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Boston University

BOSTON UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

Dissertation

**ON THE EDGE:
LIMINAL SPACES IN THE NOVELS OF BENITO PÉREZ GALDÓS**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my first Spanish teacher Rick Newton whose energy, creativity, and genuine love for his students will be with me always.

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I would like to extend my gratitude to those who have helped me to realize this project. To my advisor, Dr. Alan Smith, for his wisdom, thoughtfulness, and masterful editing skills I am forever indebted. I am privileged to have worked with such a distinguished Galdosian scholar. This work would also have never come to fruition without the careful consideration of Dr. James Iffland, who helped me on my way to understanding the world of carnival. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Casa-Museo Pérez Galdós for allowing me full access to the *Fortunata y Jacinta* galley sheets, research that not only proved invaluable to this study, but that also granted me an intimate connection to the author himself. I am similarly appreciative to the Houghton Library of Harvard University where I spent many hours analyzing the *Fortunata y Jacinta* manuscript. This project has been a labor of great love that would have otherwise been impossible without the help of so many others.

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Boston University Graduate School of Arts and Sciences, 2019

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ABSTRACT

Liminal spaces in Benito Pérez Galdós's novels offer profound insights into the society, characters, and practices of representation in his art. By examining settings that lie at the intersection between public and private, domestic and commercial, interior and exterior, such as balconies, display windows, patios, and corridors, this dissertation reveals unexplored aspects of Galdós's work.

In-between spaces determine the social reality of many Galdosian characters. For example, balconies and *miradores* show the importance of the facade of a home as a projection of bourgeois wealth. The windows of middle-class homes blur the line between domestic and commercial practices, as merchant families displayed goods in that space. The development of the display window transforms the public space of the street into a shop, forever changing the way characters navigate their urban surroundings. When middle-class characters visit the lower-class space of the *casa de corredor*, class tensions and inequalities become apparent. The narrative gaze, drawn to children as they play on the patio, reveals the lack of basic resources such as bread and water available to the lower class.

Liminal spaces also communicate the fears and desires of Galdosian characters. Display windows, at once transparent and reflective, play a role in the identity formation of the characters who stare into them and observe their own image superimposed onto exhibited goods. In some cases, the balcony places characters on the edge of death as they consider suicide in the hope of regaining autonomy in their lives. For other characters, windows and balconies offer insight into their hidden fantasies, as they view the street from their home, filtering their observations through their own imagination.

Lastly, the balcony is an essential space for characters to view and perform spectacle and for Galdós's fiction to consider its own narrative discourse. Galdós's characters take part in carnivalesque rituals on balconies and patios that directly oppose ecclesiastical norms. As they observe and interpret the misfortune of other characters on and from balconies, Galdós's fiction itself becomes performative, pointing to the metafictional function of liminal space in his art.

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Introduction

When reading Benito Pérez Galdós's novels, one becomes attuned to the rhythms in his works, the repetition of themes, language, and characters that make his text come to life. The inspiration for this dissertation is drawn from one very specific textual design: the presence of liminal spaces in many key scenes in Galdós's novelistic universe. Throughout his novels, balconies, windows, corridors, and patios serve as sites of encounter between the individual characters and the society in which they live as well as with their own selves, a dynamic common ground of fiction and history, of mimesis and metaphor.

There are several questions that motivate this study. First, I consider the social implications of liminal spaces. How do "in-between" spaces present separations and tensions between classes that existed in Galdós's Madrid? I also examine the connection between space and character development. What role do "in-between" spaces have in communicating the fears, desires, and ambitions of Galdós's characters? Lastly, I consider how liminal space portrays spectator and spectacle, at times blurring the difference between the two, making characters interpreters of their own novel.

Many authors have richly informed this thesis. María Rosa Cervera Sardá's work¹ on the social class and architecture in nineteenth-century Madrid has proven vital to understand the social role of the balcony during the historical period of Galdós's writing.

¹*El hierro en la arquitectura madrileña del siglo XIX*

Ángel Bahamonde Magro's insight into the mechanisms of Spain's ruling middle class² illuminates the social tensions represented in the liminal spaces of Galdós's novels. Bridget Aldaraca's work on the role of feminine identity³ has also served as a reference for the significance of the shop window on female characters. Mikhail Bakhtin's seminal work⁴ as well as Julio Caro Baroja's studies on carnivalesque traditions⁵ have helped to shape my thoughts on spectacle as portrayed in liminal spaces by Galdós. Many other theorists have also helped build the foundations for my work, among them Michel Foucault and his considerations of liminal spaces⁶, Isobel Armstrong and her analysis of glass in Victorian literature⁷, and Rachel Bowlby and her study of architectural space, identity, and consumption⁸.

Among the criticism specific to Galdós, Akiko Tsuchiya⁹ and Teresa Fuentes's¹⁰ insights into marginalized characters, Farris Anderson's studies on urban space¹¹, and James Whiston's analysis of the *Fortunata and Jacinta* manuscript¹² have all helped to lay the groundwork for this study. Furthermore, my direct study of the A and B manuscripts and galley sheets of *Fortunata y Jacinta* has also served as a valuable resource for understanding Galdós's artistic process, drawing my attention to the author's purpose on multiple occasions.

² *Burguesía, especulación y cuestión social en el Madrid del siglo XIX*

³ *El Ángel Del Hogar: Galdós and the Ideology of Domesticity in Spain*

⁴ *Rabelais and His World*

⁵ *El carnaval (análisis histórico-cultural)*

⁶ "Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias"

⁷ *Victorian Glassworlds: Glass Culture and the Imagination 1830-1880*

⁸ *Just Looking: Consumer Culture in Dreiser, Gissing, and Zola*

⁹ *Marginal Subjects: Gender and Deviance in Fin-De-Siècle Spain*

¹⁰ *Visions of Filth: Deviancy and Social Control in the Novels of Galdós*

¹¹ "Madrid y el espacio de *Miau*"

¹² *The Practice of Realism: Change and Creativity in the Manuscript of Galdós's Fortunata y Jacinta.*

This study is organized thematically into three chapters. The first chapter, “The Social Meaning of Liminal Space,” begins with an analysis of the social significance of the balcony in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. The balcony, as a fixture of the facade of many buildings in Madrid, was particularly important as a mark of social status as Madrid’s middle class invented ways to visually represent a new social hierarchy and project their material wealth to the public. This is particularly evident in Galdós’s Madrid through the depiction of the balconies of the home of the upper middle-class Santa Cruz family. Furthermore, the introduction of the *mirador*, a glass-encased balcony imported from England, served as a privileged space both historically and in Galdós’s fiction. Beyond its function as a prestigious element of a facade, the *mirador* is also a space where middle-class women gossip and reveal secrets that inform the reader.

This chapter also studies the changing urban landscape of Galdós’s Madrid as the merchant class begins to mold the city in its image. I trace the transformation of the window as a domestic space to one that erases the barrier between public and commercial space, connecting passersby to goods without them ever having to enter a shop. The invention of the shop window forever changes the way Galdosian characters interact with the space they inhabit, and points to a new age of consumerism.

Lastly, this chapter also explores lower-class liminal spaces, specifically, the patios and corridors of the *corrala*, buildings that housed poor communities in Madrid, as represented in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. In this novel, the hidden world of the lower class is revealed through the perspective of two middle-class characters who step foot into the shared spaces of the *corrala*, or *casa de corredor*. Through the depiction of the children

who play in the decrepit hallways and muddy patios of the *corrala*, Galdós depicts grave social tensions and injustices inherent in his bourgeois readers' usually unseen world.

Chapter Two, "The Character in Liminal Space," examines the role of liminal space in the formation of character identity in Galdós's Madrid. The first section considers the display window as a device for shaping and configuring the desires and ambitions of Isidora Rufete in *La desheredada*. The transparent yet reflective quality of the window makes visual consumption an act of identity formation, imprinting material objects onto the very soul of Galdosian characters. In addition, the elaborate portrayal of the goods in the display window aided by the use of new technology, such as gas lighting and larger panels of glass, provoke the imagination and fantasies of our author's characters.

The next section of this chapter explores the balcony as the site of consciousness and conscience in the characters in *Ángel Guerra*, *Miau*, and the *Torquemada* tetralogy. In each novel, characters contemplate life and death from the balcony, and consider suicide as an option to escape oppressive domestic and social circumstances from that space. For these characters, the balcony represents freedom, allowing them to make their own decisions despite the unfortunate aspects of their lives that have stripped them of their autonomy and left them hopeless.

We also trace the potent imagination of Maximiliano Rubín as represented on the balcony in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. As a marginalized character, what Maxi observes from the balcony as a child shapes his fantasies and identity. After falling in love with Fortunata, however, the balcony becomes a space in which Maxi reveals his greatest

hopes and fears, adoring Fortunata as she occupies the balcony and anxiously searching for her in the street from that very space when she is outside of their home.

Finally, this chapter considers the balcony as a narrative space. Máximo Manso of *El amigo Manso* narrates the actions of other characters in the novel, and the balcony serves a key space where he assumes the role of storyteller. In *El amigo Manso*, the balcony reveals intimate relationships, secrets, and hidden emotions.

Chapter Three, “Liminal Space and Spectacle in Galdós’s Novels,” explores the role of balcony as both a performative and observational space. The first two sections of the chapter focus on carnivalesque spectacle in liminal spaces. The balcony of the Troya home in *Doña Perfecta* is a space where women ridicule, insult, and attack other characters, creating a carnivalesque atmosphere that challenges the religious and patriarchal norms established in the provincial setting of the novel. Similarly, in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the marginalized character Mauricia la Dura creates a carnivalesque spectacle through foul language and violence. However, she does so within a religious institution in Madrid, and her carnivalesque actions present the *mundo al revés* as they defy and stymie the reformatory intentions of the convent.

The next section considers the balcony as a meditative space where characters portray the spectacles of their lives through their own thoughts. This is particularly true of Doña Lupe in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, a middle-class woman who perceives the balcony as a source of entertainment. When the street she lives on is devoid of human activity, Doña Lupe turns inward to contemplate the dramatic events of her own life, interweaving

current events of the novel with her past memories. Galdós thus presents the human mind as spectacle, offering insight into the cognitive processes of one of his characters.

The final section of this work considers the spectacle of death as observed from the balcony in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. As several characters observe the death of Mauricia la Dura, each reacts in their own way. Thus, by shifting the focus of the scene from the spectacle to the spectator, the balcony becomes a space for metafictional representation as the characters interpret the very fiction that they inhabit.

The aim of this dissertation is to consider elements of Galdós's fiction that have previously been unexplored, and in doing so, help to better understand how we, as humans, construct our idea of spatial reality. The scenes that take place at the intersection of supposedly oppositional concepts make evident that Galdós's fiction functions to upend established dichotomies and encourages us to question our preconceived notions of the world around us.

Chapter 1: The Social Meaning of Liminal Space

In a time of political, social, and economic upheaval, Galdós narrates the transformation of Madrid's society in the nineteenth century. A telling aspect of his characterization is his depiction of the architectural design of the city, and in particular, of the in-between spaces that defy categorization and meet at the intersection between public and private, domestic and commercial, material and spiritual, tangible and imagined, which reveal the shifting cultural values and class tensions of a society in crisis.

This chapter will begin by exploring how the balcony, a fundamental feature of bourgeois¹³ architecture, projected wealth and power, as exemplified, for example, in the balconies of the Santa Cruz and Arnaiz homes in *Fortunata y Jacinta* (1887/1888). The bourgeoisie also created new architectural liminal spaces that emerged in the nineteenth century. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós describes the *mirador*, a balcony elaborated with

¹³In this dissertation the terms *middle class* and *bourgeoisie* will be used interchangeably to refer to the social class in Madrid that did not belong to the peasantry, clergy, nor nobility. Franco Moretti writes: “The bourgeois came into being somewhere in the middle, yes- he ‘was not a peasant or a serf, but he was also not a noble,’ as Wallenstein puts it – but that middlingness was precisely what he wished to overcome: born in the ‘middle state’ of early modern England, Robinson Crusoe rejects his father’s idea that it is ‘the best state in the world,’ and devotes his whole life to going beyond it. Why then settle on a designation that returns this class to its indifferent beginnings, rather than acknowledge its successes? What was at stake, in the choice of ‘middle class’ over ‘bourgeois’? [...] In the Google Books corpus, ‘middle class,’ ‘middle classes,’ and ‘bourgeois’ appear to have been more or less equally frequent between 1800 and 1825; but in the years immediately preceding the 1832 Reform Bill – when the relationship between social structure and political representation moves to the center of public life – ‘middle class’ or ‘middle classes’ become suddenly two or three times more frequent than ‘bourgeois.’ Possibly, because ‘middle class’ was a way to dismiss the bourgeoisie as an independent group, and instead look at it from above, entrusting it with a task of political containment. Then, once the baptism had occurred, and the new term had solidified, all sorts of consequences (and reversals) followed: though ‘middle class’ and ‘bourgeois’ indicated exactly the same social reality, for instance, they created around it very different associations: once placed ‘in the middle,’ the bourgeoisie could appear as a group that was itself partly subaltern, and couldn’t really be held responsible for the way of the world. And then, ‘low,’ ‘middle,’ and ‘upper’ formed a continuum where mobility was much easier to imagine than among incommensurable categories – ‘classes’ – like peasantry, proletariat, bourgeoisie, or nobility” (7-8).

the addition of a glass enclosure, as an upper middle-class space, which identifies and connects women belonging to the upper middle class, but also has an important role in the imagination of lower-class women in the novel.

This chapter also considers representations of the *escaparate*, or store window. The impact of new business practices on the lives of characters in the novel is depicted through the mercantile transformation of windows of the home into store displays. Throughout *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the boundaries between domestic and commercial, exterior and interior are blurred as windows become displays that connect the exterior space of the street with the interior of the home and shop.

Lastly, this chapter will analyze the liminal space of the *casa de corredor* in both *Fortunata y Jacinta* and *Torquemada en la hoguera*. The *casa de corredor* or *corrala*, a space with interior patios and balconies, represents a microcosm of rural, communal living within the city limits. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós depicts class tensions and inequalities by describing how the women and children of the *casa de corredor* interact with the space they inhabit. The representation of the *casa de corredor* in *Torquemada en la hoguera* (1889), depicts the greed of its middle-class property owners who value turning a profit over the living conditions of their tenants. Through the interaction of characters from disparate social backgrounds in these liminal spaces, Galdós offers an intimate view into the suffering caused by a corrupt economic system.

1.1 Reimagining the Capital: The Bourgeois Facade in *Fortunata y Jacinta*

In the early nineteenth century, economic crisis and a newly installed liberal government led to both the social and architectural reimagining of Madrid. The seizure and subsequent redistribution of ecclesiastical land by prime minister Juan Álvarez Mendizábal in 1836, as an attempt to address state debt and instill progressive values, served as a catalyst for the rise of the middle class. Although the practice of disentanglement or *desamortización* (the selling of church-owned land) had taken place throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, monumental changes occurred under Mendizábal's rule. As Mary Vincent explains: "the amount of land that changed hands after 1836 dwarfed any earlier transfers: an estimated 30 per cent of the land area of Castile changed hands as a result of disentail" (18).

Disentanglement occurred not only in rural areas, but also within the city limits of Madrid, where the Church previously owned a significant amount of land designated for convents and other religious institutions. Ángel Bahamonde explains that the vast majority of the buyers of ecclesiastical property in Madrid were members of the upper middle class whose access to capital gave them the ability to purchase urban property:

No hay que olvidar que aunque existió un número considerable de compradores, también lo fue la concentración de ventas: 147 compradores adquieren 76,06 por ciento de las ventas totales. Para la gran burguesía, estos bienes conseguidos a bajo precio no se limitan a ser una fuente de rentas, sino algo más importante: un objeto de especulación. Viejos conventos y toda suerte de edificaciones

comienzan a demolerse para construir sobre sus solares nuevas casas donde albergar la emigración, que se acelera por aquellos años. (28)

The result was a vast reconstruction of Madrid by the middle class looking to take advantage of the real estate market created by the city's population increase and a burgeoning capitalist economy.

The reconstruction of Madrid was especially important in defining the social position of the city's newly-minted middle class. Consumerist values and a lack of historical prestige held by their aristocratic counterparts meant that the middle class relied to an important degree on visual cues to determine social worth. As Collin McKinney states: "with the spread of urbanization, industrialization, and consumer capitalism, everything (and everyone) in Madrid was in circulation. Economic conditions in the nineteenth century provided a greater degree of social mobility in Spain's major cities than had previously been experienced, and with this mobility came a greater sensitivity to one's visual identity" (48-49). The 'visual identity' referred to here by McKinney applied not only to one's personal appearance, but also that of one's home.

The desire of the bourgeoisie to project an attractive, prestigious appearance meant that the facade of the house played a vital role in determining social status. During Isabelline and restoration Spain, Madrid's cityscape underwent a radical architectural transformation, favoring ornamentation and decoration while incorporating the use of fashionable materials such as glass and iron. María Rosa Cervera Sardá comments on the factors that contributed to the architectural beautification that occurred in nineteenth-century Spain and their role in the creation of a new social hierarchy:

Varias son las causas que van a influir en la conformación de la arquitectura isabelina. En primer lugar, un mejor estado económico del país; en segundo, un crecimiento generalizado del gusto por el ornato y la decoración; en tercer lugar, un más fácil acceso al adorno debido a la producción industrializada y, por último, un deseo de manifestar al exterior el poder económico y social, lo que lleva implícito una idea de jerarquía. (108)

As a key feature of the facade of many homes in Madrid, the middle class looked to the balcony to determine a family's social status. The appearance of the balcony was so important, in fact, that Cervera Sardá even sees an analogous connection between balconies, and *miradores* (enclosed balconies), with the aristocratic tradition of the coat of arms: “en cierto modo, los miradores, los balcones principales, los portales y las rejas de cerramiento se convirtieron en símbolo de la burguesía, al igual que el blasón lo había sido para la aristocracia” (186). The balcony represented both the middle-class affinity for more luxurious architectural forms, and also symbolically made manifest the social prestige of a family.

In *Fortunata y Jacinta* one of the most noteworthy aspects of the Santa Cruz home is its sheer number of balconies. In the initial description of the Santa Cruz house, the narrator makes a point of mentioning that the home is enormous and has twelve balconies:

Los de Santa Cruz vivían en su casa propia de la calle de Pontejos, dando frente a la plazuela del mismo nombre; finca comprada al difunto Aparisi, uno de los socios de la Compañía de Filipinas. Ocupaban los dueños el principal, que era

inmenso, con doce balcones a la calle y mucha comodidad interior. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 353)

A house with twelve balconies would surely have inspired awe in any passerby and defines the Santa Cruz family as belonging to the upper middle class.

The description of a similarly large house from *El amigo Manso* helps put into perspective the social implications of a facade with such a vast number of balconies within Galdós's novelistic universe. When Máximo Manso's brother, José María, comes back from the Americas, he spends a portion of his newly acquired wealth on a mansion in the center of Madrid (modern-day Malasaña). The facade of the mansion is so striking that when Manso mentions the vast number of balconies to a group of lower-class bystanders in the street it causes them to open their mouths in shock: “‘Oiga señor,’ añadió el autor de los días de Regustiana. ‘¿Es casa grande?’ ‘Tan grande que tiene nueve balcones y más de cuarenta puertas.’ Cinco bocas se abrieron de par en par” (*El amigo Manso*, 327). The Santa Cruz house has three more balconies than José María's mansion, indicating the striking impression the home would leave on all who would gaze upon it.

The location of the house on the “principal” floor also distinguishes the Santa Cruz family as wealthy and successful. Cervera Sardá explains the social meaning implicit in the occupancy of a second floor apartment: “En la edificación doméstica aparece siempre un primer piso principal o ‘planta noble,’ residencia del propietario de la finca o de persona adinerada, al que siguen otras plantas normalmente de alquiler, de menor calidad y dimensiones ya que en muchas ocasiones se subdividen en mayor número de viviendas” (Cervera Sardá, 109). Second floor apartments were the largest in

most buildings in Madrid in the nineteenth century, and because they occupied the entire floor rather than being subdivided as the apartments in the stories above, had the largest number of balconies. Thus, the Santa Cruz family's wealth is represented by the size of their house, which in turn is made apparent to the public by the balconies.

Furthermore, due to laws pertaining to facade construction, second floor homes were allowed to build larger balconies and therefore flaunted more impressive exteriors than the homes in higher floors of the same building. Cervera Sardá explains how the legal restrictions imposed on balcony construction resulted in a hierarchical relationship between floors of a building:

El balcón es pues un importante elemento jerarquizador, tanto de un edificio con respecto a otro como de las diversas plantas de una misma arquitectura. Las propias ordenanzas condicionan la jerarquía vertical al establecer en sus normas variaciones de las dimensiones según las alturas [...]. La degradación de las dimensiones de los voladizos desde la planta noble a la última, llegando ésta a ser en muchas ocasiones, y al igual que el entresuelo, un mero antepecho empotrado en el muro, es un invariante de la edificación decimonónica. (186)

Cervera Sardá cites municipal orders issued in 1884 stating specifications that limited the distance the balcony was allowed to protrude from the facade of the home: "El vuelo máximo de los balcones, a contar del paramento de fachada en todos casos se considerará como tal el del zócalo, será en calles de primer orden de 0,90 metros en el piso principal, 0,75 metros en el segundo, 0,50 metros en el tercero y 0,35 metros en la cuarta o entresuelo" (186). As evidenced by this ordinance, the second floor balconies were

permitted, by law, to reach out three times further than balconies on the fourth floor.

These legal stipulations contributed to the social hierarchy of buildings in Madrid in the nineteenth century and increased the importance of the balcony as a visual marker representative of social worth.

Therefore, the Santa Cruz house is defined not only by the number of balconies in its facade, but also by the superior size of the balconies on the second floor that extend out towards the street farther than those of the other homes in the same building. Galdós offers little initial detail of the design of the balconies and their general appearance, implying their noble appearance simply by mentioning the second floor location. Galdós counts on his readers to imagine the balconies as an ostentatious feature of the home through their own experience of nineteenth-century architecture and its markers of social status.

Changes made in the galley sheets and manuscripts to the number of balconies of the Santa Cruz home suggest that Galdós attempted to find a balance between emphasizing the family's wealth and creating a believable representation of the facade. Galdós put careful consideration into the number of balconies he would attribute to the Santa Cruz house, ultimately deciding to tamper the exaggerated size he initially imagined, modifying, in B¹⁴, the number of balconies from sixteen to fourteen, a number he further reduced to twelve in the galley sheets¹⁵ (B 1, 308 and G 1B, 30). Galdós may

¹⁴ The existing manuscripts of *Fortunata y Jacinta* consist of two hand written versions referred to as the Alpha and Beta manuscripts of the text. In this dissertation we will refer to them as the A and B manuscripts.

¹⁵ Before publishing the first edition of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós made further edits to the B manuscript in the galley sheets, a preliminary printed version of the novel that we will refer to as G.

have made this change due to the fact that the representation of a house with sixteen balconies stretches the limits of verisimilitude while twelve balconies still clearly presents the vast wealth of the family.

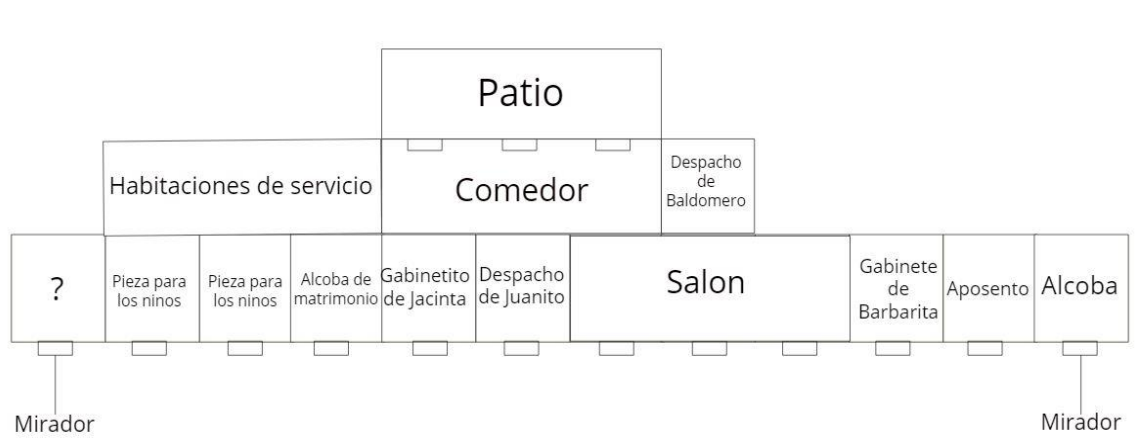
Although Galdós decreased the number of balconies of the Santa Cruz home in the B manuscript and the galley sheets, he also decided to change the location of the home from the third floor to the second or ‘principal’ floor of their building, thus amplifying the impressive nature of its balconies. James Whiston explains that at A Galdós described the family as living in two separate floors: “In the Alpha version, Bárbara and Baldomero lived on the second floor of the house, letting the first, principal floor to a diplomat so the move to the more spacious quarters of the principal floor in the final version allowed Galdós the ironic resource of using space that was too large for Baldomero and Bárbara but too small for them and their ‘children.’” (Whiston 78). In addition to forcing the two couples into a more communal living situation, the decision to move the family to the second floor is a sign of their social privilege, in part due to the potential for having larger balconies. This change made it possible for Galdós to decrease the number of balconies while still emphasizing the family’s economic power.

The layout of the Santa Cruz home emphasizes publicly its inhabitant’s wealth. The narrator details that the majority of the rooms of the home have balconies connecting them to the street, which configures a long and narrow domicile:

La casa era tan grande, que los dos matrimonios vivían en ella holgadamente y les sobraba espacio. Tenían un salón algo anticuado, con tres balcones. Seguía por la izquierda el gabinete de Barbarita, luego otro aposento, después la alcoba. A la

derecha del salón estaba el despacho de Juanito, así llamado no porque este tuviese nada que despachar allí, sino porque había mesa con tintero y dos hermosas librerías [...]. El gabinetito de Jacinta, inmediato a esta pieza, era la estancia más bonita y elegante de la casa [...]. Seguía luego la alcoba del matrimonio joven [...]. La alcoba de los pollos se comunicaba con habitaciones de servicio, y le seguían dos grandes piezas que Jacinta destinaba a los niños [...]. El comedor era interior, con tres ventanas al patio, su gran mesa y aparadores de nogal llenos de finísima loza de China [...]. Asimismo era interior el despacho de Baldomero. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 354-55)

The narrator gives a very detailed description of the home, focusing, for the most part, on the rooms that are visible from the street. A visual representation of the information given by the narrator detailing the layout of the Santa Cruz home provides a helpful image of its long and shallow form:



This image may help to conceptualize that, although the Santa Cruz home is very large, it may seem even larger to the pedestrians in the street. Since the living room has three balconies, each room described as being located either to the left or right of the *salón* can

then be assumed to have a balcony. Furthermore, any room not containing a balcony is labelled as ‘interior’ by the narrator. Therefore, it is evident that the house is also very well connected to the outside world, as every room designated for use by the Santa Cruz family has a window or balcony linking it to a public space, be it the patio shared by the other homes in the building or the street below. Certainly, the rooms most commonly used by the family, with the aforementioned exception of Baldomero’s office, all allow for views of the street. Later in this chapter, we will explain the labelling of the two end balconies as *miradores* in the image above. It is, at any rate, markedly clear that in the novel the balcony serves as a status symbol, demarcating the Santa Cruz family in the upper strata of the middle class, not just to their friends but to any character that sees their home from the street.

The narrow design of the Santa Cruz home with its impressive facade and multiple balconies was commonly used in nineteenth-century Madrid to exaggerate wealth. Whiston points out that the Santa Cruz home’s design was similar to that of many real Madrid homes in the nineteenth century:

Although the manuscript versions of the number of balconies onto the square are indecisive, Galdós may well have been aware of what Pedro Ortiz Amentol’s indefatigable empirical scrutiny of the topography of central Galdosian Madrid has revealed to us in this case, namely, that the house deceives the eye, being much smaller inside than one would imagine from the outside, and more triangular than rectangular in shape, in part because of its hilly location. (78)

Galdós recreates the effect of the impressive facade in narrative form by providing detail on the rooms of the home with balconies while leaving the interior rooms undescribed. The narrator's lack of description of interior rooms allows the reader to imagine a enormous home into existence. The servants' quarters are not described beyond the fact that they exist, and there is no mention of the kitchen or other possible interior rooms. In fact, in B, Galdós had written a description of a vestibule and a mention of the hallways of the home that he decided to cross out: "Además, en el recibimiento, que era grandísimo y no muy claro, se puso una estufa de nuevo sistema, que mantenía un olor terrible en todos los pasillos" (B 1, 315). This passage would have given a sense of the inner workings of the home, along with details such as the temperature of the interior rooms and their (foul) smells, however Galdós ultimately decided to leave these spaces undescribed. Just as the interior of the house is hidden from view to people in the street, it is also left unrevealed by the narrative, letting the reader define the interior of the home using their own imagination.

A change Galdós made to the description of Baldomero's office also supports the idea that he determined to reduce the narrative attention dedicated to the interior rooms of the home. In the galley sheets Galdós crossed out a passage describing Baldomero's interior office: "pieza muy abrigada con sillería de pana verde, muebles de palosanto, y un reloj magnífico regalo de Barbarita, de esos cuya esfera está en el péndulo y se mueve. Estaba colocado sobre la chimenea, donde jamás se vio lumbre, porque D. Baldomero era enemigo por sistema higiénico de todo especial de calorífero" (G 1B, 32). In eliminating

the detailed descriptions of interior spaces, Galdós draws the reader's attention to the rooms with balconies.

With the same effect of emphasizing the importance of the facade, Galdós limits his descriptions of the home's furnishings. The interior of the home is not portrayed as dilapidated or overly fancy. For example, the furniture in Jacinta's powder room is described in an off-hand manner, and could be "de raso o de felpa...siendo de notar que lo que allí se veía no chocaba por original ni tampoco por rutinario" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 355). Baldomero and Barbarita's bed is dispatched with irreverent humor: "la de los padres parecía andamiaje de caoba con cabecera de morrión y columnas como las de un sagrario de Jueves Santo" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 355). The narrator does not describe the bed as it *is* but rather what it *seems* to be. The two rooms reserved for children are barely described at all, other than to say that they are a heterogeneous mix of furniture from around the home, and that, in fact, the rooms hold more value in Jacinta's imagination than they do in any concrete descriptions: "Hallábanse amuebladas con lo que iba sobrando de los aposentos que se ponían de nuevo, y su aspecto era por demás heterogéneo. Pero el arreglo definitivo de estas habitaciones vacantes existía completo en la imaginación de Jacinta, quien ya tenía previstos hasta los últimos detalles de todo lo que se había de poner allí cuando el caso llegara" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 355).

Although for the most part the rooms with balconies are described in detail, there is one room not mentioned at all in the narration. This omission contributes to the imagined magnitude of the home already amplified by the long, slender design of the apartment. After the narrator mentions that the *salón* has three balconies, he then goes on

to name the following three rooms that are to the left of living room: Bárbara's sitting room, another room, and Bárbara and Baldomero's bedroom. He then describes five rooms that are to the right of the *salón*, bringing the total to eight: Juanito's office (el despacho de Juanito), Jacinta's sitting room (el gabinetito de Jacinta), Juanito and Jacinta's bedroom (la alcoba), and two bedrooms reserved for future children (dos piezas grandes para los niños). Assuming each of the eight rooms has one balcony and the living room has three, eleven of the twelve balconies belong to the rooms mentioned by the narrator in this passage with one balcony remaining. This omission could signal that one of the rooms has more than one balcony; however, the specificity of the enumeration of the three balconies of the *salón* makes that an unlikely answer. It is far more likely that the remaining room is simply left undescribed here. By naming many rooms, while leaving one unidentified the Galdosian narrator allows the reader to fill in the space using their own imagination. The string of rooms listed in succession, though impressive, is incomplete, suggesting that the home is even larger.

1.2. Revealing Secrets: The Balcony *Mirador* of Galdós's Madrid

In Spain, the balcony underwent a physical transformation in the nineteenth century, as glass and iron began to be much more commonly used materials in middle-class architecture. Specifically, an enclosed balcony structure referred to as the *mirador* decorated the facade of many bourgeois homes. Due to the previously mentioned legal restrictions on balcony construction, as well as the high cost of the materials, the *mirador* became a key distinguishing characteristic in the facade of the upper-middle class.

Cervera Sardá explains that the *mirador* was almost exclusively associated with the middle and upper classes: “el mirador [...] es un signo de distinción, siendo su aparición mucho más escasa en la arquitectura doméstica popular que en la destinada a clases medias y altas” (194).

In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the *mirador* represents the social prestige of both the Santa Cruz and Moreno families. Although initially the narrator offers very few details about the facade of the Santa Cruz home beyond the exact number of balconies, eventually he reveals more pertinent information that marks their status as a powerful and wealthy family. When first describing the relationship between Doña Bárbara Santa Cruz and her neighbor, Guillermina Pacheco, the narrator mentions that some of the balconies are, in reality, *miradores*:

De cuantas personas entraban en aquella casa, la más agasajada por toda la familia de Santa Cruz era Guillermina Pacheco, que vivía en la inmediata, tía de Moreno Isla y prima de Ruiz-Ochoa, los dos socios principales de la Antigua banca de Moreno. Los miradores de las dos casas estaban tan próximos, que por ellos se comunicaba doña Bárbara con su amiga, y un toquecito en los cristales era suficiente para establecer la correspondencia. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 371)

The structure and status of the *mirador* is detailed by Cervera Sardá:

El mirador se estructura en dos cuerpos, uno hasta la altura del pasamanos de la balaustrada del balcón que se ajusta plenamente a ella sin más que recubrirlo interiormente con cristal y carpintería de hierro, y otro que nace a partir del pasamanos, y que vuela sobre él, aumentando así las dimensiones, llegando a

proteger el hueco en toda su altura [...]. El mirador se disponía en la fachada situándose en los huecos extremos de la planta principal o de la planta principal y la segunda, quedando los restantes pisos excluidos del uso de este elemento. Sólo más tarde accederán las plantas elevadas al mirador. (Cervera Sardá 138-40)

Since the *mirador* extended the balcony out towards the street the Santa Cruz and Moreno homes are in a sense brought nearer to each other. Considering that the addition of the *mirador* was typically only applied to the second floor, this enclosed balcony marks the Santa Cruz and Moreno homes as socially superior to the apartments on the upper floors of the building.

Galdós links social worth with the *mirador* by deciding to include Bárbara's title when describing how she uses the space. At B Galdós had originally referred to her as Barbarita, but eliminated the diminutive 'ita' and added 'Doña' in the galley sheets changing: "los miradores de las dos casas estaban tan próximos que por ellos se comunicaba *Barbarita* con su amiga" to "los miradores de las dos casas estaban tan próximos que por ellos se comunicaba *Doña Bárbara* con su amiga (emphasis mine) (G 1B, 48). At many points in the galley stage Galdós made alterations to several characters' names, often with the intention not only of avoiding repetition but also of revealing specific aspects of their identities¹⁶. In this case there is an emphasis placed on the formality of Bárbara's title, showing that the *mirador* is a space belonging to respected members of society. Doña Bárbara and Guillermina are both privileged characters who

¹⁶ For example, in the galley sheets Galdós crossed out "Maximiliano" and replaced it with "sietemesino," revealing his premature birth, and subsequently giving a partial explanation for his sickly nature. (G 2B, 20).

gain access to a space reserved for the elite members of the middle class, and Bárbara's title affirms her privileged status.

The alteration of Barbarita's name to Doña Bárbara also focalizes¹⁷ the passage on the exterior of the home while creating both an emotional and physical distance from the character and the space. The description of the home as seen from the exterior reveals that some of the balconies of the home are in fact *miradores*, and also changes the narrative perspective from intimate friend to an observer in the street who perceives the high social status of Barbarita as she occupies the space of the *mirador*. The viewer is both far enough away from her so as to capture the image of the exterior of the home clearly, and too unfamiliar with her to use the intimate diminutive form of her name. The narrative addresses Barbarita with respect using her title because the image of her in the *mirador* perceived from the street depicts her as a member of the upper middle class.

¹⁷ Focalization is defined by Mieke Bal in her work *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative* as separate from narrative voice and therefore a more nuanced term than 'perspective': "[...] it is possible, both in fiction and in reality, for one person to express the vision of another. This is a key feature of language and it happens all the time. When no distinction is made between these two different agents, it is difficult to describe adequately the technique of a text in which something is seen—and that vision is narrated. The imprecisions of such typologies can sometimes lead to absurd formulations or classifications which are too rough-and-ready. To claim, as has been done, that Strether in Henry James' *The Ambassadors* is 'telling his own story,' whereas the novel is written 'in the third person,' is as nonsensical as to claim that the sentence: "Elizabeth saw him lie there, pale and lost in thought," is narrated, from the coma onwards, by the character Elizabeth; that means it is spoken by her. What this sentence does is to present Elizabeth's vision clearly: after all, she does see him lying down. If we examine the current terms from this point of view, only the term *perspective* seems clear enough. This label covers both the physical and psychological points of perception. It does not cover the agent that is performing the action of narration, and it should not do so. Nevertheless, my own preference lies with the term focalization for two reasons and despite justly raised objections to the introduction of unnecessary new terminology. The first reason concerns tradition. Although the word 'perspective' reflects precisely what is meant here, it has come to indicate in the tradition of narrative theory both the narrator and the vision. This ambiguity has affected the specific sense of the word. I also find its use in art history too different from the literary one to maintain it in a theory that has also applicability for visual images" (145-46).

Galdós represents the importance of the addition of glass to the exterior of the balcony as a marker of middle-class status by associating the glass of the *mirador* with Doña Bárbara. A change at the B manuscript shows how Galdós represented the significance of glass in nineteenth-century Spanish architecture by linking sound and memory with class identity. In the A manuscript Galdós had originally written that the two *miradores* of the Moreno and Santa Cruz homes were so close that they nearly touched: “Comunicábanse fácilmente por los balcones miradores, que estaban casi tocándose en la calle de Pontejos” (A, 162). In B Galdós modified the text to read: “Los miradores de las dos casas estaban tan próximos que por ellos se comunicaba Barbarita con su amiga, y un toquecito en los cristales era suficiente para establecer la correspondencia” (B 2, 351). Through the mention of the taps on the glass of the *mirador*, the narrator creates a sonic signature for Doña Bárbara. Clearly, Galdós changed this passage in order to associate the sound of the glass with the correspondence between Guillermina and Bárbara, emphasizing not only their physical proximity and their ability to communicate on the *mirador*, but also the secret code expressed through contact with glass by two upper middle-class women inhabiting a privileged space.

Doña Bárbara’s high social position is confirmed through her depiction in relation to the *mirador*, and this exclusive space also offers insight into the social identity of the complex character of Guillermina Pacheco. Although Guillermina defies many of the expectations attributed to other female characters in the novel, her presence on the *mirador* is important for understanding her place as a member of the middle class. As Scott Dale has indicated, while Guillermina is referred to as a saint throughout the novel,

and in part is defined by her extensive charity work, she nonetheless reflects many social values of the Restoration period middle class. Dale points out that even though Galdós draws inspiration for the creation of Guillermina from Ernestina Manuel de Villena¹⁸, an altruistic woman who dedicated her life to establishing an orphanage, Guillermina herself reflects superficial values typical of middle-class Madrid: “al final, no puede considerarse como una auténtica santa altruista, sino una santa interesada, una burguesa roña que manga el dinero de sus colegas, compañeros y hasta personas que ni conoce” (289).

Guillermina’s use of liminal space reveals the middle-class values she shares with other characters in the novel. As a member of the upper middle-class Moreno family, Guillermina also occupies a principal floor apartment with *miradores* in an adjacent building. When describing the *miradores* of the Moreno and Santa Cruz homes, the narrator introduces Guillermina to the reader, portraying the close personal relationship between the two families as well as the architectural characteristics of their respective houses that mark them as social equals. The narrator even goes on to comment: “Guillermina entraba en aquella casa como en la suya,” suggesting a familiarity in both their friendship and her comfort with navigating upper middle-class space (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 372).

The *mirador* not only facilitates communication between Guillermina and Barbarita; it is also a key symbolic space that defines their shared social values. Galdós represents the *mirador* as a space with a physical boundary that also permits characters to

¹⁸ Dale describes Ernestina Manuel de Villena as: “una famosa y respetada santa-fundadora madrileña que fundó asilos para huérfanos en Madrid durante los años setenta y ochenta [del siglo XIX]” (284).

access sights and sounds existing outside of the domestic domain. Despite the enclosed quality of the *mirador*, Doña Bárbara and Guillermina converse with one another from this space without ever leaving their respective homes. Thus, similar to the open balcony, the *mirador* can be seen as an in-between space, as it is part of the house, but also extends out from it, connecting characters not only with the outside world, but also with characters in other houses. In fact, in B, after the first mention of the *miradores* of both homes, Galdós had originally written a dialogue between Bárbara and Guillermina discussing the need to visit one another that he later decided to cross out: “Otras veces era Barbarita la que transmitía esta parte: ‘Guillermina, vente acá esta noche que tenemos que hablar’” (B 2, 351). At this point in the novel, Galdós clearly thought it best to mention the ongoing correspondence between Guillermina and Bárbara rather than record the actual exchanges that were transpiring. By excluding this passage, Galdós leaves open the possibility in the reader’s imagination for secret conversations without explicitly transcribing their possible specific dialogues, invoking a rich texture of contacts and collusions.

The social implications of the *mirador* are also evident to the lower-class characters in the novel. Fortunata, in particular, is aware of the *mirador* as an upper middle-class space that connects the Santa Cruz and Moreno homes. When Guillermina invites Fortunata to her home, Fortunata’s first thought is of the *miradores* of both homes and the conversations that take place there: “‘Bueno,’ dijo Guillermina; ‘antes de separarnos, quedaremos en algo. ¿Quiere usted ir a mi casa? ¿Sabe usted dónde vivo?’ Fortunata dijo que sí. Santa Cruz le había dicho varias veces que la *rata eclesiástica* vivía

en la casa inmediata a la suya, y que ella y Barbarita se comunicaban por los miradores” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 451). Upon imagining the Moreno home, Fortunata immediately envisions its *miradores* since they stand out as a defining characteristic of upper middle-class homes.

