence a rejection of bourgeois values by a youth that is alienated from mainstream society (Goodlad 1-19). Lorencito, operating from a bourgeois world view, laments their lack of respect for authority, and is reminded of the "vaticinios lúgubres" of the older members of his prayer group about the state of the world, which now "le parecían exactos, incluso menos apocalípticos que la realidad" (129). Also part of the elders' laments are "añoranzas melancólicas de la paz de Franco y de la liturgia en latín" (129), which points to one of the central sources of the postmodern anxiety displayed in the novel; for many Spaniards of an earlier generation who supported Franco, the freedoms brought about by the Transición, democracy, and Spain's entry into the European Union have only served to

[42] The term "yonquis" is borrowed from the English "junkies," yet another example of the influence of US culture and globalization.

corrupt the country. They fondly remember the Franco years as a time of peace and long for the idea of the purity of Spanish culture. At the same time, the Goth subculture contests many of the "achievements" of the Transición; the new democracy has not been able to incorporate many of Spain's youth in the new liberal project.

After his harrowing bus ride, Lorencito arrives at Pepín's office with the intention of confronting him, only to find Pepín shot in the stomach. With his last breaths, Pepín gives Lorencito a key to the Galerías Piquer in the Rastro district. Olga soon arrives, and they go together to her apartment in Chueca. After spending the night with Olga, Lorencito awakes to find both her and the key missing. When he arrives at the Galería Piquer, Olga is already there, and she betrays him to the thugs who threw him onto the highway. Lorencito is then taken up the Paseo de la Castellana to a completely different Madrid: the modern, prosperous, corporate corridor that lies north of the city center. The Paseo de la Castellana has always been Madrid's fashionable address; in the nineteenth century, it was dotted with cafés and entertainment booths, and was the place to display bourgeois material wealth. Today, the Castellana transitions from Madrid's nineteenth-century splendor to its twentieth- and twenty-first century luxury. This is the other side of Madrid's entry into the globalized economy: sleek skyscrapers that house multinational companies standing in sharp contrast to the traditional *casco antiguo*. Since the nineteenth century, Madrid had always had a north-south dichotomy: the newer, prosperous north versus the older, poorer south. This division has become more pronounced in the years of Madrid's property boom in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. The northern end of the city is home to successful corporations, nature preserves, and recreation facilities, while the south houses the industrial sector and

the working class. The "global class," Madrid's economic elite and the agents of the globalized economy, have abandoned the city center and now live in exclusive suburbs in the north; the traditional bourgeois neighborhoods of the center are increasingly being abandoned by young Spanish professionals. The population of the city center is increasingly elderly and immigrant.

Despite leaving the confusion of the city center, Lorencito's feeling of danger and alienation does not dissipate once he arrives at the business district. Lorencito is taken to the Torre Picasso, one of Madrid's most notable skyscrapers, designed by Minoru Yamasaki, the architect of the World Trade Center in New York. Lorencito experiences the modern landscape with the same trepidation with which he encountered the winding streets of Old Madrid:

> Lo hicieron atravesar pasajes subterráneos, corredores de paredes de vidrio, siniestros túneles vacíos en los que se multiplicaba la resonancia de los pasos. Madrid parecía ahora una ciudad del futuro abandonada tras la explosión de una de esas bombas nucleares de las que dicen que sólo matan a gente y dejan intactos los edificios. Salieron a una explanada tan desierta y tan amplia como una rampa de lanzamiento de cohetes. Sólo se oían las pisadas numerosas del grupo en el que Lorencito era arrastrado: no había nadie más, ni en plazas de granito y cemento, ni en ninguna de las miles de ventanas iguales que se levantaban hacia el cielo. (Muñoz Molina 159-160)

The modern skyscraper evokes the dark passageways of a Gothic labyrinth. The desolate, unpopulated landscape is the opposite of the bustling and crowded city center, but produces the same effect of dehumanization. Nuclear war is one of the greatest anxieties

of the modern age, and in the Torre Picasso, the space creates the effect that the nuclear war has already happened by eliminating all signs of human life.

The Torre Picasso is exemplary of the style of architecture of the Transition period that Antonio Fernández Alba has called the "estética de la aniquilación del significado" (130). The function of these buildings is to connote modernity and economic power. In 1992, the Torre Picasso was the tallest building in Spain. As Fernández Alba has discussed, the Spanish government wanted to quickly create an architecture that was representative of the new democracy and, to do so, they imported North American models at great cost while ignoring many of Madrid's infrastructural deficiencies (131). The goal was to present an image of progress and success, even if that success did not reach all of Madrid's citizens. Indeed, Fernández Alba sees an emptiness in urbanism of the last three decades; he characterizes it as:

> […] una amplia gama de producción de simulacros, un sistema de signos y recurrencias formales ajenos a la realidad constructiva, alejados de cualquier significado funcional; no es de extrañar, por tanto, que la sección del espacio sea ignorada o desfigurada en múltiples alusiones, y el sentido de la coherencia del cubo espacial marginado de cualquier referencia habitable. (115)

The contrast between the shanty town alongside the M-40 and the sleek Torre Picasso in Muñoz Molina's novel serves to criticize the priorities of the Socialist government and neo-liberal culture, which are more interested in creating an illusion of modernity than modernizing the living conditions for Madrid's citizens. For many critics, the Madrid of the 1990s was becoming a city for corporations but not for citizens

Reliquary Returns

When Lorencito enters the building, however, the past returns in an unexpected fashion. Lorencito is brought to a sleek office building where a famous businessman, known simply as "JD" awaits him. JD's wealth seems to be equaled only by his fame. Lorencito realizes he has seen JD's face everywhere: "en los noticiarios de la televisión, en las primeras páginas de los diarios financieros, en las páginas satinadas de las revistas del corazón" (Muñoz Molina 161).[43] JD reveals that he was behind the attempts to kill Lorencito; he is a collector of religious relics and he wants Lorencito to turn over the Cristo to him. JD reveals to Lorencito the extent of his collection:

> JD oprimió un mando a distancia: la persiana, que ocupaba toda una pared, siguió levantándose, y el sol iluminó poco a poco la habitación entera, al tiempo que en los altavoces del hilo musical sonaba muy bajo el Adeste fideles. Lorencito no daba crédito a sus ojos: la otra mitad de la habitación no era o no parecía un despacho, sino la capilla más rica, la más abarrotada de imágenes de santos, crucifijos y relicarios que él había visto nunca. (Muñoz Molina 163)

As Lorencito looks on, stunned, JD asks "¿No se habrán preguntado alguna vez dónde fue a parar el brazo incorrupto de Santa Teresa después de la muerte del Caudillo?" (Muñoz Molina 164). The presence of the relics harks back to the Middle Ages, when pilgrims traveled long distances to venerate these metonymic symbols of holiness. The relic contests the modern empirical sensibility, and reveals the lingering atavistic

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[43] During the years of Spain's economic boom, capitalists like JD were treated like celebrities; John Hooper describes the case of the 'two Albertos,' Alberto Alcocer and Alberto Cortina, Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the banking conglomerate ConyCon, cousins and also husbands of aristocratic sisters, whose scandals and lavish lifestyle were continuous topics of tabloid journalism (59).

tendencies of an otherwise modern businessman. The presence of a relic collection in the Torre Picasso is indeed an incongruous pairing but, in a Gothic sense, it represents the continued existence of a more irrational past in the supposedly modern present.

The veneration of relics pre-dates Christianity; the ancient Greeks venerated the bodies of their leaders, and relics of Buddha have been kept in temples for centuries (Thurston "Relics"). Relics have been a part of Catholic religious practice since the earliest days of the Church. One of the ways a saint's body becomes a relic is when her corpse is found intact years or even centuries after her death. The 'incorrupt' body is considered a blessing from God and a sign of holiness (Quigley 254-255). Relic veneration was widespread in the fourth century, and the distribution of relics began in the seventh century to protect them from theft or destruction by the Germanic tribes that invaded the Roman Empire. By the Middle Ages the search for relics was extremely popular; the Roman catacombs, for instance, were a popular place to search for the remains of martyrs. As demand for relics grew, the incorrupt bodies of saints began to be taken apart piece by piece. Pilgrims would bring relics home and use them to consecrate new churches (Quigley 257). The Council of Trent instructed the faithful to venerate the bodies of saints and martyrs, for through them God can bestow miracles (Thurston "Relics").

Relic hunting soon became a lucrative business. Kings paid large amounts of money to add to their relic collections. A large collection of relics was a status symbol and a sign of great power; in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, Frederick the Great was said to have possessed 19,000 holy bones (Quigley 261). As their monetary value grew, many famous relics were vulnerable to theft. In 1969, Teresa of Ávila's foot

was stolen in Rome and later recovered (262). JD's relic collection in Muñoz Molina's novel harks back to the medieval and early modern kings who used their wealth to buy an association with holiness. The advent of the French Revolution saw the questioning of the relic's veracity. In 1793, the tombs of Saint Denis were opened and dubious relics were derided as objects of superstition (262). Skeptics claim that the supposedly miraculous lack of decay is actually the result of covert preservation or scientifically provable natural phenomena (255). The relic is a vestige of a pre-modern, magical religious belief; the faithful have believed for centuries that relics can heal the sick and even raise the dead. For these believers, relics are a symbol of holiness, and contact with a relic is considered a spiritual union (259). A relic is often literally a piece of a corpse, but it is a corpse that inspires veneration rather than horror.

JD's collection of relics also recalls the Catholic and medievalist cultural agenda of the Franco years. When Franco entered Madrid as a victor in May of 1939, he was greeted as a returning crusader:

> [G]uns thundered as the Caudillo arrived to attend the solemn Te Deum service held at the royal basilica of Santa Barbara to give thanks for his victory. The choir from the monastery of Santo Domingo de Silos greeted him with a tenth century Mozarabic chant written for the reception of princes. Surrounded by the glorious military relics of Spain's crusading past, including the battle flag of Las Navas de Tolosa, the great victory over the Moors in 1212 […] Franco presented his 'sword of victory' to Cardenal Gomá, Archbishop of Toledo and Primate of all Spain, who solemnly blessed him. The sword was then laid on the High Altar before the great crucifix of the Christ of Lepanto, which had been especially brought from

Barcelona. (Preston 330)

The years of the Franco regime saw the widespread veneration of the bodies of both Catholic saints and Nationalist heroes. In 1969 the incorrupt body of San Isidro Labrador, the patron saint of Madrid, was displayed for ten days in celebration of its return to Madrid. More than two decades earlier, the body of José Antonio Primo de Rivera was exhumed and circulated throughout Spain before its reburial at the Escorial (Pavlovic 44). Franco constructed his government with clearly medievalist paradigms, and his regime was a crusade to reconquer the true from the alien 'anti-Spain' (Richards 176). Franco imagined himself in a king-like role in this new *Reconquista*: he insisted on the right to name bishops, a right that originated with the Catholic Kings; he wanted the royal march played upon the arrival of his wife to official events, and he had originally intended to live in the Palacio Real after taking power (Preston "Monarchy" 29). Franco's use of reliquary culture was part of his regime's strategy to use Catholic discourse and culture to secure power. Some Catholics believe relics to have supernatural powers, which might serve to explain Franco's obsession with the Saint Teresa relic. Supernatural or not, relics are endowed with a cultural symbolism that reflects the dominant power structures that give them value. The Cristo de la Greña is described as "the pride of Mágina," a veritable embodiment of the town's identity. Gothic tales center on a "lost object," an object that has psychological and symbolic value. In the case of *Los misterios de Madrid*, the Santo Cristo de la Greña is literally a lost object, but it represents the loss of Spain's culture to the politicized and commodified official culture of the new democracy. In an interview, Muñoz Molina has derided the "regreso de la religión más oscurantista, ahora através y legitimada por la izquierda" and "los ayuntamientos y otros organismos [que gastan] el

dinero público en organizar estos actos que ahora se llaman culturales" (Cobo Navajas 47-48); instead of advocating for a secular state culture, Spain's politicians have continued to use religious iconography just as it was used during the Franco years.

