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### Costumbrismo and propaganda as presented by Vicente Blasco Ibanez and Pio Baroja y Nessi

Shirley Savage Standiford  
*The University of Montana*

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COSTUMERISMO and PROPAGANDA

as presented by

VICENTE BLASCO IRANEZ

and

PIO BAROJA Y NESSI

by

Shirley Savage Standiford  
B.A., Montana State University, 1948

Presented in partial fulfillment of the  
requirement for the degree of Mas-  
ter of Arts.

Montana State University

1949

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## PART I

### INTRODUCTION

It was the purpose of this study to compare some of the novels of Vicente Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja y Nessi in order to ascertain which author gives the more comprehensive treatment of costumbrismo and propaganda. Although both men often write about the same general topics and their novels have similar settings, their methods of approach differ.

Many authors include details in their novels which have little bearing on the subject. Wanting his books to represent life as it actually exists, rather than as the planned product of an author's mind, Pío Baroja occasionally goes to this extreme. Since he waged a war against established literary traditions, it is probable that he did not use his imagination to any great extent, because he might be accused of resorting to ornamentation. Blasco Ibáñez also used much detail at times, so that the information borders on encyclopedic data, but he integrated the material with the theme of the novel.

In order to insure an understanding of the use of terms, it is necessary to define costumbrismo and propaganda as interpreted throughout this study. Costumbrismo refers to a movement in Spanish literature during the first half

of the nineteenth century, whose object was a realistic prose treatment of manners and customs. Regionalism, which is concerned with the effect of a locality upon the lives of the inhabitants, grew out of this movement. Several novels of Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja have been classified as regional novels. However, these novels have here been examined for their costumbrista elements, since a better comparison can be made on that basis.

The physical and moral factors appearing in the costumbrista novels of both authors will be analyzed in this study. With regard to the physical, the delineation, whether impressionistic or detailed, of the features of a person will be considered, along with the description of clothing representative of the region. Moral factors include the actions of the individual and the group. Certain persons in the novels may represent the general tendency of their group in their ideas of right and wrong, while others may stand aloof, exemplifying individual mores. Here the purpose is to determine if the individuals typify the social level of the region to which they belong.

Interlaced with the physical and moral characteristics are social and economic conditions. The authors may recognize the individual's attitude towards organization, but it is essential for them to include the reasons underlying his attitude. Knowledge of other factors determining his



ideas and actions, the situations prevailing in his home, his occupation, and the government, is important. The costumbrista novels of Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja will be evaluated for the treatment of these points.

The second phase of their work to be considered is propaganda, which is defined as, "the spreading of a specific idea, or that activity (including writing) which aims at spreading a particular belief".<sup>1</sup> Certain degrees of similarity exist in the methods of the two authors in inserting propaganda in their novels. Both men have dealt primarily with one or two important subjects, about which they have strong convictions, in one novel. Thus to one of the most pressing problems in Spain, the economic and political power of the Catholic Church, Blasco Ibáñez has dedicated his novel, La Catedral. Similarly, Pío Baroja discusses anarchy in his novel, Aurora Roja. With reference to their inclusion of two important topics in one novel, Blasco Ibáñez treats the land problem and the Catholic Church in La Bodega, while Pío Baroja is concerned with the corruption in politics and the Catholic Church in César o Nada. In this study the significant propaganda of each author regarding the influence of the Catholic Church, the abuse of alcohol, the land problem, and the political parties and theories in Spain, will

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph T. Shiplay, editor, Dictionary of World Literature (New York: Philosophical Library, Inc., 1943), p. 453.

be examined.

Although several authorities and critics have stated that a great difference exists between the writing of Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja and have compared them briefly, none has compared individual novels of the two authors, point by point. H. L. Mencken devotes several pages to a discussion of their literary merits in an introduction to Pío Baroja's Youth and Egotry, but indicates prejudice in calling Blasco Ibáñez, "a fellow with plain touches of the charlatan."<sup>2</sup> This study was undertaken in the belief that a detailed comparison of some of the novels of Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja, of their native regions, of Madrid, of other parts of Spain, and of foreign countries, would establish the degrees of similarity and difference in the works of the two men.

Vicente Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja y Nessi will be referred to by their professional names, Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja, respectively.

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<sup>2</sup>Pío Baroja, Youth and Egotry, translated by Jacob S. Fassett Jr. and Frances L. Phillips (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1920), p. 16.

## PART II

### COSTUMBRISMO

#### CHAPTER I

#### VALENCIA

Valencia, a city of exotic and mysterious beauty, is still under the overpowering influence of the Moors, whose political domination in Spain terminated centuries ago. The dazzling white, delicate gold, and clear blue coloring of the domes and towers of the churches and public buildings, give it the appearance of a fairy city, unreal and enchanting. The winding, narrow streets give further proof that the invisible hand of the Arab has retained its supremacy through generations of political strife and change. The hustle and bustle of a modern city have not dispelled the Moorish influence over the characteristics, appearance and customs of the people.

From the fields nearby, the lush green of the alfalfa and the rich gold of the wheat indicate the fertility of the earth. The pungent odor of orange blossoms emanates from the colorful orchards. The vivid and varied hues of tropical vegetation add to the picturesque and dreamy quality of the scene.

To the east lies the Mediterranean, changeable as a

chameleon, today a deep blue, tomorrow a pale aquamarine. Now smooth as glass, overnight it may become a raging, turbulent mass, the despair of many a sailor. Valencia, one of Spain's leading Mediterranean ports, enjoys a thriving fishing industry. Its products are sent to other parts of the world, while in return it receives goods needed for the maintenance of a large city.

The activities of a cosmopolitan city do not affect the languid peace which is characteristic of the province. The warm climate slows down the tempo of daily life to create an atmosphere of tranquility and a typical mañana land.

It does not seem probable that a man of action and of violent energy would be the product of a province naturally conducive to the opposite characteristics. However, such a man, Vicente Blasco Ibañez, was born in Valencia in 1867. During his lifetime he directed his tremendous vigor in defense of his ideals. Although he was faced with great opposition and was subject to imprisonment and even exile, he did not yield his principles, continuing the struggle until his death.

His sympathy for the common people, which is evident in his political career and literary activities, probably had its beginnings in his youth. His parents were of the middle class, but the significant fact is that they were

merchants.<sup>1</sup> Since they were not wealthy, it is likely that he worked in the store, thus coming in daily contact with customers some of which were of the lower classes. Constantly seeing their misery, he was not long in forming a sympathetic attitude and unconsciously gathered impressions for his novels.

He received his early education in Valencia and at seventeen left for Madrid to study law. The period, after his arrival in Madrid, in which he was a copyist and collaborator for Manuel Fernández y González, tended to develop his interest in a literary career. He was encouraged by his employer who felt that he showed promise.<sup>2</sup> After receiving his degree he returned to Valencia, where he founded a republican newspaper, El Pueblo.

At this time, he wrote his first novels, generally considered his best. They are the novels concerning life in Valencia, among which the most notable are La Barraca and Cañas y Barro. Although critics have classified La Barraca as his best novel, Blasco Ibáñez himself preferred Cañas y Barro.<sup>3</sup> His newspaper work kept him occupied during the day and early evening, so that these novels were written during the night. The merit of La Barraca was not recognized in

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<sup>1</sup>Eduardo Zamacois, Mis Contemporáneos, I, Vicente Blasco Ibáñez (Madrid: Sucesores de Hernando, 1910), p. 7.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., pp. 10-11.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 46-47.

Spain until a French translation by G. Herelle, who bought the novel in San Sebastian one day to pass the time until his train left, became popular.<sup>4</sup> Blasco Ibáñez had an extraordinary following among the reading public of other nations during his lifetime, especially after his novels on the first World War were published.

From Valencian regional novels he turned to novels of national and international propaganda, of psychology, of history, and of travels, as well as to translations. As he travelled over a large part of the world he gave first hand descriptions of the countries used as a background for his writing. He lived many of the events about which he wrote. For example, he participated in the smuggling expedition incorporated in Flor de Mayo, and the hunting expedition described in La Horda.<sup>5</sup> The average time for writing a novel was less than two months. Great nervous strain and tension are required to write a novel in so short a time.

His literary work did not provide enough outlets for his abundance of energy, and he turned to the political field. He was elected as a deputy to the Cortes, Spain's national assembly, for eight terms. An ardent republican, he was imprisoned over thirty times, primarily for his attacks on the monarchy.<sup>6</sup> His first arrest, for writing a

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<sup>4</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Barraca (second edition; Buenos Aires: Espasa-Calpe Argentina, 1944), pp. 7-8.

<sup>5</sup>Zamacois, op. cit., p. 15.

republican sonnet, occurred a few months after he received his degree.<sup>7</sup> He was also exiled numerous times. As early as 1890, he spent a two year exile in France.<sup>8</sup>

After Blasco Ibáñez was exiled in 1924 for his book, Alfonso XIII Unmasked, he retired to his home in Mentone, France, where he passed the remainder of his life. There, to satisfy his craving for knowledge, he spent from four to five hours a day reading. His library contained over sixty thousand volumes in many different languages.<sup>9</sup> When death overtook him in 1928, he was writing a peace novel based on the League of Nations, entitled The Fifth Horseman of the Apocalypse, which he hoped would be his best literary effort.<sup>10</sup> In his will Blasco Ibáñez stipulated that after the death of his widow, his villa at Mentone be bequeathed to the writers of all nationalities as a recreation home.<sup>11</sup>

According to his wishes the author was buried at

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<sup>7</sup> Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, Twentieth Century Authors (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1942), p. 149.

<sup>8</sup> Zamacois, loc. cit.

<sup>9</sup> Charensel, "Blasco Ibáñez on Himself," Living Age, CCCXXV (May 9, 1925), 335.

<sup>10</sup> "Obituary," Nation, CXXVI (February 8, 1928), 137.

<sup>11</sup> "Blasco Ibáñez: The Stormy Petrel of Spain," Literary Digest, XCVI (February 25, 1928), 44.

Mentone, where his grave was covered with earth brought from Valencia by his friends. He stated in his will: "If I were to go home alive I should be arrested and persecuted, and if taken there dead I should receive honors which I do not desire."<sup>12</sup> It is probable that neither King Alfonso nor Primo de Rivera would have tried to stop the return of his body to Spain, but it is certain that Blasco Ibáñez did not want to be buried in his homeland while its rulers were his bitter enemies. After the establishment of the Spanish republic in 1931, his remains were sent to Spain where they were reinterred with honors, in the presence of the new political leaders, who recognized the importance of his role in upholding the republican ideals.<sup>13</sup> The dream of Blasco Ibáñez, for which he had labored unceasingly during his life, had at last come true. Spain was a republic.

Valencia, the birthplace and final resting place of the author, is the setting for his first and best novels. He knew the region intimately through being associated with the inhabitants, first in his father's store and later in his own place of business. He was held in great esteem by the people of Valencia, about whom he wrote in novels such as La Barraca, Flor de Mayo, and Cañas y Barro.<sup>14</sup> The first

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<sup>12</sup>"Blasco Ibáñez: The Stormy Petrel of Spain," loc. cit.

<sup>13</sup>Helen S. Nicholson, The Novel of Protest and the Spanish Republic (University of Arizona Humanities Bulletin, Vol. 10, No. 3. Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona, 1939), p. 4.

<sup>14</sup>"Blasco Ibáñez Honored in His Native City " Current



deals with farming, the second with fishing, and the third with both of these occupations.

The life of the farmers of the region is pictured with the exactness of the eye of the camera. The resulting word-photographs are the product of a professional with a keen sense of perspective, proportion, focal point of interest, and color. He takes a series of pictures as he proceeds toward his subject. When placed side by side, these pictures have the effect of a moving picture. Each picture is made for its relative value to the total effect. The background adds both detail and color.

One photographer may be interested in developing a picture in which a house is portrayed at close range, while another may include details by taking the picture at a distance, so that the background assumes an important role. Blasce Ibáñez combines both of these methods. As he approaches his subject he takes pictures of the background, which he supplements with pictures of the same scene taken under different conditions, especially of time and season. He photographs the subject from several different angles so that all of the important details are included.

The photographs are colored in rich varied tones. His strokes with the brush add touches of color which give a sense of pulsating life to the scene. He freely dips into the bright hues of his paint box to make the picture one of

startling beauty. Each color is selected because it is appropriate to the object on which it is being applied. Only a master at this art can make a picture come to life.

The total effect of Blasco Ibañez' word-paintings is one of power, firm and unyielding. The author is able to put his feelings on paper so well, that they attract and ultimately conquer the senses of the person who reads his novels. His novels should be read rapidly to get the full impact and later inspected closely for details.

This feeling of actuality persists in enjoyment by the senses of hearing and smell. Each object and living being seems to move, and the songs of birds perched on the branch of a tree or the noise of water splashing against the sides of a boat are heard. The delicate fragrances and the disagreeable odors that are a part of the scene permeate the print. As each sense is put into play, the reality of the described picture increases, until it vibrates with life and energy.

The lake fishing of the Albufera and the sea fishing of the Cabañal section of the city of Valencia form the background for the novels Cañas y Barro and Flor de Mayo. With bold strokes the water, whether the lake or the sea, is drawn on the canvas. It dominates the picture, so that viewed from any vantage point the background asserts its importance. Upon closer inspection the other elements in

the painting, the stretches of sandy beach, the marshlands, the fishing boats, the huts, and the fishermen themselves are seen clearly. The details are present but they are relegated to a position of secondary importance. The purpose of the artist in painting the picture determines whether the landscape or minute details, such as the clothing of a person in the foreground, assume the most influential role. In this case the purpose is to give the impression that the background is the dominating factor.

Upon studying the picture, at times it seems to be characterized by a general softness of tone, while viewed in another light it appears to be composed of more vivid tones, which, however, are never harsh. Familiarity tends to increase the pleasure and appreciation with which it is first regarded.

An appeal is made immediately to the senses, particularly the ear. In Flor de Mayo the sound seems almost deafening as the waves thunder against the beach during a violent storm. The novel begins and ends with tragedy, with storms in which several fishing boats are lost at sea with members of the same family on board. The author builds up to the point when the waves crash against the frail boats, finally dashing them to bits. The anguished cries of the wives and children of the drowned men echo through these pages. The author has personified the sea, desirous of vent-

ing its fury on those who challenge its supremacy. The sound, intense and insistent from the beginning, takes possession of the novel. The smells of fish, dead and alive, of seaweed, and of marshlands, which are only dispelled by conscious effort, assail the nostrils.

It has been said that it is easy to tell what a person is like by the condition of his house. In describing the houses of the poorer classes of Valencia, Blasco Ibáñez concentrates on giving the information most pertinent to becoming acquainted with the inhabitants. In La Barraca a house is presented in a "before and after" manner to show the transformation that can occur through the hard work and ingenuity of the tenants. Although most of the furniture is old, and pieced together from articles discarded by more fortunate individuals, it sparkles with cleanliness. In Cañad y Barro, the author looks over a hut while the residents are asleep, and relates the outstanding characteristics. As his eyes wander over the interior he is moved by the utter poverty of the room. The makeshift furnishings, the dirt of years of careless cleaning, and the gradual blackening by soot, add to the misery of the dwelling. Even the clothes hanging from the ceiling seem to protest the hard life which the fishermen lead. In Flor de Mayo a fishing cabin is seen by one of the main characters who conveys his impressions. Since it is the first time he has

entered such a habitation, similar to the one described in Cañas y Barro, his shock on seeing it is so natural, that it is shared by the reader. The author opens the door of each house and allows the reader a visit. After the important facts are given, he seems to say that it is time to leave and pass on to other things which demand attention. He aptly transmits the feature of each house which is of most consequence, whether it be cleanliness, neatness or poverty.