The depiction of the *mirador* as a symbolic representation of upper middle-class status in Fortunata’s mind is affirmed by a change Galdós made at the galley stage in which he altered the text from “ella [Guillermina] y Barbarita se comunicaban por los *hierros de la fachada*” to “se comunicaban por los *miradores*” (emphasis mine) (G 3C, 50). In Fortunata’s imagination, both homes not only have balconies, but boast the impressive architectural feature of the *mirador*. Furthermore, as we shall see, this reference to the *mirador* as a means of communication between Barbarita and Guillermina foreshadows the events that take place once Fortunata sets foot in the Moreno home, with the glass material of the space playing an especially important role in the scene.

The descriptions of the *mirador* as portrayed first by the narrator, then later through Fortunata’s memory, augment the suspense leading up to Fortunata’s meeting with Guillermina in the Moreno home. As Mieke Ball explains: “suspense can be generated by the announcement of something that will occur later, or by temporary silence concerning information which is needed” (164). At this point in the novel, the space of the *mirador* creates an imagined connection between Fortunata and the Moreno and Santa Cruz families. Although she has not physically stepped foot into either home, Fortunata’s intimate relationship with Juanito leads to her knowledge of how Guillermina

and Barbarita use the liminal spaces of their own homes, allowing her (and the reader) to anticipate what will happen in the future.

The suspense of the future meeting is further amplified by the secrets kept from each other by Guillermina and Fortunata. Fortunata does not voice her recollection of the conversation she had with Juanito about the *miradores*, and thus her knowledge on the proximity of the Moreno and Santa Cruz homes is kept hidden from Guillermina, as is Fortunata's emotional response to the possibility of coming into contact with Barbarita and Jacinta. For her part, Guillermina has not revealed her close relationship with Fortunata's rival Jacinta, a secret that heightens suspense when the two meet in the Moreno home. The narrator also keeps the reader in the dark regarding Fortunata's anxiety, with Galdós having crossed out in the galley sheets: "Este recuerdo [del mirador] y la consideración de lo cerca que iba a estar de aquella persona [Jacinta], perturbaron su ánimo" (G 3C, 50). The reader is left to imagine Fortunata's possible feelings at the proposition of meeting Barbarita, heightening the suspense of the anticipated moment.

Thus, the memory linking Fortunata's secret conversation with Juanito and the upper middle-class space of the *mirador* becomes a prolepsis for the scene that will occur later in the novel when Fortunata is in Guillermina's sitting room. In the final chapter of the third part of the novel, entitled 'La idea...la pícaro idea,' Galdós inserts the lower-class protagonist of the novel, Fortunata, into the upper-bourgeois setting of Guillermina's sitting room, with its *mirador*. Fortunata's ongoing affair with Bárbara's son, Juanito Santa Cruz, and her subsequent rivalry with his wife, Jacinta, a source of tension throughout the story, crystallize in this encounter, which is one of the most

theatrical scenes of the novel. Jacinta, against the wishes of Guillermina, hides in the boudoir, as, mistaken for a beggar by a servant, Fortunata is ushered into Guillermina's private sitting room, which features the *mirador* adjacent to the Santa Cruz home.

As the scene progresses, it becomes apparent that the previous mentions of the *miradores* served to prefigure the present action of the novel. Just before Fortunata confesses her idea to have a child with Juanito, Barbarita knocks on the glass of the *mirador* looking for Jacinta. The narrator remarks that Guillermina is about to put an end to Fortunata's outburst when the conversation is interrupted: "Ya tenía la palabra en la boca para despedirla con buen modo, cuando se sintió ruido como de mano golpeando en los cristales de un mirador, y luego una voz que llamaba a Guillermina. Asomose esta. Fortunata oyó claramente la voz de doña Bárbara preguntando: '¿Está ahí Jacinta?'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 465). The communications that take place between Barbarita and Guillermina on the *mirador* appear in three instances in the novel; the narrator's initial description of the *miradores* of the Santa Cruz and Moreno house, in Fortunata's thoughts concerning the two homes, and this specific moment where the imagined conversations now become a reality for both Fortunata and the reader.

Fortunata and Jacinta's presence to what would normally be a private conversation between Barbarita and Guillermina on the *mirador* complicates the communication between the two middle-class women. Guillermina finds herself faced with a choice between lying and telling the truth, ultimately opting for the former: "La santa vaciló antes de dar respuesta. Por fin la dio: 'Jacinta?... No, aquí no está.'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 465). Fortunata's access to the space of the *mirador* embroils

Guillermina further in a web of lies and intrigue. Now, not only does Guillermina conceal Jacinta's presence from Fortunata, but she also keeps both Fortunata and Jacinta hidden from Barbarita. Barbarita's question in the first place, although seemingly benign, implies that Guillermina and Barbarita converse about other characters when in the *miradores*, and that Barbarita uses the conversations as a means of acquiring information on the whereabouts of her daughter-in-law from Guillermina. Thus, the question itself presents a moral paradox for Guillermina: she can either tell the truth and betray Jacinta's trust (in turn causing a conflict), or lie and deceive her friend Barbarita while temporarily avoiding a confrontation between the two women.

Guillermina's emotional reaction to being placed into this moral dilemma shows how the middle-class affinity of using the *mirador* to share and keep secrets contradicts her Christian values. After lying to her friend, Guillermina regrets her actions and is afraid of being punished by God for her sins:

Poco más hablaron las dos damas, y Guillermina volvió al lado de la visita; pero la falsedad que se había visto obligada a decir trastornaba de tal modo su espíritu, que no parecía la misma mujer de siempre, segura, impávida y tan dueña de su palabra como de sus actos. La mentira y el escondite escénico de su amiga pusieronla en la situación más crítica del mundo, porque se había hecho a la verdad, y vivía en ella como los peces en el agua. Estaba la pobre señora, con aquellos escrúpulos, como pez a quien sacan de su elemento, y aun le pasó por el magín la pavorosa idea: ¡pecado mortal! En fin que aquello se tenía que concluir. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 465).

Guillermina identifies as both a member of the middle class as well as an honest Christian woman, and the two conflicting aspects of her social identity become manifest in the *mirador* of the Moreno home.

While the *mirador* serves as a “mediation” of middle-class discourse, for Fortunata it becomes the means for her full expression. Eventually Guillermina can no longer keep up her lie and reveals Jacinta’s presence in the Moreno home, causing a verbal and physical confrontation between the two rivals of Juanito’s affection. In an emotional outburst, Jacinta accuses Fortunata of being a “ladrona,” and Fortunata is unable to contain her violent reaction to the injustices set before her. Precisely at this instant, the light streaming in from the balcony illuminates Fortunata, highlighting her anger, beauty, and defiance as Guillermina looks on in terror:

Apoyando las manos en el respaldo, agachó el cuerpo y meneó las caderas como los tigres que van a dar el salto. Miróla Guillermina, sintiendo el espanto más grande que en su vida había sentido... Fortunata agachó más la cabeza... Sus ojos negros, situados contra la claridad del balcón, parecía que se le volvían verdes, arrojando un resplandor de luz eléctrica. Al propio tiempo dejó oír una voz ronca y terrible que decía: ‘¡La ladrona eres tú, ... tú!’ (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 469-70)

The radiant image of Fortunata crouched down so that the light strikes her just so represents her passionate response to the personal and social implications of Jacinta’s insult. Jacinta’s words have multi-layered significance as she not only accuses Fortunata of stealing her husband, but also labels her as a criminal. Galdós depicts Fortunata’s awe-inspiring presence by means of the light that enters in through the middle-class space of

the balcony/*mirador*. The light filtered through the glass combined with Jacinta's hurtful words give her power and make her appear both beautiful and dangerous.

Despite Fortunata's strong will, in this scene, class boundaries ultimately remain firm. Fortunata, now an unwelcomed visitor, is expelled from the Moreno home by their English servant: "La señora de Rubín no se dio cuenta de lo demás... Tenía después una idea incierta de que la mano dura del inglés la había cogido por un brazo, apretándoselo tanto que aún le dolía al día siguiente; de que la sacaron del gabinete, de que le abrieron la puerta y de que se vio bajando la escalera" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 470). After the attack she mounts on Jacinta, Fortunata is identified as a social renegade, and promptly denied access to the privileged space of the sitting room with *mirador*. This scene reveals middle-class society's fundamental gesture of exclusion by means of both visual and physical barriers, which deny members of the lower class right of entry. Although she continues to pursue her plan to become Juanito's legitimate wife, Fortunata will never again step foot into a home with a *mirador*.

1.3 Lower Middle-Class Liminal Space: The Arnaiz Home

The representations of balconies and windows in Galdós's novels not only depict the power of Madrid's rising middle class, but also reveal the harsh realities that existed for bourgeois families that were not as successful in their financial endeavors. In Galdós's novelistic universe, bourgeois families were often represented as being superimposed upon one another, ascending and descending into different levels of

prestige within their own class, depending on business decisions and marriage contracts, as is evidenced by the intertwined Santa Cruz and Arnaiz families.

Although both families run businesses selling clothes and fabrics, the Arnaiz family comes on hard financial times. Due to changes in the market, as well as some poor decisions on the part of their deceased father, the once wealthy Arnaiz family precipitously falls from the upper echelon of the middle class, and becomes a household struggling just to make ends meet. Despite their connection with the Santa Cruz family due to Barbarita and Baldomero's marriage, the social status of the Arnaiz family is ultimately determined by their ability to flaunt their wealth rather than their name.

The commentary made by the narrator in regard to balconies while describing the lack of space in the Arnaiz home provides a basis for understanding the role of the space as an ornamental element of the facade. The home of Isabel Cordero, a poor middle-class woman, married to the brother of Bárbara Santa Cruz, Gumersindo Arnaiz, is overrun with her nine surviving children, seven of whom are girls. The narrator alludes to the decorative role of the balcony when describing the limited space of the Arnaiz home: "Al ver la estrecha casa, se daba uno a pensar que la ley de impenetrabilidad de los cuerpos fue el pretexto que tomó la muerte para mermar aquel bíblico rebaño. Si los diez y siete chiquillos hubieran vivido, habría sido preciso ponerlos en los balcones como los tiestos, o colgados en jaulas de machos de perdiz" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 257). The narrator's ironic, almost festive tone, draws the reader's attention to the balconies, viewed here as a place for displaying ornamental domestic objects.

Galdós highlights the appearance of a family's home as an essential aspect of crafting the fictional representation of family identity in a speech given to the *Real Academia Española* in 1897:

Imagen de la vida es la Novela, y el arte de componerla estriba en reproducir los caracteres humanos, las pasiones, las debilidades, lo grande y lo pequeño, las almas y las fisonomías, todo lo espiritual y lo físico que nos constituye y nos rodea, y el lenguaje, que es la marca de raza, y las viviendas que son el signo de familia, y la vestidura, que diseña los últimos trazos externos de la personalidad.
(8)

A study of the *Fortunata y Jacinta* B manuscript shows that Galdós made a clear choice to portray the importance of the balcony of the Arnaiz house as a space with social significance. In the B manuscript, he crossed out “no habrían cabido dentro de la casa,” and replaced it with: “habría sido preciso ponerlos en los balcones como los tiestos.” (B 1, 104). By making this change, Galdós shifts the focus of the narrative description from the hidden interior of the house to its visible exterior.

As a marker of an inferior social status to that of the Santa Cruz family Isabel's home only has one balcony. When describing the interaction between the Arnaiz daughters and their potential suitors the narrator mentions the limited liminal space of the home: “Las chicas no eran malas, pero eran jovenzuelas, y ni Cristo Padre podía evitar los atisbos por el único balcón de la casa o por la ventanucha que daba al callejón de San Cristóbal” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 260-61). The connection between the Arnaiz home

and the street below is limited by their lack of windows and balconies, and the facade of their home is much less impressive than that of more prominent middle-class families.

The relationship between language and liminal space is an important factor in the creation of the social identity of the Arnaiz family. Although Gumersindo Arnaiz comes from a merchant family, his poor financial situation as well as his marriage to a woman of humble means result in their relatively modest social status. In order to communicate more intricately the social reality of the family, Galdós depicted the liminal space of the Arnaiz house through descriptions that mirror spoken language to portray the perception itself of the limited status of the home. Ana María Vigarra Tauste observes that Galdós's most common expressive modification of words came in the form of suffixes: "Entre los morfológicos, además de ciertas modificaciones expresivas en la forma de las palabras [...] y de la prefijación [...], el más utilizado por los personajes galdosianos es el de la sufijación" (no pagination). Although Vigarra Tauste does not offer any empirical evidence to support this claim, it is clear that Galdós's often incorporated words with suffixes in the language, not only of dialogue, but significantly in the narrator's discourse, thereby informing his narrative description an almost constant perspectivized voice, and gaze. In many instances, Galdós made textual changes to associate the space of the balcony with the spoken language of the lower middle class.

An example of how suffixation changes the meaning of the text is seen in the language used to describe the window of the Arnaiz house. In the B manuscript, Galdós changed the text, crossing out 'ventana' and replacing it with the colloquialism 'ventanucha' (B 1, 113), creating a link between language and space and emphasizing the

importance of balconies and windows as perceived marks of social status. That the term *ventanucha* clearly assigns the space a lowly social status is evident in as much as it reappears only once more in the novel, when Jacinta travels to the lower-class neighborhood of the ‘Cuarto Estado.’ The narrator also depicts the house as poorly ventilated, resulting in insanitary conditions typically associated with lower-class housing of the time¹⁹.

The description of the liminal space in this passage shows the importance of the appearance of the home as an indicator of social identity. The narrator makes clear that the home only has one balcony, and that one of the few windows that connects the home to the public space of the city is small, dilapidated and ugly. Therefore, not only is the Arnaiz home lacking in space to accommodate the inhabitants within the domestic sphere, but it also projects an undignified impression to pedestrians in the street. Although the family belongs to the middle class, the spatial limitations of their home as well as the modest facade show that they have sunk to the bottom rank within their own social group.

1.4 Linking Interior and Exterior Space: Women on the Balcony

¹⁹ The lack of windows in Doña Isabel’s house, as well as in the homes of apartments in the ‘Cuarto Estado,’ associate the lower class with filth, immorality, and disease. In the nineteenth century, medical beliefs were based on the miasmatic theory that drew a direct correlation between disease and foul smells and decay commonly observed in lower-class housing that lacked proper ventilation. For more information on medical beliefs and lower-class housing, see Teresa Fuentes’s “Images of Filth: Representation of the Poor in ‘Una vista al Cuarto Estado.’”

The balcony of the Arnaiz home not only serves as a symbolic representation of the social status of the family, but also functions as a link between public and domestic space for Isabel and her daughters. Bridget Aldaraca explains that confinement within the domestic sphere determined the life experiences of women in nineteenth-century Spain: “the ideal woman is ultimately defined not ontologically, not functionally but territorially, by the space which she occupies. The frontier of her existence as a virtuous woman begins and ends at her doorstep” (27). In the case of the Arnaiz women, the balcony becomes a vital space connecting them to the outside world, as well as helping them to escape their financial destitution despite the social expectations that confine them to domestic space.

The balcony of the Arnaiz home helps to facilitate communication between Isabel’s daughters and men in the street. Although the house only has one balcony, and the window is small and dilapidated, the narrator clarifies that they nonetheless serve as key spaces connecting the Arnaiz daughters to potential suitors, as we have seen.

The Arnaiz girls are able to gain access to public space without ever leaving the home and they take advantage of this opportunity in order to establish relationships with men through both oral and written communication. The balcony offers them a space where they can find both love and the prospect of a better life through marriage.

Isabel actively participates in the display of her daughters on the balcony, recognizing the value of their physical appearance. The narration presents Isabel’s perspective of the girls through indirect free style describing them as ‘jovenzuelas,’ a

term that highlights their youth and beauty; two characteristics that make her daughters desirable on the open market.

Isabel also expresses her understanding of the economic value of her daughters in her own words. In fact, Galdós insisted on the idea of Isabel Cordero's children as possessions when in B he decided to insert the possessive 'mi' before Jacinta's name when the narrator quotes Isabel relating the birth of her daughters: "*Mi Jacinta nació cuando se casó la reina con pocos días de diferencia. Mi Isabelita vino al mundo el día que el cura Merino le pegó la puñalda a Su Majestad, y tuve a Rupertito el día de San Juan del 58*" (emphasis mine) (B 1, 103). The possessive 'mi' reveals that she views her daughters with a sense of ownership, which ultimately can be used for financial benefit. Notably, the possessive adjective is absent in reference to her son Rupertito, suggesting the objectification of the daughters in particular. Isabel is clearly aware of her daughters' worth and is even referred to by the narrator as a "negociante en hijas" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 113). Ultimately, she realizes that as the family business flounders, the best way to assure her daughters' financial security is to remove them from the confinement of the domestic sphere and allow them to present themselves to men occupying the public space of the street.

Isabel, however, is also aware of the potential threat to her daughters' chastity (and thus marriage possibilities) and therefore also uses the balcony as a space for surveillance: "Doña Isabel estaba siempre con cada ojo como un farol, y no las perdía de vista un momento. A esta fatiga ruda del espionaje materno uníase el trabajo de exhibir y airear el muestrario, por ver si caía algún parroquiano o por otro nombre, marido"

(*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 261). The comparison of Isabel's eyes to a "farol" can be visually linked to the image of the panoptic eye. This impression, coupled with the composition of the iron bars of the balcony, creates a prison-like atmosphere for the daughters. Foucault notes that Bentham defines the panoptic schema as: "applicable to all establishments whatsoever, in which, within a space not too large to be covered or commanded by buildings, a number of persons are meant to be kept under inspection" (Foucault 206). The use of the balcony as an observation point transforms it into a privileged space for Doña Isabel, where she is able to control her daughters in the business/home. In a capitalist society, where human life is translated into market value, the panoptic surveillance method applies not only to objects, but persons as well. The 'store owner,' then, becomes vigilant over 'goods' just as the prison guard watches over the prisoners. Doña Isabel does both.

1.5 Shopping the Home: The Display Window in *Fortunata y Jacinta*

The introduction of the *escaparate*, or shop window, as a prominent feature of Madrid's nineteenth-century cityscape signaled a shift in cultural values ushered in by the merchant class. The extension of the window as a place to advertise goods reflects a change in architectural design in Madrid that occurs within the timeframe of the setting of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, when new buildings are constructed by middle-class property owners. Symbolically, the window of Bárbara's childhood home represents the intersection between home and shop, familial love and materialism, interior and exterior,

as well as present and future. The blurring of the lines between these dualities is depicted through the adaptation of the window as a space used to display the shop's goods.

As the daughter of the merchant Don Bonafacio Arnaiz, Doña Bárbara, who grows up in the 1830's, spends her childhood in a home that is simultaneously a shop. Although the home does not feature a space with the designated purpose of allowing outside observers to view commercial goods without entering into the house, a barred window serves to present the wares to potential customers. This use of domestic space in order to exhibit items for sale has a profound impact on Bárbara and the narrator comments on her desire to possess the luxury objects displayed in her home:

Muchas noches se acostaba con fiebre porque no le habían dejado satisfacer su anhelo de coger para sí aquellas monerías. Hubiérase contentado ella, en vista de prohibición tan absoluta, con aproximar la yema del dedo índice al pico de una de las torres; pero ni aun esto... Lo más que se le permitía era poner sobre el tablero de ajedrez que estaba en la vitrina de la ventana enrejada (entonces no había escaparates), todas las piezas de un juego, no de los más finos, a un lado las blancas, a otro las encarnadas. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 229)

Not only does the window allow the people in the street an intimate view of the goods in the shop, thus blurring the boundary between interior and exterior space, it also permits potential customers intimate access into the Arnaiz home. The window, converted into a display, presents the illusion of domesticity, while exciting the customer's imagination in order to sell a product.

Significantly, the object placed in the window for others to see is a chessboard, an object normally considered a form of entertainment for the family. The image implies fun and enjoyment to be shared by family members and friends. However, Barbarita is prohibited from playing with the chess pieces and is limited to setting them on the board to make the game seem attractive to someone else, essentially creating a still-life of domestic bliss. The inviting appearance of the chess board captures the imagination of the customer, who, attracted by the impression of family harmony, might be swayed to purchase the board. On the other hand, Bárbara's desire to take the board for herself reflects her confusion at growing up in a home where the objects inside belong not to the family, but are for sale to the customers, and where the window functions more to draw gazes in from the street than to allow the family access to exterior space.

Apart from symbolizing the intersection between mercantilism and family, the window of Don Bonafacio's home also projects a vision of Madrid's architectural future. Specifically, the description of the window represents both a textual and historical foreshadowing of the installation of the display window as a common element of Madrid's cityscape. Lacking a formal structure in which to display the goods of the store, the barred windows of the home serve as a transitional space, occupying the role of a future space that has yet to be invented. Thus, pedestrians passing Don Bonafacio's home not only find themselves passively entering both shop and home as they pass by, but they also glimpse a vision of the future of Madrid in which display windows become ubiquitous.

The use of the window as a form of advertising in Doña Bárbara's home foreshadows the commercial use of liminal space later in the novel. Some forty years after Barbarita's childhood, the husband of Jacinta's sister Candelaria, Pepe Samaniego, opens a store in a newly constructed building near the Santa Cruz family home. According to the narrator, Samaniego's store would have the most elegant display window in all of Madrid: "La tienda estaría en una casa nueva de la subida a Santa Cruz, frente por frente a la calle de Pontejos, y sus escaparates serían de seguro los más vistosos y elegantes de Madrid. Inauguración el 1º de septiembre." (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 509). The emphasis placed by the narrator on the *escaparate* of the shop shows that financial success is closely tied to this liminal space. Samaniego's new store is presented formally as a momentous, even historical event by the narrator because its construction serves as the realization of capitalist ambitions in architectural form. The elegant display window is presented as the shop's defining characteristic and communicates the ostentatious redesign of store fronts in Madrid, with store owners attempting to lure the eye of the consumer. Whereas Barbarita's father adapted the traditionally domestic architectural feature of the window to entice customers into his shop, in the present setting of the novel, the creation of the *escaparate* reflects a physical realization of the imagination of the merchant class.

The construction of Pepe Samaniego's shop represents the rise of middle-class influence on the cultural and economic practices of nineteenth-century Madrid. Sarah Sierra points out that the lack of architectural integrity of middle-class homes in the early part of the novel as represented by the poor construction of Doña Bárbara's childhood

house is symbolic of the weak foundation of the merchant class: “the flimsy building materials that form the foundation of the Spanish bourgeoisie’s habitat may be seen as a fitting symbol of essential limitations in the infrastructure of the rising class itself” (105). However, as the middle class continues to maintain power in Madrid they erect new buildings specifically intended to eliminate the barrier separating pedestrians in the street with goods inside of shops. The *escaparate*, in essence, is designed so that the mere act of entering into public urban space transforms casual passersby into shoppers, regardless of what brought them outside in the first place. Furthermore, the presentation of the display window holds social value. Just as happens with the balcony and *mirador*, the *escaparate* functions as a distinguishing element of a store, determining the type of customer, the price of the goods, and the prestige of the store owner.

Many of the middle-class characters in *Fortunata y Jacinta* are aware of the importance of liminal space in commercial practices. According to the well-travelled Aurora, who herself shows an intuitive understanding of Madrid’s consumerist culture, the introduction of the *escaparate* signals a clear shift in marketing strategy in Madrid society as merchants aim to lure their customers into the shop through the beautiful exhibition of luxury goods:

Hoy han estado probando el gas en la nueva tienda. Será una cosa espléndida. Ya están llegando cajas de novedades, cosas, ¡ay!, por ejemplo, tan bonitas, que en Madrid no se ha visto nada igual. Aquí no saben poner escaparates. Verán, verán el nuestro, con todo lo que hay de más lindo, para llamar la atención, y hacer que la gente se pare y entre a comprar algo. Después que entran, se les enseña más, se

les hace ver esta y la otra cosa de precio, se les engatusa, y al fin caen. Los tenderos de aquí apenas tienen el arte del *étalage*, y en cuanto al arte de vender, pocos lo poseen. Hay muchos que pertenecen todavía a la escuela de Estupiñá, que reñía a los que iban a comprar. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 510)

In order to draw the attention of people in the street, Aurora tempts potential customers with beautiful objects they've never seen before, presented in an awe-inspiring manner.

Technological advancements in the production and presentation of liminal space also changed Madrid's cityscape and favored the ambitions of the middle class to draw customers from the street into their shops. The large glass panels of the *escaparate* along with gas lighting accentuate the objects arranged by Aurora, making them even more desirable. Rachel Bowlby explains the importance of these technological advancements:

They utilized new inventions in glass technology, making possible large expanses of transparent display windows. Visibility inside was improved both by the increase in window area and by better forms of artificial lighting, culminating in electricity which was available from the 1880's. Glass and lighting also created a spectacular effect, a sense of theatrical excess coexisting with the simple availability of individual items for purchase. Commodities were put on show in an attractive guise, becoming unreal in that they were images set apart from everyday things, and real in that they were there to be bought and taken home to enhance the ordinary environment. (2)

One of the key features of Samaniego's shop, in fact, is the newly installed gas light that will serve to illumine the objects presented in the window and captivate people in the

street. The quality of glass as a transparent physical material also plays a role in alluring customers. Their inability to touch the goods adds to their desire to possess them, and the glimpse of the inside of the shop invites them to enter. Bowlby notes the importance of this last aspect of the display window: “‘impulse buying’ replaced planned buying” (3).

The goods exhibited in the display window also represent an intersection of commercial and artistic practices, as creativity and ingenuity are needed in order to seduce customers. Significantly, Aurora refers to the presentation of the *escaparate* as an ‘art,’ and indeed there is an important creative element to the composition of a successful *escaparate*. The display window features original, unique, never-seen-before items, made even more visible by the bright lights above them. Bowlby comments that the obsession with the visual spectacle in European societies in the nineteenth century resulted in the use of artistic production as a successful business practice: “The dominance of signs and images, the elements of pleasure, entertainment and aesthetic appeal indicate what the new large-scale commerce shares with practices derived not from industrial production, but from the arts. Yet if industry, beautiful images, was becoming more like art so art at this time was taking on the rationalized structures of industry” (8). The *escaparate* of the Samaniego store is an architectural representation of how changing commercial practices influenced the role of art in Spanish society. While beauty and aesthetics became integrated into daily life, this also meant that the object of art was transformed into a means for turning a profit. The superficial nature of consumerist culture results in the production of art, even if the imaginative productions benefit store owners to the detriment of unsuspecting customers.

Through his depiction of the transition of the window from domestic to commercial space in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós portrays changes in the cultural values of Madrid's middle class that influence the way characters interact with and experience their urban surroundings. At the beginning of the novel, the window symbolically portrays the commercial adaptation of domestic space by the middle class, and results in Doña Bárbara's emotional attachment to inanimate objects. As the novel progresses, the *escaparate* serves to blur the distinction between interior and exterior space, and Aurora's description of Pepe Samaniego's shop conveys the role of art in consumerist culture. The representation of the window as a space that links the customer to the interior of the shop while simultaneously taking advantage of their imagination in order to make a sale communicates the exploitative nature of Madrid's middle class, whose members continually prey upon one another for financial gain. Aurora's fellow businesswoman, Doña Lupe, concisely articulates the benefits to be found for merchants looking to profit from the superficial values of the middle class when she comments on the inevitable success of Pepe Samaniego's shop: "'Yo creo,' dijo doña Lupe con expresión avariciosa, 'que Pepe Samaniego va a hacer un gran negocio. Madrid está por explotar²⁰'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 511).

²⁰ According to the *Diccionario de la Real Academia Española* the etimological origins of 'explotar' can be traced to the French word 'exploiter' meaning "sacar provecho (de algo)." All three definitions in the *Diccionario* suggest that within the context of Doña Lupe's comment the word signifies a gain on the part of the merchant class through business practices or the abuse of a resource or person: "explotar (1) 1. Extraer de las minas la riqueza que contienen. 2. Sacar utilidad de un negocio o industria en provecho propio. 3. Utilizar abusivamente en provecho propio el trabajo o las cualidades de otra persona." Alternatively, the word can also refer to a literal or figurative explosion: "explotar (2) 1. Explosionar (hacer explosión). 2. Dicho de una persona: Manifestar violentamente un sentimiento, hasta ese momento reprimido."

1.6.1 A World Apart: The *Casa de Corredor*

The importance of liminal space in *Fortunata y Jacinta* is not limited to middle-class characters of the novel. Galdós's depiction of the lower-class space of the *casa de corredor*, a building designed with interior patios and balcony corridors, presents a vastly different experience of life in Madrid. This structure, with roots in Spanish architectural history, fosters community of neighbors supporting each other in an environment with limited resources.

In his thesis entitled *Estudio tipológico, constructivo y estructural de las casas de corredor en Madrid*, Jamie Santa Cruz sums up the socio-historical significance of the space with origins that can be traced to Roman and Moorish architecture:

El modelo arquitectónico de las casas de corredor, es una evolución de dos formas antiguas de entender la residencia: la casa patio romana, a la que debe su organización formal y funcional, y el adarve musulmán, del que toma el modo de vida comunitaria como protección del espacio público. Estos dos modelos se fusionan en la península ibérica, gracias a las diferentes culturas que convivieron durante muchos siglos. (Santa Cruz, 1)

Due to their design, the *casa de corredor*, also known as the *corrala*, created a way of life very different from other urban dwellings in the capital. The *casas de corredor* were overcrowded and promoted intimate relationships between neighbors. Their enclosed nature, a microcosm of rural life within the city, created a community of neighbors living

in a shared space. As Gloria Otero points out in “Las corralas madrileñas: Historia y submundo”:

Los inquilinos normalmente de procedencia rural, no debieron de acusar desfavorablemente esta obligatoria promiscuidad social, sino que, al contrario, vieron aprovecharla para desarrollar, a la pequeña escala de su edificio, un sustituto de la vida pueblerina y recoleta que abandonaron para venir a vivir en Madrid, y protegerse así de la dispersión y marginación que la ciudad les imponía.
(75)

In the following four sections we will explore the depiction of this marginalized space in both *Fortunata y Jacinta* and in *Torquemada en la hoguera*. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the portrayal of women in the patios and corridors of the *corrala* offers insight to the tight-knit lower-class community, whereas the introduction of Guillermina and Jacinta presents a middle-class perspective of the space. On the other hand, the games the children play in *casa de corredor* reveal class tensions of nineteenth-century Madrid. In *Torquemada en la hoguera*, the diabolic representation of Torquemada highlights the social injustices created by middle-class property owners who took advantage of disentanglement in order to exploit their tenants.

1.6.2 Communal Living: The Lower-Class Women of the *Casa de Corredor* of *Fortunata y Jacinta*

In the *casa de corredor* of the poor lower-class neighborhood of the ‘Cuarto Estado’ representations of the female characters depict a blurring of the boundary

between public and private space through rural traditions. The women living in the *corrala* do chores in the public space of the corridor allowing them to connect with one another. Thus, the patios and balcony corridors create an effective social network, evidenced by the quick and efficient communication between the women in the building. Anything one woman knows, the rest are immediately aware of as well, as demonstrated by their instant communal knowledge to the presence of Guillermina and Jacinta in the *casa de corredor*:

Había vecinas que se estaban peinando las trenzas negras aceitosas, o las guedejas rubias y tenían todo aquel matorral echado sobre la cara como un velo. Otras salían arrastrando zapatos en chancleta por aquellos empedrados de Dios, y al ver a las forasteras corrían a sus guaridas a llamar a otras vecinas, y la noticia cundía, y aparecían por las enrejadas ventanas cabezas peinadas o a medio peinar.

(*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 433)

Galdós emphasized the communal character of this *corrala* society when at the galley stage he crossed out “mujeres,” replacing it with “vecinas,” in the passage above, which was a change repeated twice in the same paragraph and then again two pages later in the galley sheets (G 1C, 4a, 6a). This change indicates that existing as a community is an important aspect of the women’s identity. The concept of *vecindad*, a tight-knit, intimate community, defines the women’s life experience while also helping them to survive the economic and social difficulties that confront them.

Later, Galdós depicts how women in the community help one another through their networking and communication skills. In the ‘Cuarto Estado,’ gossiping serves the

purpose of alerting members of the community to beneficial economic opportunities. Moved by the lamentable state of the inhabitants of the 'Cuarto Estado' the second time Jacinta visits the *casa de corredor* she brings clothes, blankets, medicine, and loose change to disperse amongst the community. Throughout the *corrala*, word of her philanthropic tendencies quickly spreads allowing as many neighbors as possible to take advantage of the benevolent Jacinta:

Jacinta y Rafaela subieron. La criada llevaba un lío de cosas, dádivas que la señora traía a los menesterosos de aquella pobrísima vecindad. Las mujeres salían a sus puertas movidas de la curiosidad; empezaba el chismorreo, y poco después, en los murmurantes corros que se formaron, circulaban noticias y comentarios: “A la seña Nicanora le ha traído un mantón borrego, al tío *Dido* un sombrero y un chaleco de Bayona, y a Rosa le ha puesto en la mano cinco duros como cinco soles...” “A la baldada del número 9 le ha traído una manta de cama, y a la señá Encarnación un aquel de franela para la reuma, y al tío Manjavacas un ungüento en un tarro largo que lo llaman *pitofufito*... ¿sabe?, lo que le di yo a mi niña el año pasado, lo cual no le quitó de morírseme...” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 478-79)

Although the women express jealousy for what their neighbors have received, they also notify one another of the possible benefits that Jacinta has to offer. Compared to the self-interested nature of many of the bourgeois characters in the novel, the neighbors of the 'Cuarto Estado' support one another and depend upon each other for their daily needs.

Furthermore, in this passage, the women also share their own tragic experiences with one another. As one neighbor mentions the importance of the medicine received by

other members of the community, she also references the unfortunate death of her own daughter from a year ago. Thus, not only do the women aid one another financially, but their community bonding helps them to cope with the hardships of poverty. Through his depiction of women gossiping in the 'Cuarto Estado' Galdós offers the reader a glimpse at the importance of communal living for lower-class citizens of Madrid, as it offers both emotional and economical support that would otherwise be unavailable to them.

In the liminal space of the patio and balcony corridors, the neighbors simultaneously exist as individuals and as a collective. This is reflected in both the unique voice given to the women of the community as well as the general sounds of the *casa de corredor*. Although in the passage above, Galdós represents the voice of one of the neighbors who laments the death of her daughter, he does so without naming her or establishing her as an individual character, however, far from creating a dehumanizing effect, the anonymity of the *vecina* establishes a representative voice of the community. The *vecina's* comment laments a specific personal hardship, yet also articulates the collective suffering of the lower class. Additionally, the narrator repeatedly refers to the collective pulse of the 'Cuarto Estado' through the general noise created by the multitude of life interacting in public domestic space. The building is referred to as a hive, likening the sounds in the public space to "un zumbido como de enjambre" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 432). This description not only suggests constant activity, but also implies how the community works together to survive.

In *Fortunata y Jacinta* the *casa de corredor* is not only a microcosm of rural culture within the limits of Madrid, but also a temporal regression. When Jacinta first

arrives to the ‘Cuarto Estado,’ it is clear that the building she finds herself in more closely resembles a *corrala* constructed in the seventeenth century than the taller, more compact version of the *casa de corredor* of the nineteenth century. Rather than being built up several floors this building only has two floors²¹. In fact, Galdós originally had written the *casa de corredor* of the ‘Cuarto Estado’ as having “tres filas” rather than two, later changing this at the galley stage, a clear indication that he had a specific architectural structure in mind (G 1C, 3a). This numbering of the “filas,” contrasts with the numbering of the individual balconies present in the Santa Cruz house. In comparison to the upper middle-class Santa Cruz home where space is compartmentalized and neatly separated, even between the two couples living within the same house, in the ‘Cuarto Estado’ each home is conjoined by the long, common balcony/corridor, creating a lack of physical barriers between community members. Furthermore, the dirt floor of the patio, the use of wood as a primary material, and the commercial practices of the people living in the ‘Cuarto Estado’ suggest a way of living from centuries past. Otero explains how people used the shared patios of the *corralas* during the seventeenth century:

El patio de la casa pasó a convertirse de esta manera en el centro del edificio; en una especie de plaza de pueblo donde los vecinos abrieron talleres y modestos

²¹ Otero explains the construction of additional floors to the *casa corredor* that was typical in nineteenth-century Madrid: “La elevación de cinco, seis y hasta nueve plantas en algunos casos, sobre solares de pequeñas chabolas dio origen a un alto grado de hacinamiento en los barrios donde se construyeron estas casas, y muy especialmente en el distrito de Inclusa, donde la tradicional carencia de espacios libres del trazado urbano madrileño llegaba al máximo, pues el único lugar para el ‘esparcimiento’ de sus vecinos era el solar de la iglesia de San Fernando, derruida para aprovechar el plomo de sus cúpulas mientras que los focos de aglomeración se multiplicaban al concentrarse en este distrito varios edificios de uso público: La Inclusa, la Maternidad, el Parador de Santa Casilda y la fábrica de Tabacos. La casa de corredores del siglo XIX fue la versión mastodóntica de la casa de vecindad del XVII, y su incongruente ignorancia de las relaciones entre tamaño y forma invalidó por completo el diseño primitivo” (8).

comercios, donde se reunían los ancianos a charlar y los niños jugaban libremente donde celebraban las fiestas del barrio. Todo el edificio vivía del patio, de donde llegaban no sólo el aire y la luz indispensables para cada vivienda. (Otero 75)

In the following sections we will explain the importance of children playing in the *corrala* patio within the novel. As far as the business practices of the residents of the *casa de corredor*, the above description falls very much in line with what Jacinta and Guillermina encounter in their own experience in the ‘Cuarto Estado’:

Bien era un brasero que se estaba encendiendo, con el tubo de hierro sobre las brasas para hacer tiro; bien el montón de zaleas o de ruedos, ya una banasta de ropa; ya un cántaro de agua. De todas las puertas abiertas y de las ventanillas salían voces o de disputa, o de algazara festiva. Veían las cocinas con los pucheros armados sobre las ascuas, las artesas de lavar junto a la muerta, y allá en el testero de las breves estancias la indispensable cómoda con su hule, el velón con pantalla verde y en la pared una especie de altarucho formado por diferentes estampas, alguna lámina al cromo de prospectos o periódicos satíricos, y muchas fotografías. Pasaban por un domicilio que era taller de zapatería, y los golpazos que los zapateros daban a la suela, unidos a sus cantorrios, hacían una algazara de mil demonios. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 435)

Within the confines of the *casa de corredor*, Jacinta notices the domestic activity of women cooking in their houses, and the commercial practices of the community members working in a shoe shop. Jacinta is taken aback by the unfamiliarity of the space, as well as by the cultural practices that occur in the ‘Cuarto Estado’ that seem foreign to her. The

women on the corridors are so unfamiliar to Jacinta that the narrator compares them with Moors, a connection to the Arab past of the *casas de corredor*: “Encontraban mujeres con pañuelo a la cabeza y mantón pardo, tapándose la boca con la mano envuelta en un pliegue del mismo mantón. Parecían moras; no se les veía más que un ojo y parte de la nariz” (*Fortunata y Jacinta, I*, 437). The confusion of space and time reflects Jacinta’s tense awareness as she seeks “her” Pituso, as well as her apprehension in midst of the lower-class population of Madrid.

The narrative description that focuses on the women of the ‘Cuarto Estado’ further emphasizes the lack of division between domestic and public space. As Jacinta walks through the corridor balconies, she not only observes the women cooking and cleaning, but also sewing in an attempt to make a living: “más allá sonaba el convulsive tiquitique de una máquina de coser, y acudían a las ventanas bustos y caras de mujeres curiosas” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 435). The open doors and windows offer an intimate glimpse into the life of the lower-class citizens of Madrid, most of all the women who inhabit the houses and are responsible for caring for the children. The open space of the doors and windows also creates a sense of movement, community, action, and festivity: “de todas las puertas abiertas y de las ventanillas salían voces o de disputa, o de algazara festiva” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 435). In comparison with the Santa Cruz and Arnaiz middle-class families, the boundary between private and public space is much more ambiguous in the ‘Cuarto Estado.’

Upon entering the ‘Cuarto Estado,’ both Jacinta and Guillermina as bourgeois characters are outsiders in the domain of the lower class. In the same paragraph in which

Galdós changed “mujeres” to “vecinas” he made another interesting change at the galley stage, replacing “dos señoras” with “forasteras” in reference to Jacinta and Guillermina (G 1C, 4a). This change marks the space of the *casa de corredor* as truly a world apart and changes the focalization from the perspective of the visited to that of the visitors. Upon entering the *corrala*, Guillermina and Jacinta leave their middle-class comforts behind, and experience a completely alien social reality. Although the neighbors of the ‘Cuarto Estado’ belong to a marginalized class, after penetrating the confines of the *corrala*, it is, in fact, Guillermina and Jacinta who find themselves outside of this intimate community, feeling like foreigners. As the two women navigate the space of the *corrala*, Jacinta’s gaze, in particular, offers an important perspective on class differences that we shall analyze further in the following section.