JD, impressed with what he perceives are Lorencito's acute survival skills, offers him a job in his organization obtaining relics by any means necessary. Lorencito refuses, and only wants to return the Cristo de la Greña to Mágina. Olga helps him escape, and while Lorencito is confused by her frequent shifts in allegiance, they both take a taxi to the Palace Hotel. When they arrive, they find don Sebastián Guadalimar and his wife, the Condesa de la Cueva. In a typical melodramatic Gothic plot twist, Olga reveals that she is the daughter of the Condesa and Matías Antequera, and blackmails the Condesa into recognizing her as her daughter and heir. Don Sebastián was responsible for attempting to frame Lorencito and Matías for the robbery of the relic so it could be sold to JD. The conspiracy of JD, don Sebastián, and Pepín represents the triumvirate of power that controls Spain: nobility, business, and politics. Curiously, the aristocratic and political factions are in the service of the corporate interests. The mystery of the Cristo de la Greña has revealed that in democratic Spain, the conjuration of money, politics, and nobility has conjured the ghosts of Spain's undemocratic past.

The final chapter finds Lorencito and the Cristo returned to Mágina, and Olga and the Condesa both participate in the *Semana Santa* processions alongside the Cristo. While it appears that life has returned to normal, the reader soon discovers that the novel has been narrated by an unnamed friend of Lorencito's. Lorencito, shaken by his experiences in Madrid, records a tape of the whole story, and authorizes his friend to reveal the tape "sólo si yo desaparezco de repente, o si muero en extrañas circunstancias" (Muñoz

Molina 184). Thus we learn that Lorencito has met an unhappy fate, and that the text we have been reading is Lorencito's testimony from beyond the grave. The text is therefore a Gothic "secret" document that uncovers hitherto hidden truths. Like the nineteenth-century *misterio* writers, Lorencito's account serves to "reveal" some of the mysterious happenings in Madrid, a kind of "guía para incautos," as Lorencito was before his adventure in the capital began. *Los misterios de Madrid* is in many ways a parody of modern Spanish culture, but it is also an exploration of the fears that permeate modern Madrid: the wave of foreign immigrants, the increase in crime and drugs, the transformation of traditional notions of "Spanishness," the corruption of the new government, and the often incomprehensible, ever changing urban experience.

In his critique of modern Spanish culture, one of Muñoz Molina's main targets is the remnants of Francoism that still persist in contemporary society. The most obvious examples are Lorencito's naïve racism and references to the "paz de Franco," but also the whole system of privilege represented by the triangle of don Sebastián, Pepín Godino, and JD. These men act with impunity and treat cultural patrimony as their own. As Salvador Oropesa has noted, Francoism tried, to a certain degree, to restore the *antiguo régimen* mentality to Spanish culture, and some of these aristocratic tendencies still persist in democratic Spain. The conspiracy carried out by Pepín, don Sebastián and JD has evoked the specters of Spain's past. Oropesa proposes that Muñoz Molina uses the *folletín* to criticize Spain's inability to extricate itself from the culture of privilege precisely because the *folletín* was the genre that "la burgesía decimonónica utilizó como propaganda masiva contra el antiguo orden" (129). While Lorencito fears the immigrants and Goth teens that have changed the urban fabric of Madrid, the real villains in *Los*

misterios de Madrid are those who both abuse their power and position, whether they be aristocrats like don Sebastián, bureaucrats like Pepín, or capitalists like JD. By making the representative of the Socialist government's cultural agenda a scheming opportunist, Muñoz Molina suggests that the Socialist government is complicit in maintaining elements of Francoism in post-Franco society. JD's obsession with relics mimics that of Franco's; this modern capitalist, one of the best known figures of Madrid's new corporate economy, is shown as a throwback to Francoism's obsession with religious culture. The postmodern Gothic villain is often the immoral capitalist, whose desire for market control crushes competition and recalls the power of the medieval kings and lords (Oropesa 129). JD has at his disposal an army of thugs and assassins, and is as powerful as any lord or politician.

Culture, as Helen Graham and Jo Labanyi have noted, is "a site of power that is always negotiated and contested" (5). During the Franco era, the Nationalist intellectuals implemented a cultural program as a way of unifying the nation and repressing dissent. Spanish culture was defined as the culture of the age of Reconquest, Counter-Reformation, and Empire (Graham and Labanyi 3); the culture of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were dismissed as anti-Spanish 'anomalies,' a time when Spain was unusually influenced by greater European culture. Once Francoism ended, rather than confront the legacy of this cultural narrative, Spain instead chose to focus on the present and near future, ushering in a rapid political modernization. As a result of the speed of these changes, Spain found itself in a world where the traditional and the modern existed

side by side (Graham and Sánchez 410).[44] In a way, this is a return to the nineteenth-century sensibility, when emerging technologies and social changes coexisted along with centuries-old customs and beliefs. Muñoz Molina's use of a nineteenth-century genre to describe a unique moment of the late twentieth century seems to suggest a return to an aspect of Spain's culture that was long ignored under Franco: the critical engagement with modernity (or postmodernity) questions rather than rejects or accepts a priori the notions of modernity and progress.

[44] Néstor García Canclini has made the same argument regarding Latin America's experience of modernity.

CHAPTER FOUR

GHOSTS OF THE PAST AND GOTHIC FAMILIES IN ANTONIO-PROMETEO MOYA'S *LOS MISTERIOS DE BARCELONA* (2006)

Barcelona is primarily the city of hidden memory.
Manuel Vázquez Montalbán

For Madrid, 1992 was a year to celebrate modernity, integration into European culture, and the anniversary of Socialist party rule. For Barcelona, 1992 was the year that it entered the world stage as the capital of Catalonia. Joan Ramón Resina has remarked on Barcelona's periodic renovations, (its "rituals of self-display"), and views the Olympics as a watershed moment for Barcelona, an event that revised the urban landscape and its image (200). As Resina notes, what is important about these moments is not the event itself, but rather the effect that the event has on urban life and consciousness in the years to come. For once, Barcelona seemed to have gained the upper hand on Madrid; for after the Olympics, Barcelona became the darling of international travelers, urban planners, and avant-garde artists, while Madrid seemed to stagnate in its administrative role. Barcelona sought, through the Olympics, to present itself as a modern, cosmopolitan city with its own unique culture. The 1992 Olympics was the culmination of Barcelona's urbanism and identity formation that began in the years following the publication of Milà's 1844 *misterio*. The story of Barcelona over this nearly

150 year period is one of drastic urban changes in the effort to both obtain and express its modernity.

Antonio-Prometeo Moya's *Los misterios de Barcelona*, published in 2006, presents an image of post-1992 Barcelona in which the Gothic tropes of the nineteenth century exist in the contemporary world.[45] The back cover of the novel contains an "Aviso a los lectores" that serves as a kind of manifesto for the *misterio* genre:

> Ahora esta novela nos muestra una ciudad, Barcelona, donde los clichés del folletín y el cine de terror recuperan toda su potencia: científicos malvados, aristócratas enloquecidos, chupasangres y vampiros, policías de vaudeville, herencias misteriosas, amores macabros, mansiones abandonadas, crímenes rocambolescos. Una historia disparatada donde nada parece ser lo que parece pero que, en clave de disparate, hace diana: vivimos en un mundo que desconocemos, detrás de cada migaja de luz se esconde una tonelada de sombras y nadie conoce quién mueve los hilos del azar que nos construye. Un gesto de humor en medio de tanta grandilocuencia narrativa. No se me pongan demasiado serios.

Moya requests that the readers "No se me pongan demasiado serios," for this novel is a parody and a pastiche of Gothic tropes. However, through this parody the novel reveals several latent anxieties of present-day Barcelona: the memory of the Civil War, the AIDS epidemic, the power of science, and family curses. Post-Olympic Barcelona has consistently been hailed as one of the world's greatest cities, but Moya's novel reveals what lies beneath the surface of urban success and prosperity. Moya's *Los misterios de Barcelona* is a Gothic family romance, but also serves as a counterpoint to Barcelona's

[45] *Los misterios de Barcelona* was published by Caballo de Troya, whose motto is "Para entrar o salir de la ciudad sitiada."

typical narrative. Here, the threats to Barcelona are internal, and the symbols of Barcelonan identity are shown to be monstrous deceptions.

Antonio-Prometeo Moya, born in Ciudad Real in 1946, published his first collection of short stories, *Retrato del fascista adolescente*, in 1975. Moya's early work shows a preoccupation with Spain's fascist and Francoist past. Moya published several novels in the late 1970s through the 1990s, followed by a dry period of nearly ten years. In 2006, Moya published two novels: *Los misterios de Barcelona* and *Últimas conversaciones con Pilar Primo*. *Últimas conversaciones* presents an imagined interview between a reporter and Pilar Primo de Rivera, the sister of José Antonio Primo de Rivera and the head of the Sección Femenina. *Los misterios de Barcelona* was received as a novel "de entretenimiento" or an experiment in popular literature by an author "de otra orientación" like Eduardo Mendoza and his *Los misterios de la cripta embrujada* (Senabre). *Los misterios de Barcelona* was characterized as "ligero e intrascendente," appropriate reading for "un rato de metro" but not much more (Molina). Most of the criticism approved of the abundant intertextualities, but lamented the weakness of the plot and the inferior sense of humor (Molina). *Últimas conversaciones*, a more "serious" novel, received higher praise. Many of the reviews of *Los misterios de Barcelona* commented on the radically different themes and techniques of the two novels, "novelas dispares," as *El Mundo* put it (Senabre). Much like the critical reception of Muñoz Molina's *Los misterios de Madrid*, Moya's novel was viewed as a caprice of a writer who normally explores more weighty themes. Both novels are, in a sense, products of their historical moment. *Últimas conversaciones* is a novel about memory, both personal and collective, written just before the 2006-2007 Ley de Memoria Histórica and in the context

of a newfound interest in exploring the Franco years after decades of the "pacto de silencio."[46] *Los misterios de Barcelona* follows the phenomenon of Carlos Ruiz Zafón's *La sombra del viento*, Spain's biggest bestseller in decades and a boon to the publishing industry. *La sombra del viento*, an urban Gothic, *folletín*-inspired tale of post-Civil War Barcelona, sparked a publishing trend of novels about Barcelona with a Gothic tenor. Much like the proliferation of *misterios* in the nineteenth century after the success of Sue's *Les Mystères de Paris*, Moya's novel appears to belong to the post-Ruiz Zafón interest in Gothic Barcelona.

The years after the publication of Milà de Roca's *misterio* saw the birth of modern Barcelona. The event that would have the greatest effect on the city's landscape was the final destruction of the city walls in the second half of the nineteenth century. Milà de Roca's Barcelona was still a constrained city under the perpetual threat of siege and bombardment. The tearing down of Barcelona's walls "held extraordinary significance for Catalans; it was an epochal event marking not only the aggregation of urban space but also the mutation of consciousness" (Resina 7). The destruction of the walls enabled the city's expansion in the form of Idelfonso Cerdà's plan for the Eixample.[47] The term "urbanism," one of the key words of modernity, first came into use with Cerdà's

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[46] The "pacto de silencio" was the tacit agreement in Spain, especially among the political figures of the Transition, not to delve into the abuses committed by the Franco regime. The Ley de Memoria Histórica, passed nearly thirty years after the dictator's death, denounces the Franco regime, recognizes the victims of the Civil War, and prohibits public demonstrations in support of Francoism. The law also calls for the removal of Francoist symbols from public spaces, the opening of mass graves from the Civil War, and establishes an archive of the dictatorship.

[47] The Eixample is the name of the district to the north of the Old City (Ciutat Vella). The word means "extension" in Catalan. The Eixample, planned by Cerdà, is known for its wide streets organized in a grid pattern. It is also home to many of Barcelona's famous *modernista* buildings.

publication of *Teoría general de la urbanización* in 1867. Cerdà's famous plan was one of the first exercises of modern city planning, and its most noted characteristic is its drive to order and rationalize urban space. After the construction of the Eixample, Barcelona entered into a golden age of wealth and culture, funding for which came, in large part, from money from Spain's remaining colonies. As we saw earlier, Milà de Roca's *misterio* narrates a conservative moment in the development of Barcelona's elites. Concerned with maintaining their economic relationship with Spain's colonies, Barcelona's upper classes and nascent bourgeoisie were loyal to the *moderados* and the Bourbon government. In the 1840s, the apogee of Barcelona's industrialization was still years away. Barcelona's economic success pushed it further and further away from political alliances with Madrid. As Barcelona's bourgeois population grew, so did resentment of Madrid's hegemony. The Revolution of 1868 that overthrew Isabel II and led to the establishment of the First Republic in 1873 was a result of the rise of bourgeois power, and Barcelona played an essential role in fostering anti-monarchical sentiments. The growth of Barcelona's factories created a population of workers who identified with federal politics along with the strengthened middle class.