A few of the people are notable for their ambition, which in each instance is directed towards achieving some form of economic security, usually for their families. There are variations where selfish and unselfish motives predominate. Neleta in Cañas y Barro is a striking example of a woman whose only thought is to keep the large inheritance left by her husband for purely personal reasons. Although she has more than enough money to provide her with a good living, she is not willing to share her wealth. She is a country woman who has risen from abject poverty through self-denial and cold calculation, and on the surface seems to be happy with her choice, enjoying pleasures which the poor cannot afford. In comparison is the unselfish attitude of the bandit, Plumitas, in Sangre y Arena, who robs the rich to give to the poor. This Robin Hood type exposes himself to danger in order to help his fellowmen. Here the author indirectly presents his point of view of poverty fighting

hopelessly against society, which will be dealt with later in his propaganda.

A characteristic of all of the ambitious individuals is their willingness to resort to any means of achieving their goal. Although this attitude does not justify their actions, it explains them. In Cañas y Barro, after the death of Neleta's husband, a will depriving her of part of his wealth if she has any amorous relations, prevents her marriage to Tonet. Neleta secretly bears a child which she and her lover plan to leave on the doorstep of a house in Valencia. Her desire to keep her money at all costs results in the death of the child and Tonet's suicide. Money becomes such an obsession with her that she does not flinch when these tragic events occur because of her avarice. She is contemptible because of the great value she places on material gain. However, her background provides the explanation for her attitude. Brought up in poverty, she realizes that without money only two roads are open to her, one leading back to her former miserable existence and the other leading to furtiveness. Before long, pity is felt for her because of her unfortunate situation. She cannot be happy without money, and her desire to keep it brings misfortune.

Pascualo in Flor de Mayo dreams of owning a fishing boat. Although by gradual saving he could achieve this

goal, the desire for an immediate realization makes him engage in a smuggling expedition. In La Barraca, the farmer, Batiste, uses devious means in order to succeed in cultivating a Valencian farm, only after he has been driven to violence by his neighbors. He is finally forced to kill one of his enemies. Plumitas, the bandit, as mentioned before, feels that he is right in robbing the rich, since it is for such a good cause. In the same novel, the bullfighter Juan Gallardo continues in his profession against the advice of his relatives and friends who favor his retirement, after a serious injury he receives in the bull ring. Although he endangers his fame and his life, he wants to keep his family and himself in the wealth to which they have become accustomed, which would not be possible if he gave up bullfighting. His actions are foolish although they are not against the law as in the examples of ambition already cited. Each ambition, in keeping with the educational level and the environment of the individual, is a natural desire of a person who wants to get ahead in life materially.

Blasco Ibañez himself was the type of man who fought for his convictions. He knew the lengths to which courage can be tested. Therefore, he presents courage as a living quality in La Barraca. Batiste is a man who strives to make an honest living, although his neighbors do all in their power to prevent him. Adversity is a stimulus to the devel-

opment of his courage, and keeps it functioning until the odds go beyond human endurance. A weaker man would have given up much sooner and gone in search of a new life. Poor, and unfortunate in previous business ventures, he finds hope in the opportunity of cultivating one of the fertile Valencian farms. In spite of the antagonism of his neighbors, he remains because he feels it is his last opportunity for creating a better life for his family.

Akin to courage is recklessness which is characterized by rash actions that needlessly endanger human life. In Flor de Mayo, Pascualo on hearing of the faithlessness of his wife and the treachery of his brother, two people whom he has loved and trusted, loses his self-control. Although a storm is imminent, he takes his fishing boat to sea. He not only loses his own life but those of the men under his trust who are obligated to obey his commands even though aware of the danger involved. Furthermore, his recklessness brings grief to the families of these men. The greatest loss is to Pascualo's own family, since three of the members fail to return. In Pascualo, normally a man of even temper, recklessness appears as a startling contrast.

At times the people of the region are shown to be tender, and again, cruel. Blasco Ibáñez convincingly interprets this dual behavior. Their tenderness, which arises from love or compassion, is sincere. The most representative



example of the former appears in Cañas y Barro after the death of Tonet. His father Toni, against the advice of the grandfather, recovers Tonet's body from the boat where it is hidden, to bury it in the rice field. He forgives Tonet for all of his actions, only wanting to hold him in his arms once more, as he did when Tonet was a child. The reader shares the anguish of Toni, who had centered all of his hopes on his only son.

It is natural for people to sympathize with the misfortunes of their friends and neighbors. This compassion becomes more pronounced when there is a death in the family, especially that of a child. In La Barraca, upon the death of Batiste's small son, the barriers of hate are lowered for a short time. The remorse of the community, because the cruelty of the other farmers' children has brought about his death, leads them to try to atone for their sins, by sharing in an effort to alleviate the grief of the bereaved family. Characteristically, sorrow is expressed by loud wailing and crying.

In the same novel, Blasco Ibañez shows cruelty as being deeply rooted. It is sustained by the hatred of a few individuals who succeed in gaining support to rid the district of Batiste's family. Even the children have this hatred instilled in them by their parents. The community believes that misfortune will fall on them if Batiste remains,

since the landowners will again assert their authority. For the ten years that the land of Barret was unoccupied the farmers held the upper hand. The landowners of the district were reluctant to demand rent from their tenants, fearing that other farms would be abandoned. The ends to which the farmers resort become more and more inhuman, until the leader, Pimento, is entangled in a web of his own making.

The temper of the people of the region becomes as heated as the temperature. Quick to anger, they soon lose control of their emotions. Barret, in La Barraca, kills his miserly landlord in a fit of rage. This characteristic also appears in a less drastic form in the attitude of the women towards each other in Flor de Mayo. The enmity existing between two fishermen's wives and the means used to expend their anger are vividly described. Rosario and her sister-in-law, Dolores, display their temper by name-calling and fights in which they inflict bodily harm on one another. The scenes they make in public places show the class to which they belong. Their anger is like a torch, which, kindled by the smallest spark, bursts into flame.

During a national emergency, a country divided by economic or political disagreements is quick to unite. Similarly a community unites when its members feel oppressed by certain groups within that society. The people of the Valencian farm district, as shown in La Barraca, are strongly

unified against new tenants, landowners and Civil Guards. When Pimentó is interrogated by the Civil Guards, his neighbors lie to uphold his story. Under these circumstances, investigations prove fruitless. Thus, the people are able to wield a certain amount of power. Their unity, established by the unwritten law of necessity, is evident at all times.

Service in the armed forces, an adventure for the youths of the Valencian region, is a means of escape from a monotonous existence. Before enlisting their minds are filled with thoughts of distant lands, while the horrors of war are ignored. It is the only way they can postpone their destiny. After a few years of service, Tonet in Cañas y Barro and Tonet in Flor de Mayo return to their homes as heroes in the eyes of the community.<sup>15</sup> Their naive friends listen to stories of exotic lands with open-mouthed admiration. In the two cases above, the young men, of a boastful and swaggering nature, take advantage of their friends' credulity and good will. Neither one is anxious to work, but spends most of his time in the local tavern.

The farmers zealously guard their most prized possessions, their family and their homes. Blasco Ibáñez shows that

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<sup>15</sup>To avoid possible confusion it should be noted that one of the male characters in each of the following novels, La Barraca, Flor de Mayo, and Cañas y Barro, has the name Tonet.

the insecurity of Batiste's economic status and his distrust of his neighbors, compels him to buy a gun, of which he is extremely proud. The interesting fact concerning this attitude is that no matter how poor a man is, he has a gun, which he keeps in perfect condition, as the following passage shows:

La huerta se había enterado de que en la antigua barraca de Barret el único objeto de valor era una escopeta de dos cañones, comprada recientemente por el intruso con esa pasión africana del valenciano, que se priva gustoso del pan por tener detrás de la puerta de su vivienda una arma nueva que excite envidias e inspire respeto.<sup>16</sup>

In general all groups with low mental faculties depend on this form of protection against being downtrodden by their fellowmen. An individual will usually think twice before he attacks a well armed man. Although the worldly goods of Batiste and his family are of no great monetary value, they are treasured by the owners. Goods secured at a sacrifice are always dear.

The attitude of the farmers towards the land they cultivate is an outstanding example of their ingenuousness. They have a sense of possession because the farm on which they live has been tilled by successive generations of their family. They even go so far as to deny the payment of rent to the landowner. Pimentó, the bully of the district, force-

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<sup>16</sup>Blasco Ibañez, La Barraca, p. 68.

fully expresses the general attitude and the disregard for the rights of the owner:

. . . ¿Por qué había de pagar él? Vamos a ver, ¿por qué? . . . Sus tierras ya las cultivaba su abuelo. A la muerte de su padre se las habían repartido los hermanos a su gusto, siguiendo la costumbre de la huerta, sin consultar para nada al propietario. Ellos eran los que las trabajaban, los que las hacían producir, los que dejaban poco a poco la vida sobre sus terrones.<sup>17</sup>

Although the farmers nourish the idea that the lands belong to them, it is nothing more than an illusion. This is made clear in the tragic events surrounding Barret's departure from the farm that is later tilled by Batiste. When Barret is no longer able to pay his rent, he does not believe that his land can be taken from him. However, his landowner institutes legal proceedings against him. He loses his personal belongings, as well as the land, to pay for the back rent he owes. The tenants speak against the landowners in defiant terms, but the latter hold the power when it is put to a test.

Blasco Ibañez has treated many phases of love in his novels. Both licit and illicit love appear, although the latter predominates. The former is presented in La Barraca, between the two young people, Roseta and Tonet. At first Tonet walks some distance behind Roseta as she returns home from the factory, and later he daringly walks beside

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid., pp. 145-146.

her. The instance is typical of first love, but it is described sympathetically and sincerely. In La Bodega, the love of María de la Luz and Rafael forms a more important part of the novel. Although their love is pure, María, under the influence of liquor, is violated by a wealthy young man. Because of this event, she feels she cannot continue seeing Rafael. Including Blasco Ibañez' novels, La Maja Desnuda and Entre Naranjos, not under consideration in this study, the only one in which the lovers are reunited in the end is La Bodega.

The illicit love affairs follow the same general pattern, in Sangre y Arena, Flor de Mayo and Cañas y Barro, as one in each couple is married. The last two novels are more similar in that the lovers were childhood sweethearts, they have a child and the ending is tragic. However, the author varies the presentation so that the affairs are never monotonous. In Sangre y Arena the man, Gallardo, is married. He falls in love with a siren type, Doña Sol, a member of the upper class. While the emotion is only temporary for her, it is permanent for him. When she tells him he no longer interests her, he cannot and does not believe her. In Cañas y Barro, the woman is married to an older man. When her lover, Tonet, returns from the service they resume the relationship they had before her marriage. They openly display their feelings towards each other which causes a good deal

of gossip in the village. Eventually Tonet is thrown out of the husband's tavern. After the death of the latter, the pair resort to furtiveness, but are caught up in their own sins when the horribly mutilated body of their child, which Tonet had drowned, is returned to him by his hunting dog. Through remorse Tonet commits suicide.

Blasco Ibáñez skillfully includes the Legend of Sancha to symbolize the love of Neleta for Tonet. Sancha, a snake, is the companion of a young shepherd boy, as Neleta was to Tonet in their youth. When the shepherd returns from military service, he calls the snake as he used to do years before. However, this time, the snake and the man are full grown. The now powerful snake wraps himself around the man's body, as was his custom, and gradually kills him. In the same way, Tonet returns from the service to find Neleta a calculating, hardened woman. Like the shepherd, Tonet makes the first advance, and Neleta responds by fastening herself on him and bringing about his death.

In Flor de Mayo, both of the lovers are married, in fact Dolores is Tonet's sister-in-law. They were lovers before Tonet's period in the navy, and on his return they resume their relationship, although Dolores is now married. Tonet marries Rosario, the belle of the community, for her modest fortune. It is common knowledge that Tonet lives at his brother's house when the latter is away. Pascualo refuses

to believe the gossip until Rosario convinces him that the child he thought was his, belongs to Dolores and Tonet, The tragic deaths of Pascualo, Tonet, and the child, result.

In all three of these novels, the author presents the feelings of a third party who is directly concerned with the lovers. Carmen, the wife of Gallardo, in Sangre y Arena, loves him even though she knows he is not true to her. Her anguish is great every time he steps into the arena for a bullfight. In Cañas y Barro, the love which Borda, Tonet's adopted sister, has for him is not revealed until the concluding paragraph when she bends over his dead body:

. . .la Borda, viendo de espaldas á su padre, inclinóse al borde de la fosa y besó la lívida cabeza con un beso ardiente, de inmensa pasión, de amor sin esperanza, osando, ante el misterio de la muerte, revelar por primera vez el secreto de su vida.<sup>18</sup>

In Flor de Mayo, the love of Pascualo for his wife, Dolores, and that of Rosario for her husband, Tonet, are woven into the story. Rosario loves Tonet although she is fully aware of his unfaithfulness. After Tonet dissipates her inheritance, she works hard to provide him with money that he spends for his own pleasure. On the other hand, Pascualo's love for Dolores diminishes upon learning of her affair with his brother. The addition of the feelings of

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<sup>18</sup>Blasco Ibañez, Cañas y Barro (Valencia: Prometeo, 1919), p. 296.



another individual, or individuals, towards the illicit relationships increases the interest in the affairs in each novel.

The blame is placed on the woman, in these novels, who makes no effort to repel her lover's advances, but rather encourages him to increased familiarity. The Legend of Sancha, mentioned before, clearly shows that the author feels the woman is more at fault than the man.

Blasco Ibáñez includes an interesting portrayal of parental love in Cañas y Barro. While a mother loves a child from the moment it is born, a father loves a child only after a period of association with it. When Neleta and Tonet plan to give away their illegitimate child, Neleta does not want to see the baby, as she would not be able to part with it. However, Tonet feels a coldness towards the baby even though he carries it in his arms. After killing it, the thought of the act, rather than of the child, weighs on his conscience. Tonet also shows the similar attitude of his grandfather, by mentioning:

. . . la cruel frialdad de su abuelo, que veía morir sus hijos pequeños, sin una lágrima, con el pensamiento egoísta de que la muerte es un bien en la familia del pobre, pues deja más pan para los que sobreviven.<sup>19</sup>

Honor is an important part of the make-up of the inhabitants of the region. After they have spent years in a

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 251

community and have become respected citizens, they want to retain the regard of their fellowmen. When Tonet, the black sheep, in Cañas y Barro, endangers the family honor, his grandfather tries unsuccessfully to reason with him. After Tonet commits suicide his grandfather thinks it is best to leave his body where the act was performed, on a little used part of the lake, as the villagers will then think that he has gone away. If his death were publicized, ". . . en vez de una Paloma desaparecido, cuya vergüenza sólo conocían ellos, tendrían una Paloma deshonorado. . ."20

Another notable characteristic of the people is their belief in destiny. In La Barraca, events build up until Batiste's house is burned by his enemies. Batiste tries to get the help of his neighbors in putting the fire out, but no door is opened to his frantic knocking. The family resigned to their fate, sit nearby watching all of their work and hopes go up in smoke. They realize it was inevitable that the hatred of the farmers should manifest itself in that way. Batiste knows that he is defeated. This pathetic situation increases the reader's sympathy for the family, although the unfolding of the plot foretells a tragic ending.