1.6.3 Middle-Class Perspectives: Jacinta and Guillermina in the *Casa de Corredor*

Galdós’s representation of the *casa de corredor* offers a nuanced view of class inequality in Madrid. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Galdós introduces the *casa de corredor* in the novel through the gaze of two middle-class characters. Both Jacinta’s fundamental drive to have a child by any means possible, as well as Guillermina’s familiarity with lower-class neighborhoods due to her charitable acts, ultimately guide the narrative to Madrid’s lower-class space and reveal the dispiriting social realities facing the working class. After discovering that Juanito previously had a son with Fortunata, Jacinta becomes angry at her husband’s neglect of the child, and begins to feel a sense of responsibility for his care:

“¡Qué rabia tengo!” pensó Jacinta apretando sus bonitísimos dientes, “por haberme ocultado una cosa tan grave... ¡Tener un hijo y abandonarlo así! ...” Se cegó; vio todo negro. Parecía que le entraban convulsiones. Aquel *Pitusín* desconocido y misterioso, aquella hechura de su marido, sin que fuese, como debía, hechura suya también, era la verdadera culebra que se enroscaba en su interior... “Pero qué culpa tiene el pobre niño...?” pensó después transformándose por la piedad. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 421)

Jacinta’s obsession with the abandoned *Pitusín* leads her to make secret plans with Guillermina to find the child by leaving the safety of her middle-class life:

Jacinta entre tanto, había salido un rato de la alcoba. En el salón vio a varias personas, Casa-Muñoz, Ramón Villuendas, D. Valeriano Ruiz-Ochoa y alguien más, hablando de política con tal expresión de terror, que más bien parecían conspiradores. En el gabinete de Barbarita y en el rincón de costumbre halló a Guillermina haciendo obra de media con hilo crudo. En el ratito que estuvo sola con ella, la enteró del plan que tenía para la mañana siguiente. Irían juntas a la calle de Mira el Río, porque Jacinta tenía interés particular en socorrer a la familia de aquel pasmarote que hace las suscripciones. “Ya le contaré a usted; tenemos que hablar largo.” Ambas estuvieron de cuchicheo un buen cuarto de hora, hasta que vieron aparecer a Barbarita” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 425-26).

The secret plans that Guillermina and Jacinta make together to retrieve *El Pitusín* eventually result in their trip to a *casa de corredor*. In the chapter, “Una visita al Cuarto

Estado” the narrator describes a space of poverty and survival on the margins of middle-class Madrid:

“Aquí es,” dijo Guillermina, después de andar un trecho por la calle del Bastero y de doblar una esquina. No tardaron en encontrarse dentro de un patio cuadrilongo, Jacinta miró hacia arriba y vio dos filas de corredores con antepechos de fábrica y pilastrones de madera pintada de ocre, mucha ropa tendida, mucho refajo amarillo, mucha zalea puesta a secar, y oyó un zumbido como de enjambre. En el patio que era casi todo de tierra, empedrado sólo a trechos, había chiquillos de ambos sexos y de diferentes edades. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 432)

As Linda Willem explains, “although [the scene] is written in the third person, it is focalized through a character rather than through the narrator. That is, the entire scene is written so as to reflect Jacinta’s sensations as she moves through the bustling market en route to Ido del Sagrario’s house, and the descriptions are subjectively tinged by her feelings and attitudes toward what she experiences” (98). As Willem notes, while Jacinta was afraid in *Calle de Toledo*, once she enters into the *corrala* and observes the patio, her interest in the children overcomes her fear: “Cuando se halló cerca del fin de su viaje, la Delfina fijaba exclusivamente su atención en los chicos que iba encontrando” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 431). Specifically, Willem notes that at the galley stage Galdós removed lines that expressed an excess of terror in Jacinta’s emotional state when entering the ‘Cuarto Estado’: “In the galley version Jacinta’s misgivings about her surroundings do not abate. On the contrary, her distress increases as the scene progresses. Jacinta’s sustained impression of the Cava Baja as a sinister locale is due entirely to five passages which are

present in the galleys but absent in the final version” (99).²² Willem’s observation indicates that Galdós decided to emphasize Jacinta’s obsession with finding a child over any fears or discomfort she experiences in the lower-class surroundings.

Embedded in Jacinta’s overriding motivations is, however, the profound social reality registered by her gaze in the *casa de corredor*. The narrative treatment of children depicted in the ‘Cuarto Estado’ reveals the middle-class tendency to objectify human life, and depicts forms of social inequality and tension. Jacinta’s middle-class materialism is evidenced by her assumption of ownership of a child over whom, in reality, she has no genetic claim. When Jacinta goes to the ‘Cuarto Estado’ with her friend and social go-between, Guillermina Pacheco, to look for what may be Juanito’s illegitimate child, she observes the children first from the patio:

En el patio, que era casi todo de tierra, empedrado sólo a trechos, había chiquillos de ambos sexos y de diferentes edades. Una zagalona tenía en la cabeza toquilla roja con agujeros, con orificios, como diría Aparisi; otra, toquilla blanca, y otra estaba con las greñas al aire. Esta llevaba zapatillas de orillo, y aquella botitas finas de caña blanca, pero ajadas ya y con el tacón torcidos. Los chicos eran de diversos tipos. Estaba el que va para la escuela con su cartera de estudio, y el pillete descalzo que no hace más que vagar. Por el vestido se diferenciaban poco,

²² For example, the following passage describing an aggressive rooster stalking the patio of the *casa de corredor* was taken out at the galley stage: “Al mismo tiempo Jacinta vió que hacia ella marchaba con las alas abiertas un gallo de pelea, la cabeza peluda y roja como un tomate. Parecía perro de guardián que la quería morder. Guillermina le amenazó con el pié, y el gallo en un arranque de despecho se dio un picotazo á si mismo, y enseñó á las señoras su rabadilla, también peluda y roja como la cabeza. Los muchachos no se acercaban. Estaban lelos, mirando á las señoras, entre burlones y respetuosos.” (G 1C, 4a).

y menos aún por el lenguaje, que era duro con inflexiones dejosas. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 432)

Ultimately, she has inherited her mother's conception of children as possessions. As the narrator states: "Estaba Jacinta aquella tarde fuera de sí. Veía al pituso como si lo hubiera parido, y se había acostumbrado tanto a la idea de poseerlo, que se indignaba de que su suegra no pensase lo mismo que ella" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 510). Despite the stark difference in the appearance of bourgeois shops in the center of Madrid and the *casa de corredor* in the south, Jacinta still manages to conceptualize the patios and corridors of the 'Cuarto Estado' in very similar manner to display windows, with goods she would "poseer."

The reference to Aparisi's manner of speech also presents the children from a middle-class perspective. Jacinta's adaptation of the use of overly sophisticated language as evidenced in the substitution of "orificios" for the more commonly used word "agujeros" presents the child's appearance through terms used in middle-class discourse. This shift in lexicon offers insight into Jacinta's mind, and reveals she is conscious of how language defines the relationship between members of different social backgrounds.

The conception of the patio and corridor balconies as a space where Jacinta views children as objects for sale is further evident in her attempt to purchase *el Pitusín*. José Izquierdo and Jacinta bargain for the child, and Jacinta even solicits Guillermina's help to complete the transaction. Guillermina deftly negotiates with Izquierdo, using the worth of other children in the patio as leverage for driving down the price: "En estos dos patios los dan por nada, a escoger...por nada, sí alma de Dios, y con agradecimiento encima..."

¿Qué te creías, que no hay más que un piojín?... Ahí está esa niña preciosísima que llaman Adoración... Pues nos la llevaremos cuando queramos, porque la voluntad de Severiana es la mía... Con que abur... ¿Qué tienes que contestar?'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 493). The interaction becomes so financially incentivized that Guillermina even attempts to take her own cut in exchange for her help in the negotiations. When she hears the price Jacinta is willing to pay, Guillermina stakes her claim to part of the payment: "¿Diez mil reales? Pues me los das, y si lo saco por menos, la diferencia es para mi obra'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 495).

1.6.4 Playing with Space: Children on the Patios and Corridors of the 'Cuarto Estado'

Galdós not only reveals an essential aspect of Jacinta's character development through her obsession with obtaining a child, but also symbolically depicts historical elements of class struggle as the narrative gaze is drawn to the lower-class children of the 'Cuarto Estado.' As the focus shifts to the children through Jacinta's perspective, Galdós communicates various pressing social issues of the time, such as the rising price of bread, middle-class fear of barricaded revolts, the institutionalized punishment of vagrancy, as well as unjust distribution of water resources.

Throughout the nineteenth century, for many lower-class citizens of Madrid, bread became a luxury item they could not afford due to inflated prices in an unregulated market. Bahamonde explains that the situation became so dire that it resulted in revolts in 1848:

En enero de 1848 el pan duplicó su precio convirtiéndose en artículo de lujo fuera del alcance de los trabajadores [...]. El 26 de marzo, se produce un levantamiento auspiciado por demócratas y republicanos que encauzan el descontento popular por la degradación de los niveles de vida y, en concreto por la cuestión apremiante del pan: se forman barricadas, generalizándose la lucha entre la guarnición militar y las capas populares de los barrios del sur de Madrid. (50-51)

Despite the violent response to the bread crisis, prices remained high throughout much of the nineteenth century. In 1871, according to Bahamonde, bread prices rose to a new extreme as grain was exported to France in response to the Franco-Prussian War (54).

Although bread prices are never discussed directly by characters in the novel, Galdós portrays the tragic implications of the market for lower-class Madrid through his description of the children playing on the patios in the ‘Cuarto Estado.’ Specifically, they use the mud from the dirt floor in order to pretend to bake bread, as Jacinta observes:

Estaban jugando en el fango, que es el juguete más barato que se conoce.

Amasábanlo para hacer tortas del tamaño de perros grandes. La niña que era de más edad, había construido un hornito con pedazos de ladrillo, y a la derecha de ella había un montón de panes, bollos y tortas, todo de la misma masa que tanto abundaba allí. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 434)

While Jacinta’s main concern is to observe the children playing in the dirt in order to locate el *Pituso*, the passage uncovers the reality of an oppressed population in which children are forced to grow up in a space where they can only *imagine* eating bread. The children literally shape their reality as they desire it to be using the dirt floor that

composes their playground. Sadly, of course, their mud bread holds no true nutritional value, and only emphasizes how the children can merely fantasize what the bourgeoisie take for granted. In this way, rather than condemning the working class for being filthy, Galdós uses their uncleanliness to convey their suffering.

The children playing in the corridors also represent the middle-class fear of violent working-class revolts which, as noted by Bahamonde, resulted in the violation of class boundaries, with barricades being set up in the streets of Madrid. As a middle-class outsider, Jacinta feels discomfort as she traverses the unfamiliar territory of the ‘Cuarto Estado.’ McKinney explains how the lack of a distinction between public and private space undermine middle-class conception of the world: “Clear divisions between private and public space and, it could be argued, a notion of middle-class morality are both absent from the *cuarto estado*. Instead, people, objects and activities mix indiscriminately in the same space” (119). The balcony corridors are filled with obstructions for Jacinta and Guillermina, making it difficult for them to navigate the space. As the narrator comments: “avanzaron por el corredor y cada paso un estorbo” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 435).

However, apart from the random furniture placed outside of the apartments, most of the obstacles come in the form of the life in the corridor. As they negotiate the corridors, Jacinta and Guillermina come across several barricades of children preventing them from passing. For Jacinta and Guillermina the children become objectified in the sense that they form part of the barricade themselves. The presence of the children on shared corridor shocks both women, unaccustomed as they are to such spatial practices.

Both show surprise for the presence of the children outside of the domestic domain, and consider them out of place: “nueva barricada de chiquillos les cortó el paso. Al verles, Jacinta y aun Guillermina, a pesar de su costumbre de ver cosas raras, quedáronse pasmadas, y hubierales dado espanto lo que miraban, si las risas de ellos no disparan toda impresión terrorífica” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 438). Although the laughter of the children ultimately relieves the narrative tension in this scene, Jacinta and Guillermina’s difficulties traversing the space of the corridor as they encounter lower-class bodies represent very real middle-class fears of uprising and rebellion.

The condemnation of vagrancy is another important form of oppression represented through the imagination of the children in the corridors. Bahamonde explains that the working-class population vastly outnumbered the amount of jobs available in the nineteenth century, resulting in catastrophic unemployment: “La incipiente industrialización madrileña se ve incapaz de absorber los contingentes de mano de obra que el campo le envía. Los recién llegados quedan, pues, condenados al subempleo, al paro encubierto” (43). However, rather than creating opportunities for jobs, the bourgeoisie condemned the lower class for their idleness and made vagrancy a punishable offense to be enforced by the municipal police and the Civil Guard: “Cuando entra en crisis la coyuntura económica y la inestabilidad social amenaza los bases del sistema, queda legalizada la represión del jornalero en paro, de la que se encarga un cuerpo municipal de agentes de orden público, en ocasiones apoyado por la Guardia Civil” (Bahamonde 48). Not only did the bourgeoisie create a situation of vast unemployment

for the working class, but they also enforced strict rules punishing those who could not work.

This harsh reality is represented by one of the children in the ‘Cuatro Estado’ who imitates the behavior of a member of the Public Order. After greeting the children, one very assertive girl, nicknamed *la zancuda* by the narrator, takes it upon herself to be Jacinta’s guide as she traverses the *casa de corredor*. As they encounter neighbors and other children in the corridor, *la zancuda* assumes the abusive attitude of a member of the Public Order: “La chica respondió que sí, y desde entonces convirtiose en individuo de Orden Público. No dejaba acercar a nadie, quería que todos los granujas se retiraran y ser ella sola la que guiasa a las dos damas hasta arriba” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 433). The role playing of *la zancuda* unveils the violence that the inhabitants of the *casa de corredor* suffer at the hands of the Public Order. When an old woman selling figs blocks her path *la zancuda* threatens her with physical force: “Vaya dónde se va usted a poner, tía bruja!... Afuera o la reviento de una patada...” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 434). Through the play of the children, Galdós indirectly communicates the fears and oppression suffered by the working class at the hands of the bourgeoisie. Their use of imagination communicates the social reality within the confines of the *casa de corredor* in a way that Jacinta could never have imagined.

The lack of water available to the lower class is also expressed through the depiction of the dirty children in the corridors of the ‘Cuarto Estado.’ Along with making bread from dirt, the children also imagine the mud to be water they use to clean themselves: “Estaban jugando con arena *fina* de fregar [...]. Uno de los mocosos

arrastraba su panza por el suelo, abierto de las cuatro patas; el otro cogía puñados de arena y se lavaba la cara con ella, acción muy lógica, puesto que la arena representaba el agua” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 434-35). The irony of the children washing their faces with dirt portrays the disheartening reality they face where they can only imagine having enough water to clean themselves.

Later, Jacinta and Guillermina observe in horror the children on the corridor who have painted their faces with ink, viewing them as wild little devils more than human beings:

Era una manada de salvajes, compuesta de dos tagarotes como de diez y doce años, una niña más chic, y otros dos chavales, cuya edad y sexo no se podía saber. Tenían todos ellos la cara y las manos llenas de chafarrinones negros, hechos con algo que debía de ser betún o barniz japonés del más fuerte. Uno se había pintado rayas en el rostro, otro anteojos, aquél bigotes, cejas y patillas con tan mala maña, que toda la cara parecía revuelta en heces de tintero. Los pequeñuelos no parecían pertenecer a la raza humana, y con aquel maldito tizne extendido y resobado por la cara y las manos semejaban micos, diablillos o engendros infernales.

(*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 438)

The religious lexicon used in the description of the dirty children implies the immorality of their action and reflects middle-class beliefs that considered uncleanliness as a sin. In “Images of Filth: Representation of the Poor in ‘Una vista al Cuarto Estado,’” Teresa Fuentes explains that in the nineteenth century, the middle class began to associate poverty with filth and immorality:

As a result of the pressures of urban and industrial expansion, the middle-class discourse on public health attracted considerable attention. In this discourse the working classes came increasingly to be associated with filth which, in turn, stood as a powerful metaphor for physical and moral contagion, and all forms of urban and social disorder. Hygienic discourses were based on class-related polarities, which posited middle-class cleanliness, morality, virtue, order, discipline, and civilization, at the opposite pole to working-class filth, immorality, vice, disorder, animality, and savagery. (3)

The narrator's description the children as wild devils reflects the discourse mentioned here by Fuentes.

However, further descriptions of dirty children in the corridor reveal the root cause of the filthiness of the children originates from middle-class greed and neglect. As Madrid expanded, it became more and more difficult to bring water to all of its inhabitants. As a result, many members of the working class did not have access to running water, and in lower-class communities, water was considered a valuable commodity. As Bahamonde notes:

Un punto a considerar en el problema sanitario y urbanístico de Madrid es el del abastecimiento de agua. El Madrid de 1848, del que surge el plan del Canal de Isabel II, es muy distinto al Madrid de 1890: se ha producido un desfase entre las condiciones de población y el abastamiento de agua. La ciudad se ha extendido. Una gran parte de la población no tiene agua corriente en sus casas y se

aprovisionan directamente de las fuentes públicas o del servicio de aguadores.

(103)

Thus, Galdós, far from portraying the unhygienic condition of the children in the ‘Cuarto Estado’ as a natural quality of an inherently immoral lower class, conveys their uncleanliness as an unfortunate consequence of material poverty. When Jacinta laments the filthy appearance of *el Pituso*, the women of the neighborhood reveal that they simply do not have the means to wash him: “todas las vecinas reconocieron la necesidad de lavarle; pero una no tenía agua y otras no querían gastarla en tal objeto” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 445). Water is clearly a precious resource to the women in the *corrala*, one that none of them can afford to waste on cleaning someone else’s child. Finally, a neighbor takes pity on the child and bathes him: “Por fin una mujer agitanada y con faldas de percal rameado, el talle muy bajo, un pañuelo caído por los hombros, el pelo lacio y la tez crasa y de color de terracotta, se pareció de repente, y quiso dar una lección a las vecinas delante de las señoras, diciendo que ella tenía agua de sobra para *desprecudir* y *covelar* a aquel ángel” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 445). Although the narrator still portrays this woman as uneducated, focusing on her gypsy-like appearance and vernacular speech, as well as describing her as vainly attempting to impress her neighbors, her sacrifice of water to clean *el Pituso* shows the dependence of the children on the support of the community in order to access food, water, and protection.

Comparing the lack of water in the lower-class community of the ‘Cuarto Estado’ to Fortunata’s experience later in the novel on the balcony of a bourgeois family, where

she is offered a choice of two different types of water, presents a disheartening view of class inequality:

“Niñas,” dijo doña Casta, tocándoles en los hombros. “¿De qué agua quieren ustedes?... ¿Progreso o Lozoya?” “Lo mismo me da,” replicó Fortunata. “Toma Lozoya, y créeme,” insinuó doña Lupe, con su vaso en la mano. “Por más que diga esta, Progreso es un poquito salobre.” “Eso va en gustos... Y también influye el hábito,” arguyó Casta con la suficiencia y formalidad de un catador de vinos. “Como yo me he criado bebiendo el agua de Pantejos, que es la misma que la Merced, que hoy llaman Progreso, toda otra agua me parece que sabe a fango.”
(*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 513-14)

Bahamonde notes the social implications of having water in one’s home: “la venida de las aguas del Lozoya a Madrid implica el que parte de la población más acomodada de los años 60 pueda tener el agua en sus casas como propietarios o arrendatarios” (103). Doña Casta and Doña Lupe not only have a surplus of water, they also have different options to choose from in either the Progreso or Lozoya water sources. Water is treated like a luxury good, akin to that of wine, for which the bourgeois women have developed a sophisticated palate, noting the saltiness of the Progreso water compared to that of Lozoya. Casta even remarks that she has a nostalgic connection with the Progreso water that she drank as a child, suggesting that her origin as a member of the bourgeoisie has granted her access to water since birth.

The characters in *Fortunata y Jacinta* with lower-class origins have a drastically different perspective on water than the privileged attitude of the middle-class *señoras*

Doña Casta and Doña Lupe. Fortunata's dry answer of "lo mismo me da" when initially offered a choice between the two different types of water shows that she has not developed the same sophisticated palate and considers the idea of water tasting to be presumptuous. The fact that Doña Casta and Doña Lupe go on to explain the flavor profiles of the water to Fortunata prove that she is unaware that different sources of water even exist. Although Fortunata has gained access to the privileged space of the middle-class home, specifically the balcony, she still stands apart from the absurdly ostentatious attitude towards such a basic element that is denied to so many others.

By comparing this scene with that of the women in the *casa de corredor*, who consider water such a valuable resource that they are unable to use it to clean the children in the patio, the immense social inequality in Madrid becomes strikingly evident. Through the representation of children and their imaginative play in the *casa de corredor*, Galdós points out that the root cause of the supposed 'evils' of filth and vagrancy rest squarely on the middle class itself.

1.6.5 Architectural Manifestations of Middle-Class Greed: The *Casa de Corredor* in *Torquemada en la hoguera*

Madrid's middle class not only created the deplorable conditions suffered by lower-class citizens living in the *casa de corredor*, but also took advantage of new economic circumstances in order to profit from working-class housing. During the housing crisis of the nineteenth century, many *casas de corredor* were built by middle-class investors. The formation of Madrid's large lower-class population was a direct

result of the mass purchases of rural property, previously owned by the Church, made by bourgeois investors. Bahamonde states that without the support of Church-owned lands, many peasants were forced to emigrate from the countryside to the city in search of a better life, as subsistence farming was no longer a viable option: “la implantación de nuevas relaciones de producción en el campo como consecuencia de las desamortizaciones, la disolución de las estructuras gremiales, y la persistencia de las crisis agrarias abocan a la proletarización a buen número de productores directos, que se ven separados de sus instrumentos de producción y obligados a vender su fuerza de trabajo como mercancía” (42). As Vincent explains:

It is quite clear that, overall, land sales benefited those with money to spend. The poor and the landless lost out, not least through the loss of Church lands on which they might encroach for firewood and grazing and financed the charity they depended on during hard times. Land sales were an elite matter and did nothing to alleviate the poverty and protest which came to characterize much of Spanish rural society, even if they did expand the elites, most notable at local level. (19)

The arrival of poor rural immigrants in Madrid caused lower-class housing to become the center of a moral debate. The practice of disentailment within the city itself meant that the fate of the new arrivals was ultimately in the hands of middle-class investors looking to profit from this disadvantaged population. Clementina Díez de Baldeón explains how property owners turned a profit by buying land on the cheap, and then constructing homes of poor quality with inferior materials: “Se abría de este modo la posibilidad de especular también la vivienda obrera y de la baja burguesía. La operación se presentaba

posible en base a dos recursos: primero, la elección de unos terrenos a precios reducidos y segundo, haciendo construcciones de baja calidad y poco coste utilizando materiales malos” (55).

In response, architects, doctors, and politicians all denounced the deplorable housing conditions of the working class that resulted from the construction of small, overcrowded, poorly ventilated homes made from cheap materials, aimed solely at turning a profit. Díez de Baldeón cites an article published by the *Revista de arquitectura* in 1879, that went as far as to condemn property owners as the “los verdugos de la clase jornalera”:

Declarar guerra incesante a esos propietarios, verdugos de la clase jornalera, y a la Corporación municipal, que consiente se construyan casas que, más que viviendas, son sepulcros en vida [...]. Cuando estos propietarios compran hoy solares, y aun en sitios que se hallan fuera del casco de la población, y construyen casas de seis pisos, y en superficies relativamente pequeñas hacen hasta multitud de habitaciones por piso, sin luz, sin ventilación y sin capacidad, todo cuanto de aquellos se diga será verdaderamente merecido. (426-27)

Díez de Baldeón explains the various proposed solutions for improving lower-class housing, ranging from an incorporation of the lower classes into middle-class housing, the so-called ‘casas mixtas,’ to a complete class segregation by neighborhood:

Para algunos, la solución idónea se encontraba en la creación de barrios obreros aislados, separados convenientemente de los barrios burgueses; otros en cambio consideraron oportuna la creación de bloques de pisos diseminados por la

población, no llegando a construir barrios obreros aislados; un tercer grupo, siguiendo modelos desarrollados en países extranjeros, consideraron como óptima solución la casa unifamiliar rodeada por un pequeño jardín, y el resto siguió encontrando conveniente la vivienda mixta de ricos y pobres – estos últimos en buhardillas y cuartos interiores – ya que este sistema de distribución concluía, en su opinión, con la hostilidad entre clases, además de ser el medio más realista y asequible. (427)

Unfortunately, throughout the nineteenth century, idealistic hopes of quality housing for the poor were repeatedly frustrated. On the one hand, city officials and architects differed vastly on their opinions of how to improve lower-class housing, and never truly represented the needs of the working class, as they were primarily concerned with stifling revolutionary uprisings and improving the overall sanitary conditions of the city. On the other, the powerful influence of private property owners at the government level prevented any real changes from being made regardless of the intent. Attempts to incorporate lower-class populations with the upper and middle class merely resulted in the creation of low-cost housing in the basements and attics of existing buildings and created lamentable living situations for the poor, while the construction of working-class neighborhoods in the suburbs of the city failed to provide the lower class with the necessities to support a basic standard of living (Díez de Baldeón, 467). The majority of lower-class housing consisted of the attics in homes of mixed social class, or poorly constructed apartments within the exclusively lower-class space of the *casa de corredor*: “Las casas de vecindad formadas por un corredor interior que distribuía los cuartos

fueron, junto a las buhardillas y viviendas en pisos compartidos, las opciones más corrientes para la clase trabajadora” (Díez de Baldeón, 554). Ultimately, private interests prevailed, and the profits of middle-class property owners resulted in the suffering of thousands.

In his short novel *Torquemada en la hoguera*, Galdós enters directly into the moral debate concerning lower-class housing and represents the negative consequences created by a corrupt system through his depiction of characters from different social groups interacting in patios and the outdoor balconies of the *casa de corredor*. Galdós himself showed sympathy for the inhabitants of *casas de corredor* in Madrid a topic in his speech for the *Guía Espiritual de España*:

En mis tiempos de estudiante aplicado, y ansioso de conocimientos demográficos, me hice amigo del administrador de casas de corredor de estos arrabales, con objeto de acompañarle los domingos cuando iba a la cobranza de los míseros alquileres que se exigen a los inquilinos por el reducido espacio de sus viviendas. ¡Oh, qué escenas vi! ¡Qué protestas escuché! ¡Qué repulsas airadas, cuánto dolor silencioso, cuántos gemidos iracundos y qué lastimado quedó mi corazón ante aquel hierro candente que la rigurosa propiedad aplicaba en las carnes desnudas de las clases menesterosas! Hubiera yo querido ser el “buen casero” de la Petra y la Juana, para redimir a todos aquellos infelices del duro tributo del pago de alquileres. (129-30)

As we shall see many of these life experiences are reflected in *Torquemada en la hoguera*.

In order to convey the perverse nature of the conversion of church buildings into middle-class real estate investments, Galdós's representation of the *casa de corredor* in *Torquemada en la hoguera* presents lower-class space as existing liminally between capitalist and religious ideologies. The novel's protagonist, Francisco Torquemada, a reoccurring character in several of Galdós's novels, is himself the owner of a *casa de corredor*. Terrence Folley points out that Torquemada's actions represent a consolidation of religious and capitalist practices in Spain during the nineteenth century:

The manner in which Torquemada personifies money acquires a religious significance. On the purely material level, Torquemada's rise to prominence is related to the general development of Spanish capitalism in the nineteenth century. We are informed that the usurer belongs to a specific historical period: "Una época que arranca de la desamortización" (V, 908). The concrete reference to the legislation of Álvarez Mendizábal's government of 1836-37 merges with the religious allusions that proliferate in the novels, when we are also told that the usurer has his roots in a clearly-defined social group who represent "los místicos y metafísicos de la usura." (45-46)

As Folley notes, Torquemada makes money by acquiring property previously used for religious purposes. At the outset of the novel, the narrator describes the profitable nature of Torquemada's investment after purchasing the *casa de corredor* and emphasizes how such practices effectively replaced religious customs:

El año de la Revolución, compró Torquemada una casa de corredor en la calle de San Blas, con vuelta a la de la Leche; finca muy aprovechada con veinticuatro

habitacioncitas, que daban, descontando insolvencias inevitables, reparaciones, contribución, etc., una renta de 1.300 reales al mes, equivalente a un siete o siete y medio por ciento del capital. Todos los domingos se personaba en ella mi D. Francisco para hacer la cobranza, los recibos en una mano, en otra el bastón con puño de ciervo; y los pobres inquilinos que tenían la desgracia de no poder ser puntuales, andaban desde el sábado por la tarde con él estómago descompuesto porque la adusta cara, el carácter férreo del propietario, no concordaban con la idea que tenemos de fiesta, del día del Señor, todo descanso y alegría.

(Torquemada en la hoguera, 10)

In this passage, the narrator describes how Torquemada has supplanted religious practices with unforgiving fiscal transactions. As Sara Muñoz-Muriana explains: “By owning this space in between urban geographies, Torquemada is dismantling and investing the urban nature of the old sacred with a modern dimension. [...] With his financial activities, Torquemada secularizes the modern city and reveals the nature of the modern sacred—economic capital— which takes full expression in the urban street” (46). Torquemada visits the *corrala* to collect rent on Sundays, a sacred day according to Catholic customs, traditionally dedicated to celebration, prayer, and rest. Not only does Torquemada blatantly ignore Catholic practices, but he goes as far as to substitute them with his own capitalist ideals. The exacting mathematical language of the narrator conveys a view of the space of the *casa de corredor* in terms of its financial value while ignoring its religious past.

Torquemada, however, is forced to reconsider his capitalist ambitions when his son, Valentín, becomes deathly ill. Galdós represents the irony of Torquemada's tragedy when it is revealed through the usurer's thoughts that he considers his son's disease as God's punishment for his general lack of moral integrity: "Torquemada, rendido de cansancio, se embutió en uno de los sillones de la sala, y allí se estuvo como media horita, 'He faltado a la Humanidad, y esa muy tal y cual me las cobra ahora con los créditos atrasados...'" (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 51). Consciousness becomes conscience, as Torquemada seems aware that his actions have literally reshaped Madrid for the worse. In a moment of desperation, Torquemada seeks redemption, pleading earnestly to God to save his son: "Ea, que ya me voy cargando: si no he hecho ningún bien, ahora lo haré, ahora, pues por algo se ha dicho que nunca para el bien es tarde" (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 52). As flawed as Torquemada's character is, he expresses a rare moment of clarity in his distressed stream of emotions as he admits his own shortcomings and accepts the repercussions for his actions, in a moral determination not devoid of irony: it was his purchase of Church-owned land that allowed him to profit from the misfortune of others.

Eventually, Torquemada's habit of collecting rent on Sunday draws the narrative back to the marginalized space of the *corrala*. However, this time Torquemada's intention is to exercise charity in hopes of saving his son by tipping the moral scales back in his favor. The fear the Inquisitor's presence causes the inhabitants of the *corrala* humorously portrays just how out of character this philanthropic inclination is for the otherwise ruthless property owner:

La presencia de Torquemada en el patio, que todos los domingos era una desagradabilísima aparición, produjo aquel día verdadero pánico; y mientras algunas mujeres corrieron a refugiarse en sus respectivos aposentos, otras que debían de ser malas pagadoras, y que observaron la cara que traía la fiera, se fueron a la calle. La cobranza empezó por los cuartos bajos y pagaron sin chistar el albañil y las dos pitilleras, deseando que se les quitase de delante la aborrecida estampa de Don Francisco. (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 54)

Don Francisco is clearly a hated figure in the community as his relationship with the various neighbors is based solely on wringing every last cent from them until they have settled their debts. The image of women hiding in their homes or fleeing from him as he approaches show how little mercy Torquemada has granted in the past when collecting money from the inhabitants of the *corrala*, and just how difficult it is for them to pay their rent.

In the only scene detailing Torquemada's direct interaction with the inhabitants of the *casa de corredor*, he shows a benevolence that defies the tenants' expectations. When a woman who has fallen on particularly hard times tells Torquemada that she is unable to pay him, his sympathetic reaction contradicts his typically unforgiving nature:

Al llegar al cuarto de la Rumalda, planchadora, viuda, con su madre enferma en un camastro y tres niños menores que andaban en el patio enseñando las carnes por los agujeros de la ropa, Torquemada soltó el gruñido de ordenanza, y la pobre mujer, con afligida y trémula voz, cual si tuviera que confesar ante el juez un negro delito, soltó la frase de reglamento: "D. Francisco, por hoy no se puede.

Otro día cumpliré.” No puedo dar idea del estupor de aquella mujer y de las dos vecinas, que presentes estaban, cuando vieron que el tacaño no escupió por aquella boca ninguna maldición ni herejía, cuando le oyeron decir con la voz más empañada y llorosa del mundo: “No, hija, si no te digo nada...si no te apuro...si no se me ha pasado por la cabeza reñirte... ¡Qué le hemos de hacer, si no puedes...!” (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 55-56)

Rumalda faces a variety of terrible afflictions; her mother is on her death bed, she cannot afford to properly clothe her three children, and she has recently been widowed leaving her without financial support. The narrator reveals that in the past, Torquemada would have ignored all of these heartbreaking tribulations and, faced with the idea of being denied payment, he would react angrily using sacrilegious language. However, to the contrary, Torquemada responds to Rumalda with the rhetoric of charity, referring to her as “hija.” Surprisingly, the usurer’s own suffering allows him to empathize with the difficulties suffered by others, and he expresses Christian compassion, moralizing to Rumalda and her neighbors on the importance of helping one another in times of strife: “Tú, Rumalda, estate tranquila: sé que tienes necesidades, que los tiempos están malos...Cuando los tiempos están malos, hijas, ¿qué hemos de hacer sino ayudarnos los unos a los otros?” (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 56). Torquemada, himself in need of salvation, approaches the inhabitants of the *corrala* with an understanding he previously lacked.

The *corrala*, however, is not present in this novel as a setting for Torquemada’s self-interested charity, but, in his thoughts, as an origin of his son’s illness. When

searching for an explanation for Valentinito's terrible sickness, Torquemada casts blame on miasmas, an accepted theory in the nineteenth century that foul smells (mostly those emanating from unclean lower-class space) were the cause of deadly diseases: "Los aires puros, bien lo decía Bailón, eran cosa muy buena. ¡Ah! los malditos miasmas tenían la culpa de lo que estaba pasando" (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 49). Torquemada's use of "maldito" to describe the miasmas portrays the negative moral value assigned to foul smells in lower-class housing, attributed to the immorality of the poor as Fuentes notes: "For much of the nineteenth century in Europe, miasmatic theory helped generate anxieties concerning a 'submerged' and morally unreachable element of the population. Foul smells, and their rapid spread in the atmosphere, were a vivid symbolic manifestation of the immorality of the working classes, and similarly of the risks of immorality spreading throughout the population" (65). Torquemada's insight, that the cause of his son's sickness was located in the *corrala*, the very place where he himself was responsible for misery, fear and sickness, subtly establishes an unconscious path of moral responsibility in the character. Through his charitable and moral teachings, Torquemada attempts to gain God's grace and change his son's fate.

The type of greed and neglect displayed by Torquemada was common in middle-class property owners and had truly horrific consequences for the working class. Although miasmas were not the cause of disease that many thought in the nineteenth century, unsanitary conditions in lower-class housing resulted in astounding mortality rates. Díez de Baldeón cites César Chicote, who published a study on the state of lower-class housing titled *La vivienda insalubre en Madrid* in 1914, in which he detailed the

deplorable conditions of the *casas de corredor* that resulted in mortality rates of up to fifty percent: “la escasez de viviendas provoca su carestía y el hacinamiento es consecuencia de una y otra; constituyendo la excesiva mortalidad – que en las casas de vecindad o de corredor alcanza del 30-50% – el triste final de unos organismos deprimidos por toda clase de privaciones” (556). That Torquemada thinks of the damaging effects of the miasmas only after his son becomes ill shows both his egoism and shortsightedness. Ironically, the very miasmas that he believes are making his son sick can be traced back to unsanitary conditions of lower-class space of the *casa de corredor* that he is responsible for creating and maintaining. Torquemada’s punishment is, in a sense, an example of poetic justice, as the cruel landlord merely reaps what he has sown.

Although after hearing about his son’s sickness Torquemada attempts to show himself to be charitable and sympathetic to the plights of his tenants, Galdós reveals the psychological elements of his cruelty symbolically through the objects that the usurer carries with him. Galdós depicts Torquemada’s brutal treatment of the inhabitants of the *corrala* when he takes out a *garrote* during a conversation with a tenant. After a neighbor curses him for demanding rent despite the fact that she has already sold all the furniture in her apartment, the narrator describes the symbolic importance of the *garrote*:

“¿No ve la casa sin muebles, como un hospital presao? ¿De dónde quiere que lo saque? ...Maldita sea su alma...” ... “A ver si hay alguna tarasca de éstas que sostenga que yo no tengo humanidad. Atrévase a decírmelo...” Enarboló el garrote, símbolo de su autoridad y de su mal genio, y en el corrillo que se había

formado sólo se veían bocas abiertas y miradas de estupefacción. “Pues a ti y a todas les digo que no me importa un rábano que no me paguéis hoy. ¡Vaya! ¿Cómo lo he de decir para que lo entiendan?.. ¡Con que estando tu marido sin trabajar te iba yo a poner el dogal al cuello?... Yo sé que me pagarás cuando puedas, verdad?” (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 57).

The narrator’s reference to the *garrote* as a symbol for Torquemada’s authority echoes the sentiments expressed in the *Revista de arquitectura*, which accuses property owners as being the “verdugos” of the working class. This specific object captures the inhumane nature of property owners’ business practices. Torquemada’s insistence on his renters paying him in spite of their dire circumstances is backed by the threat of violence that the *garrote* represents. Furthermore, the Inquisitor, Torquemada, creates an atmosphere of fear in the community by carrying the *garrote* with him at all times. Even in this case, when Torquemada is attempting to be a pious man, he cannot help but show his true nature as a figure that condemns the inhabitants of the *corrala* to a life of fear and suffering.

Torquemada’s attempt at charity also represents the lack of true housing reformations made by the middle class. Díez de Baldeón explains that the philanthropic tendencies of middle-class property owners did not solve the root of the housing problem for the lower classes and prevented any true reforms from taking place:

Efectivamente, el paternalismo filantrópico sustituyó a un espíritu de auténtica reforma social en las clases dirigentes. De este modo, en la Restauración la beneficencia se caracterizó por la fundación de asilos, hospicios, albergues, casas

de dormir y comedores para los menesterosos, pero no se atendió a la raíz del problema. Se siguió tratando a la gran cantidad de parados, vagos forzosos y maleantes como en el Antiguo Régimen; la ‘sopa boba’ se convirtió así en la panacea milagrosa, en el parche chapuza, alicorto y reaccionario con el que la burguesía tranquilizó sus conciencias frente a la gravísima situación de hambre y desempleo en Madrid. (439)

Torquemada’s behavior in the *casa de corredor* depicts the middle-class property owner’s inability to search for any real solution to lower-class suffering. As Torquemada continues to collect rent, he becomes more and more generous. When renters ask for favors he grants them, and at one point he even gives a neighbor money for her to make a stew for her sick daughter: “‘Pero hija de mi alma, so tunanta, ¿tenías a tu niña mala y no me habías dicho nada?... Pues voy a darte para que pongas un puchero’” (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 61). Nevertheless, Torquemada’s constant attempt to reassure himself that his kindness and charity are authentic belie his true nature and reaffirm the selfish motivation behind his charitable acts. When Torquemada exclaims: “Repito que yo no ahogo al pobre,” his words only serve as recognition of his role in an economic scheme in which he heartlessly benefits from the suffering of others (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 61). In truth, he is part of a systematic housing problem that has resulted in fear, disease, and death for the lower class.

The last image of Torquemada leaving the *casa de corredor* depicts the perversity of his attempts to become a good person. Torquemada’s appearance at the end of this scene conveys the absurdity of a property owner feigning kindness and sympathy for the

poor despite being responsible for their lamentable situation in the first place. The narrator comments that Torquemada's devout behavior is so contradictory to his nature that as he leaves the *corrala*, the neighbors liken his frantic movements to the devil making the sign of the Cross: "Todas le miraban por la escalera abajo, y por el patio adelante, y por el portal afuera, haciendo unos gestos tales que parecía el mismo demonio persignándose" (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 63). Although the narrative is focused on Torquemada, the scene is focalized from the perspective of the neighbors of the *casa de corredor*, who observe him from a distance. By describing Torquemada from the point of view of the neighbors as they look on together from the corridors, Galdós shows how lower-class characters view Torquemada rather than giving precedence to the delusional image of a generous, pious man that he has constructed for himself as evidenced through his dialogue with the inhabitants of the *casa de corredor*. While it is unclear whether or not Torquemada is actually trying to make the sign of the cross, it is apparent that the neighbors view him as a purely evil figure, and consider his Christian deeds to be a contradiction defying any logical explanation.

Torquemada's hopes of a divine cure for his son show that he views the neighbors of the *corrala* only as people he can use for some form of personal gain, even treating charity as a form of moral currency that he can exchange for Valentín's healthy recovery. In the next chapter of the novel, Torquemada's optimism that his benevolent treatment of his victims in the *casa de corredor* will help to cure his son reveals his egocentric motivations: "Corrió hacia su casa, y contra su costumbre (pues era hombre que comunmente prefería desvernarse a gastar una peseta) tomó un coche para llegar más

pronto. El corazón dio en decirle que encontraría buenas noticias, el enfermo aliviado la cara de Rufina sonriente al abrir la puerta” (*Torquemada en la hoguera*, 64).

Torquemada’s fantasy affirms the previous scene for what it is: a comedic farce in which the wolf, to the shock and confusion of the flock, attempts to convince himself he is a shepherd for the day. Yet, just as the neighbors easily perceived the insincerity of Torquemada’s actions, God too seems to have seen through the elaborate spiritual scam. Ultimately, Galdós condemns the usurer to a personal hell for his actions as Valentín continues to suffer immensely, eventually succumbing to death. Although the scene taking place on the patios and balconies of the *casa de corredor* shows the great inequality between property owners and members of the lower class, the final result of such an exploitative system has tragic implications for all involved.

Chapter 2: The Character in Liminal Space

2.1 Middle-Class Reflections: The *Escaparate* in *La desheredada*

In Chapter One we discussed the social implications of the *escaparate* in Galdós's fiction as they became commonplace in Madrid towards the end of the nineteenth century. In this chapter we consider how the display window also informs the manner in which characters conceive of themselves. In *La desheredada* the *escaparate* is not only liminal in the sense that it blurs the boundaries between public and private, exterior and interior, commercial and domestic, but is also a space that triggers a productive confusion between person and object, self and other, bourgeois and aristocrat. The display window is described as at once reflective and transparent, with the presentation of goods for sale superimposed onto the protagonist of the novel Isidora Rufete's own image in the glass. Thus, the *escaparate* is a site for invoking the external forces that shape desire and identity in Galdós's Madrid.