The divide between Madrid and Barcelona and the differences between two political systems became ever more apparent during this transition; Madrid represented liberal centrism, while Barcelona was the hub of federalism. The federal democratic movement swept the elections of 1869, and showed that Barcelona was leading Spain's political landscape (Resina 26-27). Resina has gone as far as to proclaim Barcelona "the unofficial Spanish capital" of post-Revolutionary Spain. Madrid was suspicious and fearful of Barcelona's newfound political clout; the publication *El Eco de España*

proclaimed that Madrid (and by extension Spain) were being 'invaded' by Catalan politicians, Catalan products, and Catalan political ideas (Resina 27). This brief hegemony lasted until the Restoration, when the federal democracy led by Catalans reverted to Bourbon centrism (Resina 37). For a time, Barcelona compensated for its lack of political hegemony with continued economic growth. Nineteenth-century Barcelona was growing at a faster rate than Madrid; from 1826 to 1900 the city's population rose from 100,639 to 533,000 (Resina 28). Madrid could not compete with Barcelona's industrial prowess, and Barcelona experienced a booming economy that would make it one of Europe's great metropolises.

The period of 1876 to 1882 is commonly referred to as the *febre d'or*, or gold fever. The financial boom of this period was created in part by speculation in futures of railroad companies. The first railroad in Spanish territory was not in Spain but in Cuba, where it increased the productivity of the sugar industry. The first peninsular railroad spanned from Barcelona to Mataró, and soon Barcelona companies were laying track throughout the country. The railroad had the secondary effect of uniting Catalonia, which transitioned "from an imagined community into a perceived one" (Resina 11-12). The railroad companies, the textile industry, and the stock market brought Barcelona six years of hitherto unseen prosperity until the market turned and slid into a recession by 1886. This recession was caused in part by policy decisions in Madrid. For years Madrid had helped Barcelona's industry with a protectionist trade policy; however, in 1882 Madrid gave in to the pressure of English expansion and lifted many of the trade restrictions (Resina 37). The 1888 Exposition, sponsored in part by the railroad companies, served in part as a distraction from the city's economic woes, but also to show the world that

Barcelona had left its provincial days behind and was now a modern, European metropolis (Resina 15). The novels of Narcis Oller narrate these tumultuous years in Barcelona's history, and show both the working class and the masses and the stock market-playing bourgeoisie. Resina cites the beginning of modern Barcelona at the moment of the World Exposition in 1888, when "the city had entered the world stage and initiated the historical cycle that was winding down on the eve of the 1992 Olympics" (6). Eduardo Mendoza's *La ciudad de los prodigios* (1986) is a combination of the Barcelona urban epic pioneered by Oller and the urban mystery genre (Resina 179).

As Barcelona's bourgeoisie and industry grew, so did its working-class population. In the years following the publication of Milà de Roca's *misterio*, Barcelona became less conservative and more radicalized. The loss of Spain's remaining colonies in the Spanish-American War of 1898 meant that Barcelona's industry lost much of the markets for their goods. Industrialists, looking to increase profits, began to replace skilled, unionized workers with unskilled immigrants (Kaplan 60). Barcelona came to be known as a "red" city, and the city was home to various communist, socialist, and anarchist groups. The general strike of 1902 turned the city into a battlefield, with nearly one hundred thousand citizens rising up against the armed forces (Kaplan 67). The Semana Trágica of 1909 further displayed the radicalizaton of the working classes and their disgust with rich industrialists.[48] Barcelona and Catalonia as a whole also became

[48] The uprising of the Semana Trágica began as a protest over the so-called 'Banker's War'. On July 5, 1909, guerillas attacked the railroad conntecting Spain's lead mines in Spanish Morocco to its port. Two of Barcelona's richest industrialists, the Marqués de Comillas and his son-in-law, the Conde Güell (the well-known patron of Gaudí) owned stock in the mines. The Spanish government sent troops to subdue the guerillas, and after heavy losses, they ordered reinforcements from Spain's reservists, many of whom were Catalan workers. The rich had the option of paying an indemnity to waive their military

more and more aggressive in promoting their culture and language and establishing a separate identity from the rest of Spain.

Mendoza's novel is book-ended with Barcelona's two Expositions: the 1888 Exposition of the Restoration period and the 1929 Expo of Primo de Rivera's dictatorship. The 1929 Expo, like the Olympics and the 1888 Expo, was also an exercise in the display of modernity. Brad Epps has written on the symbolic value of the pavilions of the various European nations that participated in the 1929 Expo. Most of the pavilions were temporary structures, but the German Pavilion was reconstructed and remained standing after the Expo concluded. The presence of the German Pavilion in Barcelona was for Catalans "part of a more extensive appeal to Europe, to visibility, recognition, and acceptance *in* Europe and *outside* Spain" (Epps 176). Indeed, Barcelona's embrace of the German Pavilion signaled that Barcelona saw itself as "more continental than peninsular, more European than Spanish" (Epps 176). The Olympic Games represented another such gesture, but this time after the decades of the Franco dictatorship that attempted to quell any manifestation of Catalanism or even Continentalism. During the Spanish Civil War, Barcelona was a firm supporter of the Republican government and, as a result, was severely punished by the Franco regime. Barcelona was once again a city under watch by the central government. Barcelona languished in disrepair during the decades of Franco's rule. While Madrid was allowed to expand, Barcelona's growth was stunted, and the glory years of the nineteenth century were shoved aside. Barcelona once

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obligation, and Barcelona's working class, disgusted with having to participate in a war whose aim was to protect the financial interests of the rich, staged a general strike that led to a full-blown insurrection. The insurrection had its Gothic moment when the anti-clerical tenor of the insurrection resulted in a storming of the city's convents, where 'mummies' of dead nuns were discovered (Kaplan 93-97).

again fingered Madrid as its oppressor. While for Madrid 1992 was the year that marked its entry into Europe, for Barcelona, 1992 was the year the city began to leave Spain.

Olympic Urbanism and the New Barcelona

In his essay on the economic impact of the Olympic Games in Barcelona, Ferran Bruent declared Barcelona to be a "modelo de transformación urbana, mejora de la atractividad de la posición estratégica de la ciudad"(cited in Delgado 11). Indeed, Barcelona's civic leaders have aimed to improve upon the city ever since it was granted the Olympic Games in 1986. Barcelona's bid for the Olympics began in 1981 in the aftermath of the attempted coup of 23-F; Narcis Serrà, the then mayor of Barcelona, saw the Olympics as a morale booster for the city.[49] The Olympics represented what was perhaps one of the few occasions when the Madrid government and Barcelona shared a similar goal; Madrid was eager to use Barcelona as a showcase for its modernization and democracy, and Barcelona was happy both to present itself on the world stage and to extract resources from the central government to make much-needed updates to the city's infrastructure (Hargreaves 58, 60-61). The Catalan nationalists saw the Olympics as an opportunity to assert Catalan identity and autonomy (60-61). The urban reforms concentrated on the run-down Barceloneta and the industrial Poble Nou, where the Olympic Village was to be built (62). This reconstruction was not without controversy; many resented the displacement of established residents and businesses in favor of Olympic construction (62). The urban renewal projects had consequences for Barcelona's

[49] "23-F" refers to the attempted coup d'etat of Februrary 23, 1981. Lieutenant-Colonel Antonio Tejero and a group of Guardia Civil officers stormed the Spanish Parliament during the election of the new prime minister. The coup ultimately failed after King Juan Carlos refused to support the insurrection.

identity; as Antonio Sánchez describes, the Olympic-era projects have "transformed the ailing modern city into a gigantic post-modern mirror reflecting an idealized image of itself to local and global audiences alike" (303). Barcelona redevelopment transformed what Sánchez calls "decaying modern urban spaces" into postmodern spaces—spaces that privilege leisure and consumption (294). Barcelona's new image prized the display of modernity. The city was hailed as a prime example of the kind of city that would emerge in the "New Europe." Barcelona was widely considered a successful fusion of government invention and corporate interests (McNeill 1).

Despite the almost unanimous approval of the "New Barcelona" (Balibrea 207), several critics began to criticize the glossy image that Barcelona's government wanted to portray. Many of the urban improvement projects spurred by the Olympics resulted simply in shifting the problems to other, less visible areas. The infamous Barrio Chino in the Raval neighborhood was swept clean of its slums and is gradually experiencing a gentrification akin to that of the Barri Gòtic and El Born.[50] However, an even larger red-light district has formed in the outskirts of the city in Empordà (Resina 208-209). The new urban areas have also presented problems; the Barcelona Field Studies Centre noted that two of the biggest construction projects of the Olympic era, the Olympic Village and Diagonal Mar, are essentially failed urban projects, lacking a vibrant social and economic life. The Centre identifies low-density housing as the culprit, nothing that the Eixample

[50] In his essay "The Geography of Evil: Barcelona's Barrio Chino," Gary McDonogh shows how writers of the 1920s dubbed the Raval "el barrio chino" to "heighten the air of mystery and romance" (176) of Barcelona's red-light district. The Barri Gòtic and El Born are districts in the Old City whose layout still reflects the haphazardness of medieval urban construction. After the expansion of the city in the nineteenth century, they suffered decades of neglect until they were revamped as tourist destinations in the late twentieth century.

has 150 dwellings per hectare while Olympic Village and Diagonal Mar have only 60 dwellings per hectare ("Barcelona").

Manuel Vázquez Montalbán was a vocal critic of Barcelona's redevelopment projects in 1992. His Pepe Carvahlo detective novels parody the redevelopment plans leading up to the Olympics. Vázquez Montalbán was dismayed at how Barcelona's former Marxists enthusiastically embraced capitalist-directed Olympic urbanism (McNeill 5). As McNeill points out, the unabashed love for all things new and glamorous in Barcelona was indicative of Spain's national amnesia of the struggles of the past:

> With the cult of modernization came a culture of forgetting, absorbed into the individual psyche, where the *desencanto* of those left behind goes beyond the disappointment of failing to achieve political goals. Carvalho and, we presume, Vázquez Montalbán, find their ability to relate to the city has dissipated in the themed shallowness and municipal tidiness of the New Barcelona. They are disoriented, as much by the psychological upheaval of rapid modernization as by the physically transformed landscapes. […] in this city where the forgotten history of the Republic lies beneath the rubble of the Chino or hidden in the overblown rhetoric of the Olympic city, Vázquez Montalbán remains as conscience, as storyteller, as socialist *flâneur.* (McNeill 51)

Vázquez Montalbán, like Muñoz Molina and later Moya, uses a popular literary mode, in this case the detective novel, to parody and contest the official image of Barcelona.

As the consequences of the Olympic-inspired renovation boom have progressed, other writers and intellectuals have contested the official narrative of the 'model city' image of Barcelona. For Manuel Delgado, while Barcelona is not the only city to be

dominated by capitalist speculation of the urban landscape, what is unique about Barcelona is how:

> esas dinámicas globalizadoras han alcanzado el mayor refinamiento en lo que se da en llamar "presentación del producto", consecuencia de un cuidado extraordinario en la puesta en escena de una falsa victoria sobre las patologías urbanans y una engañosa eficacia a la hora de producir bienestar humano y calidad formal. Esa preocupación en el manejo de la impresión ajena ha sido la clave de su éxito a la hora de vender—literalmente y a lo largo y ancho del planeta—la imagen de una ciudad paradigma de todos los éxitos concebibles, pero de una ciudad que no existe, ni ha existido nunca, que sólo es esa imagen que de ella se vende, un mero decorado, una vitrina, un espejismo tras el que lo que se agitan son otras cosas muy distintas de las que las políticas de promoción y las campañas publicitarias muestran. (11)

For Delgado, the "official image" of Barcelona pretends to have resolved the problems of urban life, but instead have created just that, an image, that does not correspond to the reality of contemporary Barcelona. Delgado has called Barcelona "la ciudad mentirosa," and criticized the "intervencionalismo tecnocrático de un despotismo centralizador" (73-74). Delgado's words, rather than only recalling the oppression of Barcelona by the central government in Madrid, instead also refer to Barcelona's own politicians, who are enamored with making Barcelona not just a model city but "modélica[…]ejemplo ejemplarizante" (74). While Delgado does recognize some positive changes in Barcelona's urban structure, he feels that the city "ha vivido últimamente demasiado absorta en sí misma, demasiado obnubilada por su nuevo"(76).