Some of the political customs, handed down for centuries, are as rigidly observed as when they were first insti-

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 292.

tuted. The Moorish influence is very strong in the Tribunal of Waters, described in La Barraca. The court procedure, in regulating the farmer's water rights, is seen in operation. In all fairness the bad points, as well as the good, are included. This impartial presentation shows the dual nature of the institution. Since both the defendant and the accuser are permitted to plead their cases, it is democratic. It is authoritarian in that the judges refuse to hear appeals after a decision is reached. The justice of the judgement of the court is questionable. The untruthful testimony of the accuser, Pimentó, is accepted as valid primarily because the defendant, Batiste, angry over the accusations directed at him, speaks out of turn several times.

One of the fishing customs most representative of the region is observed by the lake fishermen in Cañas y Barrro. During the ceremony of drawing lots for fishing positions on the lake, the fishermen's distrust for higher authority is disclosed. Their suspicions lead to careful checking on the actions of governmental representatives, who appear once a year to conduct the drawing, to prevent being cheated. They believe that an educated person will use his advantage to "pull the wool over their eyes". When each man is given a slip of paper with his name on it, he asks those of his friends who can read to see if the name is correct. Distrusting even his friends, he is reluctant

to accept the verification of just one man. He guarantees impartiality by secretly and very carefully placing his name in a capsule along with a small personal token. Thus he will know if another person's name is called when his capsule is opened.

An ancient custom of the sea fishermen, in Flor de Mayo, is the use of oxen to launch a fleet of ships. As the boats are beached rather than docked, this means of launching them is employed. Clinging to such a custom prevents progress, although the time of the novel is the end of the nineteenth century. The ox has served them well for centuries and they see no reason for replacing it. The fishermen of Valencia, adhering to the general trend in Spain, are opposed to change.

In La Barraca the allotment of irrigation water to the farmers is described. The reader shares the heartbreak of Batiste, who sees his lands dry up, because he has been deprived of water by the Tribunal of Waters. The water becomes almost a deity to the farmers, holding their salvation or destruction in its power.

Family relationships in Valencia, as seen by Blasco Ibañez, are varied. In the farming communities the family is a closely knit unit, while in the fishing districts that situation is modified by the attitude of the children. In La Barraca, teamwork is the keynote of Batiste's family.

The strength of family ties is shown by the specific job each member has in the operation of the farm. However, in Cañas y Barro, the Paloma family relationship is extremely strained. Toni, Tonet's father, prefers rice farming to fishing, the occupation of his father and of the family for generations. Tonet neither farms nor fishes, except for brief intervals. The three male members of the family are constantly at odds.

The amusements of a people burdened by severe work are fundamentally boisterous. Both young and old participate. At the departure of the fishing fleets in Flor de Mayo, the entire community joins in giving a rousing send-off. Each person vies with his neighbor in hurling phrases back and forth. The more caustic the remarks, the better the crowd appreciates them.

In each region of Spain the clothing of the inhabitants differs. Blasco Ibañez describes the wearing apparel of the people as they go about their daily activities. In La Barraca, he shows the pride of Roseta in her multi-colored skirts as she dresses, and the swagger of the men, attired in their best corduroy trousers with a black sash around their waists, celebrating a holiday in the local tavern. In Sangre y Arena, each article of a bullfighter's costume is described, with emphasis on color and the richness of the materials, as Gallardo carefully dresses for his appearance in the arena.

The raggedness and filth of the laborers' clothes in La Bodega, is described as they work in the fields.

In Spain an important attribute of religion is the pageantry it offers. The people greatly enjoy processions held on feast days in which they can participate, and anticipate them eagerly. In all the novels under consideration in this chapter, Blasco Ibáñez describes a religious procession in which one of the main characters assumes a leading role. They are: the funeral in La Barraca, the Christmas celebration in Cañas y Barro, the blessing of diseased vines in La Bodega, and the Easter processions in Flor de Mayo and Sangre y Arena. Regarding the processions as a form of amusement or an instrument for showing their prestige, many miss the religious significance. In Sangre y Arena, during Easter week, Gallardo marches with the people of his section of town rather than with a wealthier group, because he feels he is losing touch with the common people at the bullfights. His family take great pride in their jewels which adorn the Virgin and bring exclamations from the bystanders. Some of the participants are in a drunken stupor by morning. The blessing of diseased vines in La Bodega raises much unfavorable comment by the laborers, who are forced to remain on the estate for the ceremony. They are angry because the time they spend with their families in Jerez over the week end is shortened. They make fun of the ceremony and mock the priest

in answering his responses. In Flor de Mayo, Tonet and Pascualo are very concerned over the appearance they will present in the procession. The bystanders comment on the individuals, praising them to their families. In Cañas y Barro, the fishermen praise the vain Tonet for the religious ceremony he has planned as the winner of the year's best fishing position on the lake. They are overawed by the music of the band he has hired and the eloquence of the sermon of the priest imported for the occasion. Neleta sums up the general attitude in her statement, "Aquello. . . valía más que una función de teatro, y servía para el alma."<sup>21</sup>

Blasco Ibáñez' treatment of the belief in miracles is unsympathetic. He regards it as a superstition of ignorant people. The villagers of Palmar in Cañas y Barro have faith in the powers of the Child Jesus who helps to fill the nets of the fishermen. The author remarks that they believe in this miracle, ". . . con otros milagros no menos asombrosos que relataban las mujeres del Palmar."<sup>22</sup> This particular point of view is connected with his general ideas on religion which will be discussed in the section on propaganda.

Visions are real and tangible to Sangonera, the village drunk in Cañas y Barro, but to Tonet they are a figment of Sangonera's imagination. Sangonera believes implicitly that

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 175.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 109.

he sees Jesus in the vision, although Tonet assures him that the figure is that of a man of similar appearance, who has passed by where Sangonera was sleeping. The reader still doubts the reality of the vision.

In general the people are very superstitious, fully believing in the power of curses and omens. A common superstition is that of the evil eye. All sorts of misfortunes are attributed to this curse. In La Barraca, Batiste thinks his horse is killed by the evil eye of his enemies. Gallardo in Sangre y Arena draws away from an old woman he meets on the street, fearing her evil eye. Blasco Ibañez gives credence to the prophetic power of certain individuals. A gypsy curse, placed on Rafael in La Bodega, hoping that his sweetheart will be violated by his master, comes true. These curses and omens foretell events of the story, while showing the superstitious nature of the people.

In his costumbrista novels of the Valencian region, Blasco Ibañez has the principal characters participate in the customs he portrays. Often these customs have an important economic effect on the lives of the individuals, as with Batiste and the Tribunal of Waters and with Tonet and the drawing of lots for the yearly fishing positions on the lake. He recognizes the influence of the Catholic Church in Spain, and in each of his novels he delineates a religious ceremony. His manner of describing these customs gives them universal appeal.



## CHAPTER II

### BASQUE COUNTRY

The rugged mountainous Basque Country of northern Spain is a region of hardy individuals. The countryside offers an ever changing scene in the three provinces, Alava, Guipúzcoa and Biscay, from lush, green forests to strips of barren land. Rough pasture land is the background for cattle grazing in peaceful enjoyment, while the vineyards and apple orchards add bright splashes of color.

In the center of the province of Alava is the large fertile plain of Vitoria, but in the provinces of Guipúzcoa and Biscay the poverty of the claylike soil makes cultivation difficult. Alava is the most progressive farming region, using modern agricultural methods and inventions, such as artificial fertilization and ploughs.<sup>1</sup>

The deeply indented coastline is the point of departure for the many fishermen whose livelihood depends on the Atlantic. Although approaches to the ports are often dangerous, the Basques have developed a thriving fishing industry. Mining is also an important business. The excavations of the iron mines have changed nature's handiwork by creating reddish hills where level plains existed. The Basques have shown that they are an active, aggressive people in estab-

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<sup>1</sup>"Alava," Encyclopaedia Britannica, 15th edition, I, 507.

lishing the region as an important agricultural and industrial center.

Among these men of action there are some individuals who retreat from the world, and concentrate their energy in the field of writing. Pío Baroja y Nessi, who belongs in this category, was born in 1872 in the Basque city of San Sebastian, a favorite tourist resort. Although his early life was spent in many different parts of Spain, his roots were firmly established in the Basque country.

From his father, a mining engineer and a teacher, who wrote several books in both Basque and Castilian,<sup>2</sup> Pío Baroja may have inherited his first interest in writing. It is evident from the author's autobiographical work that his brother, Ricardo, influenced him in his choice of books, which were stories of adventure that all young boys enjoy. He has called himself both a rowdy and a dreamer as a youth.<sup>3</sup> His fondness for imaginative and adventurous episodes carries over to his early novels.

The family moved frequently, living in the Basque, Castilian, and Valencian provinces. The first schools he attended were in San Sebastian and Pamplona. Later he studied

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<sup>2</sup>Pío Baroja, Youth and Egotism, translated by Jacob S. Fassett Jr. and Frances L. Phillips (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1920), p. 143.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., pp. 152-53.

medicine in Madrid. He was a poor student, or else he was not interested in his courses, as he failed his examinations three times during his fourth year of medicine.<sup>4</sup> He states that the completion of his course was due to determination on his part. He probably realized that his previous years of study would not avail him in securing a post as a doctor, if he did not receive his degree. As he was not yet contemplating a literary career, it was important for him to finish his course.

He practiced medicine for only a short time, but his medical career provided him with material which he used in several novels. Aracil, in La Dama Errante, is a doctor and Andres Hurtado, in El Arbol de la Ciencia, is a medical student.

For six years Pío Baroja and his brother managed a bakery in Madrid.<sup>5</sup> After this venture he began contributing articles to leading periodicals, and was a stockholder and editor for the Revista Nueva. A year later, in 1900, he published his first work, Vidas Sombrias, a collection of short stories, closely followed by his first novel, La Casa de Aizgorri.<sup>6</sup> The setting of these works is the Basque

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<sup>4</sup>Ibid., p. 166.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 172-74.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., pp. 191-92.

country. Later he wrote novels of other regions of Spain, and of foreign countries. He visited France frequently. He has written on a variety of subjects, as the titles of his trilogies indicate. He enjoys popularity in Spain, but has never had a large following among the reading public of other parts of the world.

Until the outbreak of the Civil War in 1937, he lived a rather quiet life in Vera del Bidasoa in the Basque country. He entered into politics for a short time, as a member of the republican party. An unfortunate incident occurred during the Civil War. He was arrested and imprisoned by the Falangist troops when he went to see them enter Pamplona. He was later freed and escaped to France.<sup>7</sup> The irony of such a situation is apparent, since Pío Baroja favored a dictatorship. In 1937, he wrote:

In spite of everything, I believe that today a White dictatorship is preferable in Spain. A dictatorship of White Republicans one supposes it will be. With more or less severity in it, but with some sense too. A Red dictatorship is the same everywhere--a Government which makes many mistakes, whose intentions are obscure and confused.<sup>8</sup>

It was not generally known where he was living until 1940 when he wrote a sketch from Paris to the biographical work, Twentieth Century Authors. Since the Nazi conquest

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<sup>7</sup> Stanley J. Kunitz and Howard Haycraft, Twentieth Century Authors (New York: The H. W. Wilson Company, 1942), p. 76.

<sup>8</sup> Pío Baroja, "Mistakes of the Spanish Republic," Living Age, CCCLI (January, 1937), 426-27. Reprinted from La Nación, Buenos Aires.

there has been no word regarding his whereabouts.<sup>9</sup> Whether he is alive today is a matter of conjecture. At any rate it is probable that his literary production, published to date, can be evaluated as representing his total efforts in the field, for even if he adds to this imposing collection, it is not likely that the estimate of his writing will change.

It is fitting that Pío Baroja's early novels are concerned with the Basque country for which he always felt a strong attachment. Among these works are: La Casa de Aizgorri, Zalacain el Aventurero, and Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andia.

He depicts the farming of the region, in Zalacain el Aventurero, as in a pen and ink sketching. The outline of the farms is there, but the individual characteristics are difficult to distinguish. They merge into one another. No matter how long the drawing is studied the first impression remains.

The background is not important in his novels. His primary consideration is for the figure in the foreground, who is delineated in more detail. As long as the student keeps his attention on this individual, he may be satisfied. If he begins to look farther, for color, he will be disappointed. Neither will his senses be intrigued by the handiwork before him.

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<sup>9</sup>Kunitz and Haycraft, loc. cit.

In Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, the life of the Basque seamen forms a major part of the novel. This time the author has assumed the role of a photographer. His pictures have the stamp of the tourist who passes by snapping a photograph here and there, with no definite pattern in mind. Often there will be a very interesting picture among several which have little relation to each other. He finds so many fascinating scenes, that he includes them all.

In La Casa de Aizgorri, Pío Baroja deals with distilling, but very little information is included about the occupation. The Intruder, Blasco Ibáñez' novel of the Basque country, gives a thorough account of iron mining in the region. In the latter novel are descriptions of the history of the development of mining in the region, of the processes by which ore is extracted and transported to Bilbao from the neighboring villages to be refined and later exported to foreign countries, of the appearance of the countryside because of excavations and blasting, of the life of the mine owners, and of the living and working conditions of the miners. He has covered every important phase of the mining industry with beautiful descriptions. Through the impressions of the main character, Dr. Aresti, all of these facts are given. Although the novel is primarily concerned with the power of the Jesuits, Blasco Ibáñez realized the need for providing the background for the attitudes and actions

of the inhabitants of the region.

In La Casa de Aizgorri, the distillery and its influence are essential to the development of the plot. Nevertheless, the descriptions of the industry are very limited except for an emphasis on its ruined condition. The novel is written in dialogue form and divided into acts. Much detailed information is given about the house of the owners in the introductions to several of the acts. The insertion of this material to the exclusion of details about the distillery leaves the reader with only a general idea of the situation. Thus, while Blasco Ibáñez considers an occupation from every angle, Pio Baroja gives only a limited treatment.

Two other novels provide a basis for comparison of the descriptions of the distilling industry. However, it should be noted that in Blasco Ibáñez' La Bodega, the industry forms an important part of the novel. The setting is Jerez, a center of wine production in Spain. The story revolves around the owners and workers of the region. In Pio Baroja's El Arbol de la Ciencia, a distillery is mentioned only in passing. Andrés Hurtado, as a village doctor, visits a much smaller wine press than the one in Jerez.