In three separate instances, Isidora pauses in front of *escaparates*, not only to view the luxury goods within the store, but also to admire her own reflection, revealing her narcissism as well as her materialistic ambitions.

The first description of Isidora interacting with the liminal space of the store window takes place as she and her friend Miquis walk through the city on their way to the Parque Retiro. The narrator describes the superficiality with which she peers into the glass:

Siguieron hablando de otras cosas, y avanzaban poco en su paseo, porque Isidora se detenía ante los escaparates para ver y admirar lo mucho y vario que en ellos

hay siempre. También era motivo de sus detenciones el deseo oculto de mirarse en los cristales, pues es costumbre de las mujeres, y aun en los hombres echarse una ojeada en las vitrinas para ver si van tan bien como suponen o pretenden. (*La desheredada*, 117)

At first, the objects seduce Isidora as she passes by and she can't help but stop and stare at the wondrous sight. However, another strange phenomenon occurs: as she stares into the glass, Isidora is seduced by her *own* image as well.

Isidora's behavior mirrors that of Ovid's telling of Narcissus' falling in love with his own reflection in the clear waters of a fountain²³. Bowlby explains the connection between the store window and the Narcissus myth, pointing out the tragic implications of this artificial form of self-reflection:

Narcissus' tragedy is that he cannot free himself from the image with which he has fallen in love, which he wished to grasp and possess and know (the Latin *compendere* includes all three meanings), but cannot recognize as being only a

²³ The myth from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is as follows: "There was an unclouded fountain, with silver-bright water, which neither shepherds nor goats grazing the hills, nor other flocks, touched, that no animal or bird disturbed not even a branch falling from a tree. Grass was around it, fed by the moisture nearby, and a grove of trees that prevented the sun from warming the place. Here, the boy, tired by the heat and his enthusiasm for the chase, lies down, drawn to it by its look and by the fountain. While he desires to quench his thirst, a different thirst is created. While he drinks he is seized by the vision of his reflected form. He loves a bodiless dream. He thinks that a body, that is only a shadow. He is astonished by himself, and hangs there motionless, with a fixed expression, like a statue carved from Parian marble. Flat on the ground, he contemplates two stars, his eyes, and his hair, fit for Bacchus, fit for Apollo, his youthful cheeks and ivory neck, the beauty of his face, the rose-flush mingled in the whiteness of snow, admiring everything for which he is himself admired. Unknowingly he desires himself, and the one who praises is himself praised, and, while he courts, is courted, so that, equally, he inflames and burns. How often he gave his lips in vain to the deceptive pool, how often, trying to embrace the neck he could see, he plunged his arms into the water, but could not catch himself within them! What he has seen he does not understand, but what he sees he is on fire for, and the same error both seduces and deceives his eyes.

Fool, why try to catch a fleeting image, in vain? What you search for is nowhere: turning away, what you love is lost! What you perceive is the shadow of reflected form: nothing of you is in it. It comes and stays with you, and leaves with you, if you can leave!" (Translation by AS Kline)

derivative reflection of his own body. He is seduced by, and wants to seduce, something which is both the same as and different from himself, something both real and unreal: there to be seen but not tangible as a substantial, other body. It is an ideal image in which he sees nothing to threaten an unquestioning love.

Narcissus is fatally caught inside a trap of attraction which he does not see to be of his own making, moving according to his own movements. The consumer is equally hooked on images which s/he takes for her own identity, but does not recognize as not of her own making. (29-30)

Importantly, Isidora, just as Narcissus²⁴, is not enamored of herself, but rather the *representation* of herself that has been formed in part by the objects held in the display window. The question, then, is, how is Isidora depicted in the glass of the *escaparate*? How does she see herself, and what does that say about her identity, and about the collective identity of her fellow city dwellers?

It is clear that Isidora's act of contemplation in the *escaparate* offers insight into her character beyond her physical characteristics. Certainly, Isidora's infatuation with the projection of the store goods and her own image is based on her visual senses, yet the language used in the passage above creates metaphorical meaning in place of physical

²⁴ As Alan Smith notes, the rewriting of mythology played an important role in Galdós's novels and in nineteenth-century literature in general: "La importancia para la comprensión de la literatura decimonónica, irresistiblemente mitográfica, es grande: sus re-escrituras, desnudas o disfrazadas, de los mitos que heredan, gozan de la misma autenticidad que cualquier versión anterior: un mito, de hecho, es sólo sus versiones, sin que se pueda señalar la primera versión escrita como original. Diríamos que un mito, más que un participio pasado es un gerundio no está hecho nunca, pues siempre se está haciendo. Este dinamismo de todo mito señala su doble pertinencia para la ficción: es a la vez un lugar de encuentro con multitudes de imaginaciones, un signo denso de sentidos, y también un signo enunciado en el aquí y ahora. [...] No es de extrañar que la gran imaginación galdosiana volviera una y otra vez a ese acervo, cambiándolo, como todo mitógrafo, a la vez que mostraba en su misma re-escritura su propio acatamiento de la validez de aquellas historias, manifestada por su supervivencia secular y hasta milenaria" (17).

description. Rather than describing her physical appearance as Isidora peering into the glass of the *escaparate*, the narrative focuses on her fantasies and emotions. Isidora's actions are described as obeying a "deseo oculto" offering an ambiguous portrayal of her feelings.

Franco Moretti points out that in the nineteenth century, many authors began to link adjectives to intangible nouns in order to give meaning to the text rather than create precise imagery:

In Victorian times, a large group of adjectives that used to indicate physical traits begin to be widely applied to emotional, ethical, intellectual, or even metaphysical states. In the process, the adjectives become metaphorical, and hence acquire the emotional ring that is typical of this trope: if, applied to 'fence' and 'cave', 'strong' and 'dark' indicate robustness and the absence of light, applied to 'will' and 'frown' they express a positive or negative verdict – half ethical, half sentimental – on the noun they are attached to. Their meaning has changed; and so, more importantly has their nature: their point is no longer to contribute to the 'literal accuracy, unmistakable definiteness, and clear intelligibility' of Hegel's prose, but to convey a miniature judgement. Not description, but evaluation. (127)

In the description of Isidora gazing into the display window, Galdós creates meaning by attaching "oculto" to desire and opens the text to many possible interpretations. Is this a desire she keeps hidden from others? Is the desire hidden from herself? In calling the desire hidden, is the action of looking at oneself in the mirror then something to be ashamed of? While the last question implies a value judgment condemning vanity, the

first reveals an intimate glimpse into Isidora's private life. The narrator brings the reader closer to understanding who Isidora is but further away from a specific image of what she actually looks like. The multiple possible meanings of the word "oculto" reveal the complexities of Isidora's emotions and personality, and in making her identity less clearly defined, Galdós creates a character more closely resembling a real person.

The hidden desires highlighted by the narrator imply that Isidora's identity is formed as a result of subliminal and subconscious forces that stem from the changing expectations of femininity in nineteenth-century Spain. Isidora's seemingly superficial infatuation with the objects in the *escaparate* and her own beautiful reflection communicates the complexities of the evolving definition of the ideal woman established by the new bourgeoisie in a consumerist society. As Bridget Aldaraca explains, before the rise of capitalism and the middle class in Spain, wealth was seen as a non-renewable resource and an emphasis was placed on feminine frugality as a means of conserving family fortunes for future male heirs: "According to the laws of pre-capitalist agrarian economy, wealth is non-renewable. To spend is to deplete the estate. Fray Luis' insistence on the wickedness of the spendthrift woman is part of a result of his denial of the moral right to enrich oneself through the investment of capital" (35). However, as capitalism took hold of Europe, the upper class began to justify the purchase of luxury goods as a catalyst for economic growth and a way to create jobs for the working class. This shift in perspective allowed women to spend on luxury items, yet only within the limitations of their financial assets—to spend outside one's means was still considered a sinful act. As Aldaraca notes: "The arguments against 'women's luxury' ('el lujo de la

mujer’) are consequently focused on the impact of female consumption on the private economy of the family. Excess, now defined precisely as ‘beyond one’s means,’ is a direct function of economic power, that is to say, of one’s class origin” (101).

When Isidora admires her own reflection in the display window she reveals the contradicting aspects of female identity in nineteenth-century Spain, as women were expected to be both beautiful and humble. Aldaraca notes that Rousseau, for example, had a different take on female vanity, describing it as a positive, selfless quality: “Women are essentially different from men, and must be judged according to a different criterion. What might be faults in men may become virtues in women [...]. Little girls adorn themselves to please others, thus demonstrating that they know that their purpose in life is to give pleasure. Female vanity is therefore moral good; and male vanity does not exist” (109).

The influence of shopping on the vanity of women was a topic evident in Galdós’s writing before *La desheredada*. In *Rosalía*, a manuscript written by Galdós in 1872 and published in 1984 by Alan Smith, Charito struggles with the oppositional expectations of women to be at once beautiful and modest while admiring luxury goods in display windows:

Por allí va: no es fácil que se la confunda con otra de las muchas mujeres que van por la calle; fijaos bien, es aquella que va mirando a todos los escaparates, no sabemos si para lo que hay en ellos o si para verse ella misma en el reflejo del vidrio. Su traje es elegante; pero nada más que hasta cierto punto; vuelve la cabeza a todos lados con singular veleidad. Bien se conoce que le gusta verse

observada por todos los que pasan: reparad cómo se ahueca cuando la miran. Ahora se detiene delante del escaparate de una camisería en que hay expuestas multitud de baratijas y monadas de gusto parisiense. Parece que duda si comprará o no. Vacila: como que quiere entrar y después se arrepiente. La vanidad y la modestia luchan en su turbado espíritu al fin triunfa por lo visto esta rara virtud.

(*Rosalía*, 37)

Charito's behavior seems commonplace for women in Madrid. The narrative gaze follows her interior struggle between vanity and modesty, and her desire to be seen as both beautiful and unpretentious.

Similarly, according to male-centric views of the time, Isidora's obsession with her physical appearance was both frowned upon as sinful, but also encouraged through the increased importance placed on women to please others through their appearance. Paradoxically, as Isidora cultivates her physical appearance, she is both acting immorally by violating Christian teachings against vanity, while also fulfilling her role as the ideal woman who adorns herself for others to enjoy. Her concern with her outward appearance originates from the treatment of women as beautiful objects that was commonplace in nineteenth-century Spanish society whether she is aware of it or not.

In the previously mentioned passage of the *La desheredada*, the narrator's description of Isidora's vanity seems less a personal attack than a general observation of how liminal space shapes human experience in Madrid. The narrator observes that people are drawn to store windows not only by the wondrous display of luxury goods but also by the enticing opportunity they offer to view oneself. By noting that this behavior is typical

of both women and men in Madrid, the narrator supports the idea that the desire to observe oneself in the glass of the display window is driven by a subliminal force that works on society as a whole. Armstrong comments that the reflectiveness of public glass reveals a person's interior desires without them realizing it: "Desire as multiple blush is not only repeated 'all round' but it is there in the round, outside oneself, putting interiority at risk as the unconscious goes public, exposed to strangers" (146). In this sense, the adjective "oculto" also takes on an ironic meaning in the spatial context of the display window. Isidora's infatuation with her own image is not what makes her actions strange, but rather the space in which she decides to look at herself. How can her desires, or anyone else's for that matter, be hidden, if they are on display in the middle of the street? In a city where the boundaries between domestic and commercial, private and public, have become completely nonexistent, there is no longer anything intimate about desires, and yet the cause of those desires is kept hidden from the characters themselves as they stare into the display window.

The ambiguous language depicting Isidora's interaction with the space of the display window tells us a great deal about how she sees herself, and provides insight into the collective identity of the middle class in Galdós's novelistic universe. Isidora's lust for objects and her infatuation with her own image coincide in the display window, each revealing the other. Galdós's depiction of Isidora's thoughts while staring into store windows reveals how consumer society shapes human experience by infiltrating the imagination. Rather than reflecting a purely physical representation of one's appearance, the display window influences the desires and fantasies of those who look upon it through

subliminal messages. As Bowlby notes, new technology such as photography created a different form of self-reflection at the end of the nineteenth century:

In modern society, the image has other concrete and specific forms related to, but different from, the simple reflexive mirror relationship of self and self-image [...]. The photographic medium enabled a form of exact representation of places, people and things; in the multiple uses to which it was put, it is both indicated and helped to promote a desire and willingness on the part of society to look at images of itself, collectively and individually— to see its own image reflected or refracted back through the technological medium. (29)

Bowlby's observation of the importance of photography in the creation of identity through the filter of a "technological medium" is analogous to the representation of the self as depicted in the representation of store windows in *La desheredada*. The invention of the display window itself was a manifestation of architectural advancement of glasswork and the development of gas lighting that resulted in the creation of large window panes enabling goods to be illuminated in such a way as had never been seen before. As a consequence, people were not only able to see objects in a new way, but also themselves.

It is important to examine closely the language used by the narrator in the first description of the display window as it applies not only to Isidora but to the passersby in general. The verbs in the final sentence of the aforementioned passage of *La desheredada* are especially indicative of the psychological effect the shop windows have on Madrid's inhabitants: "También era motivo de sus detenciones el deseo oculto de mirarse en los

cristales, pues es costumbre de las mujeres, y aun en los hombres echarse una ojeada en las vitrinas para ver si van tan bien como suponen o pretenden.” (*La desheredada*, 117).

The narrator underscores the importance of the imagination in the fashioning of identity through ambiguous verb choice; the people of Madrid stop to peer into the glass only to affirm that they look as good as they “suponen” or “pretenden.” The two verbs to choose from express very different meanings. Themselves ambiguous, on the one hand, “suponer” could imply how the people imagine themselves to look, or how they assume that they look in their own mind. On the other, “pretender” vacillates somewhere between hope and expectation. When observing the goods in the window while also seeing their own reflection, the image of the passersby becomes infused with the pleasant appearance of the display, and their emotions are influenced by the desire to obtain those goods. Isidora and the people in the street who stop to admire their reflections in the display window envision a manipulated form of the self; wanting, hoping, assuming, and imagining who they could be as defined by the goods for sale in the store.

In the first half of the novel, Isidora is, in fact, more infatuated with her image as seen in the store window than in the reflection of a mirror. When her Aunt Encarnación, *La Sanguiuelera*, tells Isidora to look at her beautiful image in the mirror she becomes bored and desires to go out into the street: “‘La cara tienes ángel. De ojos no andamos mal. ¡Qué bonitos dientes tienes! Mírate en este espejo.’ Y le enseñó su doble fila de dientes, muy bien conservados para su edad. Isidora se aburría un poco. Mirando con tristeza a la calle preguntó: ‘¿En dónde está trabajando Mariano? Yo quiero verle’” (*La desheredada*, 101). Isidora’s reaction to her reflection in the mirror shows that her

interest with her own image goes beyond simply seeing herself in the glass. She is not seduced only by her attractive physical appearance but also by what type of life she could live as a young woman. Isidora's desire to look at her reflection in the street unveils the contradictory nature of female consumption as depicted in the house as at once liberating and confining. Her clear disinterest with the mirror in the home and her subsequent desire to go out into the street reflect the influence of consumerist practices on her identity, and the motivations of her actions in the rest of the novel.

The narrator later reveals a second instance of Isidora's dual infatuation with goods for sale and her own visage when staring into the display window:

Isidora compró rosas para acompañarse de su delicado aroma por todo el camino que pensaba recorrer. Al punto empezó a ver escaparates, solicitada de tanto objeto bonito, rico, suntuoso. Esta era su delicia mayor cuando a la calle salía, y origen de vivísimos apetitos que conmovían su alma, dándole juntamente ardiente gozo y punzante martirio. Sin dejar de contemplar su faz en el vidrio para ver qué tal iba, devoraba con sus ojos las infinitas variedades y formas del lujo y de la moda. (*La desheredada*, 172)

For Isidora, identity formation and consumption are a simultaneous act. What Isidora devours she becomes— in this case, the luxury goods displayed in the window. The adjectives applied to the objects of the stores, “bonito, rico, suntuoso,” all suggest a sensual experience but also have social implications. “Rico” in particular implies that the objects are not only lavish, but expensive and that acquiring them brings prestige to the owners.

Significantly, the narrator comments that the objects portrayed in the display window are the source of both pleasure and pain for Isidora. Isidora feels the pangs of desire rekindled just as she fulfills her need to consume. Furthermore, Isidora begins to consume even before she enters into the store. Although she seems to be standing and observing, she is not a passive viewer since she “devoraba con sus ojos las infinitas variedades y formas del lujo y moda.”

The display window drives Isidora to consume by stimulating her imagination. Isidora comes from the countryside, but she imagines herself as a very different social subject. The narrator describes Isidora’s vivid imagination, commenting that she often prioritizes creative thought over concrete experience: “la que llamaremos todavía por respeto a la rutina, hija de Rufete, tenía la costumbre de representarse en su imaginación, de una manera muy viva, los acontecimientos antes que fueran efectivos” (*La desheredada*, 94). In a conversation with her aunt Encarnación, Isidora reveals the influence of novels in the narrative she creates for herself:

“¿Es la primera vez que una señora principal tiene un hijo, dos, tres, y viéndose en la precisión de ocultarlos por motivos de familia, les da a criar a cualquier pobre, y ellos se crían y crecen y viven inocentes de su buen nacimiento, hasta que de repente un día, el día que menos se piensa, se acaban las farsas, se presentan los verdaderos padres?... Eso ¿no se está viendo todos los días?” [Encarnación:] “En sesenta y ocho años no lo he visto nunca... Me parece que tú te has hartado de leer esos librotos que llaman novelas. ¡Cuánto mejor es no saber leer!” (*La desheredada*, 109-10)

Isidora's desire to become rich and noble manifests itself through her readings of fiction and she becomes increasingly detached from the reality of her financial and social limitations as a result.

Isidora's infatuation with reading books results in her imaginative interpretation of the display window as a textual space. As Isobel Armstrong explains, the quality of glass as both a transparent and reflective material creates a dialectic that allows for the cityscape and the self to be read as a text:

The complexities of glass culture immanent in the everyday sensory perception of reflection and translucency, experienced by the body and mind, were available to the perceiver in the nineteenth century [...]. Turning to the texts of the overdetermined 'window moment' in prose fiction to explore further the poetics of transitive seeing, it is evident that the substantive physical visibility of the window's aperture as a ubiquitous fact of daily life enabled the window to become a textual aperture. It is an inlet, particularly for women, into real and imagined space, and a moment where reading— since we view the viewer— becomes a reflexive and textual act of seeing. (173)

Isidora establishes her identity based on the fictions she has read as well as through her visual reading of the display window. There, her ideal life is greatly influenced by the objects she views.

In fact, for Isidora, the objects she observes are the focal points of fantasies of her future life. Unlike the first description of Isidora's fascination with store windows, in the second passage, the narrator extensively lists all the goods that can be found on display:

Aquí las soberbias telas, tan variadas y ricas que la Naturaleza misma no ofreciera mayor riqueza y variedad; allí las joyas que resplandecen, asombradas de su propio mérito, en los estuches negros...; más lejos ricas pieles, trapos sin fin, corbatas, chucherías que enamoran la vista por su extrañeza, objetos en que se adunan el arte inventor y la dócil industria poniendo a contribución el oro, la plata, el níquel, el cuero de Rusia, la celuloide, la cornalina, el azabache, el ámbar, el latón, el caucho, el coral, el acero, el raso, el vidrio, el talco, la madreperla, el chagrín, la porcelana y hasta el cuerno...; después los comestibles finos, el jabalí colmilludo, la chocha y el faisán asados, cubiertos de su propio plumaje, con otras mil y mil cosas aperitivas que Isidora desconocía y la mayor parte de los transeúntes también...; más adelante los peregrinos muebles, las recamadas tapicerías, el ébano rasguñado por el marfil, el roble tallado a estilo feudal, el nogal hecho encaje, las majestuosas camas de matrimonio, y por último, bronces, cerámicas relojes, ánforas, candelabros y otros prodigios sin número que parecen soñados, según son raros y bonitos. (*La desheredada*, 172-73)

The objects that Isidora observes extend limitlessly before her and captivate her with their luxurious allure. Isidora is unable to distinguish between authenticity and artifice, as she considers the goods in the window to be so remarkable that they have surpassed even nature itself. Overtaken with the beauty of the jewels and shiny metals, Isidora believes that their brilliance reflects an intrinsic awe-inspiring quality and does not take notice of the effects of the light and the glass that enhance their splendor. In the display window,

Isidora's dream reality takes precedence as her eye is drawn to the endless exhibition of consumable goods.

Isidora incorporates the objects on display into her personal narrative as she fantasizes about her future life:

El hechizo que estas brillantes instalaciones producían en el ánimo de Isidora era muy particular. Más que como objetos enteramente nuevos para ella, los veía como si fueran recobrados después de un largo destierro. El entusiasmo y la esperanza que llenaban su alma la inducían a mirar todo como cosa propia, al menos como cosa creada para ella, y decía: “Con esas pieles me abrigaré yo en mi coche; en mi casa no habrá otros muebles que esos; pisaré esas alfombras; las amas de cría de mis niños llevarán esos corales; mi esposo..., porque he de tener esposo..., usará esas petacas, bastones, escribanías, fosforeras, alfileres de corbata; y cuando alguno esté enfermo en casa, se tomará esas medicinas tan buenas, guardadas en tan lindas cajas y botecillos.” (*La desheredada*, 173)

Through each object Isidora composes a fantasy in which she has a carriage, a home, children, servants, and a husband. Isidora's delusions create a hypothetical use for each item—the furs will warm her in the carriage she does not yet own, the beautiful furniture will occupy a house she does not yet have, the medicine will cure the children yet to be born, and the fancy cigarette case will adorn the pocket of the husband she has yet to meet. Importantly, Isidora only has this fanciful daydream *after* she has observed the objects in the store window. The life she has imagined for herself has been shaped by the advertising techniques used in the shops without her even realizing it.

Isidora is, in fact, by herself in this scene, and therefore the narration represents her interior desires through the use of her own voice. Her desires are intimate and public; she feels the need to exteriorize in some way her hopes for the future. By uttering the fantasy out loud she makes her delusions seem more authentic and plausible. While peering into the display window Isidora confuses reality and fiction, creating a narrative in which she lives out fantasies inspired by luxury goods. She has invented an entire existence in which all the objects for sale are necessary and form an essential part of her identity.

Isidora's imaginative experience in the display window represents the nascent stages of the modern phenomenon of visual consumption. As Armstrong explains: "Serving at once the needs of commerce and the cultural imaginary, the lyrical world of glass produced a landscape that conflated the real and imagined [...]. The pellucid glass membrane of this double world inevitably generated double meanings—the artificial luster of consumer experience and urban pastoral, the spectacle as visual pleasure and reified commodity" (185). Isidora becomes a consumer before she even makes a purchase. The depiction of Isidora devouring the beautiful image of luxury items can be seen as a precursor of more sophisticated forms of visual consumption such as cinema that would take place in the twentieth century.

In the case of the display window, visual consumption serves to stimulate the imagination of potential customers, and, in turn, increase the desire to acquire the objects within their view. Since glass is simultaneously a medium for visual perception as well as a physical barrier, it allows for consumption to take place without the customer

physically touching the objects for sale. As Armstrong notes: “Provoked by the prohibitive aura of glass, the consumer encounters a deliberate barrier generating wants, and manipulating unfulfilled desire for possession. It is the *thwarted* gaze that seduces” (171). As she stares into the display window Isidora finds herself caught in an enchanted state. The glass prevents her from directly accessing the objects and therefore makes her desire even more powerful. Just as the novels she reads allow her to enter into a figurative world where she invents her own reality, the space of the display window distances Isidora from the physical world and influences her dreams and desires.

While Isidora’s fantasies reveal her aspirations, they also unveil truths about middle-class identity as a whole. Isidora’s social ambitions go beyond a desire to belong to the upper class. Rather, despite her impoverished financial state, she imagines that she *is* part of the aristocracy. The illusory image of the self, fashioned through the refracted image of consumable goods presents Isidora’s identity within the context of the middle-class consciousness. Specifically, the bourgeois tendency to imitate aristocratic fashion and style further complicates the construction of the self for Isidora. After all, Isidora does not wish to become a member of the bourgeoisie; instead her aspirations are to take her place as the rightful heir of a noble home. Unable to distinguish between aristocracy and middle-class reproduction of aristocratic modes, Isidora becomes a counterfeit copy of what she truly desires to be. In short, by imagining herself as an aristocrat, Isidora places herself directly into the bourgeois reality. Tsuchiya points out that Isidora’s self-imagining is so convincing that other characters have difficulty denying her claim to nobility: “she asserts the superiority her own body and image to those of other common

beauties, believing the image to reflect her true class origins. This image becomes so convincing that even the Marchioness of Aransis, at one point discerns nobility and honor in her physiognomy” (35). Isidora’s confusion of real and artifice is so profound because the very world in which she exists is based on the premise of imitation, superficial appearances, and consumption. Galdós’s representation of the city dwellers entranced by the display window is a reflection of a society fascinated with the dream of becoming what they consume.

Isidora is only able to conceive of herself as an aristocrat through the representation of luxury goods that are now accessible to the masses. Consequently, the sale of the objects displayed in the store window both inspire her upper-class fantasies and also undermine the power of the aristocracy. Bowlby expands upon the phenomenon termed the ‘democratization of luxury’: “where *la mode* had previously been accessible only to the aristocracy, to those who could pay for a personal service, it was now, through the developing production of the cheaper confections or ready-made goods, to extend its market to the bourgeoisie. With ‘la démocratisation du luxe,’ all the trappings of fashionable modernity were in principle free for anyone to acquire, without distinction of class” (68). The *escaparates* represent the reshaping of Madrid, a society where status is now for sale and the lines between authenticity and imitation no longer matter as long as you are willing (and able) to pay the right price.

Isidora’s interactions with the display window reveal the complexities of femininity in a culture experiencing great change as a result of consumerist practices. The display of accessible luxury goods in the store window draw her out of the domestic

sphere and offer her an alternative to the prototypical role of the woman as the *ángel del hogar*²⁵. In essence, although Isidora's imagination is exploited by business owners, they also offer her the chance to escape the confines of the home and enter into public space and participate directly in the transactions of the market. Dorota Heneghan notes that after staring at the display window, Isidora purchases gloves and a parasol and in doing so she affirms her own elegance and beauty and shows that she identifies with a new group of women who participate more actively in the public space of the city: "These posh accessories became the hallmarks of cultural progress and sophistication. More than any other articles of fashion, they attested to the celebration of female taste and beauty in the urban space and emphasized women's participation, however limited in public life" (25). Isidora's preference for seeing herself in the glass of the display window over the mirror in her home represents the change in how women used space in the nineteenth century. Isidora's shopping brings her out of the home, and she continually sees herself as an essential part of the market both as a consumer and a valuable object. Although her image filtered through commercialized space results in her conception of the self as a luxury object, she possesses a certain amount of autonomy not experienced by women confined within the domestic sphere.

²⁵ Aldaraca explains the limitation to the domestic sphere defined expectations for Spanish woman in nineteenth-century society as an *ángel del hogar*: "What women can or cannot be allowed to do varies considerably within certain set limits, and the rationalizations vary extravagantly. But there is a third element, that which defines the spatial parameters placed upon female activity, which varies so little as to be in effect, an unchanging factor, that is, *where* women must do their work and *where* they must be. The essence of the ideal woman is not that she is modest, industrious, thrifty and, in the nineteenth century, *ilustrada* (educated), but that she embodies all of these virtues in and only in the house. The ideal woman is ultimately defined not ontologically, not functionally but territorially, by the space which she occupies. The frontier of her existence as a virtuous woman begins and ends at her doorstep" (27).

Despite her initial infatuation with the luxury goods she sees in shop windows, the change in emotional response that Isidora feels towards the *escaparates* as the novel progresses shows her understanding of and eventual disillusionment with Madrid's changing society. After the Marchioness Aransis denies her claim to the family inheritance, Isidora begins to comprehend the changing class order in Madrid and waning power of the aristocratic class. In the chapter titled "Igualdad. –Suicidio de Isidora" (referring to Isidora's metaphorical suicide), Isidora's godfather Don José confirms the abdication of King Amadeo after the two hear revolutionary cries from a tavern:

De una taberna, donde vociferaban media docena de hombres entre humo y vapores alcohólicos, salió una exclamación que así decía: "Ya todos somos iguales," cuya frase hirió de tal modo el oído, y por el oído el alma de Isidora, que dio algunos pasos atrás para mirar al interior del despacho de vinos. "Se confirma lo que esta mañana se decía," murmuró D. José demostrando una gran pesadumbre. "El rey se va, renuncia a la corona." (*La desheredada*, 272)

The abdication of the king and the uncertain future of the aristocracy results in a depressing loss for Isidora, yet rather than giving up on her dream to join the upper class, she simply decides to alter her own narrative through the fantasies induced by Madrid's store windows. The store windows become a space for escapism, offering pleasures that are otherwise unavailable to her. As Isidora meanders through the city, the narrator describes the seductive, dreamlike atmosphere of the central neighborhood of *La Puerta de Sol* before she arrives:

Madrid, a las ocho y media de la noche, es un encanto, abierto bazar, exposición de alegrías y amenidades sin cuento. Los teatros llaman con sus rótulos de gas, las tiendas atraen con el charlatanismo de sus escaparates, los cafés fascinan con su murmullo y su tibia atmósfera en que nadan la dulce pereza y la chismografía. El vagar de esta hora tiene todos los atractivos del paseo y las seducciones del viaje de aventuras. (*La desheredada*, 274)

The store windows not only attract Isidora to them, but they also create false impressions and deceive just as they seduce.

The representation of Isidora peering directly into the store window in this scene reveals how personal and historical events reshape the way she constructs her identity. In the illusory, alluring atmosphere of downtown Madrid, Isidora modifies her image while still maintaining a sense of dignity. Rather than relinquish her claim to the upper class, as it is both denied her and made less relevant by social changes, she posits herself as a noble martyr. The narrator communicates Isidora's own abdication from Spanish society through interior focalization: "Como la humana soberbia afecta desdeñar lo que no puede obtener, en su interior hizo un gesto de desprecio a todo el pasado de ilusiones despedazadas y muertas. Ella también despreciaba una corona. También ella era una reina que se iba" (*La desheredada*, 274). Previously, Isidora had based her identity on class superiority, yet with the abdication of king and the rejection from the Marchioness of Aransis she turns to the store window in order to escape her reality and enters into a dreamlike state.

Having readjusted her perception of the self, Isidora desires to see her reflection once more in the store window, which now presents her with new illusions. When Isidora again draws her attention to the *escaparate*, the narrator remarks:

Isidora observó que en ella renacía, dominado su ser por entero, aquel su afán de ver tiendas, aquel apetito de comprar todo, de probar diversos manjares, de conocer las infinitas variedades del sabor fisiológico y dar satisfacción a cuantos anhelos conmovieran el cuerpo vigoroso y el alma soñadora. Se miraba en los cristales, y se detenía larguísimos ratos delante de las tiendas, como si escogiera. No paraba mientes en el susurro de los grupos que decían: “El Rey se aburre, el Rey se va.” (*La desheredada*, 274-75)

This description of Isidora losing herself once again in the sensory gratification created by the visual consumption of the objects in the store windows is notably different from her previous interactions with the space in that it is accompanied by the public proclamations of the king’s departure. Although the narrator says she does not stop to consider the whispers of the people in the street, the events occurring around her have infiltrated her fantasy on a subliminal level. Both Isidora’s personal circumstances and the Spanish political environment begin to change and influence her imaginative experience of staring into the display window.

The date of King Amadeo’s abdication, February 11th, 1873, creates an interesting historical coincidence since it falls shortly before the commencement of Carnival. The carnival traditions of wearing masks and subverting social order reflect both Isidora’s emotional state and the lack of political stability in Spain. As Isidora traverses the city

streets at night, the narrator describes the carnivalesque atmosphere of the capital as reflected in the store windows of the city center:

Bajaban coches de lujo, cuyos cocheros gritaban para evitar el desorden y los atropellos. Deteníanse los vehículos atarugados, y la gente refugiándose en las aceras se estrujaba como en los días de pánico. La tienda del viejo Schropp detenía a los transeúntes. Como se acercaba Carnaval, todo era cosa de máscaras, disfraces, caretas. Estas llenaban los bordes de las ventanas y puertas, y la pared de la casa mostraba una fachada de muecas. Enfrente, el escaparate del Marabini, lleno de magníficos brillantes, manifestaba al público tentadoras riquezas. (*La desheredada*, 275)

The narrator juxtaposes the chaos of the street with Isidora's own desire to take her place at the top of the previously established social order. While Isidora clings to her aristocratic fantasies by staring at the jewels in the Marabini shop (a store famous for displaying jewels commissioned by the aristocracy²⁶), the masks hanging in the windows of homes would seem to invoke fragments of a collapsing hegemonic *persona*. This

²⁶In a May 1886 edition of *La Ilustración Española*, an excerpt describes the beauty of a golden frame designed for a marquis: "El grabado que publicamos en la pág. 312 reproduce un precioso marco de oro, tallado y cincelado, que ha sido construido recientemente en la platería y joyería del acreditado artífice de esta corte, Sr. Marabini (Montera, 7), por encargo de los señores Marqueses de Sierra-Bullones, condes de Paredes de Nava. El conjunto de la composición corresponde al más puro estilo del Renacimiento, con detalles delicados y de gran riqueza; el cerco, sostenido por dos ángeles, está formado con brillantes, y en el óvalo concéntrico inferior lleva la inscripción votiva A mi inolvidable Madre—26 de Julio de 1884; un lindo monograma, también de brillantes, aparece en la parte superior, apoyándose igualmente en dos ángeles, de actitud graciosa, que muestran guirnaldas de flores; sobre este monograma descansa una corona de marqués, enriquecida con gruesos brillantes y perlas; tres medallones, dos laterales con palmas, y uno en el lado inferior, ostentan los emblemas de las virtudes teologales, Fe, Esperanza, Caridad; los remates, los ángulos y los lados del marco son de mucho gusto y bien ejecutadas. Este marco es joya de gran mérito artístico, que honra al señor Marabini" (299). At times the Marabini store even commissioned jewels for the royal family. On June 14th 1906 *ABC* features photos of jeweled boxes made in the Marabini workshop that were commissioned by the mayor of Madrid as a gift for King Alonso XIII.

carnavalesque atmosphere brings to the fore the problematic question of identity in a consumerist society. Shifts in political power as well as the ever-changing whims of the market and fashion create a constant need for characters to reconstruct their identity.

After a conversation with her uncle, Isidora finally snaps out of the dreamlike state caused by the store windows: “‘Dejemos esto, chica,’ dijo D. José a su ahijada, que miraba embebecida las joyas. ‘Esto no es para nosotros’” (*La desheredada*, 275). This is a crucial moment in the text as Isidora realizes that money determines both identity and lifestyle in Madrid. Significantly, this is the last time Isidora looks at her reflection in the glass of a store window.

In the second half of the novel, Galdós deconstructs the disparate elements of Isidora’s identity that had composed her reflection in the store windows, and, in doing so, her image superimposed on luxury goods can now be seen as having foreshadowed her future as a prostitute. Isidora’s image in the store window represents several dualities existing simultaneously in her character, each of which we will analyze in greater detail: selflessness and vanity, the desire to be unique and to gain social acceptance, liberty and imprisonment, the act of consumption and being consumed.

In the second part of the novel, Isidora vacillates between having to acknowledge the reality of her life, and imagining the idealized version of her identity that she has constructed. After the scene we have just reviewed, in which Isidora stares at the jewels in the Marabini store in downtown Madrid, the narration skips ahead two years into the future. Much has changed for Isidora: she has taken on Joaquín Pez as her lover, has a child, and lives in her own home. However, she has only superficially manufactured the

life she had imagined for herself. Her home is both hastily constructed and filled with objects that merely imitate the luxury goods she so desires; her child is, according to her friend Miquis, “algo monstruoso,” and her relationship has not been legitimized through marriage (*La desheredada*, 290). The narrator describes her home as a disappointing version of the one she fantasized about in the store window:

La carencia de proporciones indicaba que aquel hogar se había formado de improviso y por amontonamiento, no con la minuciosa yuxtaposición del verdadero hogar doméstico, labrado poco a poco por la paciencia y el cariño de una o dos generaciones. Allí se veían piezas donde el exceso de muebles apenas permitía el paso, y otras donde la desnudez casi rayaba en pobreza. Algún mueble soberbio se rozaba con otro de tosquedad primitiva. Había mucho procedente de liquidaciones, manifestando a la vez un origen noble y un uso igualmente respetable. Casi todo lo restante procedía de esas almonedas apócrifas, verdaderos baratillos de muebles capeados, falsos, chapuceros y de corta duración. La sala lucía sillería de damasco amarillo rameado; en imitación de palo santo, dos espejos negros, y alfombra de moqueta de la clase más inferior; dos jardineras de bazar y un centro o tarjetero de esas aleaciones que imitan bronce, ornado de cadenillas colgando en ondas, y de piezas tan frágiles y de tan poco peso que era preciso pasar junto a él con cuidado, porque al menor roce daba consigo en el suelo. La consola sustentaba un relojillo de estos que ni por gracia mueven sus agujas una sola vez. El mármol de ella se escondía bajo una instalación abigarrada de cajas de dulces, hechas con cromos, seda, papel cañamazo y todo lo más

deleznable, vano y frágil que imaginarse puede... A Isidora no gustaba esta sala, que era, según ella, el tipo y modelo de la sala cursi. Había sido comprada *in solidum* por Joaquín en una liquidación, y provenía de una actriz que no pudo disfrutarla más de un mes. (*La desheredada*, 291-92)

The seemingly endless description of the furniture and decorations of the home mirror the long list of the objects for sale in the display window that Isidora observed earlier. Isidora's imagination of her future life as seen in the display window becomes realized here, yet in a drastically different form than she had originally hoped. Rather than exuding nobility and refinement, Isidora's home becomes a meeting place of objects wrenched from any cultural coherence, much less personal meaning. Apart from the occasional quality piece of furniture, the vast majority of the goods in the home come secondhand or are cheap imitations of noble fashions. Isidora herself is aware that her home is only a falsification of the one she wishes to have, admitting that her living room is "cursi."

The only remnant of Isidora's previously constructed image as a beautiful aristocratic woman exists in the form of a portrait: "En la chimenea, y sobre graciosos caballetes de ébano y roble, había varios retratos, entre ellos el de Isidora, obra admirable por la perfección de la fotografía y la belleza de la figura. Parecía una duquesa, y ella misma admiraba allí en ratos de soledad, su continente noble, su hermosura melancólica, su mirada serena, su grave y natural postura" (*La desheredada*, 292-93). Isidora still clings to the image she had previously established of herself as an elegant, beautiful

martyr, the suffering aristocrat forced to live among the trash of the middle class, which her photographed face looks down upon with melancholy.

Isidora herself now occupies the space of the luxury goods she had previously seen superimposed on her face in the store windows. However, instead of an *escaparate*, she is displayed in the balcony of her new home close to central Madrid. The narrator makes a point of informing the reader that: “Isidora que vivía en la calle de las Huertas, salía con frecuencia al balcón” (*La desheredada*, 339). Her uncle, José Relimpio, after noticing her from the street, enters a state of rapture when contemplating her appearance: “Isidora vestía una bata azul de corte elegantísimo. Acababa de peinarse y su cabeza era una maravilla. Nadie que la viese, sin saber quién era, podría dudar que pertenecía a la clase más elevada de la sociedad. Contemplola D. José, más que con amor, con veneración, con fanatismo, como el salvaje contempla el fetiche, y poco faltó para que se la hincara delante” (*La desheredada*, 340). The narrator’s comment that “nadie podía dudar que pertenecía a la clase más elevada de la sociedad” is a focalized utterance, conveying Relimpio’s perspective, and creates a sharp irony: she appears to him to be a member of the nobility, but the reader knows that she is purchased by middle-class men willing to pay the right price.

Isidora’s transformation into a luxury good becomes even more evident when she is no longer allowed to display herself on the balcony. After spending lavishly on himself, Isidora’s lover Pez runs out of money and is unable to maintain their luxurious lifestyle. As a result, Isidora begins a relationship with the cruel Sánchez Botín, who buys her what she desires. However, whereas Pez allowed her to be an object of desire on the

balcony, Botín plays the jealous lover, hoarding her for himself, and forcing her to remain hidden along with all the other luxury goods he has acquired.

Both Relimpio and Isidora complain of Botín's cruelty and how he does not permit her to show herself on the balcony. Relimpio comments that Botín's possessive nature has taken her off the market: "'Hoy tampoco la he podido ver,' dijo aquel día (abril de 1876). Ese Sr. Botín es un verdugo: no la deja salir de casa; no la deja asomarse al balcón...'" (*La desheredada*, 336).

Later, Isidora herself makes a similar complaint: "¡Que celoso, Dios mío! Si me ve asomada al balcón, ya se le figura no sé qué. ¡Ah!..., pues lo mejor es que a cada instante me está sacando a relucir su dinero. ¡Qué tonillo toma! (remedando voz de hombre.) 'Señora, yo me gasto con usted mi dinero, y usted ha de ser para mí...' ¡Para él! Él quisiera que yo fuera un vaso de agua para beberme de un trago" (*La desheredada*, 350). Isidora's language is clear; she feels that she is being consumed by Botín. However, Botín's attempt to take Isidora off display, in this case prohibiting her from appearing in the balcony, is what ultimately leads to the rupture of their relationship. Isidora has become the image of herself as a luxury object that she had seen mixed with her own reflection in the store windows.

Despite a downward spiral towards abject poverty, Isidora never fully accepts her position as a member of the lower class, all the while realizing that she does not belong to the Madrid elite. When she is forced to live in a poor neighborhood in the south of the city, she looks on her surroundings with disdain but also avoids passing by the display

windows of the *Puerta de Sol*, as her inability to purchase the goods there pains her deeply:

El barrio en que su mala suerte la había traído a vivir, era para la de Rufete atrozmente antipático. Algunas tardes salía con *Riquín* y D. José a dar una vuelta por la calle del Mesón de Paredes, el Rastro y calle de Toledo, y sentía tanta tristeza como repugnancia... Expulsada de aquellos sitios por su propia delicadeza y buen gusto, solía dirigirse hacia el Norte y acercarse a la Puerta del Sol “para respirar un poco de civilización.” Pero no se aventuraba mucho por los barrios del centro porque la vista de los escaparates, llenos de objetos de vanidad y lujo, le causaba tanta pena y desconsuelo, que era como si le clavasen un dardo de oro y piedras preciosas en el corazón. (*La desheredada*, 373).