The novelist Javier Calvo (who writes Gothic-inflected thrillers set in present-day Barcelona) is another critic of Barcelona's urbanism. Calvo points back to the 1920s, when the Barri Gòtic received its name during a period of restoration and neo-Gothic reconstruction. For Calvo, the Barri Gòtic was reconstructed and invented as an idea of a medieval city just as the Poble Espanyol of the 1929 Expo featured idealized versions of regional Spanish towns.[51] While the Poble Espanyol is merely an exhibit, the Barri Gòtic along with much of the historic center became thematized and museified, "quitándole la vida e inútilizandolo para los fines verdaderos de una ciudad" (Calvo 102-103). Calvo gothicizes the projects of the Litoral, the Forum de las Culturas of 2004 and Distrito 22 by calling them "terroríficos conjuros que progresivamente van expulsando a la población nativa para entregarle el territorio a los zombis turísticos y a los sirvientes del capital" (104). Barcelona's urban expansion of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries mirrors the feverish expansion of the nineteenth century.

Indeed, Delgado notes that the current mania for improving the city is, in effect, a repeat of the idea of the city that began in the eighteenth century: the never-ending quest to improve, order, and regulate the city. These projects, the legacy of the Enlightenment, aim to eliminate "la opacidad y la confusión a que siempre tiende la sociedad urbana" (17); in other words, urban renovation seeks to elimate what is unpredictable and irrational about city life and create the perfect city. Cerdà attempted to do the same in the nineteenth century; the Eixample was meant to eliminate the chaos, filth, and disease that plagued the center and foster a sense of social order and equality. For Delgado, however, the perfect city is actually a "contra-ciudad" and proposes that, perhaps, the true aim of

[51] The Poble Espanyol, located on the hill of Montjuïc, is still a popular tourist attraction.

urbanism is to "desactivar para siempre lo urbano" (17). Delgado's critiques suggest that there exists a secret Barcelona that the official discourse of the city does not want known. A novel like Moya's *Los misterios de Barcelona*, with its irrational maps, contests the image of the 'perfect city' that Barcelona's leaders and investors wish to portray. Like the nineteenth-century *misterios* that perversely used the model of city guides to map their own mysteries, Moya's *misterio* uses the nineteenth-century genre to show how the conflicts and tensions present in pre-Olympic urbanism have not disappeared nor have they been resolved. Barcelona's modernity or postmodernity has always been tied to an ideal image, an image that does not necessarily correspond to the reality of urban life.

The urban Gothic gives voice to these inconvenient interruptions in the city's ideal narrative; it provides a space for the city's 'otherness'—its perverts, its criminals, its monsters—to rise from the underground. Moya's Barcelona is decidedly not the New Barcelona; indeed, in *Los misterios de Barcelona,* the Old Barcelona returns to belie the image of the glittering postmodern playground. Moya's Barcelona is curiously free of many of the realities of modern Barcelona: immigrants, tourists, and modern high-rises. Instead, Moya focuses on revenants of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century that possess a Gothic tenor: the Laberinto, a foreboding mental hospital; the uncanny house in Gràcia, the underground tunnels and sewers of Barcelona. This vision of present-day Barcelona is that of a nineteenth-century city.

Uncanny Barcelona

Los misterios de Barcelona begins sometime in the late 1990s with the return of Santiago Bocanegra to Barcelona after spending years away in Eastern Europe.

Santiago's return to Barcelona echoes the arrival of menacing figures from Eastern Europe in nineteenth-century literature, the most famous example being Count Dracula, whose arrival in London from Eastern Europe embodies nineteenth-century England's fear of newly arriving immigrants. Even Santiago's last name, Bocanegra, invokes the image of the vampire. Bocanegra's time in Eastern Europe was spent in the former East Germany and Russia, the two principal communist powers of the twentieth century, and the countries that were the spectral enemies of Franco's Spain. Santiago left Barcelona after the suicide of his best friend, Vicente Blasco, and he returns because he is haunted by Vicente's memory. Santiago's travels echo the Gothic convention of the guilt-ridden wanderer. Santiago arrives to a dirty, noisy Barcelona that belies its image of a sunny Mediterranean city:

> El cielo se había cubierto de nubes amenazadoras. El paseo por el que avanzaba estaba desierto y mal iluminado, y el ancho andén del centro tenía que conformarse con la claridad amarillenta que llegaba de las calzadas laterales y de las calles que lo cruzaban. (Moya 33)

Santiago's years away have made Barcelona and its people seen *unheimlich.* Santiago sees his fellow *barceloneses* as having a secret pact to reject any sort of communal or social bond:

> Se fijaba en la gente y a veces tenía la sensación de que no reconocía las costumbres de sus compatriotas, como si durante su diez años de peregrinaje se hubieran difundido entre ellos consignas secretas que hubiesen alterado ligeramente su conducta… ahora sólo veía afán de menosprecio e indiferencia. (Moya 12)

Vicente died while interned at the Laberinto, a psychiatric hospital outside the city. The Laberinto is a unique complex, consisting not only of the hospital but also laboratories, a secondary school and a private university. Vicente and Santiago had been students at the Laberinto, and his memories of the complex have a sinister tenor:

> En invierno, la noche temprana ponía proyectores en todas las torres y tejados, Y como las calderas funcionaban a todo gas y las chimeneas expulsaban densas columnas de humo…el complejo parecía un campo de exterminio. (Moya 46)

The reference to Nazi death camps raises the specter of Spain's own totalitarian past and complicity with the Nazi regime. Throughout the novel, there is the subtle presence of Spain's Civil War in contemporary life. The owner of the Laberinto was Alberto García-Valdecristo, an eminent scientist and member of one of Barcelona's most elite families. His wife, Isolda, Santiago's professor and unrequited love, was also Vicente's sister.

After a few nights in a hotel, Santiago answers a newspaper ad for a room for rent in an apartment in the Eixample. Santiago's feelings of unease continue when he arrives at the apartment building; the elevator, original to the nineteenth-century building, has a large wood column in the center, and Santiago feels "la extraña sospecha de que detrás de la columna de madera podía haber una persona escondida" (Moya 19). To Santiago's surprise, the owner of the apartment turns out to be his former wife, Virginia, with whom he has not been in contact with for nearly ten years. Santiago ends up renting the room, and as he spends time with Virginia, she reveals that someone has been following her for several days. Virginia is concerned for her safety, because although Barcelona's crime has decreased, the changes in Barcelona's urban planning have also changed the pattern of crime:

> Limpiaron el centro cuando los Juegos Olímpicos y la peligrosidad está ahora en los barrios periféricos, pero no te puedes fiar y donde no hay heroína ni navajas asoman la cabeza los chiflados más peligrosos. Dicen que en Gracia hay un loco rabioso que ya ha atacado a varias personas a mordiscos; y sin ir más lejos, el otro día me siguió un hombre hasta la puerta de la casa… (Moya 40)

The next day Virginia sees the man standing across the street. Santiago agrees to confront the man later, but first he has research to do on the death of Vicente. He goes to the newspaper's archive and finds the following announcement:

> **Suicidio en el Laberinto** (Redacción). El cineasta Vicente Blasco, promesa del cine español durante su primera juventud y en inactividad total desde hace años, se abrió ayer las venas en la habitación que ocupaba en el pabellón psiquiátrico del Laberinto, donde estaba en tratamiento. El doctor García-Valdecristo, director del centro, no ha querido hacer declaraciones. (Moya 44)

Vicente had been under the care of Alberto García-Valdecristo for a year before he died, and at the time of his suicide, Alberto was away at a genetics conference in France. Looking for more information, Santiago heads to the Laberinto, located in the outskirts of Barcelona. When he arrives, he finds a large monument engraved with the motto "Noble Sangre Encumbrada y Orgullosa"; a stranger tells Santiago that the monument is in honor of Alberto García-Valdecristo, who had recently died, which Santiago did not know. Santiago tells the man he came here because he had a feeling that he would find his friend's tomb. The two men converse about don Alberto's legacy, which included work in psychiatry, genetics, and biology. The stranger begins an odd discussion about the nature of viruses: "Los virus son parásitos, no persiguen nada, no tienen en este

mundo más finalidad que reproducirse y multiplicarse, y no nacen ni mueren, sino que se activan y desactivan como los relojes y los motores" (Moya 50). As Santiago tries to extricate himself from the increasingly awkward conversation, he hears the man say "¿Puedo confiarle un secreto? También yo tengo la corazonada de que aquí hay una tumba" (Moya 50), but when Santiago turns, the man has disappeared.

When Santiago returns to Virginia's apartment building, he encounters the stranger from the Laberinto. When Virginia sees him she screams, for he is the man who has been following her. The discovery of the identity of Virginia's stalker sets into motion the central mystery of the novel. Virginia's stalker turns out to be a lawyer, Arístides Fenil, of the parodically named law firm Fenil, Fenoll y Fenollosa. Fenil is the only surviving member of the firm. Fenil presents her with the news that she is the heir to her long-lost father's estate. Virginia knew nothing about her father; she had been told that she was born in a convent to a single mother. Fenil reveals that Virginia is related to the García-Valdecristo family, and relates the family's tragic history:

> Durante años fueron una de las primeras fortunas del país. El hijo mayor, don Alberto, tenía inquietudes filantrópicas, y las desarrolló fundando colegios y gabinetes de investigación. El complejo del Laberinto fue la gran obra de su vida. Del hermano menor, don Ismael, nunca supe nada, y de doña Eulalia menos todavía. Primero murió don Ismael, hace ya diez años, de una enfermedad extraña que nadie quiso aclarar; luego la madre, al parecer de lo mismo; el hermano mayor, don Alberto, estuvo a punto de vencer la maldición familiar, incluso se casó, pero las cosas no le salieron como esperaba. Tuvo que cerrar el pabellón psiquiátrico por culpa de unas denuncias y más tarde se produjo un grave

> accidente en el laboratorio de biología, que también tuvo que cerrarse. […] Murió hace un par de años, dicen que de desesperación. Estaba completamente solo, incluso su mujer lo había abandonado. (Moya 68-69)

Santiago is baffled by the newfound connection between Virginia, the García-Valdecristo family, and Isolda, the widow of Alberto. The García-Valdecristo family appears to be cursed; Ismael and his mother, Eulalia, were said to have died of degenerative diseases, and Alberto died of a cerebral embolism.

The author of the will is Ismael García-Valdecristo, the mysterious brother of Alberto García-Valdecristo. Ismael wills Virginia an enormous house in the Gràcia district.[52] Fenil describes the house to Virginia and Santiago:

> Es una mansión antigua, uno de esos caserones periféricos que se construyeron hace más de un siglo, cuando Barcelona y Gracia aún no estaban unidas. Llevaba deshabitada algunos años. A mí me gusta, tiene clase, y si no fuera por… bueno. (Moya 68)

There is something unspeakable about the house in Gràcia, the Gothic ineffable, and Virginia herself is suspicious of this sudden windfall: "Me gustaría vivir mejor, pero tengo mucho miedo de que cambien las cosas. Tengo un mal pensamiento" (Moya 80). Fenil refuses to give Virginia and Santiago any more information until the will is read. Fenil tells Virginia that he had a very difficult time finding her:

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[52] Gràcia, which lies north of the Eixample, was a worker's town that was not incorporated into Barcelona until 1897. The district has traditionally been a modest one, with tenement housing more common than the architectural fantasies of the Eixample (Resina 118). Gràcia's first appearance in literature came with Mercè Rodoreda's *La Plaza del Diamante*, which narrated the struggles of daily life after the Civil War.