Blasco Ibáñez describes the vineyards, the process of blending wine, the sheds which house the wine, the owners and the laborers, the office workers, the firm's renown and its volume of exportation. One of the office workers walks

through the sheds, conveying his impressions about the distillery, and receiving those of other employees as he stops to talk to them. A tour that is conducted for two visitors provides the opportunity for telling how conditions used to be in better days. The reader gleans all of the details of consequence through these conversations. Blasco Ibáñez' descriptions of the wine, which the tourists sample, make an appeal to the senses in the following passage:

Todas las tonalidades del ámbar, desde el gris suave al amarillo pálido, brillaban en estos líquidos, densos á la vista, como el aceite, pero de una transparencia nítida. Un lejano perfume exótico, que hacía pensar en flores fantásticas de un mundo sobrenatural, emenaba de los líquidos extraídos del misterio de los toneles.<sup>10</sup>

Andrés Hurtado in El Arbol de la Ciencia describes a distillery operated entirely by the members of one family. He gives a brief outline of the procedure, but his treatment is not sympathetic. This attitude is due to his distaste for that type of work, as indicated by the statement, "Las decantadas labores rurales, motivo de inspiración para los poetas, le parecían estúpidas y bestiales."<sup>11</sup>

In describing the Basque dwellings, Pío Baroja goes to extremes. In La Casa de Aizgorri, much minute detail is included, while in Zalacáin el Aventurero, very few facts

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<sup>10</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Bodega (Valencia: Prometeo, 1919), p. 30.

<sup>11</sup>Pío Baroja, El Arbol de la Ciencia (fourth edition; Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1929), p. 237.



about the houses are mentioned. However, in Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía he uses more pertinent detail. In this novel the home of a rich boat owner is seen through the eyes of the boy, Shanti. He is impressed by its lavish decorations, the marble floors, the large mirrors, the statues and fountains, and the paintings on the ceilings. These descriptions are concluded by Shanti's remark, "Yo entonces aun no había visto nada, no podía comprender la diferencia que existe entre la ostentación lujosa y el buen gusto, y quedé maravillado."<sup>12</sup> Shanti also describes the Basque fishing village of Lúzaro, as it appears to him then, and later its appeal when he returns from many sea voyages, a mature individual. This is the only novel of the three in which the delineation of the dwellings is well handled.

Blasco Ibáñez cleverly describes the houses of the wealthy foremen in The Intruder. At a dinner party, Dr. Aresti tells the mine owners about these houses. They are amused by the story of such a flagrant display of wealth. The foremen buy furniture and household articles, which the shopkeepers are glad to dispose of, to impress their neighbors. On one occasion the doctor notices the pride of the family, in the large number of bars of soap in all shapes and colors, in a house he visits. The wretched, decayed homes of the

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<sup>12</sup>Pío Baroja, Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, edited by Laurence D. Bailiff and Maro Beath Jones, (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1930), p. 37.

mine workers are described as Dr. Aresti walks through the steep and narrow streets of the suburb of Gallarta, and in Labraga, where the houses are in a worse condition, he enters one. He mentions the factors which mark a poverty stricken dwelling. The interior is smoky and foul-smelling, with wooden partitions covered in dirt and grime. Eight men sleep in a bed composed of planks and benches, on which is a mattress of several leaf-filled sacks. No air penetrates the novel, except through the cracks in the walls and the upper half of the divided door. Since Aresti is a doctor, the unsanitary conditions are more noticeable to him.

An outstanding characteristic of the Basques is ambition. Zalacaín, in Pío Baroja's Zalacaín el Aventurero, is an example of a man of low birth who succeeds in raising himself. Shown first as a child and later as a man eagerly pursuing his goal, he manages to surmount all obstacles. The reader loses interest in him because he is a puppet that the author manipulates at will, placing him in almost impossible situations from which he always escapes. When Zalacaín's death seems imminent, after his wife and friends warn him against the dangerous mission of guiding the Carlist troops through a mountain pass, he miraculously survives. His death comes as an anti-climax. The author prolongs this event so that Zalacaín may die, as an ancestor of his, through the treachery of an enemy. This episode is inconsistent with

Pío Baroja's desire to have his books represent life as it actually exists.

Blasco Ibañez has depicted a similar character in Sánchez Morueta of The Intruder. Here a man, burning with ambition, raises himself from the working class to a position of power and influence. First he is shown at the height of his power as the owner of the iron mines of Bilbao, then his past is told in a flashback. Later his gradual disintegration into a person dominated by his family and the Jesuits is related. The contrast is most effective since he was a man of exceptionally strong and dominating will to begin with.

The similarity between Zalacaín and Morueta exists in their belief that, "The end justifies the means." Both are clever and unscrupulous. Zalacaín engages in a smuggling expedition at the beginning of his career upon the advice of his relative, Tellagorri: ". . .Vete a la guerra, pero no vayas de soldado. Ni con los blancos, ni con los negros. ¡Al comercio, Martín! Al comercio! Venderás a los liberales y a los carlistas. . ."13

Rather than help his country in time of need, Zalacaín places his personal profit first. He feels that money will help him achieve the position of prominence he desires. Patriotism is brushed aside. Morueta is not a model of virtue

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<sup>13</sup>Pío Baroja, Zalacaín el Aventurero (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1919), p. 69.

either. He retains his power by subjugating the workers and keeping them in ignorance and poverty. Their demands are never considered. Both men have selfish ambitions, but Morueta's are more startling because he holds the fate of many workers in his hands.

Blasco Ibañez pictures courage in a man beset by overwhelming odds. Dr. Aresti stands against the Jesuits of Bilbao, who are a very influential group. He believes in the working man for whom he fights, even against his cousin, the mine owner, Morueta. He is not daunted even when his wife and her family oppose him. His ideals are placed before his allegiance to home and family. Throughout the book he is consistent in this attitude. Dr. Aresti is the author's mouthpiece.

Pío Baroja shows Zalacaín as a reckless, rather than a courageous man. Although he is often advised against certain actions, he throws himself in the midst of danger. Glory and wealth do not satisfy him. After his marriage, his wife wants him to settle down. Although Zalacaín denies that he is exposing himself to danger, the author adds: "Pero no era verdad, tenía ambición, amor al peligro y una confianza ciega en su estrella. La vida sedentaria le irritaba."<sup>14</sup>

In Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, Pío Baroja brings

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 247.

out the stubbornness of the Basques. This characteristic is very briefly mentioned in connection with an event which illustrates it. On the day of a severe storm, Shanti and a group of men go to sea to save the men on several fishing boats who are unable to make port. When all appear headed for disaster, a man named Machin arrives in his schooner and saves the fishermen. That evening when Shanti talks to the fishermen, they are reluctant to believe that Machin had good intentions in saving them. This provokes the following comment from Shanti: "No era posible convencerles de otra cosa y los dejé. A un marinero, y a un marinero vascongado, no se convence nunca de nada."<sup>15</sup> This is one example where Pío Baroja has limited himself to including just the pertinent detail. The incident which shows the stubbornness of the race is well integrated with the story.

In The Intruder, Blasco Ibáñez cites primitive emotions as characteristic of the Basques. As is done with stubbornness, in Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, the main character gives an illustration. The crowd of mine workers was thrilled by the trials of oxen, when the animals' skulls almost split in their effort to drag immense stones a few feet. As in the quoted example of stubbornness, the scene is described first

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<sup>15</sup>Pío Baroja, Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, p. 115.

and then the author states:

It was the pastime of a primitive race, of a people in its infancy who had not as yet entered the world of thought and who looked on physical strength as one of the most splendid attributes of man.<sup>16</sup>

Blasco Ibañez' representation is superior, as he shows a characteristic of the Basques, primitiveness, through the description of a custom.

One of Pío Baroja's examples of individualism is Tellagorri, in Zalacain el Aventurero. He is an important character in the beginning of the book during Zalacain's childhood, but dies after Zalacain is grown. As an unusual and eccentric person, Tellagorri is both interesting and amusing. He is extremely self-sufficient, making his clothes and shoes, and cutting his own hair. Although he is as unscrupulous as is his philosophy, "Cada cual que conserve lo que tenga y que robe lo que pueda,"<sup>17</sup> he is sympathetically portrayed. The author describes him after his death as an ". . . hombre de mala fama y de buena corazón."<sup>18</sup> He serves his purpose as Zalacain's teacher and companion until Zalacain is old enough to take care of himself. The author emphasizes his individualism.

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<sup>16</sup>Blasco Ibañez, The Intruder, translated by Mrs. W. A. Gillespie (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1928), p. 267.

<sup>17</sup>Pío Baroja, Zalacain el Aventurero, p. 28.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 70.

Tellagorri era un individualista convencido, tenía el individualismo del vasco reforzado y calafateado por el individualismo de los Tellagorris.<sup>19</sup>

That the Basques are a people who cling to tradition is shown in their attitude towards war in the same novel: "Los vascos siguiendo las tendencias de su raza marchaban a defender lo viejo contra lo nuevo."<sup>20</sup> Although this statement is made, the author is more concerned with showing the actions of an individual, Zalacáin, than those of the Basque race during the last Carlist War. He presents a significant idea, and then leaves it in mid air, without giving the background for this attitude towards war. The reader is interested in knowing why the Basques react in this way.

In these books both authors show different attitudes towards money, from the standpoint of the lower classes. Zalacáin forgets duty and honor in his desire for personal gain. This was mentioned before, in connection with his lack of patriotism in smuggling during the war. The author does not censure Zalacáin for his selfish actions. There were other honorable, if not as profitable, ways open to him in which he could have achieved one of his ambitions, glory. Namely, service in the army to defend his region and his people.

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<sup>19</sup>Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 100.

Blasco Ibáñez's characters of the poorer classes make great sacrifices to secure a little money to keep themselves and their families alive. In The Intruder, he shows the miserable conditions under which they are forced to live while working in the mines for a few months. During the winters many farmers go to work in Bilbao, where their living quarters have already been described. Furthermore there are occupational hazards. Often men are killed by a cave-in or by an accident with the machinery. They expose themselves to danger to earn money through necessity, not because of the lust for adventure as with Zalacaín. They have no thought of personal glory or advancement, rather they want merely to live. Blasco Ibáñez gives the reader an understanding of the background of the workers that explains their attitude towards money, and he succeeds in arousing sympathy for them. Similarly Pío Baroja has shown that Zalacaín's early training by Tellagorri taught him to let nothing stand in his way of reaching his goals, glory and wealth. The reasons for the two opposing attitudes towards money, of the mine workers in The Intruder and of Zalacaín in Zalacaín el Aventurero, are equally well presented by the two authors.

Blasco Ibáñez portrays licit and illicit love in his Valencian novels. Pío Baroja deals only with licit love in his Basque novels. As with Blasco Ibáñez' love situations, he presents obstacles to the fulfillment of love. In Zala-



cain el Aventurero, the obstacle to overcome is low birth, in Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, it is a jealous rival, and in La Casa de Aizgorri, it is the fear of insanity. In the first, the love theme frays out after Zalacain marries his sweetheart. In the following he indicates his attitude towards love: "Que uno quería vivir, el obstáculo; que uno quería a una mujer y la mujer le quería a uno, el obstáculo también."<sup>21</sup> In Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, the author uses an obvious device in getting rid of the jealous rival. After Shanti is almost killed by the man, Machin, it is revealed that the latter is the half brother of the girl they are both courting. Machin conveniently leaves the village, never to return again. This is done to open the way for the lovers, and thus dispatch the affair so that the author can begin the most exciting part of the novel. Machin includes a manuscript with the story of his father's life along with a letter revealing his relationship to the girl.

The third instance of love is much more skillfully presented. In La Casa de Aizgorri the love theme is carried through until the end, while other problems are not resolved. The love between Agueda and Mariano is pure, but hindered by the girl's fear of hereditary insanity. Her suffering is real, as is the final powerful conquest of her hallucinations.

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<sup>21</sup>Ibid., p. 262.

Her situation is portrayed with understanding and sincerity. The course of their love is beautifully built up to the end when Agueda finally accepts her lover, a member of the working class, and hope is expressed that they will have a peaceful life together.

Pío Baroja gives a happy ending to the love situations in all three cases, while in Blasco Ibáñez' Valencian novels none of the endings is happy for the lovers. All of Blasco Ibáñez' love affairs are convincing, especially in the gradual development of love into an uncontrollable passion. Of Pío Baroja's examples, the love between Agueda and Mariano is the only one which is clearly delineated.

Begging, in La Casa de Aizgorri, is an economic custom. Since the novel is in dialogue form, the information about the beggars is given through their actions and conversations as they appear at the Aizgorri house, the setting for the story. Before the beggars enter the author devotes several sentences to a description of their clothing. Also Agueda and the old servant, Melchora, make some remarks about them. The idea of hereditary insanity is introduced when Agueda mentions that one, a crazy woman, is distantly related to her. The attitude of the people toward beggars from other regions is shown in Melchora's reluctance to give alms to a Castilian beggar. The author indirectly attacks society for allowing conditions to exist that make such an "occupation" necessary. The beggars

appear at the beginning of the story and keep the action going until the plot unfolds. They are merely a device, since they do not play an important role in the story. Opposed to this is Blasco Ibanez' description of beggars on the door step of the Cathedral of Toledo, in La Catedral. Here they form a contrast to the great wealth accumulated in the Cathedral. This example will be treated in more detail in the section on propaganda against the Catholic Church.

In Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andia, a fishing custom is described, which concerns the method of deciding whether the fishing fleets will go to sea on days of a possible storm. Although the description is short, it is concise and informative. On the day of a storm, an old man tells Shanti about the custom, to explain why several fishing boats are at sea. The account is well integrated with the rest of the material, since it introduces part of the action of the story.

Blasco Ibanez in a similar instance in Flor de Mayo, is also concerned with the fate of several fishing boats trapped in a storm. It is not shown whether the custom of Basque fishermen was practiced in Valencia. Nevertheless, a sufficient background is given for the events which follow, by having the fishermen debate about going to sea. In Pio Baroja's novel, the main character participates in rescue operations, but the reader is not as concerned over the men

who are being saved, since they are unknown to him. In Flor de Mayo, the action is more dramatic primarily because the fishermen whose lives are in danger are the most important characters.

Family opposition to the daughter's marriage to a man of low birth is shown in Zalacáin el Aventurero. The author builds up the hatred of the brother, Carlos, for Zalacáin through jealousy of the latter's good luck in everything he undertakes. Carlos takes drastic measures to break up the romance, by attempting to kill Zalacáin. Although he fails this time, and Zalacáin and Catalina marry, he finally engineers Zalacáin's death. The author goes into quite a bit of detail in describing the family's interference, but he does not portray the relationship between the members of the family very clearly, as Elasco Ibáñez does with the Batiste and Paloma families. Catalina's mother appears only as a faint shadow throughout the book.