At this point, Isidora is unable to confront the luxury goods that are beyond her reach.

The jewels that once captivated Isidora are metaphorically reconceptualized as a weapon that pierces her very soul. She refuses to face the window displays because she has become disillusioned with the image of an upper-class woman that had previously defined her.

Isidora’s fantasies that help construct her identity as an aristocratic martyr also eventually condemn her to imprisonment and objectification and reveal the inner rot of Spanish society as depicted by Galdós. Incredibly, despite the representation of Madrid as a place where identity is in constant flux and is defined through economic transactions, literal and figurative masks, and constant changing fashions, Isidora is taken to prison for the falsification of the document that claims her noble birth. Isidora’s friend Miquis

comes to break her the news: “Pobrecita, has sido víctima de un grande y tremendo engaño. Broma más pesada no se ha dado ni se dará. Quién fue el autor de ella, tú lo sabrás” (*La desheredada*, 434). Miquis’ words miss the mark on several levels. First, Isidora does not purely base her claim on the counterfeit document referred to here, rather her identity has been forged through her interaction with urban space and, in great part, the store windows that have not only magnified her imagination but molded it as well. Furthermore, Isidora is a victim, but not of the falsification of birthright documents. She has also been victimized into believing she’s something that she is not, so that business owners could profit from her. Lastly, Isidora’s imprisonment seems particularly unjust considering the carnivalesque environment in which she last viewed her own reflection through the store window. If at that point it was clear that all identity is for sale, that in a consumerist society all identity is indeed a falsification, then the self that she has constructed is no less authentic than that of any other person in the city. Galdós shows the damning contradiction of Isidora’s arrest, as the very process of fashioning self-identity in this representation of Madrid occurs through exploitation.

Before being incarcerated, Isidora finds herself drawn to shops selling luxury goods one final time. Although she is unable to afford the dresses in one of her favorite shops, she tries them on and looks at herself in the mirror:

Contemplese en el gran espejo, embelesada de su hermosura...Allí, en el campo misterioso del cristal azogado, el raso, los encajes, los ojos, formaban un conjunto en que había algo de las inmensidades movibles del mar alumbradas por el astro de la noche. Isidora encontraba mundos de poesía en aquella reproducción de sí

misma. ¡Qué diría la sociedad si pudiera gozar de tal imagen! ¡Cómo la admirarían, y con qué entusiasmo habrían de celebrarla las leguas de la fama! ¡Qué hombros, qué cuello, qué todo! ¿Tantos hechizos habrían de permanecer en la obscuridad, como las perlas no sacadas del mar? No, ¡absurdo de los absurdos! Ella era noble por su nacimiento, y si no lo fuera, bastaría a darle la ejecutoria su gran belleza, su figura, sus gustos delicados, sus simpatías por toda cosa elegante y superior. (*La desheredada*, 401)

Isidora sees herself as noble because of the objects that adorn her just as she did in the display window. In this instance she is able to return to those fantasies one last time, embracing her identity as a consumable object.

In a brutal follow up, however, after being released from prison on the condition that she admit publicly that the document claiming her as a noble by birth is a forgery, Isidora, who has descended to poverty, begins to view her body as a resource that can be sold for profit. Stripped of her clothes, she stares at her body in the mirror while her shocked uncle watches:

Isidora, pues ella misma era y no una vana imagen, se miró largo rato en el espejo. Aunque este era pequeño y malo, ella quería verse, no sólo el rostro, sino el cuerpo, y tomaba las actitudes más extrañas y violentas, ladeándose y haciendo contorsiones. La ligereza de su ropa era tal, que fácilmente salían al exterior las formas intachables de su talle y todo el conjunto gracioso y esbelto de su cuerpo. Don José se quedó lelo, frío, inerte, cuando oyó estas palabras, pronunciadas

claramente por Isidora: “Todavía soy guapa..., y cuando me reponga seré guapísima. Valgo mucho, valdré mucho más.” (*La desheredada*, 495)

Although Isidora no longer sees herself as a noble woman, she remains in love with her own image and still retains hope of social ascension. Her narcissistic nature resurfaces at the end of the novel and she is unable to discern between herself and her image reflected by the mirror. The formation of her identity earlier in the novel through her visual consumption of her reflection in the display windows ultimately reveals a defiant yet unfortunate character, independent in her social aspirations, yet reduced to the sale of her own body in order to achieve her goals.

2.2 Suicide, Family, and Desire in *Ángel Guerra*, *Miau* and the *Torquemada* Tetralogy

In *Ángel Guerra*, *Miau*, and the *Torquemada* tetralogy liminal spaces are closely linked to characters who face despair due to social pressures and physiological limitations. For these characters, windows, balconies, and patios foreshadow their suicidal tendencies, and are a site of an interior struggle for control over their own fates. The theme of suicide underscores one of the elements that defines many galdosian characters: their endeavor to make decisions that would determine the outcome of their lives. In this section we will analyze characters who consider and/or commit suicide, and the role of liminal space as an intersection between life and death, free will and determinism, fears and desires, as well as confinement and liberation.

This section will take into account two types of characters who struggle with the idea of suicide through or in liminal spaces. First, we will examine two male characters,

Ramón Villaamil of *Miau* and Rafael del Águila of the *Torquemada* tetralogy, for whom windows represent an escape from the tyranny of family life and disillusionment with Madrid society. We will also examine Dulcenombre Babel from *Ángel Guerra*, who yearns for an idealized form of love and entertains the idea of suicide from the balcony.

2.2.1 Domestic Limitations: The Suicide of Ramón de Villaamil

In *Miau* (1888), Galdós created a character in Ramón de Villaamil who struggles to regain control of his own fate. Having been fired from his government job one week before receiving his pension, Villaamil is no longer able to support his family financially, and feels immense shame at the poverty his wife, sister-in-law, daughter, and grandson are forced to suffer. For Villaamil, the balcony and door of his home represent an escape from his domestic oppression, and when outside of his home, the balcony window serves as a portal into his violent thoughts towards his own family. As Gabriel Cabrejas comments, Villaamil begins to have suicidal thoughts due to a “sentimiento de inferioridad, autodesprecio, y una lúcida conciencia de sí para la cual las etapas febriles de delirio son anticipo y preparación para una clara captación del ser en su insuficiencia y la medida que le es adecuada” (49). Villaamil’s social limitations result in his emotional and mental instability that manifests itself in an intense hatred towards his family and strong feelings of inadequacy that drive him to suicide.

The rest of the Villaamils, especially Ramón’s wife Doña Pura, are aware of his suicidal condition and fear that at any moment he may throw himself off the balcony. When his conniving (and successful) son-in-law Victor threatens to take away his

beloved grandson Luisito, Ramón throws an enraged fit: “Que se lo lleve...que se lo lleve con mil demonios! Mujeres locas, mujeres cobardes, ¿no sabéis que morimos... Inmolados... ¿Al... Ultraje?’ Y tropezando en las paredes corrió hacia el gabinete. Su mujer fue detrás, creyendo que iba disparado a arrojarse por el balcón a la calle” (*Miau*, 155). Victor’s decision to take away Luisito is the final indignation for Villaamil, leaving him to consider death as his only option. The balcony is significant not only as a space in between life and death, but also as an escape from his oppressive domestic life. Symbolically, he no longer feels he can be part of the family and inhabit the same space that they do. Villaamil shows the need to escape the oppression and inadequacy he feels at home, and liminal spaces represent a liberation from his familial hardships.

Ramón Villaamil is not the first Galdosian character to have suicidal thoughts associated with unemployment, family, and the balcony. In part two of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, written one year earlier in 1887, Maxi Rubín’s brother, Juan Pablo, has a similar suicidal inclination caused by his lackluster career and his miserly aunt, Doña Lupe. Much like Ramón, Juan Pablo expresses an intense hatred towards his family and a desire to end his own life. After Doña Lupe refuses to give him a loan, Juan Pablo begins to have dark thoughts: “Salió de la casa el pobre hombre más muerto que vivo. Su tía no era ya simplemente una mujer mala; era un monstruo, una furia, un dragón mitológico” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 679). The next day, when Juan Pablo is called to the government director Villalonga’s office, his desperation and suicidal thoughts are tempered by the hopes of being awarded a prestigious government job: “en cuanto salga del despacho del jefe, me levanto la tapa de los sesos, como hay Dios. La contra es que no tengo

revolver... Me tiraré por el balcón... No, eso no; ¡Me haría una tortilla!... Vamos, que el corazoncito me anuncia secretaria” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 679-80). Juan Pablo’s manic state suggests that he suffers from a form of mental illness leading to his suicidal thoughts. Furthermore, his lack of resolve to kill himself, as well as his inability to acquire a gun, show his weakness and general impotence. Juan Pablo’s story ends on a comic, positive note, as he is awarded (much like Sancho Panza who becomes the governor of an *ínsula*) the governorship of a “provincia de tercera clase;” nonetheless, he is the first example of a male character who becomes disillusioned with the Spanish administration and considers killing himself by leaping from the balcony (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 680).

In *Miau*, novelistic space reveals Ramón Villaamil economic and familial hardships. Unfortunately, unlike Juan Pablo, Villaamil is only able to resolve his frustrations through suicide. Farris Anderson explains the importance of interior and exterior space as symbolic representations of Villaamil’s emotional state, commenting that “dicho análisis del espacio novelístico apoya la interpretación de Villaamil como víctima y mártir, y de su suicidio como una relativa liberación” (24). Anderson goes on to explain that the Villaamil home in the neighborhood of *Conde Duque* is significant because it is across from a women’s prison: “no cabe duda de que esta proximidad de la cárcel sirve para subrayar la encarcelación personal del propio Villaamil,” and that there is a direct connection between Ramón’s depression and his presence in the interior of the Villaamil home: “Como de costumbre, se encuentra en lo más interior y más oscuro de la casa, escribiendo sus eternas peticiones de colocación y de socorro económico [...] *Miau*

presenta una progresiva interiorización que es, a la vez, una migración hacia la oscuridad y la lobreguez” (25, 28). On the other hand, movement in the exterior space of Madrid’s streets represents a liberation from the oppressive atmosphere of the home: “el tema fundamental de toda la obra de Galdós es la búsqueda de la libertad, y la acción radical de *Miau* es precisamente el movimiento hacia la liberación. El equivalente espacial de este movimiento liberador es una progresiva exteriorización y ascensión” (Anderson, 26).

As *Miau* progresses, Villaamil’s hatred for his family intensifies, and the balcony and door of his home become key spaces depicting his feelings of anger and his desire for liberation. Villaamil searches for freedom by fleeing his family and wandering the streets of Madrid as a fugitive. At first, Villaamil is overtaken with feelings of hostility:

El odio a su familia, ya en los últimos días iniciado en su alma, y que en aquel tomaba a ratos los vuelos de frenesí demente o rabia feroz, estalló formidable, haciéndole crispas los dedos, apretar reciamente la mandíbula, acelerar el paso con el sombrero echado atrás, la capa caída, en la actitud más estrafalaria y siniestra. (*Miau*, 175)

Villaamil’s anger causes his hands and jaws to tense, foreshadowing the potential for violence as a result of his despair.

Despite his antipathy towards his family, he finds himself inevitably drawn back to his home and imagines what his loved ones might be doing in his absence by directing his gaze to the balcony:

[...] rondó la manzana de las Comendadoras, aventurándose por fin a atravesar la calle de Quiñones y a observar los balcones de su casa, no sin cerciorarse antes

que no estaban en el portal Mendizábal y su mujer. Agazapado en la esquina de la plazuela oscura, solitaria y silenciosa, miró repetidas veces hacia su casa, queriendo espiar si alguien entraba o salía... ¿Irían las Miaus al teatro aquella noche? ¿Vendrían a la tertulia Ponce y los demás amigos? (*Miau*, 175)

Although as Anderson mentions, after chapter 41 Ramón never *physically* enters his home again, the balcony allows him to imagine his family life once more. While observing the balcony of his home, Villaamil once again experiences the oppressive feelings caused by his family. He expresses his ire towards his family, and his thoughts center on the expensive social habits of Pura and his sister-in-law Milagros, who often frequent the royal theater and invite friends over for expensive *tertulias*. These financial obligations have bankrupted the family and driven Villaamil crazy, consuming him with hate.

The balcony window allows the reader a glimpse into Villaamil's soul, and he reveals himself as a resolute and prideful character. Villaamil's thoughts about the oppressive nature of his family are so desperate, that as he stares into the liminal spaces of his home, he even begins to consider both murder and suicide as viable options to end his suffering. Determined never to return home, his inner monologue becomes a defiant and homicidal clamor directed at imaginary interlocutors:

No me privaréis de esta santa libertad que ahora gozo, ¡bendita sea!, ni aunque revolváis al mundo entro me daréis caza, estúpidos. ¿Qué se pretende?

(amenazando con el puño a un ser invisible) ¿Qué vuelva yo al poder de Pura y Milagros para que me amarguen la vida con aquel continuo pedir de dinero, con

su desgobierno y su majadería y su presunción? No; ya estoy hasta aquí; se colmó el vaso... Si sigo con ellas me entra un día la locura, y con este revólver... con este revólver (cogiendo el mango del arma dentro del bolsillo y empuñándolo con fuerza) las despacho a todas... Más vale que me despache yo, emancipándome y yendo con Dios. (*Miau*, 176)

When deciding to commit suicide, Villaamil directly blames Pura and Milagros for his desperate state rather than the administration that has so heartlessly denied him his pension. While Villaamil has strong antipathetic feelings towards Pura and Milagros, ultimately, he decides that taking his own life is preferable to murder. In this sense, his suicidal end can be seen as a positive, a way to contain the violence within himself.

Villaamil does not attempt to lash out against the system that has failed him, nor condemn those that have oppressed him; rather he laments the affronts he has suffered and doubts the justification of his own existence. Shortly after making this decision, the servant Mendizábal spies Villaamil from the door of the home. Instead of succumbing to the oppression of his domestic life, Villaamil takes flight in order to avoid capture, and eventually makes his way to a garbage heap where he ends his life.

In the passage above, when Villaamil initially makes his decision to take his own life while looking towards the window of his home, he seems unconcerned with the Catholic conception of suicide as a mortal sin. Rather, he considers suicide to be the final emancipation, a way for him to leave his earthly sufferings behind and join God. In fact, Villaamil's sentiments echo a statement made by "God" himself earlier in the novel. Luisito, who has reoccurring dreams that he is conversing with God, at one point receives

the sad news that his grandfather will never again find a position as a government employee and that soon he will die:

“Nunca, sí, y te añadiré que lo he determinado yo. Porque verás: ¿para qué sirven los bienes de ese mundo? Para nada absolutamente. Esto, que tú habrás oído muchas veces en los sermones, te lo digo yo ahora con mi boca que sabe cuánto hay que saber. Tu abuelito no encontrará en la tierra la felicidad.” “¿Pues dónde?” “Parece que eres bobo. Aquí a mi lado. ¿Crees que no tengo yo ganas de traérmele para acá?” (*Miau*, 160).

The depiction of God seen through Luisito’s visions releases Villaamil from divine condemnation and presents his suicide as an act of liberation. Villaamil is strong-willed, proud, and weighed down by his responsibility as the economic support for a demanding family with superfluous needs, and therefore denied any sort of earthly happiness. Both Luisito and his grandfather trust in God to decide their fate, and for that reason believe that he will ascend to heaven despite committing suicide. While Ramón Villaamil’s suicide is forgiven in the eyes of God, his death still conveys a somber observation; in Spanish society the afterlife is the only hope for an impoverished man consumed by the material needs of his family. The liminal space of the novel offers an intimate glimpse into Villaamil’s desperate condition.

2.2.2 A Noble Death: The Suicide of Rafael del Águila

In nineteenth-century Spain, suicide was a topic of contention between liberal and Catholic ideologies. The Church viewed suicide as a free choice made by individuals, and therefore a sinful act²⁷. As such, people with suicidal thoughts and intentions were institutionalized and reformed by the Church. However, precisely in this century, much like other European countries at the time, such as England and France, the scientific community in Spain took interest in the issue of suicide. José Javier Plumed Domingo y Luis Rojo Moreno explain that this drastically changed the way suicide was regarded by Spanish society: “la medicalización del suicidio exigía un desarrollo teórico y una nosología que permitiese definirlo como enfermedad mental, de la misma forma que sucedía con otras conductas socialmente inaceptables” (150). This new approach effectively placed suicide at the center of a philosophical polemic as to whether free will does in fact exist, and, more importantly, if people can be held accountable for their actions as a result.

Conservative Spanish intellectuals did admit the influence of mental health and social pressures as factors leading to suicide, while maintaining, however, that the decision to commit suicide was a choice made by individuals. According to Domingo and Moreno, although the nineteenth-century Spanish medical community generally recognized that suicide was the result of “un problema emocional complejo, relacionando tanto con los cambios sociales (cambios políticos, secularización) como con el nuevo

²⁷ José Javier Plumed Domingo and Luis Rojo Moreno comment: “para los psiquiatras de orientación espiritualista en España, la defensa del libre albedrío fue un punto ideológico fundamental. En el caso del suicidio, un acto calificado por la Iglesia como pecado mortal, la defensa de un modelo dualista que no considerase un determinismo orgánico en la conducta del paciente era esencial” (153).

modelo del sujeto” (154) many influential doctors maintained the belief that: “las pasiones, enfermizas por naturaleza, han de ser dominadas en todo momento por una razón sólida capaz de someter las fuerzas de nuestra naturaleza interna” (154). Ironically, suicide became an affirmation of free will and an argument against determinism, yet the act of suicide itself still condemned suicides as sinners in the eyes of God.

The paradoxical nature of suicide is apparent in Galdós’s depiction of Rafael del Águila in the *Torquemada* tetralogy. For Rafael, suicide is presented as both a result of social stresses and physical limitations, but ultimately a conscious choice that Rafael makes. Unfortunate circumstances define the life of Rafael del Águila and lead him on a path to self-destruction. Although his family bears the honorable Águila name, the untimely death of his parents means that the family has descended into financial ruin. Complicating matters further, Rafael has been stricken with a disease that has left him blind and unable to provide for his family. His lamenting sister Cruz explains Rafael’s unrealized potential in the face of such misfortunes to an inquisitive Torquemada: “¡Ay qué dolor! Un muchacho tan bueno, llamado a ser...qué sé yo, lo que hubiera querido... ¡Ciego a los veinte y tantos años! Su enfermedad coincidió con la pérdida de nuestra fortuna...para que nos llegara más al alma” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 13). From the outset of the novel, Rafael finds himself unable to pursue the life he desires due to factors beyond his control, and he desperately searches for a way to regain autonomy.

Throughout *Torquemada en la cruz*, Rafael’s shame and lack of control are closely tied to liminal space. Rafael’s domineering sister, Cruz, strips Rafael of independence and rules the family in a tyrannical manner, deciding how her siblings

should live, even imposing her power through the threat of collective suicide. At first, the narrator presents suicide as an example of the influence Cruz asserts over Rafael and their younger sister Fidela: “Lo que Cruz determinaba, fuese lo que fuese, era como artículo de fe para los dos hermanos. Esta sumisión facilitaba el trabajo de la primogénita, que en los momentos de peligro, maniobraba libremente, sin cuidarse de la opinión inferior, pues si ella hubiera dicho un día: ‘no puedo más; arrojémonos los tres abrazaditos por la ventana,’ se habrían arrojado sin vacilar” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 54). Cruz's domination of Rafael not only strips him of his self-determination but of his dignity as well. Cruz effectively replaces Rafael as the head of the family—superseding the aristocratic tradition of patrilineality, a fact highlighted by the narrator when he refers to Cruz as the “primogénita.” In his family life Rafael lacks any type of independence, and he is denied the status normally afforded to aristocratic males.

The idea of suicide in liminal spaces implanted by the narrator foreshadows future moments of desperation and torment for Rafael in both *Torquemada en la cruz* and, as we shall see later, in the subsequent novel of the tetralogy, *Torquemada en el purgatorio*. While the example of collective suicide is initially offered as proof of Cruz's unquestioned leadership, later, the window becomes the focus of a dramatic family scene. As the novel progresses, Cruz reveals her plan to marry her younger sister Fidela to the uncultured, miserly usurer, Torquemada. Rafael rejects the idea of debasing the family name in order to gain financial security: “¡Pero humillarse hasta la degradación vergonzosa, transigir con la villanía grosera y todo ¿por qué?, por lo material, por el vil interés...! ¡Oh hermana querida!, eso es venderse, y yo no me vendo. ¿De qué se trata?

¿De comer un poco mejor?” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 74). Displaying her own desperation, Cruz reacts to Rafael’s protestations by suggesting that instead of allowing Torquemada into their family, they should all throw themselves out the window together: “Pues bien, hijo mío, hermano mío, como no podemos hacer eso, ni tampoco aceptar otras soluciones que tú tienes por deshonrosas, ya no nos queda más que una, la de reunirnos los tres, y bien abrazaditos, pidiendo a Dios que nos perdone, arrojarnos por la ventana y estrellarnos contra el suelo...” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 74). Cruz’s language mirrors the narrator’s earlier comment nearly word for word, and transforms a hypothetical statement into a reality for the Águila siblings. By suggesting they ask for God’s forgiveness before killing themselves, Cruz also suggests the immoral implications of suicide in Spanish society.

Although Cruz uses the fear of suicide to make her siblings realize the lack of options available to them, for Rafael, the window represents an escape from his domestic confines and his family’s disgrace. Despite the horrific implications of Cruz’s suggestion, Rafael embraces the idea of suicide, believing it will help him find peace and put an end to his suffering. As the emotion of the scene heightens, Cruz makes an artificial argument for suicide that Rafael agrees with all too willingly: “La muerte es para mí un descanso, un alivio, un bien inmenso. Por ti no he dejado ya de vivir. Siempre creí que mi deber era sacrificarme y luchar...; pero ya no más, ya no más. ¡Bendita sea la muerte, que me lleva al descanso y a la paz de mis pobres huesos!’ ‘¡Bendita sea, sí!’ exclamó Rafael, cometido de un vértigo insano, entusiasmo suicida que no se manifestaba entonces en él por vez primera...” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 148). The narrator reveals that this is not the

first time Rafael has shown an enthusiasm for suicide. Since his blindness forces him to remain within the limits of his home, oftentimes confining him to his own room, the window comes to represent the only path to ending his suffering since it is through that space that he can escape from his sister's tyranny and the restrictions of his own disability. In this sense, the window represents the idea of free will for the unfortunate young blind man, even if that means that he has to take his own life.

For Rafael, the window exists at the intersection between life and death, as well as his independence and confinement. Cruz restricts Rafael to the interior space of the home, denying him free access to the outside world. Each night, she puts Rafael to bed like a child: “como de costumbre, ayudaba a Rafael a quitarse la ropa para meterse en el lecho” and makes sure to close any windows and to lock the doors: “[...]cogiendo una luz se fue a registrar la casa, costumbre que había prevalecido en ella desde un fuerte susto que pasaron a poco de habitar allí. Examinaba todos los rincones, poníase a gatas para mirar debajo del sofá y de las camas, y concluía por asegurarse de que estaba bien echado el cerrojo y bien trancadas las ventanas que caían al patinillo medianero” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 125). The window must be closed and locked because it allows an intruder access to the home and Rafael an escape from his domestic confines. The use of the verb “caer” hints at the potential for something or someone to fall from that space. Additionally, the specific mention of the windows that link the home to the interior patio of the building anticipate Rafael's suicide in *Torquemada en el purgatorio*, since it is in a very similar space that he ultimately chooses to kill himself. For now, however, Cruz

effectively transforms the home into a type of prison for Rafael, where he is kept safe under lock and key.

The fear that Fidela and Cruz express in relation to the windows of their home further connects the space to suicide and freedom for Rafael. Though initially he is unable to commit suicide due to Cruz's precautions, he does manage to escape the Águila home. When Rafael's friend Melchor leaves him unchaperoned, the young blind man seizes the opportunity to make a getaway. Soon after, Cruz notes his absence and immediately fears that he has committed suicide by jumping out of a window: "Corrió Cruz al cuartito. Rafael no estaba. Gritó. Acudieron los demás; buscaronle por toda la casa, y el ciego sin parecer. La idea de que se hubiese arrojado por la ventana al patio o por algún balcón a la calle, les alarmó un momento. Pero no; no podía ser. Todos los huecos cerrados. Donoso fue el primero que descubrió que la puerta de la escalera estaba abierta" (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 180). Fidela and Cruz are aware of Rafael's desire to commit suicide and view the closed windows as an indication of his inability to do so, easing their worries and giving them hope that their brother is still alive. The open door on the other hand confirms their fear that Rafael has abandoned the domestic space and placed himself in danger despite Cruz's best efforts to limit him to the home. Rafael's escape can be seen as his first act of free will in the novel, and the fear of his committing suicide by jumping out of a window or off a balcony serve as yet another foreshadowing of his tragic fate.

The importance of the window as a space between life and death, as well as past and present, is highlighted by Rafael's return to his childhood home after he makes his

escape. Whereas the windows of his current home represent an escape from confinement, dishonor, and suffering, while seated outside of his parent's old home, the window becomes a metaphorical space that allows him to use his imagination to peer into the past and reflect upon the capitalist transactions that resulted in the downfall of his family. After reminiscing about family excursions to the opera, Rafael fantasizes that he has reentered his old home through the window of his mother's bedroom:

“Desde donde estoy vería yo, si no fuera ciego, la ventana del cuarto de mi madre...Paréceme que entro en él. ¡Qué se haría de aquellos tapices de Gobelinos, de aquella rica cerámica *viejo Viena y viejo Sajonia!* Todo se lo tragó el huracán. Arruinados, pero con honra. Mi madre no transigía con ninguna clase de ignominia. Por eso murió. Ojalá me hubiera muerto yo también, para no asistir a la degradación de mis pobres hermanas. ¿Por qué no se murieron ellas entonces? Dios quiso sin duda someterlas a todas las pruebas, y en la última, en la más terrible, no han sabido sobreponerse a la flaqueza humana, y han sucumbido. Se rinden ahora, después de haber luchado tanto y aquí tenemos al diablo vencedor, con permiso de la Divina Majestad, que es quien a mí me inspira esta resolución de no rendirme, prefiriendo al envilecimiento la soledad, la vagancia, la mendicidad... Mi madre está conmigo... A mamá, bien lo recuerdo, le eran horriblemente antipáticos los negocios, aquel fundar y deshacer sociedades de crédito como castillos de naipes, aquel vértigo de la Bolsa, y entre mi padre y ella el desacuerdo saltaba a la vista... Desde aquí no veo más que humo, vanidad, y el polvo miserable en que han venido a parar tantas grandezas, mi madre en el cielo,

mi padre en el purgatorio, mis hermanas en el mundo, desmintiendo con su conducta lo que fuimos, yo echándome solo y desamparado en brazos de Dios para que haga de mí lo que más me convenga.” (*Torquemada en la cruz*, 187-88)

Rafael’s own thoughts mirror his mother’s actions and he prefers death to the dishonor and helplessness that he feels, not only for himself, but for his sisters as well. For Rafael, embracing death is a demonstration of strength, and he chooses to die rather than to stain the Águila name by selling out to a businessman who lacks the prestige to join an aristocratic family. The window, then, offers not only a view into Rafael’s past but also reveals his personal values and unveils the source of his pained existence; it is, quite consequentially, a “window” into his soul. His inability to adapt to the swirling social and economic changes occurring in Madrid in the latter half of the nineteenth century and his stubborn loyalty to a defunct social class will result in his self-destruction.

In the following novel of the tetralogy, *Torquemada en el purgatorio*, the window becomes an important space that ties Rafael’s sad existence to that of his sworn enemy, Torquemada. The two unfortunate characters are both helplessly controlled by the overpowering Cruz. Rather than being stripped of his honor, Cruz seizes control of what Torquemada loves most: money. Torquemada often refers to the window as a destructive space for his assets and investments, angrily shouting: “¿Voy a tirar mis intereses por la ventana?” at one point, and at another uttering in despair: “No más Purgatorio, no más penar por faltas que no he cometido; no más tirar por la ventana el santísimo rendimiento de mi trabajo” (*Torquemada en el purgatorio*, 99, 156). While Rafael laments his sister’s

intention of buying a noble title for a man without aristocratic pedigree, Torquemada bemoans the loss of his money.

Although both men have completely different values and perspectives, eventually they end up in similar emotional states and are able to empathize with one another. The window serves as a space to connect the two characters. At one point, while conversing with Torquemada from the window of his room in a vacation home, Rafael even feels pity for his enemy:

Rafael se aproximó también a la ventana. En aquel instante, como si los sentimientos de Cruz se le comunicaron por misterio magnético, sintió asimismo lástima del hombre que odiaba. “Entre, D. Francisco,” le dijo, pensando que la ilustre familia hambrienta había engañado a su favorecedor, utilizándole para redimirse, y que después de sacarle de su elemento para hacerle infeliz, le cubría de una ridiculez más grave que la que él había echado sobre ella. Entráronle deseos de reconciliarse con el bárbaro, guardando siempre la distancia, y de devolverle en forma de amistad compasiva la protección material que de él recibía. (*Torquemada en el purgatorio*, 135)

Through the window Rafael views Torquemada in a different light and sympathizes with the hardships caused by family obligation. While Rafael recognizes that he could never truly embrace Torquemada as a brother and friend, he does feel compassion for the usurer and understands his feelings of impotence in the face of Cruz del Águila’s domineering presence.

The spatial connection between Torquemada and Rafael continues throughout *Torquemada en el purgatorio*, as the two eventually end up inhabiting the second floor of the family home. Torquemada is initially forced out by Cruz despite his protestations: “Torquemada, sin que estorbarlo pudieran ni los refunfuños del tacaño, impotente para luchar contra la fiera resolución de su cuñada, ni los alardes de resistencia pasiva en que quiso detener, ya que no impedir, la instalación del escritorio y oficinas en el piso segundo privándose de una bonita renta de inquilinato” (*Torquemada en el purgatorio*, 89). For his part, Rafael uses his own cunning to convince Cruz that he too should relocate to the second floor:

A la hora de comer, trataron Rafael y Cruz del deseo que éste había manifestado diferentes veces de trasladarse al piso segundo, porque su habitación del principal era muy calurosa y estrecha, y en el segundo había dos hermosas piezas interiores, que no se utilizaban, y en las cuales el ciego podía vivir con más independencia. No había querido la hermana mayor consentir en la traslación, porque abajo le tenía más cerca para vigilarle y cuidar de su persona; pero tanto insistió Rafael, que al fin, previa consulta con D. Francisco, fue autorizada la mudanza.

(*Torquemada en el purgatorio*, 219-20)

Both men inevitably end up distancing themselves from the rest of the family due to Cruz’s authoritarianism; one in order to escape her, and the other, unable to resist her overpowering will.

Unlike Torquemada, Rafael never resigns himself to Cruz’s authority, and his resistance leads him down the path of suicide. At the end of *Torquemada en el purgatorio*

it becomes patently clear that each mention of Rafael in relation to windows in *Torquemada en la cruz* was a foreshadowing of his tragic death. Ironically, Rafael shares his last living moments with Torquemada, whose existence is the very source of his suffering. As the novel draws to a close, Rafael and Torquemada share an intimate conversation in which the former reveals his disillusionment with Spanish society and leaves hints of his impending suicide:

“La Monarquía es una fórmula vana, la Aristocracia una sombra. En su lugar, reina y gobierna la dinastía de los Torquemadas, *vulgo* prestamistas enriquecidos. Es el imperio de los capitalistas, el patriciado de estos Médicis de papel mascado... No sé quién dijo que la nobleza esquilmada busca el estiércol plebeyo para fecundarse y poder vivir un poquito más. ¿Quién lo dijo?... A ver...usted que es tan erudito...” [Torquemada:] “No sé... Lo que sé es que esto matará aquello.” [Rafael:] “Como dice Séneca, ¿verdad?” (*Torquemada en el purgatorio*, 266)

Rafael’s speech displays his own erudite background, exemplifying his oratory skills in the face of suicide and despair. He poetically describes the downfall of the aristocracy, supporting his point with historical references to the powerful Florentine merchant and the banking Medici family, as well as Seneca, a Roman politician and philosopher during the rules of Caligula and Nero. Rafael highlights the instability of Spain’s current financial system by referring to his contemporaries as nothing more than “papel mascado” in comparison to the prestigious fifteenth-century bankers.

The mention of Seneca is particularly noteworthy considering his life ended in suicide, therefore alluding to the blind young man’s intentions to take his own life.

Furthermore, Rafael's familiarity with Seneca may reveal his knowledge of fine contemporary Spanish art: in 1871 Manuel Domínguez Sánchez's painting *La muerte de Séneca*, portraying the philosopher's suicide was awarded a medal at the *Exposición Nacional de Bellas Artes* in Madrid²⁸. The painting itself in many ways resembles Rafael's idealized form of death: in the face of execution Seneca nobly chooses to end his life, defying authority and displaying freedom of choice in the face of despair. Additionally, many educated nineteenth-century readers would have been familiar with the painting and thus would have made the connection between Seneca and suicide, further building tension within the scene itself.

The description of Rafael's death suggests that he ultimately falls short of his idealized noble death. Left alone, Rafael is able to take his own life by jumping out of the third story window of his room. The act itself is reported by the servant Pinto after Torquemada and his business partner, Arguelles de Mora, hear a loud sound from the patio: "Segundos después, alaridos de la portera en el patio, gritos y carreras de los criados en toda la casa...Medio minuto más, y ven entrar a Pinto desenchajado, sin aliento. 'Señor, señor...' '¿Qué, con mil Biblias?' '¡Por la ventana...patio...señorito...pum!' Bajaron todos...Estrellado, muerto'" (*Torquemada en el purgatorio*, 267). The graphic description of shattered corpse along with the mention of the sound of Rafael's body crashing onto the patio through Pinto's use of onomatopoeia punctuated by the unmovably stark "muerto" (the last word of the novel) make this an extremely difficult

²⁸ According to the Prado museum website: "This work won first prize at the National Exhibition of Fine Arts in 1871, along with Rosales' *Death of Lucretia*" (<https://www.museodelprado.es/en/the-collection/art-work/the-death-of-seneca/7a5faebf-1111-4d01-bc18-c47c771533c0>)

passage to read. Although factors beyond his control have led him to this point, Rafael displays his own strong will, cunning, and stubbornness by ending his life on his own terms. The window represents an escape from a world that he feels he no longer belongs to, and an end to a tortured existence. However, in presenting the gruesome, pathetic image of Rafael's broken body, Galdós undermines any tragic import of the act and highlights the futility of the concept of noble death through suicide.

2.2.3 Unfulfilled Desire: Dulcenombre and Liminal Space in *Ángel Guerra*

For *Dulcenombre* of *Ángel Guerra* (1891), balconies and patios serve as key spaces for the expression of love and despair. At various points in the novel, Dulcenombre vacillates between amorous ecstasy and suicidal thoughts, most often related to her affair with the protagonist of the novel, Ángel Guerra. At the beginning of the novel, Ángel, a man who has rejected his origins as a member of the upper class due to his progressive political beliefs, lives with Dulce in a rundown apartment. Although he refuses to marry her, Dulce falls in love with Ángel, and even puts up with his revolutionary activities in favor of the creation of a Spanish Republic.

Dulcenombre's emotions are initially linked to the liminal spaces of her home. The novel opens with a description of light entering her apartment as she anxiously awaits Ángel's return from a military revolt: "Amanecía ya cuando la infeliz mujer, que había pasado en claro toda la noche esperándole, sintió en la puerta, a punto que la aurora se asomaba risueña por los vidrios del balcón, anularon súbitamente toda la tristeza de la angustiosa y larguísima noche" (*Ángel Guerra*, 3). The light streaming in from the

balcony becomes a metaphor for Dulce's feelings as the rising dawn replaces the dark of night. The light illuminating the home through the glass also mirrors Ángel's entrance through the door, and his return to Dulce. This description of Dulce's feelings highlights her intense love for Ángel and her own fears about his radical political stance.

The balcony also represents Dulce's symbolic attempt to keep her lover safely within the confines of the home. Ángel arrives wounded and confused from the chaos of the night. In order to ease his pain and restlessness, Dulcenombre creates a tranquil environment by closing the balcony shutters: "Cerró las maderas y encendió luz, figurando la noche en la reducida sala, y acto continuo pasó a la alcoba para arreglar la cama, que era grande, dorada, la mejor pieza de todo el mueblaje. Después ayudó al herido a quitarse la ropa" (*Ángel Guerra*, 6). The closing of the shutters simulates night and allows Ángel to sleep despite the violence he recently experienced. Furthermore, the narrator highlights the couple's golden bed, a symbolic representation of the domestic bond between the Ángel and Dulcenombre.

In contrast to the closing of the shutters, the opening of the balcony windows moves Ángel to speak. When he awakens he refuses medical attention, and in an attempt to help his depressed mood, Dulce opens the balcony shutters to let light into the room: "Pudo convencerle de que aquella fingida noche en que estaba, con las maderas cerradas y la luz encendida, más propicia era a la tristeza lúgubre que al descanso reparador. Y se apagó la vela y se abrieron las maderas; pero con la claridad solar, Guerra se excitó más, mostrando ganas de levantarse y apetito insaciable de charla" (*Ángel Guerra*, 9). While

the closing of the shutters causes Ángel to internalize his thoughts, once opened, he begins to narrate the events of the night before.

The opening of the shutters sheds light on the disorder of the night before, allowing Dulce to reestablish domestic peace: “[...] después de trastear allá dentro, volvía, para engolosinar a su amigo con una palabra cariñosa, para arroparle y acomodar el brazo sobre el cojín. Al pasar por la salita, no dejaba de dar un empujín a las butacas y sillas, poniéndolas en su sitio; de arreglar lo que desde la noche anterior permanecía revuelta” (*Ángel Guerra*, 11). After the shutters are opened, Dulce’s domestic function as part-servant, part-illegitimate-lover becomes clear. Dulce cares for Ángel while making sure to restore the apartment to its former state, emphasizing the importance of the home as a metaphor for their relationship.

The interior liminal spaces of the building they live in also reveal the nature of Dulce and Ángel’s relationship:

Dígase de paso que la habitación era pequeñísima, que no tenía gabinete, sino tan sólo sala de un balcón, y alcoba separada de aquella por puerta de cristales; que estas dos piezas uníanse por pasillo nada corto a la cocina y comedor, cuyas ventanas daban al corredor del patio. La casa era de estas que pueden llamarse mixtas, pues la fachada había cuartos de mediana cabida, de ocho a diez duros de inquilinato; en el fondo, patio con corredores de viviendas numeradas, de cincuenta a ochenta reales. Una sola escalera servía el exterior como el interior de la finca, situada en la corta y solitaria calle de Santa Águeda [...]. (*Ángel Guerra*, 11)

Ángel and Dulce live in one of the more modest houses of an economically diverse community, and share an interior patio with their neighbors. The building, similar to their own relationship, is “mixta,” as Ángel comes from the prestigious Guerra family whereas Dulce’s family, the Babeles, are infamously lower-class. The only balcony of their home marks it as one of the poorer homes in the building, emphasizing Guerra’s sacrifice in deciding to maintain a relationship with Dulce and forego his family wealth.

Throughout the scene that follows, Dulce cleans the home, in part, as a means of expressing her own worries; while Ángel convalesces, she attends to the chores in the house: “Dulcenombre consiguió de Ángel que consintiese en estar encerrado un rato para poder abrir el balcón de la sala, y barrer, limpiar y ventilar ésta. Concluida la operación en un periquete, la joven, escoba en mano, fue a dar un poco de palique a su amante” (*Ángel Guerra*, 11). Dulcenombre’s emotions are reflected in the vigor with which she cleans the home; the opening of the balcony allows her to express her own anxieties to Ángel. The broom in her hand elicits a prompt response from Ángel, who still has yet to clearly explain the events of the night before. The shared interior patio also helps to start the conversation between the two lovers since it is there that Dulce collects information from neighbors:

“Pues anoche, a eso de las diez y media, toda la vecindad del patio salió de los cuartos, como las hormigas en tiempo de calor, porque se corrió la voz de que había gran trifulca. Yo me asomé a la escalera, y uno decía que verdes, otro que maduras. Contó no sé quién que la caballería sublevada había pasado por la calle de la Puebla dando gritos, con oficial a la cabeza, que, revólver en mano, se

desgañitaba diciendo que viviera la República. ¿Es verdad esto?” (*Ángel Guerra*, 11-12).

The patio itself becomes a microcosm for the upheaval caused by the failed republican military uprising of the night before. Through the neighbors' gossip, Dulce experiences secondhand the political disturbances involving Ángel. Dulce's presence on the patio portrays the anxieties that her relationship with Ángel cause and foreshadows further dramatic displays in similar spaces later in the novel.

Unfortunately for Dulce, liminal spaces become important for depicting her despair as she is ultimately spurned by Guerra. After the death of his daughter, Ángel radically changes, deciding to abandon the republican cause and romantically pursue his mother's pious servant Leré. When Ángel informs Dulce of his decision to move to Toledo to follow Leré, Dulce expresses her anger and indignation from the balcony:

Dulcenombre, en un raptó de demencia, corrió hacia la escalera gritando: “Es una infamia...abusar así... porque me ve sin familia, abandonada de todo el mundo. Dios mío... Virgen... No, no, que sois mitos.” Algunos vecinos salieron a sus respectivas puertas. La galguita ladraba furiosa en el pasillo. Hubo un ligero remolino de curiosidad y chacota en la escalera; pero nada más. Luego cuentan que salió la moza al balcón, enteramente trastornada, y desde allí, con descompuestas voces y ademanes más descompuestos aún, llamó al amigo perdido, que ya doblaba la esquina de la calle de Santa Brígida sin mirar para arriba ni hacer caso de nada. (*Ángel Guerra*, 196)

Whereas before the light streaming into their home through the balcony reflected Dulce's happiness at Ángel's return home, the balcony is now a space where she expresses her anguish at his departure. Dulce's religious references reveal her lack of faith and her feelings of abandonment and disillusionment. The importance of the balcony as a public, domestic space allow her to display her emotions, as she denounces Ángel's behavior for the neighbors to hear. The narrator highlights the public nature of their fight, stating that the quarrel was described to him by several people. Dulce's performative act is a public condemnation of Ángel's actions, as well as a cry for help to those around her.