> Permítame decirle que es usted el terror de cualquier espía; yo no lo soy, pero le confieso que estoy francamente aterrado. ¿Sabía que no consta usted en ninguna parte? Por eso he sentido curiosidad por la parte administrativa del vínculo que había entre ustedes. No hay forma de localizarla civilmente, señora, como si no existiera. (Moya 57)

Fenil is terrified of Virginia's absence from the records of modern civil society. Virginia is thus specter-like; there is no empirical, legal proof of her existence. Virginia exists outside the parameters of civil society. Virginia is thus a Gothic figure in the sense that modern society cannot account for her existence. Before the reading of the will, Santiago goes to the University in search of Isolda. The University is made of labyrinthine passageways, "un dédalo de pasillos que no conducían a ninguna parte y las últimas reformas no habían hecho sino volverlo más abstruso al multiplicar los corredores" (Moya 82). Santiago is sure that he sees Isolda, but before he can approach her, she disappears, ghost-like. Instead, he meets Sonia, a young woman who works at the University and is curious about Santiago's time in Russia and whether or not he is a communist. Both Virginia and Isolda seem to exist more in the mind of Santiago than in real life.

A few days later, Santiago and Virginia head to Fenil's office to read the will. Valdecristo's will is another Gothic found document; it had been missing for several years, and it is not a normal will. Along with the will is a letter to Virginia from her alleged father. In the letter, Ismael García-Valdecristo claims to be Virginia's father, and warns her that "Si en vez de tener a tu padre sólo tienes la carta, es que algo malo me ha

sucedido, no sabría decirte qué" (Moya 99). The letter reveals the tragic circumstances of Ismael's life:

> He sido prisionero de mi madre desde los veinte años, desde que tú viniste al mundo, pues tu nacimiento significó en cierto modo mi muerte. (Moya 98)

Ismael describes how he fell in love with Virginia's mother, Adela, a girl from a humble family, and when she became pregnant, Ismael's family forbid their marriage and had Ismael declared insane to prohibit him from running away with her. Alberto wanted to conduct experiments on him, so Ismael planned to fake his death and run away. The will Ismael left for Virginia contains several documents, including "Historia de Nuestra Familia con el Diario Secreto de mi cautiverio" (Moya 100). After reading all of the documents, Santiago jokes "Qué familia […] Y vaya folletín. ¿Seguro que esta carta se escribió hace diez años y no cien?" (Moya 101). Santiago's remark points to the self-referential and parodic nature of the novel, but it also indicates that the novel's themes are situated squarely in the realm of the nineteenth century.

The Gràcia house is hardly a typical house. For much of its history, Gràcia was a village outside Barcelona's city limits. It therefore remained outside of the purview of Cerdà's urbanization project, and Gràcia's streets display a haphazardness similar to those of the Old City. Fenil tells Santiago and Virginia that he refused to stay in the house, because "[l]o que me asustaba era la casa misma" (Moya 150). From the outside, the house is "imponente y sobria; con múltiples desconchadas en las dos fachadas, pero más lúgubre que decrépita" (Moya 106). The house is in a state of disrepair and filth. The organization of the house is also odd:

> La distribución de los espacios no obedecía a ninguna lógica y tampoco

> había ninguna simetría reconocible en el trazado de los corredores. (Moya 107)

Some of the house's strange features give clues to its unusual history:

> Y en el suelo de la cocina había una trampilla que parecía ser el acceso natural al sótano. En conjunto, por la organización de sus espacios y la idea de comunicación que expresaban sus puertas y escaleras no parecía que la casa hubiera cobijado nunca las actividades de lo que solemos llamar vida familiar normal. (Moya 125)

The basements appear to be the defining feature of the house, "como si los sótanos mandaran sobre el resto" (Moya 140). The basements can be accessed from various points in the house; there is even a staircase that runs directly from the attic to the basement. Sonia, Fenil's niece, concludes that "la gente que ha vivido aquí se escondía en el subsótano" (140). The basement refuge conjures memories of the Civil War and the siege of Barcelona by the Nationalists; the house is the physical embodiment of the traumas of the Civil War. As we saw in Chapter 1, Bachelard has identified the basement (along with the attic) as the source of a house's irrationality. Thus, if the basement governs the house in Gràcia, the house is controlled by irrationality.

The haunted house is, of course, one of the classic conventions of the Gothic. The haunted house evolved from the motif of the Gothic castle. If the haunted castle can be read as "a complex metaphor for the structures of cultural power (whether private or public, sexual, political, or religious)" (Williams 47), the haunted house can be seen as a representation of the power dynamics of the bourgeois family, and house is the physical embodiment of the secrets and evils of the family. The house in Gràcia is a parody of the symbol of the *masia*, the manor, which was the traditional economic and social unit of

rural Catalonia (Hargreaves 20). The *masia* was the seat of the family unit, and represented the patriarchal social structures and mores of pre-industrial Catalonia (20). For Williams, the Gothic family romances mirror the structure of government and politics. If Gothic family romance is the story of the patriarchal family structure, and the political and social systems are based on that patriarchal system, then the Gothic romance is an exploration of the political (22-23). The haunted house of Gràcia is the novel's first foray into contesting the symbols of Catalan society and nationhood.

The Gràcia house is described as having "algo de fortaleza inexpugnable" (Moya 129). The Gothic is full of buildings and institutions that, while designed to wall out danger and desire, actually trap them inside (Kilgour 126). The classic example is the Gothic convent, as in Matthew Lewis's *The Monk*; the convent that is intended to protect its inhabitants from sin and worldly pleasures ends up harboring and fostering vice and horror. As Moya's novel progresses, it becomes evident that the house hides many secrets about the city and the Valdecristo family.

The Vampire in the City

When Virginia inherits the house, Gràcia is in a state of panic: a serial killer nicknamed 'El vampiro de Gracia' is terrorizing the neighborhood. The killer is called the 'vampiro' because he attacks the victim's neck seemingly to suck out blood. A neighbor, part of the neighborhood watch group "Los Vigilantes," recounts the story to Santiago and Virginia:

> Ya ha matado a varias mujeres. Mientras las viola, les destroza el cuello a mordiscos. Eso no es una persona, es un animal y no merece seguir con vida. (Moya 111)

Another neighbor claims that while the killer does indeed extract blood from his victims, though there is no evidence that he rapes them. The Vigilante blames the killer's vampirism on modernity: "Es que la culpa la tienen el progreso y la democracia, que han producido esa clase especial de seres" (Moya 112). He continues:

> El vampirismo es una mutación, perfectamente estudiada, que apareció como todas las mutuaciones, cuando la sociedad inventó las máquinas para que los músculos y el cerebro no trabajaran tanto […]. Esos seres monstruosos que hay se corren con tristeza, que son más de los que pensamos, son los tataranietos de aquellas primeras generaciones de ciudadanos que dejaron de trabajar y de quemar energía cuando se inventaron las máquinas. Porque el progreso también es retroceso, ¿eh?, también es retroceso… (Moya 113)

The neighbor blames both urbanization and industrialization for the mutation of humans. He sees these phenomena as violating the natural order of life, and questions the benefits of progress. There is also a more scientific theory for the killer's vampirism; some believe that the killer is a hemophiliac, and he requires blood to make up for his own biological deficiencies. The scientific explanation gains creedence when it is revealed that the Vampiro "no extrae la sangre succionándola, sin por algún procedimiento mecánico" (157). The Vampiro is thus in a sense a creature of modernity, for he is able to use technology to collect blood from his victims.The Vampiro is an urban creature and an expert on the city's geography:

> conocía muy bien su territorio y utilizaba sus recursos para aparecer y desaparecer. Gracia era como una ciudad dentro de otra, un crisol de épocas, tribus y formas de vivir. (Moya 155)

Gràcia, exempt from the organization of the Eixample, is a palimpsest of memories and urban lifestyles; instead of one, linear narrative, Gràcia is a jumble of discourses. The heterogeneity of the landscape is the perfect refuge for the vampire. Gràcia is thus like the Gothic labyrinth, with multiple paths and multiple meanings.

When Santiago spends the night in the Gràcia house, he hears noises outside and sees "una figura pequeña y negra" along with another figure, "una sombra encogida cuyo rápido y extraño zigzagueo se perdía en las tineblas" (Moya 129). Santiago runs after the figures with his video camera, and he stumbles upon the body of a dead woman. Santiago hears a woman's voice shout "¡Alto!,"and the Vigilantes appear like a "banda de linchadores" (131), but the culprit(s) are nowhere to be found. Santiago fears that the Vigilantes will mistake him for the murderer, so he runs back to the Gràcia house. The next day, Santiago watches the video of the chase, only to find a "caótica sucesión de imágenes […] todas muy movidas y oscuras" (Moya 135) that reveal nothing about what occurred. The video is yet another Gothic "document," one that incompletely narrates a moment of terror. The next morning, Santiago is startled by the presence of a woman; it is Sonia, the woman he met at the University. Sonia is the niece of Fenil, and she was hired to look after the house before Virginia received news of the will. It was Sonia who yelled at Santiago as he was chasing the vampire. Sonia and Santiago set up traps around the house to protect themselves from the vampire. Fenil calls Paco Fenoll, the inspector investigating the Vampiro murders and the son of Fenil's partner Ezequiel Fenoll, who suspects that house is being used by the Vampiro as a refuge. Paco also has a theory that the deaths of his father, Ezequiel Fenoll, Fenollosa, and Alberto García-Valdecristo are somehow related to the Gràcia vampire. Paco's theory is that the vampire is someone

with a connection to both the Valdecristo family and the firm, and is perhaps someone who has faked his own death. The murderer is dead yet not dead, like the "undead" vampire.

The modern image of the vampire is derived from Eastern European folklore. The typical vampire rests in a coffin during the day and ventures out at night to drink human blood. The vampire is a supernatural figure; it can transform its shape, hypnotize its victims, and is nearly immortal. One of the prevailing explanations for the origins of the vampire myth relates it to the plagues that dominated Europe for centuries. The animal disguises attributed to vampires—rats, wolves, and bats—were also animals associated with the plague. Deaths that were caused by little-understood diseases such as anemia and porphyria were also blamed on vampires (Botting 145). The vampire myth also functioned at the social level as a vehicle to comprehend social fears and taboos. People who died without being baptized, suicides, and the excommunicated were all seen as potential victims of vampires or suspected of being vampires themselves. Vampirism was also used to explain physical deformities; those with cleft palates were suspected to be vampires (Twithcell 9).

The foundational work of modern vampire literature is John Polidori's "The Vampyre," which established many of the tropes of the vampire figure.[53] Polidori's vampire, Lord Ruthven, is a noble, cultured man, as seductive as he is monstrous. The most emblematic vampire is, of course, Bram Stoker's *Dracula*. Dracula is a

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[53] Polidori wrote his vampire story while on vacation with Lord Byron and Percy and Mary Shelley; from that same trip emerged Mary Shelley's idea for her novel *Frankenstein*. Both literary monsters incarnate fears of the modern world; the vampire represents the return of old superstition, while Frankenstein represents the dangers of uncontrolled science.

transgressive character; like all Gothic figures he is "an uncontrollable and overwhelming power which threatens not only the loss of sanity, honour […] but the very order which supports and is regulated by the coherence of those terms" (Botting 7). The vampire is a threat to bourgeois values of family and society. Dracula represents the return of the feudal system and the noble class that threatens the emerging bourgeoisie (it is not coincidental that in Stoker's novel the men who defeat Dracula are doctors, lawyers, and businessmen, all representative of bourgeois professionals (Smith 131). Anne Williams notes that while the vampire had been part of European folklore and literature long before the publication of *Dracula*, it "became unforgettable, it seems, only when Stoker tailored vampire lore to the dynamics of power that inheres in all dimensions of patriarchal culture: in the individual family, in law, in science, in religion, in language" (22). Dracula violates some of the deepest taboos of the patriarchal social order; he is at once the 'bad father' and the embodiment of "the culturally 'female' in blood, darkness, death, and monstrous, unspeakable, unsanctified reproduction" (Williams 21-22). The Dracula story can also be seen as a retelling of the St. George versus the Dragon myth. St. George, the patron saint of England (and of Catalonia) defeats a dragon (dragon equates to Dracula) that has been terrorizing the population and demanding the sacrifice of a virgin princess. After St. George slays the dragon, the people convert to Christianity. The dragon is read as a symbol of paganism; Dracula is also a vestige of the pagan past that threatens to control the women. The battle against Dracula is mirrored in Freud's *Totem and Taboo* (1912), which describes the defeat of the father by the sons to gain power over the women (Williams 21-22).