An amusement of the Basque region, pelota, is mentioned in this novel. Both Zalacáin and Carlos figure in the game, Zalacáin as a player and Carlos as the backer of Zalacáin's opponents. It is an occasion for showing Zalacáin's prowess, since he emerges victorious. Also the hatred of Carlos for Zalacáin, "Se manifestó primeramente en el juego de pelota."<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

A person who did not have a knowledge of the game would not fully appreciate these events, since the author does not describe the fine points of the game. Zalacaín's cool, level-headedness would have been more impressive, if the author had emphasized the speed of the game and the difficulty of mastering it. This example indicates a basic difference in the approach of both authors. Blasco Ibañez always described the amusements included in his novels, as shown in the examples which follow. He realized that people of other regions and other countries who had never seen these customs, need an explanation of them. Blasco Ibañez' writing is more universal in this respect.

Although The Intruder does not entirely fall into the costumbrista category, Blasco Ibañez gives vivid illustrations of local color in describing the amusements of the miners. Dr. Aresti, in attending one of the Biscayan festivals, depicts the customs characteristic of the region, the eating contests between men and greyhounds, the blasting contests, the trials of oxen, the song contests between wandering troubadours, the wood-chopping contests, and the dance which follows these events. The presentation of the attitude of the people towards these amusements, adds interest, as well as showing the nature of the Basque race. In the eating contests, the pride of the miners causes them to win over the greyhounds. The animals stop eating when they

are full, but the men keep on until they burst, to prove that they are superior. The blasting contests show the effect of over-civilizing one of the contestants, the advantage of slow determination over rapid bursts of energy which soon fray out, and the bad sportsmanship of the miners who backed the defeated man, as opposed to the generosity of the winners. The songs of the troubadors indicate the delight the people take in satirical and gross verses. The author describes the great Biscayan dance, the surresku, which is held in the evening. A democratic attitude is shown in their disregard for class distinction, as members of the nobility dance with peasants.

Pío Baroja does not describe the unusual clothing of the Basques except in the beginning of La Casa de Aizgorri, in the portion which is in the form of stage directions. Since only brief details are mentioned, the picture of Agueda in these clothes is indistinct. They seem to be on a mannequin rather than on a real person. In Zalacáin el Aventurero, he only mentions that they wear berets. Blasco Ibáñez, in the Valencian region, describes the multi-colored skirts of the women and the corduroy trousers of the men.

In La Casa de Aizgorri, superstitions are mentioned through the servant, Melchora. As in Blasco Ibáñez's La Barraca, the misfortunes of the Aizgorri family are blamed on the evil eye. The omens she tells about, the barking of dogs

near the door, and the lights on the mountains which are supposedly human spirits, are forebodings of death. Since Agueda's father is very ill, they are introduced at a psychological moment. The naive people firmly believe in them.

Although the Basque country is Pío Baroja's native region, he has not treated as many of the costumbrista elements there, nor has he treated them as well as the Valencian, Elasco Ibañez. The latter provides interesting descriptions of occupations, dwellings, characteristics, attitudes, and especially customs.

### CHAPTER III

#### MADRID

Years of living and working in Madrid afforded both authors an opportunity to indulge an inclination for depicting problems and conditions of the lower classes in the slum districts. La Horda by Blasco Ibañez, and the trilogy, "La Lucha por la Vida," including La Busca, Mala Hierba, and Aurora Roja by Pío Baroja, present sources for investigating their separate treatments.

Described are the occupations of rag dealers, tradesmen, and journalists. Blasco Ibañez introduces the rag dealers, entering the city at dawn, in the opening pages, and then singles out Zaratustra and Eusebia, whose stories are continued. In Pío Baroja's La Busca, following the picaresque tradition, Custodio, the rag dealer, is one of the protagonist's series of masters. The description of Custodio is detailed but he is not shown to be representative of a type common to that stratum of society. This lack of causal connection, noticed in Pío Baroja's novel, tends to decrease the effectiveness of the representation. In La Horda, rag-dealing is suggestive of the way the lower classes live, subsisting on the residue of the civilized section of the city: "Pasaban y pasaban jinetes y carros, como una horda prehistórica que huyese llevando á la espalda el hambre, y delante,



como guía, el anhelo de vivir. . . ."<sup>1</sup>

The work of the tradesmen, especially that of shoemakers and bakers, to which Manuel, the protagonist, is apprenticed, is minutely described by Pío Baroja. Although the hardships of each occupation are emphasized, many insignificant facts, such as the appearance of each room in a bakery, are included. Blasco Ibañez has the power to provoke thought, in his presentation of masonry in Madrid, which is one of the essentials of a good novel. A bricklayer speaks about the hazards of his work in referring to a government building under construction:

. . . Los que conocemos el oficio temblamos de miedo al ver cómo nos obligan á construir. Sólo llevamos hecho un piso, y estamos seguros de que el día que lo cargen se vendrá abajo, aplastando á todo Cristo. . . . El cemento es polvo de la carretera, las paredes son tabiques, las pilas-tras están huecas. . . .<sup>2</sup>

A comparison of the two authors' accounts of the journalistic profession, indicates Pío Baroja's fondness for irrelevant detail. In Mala Hierba, Manuel works in a printing office, where the author describes the journalists who work there. Listing many names of newspapers and citing the views they express, confuses rather than enlightens the reader. The latter feels that he is on a train watching

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<sup>1</sup>Blasco Ibañez, La Horda (Valencia: Prometeo, [n.d.]), p. 15.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 227.

people flash by. Only once in a great while, when the train slows down, can he distinguish or recognize someone. Blasco Ibáñez divulges more about the occupation than details of the offices and newspapers of the city can, in showing that the qualities the protagonist, Maltrana, lacks, are necessary to a successful journalist in Madrid. He has one requirement, a store of knowledge, but it goes to waste in view of his inability to write in accordance with the policies of the newspaper and on the level of the average reader. Perseverance is not in his make-up, except for one instance when he writes a book for another man. The author also shows the erroneous judgement of Maltrana's fellow workers and his superiors, in regarding him as a man of extraordinary talent because of his education.

Both authors were attracted by the possibilities of writing interesting passages on the unusual dwelling of the rag dealers and on the boarding houses. However, in the rag dealers' homes each emphasizes a different aspect. Pío Baroja sees Custodio's abode as neat and orderly, with all of the sundry articles, collected by a rag dealer, in designated places. Blasco Ibáñez sees Zaratustra and Eusebia's habitation as a disorderly conglomeration of useless objects. In Pío Baroja's novel, Manuel describes the house as he first sees it. The reason it looked so appealing to him, is that he had been living on the street until the rag dealer offered

him a job. Blasco Ibáñez shows both the attitude of the owner and of an outsider, when Zaratustra guides Maltrana through his house. While the rag dealer comments with pride on everything it contains that he has been collecting for years, Maltrana inwardly registers disgust at the useless assortment of dirt-covered articles. A knowledge of two opposing views, as expressed here by Zaratustra and Maltrana, gives the reader a better understanding of the subject.

The boarding houses, in which other members of the lower classes live, are depicted in varying degrees of detail by both authors. Pío Baroja enumerates the most minute characteristics of these homes, the refuse cluttering the courtyard, the strong odor of decaying garbage, the appearance of the sections of the gallery belonging to individual families, the type of clothing hung out to dry, and even the price of different rooms. Blasco Ibáñez provides an understanding of the situation with much less detail by using the method of retrospection. When Maltrana recalls his boyhood impressions of the boarding house in which he lived, its most distinguishing features, the similarity it had to a prison because of the uniformity of the numbered doors, and the unhappiness of the inhabitants except on the day they were paid, stand out sharply.

The workers' lack of ambition is one of their most outstanding characteristics. Since class distinction pre-

vents them from going very far in life, no matter how hard they work, they have no reason to be ambitious. They are:

. . . resignados á sufrir el resto de una vida sin esperanza y sin sorpresa, conociendo de antemano la fatiga monótona y gris que se extendería hasta el momento de su muerte.<sup>3</sup>

Both authors use as their protagonists, men whose weakness prevents them from achieving their goals. However, at times they feel ambitious and seem to be on the way to making something out of themselves. Maltrana succeeds in writing a book, as mentioned previously, while he cannot write newspaper copy. It is only a temporary spurt of activity for him. Manuel secures a good job in a printing office, but one morning, after a late night with friends, he fails to report for work. Each day he puts off returning to the establishment, since it is much easier for him to fall back into his former way of living. Manuel, "Sentía una inercia imposible de vencer."<sup>4</sup> With both the flame shines brightly for awhile, but soon begins to flicker, and presently darkness descends once more.

Maltrana's weakness is more striking than Manuel's because of his amazing energy in doing one record breaking piece of work. Manuel does not achieve success in any job through his own initiative. When he is finally established as the owner of a printing office, it is through the efforts of the woman, Salvadora. Rather than provide a contrast in

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 16.

<sup>4</sup>Pío Baroja, Mala Hierba (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, [n.d.]), p. 166.

the individual himself, as Blasco Ibáñez does with Maltrana, Pío Baroja brings in another character, who possesses all of the qualities Manuel lacks. This person, an Englishman, tries to guide Manuel by sound advice and financial aid. The following is typical of his advice:

Hazme caso, porque es la verdad. Si quieres hacer algo de la vida, no creas en la palabra imposible. Nada hay imposible para una voluntad enérgica. Si tratas de disparar una flecha, apunta muy alto, lo más alto que puedas; cuanto más alto apuntes, más lejos irá.<sup>5</sup>

Blasco Ibáñez' protagonist is more complex than Pío Baroja's, since with all of his educational advantages he is unable to face life and fit into society. As with the example of his treatment of masonry, the author provokes thought on the reasons for Maltrana's failure to adjust himself. He is an interesting character because of his inner struggle.

Pío Baroja depicts ambition, in his novel, La Ciudad de la Niebla, through a woman whose social ambitions are thwarted because her husband has no desire to improve. She is a calculating, vain person, whom he compares to a snake. He sympathizes with the man, who is chained to such a scheming wife. She is best described by her own words, "No tengo más camino que el que tienen las mujeres cuando están desesperadas. Si encuentro algún hombre rico saldré adelante; si no,

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<sup>5</sup>Pío Baroja, La Busca (fifth edition; Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1920), p. 89.

Dios sabe dónde iré á parar."<sup>6</sup>

Blasco Ibáñez shows recklessness in people with a lust for adventure, who do not place a very high value on life, since death would be a relief from misery. The rabbit hunters of the outlying districts of Madrid only place their own lives in jeopardy, unlike Pascualo in Flor de Mayo. They are excited at the thought of the dangers that await them in their nightly hunts. Rather than censure the men for their recklessness, with the superior attitude of an outsider, he presents their feelings with a depth of understanding. Maltrana goes on one of the hunts with a friend who hunted all year instead of just in the winter, as the other men did.

Some individuals of the lower classes, have commendable characteristics in view of the type of life they lead. Among these is tenderness, which reveals a side of Maltrana's character not shown before his common-law wife, Feli, enters the hospital. Until then, he is thoughtless and full of false pride, at Feli's expense. When she becomes ill, he feels remorse over his previous treatment of her. It costs him much effort to display his feelings openly, by taking the dying girl a bunch of flowers, which she is overjoyed to receive.

Pío Baroja's Madrid and Basque novels are conspicuous

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<sup>6</sup>Pío Baroja, La Ciudad de la Niebla (Londres: Thomas Nelson and Sons, [n.d.]), p. 103.

for only one mention of tenderness, which appears in the following passage referring to the inhabitants of one of the boarding houses in La Busca:

De cuando en cuando, como un suave rayo de sol en la umbría, penetraba en el alma de aquellos hombres entontecidos y bestiales, de aquellas mujeres agriadas por la vida áspera y sin consuelo ni ilusión, un sentimiento romántico, de desinterés, de ternura, que las hacía vivir humanamente; y cuando pasaba la racha de sentimentalismo, volvían otra vez a su inercia moral, resignada y pasiva.<sup>7</sup>

However, the author does not give examples of the expression of the sentiment he mentions.

In comparison to the tender reaction of Tonet's father to his death in Cañas y Barro, is Manuel's attitude after the death of his mother. The night she passed away, he was tormented by thoughts of the uselessness of life and death, but he did not express any emotion over the loss of his mother. The next day the author describes Manuel on a hillside:

Manuel se tendió perezosamente al sol; sentía el bienestar de hallarse libre por completo de preocupaciones, de ver el cielo azul extendiéndose hasta el infinito. Aquel bienestar le llevó a un sueño profundo.<sup>8</sup>

In Blasco Ibáñez' novel, the people of Madrid have an appreciation of beauty, more keen because of their dreary, drab existence. The beauty of nature, which Maltrana and Feli see on their infrequent trips to the country, brings joy into their lives and later nostalgia.

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<sup>7</sup>Pío Baroja, La Busca, pp. 76-77.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 184.

Although the people fight among themselves, they are united against those they regard as responsible for their poverty. However, they are not able to join their efforts in working towards a constructive goal. Both authors show how the people help others less fortunate. In Aurora Roja, Manuel is assisted in setting his course in the right direction, by the woman, symbolically named Salvadora. In La Horda, Maltrana's grandmother, Eusebia, gives him her most prized possessions, acquired in her capacity as a rag dealer. Since the worthless articles are valuable to her, it costs her much mental and emotional effort to part with them. Hers is the supreme example of generosity.

The lower classes respect neither the laws, nor the administrative officers, since they consider laws harmful for the poor and beneficial for the higher classes. Both authors stress this attitude. In Aurora Roja, the Civil Guards have difficulty apprehending a criminal shielded by the many members of his class. Manuel is easily persuaded by his friends to stop helping the authorities in the search. This shows a fault in Manuel's character which cannot be condoned on any grounds, especially since the victim was his best friend and the murderer his avowed enemy.

Blasco Ibañez' example of the attitude towards authority is more plausible. A group of workers have good reasons



for staging a riot at the funeral of one of their members. It is natural for them to resent the unwarranted discrimination, which forbids them to carry a casket through parts of the city restricted for funerals of the upper classes.

Both authors deal with the loose morals of the men and women of Madrid, mentioning many cases of prostitution. Pío Baroja sees very little that is fine in the relationship of the sexes in his novels of the trilogy, "La Lucha por la Vida." He cites several cases of the illicit relations between children, as well as adults. However, it is true that he was describing existing conditions. Blasco Ibañez concentrates on the love affair of one couple to show that illicit relations were common. He describes the happiness of Maltrana and Feli upon discovering their mutual love, and the gradual disintegration of their affection for each other because of poverty.

In Pío Baroja's novel, Aurora Roja, Manuel and Salvadora marry because of economic convenience, rather than love. Since Salvadora has helped Manuel to become a responsible working man, his English friend, Roberto, advises him to marry her. In Blasco Ibañez' novel, there are several lovers who feel that marriage is an unimportant formality. As the protagonist tells his sweetheart, after inducing her to live with him, "Más adelante cuando tuviesen hijos, ya pensarían

en el matrimonio."<sup>9</sup> Although there was no economic reason for them not to marry, since their financial status was especially good at the time, they were following a general pattern. Both Maltrana's mother and grandmother, after the death of their husbands, had lived with another man. The grandmother's attitude appears in the author's statement, "Por fin, la señora Eusebia, había decidido casarse, sin la ayuda de la Iglesia ni del Estado, con aquel consocio que la cortejaba desde su viudez. . ."<sup>10</sup> That the people sanctioned such unions can be seen in their feeling towards the couple, "Merecían respeto: eran los industriales más importantes del barrio, y habían hecho bien uniéndose en una sola razón social."<sup>11</sup>

Blasco Ibáñez contrasts the virtue of the gypsies of Madrid, who require proof of virginity before the wedding ceremony, to the loose relations of the laboring classes. Further stress is placed on this comparison as the protagonist and his sweetheart live in the gypsy quarter for awhile. An indication of the author's thoroughness in covering a subject is his description of the gypsy farm laborers in La Bodega. There, due to a different environment, they possess attitudes opposite to those evidenced in Madrid, espe-

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<sup>9</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Horda, p. 181.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 90.

cially towards their sexual relations.