Ironically, it is perhaps the least responsible character of the novel, Dulcenombre's drunk uncle Don Pito, who comes to her aid. Unlike Ángel, who walks away from Dulce without even a backward glance, Don Pito realizes the gravity of the situation, and understands the potential for the scene to end in suicide:

Don Pito, que voltijeaba en la calle, esperando a que el enemigo pasara de largo para volver a entrar, vio a su sobrina haciendo figuras en el balcón, y tuvo miedo de que se le fuera la cabeza y diese la gran voltereta. "Chica," le gritó desde abajo, extendiendo los brazos para recogerla en ellos, por si acaso se tiraba, "no seas loca...aguántate... despréciale... tendrás otros que valen más... Juicio, niña, juicio, y adentro." Al ver que la joven se retiraba del balcón, subió con toda la rapidez que sus desiguales piernas le permitían. (*Ángel Guerra*, 235)

Dulce's appearance on the balcony depicts her vacillation between life and death. For his part, Don Pito understands Dulce's plight. He saves Dulce's life by sharing some calming words with her.

Once removed from the balcony, Dulce's emotions are once again interiorized, and her consumption of alcohol suppresses her agony. Don Pito offers her champagne, the same remedy he uses to bury his own sorrows²⁹: "Dime ¿te gusta a ti el fin champán? No hay remedio mayor para la debilidad de estómago para las averías del alma. Un dedito, y se tapan todos los huequecillos donde anidan las penas" (*Ángel Guerra*, 198). While the champagne soothes Dulce temporarily, it is only a matter of time before her despair once again surfaces.

Later in the novel, the patio of the Babel home in Toledo serves as a space where Dulcenombre's feelings become the stuff of spectacle. When Ángel catches wind of the Babel family's presence in Toledo, he decides to visit Dulce. Upon entering the Babel home, he immediately finds himself face to face with an incoherent Dulce in the patio:

Apenas hubo empujado la roñosa puerta del zaguán para entrar en el patio, de desigual y mal barrido suelo, sin arbustos ni adorno alguno, con pilastrones de piedra, las paredes con la mitad del yeso caído, todo de lo más desamparado, pobre y sucio que en Toledo se podía ver; apenas al primer vistazo se hizo cargo de la triste localidad, le salió al encuentro la persona que buscando iba, la propia Dulce; ¡pero en qué facha, Dios poderoso, en qué actitudes! El tristísimo espectáculo que sus ojos se ofrecía, dejó a Guerra suspenso y sin habla.

Desmelenada, asqueroso pingo, descompuesto y arrebatado el rostro, la mirada echando lumbre, Dulce salió por una puerta que parecía de cuadra o cocina, y

²⁹ D. Pito has resorted to alcoholism in an attempt to forget his role in the slave trade, admitting as much in a confession to Ángel: "A ratos, de noche, cuando no he bebido y siento la penita en el estómago, me ocurre que si esto de mi mala suerte me vendrá de que anduve en aquel fregado de traer la esclavitud a Cuba" (*Ángel Guerra*, 352).

corrió hacia él echando por aquella boca los denuestos más atroces y las expresiones más groseras. Ángel dudó un momento si era ella la figura lastimosa que ante sí tenía, y algún esfuerzo hubo de hacer su mente para dar crédito a los sentidos. La que fue siempre la misma delicadeza en el hablar, la que nunca profirió vocablo indecente, habíase trocado en soez arpía o en furia insolente de las calles. La risilla de imbecilidad desvergonzada que soltó al ver a su amante, puso a éste los pelos de punta. (*Ángel Guerra*, 417)

Dulce's transformation is represented by the space she inhabits in that the rundown state of the patio reflects her miserable appearance. Ángel's surprise at Dulce's uncouth demeanor and foul language is more a condemnation of his own naivety and disregard for others than a truly shocking representation of Dulce's character. Neither the Babeles nor the reader find Dulce's behavior and appearance as unexpected since her curses and impoverished state result directly from Ángel's abandonment. It is on the liminal space of the patio, however, where both her outrage and destitution are made visible.

Dulce's repeated dramatic scenes on the patio are a source of shame for her family and a spectacle for the public. While the Babeles attempt to keep her hidden indoors, Dulce insists upon displaying her anger and despair on the patio, and oftentimes tries to escape her domestic confines in search of alcohol. Her mother Doña Catalina explains the family's predicament to Ángel:

“Estoy avergonzada, y le pido al Señor que me lleve de una vez. Yo no puedo ver tales afrentas en mi casa... (Volviéndose a su hija, que corría por el patio.) Dulce, hija mía qué visita tienes aquí... Nada, como si no... Pues cuando se le pasa cae

en un estado de idiotismo que no parece sino que se le seca el entendimiento ¡Qué angustias pasamos para que los amigos no la vean así, para que su primo no sospeche...! Pero imposible disimular más tiempo. La encerramos y nos atruena la casa, la soltamos y nos abochorna, la privamos de toda bebida, y dice que se muere... Pues que se muera.” (*Ángel Guerra*, 418)

Although Dulce appears insane, her constant outbursts reflect her reluctance to accept Ángel’s mistreatment. She is ultimately unable to be restrained by her family and expresses her intense emotions by repeatedly escaping her domestic confines. Despite the public shame it may bring her and her family, Dulce continually shows her feelings on the patio affirming her role as an indomitable character.

Dulce’s strength of character eventually becomes offset by the social factors placed before her. Almost on cue, just as Doña Catalina finishes her speech about Dulce’s deplorable condition, two passersby take interest in the scene caused by her drunken exclamations: “Dos o tres chicos habían empujado la puerta del zaguán, ávidos de contemplar el para ellos gracioso espectáculo, y doña Catalina se puso a dar gritos: ‘Cerrar, cerrar, que se nos escapa’” (*Ángel Guerra*, 418). The Babeles react by suppressing Dulce’s obstinate behavior and locking her indoors. After Dulce’s brother seizes and drags her inside, Ángel listens to the terrible sounds of their struggle from the patio: “Guerra sintió desde el patio algo como encontronazos, traqueteo de lucha, sofocadas exclamaciones, y por fin el resoplido del domador victorioso confundiendo con el resuello intercadente de la fiera. Nunca había sentido horror semejante ni

presenciado espectáculo tan lastimoso” (*Ángel Guerra*, 419). Guerra’s presence on the patio alone reminds the reader of his guilt in causing Dulcenombre’s misery.

The resolution to Dulce’s conflict suggests that passionate love and poverty were the source of her problems. Eventually, Dulce’s emotions are stabilized through her marriage to her cousin Casiano. Dulce resigns herself to the idea that Ángel will never love her and instead settles for a man that can provide for her economically: “Grandes elogios hizo Dulce de su futuro, poniéndole en los cuernos de la luna, asegurando que, sin sentir por él ese entusiasmo que es la flor fina del querer, le estimaba y le respetaba y... vamos, le quería honradamente como a su amparo y sostén en esta vida mortal” (*Ángel Guerra*, 737). While far from a fairytale ending, Dulce’s marriage of convenience to Casiano points to a maturation process that occurs throughout the novel.

2.3 Imagined Life: A Window into the Mind of Maximiliano Rubín

Much criticism has addressed the origin and creation of the memorable character of Maximiliano Rubín. Vernon Chamberlin has pointed out similarities between Maxi and the Austrian prince Max Franz, citing their shared characteristics of paranoia and impotence (103-04). Tsuchiya argues that Maxi’s madness is a symptom of the way he interprets language: “Maxi questions the natural relationships between words and things, the sign and its referent. These words (*dormir* and *despertar*, *acostarse* and *levantarse*), he declares, are nothing more than names, whose correspondence to a reality (*despertar* to ‘vida efectiva’ and *dormir* to ‘sueño’ is arbitrary; the rest of society fails to see that signs only signify through conventions” (53-54). In this section I wish to add to these

characterizations by examining how liminal space offers insight into the imaginative mind of Maximiliano Rubín. Maxi's physical limitations prevent him from having the life he desires, and he frequently envisions an alternate world based on his own fantasies when gazing through windows or observing other characters on balconies. Although this allows him to overcome his physical shortcomings, Maxi's powerful imagination ultimately results in mental instability. Throughout the novel Maxi becomes trapped in a manic emotional state of ecstasy and fear due to his marriage to Fortunata and her subsequent infidelity. Maxi's perception of Fortunata on the balcony plays a central role in the depiction of his unfettered imagination that serves as a source of desire and despair for the sickly young man.

From the outset of the novel, Maximiliano Rubín creates his reality through fantasies he dreams up as he gazes out the window of his bedroom. In Doña Lupe's house on Serrano street in the Salamanca neighborhood, Maxi watches young soldiers training from the window of his room and envisions his own physical transformation:

Maximiliano veía desde la ventana de su tercer piso a los alumnos de Estado Mayor, cuando la Escuela estaba en el 40 antiguo de la calle de Serrano; y no hay idea de la admiración que le causaban aquellos jóvenes [...]. Algunas noches, Maximiliano soñaba que tenía tizona, bigote y uniforme y hablaba dormido. Despierto deliraba también, figurándose haber crecido una cuarta, tener las piernas derechas y el cuerpo no tan caído para adelante, imaginándose que se le arreglaba la nariz, que le brotaba el pelo y que se le ponía un empaque marcial como el del más pintado. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 581-82)

The images that Maxi sees from his window enter directly into his subconscious, becoming the source material for his dreams not only while sleeping, but also awake.

Due to his stunted growth and unattractive appearance, Maxi relies on delusions for happiness rather than focusing on the material world. Unable to stay focused on his pharmaceutical studies, he daydreams about the young soldiers:

En la clase misma, que por la placidez del local y la monotonía de la lección convidaba a la somnolencia, se ponía a jugar con la fantasía y a provocar y encender la ilusión. El resultado era un completo éxtasis, y al través de la explicación sobre las propiedades terapéuticas de las tinturas madres, veía a los alumnos militares en su estudio táctico de campo, como se puede ver un paisaje al través de una vidriera de colores. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 582)

Maxi interprets the world as if seeing through a stained glass window, using ambiguous shapes and colors to construct his own reality. Furthermore, his imagination creates an escape from the disappointing truth of his existence as a pimpled, feeble young man (“carecía de bigote, pero no de granos que le salían en diferentes puntos de la cara”) (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 583).

Later in the novel, many of Maxi’s desires and apprehensions are revealed through his observations of Fortunata in liminal spaces. The facade of Fortunata’s apartment, when she first moves back to Madrid, symbolically represents Maxi’s emotional response to meeting a beautiful woman known for having adulterous sexual relations. When Maxi first meets Fortunata, he finds her on the third floor of a building being hosted by her friend Feliciano. Leading up to his meeting, Maxi expresses

hesitancy at being introduced to a dishonorable woman: “‘Es honrada?’ preguntó Rubín, mostrando en su tono la importancia que daba a la honradez” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 588).

Although Rubín recognizes the negative social implications of visiting a dishonored woman, he remains interested in Fortunata. When he ultimately accompanies his obnoxious classmate, Olmedo, to Feliciano’s *hotel*, the space inhabited by Fortunata reflects his own fears and desires:

Por la noche fue Maximiliano al hotel de Feliciano, tercer piso y al entrar lo primero que vio...Es que junto a la puerta de entrada había un cuartito pequeño, que era donde moraba la huésped, y esta salía de su escondrijo cuando Rubín entraba. Feliciano había salido a abrir con el quinqué en la mano, porque lo llevaba para la sala, y a la luz vivísima del petróleo sin pantalla, encaró Maximiliano con la más extraordinaria hermosura que hasta entonces habían visto sus ojos. Ella le miró a él como a una cosa rara, y él a ella como a sobrenatural aparición. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 589)

Fortunata’s room is small and hidden from view, described by the narrator as an “escondrijo.” Furthermore, Maxi visits her at night rather than during the day, implying the clandestine nature of the arrangement. While Fortunata’s attractive features are accentuated for Maxi by the artificial light of the petroleum lamp, the darkness of night means that she is kept concealed from public view.

Certain textual incongruities in the description of Fortunata’s apartment show that Galdós valued space as an important aspect of characterization for Maxi and Fortunata.

After Maxi decides to rent an apartment for Fortunata, the narrator mixes up the location of Feliciana's apartment. Although, in the first mention of Feliciana's apartment, the narrator notes that she lives on the third floor, after Fortunata moves out, he states that Feliciana lives in an exterior second story apartment: "En uno de los segundos exteriores vivía Feliciana, y Fortunata en un tercero interior. Lo alquiló Rubín por encontrarlo tan a mano, con intención de tomar vivienda mejor cuando variaran las circunstancias" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 617-18). Considering the inverse vertical social order established in nineteenth-century architectural design as mentioned by Cervera Sardá, Galdós's decision to move Feliciana to the second floor and place Fortunata on the third floor in an interior apartment could have been a conscious decision to underscore her low social status at this moment in the novel.

Not only is Fortunata now in the highest floor of the building, but her friend, Feliciana, occupies a more prestigious space, being both a floor lower and in an exterior apartment. The narrator succinctly describes the social hierarchy of the building:

En el piso principal radicaba una casa de préstamos con farolón a la calle, y en ciertos días había en los balcones ventilación de capas empañadas. Más arriba los pisos estaban divididos en viviendas estrechas y de poco precio. Había derecha, izquierda, y dos interiores. Los vecinos eran de dos clases; mujeres sueltas, o familias que tenían comercio en el próximo mercado de San Antón. Hueveras y verduleras poblaban aquellos reducidos aposentos, echando sus hijos a la escalera para que jugasen. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 617)

In this passage the narrator identifies the first-floor occupants as the wealthiest in the building, whereas the higher floors are divided into smaller apartments and rented to members of the lower class. The narrator describes the subdivisions of right, left, and two interiors created in the higher floors meaning that the second floor apartment quadruples them in size. Notably, the inhabitants of the upper floors are composed of families that work in the market and “mujeres sueltas.”

In both cases the domestic sphere overlaps with economic activity— market goods are kept in the house, forcing children to play in the stairwell and the women to use their homes to entertain men in exchange for money. Similar to the Arnaiz household, the families who make a living in the market do not have sufficient interior space to contain their children, who ultimately end up playing in the shared space of the stairwell. The independence of the “mujeres sueltas” is also contrary to what was expected. Fortunata, who previously worked as a “huevera,” sees herself in a new occupation, yet a similar economic and social situation, now as a kept woman.

The capes flapping in the wind from the balconies of the building show how the moneylenders have literally stripped their victims of the clothes off their backs. This image is particularly ironic because, despite the visual evidence of the dire consequences suffered by those who take on loans, moneylending continues to be a successful business model in Galdós’s depiction of Madrid, which is dominated by a class obsessed with appearances. Although the second floor balconies exteriorize the wealth of its inhabitants, the building still represents vice and denigration, especially for members of the middle class such as Maxi.

A second textual discrepancy that sheds light on Maxi's relationship with Fortunata occurs when the apartment, previously described as interior, later is portrayed as having balconies—a characteristic unique to exterior apartments. This sudden change in the description of Fortunata's apartment puts into doubt the reliability of the narrative description of space as filtered through Maxi's point of view. The interior focalization of the narration from Maxi's perspective offers a fantastic description of Fortunata as she does chores both within the apartment and out on the balcony:

Su cuerpo no necesitaba corsé para ser esbeltísimo. Vestido enorgullecía a las modistas; desnudo o a medio vestir, cuando andaba por aquella casa tendiendo ropa en el balcón, limpiando los muebles o cargando los colchones cual si fueran cojines, para sacarlos al aire, parecía una figura de otros tiempos; al menos, así lo pensaba Rubín, que sólo había visto belleza semejante en pinturas de amazonas o cosa tal. Otras veces le parecía mujer de la Biblia, la Betsabée aquella del baño, la Rebeca o la Samaritana, señoras que había visto en una obra ilustrada, y que, con ser tan barbianas, todavía se quedaban dos dedos más abajo de la sana hermosura y de la gallardía de su amiga.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 621)

The description of Fortunata's home as an exterior rather than interior apartment occurs after Maxi begins to educate Fortunata on middle-class modalities as well as encourage her to fulfill domestic duties. As the novel progresses, Maxi becomes more comfortable with revealing his feelings for Fortunata and announcing their relationship publicly.

This scene also reveals that Maxi's idea of the perfect woman is more complex than may appear. At first, he seems to envision Fortunata as a model of the *ángel del*

hogar instead of a “mujer suelta,” noting her ability to perform domestic duties after receiving her formal feminine education. This vision fits into what Catherine Jagoe explains as the expectations of the model middle-class woman of the nineteenth century in Spain who were “expected to be clean, frugal, hardworking, cheerful and contented” (28). However, Maxi also likens Fortunata to Amazon warriors he has seen in paintings, marking her as a defiant, even violent woman. Maxi’s focus on Fortunata’s vigor reveals that he considers physical strength to be part of feminine beauty, and subsequently hints at his desire to be the docile partner in the relationship, a clear inversion of traditional gender roles.

The religious references in this fantasy also connect Maxi to his Jewish origins and anticipate his role as a martyred cuckold. While the reference to Rebecca links Fortunata to the ideal Hebrew woman for her selfless qualities and beauty, the connection Maxi makes with Bathsheba (Betsabée) foreshadows Fortunata’s adulterous acts with Juanito³⁰. Bathsheba’s infidelity to her husband, who, as a soldier, is cuckolded by King David, mirrors the overall plot of the novel. Maxi has imagined the future of the novel in terms of his own fantasy—a Jewish soldier wed to a beautiful woman who is unfaithful to

³⁰ In *Comedy and Feminist Interpretation of the Hebrew Bible: A Subversive Collaboration*, Melissa Jackson summarizes the story of Bathsheba as it appears in the Old testament: “The story of Bathsheba is told primarily in three episodes. In the first (2 Sam. 11:1–12:25) David sees Bathsheba bathing and has her brought to him, after which she becomes pregnant (11:1–5). David enacts a series of plans designed to cover his actions, which eventuate in the death of Bathsheba's husband, Uriah, after which David and Bathsheba marry (11:22–7). The son is born, then dies, after which another son is born: Solomon (12:24–5). In the second episode featuring Bathsheba (1 Kgs 1–2), she and Nathan conspire together to have Solomon named by David as his successor (1 Kgs 1:11–31); in the third she plays a role in the death of Adonijah (1 Kgs 2:13–25)” (ch. 7).

him with a man of higher social standing. Maxi struggles to reconcile two disparate fantasies in the scene—his desire to have a marriage based on middle-class values, and his attraction to an unfaithful but powerful woman. In the imaginative space of the balcony, Maxi is able to conceive of Fortunata as an *ángel del hogar*, an Amazon warrior, and Bathsheba.

While walking in the streets of Madrid, Maxi wavers between defiance and apprehension of social reprobation, both of which are symbolized by the imposing presence of his aunt, Doña Lupe, on the balcony:

Iba por la calle sin ver a nadie, tropezando con los transeúntes, y a poco se estrella contra un árbol del paseo de Luchana. Al entrar en la calle de Raimundo Lulio vio a su tía en el balcón tomando el sol. Verla y sentir un miedo muy grande, pero muy grande, fue todo uno. “Si mi tía lo sabe...!” Pero del miedo salió al instante la reacción de valor, y apretó los puños debajo de la capa, los apretó tanto que le dolieron los dedos. “Si mi tía se opone, que se oponga y que se vaya a los demonios.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 595)

Although Doña Lupe has not seen Maxi, nor does it seem that she is even particularly looking for him, Maxi interprets her presence as a threat to his relationship with Fortunata. Maxi seems adamant about using his love for Fortunata as a way of showing his contempt of authority and affirming his own valor, yet simultaneously is astutely aware of how others perceive him.

Maxi’s imagination heightens his fear as well as his courage and, at times, Doña Lupe remedies his hysteria by closing the windows and doors of his room in order to

limit him to his domestic confines. When Maxi prepares himself to tell Doña Lupe about his relationship with Fortunata, he imagines the drama before it unfolds: “No durmió Maximiliano pensando en la escena que iba a tener con su tía. Su imaginación agrandaba a veces el conflicto haciéndolo tan hermosamente terrible como una escena de Shakespeare; otras lo reducía a proporciones menudas” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 648). When Maxi imagines the scene he places himself within his own Shakespearean drama, anticipating a beautifully pained exchange.

The next day, the anticipation of telling Doña Lupe about his plans to marry Fortunata causes Maxi to throw a fit, and Lupe in turn reacts with the symbolic act of closing the window of the sitting room: “Estaba lívido, y la señora debió de sentir lástima cuando le vio entrar en su gabinete, como el criminal que entra en la sala de juicio. La ventana estaba abierta, y doña Lupe la cerró para que el pobrecillo no se constipase” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 649). Lupe’s act of closing the window shuts Maxi off from the outside world and also represents her attempt to stifle his imagination. In doing so, she asserts her dominance over the young man and suppresses his agitated emotions.

As the novel progresses, Maxi begins to show more signs of mental instability that Doña Lupe attempts to cure by closing the windows of his room. The narrator describes Maxi’s unfortunate mental state after a long debate with his brother Nicolás (a priest) about his relationship with Fortunata: “desde media noche sintió Maxi un entorpecimiento particular dentro de la cabeza, acompañado del presagio del mal. La atonía siguió, con el deseo de sueño no satisfecho y luego una punzada del ojo izquierdo, la cual se aliviaba con la compresión bajo la ceja” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 694). Taking

into consideration Maxi's imaginative nature, "sueño" may be read both as a reference to Maxi's dreams to marry Fortunata as well as his ability to sleep. In an effort to help relieve his symptoms his aunt closes the windows: "Doña Lupe, tan cariñosa como siempre, le puso láudano, y arreglando la cama y cerrando bien las maderas, le dejó para ir a hacer una taza de té, porque era preciso que tomase algo" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 694).

The balcony causes hysteria in Maxi, in part, because it is in that very space that Fortunata expresses her desire for Juanito. Maxi's worst fears are realized when he returns home one day to find Juanito's carriage driving away from his apartment:

[...] vio Maximiliano a Santa Cruz guiando un faetón por la calle de Santa Engracia arriba. Ya tenía el brazo bueno. Miró a Maxi, y este le miró a él. Desde lejos, porque el coche iba bastante a prisa, observó Rubín que ese entraba por la calle de Raimundo Lulio. ¿Pasaría luego a la de Sagunto? Nunca como en aquel momento sintió el exaltado chico ganas de tener alas. Apresuró el paso todo lo que pudo, y al llegar a su calle... ¡Dios!... lo que se temía... Fortunata en el balcón, mirando por la calle del Castillo hacia el paseo de la Habana, por donde seguramente había seguido el coche. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 849-50)

Fortunata's gaze on the balcony expresses her love for Juanito despite her current position as Maxi's wife. Maxi's dramatic reaction underscores Fortunata's role as a source of emotional turbulence in his life; she both fulfills his greatest desires and provokes his greatest fears.

Changes made to the galley sheets emphasize Maxi's intense emotions in this scene. At G, Galdós decided to substitute Maxi's name with "exaltado chico." Furthermore, to underscore his emotional state Galdós replaced "lo que se figuraba" with "lo que temía," highlighting the emotional change of the scene (G 2C, 77).

The balcony repeatedly surfaces as a space in which to stage Fortunata's infidelity. Maxi's paranoia about Juanito's pursuit of Fortunata turns out to be justified. When Fortunata goes to Federico Ruiz to ask for different medicine to improve Maxi's health, Ruiz points out that Juanito has been looking for her on the balcony: "Pues que bien le pasean a usted la calle... Y la niña sin parecer por ninguna parte. El niño rompía el escuezo mirando para los balcones, y usted atormentándole con su ausencia. ¡Pobre señor!" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 547). Ruiz refers to Juanito's roaming the streets of Madrid hoping to catch a glimpse of Fortunata on the balcony, and his comments suggest that Juanito's pursuit of her—and therefore Maxi's shame—is publicly known in their shared social circles. The balcony becomes a space that connects Juanito to Fortunata without her ever leaving her home.

The function of the balcony as a locus of escapism and jealousy is highlighted when Fortunata comes home to find Maxi sitting in the apartment and staring at the street through the balcony windows. Although Maxi seems peaceful, Fortunata fears his reaction should he glimpse Juanito from the window:

Maxi continuaba tranquilo. Más bien parecía un convaleciente que un enfermo. Estaba muy débil y no apetecía más que sentarse junto a los cristales del balcón del gabinete, contemplando con incierta mirada a los transeúntes. Esto no le hacía

maldita gracia a Fortunata, porque... “si al otro le da la gana de pasar también esta tarde y Maxi le ve, se va a excitar mucho” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 542).

Looking out the window allows Maxi to shape his own reality, although Juanito’s presence serves as trigger for his jealous fits. On the balcony Maxi views the world through his own fantasies, or sees his worst fears realized.

Eventually, Maxi’s jealousy causes his mind to deteriorate to the point that he is forced to be kept indoors. His deplorable state moves Doña Lupe to beg for help from Segismundo Ballester:

Doña Lupe le rogó varias veces que fuese a ver a Maximiliano, que continuaba encerrado en su cuarto, y le daban la comida por un tragaluz, no atreviéndose a entrar ni la señora ni Papitos, porque los aullidos que daba el infeliz eran señal de agitación insana y peligrosa. Segismundo fue el primero que penetró en la estancia, sin miedo alguno, y vio a Maxi en un ovillo, con más apariencias de imbecilidad que de furia, demudado el rostro y las ropas en desorden. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 783)

Maxi’s connection to the outside world has been reduced to a tiny window that is only used to provide him with sustenance. Imprisoned with his own insane thoughts, he barely resembles a rational human being.

It is only when the physical manifestation of Fortunata ceases to exist that Maxi is able to recover his senses. Fortunata’s death brings Maxi to the cemetery, a space on the periphery of the city. Michel Foucault explains that in the nineteenth century the cemetery took on a new cultural value:

From the moment when people are no longer sure that they have a soul or that the body will regain life, it is perhaps necessary to give much more attention to the dead body which is ultimately the only trace of our existence in the world and in language. In any case, it is from the beginning of the nineteenth century that everyone has a right to her or his own little box for her or his own little personal decay, but on the other hand, it is only from that start of the nineteenth century that cemeteries began to be located at the outside border of cities. In correlation with the individualization of death and the bourgeois appropriation of the cemetery, there arises an obsession with death as an ‘illness.’ The dead, it is supposed, bring illnesses to the living, and it is the presence and proximity of the dead right beside the houses, next to the church, almost in the middle of the street, it is this proximity that propagates death itself. This major theme of illness spread by the contagion in the cemeteries persisted until the end of the eighteenth century, until, during the nineteenth century, the shift of cemeteries toward the suburbs was initiated. The cemeteries then came to constitute, no longer the sacred and immortal heart of the city, but the other city, where each family possesses its dark resting place. (5-6)

The cemetery Fortunata is buried in is located in the southern outskirts of Madrid as evidenced by the narrator description of the funeral procession: “En el largo trayecto de la Cava al cementerio, que era uno de los del sur, Segismundo contó al buen Ponce todo lo que sabía de la historia de Fortunata” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 781). Caudet’s footnote of this quote supports Foucault’s argument and its relevancy to Spanish culture:

Mesonero Romanos en su Manual, pág. 196, empezaba diciendo sobre los ‘Cementerios’: “La costumbre de enterrar en las iglesias fue abolida en virtud de decreto de Carlos III de 3 de abril de 1787. Conociendo los perjuicios que ocasionaba a la salud pública, ordenó aquel monarca la construcción de cementerios extramuros de las poblaciones; pero en Madrid no llegó a tener efecto hasta la época de la invasión francesa en que se construyeron los dos generales de la puerta de Fuencarral y de la Puerta de Toledo, o del Norte y Sur.” (781)

It is finally in this ‘other city’ that Maxi is able to openly articulate his feelings for Fortunata. Removed from the social pressures of life as a middle-class man, Maxi expresses the role she played in his life as both a source of love and fear:

“Ahora que no vive, la contemplo libre de las transformaciones que el mundo y el contacto del mal le imprimían; ahora no temo la infidelidad, que es un rozamiento con las fuerzas de la Naturaleza que pasan junto a nosotros; ahora no temo las traiciones, que son proyección de sombra por cuerpos opacos que se acercan; ahora todo es libertad, luz; desaparecieron las asquerosidades de la realidad, y vivo con mi ídolo en mi idea, y nos adoramos con pureza y santidad sublimes en el tálamo incorruptible de mi pensamiento.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 788)

Maxi finds peace in Fortunata’s death because he is able to idealize her once more and no longer fears that she will betray him. While Fortunata, when alive, tortured Maxi, in death she brings him peace, and he perceives her once again through his imagination.

2.4 Space for Interpretation: The Balcony in *El amigo Manso*

In *El amigo Manso* (1882), the balcony is an important space where the protagonist and narrator, Máximo Manso, reveals essential aspects about other characters in the novel. Máximo tells the story of the beautiful, intelligent young woman Irene and her involvement with both his brother José María and his protégé Manuel. Throughout the novel, Máximo is unable to express his feelings for Irene, who for her own part has fallen in love with Manuel while being pursued shamelessly by José María. Máximo, as a narrator, depicts aspects of Irene's character and reveals her hidden emotions through metaphor on the balcony, as we will see below. In this section we will also explore the role of the balcony as an intersection between life and death for Irene. Finally, we will examine the metafictional implications of the space, as Máximo interprets his own story as he tells it.

From the beginning of *El amigo Manso*, it is clear that the balcony is an eroticized space. As Máximo introduces the story, he addresses his audience directly, revealing his familiarity with erotic tropes through his proclamation that his narration is not intended to convey a simple love story:

La que me ocupa es de gran importancia y ruego a mis lectores que por nada del mundo pasen por alto este capítulo, aunque les vaya en ello una fortuna, si bien no conviene que se entusiasmen por lo de *vecina*, creyendo que aquí da principio un noviazgo, o que me voy a meter en enredos sentimentales. No. Los idilios de balcón a balcón no entran en mi programa, ni lo que cuento es más que un caso vulgarísimo de la vida, origen de otros que quizá lo sean tanto. (*El amigo manso*, 159)

Though Máximo is a reserved, intellectual man, his comments on the sentimental nature of balconies reveal that he is well versed in popular erotic literature, and as his story progresses he does, ironically, become involved in a convoluted love plot with Irene, his own brother José María, and his young protégé Manuel Peña, in which the balcony plays an important role in the expression of amorous sentiments.

Throughout the novel, Máximo remains distant while those around him experience intense emotions on the balcony. The first key moment involving Máximo and the balcony occurs as his sister-in-law Manuela jealously spies on José María pursuing Irene. José María, begins to prey on Irene shortly after she moves into his mansion to become a tutor for his children. Aware of José María's dishonest intentions, Máximo and Manuela carefully monitor his interactions with the young woman. One afternoon, despite her protestations, José María insists that Irene accompany him in his carriage: "José María bajó tras ella. Manuela y yo nos acercamos a los cristales del balcón del gabinete para ver...En efecto, no pudiendo Irene evadir la galantísima invitación de mi hermano, entró en el coche, seguida de José; y al punto vimos partir a escape la berlina hacia la calle de San Mateo" (*El amigo Manso*, 313). While Máximo attempts to remain calm and logical despite his feelings for Irene, Manuela expresses her emotions clearly and dramatically: "'Yo me muero, no puedo vivir así,' exclamó rompiendo en llanto, '¿Máximo, qué te parece?, en mi propia cara, delante de mí, estas finezas... Eso es no tener vergüenza, y la sinvergüencería no la perdono'" (*El amigo Manso*, 313). Manuela communicates clearly her feelings of indignation, shame, and

jealousy of what she has witnessed from the balcony in a way that Máximo, as a self-proclaimed “intellectual,” is incapable of doing.

Máximo’s role as the observer of profound emotions on the balcony continues as he begins to unravel the amorous web between José María, Manuel, and Irene. José María, desiring to be alone with Irene, away from the watchful eye of his wife, makes an arrangement with Irene’s greedy aunt, Doña Cándida, to pay for their apartment as long as she agrees to leave any time he comes to make a visit. Concerned, Máximo decides to show up to the apartment himself, and immediately takes note of the two balconies of the home: “De muebles estaba tal cual, pues no había más que tres sillas y un sofá; pero en las paredes vi lujosas cortinas, y entre los dos balcones una bonita consola con candelabros y reloj de bronce” (*El amigo Manso*, 404). Máximo’s mention of the balconies in this scene hints at their importance for future dramatic scenes in the novel.

Initially the balconies serve as the only space that can free Irene from the prison created by José María and Doña Cándida. Feeling helpless, Irene begs Máximo to save her from José María’s trap. However, despite his strong feelings, Máximo finds himself incapable of playing the hero: “cuando las más vulgares reglas de romanticismo pedían que me pusiera de rodillas y soltara uno de esos apasionados ternos que tanto efecto hacen en el teatro, mi timidez tan sólo supo decir del modo más soso posible: ‘Veremos eso, veremos eso...’” (*El amigo Manso*, 332). Irene responds in part by revealing her dire situation, and suggesting that, without Máximo’s help, her only other viable option is suicide: “‘He tenido la desgracia de que ese señor se enamore de mí como un loco, y aquí me tiene usted puesta entre lo que más odio, que es su hermanito de usted, y la necesidad

de matarme, porque estoy decidida a quitarme la vida, amigo Manso, y como hoy mismo no encuentre usted medio de librarme de esto, lo juro, sí lo juro, me tiro a la calle por ese balcón” (*El amigo Manso*, 332).

Although Irene’s choice seems limited between an abusive man and death, the balconies of her new home play a central role in the unveiling of the next twist in the plot: Irene and Manuel’s secret courtship. When Manuel finally reveals his passionate feelings for Irene, the balcony plays a central role. Angered by the arrangement José María has created for Irene, Manuel enters her home armed with a revolver with the intention of protecting her from her oppressor. When his enemy fails to arrive Manuel tells Máximo of the romantic night he and Irene spent together on the balcony: “Calladito salimos al balcón. ¡Qué noche, qué cielo estrellado!, ¡qué silencio en las alturas!... y luego las sombras entrecortadas de las calles, y el roncar de Madrid, soñoliento, enroscándose en su suelo salpicado de luces de gas...” (*El amigo Manso*, 478-79). Together on the balcony, the lovers’ fears and hatred turn quickly to poetic bliss and even the urban landscape mirrors the stars in the sky. Máximo’s response is again that of a paternal figure who has spent too much time as a literary scholar: ““Metafísico estás... y poeta de redomilla”” (*El amigo Manso*, 479). Manuel’s reference to his romantic night on the balcony with Irene directly contradicts Máximo’s claim from the beginning of the novel, that his story would not include over-used romantic tropes. Thus, Máximo’s critical response to Manuel’s speech becomes part of a metafictional discourse taking place in the novel.

The metafictional elements of this scene in relation to the balcony increase when Máximo relates Manuel's story to *Romeo and Juliet*. After Manuel expresses the courage love grants him in the face of danger, Máximo cannot help but assess his sentiments as unoriginal: “‘La pasión me trastornaba el juicio. Ni peligros, ni obstáculos veía yo...’ Como una máquina de hablar, como el frío metal del teléfono que habla lo que le apunta la electricidad, así dije yo: ‘Romeo y Julieta,’ sin saber de dónde me habían venido aquellas palabras, porque mi cerebro se había quedado vacío” (*El amigo Manso*, 480). The mention of *Romeo and Juliet* is especially noteworthy considering the famous window scene between the two lovers who risk everything to be together under the cover of night. Máximo interprets the scene of his own story through the familiar relationship between the balcony and the act of courtship. As Bal notes, representations of space carry specific meanings due to their use in previous works of fiction: “The relations between space and event become clear if we think of well-known, stereotypical combinations: declarations of love by moonlight on a balcony, high-flown reveries on a mountain-top, a rendezvous in an inn, ghostly appearances among ruins, brawls in cafes” (140-41). For Máximo, the balcony is not a space where he is able to express his own sentiments of love, but rather a trope he uses in his own story. As a character and narrator he seems at once confused by his passive role in the story and disappointed in his lack of originality. The mention of this Shakespearean tragedy also creates tension in the text as a potentially ominous foreshadowing of suicide for either Irene, Manuel, or both.

As a storyteller, Máximo creates emotional tension through symbolism related to the balcony. Although Irene and he have difficulties expressing emotions to one another,

a canary kept in a cage on the balcony communicates her feelings of imprisonment and passion. When Doña Cándida finally leaves the two alone to converse, Máximo notices the imprisoned bird: “Alzando los ojos a la vidriera del balcón, vi un canario en bonita y pintorreada jaula” (*El amigo Manso*, 504). The canary immediately becomes a representation for Irene, a beautiful bird trapped in a cage, placed in the balcony, existing in between fear and desire.

The canary also facilitates the exchange between Irene and Máximo. Noticing that the canary has drawn Manso’s attention, Irene explains its presence: “‘Ese es obsequio especial de D. José a mi tía,’ me dijo Irene buscando en la conversación corriente un fácil medio de hablar sin turbarse” (*El amigo Manso*, 504). When Máximo begins to ask her personal questions, Irene refers back to the canary, wishing that he could hear it sing, to which Máximo replies, “‘A quien quiero oír cantar es usted’” (*El amigo Manso*, 505). The double meaning of ‘cantar,’ signifying both to sing and to reveal a secret, makes evident the metaphor of the caged canary and builds tension in the scene.

Rather than opening up, Irene continues to use the space of the balcony in order to hide her feelings for Manuel from Máximo. In a symbolic act, she closes the shutters of the balcony, making it both difficult for him to see her due to the lack of natural light entering the room, as well as closing him off from the intimate space that holds both her fears and desires: “había entornado las maderas del balcón para atenuar la viva claridad del día, y de esta manera su rostro estaba en sombra, Todos estos procedimientos denotaban su práctica en el arte del disimulo” (*El amigo Manso*, 506). Despite Irene’s

attempt to hide her feelings, Máximo proceeds to voice her secrets himself, reaffirming his role as an omniscient narrator. After Máximo describes Irene's feelings, the two reflect upon the metafictional implications of the scene. Irene comments: “sabes más que Dios” and Máximo states, “parece que estoy leyendo un libro” (*El amigo Manso*, 372).

Furthermore, the canary serves to increase the dramatic tension of the confession as well as to affirm the truth of Máximo's words. After concluding his speech, Máximo notes that he was forced to gradually speak louder due to the fact that the canary was singing:

“¿Y ahora qué queda por hacer? Manuel y usted han de decidirlo.” Esto último que dije lo dije a gritos, porque el canario empezó a cantar tan fuerte que mi voz apenas se oía. Ella se levantó alterada; no sabía qué hacer... Volvióse al pájaro, le mandó callar, y viendo que no obedecía me dijo: “No callará mientras no cierre el balcón.” Y decidiéndolo, entornó tanto las maderas, que nos quedamos casi a oscuras. Lo que quería la muy pícara era estar en penumbra para que no se le viera la alteración ruborosa de su semblante... En vez de volver a tomar la costura, que era tan sólo un pretexto para no mirarme de frente, sentose en una banqueta que en el ángulo de la pieza estaba, y siguió el lloriqueo. (*El amigo Manso*, 374-75)

The metaphor of the canary on the balcony allows Máximo to depict the emotional importance of the scene with very little active participation on Irene's part. Furthermore, the canary's singing affirms the truth of Máximo's statements and forces him to scream so that his words come across as more accusatory than paternal. Although Irene has

attempted to hide her secrets from Máximo, an act symbolically represented by the half closing of the balcony shutters, as an omniscient narrator he has unveiled her most intimate emotions to the point that she can only futilely attempt to hide her tears by closing the balcony shutters even more tightly. Without waiting for Irene's response Máximo reaffirms his role as more narrator than character: "en realidad, nada estaba ya oculto, y yo veía tan clara la historia toda, cual si la hubiese leído en un libro" (*El amigo Manso*, 375).

After the confession is complete, Irene begins to open up to Máximo and later reverses the symbolic act of closing the shutters by accompanying him on the balcony of her home. Instead of keeping secrets from Máximo, on the balcony the two are able to share a private conversation away from the meddling Doña Cándida. In this instance, Irene finally reveals herself as a passionate yet honorable woman, resigned to living on the precipice of love and death:

Un momento después nos asomábamos Irene y yo al balcón... "Dígame usted, Irene," le pregunté con interés profundo. "Si Manuel tuviese ahora un mal pensamiento y..." No me dejó concluir. Respondiome con una grandísima descomposición de su semblante que anunciaba dolor y vergüenza, y después me dijo: "Me mata usted sólo con suponerlo... Si Manuel... Me moriría de pena..." "¿Y si no se moría usted? ...pues se dan casos..." "Me mataría...; tengo fuerzas para matarme y volverme a matar, si no quedaba bien muerta... Usted no me conoce..." (*El amigo Manso*, 385)

Irene's act of opening up to Máximo about Manuel on the balcony shows that she has accepted his role as an observer and narrator, and no longer hides her fears and desires from him.

In *El amigo Manso*, Máximo finds himself within a love story, but with no true purpose other than to narrate the feelings and actions of the characters that surround him. The balcony is an important metafictional space where he interprets his own story, builds dramatic tension, and relates his story to other erotic texts. Even Máximo's death occurs, not as a result of any physical ailment, but from his lack of motivation to continue existing within the narrative: "Y tal era mi anhelo de descanso, que no me levanté más. Prodigóme sin tasa mi vecina los cuidados más tiernos, y una mañana, solitos los dos, rodeados de gran silencio, ella aterrada, yo sereno, me morí como un pájaro" (*El amigo Manso*, 415-16). After he dies, Máximo still observes the characters of his story, noting that after a brief period of bereavement, they all move on with their lives and continue as if nothing has ever happened. In death he savors his existence as a spectator and critic with a literal omniscient view: "¡Dichoso estado y regiones dichosas estas que puedo mirar a Irene, a mi hermano, a Peña, a doña Javiera, a Calígula, a Lica y demás desgraciadas figurillas con el mismo desdén con que el hombre maduro ve los juguetes que le entretuvieron cuando era niño!" (*El amigo Manso*, 623).