One of the most notable characteristics of *Dracula* is the constant presence of modernity. The novel abounds with references to telegraphs, phonographs, newspapers, trains, and other technological advances. The novel's characters, especially Dr. Van Helsing, use psychiatric and medical terminology to describe Dracula and his victims' behavior (Botting 147). However, upon confronting Dracula, these modern tools become powerless; as Harker states, "unless my senses deceive me, the old centuries had, and have, powers of their own which mere modernity cannot kill" (Stoker 51). For Botting, the conflict between Dracula and his modern enemies is the collision between modernity and "irrepressible forces from the past [that] continue to threaten the present's idea of itself" (148). Indeed, while the modern men who fight Dracula have all the latest technology at their disposal, in order to defeat the vampire they must resort to superstitious folklore methods (Ellis 198). The vampire resides in the darker corners of the modern consciousness that reveals the uncertainties about modernity. While a vampire is a supernatural figure, in literature it is constantly surrounded by rational, ordered, modernity. For the vampire to be frightening, it must be juxtaposed with "reality," for it is precisely modernity's security in its own rationality that the vampire disrupts. Like Dracula, *Los misterios de Barcelona* features a *conjuración* of modern bourgeois men attempting to vanquish a vampire and by extension the *antiguo régimen*. The Valdecristo family is a relic from another time, a secretive, aristocratic family with an obsession with purity of blood.

As Santiago, Fenil, and Inspector Fenoll attempt to solve the mystery of the vampire, they also learn more about the Valdecristo family. The Valdecristos were longtime clients of the law firm of Fenoll, Fenollosa, y Fenil, a group that specialized in

the affairs of some of Barcelona's most prestigious families. The families represented by the firm had "una innegable obsesión por la pureza de la sangre familiar" (191) and they often subjected potential family members to genetic testing. Moya's novel consistently contests the image of the ideal family. Despite Fenoll, Fenollosa, and Fenil's work with the purity of family bloodlines, the partners are all involved in affairs that undermine the integrity of the family. Fenil reveals that he had a long-term affair with the wife of his partner Fenollosa, and that they had a child who was recognized as Fenollosa's. Fenollosa had a relationship with Fenoll's wife, and Fenoll had a romance with the wife of a client). Rumors claimed that some of the families represented by the firm belonged to secret societies that generously funded Nationalist political parties.

Ismael's will presents him as the Gothic victim of a perverse family, led by his brother, Alberto. Alberto García-Valdecristo is scientist, a figure who is at once the quintessential embodiment of modernity and also a Gothic character. According to Ismael's letter, Alberto wants to conduct perverse scientific experiments on him. As an emblem of modernity, the scientist has been invoked by Locke and others as the model of the rational adult (Kilgour 196). However, as the modern age progresses, the scientist becomes more and more separated from the rest of society:

> The scientist is the epitome of the alienated autonomous individual, the loner par excellence, a cerebral questor who, in his laboratory (the new castle that in films becomes the central image for Frankenstein) has to detach himself not only from the objects of his analysis but from all relationships. (Kilgour 195)

This separation from society makes the scientist a possible Gothic figure. The Gothic shows how the independent, logical mind falls into "solipsism and obsession" (Kilgour

12) and ultimately alienates himself. The scientist's search to control nature makes him pervert the natural order of things. His ability to access the power of nature drives them to excess.

Science has always garnered the attention of Gothic writers; in keeping with the Gothic's critique of modern reason, science, as the "highest expression of modernity"(Ellis 121), has been the ideal forum in which to examine the consequences of modernity. We cannot talk of the modern age and the Enlightenment without discussing the Scientific Enlightenment, for it perhaps represented the greatest challenge to the early modern cosmovision. The Scientific Enlightenment was "a profound cultural transformation in its belief in the power of human enquiry to solve the problems of existence and its rejection of received ideas of orthodox religion" (Ellis 121). As Markmann Ellis notes, the scientific Enlightenment was associated with urban life and radical political thought (122). While science and the Gothic seem to be inherently opposed, this new scientific knowledge represented a new, frightening power. Power over the universe was no longer in the hands of a higher power, but was instead controlled by corruptible humans. The questions raised by man's control over life are explored in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, where both science and superstitious alchemy are employed to give life to Frankenstein's monster. The implicit analogy made between science and sorcery suggests that science can be a nefarious force used for dark ends. Shelley gothicizes science by investigating its relationship to unchecked power. Her novel suggests that "modern science, superficially detached from its dark and murky past, becomes another version of it" (Kilgour 196). The Gothic explores the consequences of

the modern project and the scientific revolution, and Moya's portrayal of Alberto presents a perversion of the modernity that Barcelona proudly claims to possess.

Irrational Maps

One night, Fenil decides to go to the Valdecristo pantheon (which he finds completely empty), and Santiago and Paco go to the Gràcia house to await the vampire. When Paco is called away by news of another vampire attack, Santiago begins to explore some of the stranger aspects of the house:

> Aquella casa parecía reproducir formas geométricas inusuales, trazadas con una gran precisión, y todas curiosamente inscritas, como para que encajaran en un dibujo general. Puede que fuera casualidad, pero así como el pozo y las pilas de la fuente eran círculos concéntricos, la base de la fuente era un rombo y esta figura estaba como sobreimpuesta a una gran losa cuadrada, encerrada a su vez en otro círculo de gran tamaño. A grandes rasgos, el patio parecía reproducir la forma de una brújula y Santiago buscó instintivamente con los ojos la presencia de alguna veleta en las Alturas, los típicos hierros que se cruzan con los extremos rematados por las letras N,S,E,O. Observó los tabiques, de frente y por los lados. Al principio había pensado que era una chapuza de albañiles que en su día habían dejado el trabajo a medias, pero ahora se daba cuenta de que era una pequeña obra maestra del disimulo. Cada tabique reproducía groseramente una letra, de modo que cada grupo de cubículos formaba una palabra con ellos, en total cuatro palabras, NORTE, SUR, ESTE, OESTE. (202)

Santiago realizes that the family motto that is engraved in the Laberinto, the Gràcia house, and the family mausoleum actually refers to the cardinal points. Fenil then realizes that the Valdecristo landmarks form the points of a map:

> El subsuelo de la ciudad está prácticamente hueco, entre los túneles del metro, las cloacas, los aparcamientos, los sótanos comerciales y otras perforaciones. […] vemos que basta una sencilla red de corredores o conductos para moverse libremente por el subsuelo de la ciudad. Se puede escapar así de cualquier persecución. Tú me diste la clave cuando me llamaste por teléfono. Los puntos cardinales se determinan con dos rayas cruzadas perpendicularmente. Olvídate de la orientación geográfica y piensa sólo en el trazado de las líneas y en los ángulos de noventa grados que origina la intersección. La dirección de la segunda línea se averigua por sí sola si se conoce la primera, pero para determinar la dirección y longitud de ésta necesitamos localizar antes los dos puntos que la delimitan. La casa de Gracia y el panteón de los Valdecristo son esos puntos. (214)

Santiago, Fenil, Paco and Sonia venture though one of the basement tunnels of the Gràcia house, and when they emerge, they are in front of the monument to Alberto García-Valdecristo at the Laberinto. Paco then takes out a map of Barcelona to link the points of the map:

> Podemos trazar ya la segunda línea. Arranca del lugar donde estamos, se cruza con la primera en los alrededores de la Ópera y sigue hacia el puerto, en busca del cuarto punto, que no sabemos cuál es. […] Hasta ahora nos dedicábamos a esperar la llegada de los acontecimientos, pero creo que por fin han cambiado las tornas. Yo no soy Paco, pero pienso que ese vampiro, sea quien fuere, conoce las

> rutas subterráneas de la ciudad tan bien como las casas abandonadas de Gracia y, al margen de la relación que tenga con la persona o personas que realmente buscamos, puede servirnos de orientación. (217)

The group is able to "map" the mysteries of the city, and once they follow the lines that link the cardinal points on Barcelona's irrational map, they are led to the source of the mystery.

In the chapter "El vampiro al que le gustaba Wagner" Fenoll and two patrols discover that the tunnels of the metro lead to passageways underneath the Liceu. Fenoll has a startling encounter with the vampire:

> la vista se llenó de moscas y cucarachas durante un segundo, no apartó la armónica de la boca y siguió mirando con fijeza a quien lo miraba, sin atreverse a mover un músculo. A dos metros escasos había una forma humana, humana porque tenía una cara pálida que recordaba a los humanos, pero por lo demás podía ser muy bien un animal peludo y encogido, una araña con cara de cadáver. (Moya 230)

Fenoll and the patrols race to catch the vampire, but only discover what appears to be a hidden door at the end of the opera house's storage rooms. A strange smell emanates from the door; one of the patrols suggests "Yo diría que es formol y que ahí dentro podría haber un depósito de cadáveres" (Moya 234), but Paco says it is ozone, and that there is a refrigeration unit on the other side.

In a nod to Gaston Leroux's *Le Fantôme de l'Opéra*, the Gràcia vampire takes refuge under the opera house, where Wagner's *Tristan* (the complete title is, of course, *Tristan and Isolde*) is being rehearsed. The vampire of *Los misterios de Barcelona* is a

creature of the underground, and uses the tunnels and sewers under the city to travel undetected. In the "Aviso a los lectores," Moya highlights the iconic presence of the underground in modern culture:

> La idea de que otro mundo es posible se ha convertido en bandera del movimiento antiglobalización. Pero está en éste, añaden los más escépticos. El sueño de ese otro mundo tiene una variante narrativa de larga tradición literaria: lo subterráneo. Desde El viaje al centro de la Tierra de Verne, hasta *El misterio de la cripta embrujada* de Eduardo Mendoza, pasando por *La máquina del tiempo* de Wells o *El inspector de alcantarillas* de Giménez Caballero. Por no hablar de las catacumbas y *Las memorias del subsuelo*. Un mundo lleno de puertas secretas y pasadizos oscuros que recorren la geología oculta de nuestras vidas. Un perfil narrativo que heredaron el folletín y las novelas de misterio.

David Pike has proposed that the underground "has been a dominant image of modernity since the late eighteenth century" (Pike 2). The underground is an uncanny space in the way that it combines "the utterly alien with the completely familiar, […] mythic timelessness with the lived experience of the present" (1). The underground has long functioned as a constestatory space in relation to the "aboveground"; the underground contains what is negated, denied, or rejected on the surface (Pike 1). The underground began to play a greater role in the public imaginary in the wake of the industrial revolution. The advent of the mining industry and the construction of underground railways and subway systems made the underground the most explored and exploited place on earth (Pike 3). The underground's value as a source of riches combined with its role as a place of elimination and death led to its complicated and often contradictory

status in the modern consciousness. In the medieval and early modern Christian cosmovision, the underground was the kingdom of the devil. This conception was inherited from the Greeks and Romans, who located the realm of Hades under the earth. By the nineteenth century, the underground came to be associated with crime and clandestine activities, and in so doing "helped to produce the confusion between the moral and the physical" (Pike 6).

The underground plays a special role in the urban mystery genre. The urban mysteries "introduced the fundamental paradox of the view from below as an epistemological approach to modernity" (Pike 161). Urban mysteries are characterized by their clear opposition between good and evil, thus the power struggles at play in the novel are set against the background of aboveground versus below-ground activities. As with the Gothic novels of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the spaces that the urban mysteries employ are quotidian, conventional spaces —old houses, basements, attics—but with the urban mysteries, the conventional spaces are also given a specificity that the earlier works lacked (Pike 162). The underground is a product of modernity—sewers and subway systems are fundamental characteristics of the modern city—but it also embodies the dark corners of modern life.

Paco and his men decide they need dynamite to blast open the door, but they need a distraction. Thus the Vigilantes are brought in during a performance of *Tristan* and invade the theatre in search of the vampire:

> Los vigilantes subieron las escalinatas del centro y de los lados e inundaron la platea y los palcos de platea, en dirección del escenario. Tristán, Kurwenal e

> Isolda retrocedieron con aprensión, pensando durante un segundo que iban a lincharlos. (Moya 259)

The invasion of the Liceu by the working-class Vigilantes recalls the bombing of the Liceu in 1893, when working-class anarchists aimed to destroy the symbol of elite Barcelona (McDonogh 200). The 1893 attack on the Liceu was an attack on the power and influence of Barcelona's Good Families, and the Vigilantes attack also aimed to break down the image of bourgeois Barcelona to reveal violence, anarchy, and destruction.