Pío Baroja deals with love in three other novels, La Ciudad de la Niebla, El Arbol de la Ciencia, and César o Nada. In the first, the heroine, María, falls in love with a man, Vladimir, who marries another woman. She was afraid to love him from the beginning, because she thought he might deceive her and also because, as her friend, Natalia, expressed it, "quieres luchar contra tus sentimientos, y una pasión fuerte te asusta."<sup>12</sup> In the end of the book she succumbs to tradition by returning to Spain from London, and marrying her cousin, Venancio. María's widowed father marries a wealthy widow, and goes to America with her. Their relationship is unhappy and he returns to Spain. Natalia, also widowed, marries the divorced man, Roche, whose former marriage had been loveless. The marriages of María and her father are of convenience and not for love. The marriages of Natalia and Roche, of Hurtado and Lulu in El Arbol de la Ciencia, and of César and Amparito in César o Nada are for love, but in the last two cases the couples are unhappy. Although reluctant, because of a hereditary illness, Hurtado marries. At the end, he commits suicide, after the death of his wife and newborn child. César is troubled because he cannot understand his wife: "Ella sentía por los dos, pero él no pensaba

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<sup>12</sup>Pío Baroja, La Ciudad de la Niebla, p. 254.

por los dos; cada maquinaria del pensamiento marchaba aisladamente, como dos relojes que no se oyen."<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps the best and most concise statement of Pío Baroja's treatment of love, and which is directly opposed to Blasco Ibáñez' handling of the subject, is the following:

"It is this absence of all sense of love, whether human or divine, which dries up the springs of poetry in Baroja."<sup>14</sup>

Pío Baroja indicates that normal family relationships are sometimes violated among the lower classes of Madrid, in describing several cases of incest. One of the characters who indulges in such relations, shows his disregard for the commonly accepted attitude towards the family:

¡La familia! Lo primero que debe hacer uno es olvidarla. Los padres y los hermanos, y los tíos y los primos, no sirven mas que para hacerle a uno la pascua. Lo primero que un hombre debe aprender es a desobedecer a sus padres y a no creer en el Eterno.<sup>15</sup>

Blasco Ibáñez also illustrates that family unity is not strong and that filial devotion is frequently absent. Feli feels fear, rather than remorse, after leaving her lonely father to run away with her lover. The author weaves in the father's reaction through the conversations between Maltrana and several of their mutual friends, who tell him of the old man's despondency. Sympathy is directed towards the father

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<sup>13</sup>Pío Baroja, César o Nada (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1920), p. 319.

<sup>14</sup>George Tyler Northup, An Introduction to Spanish Literature (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1925), p. 126.

by the author, who condemns the girl's actions in saying that, ". . . Ni una duda ni un remordimiento sintió la joven: huyó sin que dijeran nada a su alma los lugares en donde había transcurrido su vida."<sup>16</sup> When Pío Baroja presents unsavory examples of family relationships, he does not indicate that he regards them in an unfavorable light, as Blasco Ibáñez does with Feli's actions.

Both authors describe bullfights, Blasco Ibáñez in his novel Sangre y Arena, and Pío Baroja in La Busca. The former includes descriptions of the youngsters who aspire to be bullfighters, of the bullfighters themselves, of the training of the bulls and their selection for the fights, of the rounding up and driving them into the corrals, of the clothes and superstitions of the bullfighters, and of several bullfights, including the last one in which the protagonist, Gallardo, is killed. Although Pío Baroja does not devote an entire novel to the sport, he describes a bullfight Manuel attends. While Blasco Ibáñez sees the beauty and pageantry of the affair in the colorful costumes of the bullfighter and of the women whose shawls are draped over the grandstand, Pío Baroja sees the spectators as a black mass of humanity, and the struggle between man and beast, as horrible and revolting. Blasco Ibáñez describes the gory side of the sport

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<sup>16</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Horda, p. 182.

also, but he includes the splendor as well. As one critic has stated, Pío Baroja gives a ". . . characteristically thin and pitiful account of a bullfight. . . ."17

This example points up one of the differences in the two authors. Blasco Ibañez uses much more colorful language in his descriptions. Pío Baroja usually sees life through a grey haze, but occasionally he gives lovely descriptions, as in the epilogue to La Casa de Aizgorri, in his account of an old woman sleeping by the fire. Although he justifies this by saying, ". . . It is well to be a little neutral, perhaps, a little grey for the most part, so that upon occasion the more delicate hues may stand out clearly. . . .",18 he uses too much "grey" and too infrequently makes the delicate hues stand out.

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17Aubrey F. G. Bell, Castilian Literature (Oxford, England: The Clarendon Press, 1938), p. 108.

18Pío Baroja, Youth and Egotry, translated by Jacob S. Fassett Jr. and Frances L. Phillips (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1920), p. 87.

### PART III

#### PROPAGANDA

#### CHAPTER I

#### SOCIAL

The Catholic Church in Spain is a powerful social, economic, and political force. On these grounds, Blasco Ibañez and Pío Baroja launch their attack. In the social area they deal with charity, and with influence on education and family life.

Both comment on education of the clergy and the laity. Gabriel Luna in La Catedral and Juan, Manuel's brother, in Aurora Roja leave their religious studies and become anarchists. Gabriel, a brilliant youth, had a very promising future, until he left the seminary to defend the Church on the battlefield. Later he went to France, where, influenced by revolutionary ideas, he lost his faith. Juan's belief in Catholicism waned while he was still a student. He secretly read books by authors whose ideas were opposed to those of the Church. He gives his reasons for leaving the seminary as:

. . . he visto las porquerías que hay en el seminario; al principio, lo que vi me asombro y me dió asco; luego me lo he explicado todo. No es que los curas son malos; es que la religión es mala.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pío Baroja, Aurora Roja (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, [n.d.]), p. 10.

At this time, neither the author nor Juan reveal what facts have given them the belief that the Catholic religion is bad.

When Gabriel returns to the shelter of the Cathedral at Toledo, where his family have been church servitors for generations, he attacks the teachings of the Church, although he accepts economic support from it. His arguments are directed against the limitations of these teachings in that they exclude science. His attempts to give the lay servitors a new philosophy bring disaster. Although he emphasizes that the reforms he advocates are to be realized in the future, his listeners want to alleviate their miserable situation immediately. One night in order to rob jewels from a statue in the Cathedral they kill Gabriel, who, as watchman, is loyal to his position.

Blasco Ibáñez, in The Intruder, hits at the Church education of the laity as supervised by the Jesuits, and Pío Baroja does the same, in La Ciudad de la Niebla. In the former novel, the author singles out the Morueta family, wealthy mine owners. The mother is an embodiment of erroneous methods of educating young girls of the upper class, according to the author. She is formal in manner, class-conscious, intensely religious, and extremely inhibited in the normal impulses which would make for a happy marriage. The early Jesuit training and the later influence of the confessor are blamed



for this situation. María in La Ciudad de la Niebla attends a strict Catholic boarding school in London, operated by an unscrupulous woman. María's early education in Spain had been lax, in fact she did not learn to read until she was ten years old. The director of the School, who untruthfully tells María that her father wants her to become a Catholic, is described as follows:

Madame Troubat no sólo tenía un fanatismo estrecho, sino que, además, como ferviente católica, pensaba que para llegar á un buen fin todos los medios son buenos, y mentía además con una facilidad extraordinaria.<sup>2</sup>

The Jesuits are mentioned in this novel also, in the person of a French member of the order, who speaks to the girls every Sunday. In his sermons he mixes politics and religion, speaking to them of a "porción de vulgaridades que los jesuitas franceses han fabricado expresamente para los colegios católicos."<sup>3</sup> Both authors present the idea that Catholic education is wrong, but Blasco Ibañez also censures the foreign influence. He speaks scathingly of the daughter of a mine contractor who had gone to England to study and returned with "flirting propensities" and "ideas of comfort which astonished all Gallarta."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Pío Baroja, La Ciudad de la Niebla, (Londres: Thomas Nelson and Sons, [n.d.]), p. 124.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

<sup>4</sup>Blasco Ibañez, The Intruder, translated by Mrs. W. A. Gillespie (fourth edition; New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1928), p. 31.

The charity of wealthy Catholic women is attacked in the Madrid novels of the two authors, La Horda and La Busca. The examples are extremely similar. In both doctrine is taught to people of the lower classes, sheets are given away, and the recipients hurl curses at their benefactors, as soon as they are out of hearing distance. This form of charity is disparaged by the authors, since they feel that it does not remedy the situation. The members of the upper class believe that they are fulfilling a religious duty, while the lower classes disregard the instruction they receive, only desiring more material aid. Blasco Ibañez again mentions charity in his novels La Bodega and The Intruder. In the latter he says that, ". . . Charity must be suppressed, for charity is nothing more than hypocrisy drawing a mask of palliation over the cruelties of the present."<sup>5</sup> In the same novel he refers to the charity of the wealthy in the United States who bequeath their money for a useful purpose in founding universities, libraries and museums, which help to improve the masses. The upper classes in Spain leave money to build churches and chapels that do not alleviate the miserable living conditions of the lower classes.

The evils of charity are pointed out by the authors, but they do not remark on what would happen if there were no

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 152.

charity. Although only a temporary aid, it mitigates somewhat the suffering of the lower classes.

Blasco Ibañez deploras the influence of the Church on family life in The Intruder. The Jesuits arrange marriages between the rich, in fact young couples can marry only, as Father Pauli states, "after the mature and repeated advice of your prudent friends, of your masters, and above all of your spiritual director."<sup>6</sup> One young girl, the daughter of Sánchez Morueta, is persuaded against marrying a young man whom she loves, because he is not the choice of her confessor. Although the character and morals of the man selected are questionable, they are overlooked, because the individual has worked for the Church.

Jesuit control continues after marriage through the confessional. Jesuitism, embodying the title of the novel, takes possession of all of the actions of the women of a household, and through them secures the will of the men. Dr. Aresti, the protagonist, states that the Jesuits have changed the women of Spain, ". . . crushing their souls, turning them into automatons who abhorred as sinful all manifestations of life. . . ." <sup>7</sup> Since the women of Spain are always with women, the Jesuits relieve their boredom with an effeminate religion.

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., pp. 193-94.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 113.

Some of the men are grateful that their wives are provided with innocent entertainment so that they may be at greater liberty.

Morueta's marriage is unhappy, because his wife considers that ". . . What depraved people called love was only a repugnant sin, fit only for people without religion. . . ."8 However, she is able to wield all the wiles of her sex when it suits the purpose of the Church, for regaining her husband's love and establishing control over him. Morueta, who has suffered a sad disillusionment at the termination of an extramarital love affair, is an easy prey, and becomes a fervent convert.

In La Bodega, the Jesuits and Pablo Dupont, the wealthy distillery owner, organize religious ceremonies which the employees are compelled to attend. Pablo's mother is persuaded that her position is important in the religious life of the community. She only becomes reconciled to the family industry when she can send a barrel of wine to the mass of the Pope. She is very intolerant of the Protestant foreigners who come to do business with her son. Through the Dupont family, the Jesuits are able to exert their power over the workers of Jerez.

Pío Baroja writes on the same general lines in the

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 104.

autobiographical work, Youth and Egotry, of the influence of the Jesuits in his birthplace, San Sebastian, but in his novels he deals with only the charity and education of the church. On these last two subjects their presentation is about equal, and similar examples are used. However, while that is the extent of Pío Baroja's treatment, Blasco Ibáñez carries his propaganda against the Church even farther, concerning its influence on family life and revenue received. The latter subject will be treated in the chapter on economic propaganda.

Neither author offers a constructive solution for this problem. Pío Baroja's characters in La Busca, express radical ideas concerning all religions. They present two alternatives, the first to expel all religious orders, and the second to behead all their members. Blasco Ibáñez makes repeated demands for social justice, in La Catedral, La Bodega, and The Intruder. In the latter he states through Dr. Aresti, "And I, . . . . worship social justice as the end, and I believe in science as the means."<sup>9</sup> He goes no further in mapping out a program. Both authors recognize and expose the need for reform, suggesting only general principles and ideals as guides for solution.

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<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 248.

## CHAPTER II

### MORAL

Blasco Ibáñez in La Bodega and Cañas y Barro, and Pío Baroja in La Casa de Aizgorri deal with the abuse of alcohol and the consequent effect on the mind and morals of both the upper and lower classes. Also in most of their novels they mention intoxication as one of the few pleasures of the poor.

In La Casa de Aizgorri, the Aizgorri family own a distillery which has had a harmful effect on the villagers. Before its establishment, the now degenerate people were energetic and the community was among the strongest in the Basque country. The daughter, Agueda, fears that she has inherited insanity. Her hallucinations make the situation vivid. The family doctor bears out her belief in saying, "Es que los efectos del alcohol son lentos. El daño que hace en el padre, se manifiesta en el hijo ó el nieto."<sup>1</sup> He damns alcohol as one of the greatest evils of mankind, worse even than dynamite in its effects. Both Agueda's father and her brother, Luis, are examples of its degenerate influence. Luis, a weakling, leaves home the night of his father's imminent death. At the end of the novel, Agueda overcomes her hallucinations. The author believes that she will be happy

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<sup>1</sup>Pío Baroja, La Casa de Aizgorri (Madrid: Renacimiento, 1911), p. 92.

in the future, but it is not made clear why she should escape the fate of her brother.

In Cañas y Barro, Sangonera, the son of the village alcoholic, follows in his father's footsteps. For a time he works for the village priest, because with a minimum amount of work he receives three meals a day and most of all, wine. Although he is tempted away from the Church by his strong desire for alcohol, he retains some of his religious sentiments in having visions about Jesus. In the end alcohol wins over the Church, and Sangonera dies from a day's gluttony of food and wine. Salvatierra, in La Bodega, also cites its hereditary influence and states that it keeps the people in slavery. He refers to wine as:

¡El vino! . . . Ese es el mayor enemigo de este país: mata las energías, crea engañosas esperanzas, acaba con la vida prematuramente; todo lo destruye: hasta el amor.<sup>2</sup>

The author gives an example bearing out his statement. One night when they are both under the influence of alcohol, Luis Dupont violates María, who subsequently breaks off relations with her suitor, Rafael. These are the results of the intoxication: Fermín, María's brother, kills Luis when the latter refuses to marry her, and then is forced to flee to South America; María's father leaves his position as an overseer on one of the Dupont estates and continually insults

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<sup>2</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Bodega (Valencia: Prometeo, 1919), p. 199.