Chapter Three: Liminal Space and Spectacle

3.1.1 Carnavalesque Spectacle: The Balconies of the Troya Home in *Doña Perfecta*

In *Doña Perfecta* (1876) Galdós presents the complicated struggle for power between city-dweller Pepe Rey and the residents of the provincial town of Orbajosa. Rey's desire to marry his cousin Rosario against the will of his aunt Doña Perfecta results in a series of conflicts that ultimately lead to his murder. In this section, we will examine the role of liminal space in the portrayal of carnivalesque spectacle³¹ and how the traditions of Carnival stand in direct opposition to the institution of the Church and Orbajosa's conservative ruling class. Pepe Rey, along with the carnivalesque characters Don Juan Tafetán and *las niñas* Troya (María Juana, Pepa, and Florentina), ridicule, insult, and attack the residents of Orbajosa in an attempt to upset the *status quo* of the town. As we shall see, the scene that takes place both within the Troya home and also in its liminal spaces (in this case the balcony and dining room terrace) portrays marginalized characters in a position of power. However, Pepe Rey never truly understands his position as an outsider in Orbajosa, and ultimately, he becomes the victim of ridicule rather than an authoritative figure laughing at those beneath him.

Before analyzing the carnivalesque moment in the Troya home, it is important to note the role of ridicule as one of Pepe Rey's defining characteristics. Rey repeatedly uses mockery throughout the novel as a means of undermining those around him and

³¹ Bakhtin identifies three main aspects of carnivalesque performance that we will discuss in this chapter: "1. Ritual spectacles: carnival pageants, comic shows of the market-place. 2. Comic verbal compositions: parodies both oral and written, in Latin and in the vernacular. 3. Various genres of billingsgate: curses, oaths, popular blazons. These three forms of folk humor, reflecting in spite of their variety a single humorous aspect of the world, are closely linked and interwoven in many ways" (5).

challenging authority. The narrator refers to Rey's tendency to make fun of others as both a useful tool and a defect: "Pepe Rey solía emplear a veces, no siempre con comedimiento, las armas de la burla. Esto casi era un defecto a los ojos de gran número de personas que le estimaba, porque nuestro joven aparecía un poco irrespetuoso en presencia de multitud de hechos comunes" (*Doña Perfecta*, 93). The violent implications of mockery are evident in this description, as ridicule is described as a weapon, one that will be employed by both Rey and the residents of Orbajosa in an attempt to establish superiority in the town.

The role of the balcony in the social hierarchy of Orbajosa is also important for understanding the scene in the Troya home. From the beginning of the novel, the balcony is evidently a feminine space situated in a religious and patriarchal setting. When Pepe Rey first arrives to Orbajosa from Madrid, the women of the town reveal themselves from behind the latticework of their balconies and look down at him in curiosity:

Así, y no de otra manera, por más que digan calumniadoras lenguas, era el hombre a quien el tío Licurgo introdujo en Orbajosa en la hora y punto en que la campana de la catedral tocaba a misa mayor. Luego que uno y otro atisbando por encima de los bardales, vieron a la niña y al Penitenciario y la veloz corrida de aquella hacia la casa, picaron sus caballerías para entrar en la calle Real, donde grande número de vagos se detenían para mirar al viajero como extraño huésped intruso de la patriarcal ciudad. Torciendo luego a la derecha, en dirección a la catedral, cuya corpulenta fábrica dominaba todo el pueblo, tomaron la calle de Condestable, en la cual, por ser estrecha y empedrada retumbaban con estridente

sonsonete las herraduras, alarmando al vecindario, que por ventanas y balcones se mostraba para satisfacer su curiosidad. Abríanse con singular chasquido las celosías, y caras diversas, casi todas de hembra asomaban arriba y abajo. (*Doña Perfecta*, 96)

Donald Buck notes that the cathedral is the “dominant architectural structure of the town” and that it is a symbol of “the quintessential patriarchal organization: the church” (418). The arrival of Pepe Rey at the exact hour of high mass, places him in direct opposition to the Christian and patriarchal power structure of Orbajosa, and attracts the interest of its residents, especially the women. The women’s inquisitiveness overcomes their desire to remain hidden, and they open the latticework of their balconies in order to get a better look at Pepe Rey. Thus, upon first glance he is labelled as an intruder, and becomes a spectacle himself.

It is important to note that the balconies of Orbajosa are fitted with latticework in place of shutters. In fact, the term ‘celosía’ only appears in two other novels of Galdós, *El audaz* and *Nazarín*, differentiating the facades of the homes in Orbajosa from those in most other settings in his novelistic universe. The *celosía* communicates both the conservative and secretive nature of Orbajosa. Its practical function, allowing for the homes to be ventilated while keeping out the sun, suggests that the climate of Orbajosa is overly hot, creating a symbolic link to the town and Pepe Rey’s feelings of unease. The *celosías* also serve as a semi-transparent barrier between women and the public space of Orbajosa. From just behind the latticework, the women are afforded a view of the street below while remaining hidden from sight themselves.

The use of the term *celosía* conveys an ambiguous emotional significance. According to the *Diccionario Real*, *celosía* originates from the word *celos*, yet does not clarify if the name refers to the jealous feelings of those in the street who gaze enviously at their neighbor's home, or if the latticework serves to conceal the wives of jealous husbands. On the one hand, the *celosías* guard women from prying eyes, and on the other, they hint at the oppressive conditions of the women in the town, who are generally confined to the space of their home. This reference to the balconies and latticework foreshadows the symbolic inversion that will take place later in the novel when Pepe Rey meets the carnivalesque characters the *niñas* Troya.

Many scholars have written about the *niñas* Troya, yet few have considered their role as carnivalesque characters who function in opposition to the domineering religious institution and patriarchal hierarchy established in the passage above. Much previous critical analysis has focused on the economic and social hardships the *niñas* face in the novel. Roberto Sánchez notes that the *niñas*' middle-class pedigree and material poverty marks them as "el primer retrato que nos da Galdós de esa sociedad de clase media venida a menos, a menudo grotesca y extravagante, que poblará muchas de las novelas posteriores" (53). Although Sánchez presents the *niñas*' social reality accurately, he overlooks the significance of placing such a family into a provincial setting. Marilyn Rugg recognizes the difficulties faced by the *niñas* as women living in a conservative, religious, and patriarchal society, but describes them as helpless, marginalized characters:

The Troyas are doubly pitiable because first, they are unjustly ostracized and second, they desire only to be part of the society that rejects them. While their

marginalized status gives them privileged insight into the hypocrisy of Orbajosa's elite, they are powerless to promote change, and their behavior and reactions to their social ostracism are limited to meaningless pranks and gossip. (210)

Wilfredo de Ráfols connects the *niñas* Troya to Greek mythology: "as frivolous parodies of the Fates, the three Troya sisters not only mock but also, in a sense, control the destinies of all Orbajosenses by dispensing to each a suitable epithet" (480). Ráfols comes close to identifying the importance of the *niñas* but does not take into account their role in the creation of a carnivalesque atmosphere in Orbajosa. Only Vernon Chamberlin notes their participation in masked parties and the religious parodies they create through insulting nicknames as an indication of their carnivalesque nature (12). A closer look at the spectacle that takes place on the balcony of the Troya home and their subversive implications shows that not only do the *niñas* undermine Orbajosa's elite, but that they also illuminate a larger power struggle in the novel between the authority figures of Orbajosa and Pepe Rey.

The liminal spaces of the Troya home indicate the contraposition of the *niñas* with the Church. Specifically, the initial description of the balcony of the Troya home sets it in opposition to Orbajosa's cathedral. Pepe Rey first hears the festive sounds from the balcony of the Troya home while he observes the street from a window of a quiet room in Orbajosa's casino:

Huyendo del bullicio, dio con su cuerpo en una estancia destinada a tertulia, en la cual a la sazón no había alma viviente, y con indolencia se sentó junto a la ventana de ella, mirando a la calle. Era ésta angostísima y con más ángulos y

recodos que casas, sombreada toda por la pavorosa catedral, que al extremo alzaba su negro muro carcomido. Pepe Rey miró a todos lados, arriba y abajo, y observó un plácido silencio de sepulcro ni un paso, ni una voz, ni una mirada. De pronto hirieron su oído rumores extraños, como cuchicheo de femeniles labios, y después el chirrido de cortinajes que se corrían, algunas palabras y por fin el tararear de una canción, el ladrido de un falderillo, y otras señales de existencia social que parecían muy singulares en tal sitio. Observando bien, Pepe Rey vio que tales rumores precedían de un enorme balcón con celosías, que frente por frente a la ventana mostraba su corpulenta fábrica. (*Doña Perfecta*, 290-92)

The narrator's ominous description ("Pavorosa catedral... negro muro carcomido") conveys the oppressive influence of the cathedral. Unlike the foreboding silence of the street, seemingly imposed by the dominating presence of the church, sounds of movement and music emanate from the Troya balcony marking the emotional disparity between the two spaces. Where the street represents silence, terror, and death (literally being referred to as a tomb), the noises coming from the balcony hint at life and festivity. The narrator uses "corpulenta fábrica" to describe the size of the balcony, the exact same phrase mentioned earlier when referring to the cathedral, and thus stressing the powerful impact of both spaces. The reference to the large body of the space, also draws attention to the corporal elements of Carnival.

The narrator's juxtaposition of the ominous cathedral with the lively Troya house establishes the balconies as a carnivalesque space. As Julio Caro Baroja notes, Carnival existed in direct relation to religious practices, specifically the tradition of Lent:

En el Diccionario histórico de la lengua española que empezó a publicar la Academia en 1933 y que quedó en su segundo tomo, se define el ‘Carnaval’ como el período de los tres días que preceden al Miércoles de Ceniza. Se dice allí, también, que las ‘Carnestolendas’ son los tres días de Carnaval. Da también una acepción de ‘Carnal’ (la sexta) como equivalente. [...] Podríamos incluso pensar que se ha distinguido un período de ‘Carnal,’ un momento en que hay que privarse de la carne (cuyo consumo caracterizaría al mismo), y a la Cuaresma.

(43)

The corpulence of the balcony implies an opposition to the abstemious practices of Lent. Furthermore, the dates of the novel also coincide with the timing of Carnival and Holy Week. According to letters written by various characters in the novel, the timeframe of Pepe’s stay in Orbajosa is set between the beginning of March and late April (Pepe first receives word from Perfecta in early March and is killed on April 20th)³². Since his visit to the Troya home occurs about two weeks after his arrival to the town (*Doña Perfecta*, 269), it is very possible that Galdós intended for Pepe to arrive to their home with the Troyas in the midst of carnival celebrations that would later be followed by Lent and Holy Week. At the time, Galdós was clearly interested in the tradition of Holy Week, considering that in *Gloria*, the subsequent novel to *Doña Perfecta*, he set much of the action during the week of Semana Santa.³³

³² Easter Sunday in 1870—the year Galdós published the first segment of *Doña Perfecta*— was on April 17th and thus, both lenten and carnival festivities would have occurred during the timeframe of the novel.

³³ For more on the role of Holy Week in *Gloria* see Peter Bly’s article “Semana Santa Processions as Viewed by Galdós and Alas.” Bly notes the importance of the balcony as a space for spectatorship and spectacle in Galdós’s representation of Holy Week in *Gloria*: “The conversion of Morton before a crucifix that is his mirror facial image has to be interrupted so that the whole Lantigua family can go onto the

Caro Baroja notes the contrasting emotional tones of Carnival and Lent: “El cristiano consciente habrá de tender a la tristeza, y más aún en el periodo de Cuaresma y en la Semana de Pasión. En contraste, estaba el periodo anterior, de inconsciencia acaso, pero también de alegría” (51). From the window of the casino, Pepe Rey finds himself between the world of the Church and Carnival, observing at once the festivity emanating from the Troya balcony and the grave emotional state of Orbajosa beneath the looming cathedral.

In the following scene, Don Tafetán and the *niñas* Troya create a carnivalesque atmosphere by expressing gaiety through the use of laughter. Caro Baroja cites seventeenth-century poetry that compares carnival laughter with the solemnity of Ash Wednesday:

La diferencia entre la alegría oficiosa del martes de Carnaval y la tristeza obligatoria del Miércoles de Ceniza se halla expresada asimismo en una composición poética, muy gráfica, de Gaspar Lucas Hidalgo, el autor de los *Diálogos de apacible entretenimiento* (aparecidos por vez primera en 1605):
Martes era, que no lunes,/ Martes de Carnestolendas,/ Víspera de la Ceniza,/ Primer día de Cuaresma,/ Ved qué martes y qué miércoles,/ Qué vísperas y qué fiesta;/ El martes lleno de risa,/ El miércoles de tristeza (52)

Don Tafetán, the character who introduces Pepe Rey to the Troya home, vacillates between the laughing, festive world of Carnival and the solemn world of the Church. The

balcony to watch the procession. In so doing, they become themselves objects for viewing. The use of this vantage point allows Galdós to adopt a narrow downward focus so that each “paso” and its attendants can be recorded. More importantly, though, the shock and surprise of those processing at seeing the Jew kneeling on the balcony as they look up can thus become the highlight of his account [...]” (38).

narrator introduces Tafetán as a musician with a penchant for laughter, telling jokes, and pursuing women, who also participates in Christian rituals:

[...] era muy simpático, tenía mucho gracejo y felicísimo ingenio para contar aventuras graciosas. Reía mucho, y al hacerlo, su cara se cubría toda, desde la frente a la barba, de grotescas arrugas. A pesar de estas cualidades y del aplauso que debía estimular su disposición a las picantes burlas, no era maldiciente. [...] Completaba su pasar tocando gallardamente el clarinete en las procesiones, en las solemnidades de la catedral y en el teatro, cuando alguna trailla de desesperados cómicos aparecía por aquellos países con el alevoso propósito de dar funciones en Orbajosa. Pero lo más singular en D. Juan Tafetán era su afición a las muchachas guapas. [...] Oírle contar sus conquistas era cosa de morirse de risa, porque hay Tenorios de Tenorios, y aquel fue de los más originales. (*Doña Perfecta*, 293-95)

This description of Tafetán shows him to be a protean character, practicing both Catholic and carnivalesque rituals. On the one hand, his crude jokes and sexual exploits fit him into Bakhtin's description of the carnival clown: "they [...] remained fools and clowns always and wherever they made their appearance. As such they represented a certain form of life, which was real and ideal at the same time. They stood on the borderline between life and art, in a peculiar mid-zone as it were; they were neither eccentrics nor dolts, neither were they comic actors" (8). Tafetán's penchant for laughter and his artful yet crude storytelling place him outside of the Church's restrictions. Tafetán is, in

essence, a grotesque character³⁴, existing in the intersection between decomposition and reproduction, his old wrinkled skin standing in contrast to his virile nature and sexual exploits. These two disparate qualities encompass the cyclical nature of Carnival, the process of conception, birth, development, degeneration, and death. Tafetán does not reside strictly in the world of Carnival; he is also an active participant in ecclesiastical activities, performing musically in formal settings that demand the solemnity typical of the Church. Ultimately, Tafetán's immoral actions are generally forgiven since he performs in Christian rituals, and also because of his ability to provoke laughter. These characteristics make him an important character in the space of the balcony in the scene that follows, and introduce Pepe Rey to carnivalesque practices in Orbajosa.

Tafetán's role in the scene extends to explaining the *niñas*' background to Pepe Rey, as well as their habit of ridiculing passersby from the balcony of their home. When the *niñas* briefly reveal themselves from behind the latticework of their balcony (not unlike the women of Orbajosa when Pepe Rey first enters the town), Tafetán narrates their background:

Una de las celosías del balcón se abrió, dejando ver un rostro juvenil, encantador y risueño, que desapareció al instante como una luz apagada por el viento. [...]

“Son las Troyas, las niñas de Troya. Pues no conoce usted nada bueno... Tres chicas preciosísimas, hijas de un coronel de Estado Mayor de Plazas, que murió

³⁴ Bakhtin notes: “The grotesque image reflects a phenomenon in transformation, an as yet unfinished metamorphosis, of death and birth, growth and becoming. The relation to time is one determining trait of the grotesque image. The other indispensable trait is ambivalence. For in this image we find both poles of transformation, the old and the new, the dying and the procreating, the beginning and the end of the metamorphosis” (24).

en las calles de Madrid el 54.” La celosía se abrió de nuevo y comparecieron dos caras. “Se están burlando de nosotros,” dijo Tafetán haciendo una seña amistosa a las niñas. (*Doña Perfecta*, 295-96)

The presence of the *niñas* on the balcony and their game of revealing and hiding themselves to Pepe Rey and Tafetán begin an informal, sexually suggestive, carnivalesque dialogue. The *niñas* initiate the act by teasing the two men, offering them a brief glimpse of their attractive faces, and then suddenly withdrawing in order to provoke them.

In the scene, the balcony serves as a stage to frame the carnivalesque performance of the *niñas*: “Funcionó de nuevo la celosía. ‘Buenas tardes niñas,’ gritó D. Tafetán dirigiéndose a las tres, que artísticamente agrupadas aparecieron. ‘Este caballero dice que lo bueno no debe esconderse, y que abran ustedes toda la celosía.’ Pero la celosía se cerró y alegre concierto de risas difundió una extraña alegría por la triste calle. Creeríase que pasaba una bandada de pájaros” (*Doña Perfecta*, 297-98). The playful acts of the *niñas* on the balcony once again contrast with the melancholy streets of Orbajosa, and the *niñas* are even arranged in an artistic manner, suggesting that their behavior is indeed performative. The Troyas create a carnivalesque environment by dispersing their laughter from the balcony to the street, breaking the stark silence imposed by the cathedral. Bakhtin notes: “the basis of laughter which gives form to carnival rituals frees them completely from all religious and ecclesiastic dogmatism, from all mysticism and piety. They are also completely deprived of the character of magic and prayer; they do not command nor do they ask for anything” (7). The *niñas*’ laughter stands in contrast to the

solemnly religious atmosphere of Orbajosa, and creates an entirely different, carnivalesque world, freeing all the characters from the limitations placed upon them by Catholic traditions.

Moreover, the carnivalesque spectacle that takes place in this scene blurs the line between life and art. Rather than standing by as passive spectators, Tafetán and Pepe Rey are drawn into the performance, and interact directly with the *niñas*. Although there are clearly performative aspects of the interplay between Pepe, Tafetán, and the *niñas*, the lack of a formal theatrical setting, as well as the unclear distinction between actors and audience, make it difficult to differentiate art from life in the scene. As Bakhtin observes: “Carnival spectacle belongs to the borderline between art and life. In reality, it is life itself, but shaped according to a certain pattern of play. In fact, Carnival does not know footlights, in the sense that it does not acknowledge any distinction between actors and spectators [...]” (7). Pepe Rey is drawn into the carnival world by the *niñas*, and instantly becomes a part of the spectacle himself. At this point, Pepe experiences the laughter of the *niñas* from the perspective of the passerby as would a typical resident of Orbajosa, suggesting the power of the young women to create a carnivalesque atmosphere in the town.

The carnivalesque performance of this scene creates a symbolic inversion³⁵ by ridiculing social hierarchies that exist outside of Carnival. Don Tafetán’s reference to

³⁵ Bakhtin defines carnivalesque symbolic inversion: “During the century-long development of the medieval carnival, prepared by thousands of years of ancient comic ritual, including the primitive Saturnalias, a special idiom of forms and symbols was evolved—an extremely rich idiom that expressed the unique yet complex carnival experience of the people. This experience opposed to all that was ready-made and completed, to all pretense at immutability, sought a dynamic expression; it demanded ever changing, playful, undefined forms. All the symbols of carnival idiom are filled with this pathos of change and

Pepe with the formal term “caballero” implies that the *niñas*’ laughter is directed at someone who belongs to a higher social class. Pepe seems aware of the social disparity between himself and the Troyas, even doubting whether or not they are prostitutes:

“¿Pero qué clase de gente es esa?’ [Tafetán:] ‘Ande usted, Sr. de Rey... Las pobrecitas son honradas. ¡Bah se alimentan del aire como los camaleones! Diga usted, el que no come, ¿puede pecar? Bastante virtuosas son las infelices. Y si pecaran, limpiarían su conciencia con el gran ayuno que hacen’” (*Doña Perfecta*, 298-99). Tafetán uses an extremely formal term to refer to Pepe Rey, calling him “señor” and also referring to his last name of “Rey” signifying his high social standing. Carnival traditions specifically undermine the authority of the king through mockery, as noted by Bakhtin: “in such a system the king is the clown. He is elected by all the people and is mocked by all the people. He is abused and beaten when the time of his reign is over, just as the carnival dummy of winter or of the dying year is mocked, beaten, torn to pieces, burned, or drowned over time” (187). Rey comes to represent a false king who is, in fact, the subject of ridicule. Unknowingly, Pepe becomes part of the carnivalesque performance and his authority is the source of mockery. The proclamation of Rey as the king of Carnival foreshadows his unfortunate violent end. Furthermore, the mention of the girls’ fasting—a direct result of their poverty—serves to excuse their potentially ‘bad’ behavior since it

renewal, with the sense of the gay relativity of prevailing truths and authorities. We find here a characteristic logic, the peculiar logic of the ‘inside out’ (*à l’envers*), of the ‘turnabout,’ of a continual shifting from top to bottom, from front to rear, of numerous parodies and travesties, humiliations, profanations, comic crownings and uncrownings. A second life, a second world of folk culture is this constructed; it is to a certain extent a parody of the extracarnival life, ‘a world inside out’” (11).

mirrors the religious practices of Lent and will wipe their consciences clean, again highlighting the play between Catholic and carnivalesque traditions in the scene.

The question as to why and at whom the *niñas* are laughing reveals the symbolic inversion created within the carnivalesque atmosphere of *Doña Perfecta*. The direction of the laughter determines the social significance of the act within the novel, in this case, poor women laughing at Rey, who, as a rich young man from Madrid, enjoys a higher social status to that of the Troyas, even if he has been reduced to an insignificant figure in the Orbajosian community by his powerful aunt Doña Perfecta. James Iffland notes that two prostitutes similarly laugh at Don Quijote in Cervantes' novel:

Toda la ridiculez de don Quijote no disminuye el hecho que tenemos dos individuos inferiores riéndose de otro que pertenece a la elite de los hidalgos. En una sociedad rígidamente diferenciada, la dirección de la risa por definición debe ser la contraria, esto es, de arriba para abajo. El hecho de que aquí va desde abajo para arriba ya muestra que la economía de la risa en la obra tendrá rasgos que podemos considerar desestabilizadores como mínimo” (43).

The *niñas*' laughter on the balcony portrays the *mundo al revés*, as two women of lowly social status laugh at a wealthy middle-class man. Their placement in the balcony helps to visually represent this inversion of social hierarchy; the balcony allows the girls to literally laugh down at Rey, shifting the power dynamic in their favor. Rather than using mockery as a weapon, Pepe finds himself the victim of ridicule.

Pepe is not the only object of the *niñas*' laughter and ridicule. When he enters the Troya home, his role in the carnivalesque spectacle changes, and he views Orbajosa

through the perspective of the *niñas*, that is to say, a marginalized character in the ecclesiastical, official world, yet a powerful figure in the world of Carnival. The narrator describes the oppressive social condition of the *niñas*, who live in poverty and are shunned by the other residents of Orbajosa:

Cuando la visita entró, las tres se quedaron muy cortadas; pero bien pronto mostraron la índole de su genial frívolo y alegre. Vivían en la miseria, como los pájaros en la prisión, sin dejar de cantar tras los hierros lo mismo que en la opulencia del bosque. Pasan el día cosiendo lo cual indicaba por lo menos un principio de honradez, pero en Orbajosa ninguna persona de su posición se trataba con ellas. (*Doña Perfecta*, 300)

The mention of sewing as a form of honorable work highlights the lack of options available to the *niñas* due to their status as orphaned, unmarried women. The bird in a cage metaphor repeatedly appears in Galdós's novels to refer to young women feeling trapped and oppressed in their domestic situation, and who have a desire to express their frustrations. The *niñas* oppose their social status by remaining happy and frivolous despite their hardships, and their festive nature defies the serious, sad feelings imposed by the Church.

Far from content to remain silent, the *niñas* mock the people of Orbajosa through insults, pejorative nicknames, pranks, and laughter from the balcony and windows of their home. The narrator notes their infamous social status: “[...] la mala reputación de las Troyas consistía, más que nada, en su fama de chismosas, enredadoras, traviesas y despreocupadas. Dirigían anónimos a graves personas; ponían motes a todo viviente de

Orbajosa, desde el Obispo al último zascandil [...] (*Doña Perfecta*, 301). The narrator notes that the *niñas* treat the most respected religious figure and lowly rascal as equals, essentially erasing the idea of social hierarchy altogether.

The *niñas* create the world of Carnival through language that challenges the socially accepted norms of speech. Bakhtin explains the liberating force of profanity in carnival speech:

Abuses, curses, profanities, and improprieties are the unofficial element of speech. They were and are still conceived as a breach of the established norms of verbal address; they refuse to conform to conventions, to etiquette, civility, respectability [...]. Such speech forms, liberated from norms, hierarchies, and prohibitions of established idiom, become themselves a peculiar argot and create a special collectivity, a group of people initiated in familiar intercourse, who are frank and free in expressing themselves verbally. (187)

Through their use of nicknames, the *niñas* christen the residents of Orbajosa with a carnival name, stripping them of their Church-given names, and in doing so, make them part of the laughing world, void of social hierarchy. Just like their laughter, their insults and abuses are an act of defiance and freedom.

Another carnivalesque element of the *niñas*' behavior is their abandonment of daily chores in order to interact with the residents of Orbajosa from their balcony. Caro Baroja explains that during Carnival women abandoned their work with thread, in this case spinning:

Es el de Carnaval también un tiempo durante el cual no debían llevarse a cabo determinados trabajos. Así, en Asturias, las mujeres que comenzaban a hilar en reuniones por septiembre, al llegar el Carnaval seguían reuniéndose en los ‘filandones,’ pero no hilaban. En Portugal dicen que es aconsejable no hilar entonces ‘porque se hilan las barbas’ o porque, como las manos suelen estar untadas de comer carne y grasas, los ratones roen después lo hilado. En Castilla, en la época de Correas, corrían estos refranes: ‘El buen hilar, de San Miguel a Navidad: de marzo ayuso, no rabea bien el huso,’ ‘Día de santa Inés, mujeres no hilés.’ (49)

Don Tafetán continues his role as a performative carnivalesque character in the scene when he buys the *niñas* food (thus breaking their fast) and then demands that they stop sewing and sing with him as he plays the guitar: “‘María Juana, no abandones la costura,’ dijo la Troya mayor. ‘Es tarde y hay que acabar la sotana esta noche.’ ‘Hoy no se trabaja. Al demonio las agujas,’ exclamó Tafetán” (*Doña Perfecta*, 306). The use of the word “demonio” contrasts Tafetán and the *niñas*’ carnivalesque actions with Lenten practices, and the expectations placed on women within the home. Emphasizing the carnivalesque nature of the cessation of their needlework is the identity of the garment one of them puts down: a “sotana.”

The *niñas* transition to the world of Carnival by leaving the interior space of their home and appearing on the balcony. Just after Tafetán demands that the *niñas* abandon their work, the spectacle resumes: “Enseguida entonó una canción. ‘La gente se para en la calle,’ dijo la Troya segunda, asomándose al balcón. ‘Los gritos de D. Juan Tafetán se

oyen desde la plaza...’ (*Doña Perfecta*, 307). After the carnival spectacle is initiated, the streets of Orbajosa are transformed, and no longer silent and lonely. The street becomes a social space where, later in the scene, the *niñas* will interact with other *Orbajosenses*.

When the *niñas* appear on the balcony, they immediately refer to the people they observe using their carnival names. The nicknames given to the residents of Orbajosa by the *niñas* directly parody the Church by mocking religious figures. For example, when María Remedios passes the Troya home, the *niñas* shout: “‘¡Juana, Juana!’ ‘¿Qué?’ ‘Por la calle va Suspiritos’” (*Doña Perfecta*, 307). Chamberlin explains the religious connotations of the nickname: “To Mary in heaven, who is perpetually sighing and lamenting concerning the fate of her son, believers on earth offer up to her in prayers and hymns their own sighs and laments, which she can convey to God. Thus one of Mary’s titles is Nuestra Señora Medianera del Suspiro” (11). According to Chamberlin, the Church itself was aware of the sacrilegious nature of the nicknames of this scene and *Doña Perfecta* was even placed on *Index of Prohibited Books* (12)³⁶. The *niñas* mock María Remedios’s flaws and Catholic beliefs, ridiculing her personal peculiarity and the Virgin Mary. The *niñas* make light of the solemn emotions of the ecclesiastical world embodied in Mary’s symbolic mourning of Christ’s death.

³⁶ Chamberlain hypothesizes that the “Suspiritos” nickname would have been enough to land *Doña Perfecta* on the *Index of Prohibited Books*: “[...] the insinuating nickname of “Suspiritos” is remarkable. And when coupled with precisely seven instances of this villainous character’s sighing and lamenting, one may extrapolate that this aspect of the novel alone might suffice for its inclusion in the *Index*, which held that ‘all books are forbidden that insult [...] the Blessed Virgin Mary’” (12).

The *niñas* further exhibit carnivalesque characteristics by throwing small objects at the residents of Orbajosa from the balcony. Once liberated from their domestic chores, the *niñas* begin to hurl orange peels at Suspiritos:

La más pequeña voló al balcón. “Tírale una cascara de naranja.” Pepe Rey se asomó también; vio que por la calle pasaba una señora, y que con diestra puntería la menor de las Troyas le asestó un cascarazo en el moño. Después cerraron precipitadamente, y las tres se esforzaban en sofocar convulsamente su risa para que no se oyera desde la vía pública. (*Doña Perfecta*, 307-08)

Not only do the *niñas* transform María Remedios into a religious parody, they also mount a direct attack on a revered holy figure. Significantly, the *niñas* target María Remedios’ bun. The *moño* represents her ornamented appearance and presumptuous personality, and an alternative definition for the word according to the Diccionario Real is “presunción, vanidad.” The fact that the peel falls directly onto her bun is a symbolic mocking of María Remedios’ own vanity. Furthermore, the undoing of the *moño* may also be a direct reference to the colloquial expression “quitar moños a alguien,” which is an alternative phrase for “bajarle los humos.” Thus, the direct attack against the *moño* can be seen as a displacement of María Remedios from her respected social standing.

The orange peels thrown by the *niñas* are also elements of carnivalesque spectacle. Caro Baroja notes that throwing oranges as an act of symbolic stoning was a typical practice of Carnival (58).³⁷ One of the most common uses for orange throwing

³⁷ Caro Baroja lists orange throwing among other common carnival traditions: “He aquí otro resumen de las prácticas carnavalescas [...]: 1) Arrojar salvado y harina. 2) Quemar estopas. 3) Correr gallos. 4) Mantear perros y gatos. 5) Colgar a la cola de estos animales mazas, vejigas, cuernos, botes, etc. 6) Arrojar agua con pucheros, jeringas, etc. 7) Apedrearse con huevos, naranjas u otros objetos” (58).

came during the carnival custom of the *rey de gallos*, in which young men threw oranges at a rooster as a symbolic stoning of the king.³⁸ In Andalusia, servants would often throw oranges in the streets as well during Carnival.³⁹ In fact, the custom was common enough that *anaranjear* was used as a verb to describe the action of throwing oranges.⁴⁰

Furthermore, the orange peels serve as proof that the *niñas* have broken their fast and have eaten during the day. The *niñas*' attack on María Remedios may not cause her any physical harm, however, their actions symbolically assault the social hierarchy of Orbajosa through carnivalesque traditions.

The *niñas* even go as far as to ridicule Doña Perfecta herself, although in a much subtler manner than María Remedios. Perfecta is not given a nickname, yet the *niñas* appear to use excessive praise in order to mock her: “‘Sr. D. José, ¡qué excelente señora es doña Perfecta!’ ‘Es la única persona que no tiene apodo, la única persona de que no se habla mal en Orbajosa.’ ‘Todos la respetan’ ‘Todos la adoran’” (*Doña Perfecta*, 311).

Bakhtin notes that: “The passing from excessive praise to excessive invective is characteristic, and the change from one to the other is perfectly legitimate. Praise and abuse are, so to speak the two sides of the same coin. [...] Praise [...] is ironic and ambivalent. It is on the brink of abuse; the one leads to the other, and it is impossible to

³⁸ Caro Baroja cites classic Spanish literary texts that describe the custom of *rey de gallos* and the symbolic stoning of the roosters with oranges: “[...] donde hace una mención más conocida es en la bonita poesía que comienza ‘...y una caperuza/ con muchas almenas/ pondré por penacho/ las dos plumas negras/del rabo del gallo/ que acullá en la huerta, / anaranjemos/ en Carnestolendas.’ Por este verso podrá deducirse que los chicos eran los que corrientemente celebraban la fiesta, apedreando a un gallo con naranjas” (77-78).

³⁹ Caro Baroja cites an excerpt about Carnival written by H. Cock: “‘la gente baxa, criados y mocas de servicio, echan manojos de harina unos a otros en la casa cuando pasan, o masas de nieve, si ha caído, o naranjas en Andalucía mayormente, donde hay cantidades dellas’” (75).

⁴⁰ The *Diccionario de la lengua española* defines *anaranjear* (a term in disuse) as “tirar o arrojar naranjas contra alguien.”

draw the line between them” (164-65). The *niñas* use praise ironically in that their respect for Doña Perfecta is, at least in part, born out of fear, and they compliment her in order to ridicule Pepe Rey, who has been victimized by Perfecta’s attempts to undermine him in his quest to marry her daughter.

Perfecta’s role as a powerful woman in a patriarchal town may also be the source of the Troyas’ praise. Buck notes that Perfecta’s understanding of the social mechanisms of Orbajosa are the basis for her ascension to power: “Perfecta’s geographical place, combined with its attendant ideologies, has taught her that the only means of gaining power over men is not through direct action, but rather through subtle persuasion, subterfuge, hypocrisy” (419). Similar to the *niñas*, Perfecta uses the means at her disposal in order to challenge the Church’s authority.

Furthermore, Perfecta may not have been given a nickname by the *niñas* due to the fact that her name already parodies the Spanish Church. Chamberlin notes that the name Perfecta could be a reference to the ecclesiastical movement occurring in Spain in the nineteenth century: “it is helpful to remember that *Doña Perfecta* began appearing serially in 1870 at the very time when the Cortes was furiously debating whether or not to reestablish Catholicism as the official state religion. It was also a time when Catholic apologists, including Pope Pius IX, were describing the Church as ‘societas perfecta’” (12). When the *niñas* use Perfecta’s name ironically, they ultimately ridicule Catholic beliefs.

The *niñas*’ “fama de chismosas” also hints at the carnivalesque atmosphere they create by shaming the residents of Orbajosa from the balcony. Caro Baroja notes that

during Carnival the balcony was typically used as a space where people would proclaim the private affairs of others for all to hear: “El día de la Candelaria echaban un pregón, al que llamaban ‘carta calenda’ o ‘carta candelas,’ desde el balcón del Ayuntamiento, en el que se sacaba a relucir todo lo que cada vecino creía tener más oculto de su vida privada” (93). The narrator notes that the *niñas* “sabían todos los sucesos de la vecindad, para lo cual tenían en constante uso los tragaluces y agujeros todos de la parte alta de la casa” (*Doña Perfecta*, 301). The liminal spaces of the Troya home serve a dual purpose for the carnivalesque spectacle; it allows the *niñas* to spy on the other residents of Orbajosa, and to denounce them jocosely in a public setting from the shelter of their home.

Following this carnival tradition, as the scene progresses, the *niñas* reveal the private affairs of Orbajosa’s residents from the balcony. Nicolás Hernández is ridiculed for his hypocrisy as a religious figure and moneylender: “‘Don Juan, D. Juan,’ gritó Pepilla. ‘Por ahí viene su amigo de usted Nicolasito Hernández, o sea Cirio Pascual, con su sombrero de tres pisos. Viene rezando en voz baja, sin duda por las almas de los que ha mandado al hoyo con sus usuras’” (*Doña Perfecta*, 312). Although Pepilla addresses Pepe Rey, she exclaims her insults from the balcony for any passerby in the street to hear. Thus, the *niñas* publically condemn Nicolás’ immoral actions through dialogue, merging conversation with spectacle. The *niñas* uncover the dubious behavior of characters who on the surface level seem to be devote Catholics. Orbajosa, despite its provincial appearance, keeps its sinister side just out of view. Through their carnivalesque actions on the balcony, the *niñas* pull back the cover, allowing both Pepe and the reader a glimpse into the hidden world of Orbajosa.

Another way in which the *niñas* create a carnivalesque atmosphere in the streets of Orbajosa is through references to the lower body that parody the Church. Bakhtin explains: “the grotesque concept of the body forms the basis of abuses, oaths, and curses. The importance of abusive language is essential to the understanding of the literature of the grotesque. Abuse exercises a direct influence on the language and the images of this literature and is closely related to all other forms of ‘degradation’ and ‘down to earth’ in grotesque and Renaissance literature” (28-29). The nickname given to Nicolás Hernández, *Cirio Pascual*, ridicules the ecclesiastical world by making reference to the phallic shape of Easter candles, as Chamberlin explains: “because of its length and diameter, the Holy Saturday Candle early on became ‘uno de los eufemismos jocosos frecuentes’ for a very large phallus” (14). The expression of insults and foul language of carnivalesque spectacle occurs on the balcony of the Troya home, when the *niñas* scream ‘*Cirio Pascual*’ repeatedly as Nicolás Hernández passes by:

“¿A que no le dicen ustedes el remoquete? ¡A que sí!” “Juana, cierra las celosías. Dejémosle que pase, y cuando vaya por la esquina, yo gritaré: ¡Cirio, Cirio Pascual!...” Don Juan Tafetán corrió al balcón. “Venga usted, D. José, para que conozca este tipo. Pepe Rey aprovechó el momento en que las tres muchachas y D. Juan se regocijaban en el balcón, llamando a Nicolasito Hernández con el apodo que tanto le hacía rabiar, y acercándose con toda cautela a uno de los costureros que en la sala había, colocó dentro de él media onza que le quedaba del juego. Después corrió al balcón, a punto que las dos más pequeñas gritaban entre locas risas ¡*Cirio Pascual, Cirio Pascual!* (*Doña Perfecta*, 313-14)

The *niñas* not only laugh because they have offended Nicolás Hernández, but also because they feel liberated in having screamed prohibited language for all of Orbajosa to hear. Their actions ridicule the Church and are an expression of freedom. Tafetán highlights the importance of audience in carnivalesque spectacle when he encourages Pepe Rey to watch the *niñas* insult Nicolás, even going as far as to introduce him as a character with whom he should be familiar.

The terrace of the Troya dining room is also an important space where the *niñas* can attack the residents of Orbajosa without being seen: “Las de Troya, acercándose al bordo de la azotea, miraron atentamente a la casa vecina, e imponiendo silencio a los galanes, se retiraron luego a aquella parte del terrado, desde donde nada se veía ni había peligro de ser visto” (*Doña Perfecta*, 316-17). The *niñas* use this vantage point in order to mount an ambush on their neighbors:

“Ahora sale de la despensa con un cazuelo de garbanzos,” dijo María Juana, estirando el cuello para ver un poco. “¡Zas!” Exclamó otra, arrojando una piedrecilla. Oyóse el ruido del proyectil al chocar contra los cristales de la galería, y luego una colérica voz que gritaba: “Ya nos han roto otro cristal ésas...”

Ocultas las tres en el rincón del terrado, junto a los dos caballeros, sofocaban la risa. (*Doña Perfecta*, 317-18)

The bushes on the terrace serve as a hiding place from which the *niñas* can simulate an attack on their neighbors. At this point, the *niñas*' attack escalates as they replace the harmless oranges peels with small rocks and manage to break their neighbor's window. This destructive act follows the Carnival tradition in which the old is destroyed so that it

can be reborn and made anew as stated by Bakhtin: “death is not the negation of life seen as the great body of all people but part of life as a whole— its indispensable component, the condition of its constant renewal and rejuvenation” (50).

The *niñas*’ violent acts escalate throughout the scene, and reflect the potential for violence in carnivalesque customs. As Caro Baroja notes, the act of throwing projectiles during Carnival became so dangerous that, at times, it resulted in death, and was ultimately prohibited in Madrid and other regions of Spain:

Los caballeros, disfrazados y bien provistos de toda clase de dulces y armados con una bota de vino henchida de aire y colgada de un palo, salían a la calle, y con su dulce carga apedreaban a las damas que salían a los balcones, usando de la bota para espantar a los muchachos y gañanes que les seguían. Esta pedrea, aunque fuera de confituras, ocasionaba males, por lo que los alcaldes la prohibieron en varias ocasiones, pero los tudelanos no hicieron caso de la prohibición. Ya se verá cómo en Madrid fue objeto de prohibiciones continuas, que no surtieron efecto, hasta que en nuestros días se acabó el Carnaval. [...] Y las prohibiciones, excusado es el decirlo, se fundaban en que a veces los jeringazos de agua, los naranjazos, los lanzamientos de salvado o de ceniza, originaban riñas, discusiones, y de ahí se pasaba a mayores, llegando a veces a ocasionar muertes.

(68)

The *niñas* not only threaten real violence through their rock throwing, as was typical in nineteenth-century Spain, but they are also aggressors rather than victims. Therefore, the

world is once more turned upside down, since the balcony is a space where the *niñas* wield power over the men of Orbajosa rather than the other way around.