The Liceu, located on the Ramblas, is one of Barcelona's most iconic and symbolically charged buildings. The Liceu has had many incarnations due to the fires that have destroyed the original structure. The Liceu was "perhaps the most significant and certainly the most lavish institution of the nineteenth-century Catalan bourgeoisie" (Resina 53). The Liceu was a manifestation of social wealth and visibility; it was where Barcelona's elites went to see and be seen. Indeed, for most of the nineteenth century, the house lights were not dimmed during opera performances, so that the audience members were able to people-watch. The Liceu was also a visual representation of Barcelona's social structure; boxes were owned by families and kept for generations, thus a performance at the Liceu was also a performance of social norms and status (Resina 57). The Liceu was a common meeting place for business deals and displays of power and wealth. Opera was Barcelona's way to distinguish itself culturally from Madrid; Madrid's theatre had more of a mass appeal, and opera linked Barcelona to more Continental tastes. Resina has noted that the Liceu was so important to Barcelona's society precisely because it lacked a court or other official stages of status (Resina 57-59). The Liceu is an

institution in which the Barcelona bourgeoisie could create an ideal image of itself. Family relations were also at the core of the Liceu; boxes were passed down through family lines, and a family signaled that it was in mourning by closing its box for the season (McDonogh 196). Moya's selection of a Wagner opera is not accidental; late nineteenth-century Barcelona experienced a craze for all things Wagner (Resina 86). The vampire's refuge belies the splendor of nineteenth-century Barcelona's temple to the success of its bourgeoisie, for just under the surface awaits poverty, violence, and death.

As Paco and the patrols prepare to open the hidden door of the Liceu, the narration changes perspective to focus on Alberto García-Valdecristo, who is working in the laboratory he constructed to conduct his experiments. It is also the lair of the vampire, Josué, who is shown to be more pathetic than monstrous: when Alberto gives him the final order to kill Virginia, he looks at Alberto with "la nauseabunda y horrible tristeza que solía emanar de sus ojos enfermizos" (Moya 264). Isolda is held there as his prisoner; she was the only one who knew that Alberto was alive, for he forced her to rent the apartment above Virginia's in order to carry out his plans. Alberto long ago faked his death in order to carry out his experiments and hide his terrible family secrets.

Gothic Family Values

Chapter 23, "El más desdichado de los mortales," consists of a long report presented by Paco Fenoll to the Homicide Division of the Barcelona police. In the report, Fenoll narrates the confession of Alberto Valdecristo. Valdecristo's confession is a story of a corrupt, decadent family. Alberto's brother, don Ismael, was promiscuous to the point of pathology:

> se dedicaba a perseguir y acosar a todas las mujeres que veía, ya copular con todas las que podía, sin distinción de estado, edad ni condición, y cuando no había mujeres a mano, con el primer sucedáneo que encontraba. (Moya 278-279)

Fenoll notes that Ismael's sexual exploits occurred in the age before HIV and AIDS, therefore he impregnated dozens of women. Alberto, ever the scientist, analyzed Ismael's blood in order to find some reason for his perversion, and finds that Ismael has an autoimmune disorder. Although the virus is not named, the parallels to the HIV/AIDS epidemic are still present. The vampire myth has been used to explore the fears of AIDS, an illness spread either through sex or blood. The gothicization of AIDS by social conservatives painted the disease as divine retribution for sins against God and nature. The presence of pathology in the blood of one of Barcelona's supposed "good families" discredits their cherished belief in the purity and nobility of their bloodline; the motto of the Valdecristo family is "Noble Sangre Encumbrada y Orgullosa," but Alberto's discovery contradicts this claim.

Alberto is convinced that the disorder is genetic, and he sets off to find more of Ismael's offspring to prove his theory. Adela, Virginia's mother, was one of dozens of women impregnated by Ismael, but both she and her daughter had disappeared after the birth. In the course of his investigations, Alberto discovers that Virginia is not Adela's daughter, but instead the daughter of his mother, doña Eulalia, and a man who was not her husband. Alberto confronts his mother with her secret and strangles her, but not before revealing that Alberto's father was not the elder Valdecristo either. The worst secret is yet to come, however; Alberto learns that Virginia is the daughter of Ismael and his mother, Eulalia. Enraged, Alberto kills Ismael, and hides his body inside a wall of the

Gràcia house. Alberto becomes so obsessed with the desire to "depurar el genoma familiar, reconstruir desde cero el árbol de la familia" (Moya 288) that he orders don Ezequiel to find Virginia. The will that Virginia received was a ruse to lure her to the house so Alberto could kill her and take her blood for testing. In order to carry out his clandestine plans, Alberto faked his own death, and began to live in the underground space beneath the Opera. Living underground, he learns the passageways that connect the Gràcia house, the Laberinto, and the family cemetery. After using his medical skills to save the life of an old beggar woman, Alberto became known as "el benefactor misterioso del subsuelo" (Moya 292). The underground subverts the dynamics of the above ground; in the "real" world, Alberto is a murderer, but underground, he is a savior. The old woman's son, Josué, pledges eternal faithfulness to Alberto. Josué is grotesquely deformed, and is also a creature of the underworld; Alberto uses his loyalty to continue his scientific investigations, and Josué becomes the "Vampiro" that terrorizes Barcelona.

As in all the *misterios* examined thus far, a family secret lies at the center of *Los misterios de Barcelona*. While *The Castle of Otranto* deals with perverse family relations, much of Gothic fiction has ignored the family; figures like Frankenstein, Dracula, and Melmoth the Wander are excluded from family life. For Maggie Kilgour, the Gothic is the vision of "a modern world made up of detached individuals, which has dissolved into predatory and demonic relations which cannot be reconciled into a healthy social order" (12). When families are present in Gothic narratives, they subvert the bourgeois ideal of the family unit. The recurrent theme of incest speaks to the Gothic's aim to portray the extremes of desire and to parody the foundation of modern society (Kilgour 12). In Shelley's *Frankenstein*, the scientist Victor has a seemingly idyllic childhood. It is

suggested, however, that Victor harbors incestuous feelings for his sister Elizabeth. Kilgour suggests that in *Frankenstein*, the family "doesn't wall monsters out, but ends up producing its own" (202). The American Gothic is notable for its focus on the horrors of family life; from Hawthorne to Poe to Faulkner, the depiction of the corrupt, perverse family has been a counterpoint to the American exaltation of family life (Davenport-Hines 267-268). In "The Fall of the House of Usher," Poe's tale of a decadent aristocratic family, the monsters are within the family itself. In *Los misterios de Barcelona*, the Valdecristo family, one of the "Good Families" of Barcelona's bourgeois success story, is shown to be a monstrous version of family relations. The family, as Kilgour notes, is often used as a "microcosm reproducing social tyranny" (96). The Valdecristos, a bastion of Catalan bourgeois society, culture, and education, are shown instead to be a perversion of the ideal family.

Gary McDonogh defines the "Good Families" of Barcelona as a group of around one to two hundred elite families who have controlled economic power in Barcelona since the nineteenth century. The Good Families are a fusion of old aristocracy and bourgeois industrialists. The symbol of the family has been fundamental to Catalan identity and Catalan nationalism. The family has been used as a symbol of order and stability for Catalan politics; as McDonogh notes, "turn-of-the-century Catalans used the family as an emblem of historically homogenous Catalonia in opposition to the encroachments of the centralist state" (53). Josep Torras Bages, one of the leading figures of conservative Catalanism, describes the importance of the family to Catalan social order in *La tradició catalana* (1892):

> The family is the substance and base of social organization. Social decadence supposed decay in the family. Social regeneration, social reconstruction, must begin with the reconstruction of the family. […] Love for the homestead [*casa pairal*], the desire to conserve the patrimony, the order of the family hierarchy…all is superior where regional life has been maintained, even in decayed form, as opposed to those areas which are confused with that great mass, the nation. (cited in McDonogh 54)

According to Torras Bages, the Catalan family was the defense against Madrid-led centralism; it was the foundation of the Catalan nation.

Fred Botting reminds us that the Gothic is always really about something else; the haunted houses and grotesque monsters are really stand-ins for the immediate fears of the readers. The Spanish *misterios* seem to arrive at transitional moments in Spanish history; the misterios of the 1840s came at a moment of political uncertainty and on the cusp of economic and social transformation. Muñoz Molina's *misterio* appeared at the moment Madrid was introducing itself as a European capital and the PSOE bubble was about to burst. Moya's misterio arrived at a moment when Catalanism seemed at its peak; the expressions of nationalism after the Franco years and leading up to and following the Olympic Games had not resulted in any meaningful autonomy. However, in 2006, the Estatut on Catalan self-governance tilted Catalonia further towards self-government.[54]

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[54] The Estatut d'Autonomia de Catalunya (Statute on Catalan Autonomy) defines Catalonia as a nation and expands its self-governance. The 2006 Estatut is one of many statutes addressing Catalan autonomy. The first was proposed in 1919 by the Mancomunitat, and another followed in 1932 during the Second Republic. The statute was abolished by Franco, and a new statute was approved in 1979. The 2006 Estatut is not without controversy; the low voter turnout has been interpreted by pro-Spanish nationalists as a sign that Catalonia's politicians are overstating the public's desire for

The return to a Gothic family romance narrative in a Barcelona that seems to have changed little since the nineteenth century indicates a certain stagnation; this Barcelona is not the postmodern, urban success story, but rather one where the problems of the nineteenth century have not disappeared. Moya's novel belies the image of Barcelona as a modern city and the potential capital for a nation-state. By portraying the García-Valdecristo family as a corrupt, murderous, incestuous Gothic family, Moya strikes a blow to the Barcelona/Catalan image of the "good family" that carried out its success in the nineteenth century.

John Hargreaves, in his study on Catalan nationalism and the Olympic Games, notes that nationalisms can be divided into two camps: civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism. Civic nationalisms are characteristic of countries that developed as states during the Enlightenment and that were influenced by ideas such as equality and natural rights. The ethnic model emerged in the nineteenth century and was influenced by German Romanticism and its view of the nation as the union of a unique people who share a culture and a language. The ethnic model of nation building was what influenced the Catalanist nationalist movement that began in the late nineteenth century (16-17). It is important to distinguish the difference between the nation and the state when discussing nationalist movements. A 'nation' can be defined as a population group "held together by a particular kind of enduring identity […]and, above all, attachment to a given territory (Hargreaves 4-5). The state, on the other hand, as defined by Max Weber, is the institution that has legitimate power in a given territory (4-5). While the term nation-state is commonly used, many modern-day states are multi-national states, and many nations

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autonomy, while the Catalan nationalists claim that the abstention reflects the insufficiency of the Estatut in declaring Catalan independence.

exist without their own unique state. Catalonia is an example of a stateless nation, and Spain an example of a multi-national state.

In a sense, Catalan nationalism grew in influence because of the existing tendencies towards federalism and anti-centralism. Carlism, the pro-federal, traditional, Catholic national movement was the dominant political nationalism in rural Catalonia for most of the nineteenth century. The urban Catalan elites, as we saw in Milà de Roca's *Los misterios de Barcelona*, were initially compliant with the central government in hopes of maintaining their trade status and due to their concern with the growing radicalization of the working class (Hargreaves 27). While the promise of state protection kept the loyalty of Catalan elites for a time, the 1898 war with the United States and the loss of Spain's remaining colonies, historically of great economic importance to Catalonia, destroyed any remaining sense of a beneficial relationship between Catalonia and the central government.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the anti-centralist rural Carlists and the urban Catalanist elites combined to produce a strong Catalan nationalist movement (Hargreaves 27). In 1914, the first step towards autonomy, the Mancomunitat, was established in Barcelona.[55] The Mancomunitat was perhaps too successful for Madrid's liking, and it was abolished under Primo de Rivera's dictatorship. Under the Second Republic Catalonia finally gained autonomy with the restoration of the Generalitat, but after the defeat of the Republicans the Franco regime disbanded the Generalitat and began a program of total control from the center. In his goal to unify Spain under one

[55] The Mancomunitat de Catalunya (The Commonwealth of Catalonia) joined together the four Catalan provinces and represented the central government's acknowledgment of Catalonia as a political agent. The Mancomunitat worked to improve Catalonia's infrastructure and promote Catalan language and culture.

strong central government, Franco banned all expressions of Catalan culture and language (28). While the language and culture were kept alive privately, at the public level Catalanism was effectively shut down. Other factors contributed to the diminishing of Catalanism; Catalonia's continued economic modernization attracted many immigrants from Castilian-speaking Spain, especially from Andalusia. By the 1970s, immigrants made up nearly 50 percent of Catalonia's population. The characteristics that made up the *fet differential* were slowly fading away; Catalonia now had a significant non-Catalan speaking population, and the overall modernization of Spain during the 1960s and 1970s erased many of the economic differences between Catalonia and the rest of Spain. Indigenous Catalans saw these developments as a threat to their unique identity, and Catalan nationalism became concerned with securing Catalan identity in the face of a rapidly changing Spain (Hargreaves 29).