María because of the dishonor she has brought on the family; and Rafael leaves the estate owned by Luis to become a smuggler again, his love for María turned into hate. Only after much suffering on all sides are the lovers reunited.

Alcohol helps the poor to forget their misery, according to both authors, but the relief is only temporary. These people envy the rich because they can drink wine whenever they desire. In La Bodega, Blasco Ibañez also attacks the abuse of alcohol by the rich, who use it as a control over the workers. Whenever the workers begin to demand their rights, the vineyard owners merely give them wine and thereafter, they cannot praise their masters enough. As Blasco Ibañez remarks:

. . . El vaso de vino mitiga el hambre y  
alegra la vida un momento con su fuego: es  
un rayo de sol que pasa por el estómago . .  
. .<sup>3</sup>

An individual in Sangre y Arena does not drink wine, as he feels it is the cause of the backwardness of the working classes. Ironically, his wife operates a tavern. Although Blasco Ibañez criticizes the people for drinking to excess, he shows that he understands their reasons. In The Intruder, Dr. Aresti states that he had unjustly censured the men who work in the blast furnaces, since only a glass of alcohol alleviates their perpetual thirst.

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<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 98.



The two authors recognize the hereditary effects of excessive amounts of alcohol, but Blasco Ibañez also presents facts which Pío Baroja does not reveal, in citing the use of alcohol as a control over the workers.

## CHAPTER III

### ECONOMIC

One critic has mentioned that Blasco Ibañez was the first to describe the miserable condition of the farm laborers in his novel La Bodega, written in 1905.<sup>1</sup> Andalusia, more particularly Jerez, one of the centers of the wine industry, is the setting. Pío Baroja in La Dama Errante, 1908, briefly describes a similar situation.

The land in Andalusia is held by a few powerful landowners, who, because of the abundance of labor, exercise a tight control over the workers. The farms are contrasted to those in Valencia and Murcia, where each man has a patch of land to cultivate. There, the villages are close together, while in Andalusia, one can look for miles in all directions without seeing a farm house. In Sangre y Arena, as well as La Bodega, he complains of great areas of land reserved for the raising of bulls used in the arena. These estates could sustain several towns and provide food for hundreds of starving families. He explains that the industry of raising these animals is a luxury, each bull costing more to maintain than an entire family, since they have to be watched constantly so that they will give honor to the owner of the herd. Pío Baroja strikes a similar note concerning land used for the amuse-

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<sup>1</sup>Gerald Brenan, Spanish Labyrinth (Cambridge, England: The University Press, 1943), p. 121.

ment of the wealthy:

Y en Andalucía. . . es aún peor. Hay ricos que tienen dehesas y cotos enormes. Allí viven los venados y los jabalíes donde podrían vivir los hombres.<sup>2</sup>

In La Horda, the men of the lower classes, who hunt on the reserves, are killed on sight by the Civil Guards. The death of one of these individuals is mentioned by a friend of his.

. . . Da rabia, Isidro, pensar que hombres tan hombres mueren como perros, por querer vivir de lo superfluo, de lo que otros no necesitan; que los cacen como fieras, sin haber hecho otro delito que cobrar algunos conejos. . . .<sup>3</sup>

Dr. Aracil and his daughter, María, in La Dama Errante, are shocked by the poverty of the peasants near the Portuguese border. The rich landowners turn roads into irrigation ditches in order to save money, they construct highways through deserted places merely for their personal use, they monopolize the water from the mountains, leaving the poor with stagnant pools, they shoot anyone attempting to steal grapes with the excuse that the vines must be protected, and they send to prison those who take a bundle of dry branches or a handful of acorns. While Blasco Ibáñez speaks unfavorably of the amount of land owned by the Church, Pío Baroja indirectly praises the Church management of land, as against the new landowners. When the estates were owned by the convents,

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<sup>2</sup>Pío Baroja, La Dama Errante (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1920), p. 194.

<sup>3</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Horda (Valencia: Prometeo. [n.d.]).

the country people were favored. The land was seized by the government and sold to the wealthy, who were more despotic than the religious orders had been.

Blasco Ibañez describes the laborers on one of the Dupont estates, from the standpoint of their wages, housing, food, health, and education. While over fifty thousand reales are paid for one horse, the farmhands receive only two reales for a day's work and the vineyard workers ten. They receive even less when the food is furnished or when the crops are bad. After a day of back-breaking labor, they return to their miserable living quarters, a long, evil-smelling room where the sexes are not segregated. Three times a day they eat only a soup of oil, vinegar and water, except at harvest time when they are fortunate enough to receive beans. It is no wonder that many of the workers are old by the time they are thirty-five. A pitiful picture of the poor health of the laborers is presented in a young gypsy girl who dies of consumption.

Labor is so plentiful that there is no need for using modern agricultural inventions. Although the landowners boast of their machinery, the workers state that only threshing machines have been adopted, which do not ease their work, but only lessen the numbers needed. In the vineyards, the workers felt as if the hoe they used weighed tons by the end of the day. Blasco Ibañez blames the lack of modern agricul-

tural inventions on the ignorance of the people, who think they are evil, and on the Catholic Church, which disparages scientific development.

Emigration of the laborers to America, is common in the farm districts. Although this may save individuals, it does not help the nation. At the end of La Bodega, some of the workers leave the country in the hope of building a new life. When Dr. Aracil in La Dama Errante states, ". . . En un país en donde la propiedad es tan brutal, tan agresiva y tan ignorante como aquí, la revolución debía estar ya triunfante,"<sup>4</sup> he is reminded that since the most intelligent and the strongest people leave Spain, revolutions fail.

Both authors offer the communistic solution of dividing land equally. Pío Baroja feels that all Spaniards should live in the country, thus dispersing the large city population and providing livelihood for everyone. His ideas are phrased as follows:

Viviríamos en el campo. Esparciríamos la vida que se amontona en las ciudades por los valles y los montes, haríamos la propiedad de la tierra comun a todos, y así podríamos vivir una vida limpia, serena y hermosa.<sup>5</sup>

Zarandilla in La Bodega voices the same sentiments. If the land and the fruits of their labor belonged to the labor-

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<sup>4</sup>Pío Baroja, La Dama Errante, p. 195.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 196.

ers, they would work harder. Salvatierra takes the same view, but in his opportunism believes that for the present it is best for a few men to control the land. A limited number of landowners would make the imposition of communism easier, since small land holdings make for satisfaction among these holders.

The most constructive solution presented by either author is the need for education among the workers, which Blasco Ibáñez reiterates in La Bodega and Sangre y Arena. In Andalusia the workers are forbidden to read, but one enterprising individual tries to educate himself. He feels that the world should be changed without bloodshed, through education. Salvatierra, the revolutionist, states that perhaps he is right. Sebastián in Sangre y Arena blames his own insignificance and all of the vices in the world on the lack of education. He says, referring to the money spent at bull-fights, ". . . La gente necesita como el pan sabé leé y escribí, y no está bien que se gaste el dinero en nosotros mientras farta tanta escuela. Así lo dicen papeles que vienen de Madrid. . . ."6 However, in La Horda, Maltrana has an education which does not help him to achieve economic security. The blame is placed on his personal weakness and the existing regime, not on his education.

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<sup>6</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, Sangre y Arena (Valencia: Prometeo, 1916), p. 103.

The wealth of the clergy, as well as of the landowners is attacked by Blasco Ibáñez. The revenue of the Church and the sources from which it is derived are treated in La Catedral. Blasco Ibáñez gives figures to bear out his arguments. At the time of the Inquisition, the clerical revenue amounted to more than half of the national fortune. When the novel was written, 1903, the State gave the Church forty-one million pesetas, of which nine million was devoted to education, and one million to poor relief. Including the money received from private sources, the revenue was three hundred million pesetas, or nearly double what the army cost. For instance, in The Intruder, the greater part of the wealth made in the mines is spent on the construction of churches and convents. Blasco Ibáñez accuses the rich man of buying his salvation with part of his fortune. Dr. Aresti remarks about the Jesuits that, ". . . They are like reeds which by the thickness of their stems betray the presence of hidden water. Wherever the Jesuits appear there, without any doubt, is wealth."<sup>7</sup>

Most of the revenue of the Church is controlled by the clerical aristocracy, who satisfy the desire of the wealthy for honor to their family name and for a means of fulfilling

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<sup>7</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, The Intruder, translated by Mrs. W. A. Gillespie (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1928), p. 126.

their religious duties, by building sumptuous churches. In one Jesuit church, ". . . The altars were as attractive as dishes laid out for a banquet, there were caramel colored marbles, others of honey or fresh strawberry color, and again others were green like candied fruit, or soft white like the whipped cream of a meringue. . . ." <sup>8</sup> Rather than places of worship, the churches were more like luxurious drawing rooms. The statues used in former days were changed for images more acceptable to the taste of wealthy people. Blasco Ibañez deplures the many precious stones used in clothing these statues. In the midst of such wealth, the mine workers are suffering poverty and filth. Likewise, in Toledo, described in La Catedral, the church servitors have barely enough to live on and beggars crowd around the church doors. A child of one of the shoemakers living under the Church's protection, dies of malnutrition. During a procession in Sangre y Arena, the statues are described:

. . . todo un mundo de imágenes absurdas,  
 en las que contrastaban los rostros trágicos,  
 sanguinolentos o lloriqueantes con las ropas  
 de un lujo teatral cargadas de riquezas. <sup>9</sup>

The hierarchy of the Church live in palatial splendor, while those in lower positions receive a meager salary. The Jesuits have money enough to make loans to people needing

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 285.

<sup>9</sup>Blasco Ibañez, Sangre y Arena, p. 284.



outside capital for their businesses. By withholding loans they can ruin the men who are not in their favor.

Some of the authors' remarks on wealthy classes in general will bear out their sympathy for the poor. Blasco Ibáñez satirically states that idleness is a vice in the poor, but a sign of distinction among the rich, ". . . Cuando se nace pobre, la pereza es el crimen. . . ." <sup>10</sup> He also remarks on the influence of the upper classes, in describing Maltrana:

Los solitarios como él, sin protectores, sin atractivo social, estaban desarmados para la lucha diaria: su destino era morir. <sup>11</sup>

Pío Baroja reflects a comparable attitude in speaking of the rich.

¡La civilización! Bastante nos sirve a nosotros la civilización. La civilización es muy buena para el rico; ¡lo que es para el pobre! . . . Antes el rico y el pobre se alumbraban con un candil parecido; hoy el pobre sigue con el candil, y el rico alumbra su casa con luz eléctrica; antes, el pobre iba a pie, el rico iba a caballo; hoy el pobre sigue andando a pie y el rico va en automóvil; antes el rico tenía que vivir entre los pobres; hoy vive aparte, se ha hecho una muralla de algodón y no oye nada. . . . <sup>12</sup>

He presents a bitter outlook in stating that the greatest pleasure of the rich is the knowledge that they are living in warmth and comfort, while some of their fellow humans are

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<sup>10</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, Cañas y Barro, (Valencia: Prometeo, 1919), p. 291.

<sup>11</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Horda, p. 61.

<sup>12</sup>Pío Baroja, Mala Hierba (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, [n.d.7] ). nn. 187-88.

cold and hungry. Since he is writing from the viewpoint of the poor, they feel that this is the attitude of the majority of the wealthy. His statement is too broad to be considered as valid or representative of the group.

In analyzing the economic propaganda of both authors, Blasco Ibáñez emerges as the more complete and conclusive. He cites facts and figures, and includes examples dealing with the Andalusian laborers and the Church. He understands the basic need of the lower classes, education. Although he also advocates revolution, he shows that without leadership and unity it is doomed to failure. The farm laborers stage an uprising which is quickly put down by the Civil Guards ordered for the landowners' protection. Even the instigating revolutionist, who speaks for the author, has to admit the need of effective education. Blasco Ibáñez covers the land problem in Spain from many angles, the control and development of the land, and the living and working conditions of the laborers.

## CHAPTER IV

### POLITICAL

The political ideas of the two authors, one active in the field and the other a party member for only a short time, are very similar. Both disliked the Spanish monarchy and wrote at length on communistic and anarchistic theories. Blasco Ibáñez has expressed his strongest sentiments in La Catedral, La Bodega, and The Intruder, and Pío Baroja in César o Nada, El Arbol de la Ciencia, Aurora Roja, La Ciudad de la Niebla, and La Casa de Aizgorri.

Blasco Ibáñez attacks the monarchy from the standpoint of its moral and physical degeneracy, and its power owing to the support of the Church and the Army. The reasons for its survival up to that time, he defines as secular laziness, resistance to change, and fear of the unknown. He does praise the Bourbons, who he felt helped Spain by morally killing the Inquisition, expelling the Jesuits, and fostering material progress. Pío Baroja has the opposite reaction to the Bourbons in saying that:

. . . Para mí, eso de Borbón es una cosa arqueológica y deletérea, como una momia que hiede; así cuando me dicen: « Ahí va el príncipe tal de Borbón », me da ganas de taparme las narices con el pañuelo.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Pío Baroja, La Dama Errante (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1920), p. 89.

Blasco Ibañez, as mentioned before, was a member of the republican party, which in Spain leans very much to the left. Pío Baroja has said that, "I have always been a liberal radical, an individualist and an anarchist. . . ."2

Although he states that nothing can be accomplished in the way of reform unless one dedicates himself to politics,

" . . . toda reforma en un sentido humanitario tenía que ser colectiva y realizarse por un procedimiento político. . . ."3

in life he does not follow this advice. However, his protagonist, in César o Nada, is such a man. César Moncada believes that any line of conduct is justified if it achieves his goal. He poses as a conservative to secure the necessary backing for becoming a representative to the national assembly, and soon after his election throws off this mask to align himself with the liberals. Pío Baroja's views on liberalism as presented in Youth and Egotry, are as follows:

To the extent in which liberalism has been a destructive force, inimical to the past, it enthralled me. . . . On the other hand, insofar as liberalism is constructive, as it has been for example in its advocacy of universal suffrage, in its democracy, and in its system of parliamentary government, I consider it ridiculous and valueless as well.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup>Pío Baroja, Youth and Egotry, translated by Jacob S. Fassett Jr. and Frances L. Phillips (New York: Alfred A. Knopf Inc., 1920), p. 219.

<sup>3</sup>Pío Baroja, El Arbol de la Ciencia (fourth edition; Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1929), p. 70.

<sup>4</sup>Pío Baroja, Youth and Egotry, pp. 219-20.

When César attempts to enforce a "constructive" program, he fails because of the efforts of the conservatives. Composed of the aristocracy, they receive strong support from the Church. One of the party leaders in the village César represents, is a member of the clergy. The bitter concluding paragraph of the novel shows Pío Baroja's regard of the conservatives and of the Church:

Hoy Castro Duro ha abandonado ya definitivamente sus pretensiones de vivir, ha vuelto al orden, como dice el periódico semanal conservador; las fuentes se han secado, la escuela se cerró, los arbolillos del Parque Mençada fueron arrancados. La gente emigra todos los años por centenares. Hoy para un molino, mañana se hunde una casa; pero Castro Duro sigue viviendo con sus veneradas tradiciones y sus sacrosantos principios, sin permitir que los advenedizos sin religión y sin patria turben su vida, sin mancillar los derechos sacratísimos de la Iglesia nuestra madre, envuelto en polvo, en suciedad y mugre, dormido al sol, en medio de sus campos sin riego.<sup>5</sup>

The author shows that corruption exists in both parties, who are not above illegal means of winning an election. César hires a group of men to guard the ballot boxes on their journey to Castro Duro from a small neighboring village. Finally Cesar is killed by the followers of his opponent.

Although Blasco Ibañez does not deal with the liberals and conservatives, one subject on which both authors have written considerably is anarchy. In several of Pío Baroja's

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<sup>5</sup>Pío Baroja, César o Nada (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, 1920), p. 362.

novels it is offered as solution for political corruption, while Blasco Ibañez shows the many attempts to overthrow the existing order. The greater part of Pío Baroja's Aurora Roja is concerned with different attitudes towards anarchy as expressed by a rebellious individualist, a humanitarian, and an advocate of general destruction.

Manuel, the protagonist, who is not active in the group of anarchists, mentions that anarchy seems all right to him if its reforms come right away, but he cannot see the use in just expounding theories. The humanitarian is Manuel's brother, Juan, who expresses his views as follows:

La anarquía. . . no era odio, era cariño, era amor; él deseaba que los hombres se liberasen del yugo de toda autoridad, sin violencia, solo por la fuerza de la razón.<sup>6</sup>

However, his actions do not conform with his words, since he later takes part in a plot to throw a bomb.

The Englishman, Roberto, explains why anarchists exist in Spain and not in Germany and England. The German is a man of order, easy to command and ready to obey, while the Englishman is practical. The Spaniard is an anarchist because he is lazy: ". . . tiene todavía la idea providencial; es anarquista como mañana lo será el moro."<sup>7</sup> The reference to the Englishman is further brought out in La Ciudad de la Niebla. Natalia

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<sup>6</sup>Pío Baroja, Aurora Roja (Madrid: Rafael Caro Raggio, [n.d.]), p. 231

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 131.

and Baltasar discuss anarchism or the Russian Revolution, but the time they have spent in England has changed their views: "El ambiente de Londres había calmado los ardores revolucionarios del anarquista, transformándole en un escéptico."<sup>8</sup>

La Dama Errante also reflects anarchistic leanings. Iturrioz thinks that anarchy will result in a foolish utopia, and that it may be of benefit only as an awakening influence. Anarchy is seen in its active stages in the bomb throwing of Nilo Brull in this novel, and in the strike and subsequent destruction of the distillery by the workers in La Casa de Aizgorri.

The author states yet another idea on anarchy. The anarchists in Aurora Roja had good intentions and under other circumstances, and with a different culture they could have been useful except for the vice of vanity, that made it impossible for them to live peacefully in society. Their vanity consisted in thinking that their logic was the only one possible.

A contradiction very characteristic of the author is shown in Manuel's statements on anarchy and socialism:

De las dos doctrinas que se defendían, la anarquía y el socialismo, la anarquía le parecía más seductora; pero no le veía ningún lado práctico; como religión, estaba bien; pero como sistema político-social, lo encontraba imposible de llevarlo a la práctica.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Pío Baroja, La Ciudad de la Niebla (Londres: Thomas Nelson and Sons, [n.d.]), p. 153.

<sup>9</sup> Pío Baroja, Aurora Roja - 107

Shortly afterwards the author says:

En principio, a Manuel, la teoría socialista le parecía mucho más útil para el obrero que la de los anarquistas.<sup>10</sup>

A further contradiction occurs in La Ciudad de la Niebla where socialism is mentioned as being antagonistic to alcoholism, and yet a tavern owner is a socialist. In Youth and Egotry, the author states his dislike for socialism:

. . . One of the most offensive things about Socialists, which is more offensive than their pedantry, than their charlatanry, than their hypocrisy, is their inquisitorial instinct for prying into other people's lives. . . .<sup>11</sup>

The authors are opposed on their ideas of communism, Pío Baroja against and Blasco Ibáñez for it. Pío Baroja states that, "Communism is a doctrine of submission, devised for the barracks or a convent. What sort of liberty can Communism offer?"<sup>12</sup> In both La Bodega and La Catedral, Blasco Ibáñez speaks favorably of communism. Salvatierra, the revolutionist, in the former novel, speaks of communism as of an ideal world which would provide happiness and spiritual peace for men: "Los males del presente eran una consecuencia de la desigualdad."<sup>13</sup> The author is more forceful in La Catedral:

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>11</sup>Pío Baroja, Youth and Egotry, p. 230.

<sup>12</sup>Pío Baroja, "Mistakes of the Spanish Republic," Living Age, CCCLI (January, 1937), 423.

<sup>13</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, La Bodega (Valencia: Prometeo, 1919), p. 12.



. . . El comunismo era la santa aspiración de la humanidad, el ensueño divino del hombre desde que comenzó a pensar, en los albores de la civilización. . . .<sup>14</sup>

In La Bodega, Salvatierra advocates the overthrow of the existing power. The farm workers go on strike and finally meet to march on the city of Jerez. Rumors current are that the Civil Guards are on their side and that Salvatierra is in the city waiting to assist them. Their project is doomed from the beginning by a lack of organization. When a leader fails to arrive, most of the workers leave but a few go to the city, where they do not receive the anticipated support. Bowed down by submission and cowardice, on their way through the city, they repeatedly state that they would attack the rich if they only had them out in open country. Soon they are surrounded by Civil Guards sent to protect the wealthy land owners, and many workers are killed or imprisoned. The author remarks that this uprising shows the instinct of the race, which is incapable of group action. They are only strong when each individual functions according to his own inspiration. After this occurrence, the farm laborers want to hear no more about revolution. They are content with an increase of a mere half real.

In The Intruder, the idea of revolution is presented early by Dr. Aresti, and continued throughout the novel. He

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<sup>14</sup>Blasco Ibañez, La Catedral (Valencia: Prometeo, 1919), p. 294.

deplores the worker's lack of enthusiasm for the revolutionary idea: "the people could not see beyond the advantages of increasing their wages by a few reals and working a few hours less."<sup>15</sup> The workers finally riot during a celebration staged by the Jesuits, but are defeated by soldiers hired by the Jesuits for protection.

The suggestions offered to remedy the evils existing in Spain are not constructive. Both Blasco Ibáñez and Pío Baroja show the hopelessness of attempts to better the Spanish way of life. Although Manuel is successful in Aurora Roja, only his problem, and not that of the masses is resolved. Several times the author suggests that the individual's best solution is to leave Spain. In El Arbol de la Ciencia, he describes an inventor who is forced to leave Spain and go to Belgium for recognition of his inventions. María succumbs to tradition in La Ciudad de la Niebla. In Blasco Ibáñez' novels, La Bodega and The Intruder, the workers fail to achieve their goals. However, a more hopeful suggestion is introduced in La Catedral, in the statement that the progress of humanity may be achieved through the application of science in agriculture, in manufacturing, and in the arts and crafts.

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<sup>15</sup>Blasco Ibáñez, The Intruder, translated by Mrs. W. A. Gillespie (New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Inc., 1928), p.123.

## PART IV

### CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation of the costumbrista novels in the Valencian, Basque, and Madrid regions and of the propaganda novels in the social, moral, economic, and political area, results in the conclusion that Blasco Ibáñez has given a more comprehensive treatment than Pío Baroja.

The costumbrista group are judged from the standpoint of the author's achievement of the apparent purpose of the novel, including tone and realistic approach, and the portrayal and development of character. These novels give a picture of the region through a primary and subordinate emphasis on setting and incident, respectively. Although Pío Baroja has succeeded in using detail relevant to incident, since his novels border on the picaresque, Blasco Ibáñez has used detail more pertinent to both setting and incident. In his novel, La Barraca, Blasco Ibáñez has depicted the Valencian farming region as it affects the lives of the inhabitants. Pío Baroja, on the other hand, in Zalacaín el Aventurero, has made the setting incidental to the many adventures of the protagonist. The Basque villages enumerated become a categorical list of names. In Blasco Ibáñez' novel, even the ambitions of the characters, as expressed in cultivating farm land, are related to the setting. Zalacaín's desire for glory

and wealth are not affected by his surroundings. In Flor de Mayo, the sea dominates the lives of the people of the region, while in Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, as in Zalacaín el Aventurero, the adventures of Shanti and Juan de Aguirre, are given more importance than the setting. Similarly Pío Baroja concentrates on Manuel's series of masters in the trilogy, "La Lucha por la Vida," while Blasco Ibáñez shows the influence of environment on Maltrana. The novels in which the distilling industry forms the background of the book, La Bodega and La Casa de Aizgorri, afford a striking example of Pío Baroja's omission of pertinent detail. Blasco Ibáñez includes a thorough description of the distillery, while Pío Baroja only mentions that the distillery is in a ruined condition.

Furthermore, Blasco Ibáñez writes about a greater variety of subjects pertinent to a region. The best comparison can be made in the Basque novels of the two authors. While Pío Baroja considers two subjects not mentioned by Blasco Ibáñez, individualism in Zalacaín el Aventurero and stubbornness in Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, Blasco Ibáñez in one novel, The Intruder, has given the most interesting and complete treatment of customs, including the trials of oxen, the eating, the blasting, the wood-chopping, and the song contests, all important to an understanding of the region and its inhabitants.

The tone of the two authors' novels explains the reason

for the greater interest of Blasco Ibañez' works. The predominant grey tone in Pío Baroja's novels is in keeping with the portrayal of the misery of the lower classes, but this constant emphasis leads to monotony. His novels have the deadening effect of the steady pattering of rain. Blasco Ibañez heightens the effect of the prevailing sordidness by using the contrast of beauty. In La Horda, nature's lovely colors and the drab existence of the main characters are placed side by side, and in The Intruder, the colorful description of Bilbao is contrasted to the picture of the workmen's living quarters in the suburbs. While Blasco Ibañez sees beauty through the cloud of smoke hanging over Bilbao, Pío Baroja never penetrates the fog surrounding London, in La Ciudad de la Niebla. In Sangre y Arena, Blasco Ibañez also sees beauty in the Spanish national sport, bullfighting, while in La Busca, Pío Baroja does not see beyond the horror of the spectacle. In Blasco Ibañez' novels a bright ray of sunlight or a multi-colored rainbow appear in the midst of rain.

Blasco Ibañez' realistic approach does not sink to degradation, although he delineates sordid conditions existing in the regions which are the setting of his novels. For instance, illicit love affairs appear frequently in his novels, and prostitution is mentioned, but examples of incest as in Pío Baroja's La Busca and Mala Hierba are not included. In the former novel, where a baker's son had relations with his

stepmother, a convenient arrangement was made whereby the baker had relations with his sister-in-law. In Mala Hierba, one of the men has relations with his sister. Blasco Ibáñez achieves realism without the inclusion of similar degraded examples.

The main character or characters, as Pascualo and Tonet who are equally important in Flor de Mayo, are sustained in each of Blasco Ibáñez' novels, while in Pío Baroja's novels, the main character often frays out. In the trilogy, "La Lucha por la Vida," Manuel's story is told in the first two novels, while in the third he is overshadowed by his brother, Juan, and in Las Inquietudes de Shanti Andía, Shanti is relegated to a secondary role for the far more interesting story of Juan de Aguirre. Often Pío Baroja appears to tire of his creation before the end of the novel. In La Ciudad de la Niebla, María's return to Spain is disappointing after her affirmations of independence. In Blasco Ibáñez' novels the effects of the setting and of the action on the main characters are steadily built up towards a dramatic conclusion, in which the individual is vitally concerned. Blasco Ibáñez develops his characters so that they live an intense lifetime in one novel. The story of Pío Baroja's characters could be begun or ended at any point, without sacrificing the plot. Setting, incident, and character are so well integrated in Blasco Ibáñez' novels that neither one could be removed or altered without destroying

the novel.

In the final analysis, Pío Baroja's costumbrista novels are summed up by the words of one critic:

Señor Baroja like Goya admirably catches and etches an attitude or a series of actions, but he will not stay to make them more than fugitive impressions; to weave around them an atmosphere which is after all the writer's art.<sup>1</sup>

The propaganda novels of the two authors are considered for the inclusion of various aspects of a subject and examples illustrating an idea, for the more hopeful suggestions, and for the consistency of opinion. The purpose of propaganda is to convincingly present an idea so that others will realize its value. In order to achieve this, it is necessary to cover a subject thoroughly. In La Catedral, The Intruder and La Bodega, Blasco Ibañez deals with the Catholic Church in four areas, education, charity, revenue and family life, while in three novels also, Aurora Roja, La Busca, and La Ciudad de la Niebla, Pío Baroja treats only of the education and charity of the Church. In relation to the harmful effects of alcohol, both Blasco Ibañez and Pío Baroja describe its hereditary influence, but the former also shows its effect on men's actions and the tragedy that may result, and its abuse by the rich to control the poor. Blasco Ibañez uses examples to make his propaganda more conclusive, as is especially evident in the

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<sup>1</sup>Aubrey F. G. Bell, Contemporary Spanish Literature (revised edition; New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1925) pp. 117-18.

economic propaganda. While Pío Baroja mentions the evils resulting from the ownership of land by the wealthy, as his main characters pass through a section of Spain, Blasco Ibañez singles out the Andalusian farm workers and dwells on their living and working conditions as representative of the general trend in Spain. The presentation is more vivid through the association of character with the ideas expressed.

Neither author has mapped out a definite program of reform in the corrupt social, moral, economic, and political fields in Spain. Their purpose is to awaken the reader to a realization of the need for change. They show attempts at reform by various means and the resulting failure through lack of unity and organization. Although neither author has given a solution for the existing problems, Blasco Ibañez has stated the most constructive suggestions, in the hopeful attitude that education of the lower classes and the development of science and its practical application will be important in bettering the lot of the workers.

Inconsistencies which appear in Pío Baroja's novels are not noticeable in Blasco Ibañez' propaganda. The former detracts from the forceful presentation of his ideas by negating statements made previously. He appears to be unsure of or indifferent to what is the right solution, so he presents more than one. This is indicated by the example in Aurora Roja.



where Manuel advocates and also attacks socialism and anarchy. An instance of the consistence of Blasco Ibáñez' novels is the delineation of Gabriel Luna in La Catedral. He remains true to his beliefs of the necessity of a gradual change in the existing order in Spain. He dies trying to prevent an attempted robbery, which would only temporarily alleviate the misery of a few workers. This makes for a more interesting, as well as a more convincing novel.

The test of Blasco Ibáñez' appeal is his ability to create an illusion of life through characters and scenes representative of a region. He is able to give more varied and vivid pictures of the Basque region in one novel, that is largely propaganda, than Pío Baroja has done in his several costumbrista novels. The power of his novels stems from the color and intensity of which they are composed. Each of Blasco Ibáñez' costumbrista and propaganda novels can be read with increased appreciation through the forcefulness and vigor of presentation. The sense of actuality characteristic of his novels, makes Blasco Ibáñez a writer whose appeal is universal.

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