In the context of a homogenizing Spain, Catalan nationalists saw the necessity of preserving and protecting Catalan language and culture. Catalan nationalism centers on the importance of the Catalan language, perhaps the only truly distinguishing characteristic that separates Catalans from the rest of Spain. The Catalan government, while officially declaring a civic model of Catalan nationality—a Catalan is someone who lives and works in Catalonia—nevertheless relies heavily on ethnic nationalism at the policy level. The Catalan government is a strident supporter and promoter of Catalan culture, and has made the Catalan language a requirement of civic life. The 'linguistic normalization' obliges Castilian speakers to learn Catalan; the school system and the government sector all operate in Catalan and treat Castilian as a foreign language (Hargreaves 34). The policy of the Catalan government is to 'make' immigrants into

Catalans by immersing them in Catalan language and culture (34). Contemporary Catalan nationalism is a complex negotiation of ethnic and civic nationalisms, but its roots lie in the nineteenth-century notion of cultural uniqueness.

The Catalanist emphasis on the purity of Catalan identity is complicated by the nature of Barcelona, its capital city. Robert Hughes has noted that part of Barcelona's identity problem lies with its nature as a port city. The port "is where the *ser autentic*, or 'essence,' of a country, as a centralizing power imagines it, begins to fray" (Hughes 9). This has proven true for Barcelona's relationship with Spain, but also for Barcelona's relationship to Catalonia. As we have seen in Milà de Roca's *misterio*, Barcelona's openness to the colonies and the rest of the world has meant that a steady flow of immigrants of various origins have always been a part of Barcelona, which has produced "an ever-deeper social segmentation and cultural heterogeneity, and consequently an ever-vaguer sense of identity as the ultimate ground of sociality" (Resina 201). The result is that, by the late 1980s, there emerged a sense of Barcelonan identity that began to overwhelm the sense of national identity (Resina 201). Barcelona exists in a strange limbo of not being quite Spanish yet neither being completely Catalan.

The epistemological problem faced by contemporary Catalan nationalism is that it tries to adopt a civic model of nationalism even though the fundamentals of the Catalan nation movement are ethnically and culturally based. The government of Catalonia defines a Catalan as "someone who lives and works in Catalonia," which is a civic model, but its justification for its right to statehood is the *fet differential*, that which

makes Catalans culturally and linguistically different from the rest of Spain.[56] Catalan nationalism falls back on the ethnic model out of necessity, for the civic model does little to justify the creation of a state separate from Spain. The nineteenth-century ideal of the nation relies strongly on ethnic purity.

In *Los misterios de Barcelona*, the Valdecristo family and the law firm of Fenoll Fenollosa and Fenil are obsessed with purity of blood, a frame that was once used to create the first Spanish nation-state under Fernando and Isabel. Moya's novel portrays these concerns as retrograde and reactionary; the Valdecristo's obsession with family purity is grotesquely parodied in the incest between Ismael and his mother. Moya's novel discredits the notions of family/cultural purity and thus discredits the tenets of Catalan nationalism. Alberto García-Valdecristo's aim is to purify his family of disease and vice and renew and restart the family line. The foundational myth of Catalan nationalism is the desire to recuperate what was lost, the Catalan state of the medieval period, and begin anew. As Williams notes, the family romance of the Gothic reflects the political structure, and the concern for ancestry in the family reflects the concern for cultural and political ancestry (32).

Los misterios de Barcelona ends on a normative note: Alberto commits suicide; the vampiro, Josué, is killed; and Santiago and Sonia join Fenil's firm. Virginia is no longer threatened and the nineteenth century has been banished to the past. As Santiago and Isolda visit Vicente's grave at Montjuïc cemetery, Santiago takes in the vista of the city, which no longer appears mysterious or threatening:

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[56] The *fet differential* is a "set of popular beliefs as to what constitutes the Catalan character" (Hargreaves 22). These beliefs are idealized visions of Catalan work ethic, moderation, and common sense, in contrast to Castilian indolence and self-indulgence (22-23).

> vio a lo lejos la ajedrezada alfombra de la ciudad, blanquienegrecida por las densas nubes, sombreada por las montañas que la empujaban hacia el Mediterráneo, ilusoriamente inmóvil a causa de la distancia. No parecía preñada de misterios, como el infierno o el mismo paraíso, sino absorta en la mediocre rutina de las frustraciones e impotencias del purgatorio, donde los condenados viven al borde de la angustia, pero no creen en la eternidad. (Moya 303)

The monsters of the Valdecristo family no longer haunt the city of Barcelona. The bourgeois men have defeated the decadent nobles of the past, and have regained control over the women and of Barcelona. However, the city they have won offers them no transcendence or consolation; they may have exorcised the ghost of the past, but what is left is a city in an eternal purgatory. The Barcelona of Moya's novel is not the glittering Mediterranean jewel, but a city vanquished by its past.

Resina has remarked that there have been relatively few novels written about Barcelona after the Olympics, for "since 1992 Barcelona has changed so rapidly that it will take literature some time to catch up. As Julià Guillamon explains, for a new landscape to become literature memory must be set" (Resina 9). It is perhaps fitting that a *misterio* with nineteenth-century tropes be one of the genres used to write a novel of post-1992 Barcelona as, following Resina, if the city's changes are not yet set in memory, the only recourse may be to resort to a conventional, parodic, pastiche of Barcelona, where various historical fears and memories are competing with more contemporary memories. As discussed in earlier chapters, the Gothic is always speaking in displaced terms, presenting one thing but really talking about something else. The *misterio* genre and the nineteenth century are troves of imaginaries that enable Moya to talk about contemporary

Barcelona without really talking about it, to narrate the dramatic changes of the last twenty years by clothing them in incestuous families and deformed vampires. The New Barcelona is revealed to be a postmodern wasteland, still ravaged by the ghosts of the past.

CONCLUSION

In Galdós's 1871 short story, "La novela en el tranvía," the narrator appears to be experiencing a *misterio* brought to life. While traveling on a streetcar through Madrid, the narrator encounters an acquaintance who tells him a story about a Condesa and her nefarious majordomo who is determined to bring ruin to their home. Later, the unnamed protagonist picks up a fragment of a *folletín* that has been left on the streetcar floor. The incomplete nature of the *folletín* announces its Gothic nature and the instability of its meaning. As the protagonist reads the novel's story of intrigue, he comes to believe that the novel is telling the same story that he had just heard from his acquaintance. He then conflates the *folletín* with reality and is convinced that the majordomo has poisoned the Condesa, which, of course, turns out to be pure fantasy. Galdós's story conveys the uncertainty of urban life; the realist Galdós uses the Gothic *misterio* to shed doubt on the 'rationality' of urban reality. In my dissertation I have chosen texts that attempt to reveal the mysteries or the hidden realities of the city; most of the writers attempt to make these mysteries legible using the vocabulary of Gothic conventions. In Galdós's story, his protagonist is such a good reader of *folletines* that he misreads reality. While the story can be seen as a criticism of the outrageous plots of *folletines*, it may also be seen as a portrayal of the instability of meaning in urban life. Galdós's city mystery suggests that while authors may attempt to "write" the city, in the end the city may be unreadable.

In this dissertation I have examined two nineteenth-century and two contemporary *misterios.* All of the *misterios* reflect an uncanny and sinister vision of the city in which

they are set. Following Derrida's definitions, each of the novels contains a kind of conspiracy or conjuration, used to either evoke or exorcise a specter that haunts Spain. All of the novels employ the motif of family romance to convey the hidden instability of family and society. In Villergas's *misterio*, the Carlist conspiracy attempts to bring back the ghost of the *antiguo régimen* that threatens the liberal project. When that ghost is expelled, the *moderado* liberals emerge to undo *progresista* hegemony. In Milà de Roca's novel, the conjuration of bourgeois Barcelonans expels the corrupt colonials who stir up rebellion and abuse colonial wealth. Both novels share the background of the tumultuous 1830s and 1840s, when Spain's fledgling liberal project was facing external threats from the Carlist movement and internal strife from the *moderado-progresista* conflict. As we have seen, Villergas takes up the *progresista* cause while Milà is a firm *moderado*. The differing political perspectives of the two authors show the mutability of the *misterio* genre and of the Gothic.

The return of the *misterio* genre in the late twentieth century coincides with Spain's reemergence as modern democratic state. Like their nineteenth-century counterparts, the postmodern *misterios* reflect on the consequences of democracy and liberalization. Muñoz Molina's *Los misterios de Madrid* reveals that the ghosts of Francoism are still present in the supposed democratic, "new" Spain; the unholy alliance (conjuration) of aristocracy, business, and government conspires to continue the corruption of Spain's past. Moya's *Los misterios de Barcelona* contradicts the city's urban success story by portraying Barcelona as a sinister nineteenth-century city. In presenting the corruption of the Valdecristo family, Moya dismantles the foundations of Barcelona's identity and Catalonia's nationhood. Muñoz Molina's and Moya's novels

employ pastiche and humor along with their Gothic tropes, and while this may have led some readers not to take these novels seriously, both works engage with the very serious legacies of the Civil War and the Franco dictatorship. Both Muñoz Molina and Moya portray their modern metropolises as haunted by the past.

Gothic *misterios* are part of Spain's dialogue with European letters and the emergence of the modern age. The criticism of the lack of 'originality' in Spanish *misterios* is part of the larger question of Spain's modernity. As a result of Spain's image as the un-modern other, the literature and tourism of Europe sought in Spain the authenticity and integrity they believed lost in their own countries; Spain had become a refuge from the same modernity that many Europeans were beginning to question (Dekker 16). These questions of modernity were absorbed into Spain's own national consciousness, as evidenced by figures such as the Böhl von Faber family and its interest in Spain's traditional (unchanging) folkloric culture as well as by writers such as Mariano José de Larra and Juan Goytisolo, who lament Spain's backwardness and lack of initiative towards progress. As result of the force of this rhetoric, Spain has maintained a problematic relationship to modernity, one that is charged with anxiety for those who desired it as much as for those who feared it.

Michael Iarocci proposes that we view Spain not simply as a country whose modernity is "insufficient" in comparison to other European countries, but rather as a privileged space where the narratives produced by modernity can be explored outside of the hegemonic block of England-France-Germany (xiii). Iarocci's proposal provides another avenue of inquiry that rejects the a priori assumption that Spain's literary production and material experience of modernity was (and has been) inherently inferior.

The notable anxiety towards Spain's modernity or lack thereof present in the works of Spanish writers can no longer be taken simply as a sign of Spain's inner crisis, but instead can be seen as a commentary on the crisis of modernity as a whole, a crisis that perhaps other, more powerful countries were less likely to admit. The *misterio* genre is an apt forum to examine the literary explorations of the crisis of modernity; its mutable nature enables it to adapt to different cities, ideologies, and time periods; its Gothic conventions provide it with the discourse to describe the anxieties of the modern age. The *misterios* represent Spain's engagement with Europe, modernity, and democracy, which perhaps explains why they appear in the historical moments that they do; the 1840s and the post-1992 years are both eras when Spain has been forced to examine its identity as a liberal European state.

The return of the *misterio* in the past two decades reveals the continued spectral presence of the nineteenth century in the culture and politics of contemporary Spain. Nineteenth-century letters had a history of marginalization in the twentieth century, but the twentieth- and twenty-first century *misterios* show how the literature and the ideologies of the nineteenth century still influence contemporary Spain. Like the Gothic monster, the nineteenth century returns from its repressed state to reveal the hidden secrets of the supposedly rational present.

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