The violence becomes even more serious when it is revealed that the *niñas* manage to hit Orbajosa's confessor Don Inocencio, who has been supporting Doña Perfecta in her constant undermining of Pepe's courtship of his cousin Rosario:

“¡A la una, a las dos, a las tres! ... ¡Paf!..” Oyóse abajo un grito de dolor, un voto, una exclamación varonil, pues era un hombre el que la daba. Pepe Rey pudo distinguir claramente estas palabras: “¡Demonche! Me han agujereado la cabeza ésas... ¡Jacinto, Jacinto! ¿Pero qué canalla de vecindad es esta? ...” (*Doña Perfecta*, 319)

The *niñas*' provocative actions draw even the most 'pious' residents of Orbajosa into the carnivalesque spectacle. Don Inocencio himself reacts to the stoning by unleashing foul language and insulting the *niñas*. Even the word 'demonche' is a colloquial reference to the devil, breaking with the use of formal speech typical of religious rhetoric. In participating actively in the carnivalesque spectacle, Don Inocencio parodies himself, once again blurring the boundaries between life and performance.

Whereas previously in the scene the narration more subtly alluded to the contrast between Carnival and religious practices through descriptions of character and setting, at this point the two come in direct conflict. Even for the *niñas*, the game seems to have gone too far as Florentina comments that normally they avoid playing pranks on Don Inocencio:

“¡Jesús, María y José, lo que he hecho!” exclamó llena de consternación Florentina, “Le he dado en la cabeza al Sr. D. Inocencio.” “¿Al penitenciario?” dijo Pepe Rey. “Sí.” “¿Vive en esa casa?” “¿Pues dónde ha de vivir?” “Esa señora de los suspiros...” “Es su sobrina, su ama o no sé qué. Nos divertimos con ella porque es muy cargante, pero con el señor Penitenciario no solemos gastar bromas.” (*Doña Perfecta*, 319-20).

The balcony shifts from being a space that symbolically portrays conflict to a space in which real violence occurs. In fact, the *niñas* ultimately abandon the space of the dining room terrace in fear of a violent retaliation from their enemies: “‘Vámonos, vámanos,’ gritó Florentina con zozobra. ‘El señor Penitenciario va a subir al cuarto de *D. Nominavito* y nos echará un responso.’ ‘Vámonos, sí; cerremos la puerta del comedor.’ Abandonaron en tropel el terrado” (*Doña Perfecta*, 322).

The *niñas* also openly parody ecclesiastical language through the nickname they give to María Remedios’ son Jacinto:

“¿Jacinto?” preguntó el ingeniero, “¿Qué endiablado nombre le han puesto ustedes? “*Don Nominavito*...” las tres rompieron a reír. “Lo llamamos así porque es muy sabio.” “No: porque cuando nosotras éramos chicas, él era chico también; pues...sí. Salíamos al terrado a jugar, y le sentíamos estudiando en voz alta sus lecciones.” “Sí, y todo el santo día estaba cantando.” “Declinando, mujer. Eso es: se ponía de este modo: *Nominavito rosa, Genivito, Davito, Acusavito*.” (*Doña Perfecta*, 323)

The nickname of “Don Nominavito” ridicules Jacinto’s desire to ascend socially by learning Latin. The *niñas* undermine the official language of the Church, creating their own rhetoric of irony, oaths, and colloquialisms. Bakhtin notes that ridicule of Latin was a common carnival practice: “The Latin parody or semiparody was widespread. The number of manuscripts belonging to this category is immense. The entire official ideology and ritual are here shown in their comic aspect. Laughter penetrates the highest forms of religious cult and thought” (13). Yet again we see a term associated with the devil (in this case ‘endiablado’) in reference to the *niñas*’ language, suggesting its opposition to the ecclesiastical world.

Interestingly, the unofficial language of Carnival also brings the *niñas* closer to some of the other residents of Orbajosa. Bakhtin notes:

When two persons establish friendly relations, the form of their verbal intercourse also changes abruptly; they address each other informally, abusive words are used affectionately, and mutual mockery is permitted (in formal intercourse only a third person can be mocked.) [...] Verbal etiquette and discipline are relaxed and indecent words and expressions may be used [...]. (16)

In the world of Carnival, not only are the *niñas* liberated, but they are also closer to the rest of the people of Orbajosa, creating familiar, free-flowing relationships that are uninhibited by the limitations of formalized speech. Unlike Pepe Rey, as carnivalesque characters the *niñas* are able to mock Jacinto without any significant consequences, commenting that: “*Don Nominavito* es amigo nuestro [...]. Desde su templo de la

ciencia nos dice a la calladita mil ternezas, y también nos echa besos volados” (*Doña Perfecta*, 322).

The scene reveals Pepe’s lack of knowledge about the intricacies of space and relationships in Orbajosa. Pepe is unaware of where his supposed enemies live, and is even ignorant of the fact that he is being spied on at that very moment:

Mientras rápidamente se pronunciaban las palabras de este diálogo, Pepe vio que frente al terrado, y muy cerca de él, se abrían los cristales de una ventana perteneciente a la misma casa bombardeada; vio que aparecía una cara risueña, una cara conocida, una cara cuya vista le aturdió y le puso pálido y trémulo. Era Jacintito, que interrumpido en sus graves estudios, abrió la ventana de su despacho, presentándose en ella con la pluma en la oreja. Su rostro púdico, fresco y sonrosado daba a tal aparición aspecto semejante al de una aurora. “Buenas tardes, Sr. D. José,” dijo festivamente. (*Doña Perfecta*, 320-21)

Similar to the *niñas*, Jacinto uses the liminal space of his home to leave behind the serious ecclesiastical, domestic, academic world, and enter into the playfulness of Carnival. Just when Pepe seems to gain control of the situation and is taking part in the ridicule of Orbajosa’s powerful residents, it turns out that just the reverse takes place. In reality, Pepe is ridiculed by his nemesis Jacinto, the man who is also vying for Rosario’s love.

Although while on the balcony and dining room terrace of the Troya home Pepe Rey experiences firsthand the symbolic inversion typical of the carnivalesque spectacle, it is clear that the implications of the *niñas* anti-ecclesiastical acts are lost on him.

Ultimately, as a member of Madrid's middle class, he is more concerned with maintaining social decorum than he is with challenging the authorities of Orbajosa through carnival practices. Before leaving the Troya home, Pepe dismisses the *niñas* as frivolous: “Ya han perdido ustedes bastante tiempo. Niñas a trabajar. Esto de arrojar piedras a los vecinos y a los transeúntes, no es la ocupación más a propósito para unas jóvenes tan lindas y de tanto merito... Con que abur...” (*Doña Perfecta*, 324-25). Pepe never fully understands the world of Orbajosa, believing that his position as a progressive thinker and a member of the middle class make him socially and intellectually superior. When he bids the *niñas* goodbye, he does so from a capitalist perspective, emphasizing their duty to work, and ignoring the limited opportunities available to them as women living in a patriarchal society.

Although he seems critical of the conservative Christian practices of Orbajosa, Pepe is unable to comprehend the subversive aspects of the carnival tradition, nor indeed the damage done to his reputation, to his very place in Orbajosa, and to his intention to marry his cousin, as the anointed carnival King. Furthermore, he is never able to fully come to terms with the fact that the carnival tradition is so fully entrenched in the very nature of the town's identity. The reason for this, in part, is because the carnivalesque spectacle portrayed by the *niñas* represents a temporal regression to a time that predates any of Pepe Rey's personal experiences, having grown up in the modern environment of Madrid. This is extremely important for understanding the mechanisms of the novel as a whole. When Pepe Rey enters Orbajosa, he finds himself not only in opposition to provincial politics and ideology, but he also enters a world existing in a different

temporal plane. In the context of nineteenth-century Spain, Orbajosa can be seen as an anachronism, a medieval space ruled by the Church. However, Pepe Rey, placed in the liminal space between the ecclesiastical and carnival world, becomes himself an anachronism within an anachronism. Thus, the study of liminal space in the novel is of vital importance because it reveals that *Doña Perfecta* does not merely serve as a novel presenting the opposing ideological viewpoints of rural and urban Spain, but rather, portrays the cultural and axiological gap that existed between Spain's past, with its rhythms of ritual and rite, and its future, based on the discourse of science and progress, exemplified by its capital city.

3.1.2 Carnavalesque Spectacle in *Fortunata y Jacinta*: The Patio and Corridors of *Las Micaelas*

In many ways, the carnivalesque spectacle on the balcony of the Troya home can be seen as a precursor for the scandal involving Mauricia la Dura in the corridors and on the patio of the convent of *Las Micaelas* in *Fortunata y Jacinta*. Similar to the Troyas, Mauricia la Dura performs carnivalesque traditions through her use of insults, foul language, and violence in liminal space in order to challenge the authority of the Church. As we shall see, her actions parody religious ideals, create symbolic inversion, and temporarily free the women of the convent from the ecclesiastical world. Furthermore, Mauricia makes a profound impression on Fortunata, who is struggling to adopt middle-class values, as a condition to her pending marriage to Maxi. Despite her ridiculous appearance and her drunken behavior, the connection between Mauricia's actions and

carnavalesque spectacle ultimately positions her as a defiant and influential character in the novel.

On the surface, the convent of *Las Micaelas* can be seen as another controlling mechanism of bourgeois hegemony. As Jean Louis Guereña notes:

The beginnings of industrialization in Spain, which brought with it urbanization and a more generalized wage economy, meant that prostitution probably existed on a scale not previously seen. To deal with the increased prostitution and to eradicate it from the streets, if only temporarily, the traditional solutions of the eighteenth century were still in use at the start of the nineteenth century: indiscriminate police enforcement in the form of periodic arrests of street prostitutes and their immediate confinement in women's prisons—the so-called galeras—or houses of correction. (219)

In the context of *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the convent founded and supported by Guillermina Pacheco, *Las Micaelas*, functions as an alternative to a women's prison, taking deviant woman off the street and keeping them under surveillance until they are reformed and able to return to mainstream society. Fuentes points out that the design of *Las Micaelas* isolates the women inside in order to control them (39). The construction occurring outside the convent results in segregation between the outside world and the institution; as the bricks begin to pile, they obscure the inside of *Las Micaelas* like a veil covering naked flesh. Consequently, *Las Micaelas* becomes a space in which women are set aside and excluded from society. Fuentes notes: "When entering *Las Micaelas*, the women enter another world, one governed by a whole set of different rules which

symbolize their social exclusion from the outside world” (39). Tsuchiya expands on this idea, mentioning that the constant vigilance of the nuns, the rigorous requirement of domestic chores, and the strict grouping the women are submitted to, fulfill the criteria for strict surveillance of inmates outlined in Bentham’s panopticon:

Central to Bentham’s panoptical model, of course, is the principle of constant and permanent vigilance, represented by the watchful eyes of the nuns who control and regulate the women’s every thought and movement, even their relationship with other internees. The institution controls rigorously the distribution of their time, as well as their movement through space, in their daily lives, thus allowing for greater efficiency in the exercise of discipline. Finally, within the panoptical schema of the convent, labour is a central technique in the discipline and correction of its inhabitants: the women must adhere to a daily regimen of cooking, cleaning, and work in a ‘taller de costura’ (sewing workshop). (61)

Despite this constant surveillance, Mauricia la Dura expresses her social discontent within the space of *Las Micaelas*. Fuentes mentions that Mauricia protests middle-class attitudes towards the filth of the poor by placing herself in a heap of garbage noting that she is “reacting against a capitalist society which, after having condemned the working classes to live in filth, blames them for their own condition, categorizing them as innately ‘unhygienic’ and in need of discipline and control” (46).

Within the confines of the convent, a Lenten place per excellence, Mauricia exchanges subversive thoughts on the role of women in the home with Fortunata. When considering the idea of marriage, Mauricia only approves of Fortunata’s union with

Maximiliano Rubín due to the fact that he is a docile man who would allow her to rule over him or as she puts it ‘wear the pants’ in the relationship: “si se deja gobernar por ti y te pones tú los pantalones puedes cantar el aleluya, porque eso y estar en la gloria es lo mismo. Hasta para ser mismamente honrada te conviene” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 773). Mauricia expresses the idea of a marriage not only of equality, but one in which the woman is superior to that of the man. Her reference to adopting male clothing suggests an inverse in gender roles and evinces the importance of fashion in the power dynamic between men and women. Tsuchiya comments that these masculine descriptions: “transgress gender boundaries, undermining the bourgeois norms of femininity implicit in the notion of the disciplined, ordered, useful— in short, docile— body” (63).

The gender reversal suggested by Mauricia’s clothes switching metaphor also points to the quintessential carnival tradition of transvestism. As V.V. Ivanov notes in *Carnival!*:

The inversion of the binary opposition male/female, which is essential for the cosmogonical and eschatological schemata of Ainu mythology as well as for others typologically similar to it, appears to be a determining factor in a significant number of carnival rites involving status reversal. In those areas of Western Europe where the ancient carnival tradition has been preserved, the donning of masks of the opposite sex by the carnival participants remains the salient feature of the ritual [...]. The wedding rituals that include transvestism are particularly interesting for developing Bakhtin’s concept of carnival as an inversion of binary semiotic oppositions. (12)

Rather than becoming reformed into an obedient woman in *Las Micaelas*, Fortunata's contact with a carnivalesque character in the convent results in an alternative education that influences her later in the novel.

Within the social mechanisms in place in order to reform deviant female behavior in institutions, as studied by Tsuchiya and Fuentes, the liminal spaces of the convent reveal the power of carnivalesque spectacle to stand in direct opposition to that purpose, in direct opposition, in fact, to religious authority itself. Mauricia takes advantage of a space designed to oppress and reform her in order to stymie that very intent. The corridors themselves, originally built for the nuns to surveil the *Filomenas* and *Josefinas*,⁴¹ are used by Mauricia as a battleground to resist her oppressors. Not once, but twice does she run amock in the corridors of the convent.

The struggle between the nuns and Mauricia also parallels the carnivalesque battle between Doña Cuaresma and Don Carnal. Caro Baroja notes that Juan Ruiz described this battle in *El libro de buen amor*:

Así pues, en la acción de El libro de buen Amor, las cartas mandadas en son de guerra a Don Carnal empezaban diciendo: De mí, Santa Cuaresma, sierva del Criador Enviada de Dios a todo picador.' Y nota añadida: De mí, Doña Cuaresma, justicia de la mar, Alguacil de las almas, que se han de salvar.' La representación

⁴¹ The narrator places the residents of *Las Micaelas* into two different groups: "Las recogidas dividíanse en dos clases, una llamada las Filomenas y otra las Josefinas. Constituían la primera, las mujeres sujetas a corrección; la segunda componíase de niñas puestas allí por sus padres, para que las educaran, y más comúnmente por madrastras que no querían tenerlas a su lado. Estos dos grupos o familias no se comunicaban en ninguna ocasión. Dicho se está que Fortunata pertenecía a la clase de las Filomenas" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 745).

popular de la Cuaresma debía ser a tenor de todo esto; a la gente no se le ocurrió otra cosa que representarla por una vieja... (132).

Similarly, the debaucherous Mauricia comes into conflict with the Superior, an old woman representing spiritual life.

Although the first conflict between the two does not result in violence, Mauricia curses and insults the nun in order to defy her authority. When the abbess sees that Mauricia has escaped her room and occupies the corridor, she attempts to assert her power: “‘Vamos,’ dijo la Superiora frunciendo el ceño; ‘callando, y baje usted al patio’ (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 754). Notably, the nun hopes to silence Mauricia, emphasizing the importance of control through censorship. Rather than obeying, Mauricia responds by cursing and insulting the nuns, thus creating a carnivalesque atmosphere within the convent: “‘A mitad de la escalera se volvió la harpía con inflamados ojos a las monjas que en el corredor quedaban, les decía en un grito estridente: ‘Ladronas, más que Ladronas!... ¡Grandísimas púas!...’...” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 755). Mauricia initiates the symbolic inversion of Carnival by calling the nuns prostitutes and criminals. Her colloquial pronunciation of the word ‘puta’ represents unofficial language, itself a challenge to the institutional norms of the convent. Her appearance is characterized as a harpy, a female monster from the pagan tradition, marking her as an anti-ecclesiastical figure.

Mauricia also challenges the serious, logical nature of the ecclesiastical world through her insane actions that resist the orders of her superiors. Bakhtin explains the role of madness in carnival: “In folk grotesque, madness is a gay parody of official reason, of the narrow seriousness of official ‘truth.’ It is a ‘festive’ madness” (39). After chasing

Mauricia as far as the patio, Sister Marcela still has to forcefully drag her to her cell in order to prevent the crazed deviant from returning to the corridor: “En el patio tuvo que cogerla por un brazo, porque quería subir de nuevo” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 755). Sister Marcela is forced to play Mauricia’s game of hide-and-seek, chasing her around the convent in ridiculous fashion.

Mauricia represents an entire class of marginalized people that have been seized and imprisoned by the ruling class due to their status as madmen or deviants. Iffland cites Foucault’s theory of the reclusion as the source of this social segregation:

Como dice [Foucault] al principio de su capítulo sobre el tema: “La locura, cuya voz el Renacimiento ha liberado, y cuya violencia domina, va a ser reducida al silencio por la época clásica, mediante un extraño golpe de fuerza.” Este silenciamiento implicaba la reclusión física no sólo de los locos, sino de toda una gama de indeseables cuya presencia en las calles representaba un estorbo o una molestia. Aquí cabían mendigos, prostitutas, desempleados, criminales y vagabundos, toda una gran variedad de marginados cuyo comportamiento se podría considerar irrazonable desde las instancias del poder, ya que evocaba el desorden o la improductividad. (162)

In this scene the narrator portrays Mauricia as a woman who ridicules the obsessive nature of the Church to imprison so-called deviants, revealing their mistreatment of marginalized characters in the process.

Although Mauricia is eventually imprisoned once more in her cell, she uses laughter to create a carnivalesque atmosphere that erases the conception of social

hierarchy in the convent. Similar to the *niñas* Troya, Mauricia uses the liminal elements of the space she occupies in order to laugh and free herself from her oppressive conditions:

Sor Marcela echó la llave dando dos vueltas, y la guardó en su bolsillo. Su rostro, tan parecido a una máscara japonesa, continuaba imperturbable. Cuando atravesaba el patio en dirección a la escalera, oyó el ja ja ja de Mauricia, que estaba asomada por uno de los dos tragaluces con barras de hierro que la puerta tenía en su parte superior. La monja no se detuvo a oír las injurias que la fiera le decía. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 755-56)

Mauricia's laughter directly challenges the serious atmosphere of the convent and breaks the silence that the nuns wish to impose. Even locked in her cell, the barred window in the door allows her to connect to the shared public spaces of the convent and oppose the Lenten forces attempting to control her.

Mauricia's excessive drinking is a carnivalesque act that flouts the rule of abstinence stressed in the ecclesiastical world. Bakhtin associates drinking with overabundance, considering it a satire of the ascetic tendency of the religious world (290). The *Filomenas* and the *Josefinas* themselves define Mauricia's drinking as anti-religious, and even go as far as to parody the Virgin Mother with alcoholic references: "Mauricia.... ¿no sabes? Vio anoche la propia figura de la Virgen. [...] '¿La cara de la Virgen?... Vaya... Sería la de nuestra Señora del Aguardiente'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 793).

The ritualistic battle between Doña Cuaresma and Don Carnal is reinitiated by Mauricia's excessive drinking. Before Mauricia mounts her second attack in the patio and corridors of the convent Fortunata and Sister Marcela notice that empty contents of a bottle of aguardiente: "En esto llegó Fortunata trayendo una botella, que al punto le arrebató sor Marcela. '¡Vacía, enteramente vacía!' exclamó ésta levantándola en alto y mirándola trasluz. 'Y estaba casi llena, pues apenas...'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 796). In her inebriated state, Mauricia's loses her inhibitions and disobeys the orders of the nuns once again. Mauricia's drinking signals her overindulgence that results in a complete disregard for social etiquette and logic. By consuming alcohol, she essentially eliminates any social restrictions that would have previously inhibited her behavior, and commences the ritual of Carnival.

In the second violent incident that occurs in the shared space of *Las Micaelas*, the power structure between Mauricia and the nuns is represented by her presence in the patio below while the nuns observe her from above in the corridor: "Asomáronse las madres al barandal del corredor que sobre el patio caía, y vieron aparecer a Mauricia, descalza, las melenas sueltas, la mirada ardiente y extraviada, y todas las apariencias, en fin, de una loca. La Superiora, que era mujer de genio fuerte, no se pudo contener y desde arriba gritó: 'trasto...infame, si no te estás quieta, verás'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 797). Mauricia's ability to create a carnivalesque atmosphere is reflected in the use of foul language and violence on the part of the nuns who are official representatives of the Church.

In her violent and unruly fit, Mauricia utilizes the space of the patio to mount her attack against the ecclesiastical figures that threaten her. The corridor, before a position of surveillance, now becomes a space the nuns use to protect themselves as Mauricia bunkers down in a corner of the patio to hurl insults and bricks at them:

Púsose Mauricia de un salto en el rincón frontero al corredor donde las madres estaban, y desde allí las miró con insolencia, sacando y estirando la lengua, y haciendo muecas y gestos indecentísimos. “¡Tiorras, so tiorras!” gritaba, e inclinándose con rápido movimiento, cogió del suelo piedras y pedazos de ladrillo, y empezó a dispararlos con tanto vigor como buena puntería. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 797)

Even the language of the scene mirrors that of the *niñas* Troya. Not only does she curse and make faces at the nuns, but she also throws rocks with “buena puntería” just as the *niñas* in *Doña Perfecta* (the *niñas* are described as throwing with “diestra puntería”— see above). Mauricia takes carnivalesque language even one step further by expressing herself through non-verbal cues, using her tongue and face to communicate her defiance and disregard for the rules imposed upon her by the nuns.

The violence and chaos of this scene represent the *mundo al revés*. The insulting language and the act of throwing debris at her oppressors mirror the scene with the *niñas* Troya in *Doña Perfecta*, who similarly attack their own. Mauricia transforms the patio into an inverted space, where she is the powerful figure victimizing the nuns on the corridor. The world is turned upside down, and the civilization built on bourgeois imagination begins to deteriorate, as the narrator comments: “Las monjas y las recogidas,

que al sentir el alboroto salieron en tropel a los corredores del principal y del segundo piso, prorrumpieron en chillidos. Parecía que se venía el mundo abajo. ¡Dios mío que bulla! Y a las exclamaciones de arriba respondía la tarasca con aullidos salvajes” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 797). At once, Mauricia is referred to as an unruly woman and a carnivalesque monster. The narrator again employs wordplay to make a carnivalesque reference through the use of ‘tarasca’ a term that according to the *Diccionario de la lengua española* signifies a “mujer temible o denigrada por su agresividad, fealdad, desaseo o excesiva desvergüenza” or a “figura de sierpe monstruosa, con una boca muy grande, que en algunas partes se saca durante la procesión del Corpus.”

Despite its appearance in Corpus Christi processions⁴², David Gilmore notes that the Tarasca was a controversial figure condemned by the Spanish Church, that eventually became associated with sacrilegious practices:

Attracting much popular interest, the dragon and its good-vs.-evil rituals had become the focus of Corpus Christi all over Spain by the eighteenth century. By that time it had become such an entrenched figure among the rabble that clerical and civil authorities felt it had gotten out of hand. To stem the growing licentiousness, Charles III issued a royal pragmatic, dated 21 June 1780, prohibiting further use of Tarascas in the Corpus or Pentecost celebrations and

⁴² Bakhtin on Corpus Christi and Carnival in Spain: “The traditional procession on the feast of *Corpus Christi* had a clearly expressed carnivalesque character with a prevailing bodily note. In Spain a dramatic performance called *Autos Sacramentalis* was staged on that day. We can surmise the contents of this show from the plays of a similar type of Lope de Vega which have been preserved for us. Grotesque-comic elements prevail in these plays and even permeate their serious parts. They contain a considerable amount of travesty and parody not only of antique but also of Christian themes and of the festive procession itself” (230).

declaring them a pagan and frivolous entertainment that imparted too much “irreverent atmosphere” to what should be solemn events. [...] The temporal switch of the parade to Carnival that occurred in Hacinas (as in other small, remote villages) at this time may have been in response to such official opprobrium, because Carnival has always been unsupervised by the Church and thus immune to official injunctions. (369)

As a Tarasca, Mauricia becomes a monster that was once used in religious festivities yet is now transformed into a part of carnivalesque ritual. Thus, she is both physically and symbolically destructive. Not only does she attack the nuns, but she also creates confusion and disorder that affect the behavior of her fellow inmates. The pandemonium she creates ultimately undermines the idea of privileged space altogether, and the power dynamics of the convent become confused to the point of obliteration.

Furthermore, by representing *Las Micaelas* as a space almost exclusively ruled by women, Galdós highlights the gender switching characteristic of Carnival. It is important to note the abbess initially refuses the idea of outside help in order to control Mauricia. The other nuns, scared senseless by Mauricia’s attack, scream for the Orden Público to intervene, but the abbess prefers to face the nonconformist head on: “‘Yo me basto y me sobro...’ indicó la Superiora, haciendo alarde de ser mujer para el caso.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 797). Thus, the corridor and patio of the convent become the setting for battle between two strong women. The scene takes on a performative texture, as Mauricia plays the role of an Amazon warrior: “Parecía una amazona. Tenía un pecho medio descubierto, el cuerpo del vestido hecho girones y las melenas cortas le azotaban la cara

en aquellos movimientos del hondero que hacía con el brazo derecho. Su catadura les parecía horrible a las señoras monjas; pero estaba bella en rigor de verdad, y más arrogante, varonil y napoleónica que nunca.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 798). Although Tsuchiya mentions that Mauricia’s nudity can be linked to her identity as a prostitute (65), her bare breast also conjures the image of a fierce Amazon warrior. Adrienne Mayor notes that in classical paintings and sculpture Amazon women were portrayed with similar imagery to that of Mauricia in this scene: “An Amazon’s garment often left one breast exposed or slipped off her shoulder in the frenzy of battle” (117). Thus, Mauricia’s nudity is both sexually suggestive and violently defiant. By referring to Mauricia as an ‘amazona’ Galdós creates a character with masculine characteristics, without relinquishing her identity as a woman. Far from being docile, submissive, and domestic, Mauricia is proactive, violent, and aggressive. The reference to Amazon women situates Mauricia into a pagan tradition, thus placing her outside of Catholic mythology. Her appearance predates the teachings of Christianity, making her an archaic figure in the scene. Furthermore, the clever use of the word ‘catadura’ meaning both ‘appearance’ and ‘tasting’ again point to Mauricia’s drunken state.

Mauricia’s prank culminates with an attack on Guillermina, a highly respected religious figure. Iffland notes the subversive qualities of Carnival, that go beyond the symbolic performances of the festive days: “[...] su misma existencia siempre podría ser percibida por las autoridades eclesiásticas y civiles y por los estratos privilegiados de la formación social como una amenaza solapada. Implícita en su capacidad de criticar el orden existente está la posibilidad de elaborar un orden alternativo, que suministraría las

necesidades materiales de una manera más equitativa” (173). Towards the end of her carnivalesque performance, Mauricia’s attack becomes realized physically when she manages to hit Guillermina in the face with one of her projectiles: “[...] Guillermina salió al patio por la puerta que lo comunica con el vestíbulo. [...] ‘¡Mauricia!... ¡cómo se entiende!’ Pero no había tenido tiempo de decirlo cuando una peladilla de arroyo le rozó la cara [...] ‘¡Infame, a mí, a mí me has tirado!’ Mauricia se reía con horrible descaro” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 798). In this scene, Mauricia attacks a social superior, even going as far as to draw blood: “con el pañuelo se restañaba la sangre de su leve herida” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 798). Similar to the *niñas* Troya, who wound Don Penitenciario with a rock, Mauricia takes the symbolic act of carnivalesque violence and turns it into a reality.

Additionally, the use of “peladilla de arroyo” is an interesting choice by Galdós. It is an antiquated term that refers to a pebble, and is used by Cervantes when he describes the stoning Don Quijote receives from shepherds he challenges to a battle⁴³. This possible Cervantine reference underscores the carnivalesque atmosphere of the scene, and the symbolic inversion occurring through the stoning of a social superior. Caro Baroja also notes that in the carnivalesque practice of the *pedrea*, *pedalillas* were commonly used to attack women who appeared in the windows of their homes: “las pedreas galantes de las que habla Zabaleta en el pasaje ya citado se hallan atestiguadas en textos del siglo XVI y en textos del XIX; en unos y otros se les da el mismo carácter y se habla de los

⁴³ The stoning of Don Quijote by the shepherds is much more violent and ridiculous than that of Guillermina: “Llegó en esto una peladilla de arroyo y, dándole en un lado, le sepultó dos costillas en el cuerpo” (Cervantes, 161).

‘huevos de olor’ como objetos principales en la pedrea. Hay informes que mencionan otros, tales como las peladillas” (67). Even texts up until the nineteenth century describe the practice of stoning with *peladillas* during Carnival, with which Galdós’s use of the word resonates.

The space of the convent, originally meant to control women, is used by Mauricia against her oppressors. Guillermina notes that Mauricia attacks her with the very bricks she hopes to use for construction: “‘Yo venía a que me dierais los ladrillos y el cascote que os sobran, y mirad qué pronto me he salido con la mía... nada, ponedla ahora mismo en la calle, y que se vaya a los quintos infiernos, que es donde debe estar” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 799). As Tsuchiya notes: “the image of the bricks, previously identified with the construction of the convent and now cast away by Mauricia, quite clearly symbolizes the destruction of the foundations of this disciplinary institution” (64). As Guillermina builds, Mauricia destroys, creating the cyclical nature of Carnival. Furthermore, Galdós incorporates a colloquial expression with a secondary meaning into the text. The expression ‘que se vaya a los quintos infiernos’ utilizes the literal meaning of a figurative phrase. Not only does Guillermina state that she wishes Mauricia to be far away, but she also makes reference to her immoral actions resulting in the damnation of her soul. Guillermina sees Mauricia as unfit for the convent and therefore banishes her from that holy space.

Mauricia’s deviance can be carried only so far before the mechanisms of control return to put her in her place. Don León Pintado, representing male authority, finally intervenes and corrals *La Dura*: “Pero Pintado tenía manos de hierro, aunque era de

pocos ánimos, y una vez lanzado al heroísmo, no sólo sujetó a Mauricia, sino que le aplicó dos sonoras bofetadas” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 799). For good measure, he physical abuses Mauricia before ultimately subduing her. Mauricia is promptly booted from *Las Micaelas* and order is reestablished in the convent; the religious institution continues its function of reforming women to abide by the moral standards of Madrid’s middle-class culture.

Despite her banishment, Mauricia leaves a lasting impression on Fortunata. Fortunata is the only character in the scene who shows Mauricia compassion, bringing her clothes down to her before she leaves: “Fortunata bajó un lío de ropa y recogiendo las botas, se lo dio todo a Mauricia, es decir, se lo puso delante. La espantosa escena descrita había impresionado desagradablemente a la joven, que sintió profunda compasión de su amiga” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 800). Mauricia’s violent nature and her drunken antics upset Fortunata, but she also seems to have empathy for a woman who refuses to adhere to rules with which she does not agree. In fact, Fortunata is the last person in the convent to speak to Mauricia: “La última que cambió algunas palabras con ella fue Fortunata, que la siguió hasta el vestíbulo movida de lástima y amistad, y aún quiso arrancarle alguna declaración de arrepentimiento” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 800). Fortunata desperately looks for the humanity in Mauricia, ignoring her appearance and crazed actions. That Fortunata feels more sympathy for Mauricia than any other character in the novel reveals her own desire to be freed from the social norms that control her life.

Mauricia’s freedom at the end of the scene ultimately signifies the power of her carnivalesque acts. Although she loses the support of the Church, Mauricia gains the

liberty of the street. She is no longer contained within the convent and escapes the indoctrination the *Filomenas* and *Josefinas* are subjected to, even flaunting her expulsion as a victory: “Salió triunfante, echando a una parte y otra miradas de altivez y desprecio. Cuando vio la calle, sus ojos se iluminaron con fulgores de júbilo y gritó: ‘¡Ay, mi querida calle de mi alma!’” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 800).

Performing another carnival tradition, Mauricia celebrates her new-found autonomy with a military parody as she exits *Las Micaelas*. After she exchanges insults with street sweepers the narrator notes: “A los barrenderos les hizo aquello mucha gracia, y poniéndose en marcha con las carretillas por delante y las escobas sobre ellas, siguieron detrás de Mauricia, como una escolta de burlesca artillería, haciendo un ruido de mil demonios y disparándole bala rasa de groserías e injurias” (*Fortunata y Jacinta*, 801). Insults and foul language are compared to weapons, used by carnivalesque characters to undermine authority and express freedom. The *barrenderos* themselves are lower-class characters who have been oppressed by the middle class⁴⁴. Thus, Mauricia immediately influences other marginalized characters through her carnivalesque language, and brings

⁴⁴ The *barrenderos* are especially significant in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, as they come to represent the lowliest form of employment in Madrid. Earlier in the novel, Guillermina insults José Izquierdo stating: “No sirves ni para barrendero de las calles” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 494). Later, Moreno Isla condemns the barrenderos as less than human: “Pues por aquí, los barrenderos me echan encima una nube de polvo... ‘Animales, respetad a la gente...’” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 556). Only Fortunata seems to appreciate their work cleaning snow as she observes them from the window of her final home in the Plaza Mayor: “Después de arreglarse volvió a mirar la plaza, entretenida en ver cómo se deshacía el mágico encanto de la nieve; cómo se abrían surcos en la blancura de los techos; cómo se sacudían los pinos su desusada vestimenta. Cómo en fin, en el cuerpo del Rey y en el del caballo, se desleían los copos y chorreaba la humedad por el bronce abajo. El suelo, a la mañana tan puro y albo, era ya al mediodía charca cenagosa, en la cual chapoteaban los barrenderos y mangueros municipales, disolviendo la nieve con los chorros de agua y revolviéndola con el fango para echarlo todo a la alcantarilla. Divertido era este espectáculo, sobre todo cuando restallaban los airosos surtidores de las mangas de riego, y los chicos se lanzaban a la faena, armados con tremendas escobas” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 642-43).

the world of Carnival to the streets of Madrid. This new independence, however, does not come without a price. Mauricia's drunken behavior will ultimately lead to her death, an entirely new spectacle with great significance, as we shall see in the final section of this chapter.

3.2 The Spectacle of Meditation: Doña Lupe's Balconies

The balconies and windows of Doña Lupe's homes in *Fortunata y Jacinta* present spectacle in the form of memories and thought. Lupe moves twice in the novel, each time to a more modest neighborhood: once during Maxi's childhood, from the Salamanca neighborhood to Chamberí, and during the present action of the novel, from Chamberí to her final central location in Lavapiés. In each home, the balcony serves as the setting for Doña Lupe's reflections. As we shall see, Lupe's meditations on the balcony become the source of spectacle and conscience, as she reflects upon erotic relationships, her own past, and her opinions of other characters in the novel. Her thoughts reveal key points in the novel's plot, and highlight the importance of spectacle as entertainment for middle-class women in Galdós's Madrid. Furthermore, her reflections on the balcony are influenced by what she observes in the street, offering a unique rendering of stream of consciousness narration and giving insight into the complexity of human thought.

Before analyzing Lupe's ruminations on the balcony, it is important to consider the meaning of liminal space for her throughout the novel. First, it is clear from the outset that Lupe uses the balcony and windows of her home for her own benefit. What little attention is given to Lupe's first home in Salamanca informs the reader of her

opportunistic tendencies. The narrator explains that the general reason for the move from Salamanca to Chamberí is based on financial reasons: “por aquel tiempo se mudó doña Lupe a Chamberí, buscando siempre casas baratas, y Maximiliano fue perdiendo poco a poco la ilusión de los alumnos de Estado Mayor” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 583). The liminal space of the home in Salamanca certainly framed the fantasies of young Maxi as discussed in Chapter Two, but Lupe’s role in the home is hardly mentioned. The narrator explains later in the novel that Lupe used her proximity with the Ministry of Defense in order to exploit members of the military through her loaning partnership with Torquemada. As the narrator comments: “Doña Lupe prestaba dinero, por mediación de un tal Torquemada, a militares, y empleados y a todo el que cayese” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 625). Whereas Maxi had idealized the soldiers from the window of his room as a sickly child, Lupe views them as a business opportunity.

As a woman often confined to domestic space, the balcony connects Doña Lupe to the streets of Madrid, allowing her to gain access to activity that she could not otherwise observe. Thus, she desires to read Madrid like a text from the balconies of her homes in Chamberí and Lavapiés when observing the human spectacle below. Unfortunately for Lupe, the balcony in Chamberí does not offer her a front-row seat to the type of drama she would hope to see. In fact, the view from the balcony of Doña Lupe’s first home distinctly lacks action. When she sits on the balcony to sew, the narrator notes the apparent emptiness of the street below:

Tomando la sillita baja, que usaba cuando cosía, la colocó junto al balcón. Le dolía la cintura y al sentarse exhaló un ¡ay! Para coser usaba siempre gafas. Se las

puso, y sacando obra de su cesta de costura, empezó a repasar unas sábanas. No le repugnaba a doña Lupe trabajar los domingos porque sus escrúpulos religiosos se los había quitado Jáuregui en tantos años de propaganda matrimonial progresista. Púsose, pues a zurcir en su sitio de costumbre, que era junto a la vidriera. En el balcón tenía dos o tres tiestos, y por entre las secas ramas veía la calle. Como el cuarto era principal, desde aquel sitio se veía muy bien pasar gente en caso de que la gente quisiese pasar por allí. Pero la calle de Raimundo Lulio y la de Don Juan de Austria, que hace ángulo con ella, son de muy poco tránsito. Parece aquello un pueblo. (*Fortunata I*, 530)

Although Chamberí is a more central neighborhood in present day Madrid, in the nineteenth century it was at the very northern edge of the city. Therefore, unless someone had specific business in the neighborhood, they were unlikely to pass through. This is of importance to the novel because despite Lupe's hope of entertainment through the observation of human life, the street below is devoid of activity. Instead, the narrative description offers details about Lupe to the reader, making her thoughts the focal point of the scene.

The space described also reveals aspects of Lupe's character. Her home on the second floor marks her as a member of the upper middle class, and while she fulfills a domestic function in sewing, her labor is merely an excuse for her to occupy the balcony in order to observe the streets of Madrid. Her dedication to mending clothes on the balcony also defines her as a frugal character. This is especially clear if we consider that in the galley sheets Galdós replaced "Púsose, pues a *coser* en su sitio de costumbre" with

“Púsose, pues a *zurcir* en su sitio de costumbre” in order to highlight Lupe’s tendency to patch up old garments rather than buy new ones (emphasis mine) (G 2A, 90). The narrator paints a character who clearly values her personal interests over religious principles, as Lupe has no qualms about working on Sundays.

Raimundo Lulio Street intersects, still today, with few other streets, and would therefore have little foot traffic. In the B manuscript Galdós had originally placed Lupe’s house on Albuquerque Street, later replacing it with Raimundo Lulio (B 3, 61). It is unclear exactly why he made this change but one reason may be that Raimundo Lulio is a narrower street and therefore would attract fewer passersby. Changes at the galley sheets hint at Galdós’s desire to situate Lupe’s second home on a more tranquil street. The following two edits are especially noteworthy in that they downplay the view from Lupe’s house: “por entre las mustias ramas veía *las calles*” to “por entre las ramas veía *la calle*” and “aquel sitio *era magnífico* para ver pasar la gente” to “desde aquel sitio *se vería muy bien* pasar la gente” (emphasis mine) (G 2A, 90). In the first edit, the view from Lupe’s home is limited solely to Raimundo Lulio Street, and in the second, the conditional tense emphasizes the unfulfilled potential of the space to view human spectacle.

It is probably no coincidence, either, that the street’s namesake Raimundo Lulio (Ramon Llull), was a thirteenth-century Majorcan born Christian philosopher famous for his meditative practices⁴⁵. Just as Lulio, Lupe feels an attraction to reflective

⁴⁵ Mark Johnston notes that Ramon Llull’s dedication to meditative practices defined much of his life: “During this phase of his career [after 1263], Llull evidently acquired most of his learning through an eremitic life of study and meditation. By 1276 his dedication to these studies became so intense that his wife sought an administrator for their temporal affairs, arguing that her husband was so absorbed in the

contemplation, yet the narrator comments that she can only do so when she finds herself in the liminal spaces of her home: “Cuando era preciso meditar, por el picor de una de esas ideas, hermanas del abejorro, que se plantan en el cerebro y no hay medio de sacudirlas, o doña Lupe no meditaba, o tenía que hacerlo sentada en la silleta junto a la ventana de la sala, los anteojos en el caballete de la nariz [...]” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 356). Lupe relies on liminal space in order to understand the world around her and to organize her thoughts as she filters them through her own past experiences.

Furthermore, Lupe meditates often in Chamberí, simply because there is not much else to keep her busy. The narrator notes that Doña Lupe, finding little entertainment in the street, begins to examine her own thoughts on the balcony:

La única distracción de doña Lupe en sus horas solitarias era ver quién entraba en el taller de coches inmediato o en la imprenta de enfrente, y si pasaba o no doña Guillermina Pacheco en dirección del asilo de la calle de Albuquerque. Lugar y ocasión admirables eran aquellos para reflexionar [...]. Aquel día doña Lupe tenía más que nunca, materia larga de meditaciones (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 663).

Faced with the tedium of the street, Lupe instead looks inward for entertainment and begins to focus on the interesting facets of her own life.

Lupe’s thoughts are the focus of the scene, and as she reflects, she filters her current worries through her past memories. While on the balcony, Lupe contemplates the news she has received about Maxi’s relationship with Fortunata, and, as she reacts to his

‘contemplative life’ that he neglected their estate. The knowledge that Lull attained through this private study culminated in a special revelation that guided all his later endeavors” (6).

scandalous behaviour, she is also reminded of her late husband, Jáuregui. The narrator notes this cognitive process as one of Lupe's defining characteristics: "el recuerdo de su difunto, que siempre se avivaba en la mente de doña Lupe cuando se veía en algún conflicto, la enterneció. En todas sus aflicciones se consolaba con la dulce memoria de su felicidad matrimonial, pues Jáuregui había sido el mejor de los hombres y el número uno de los maridos" (*Fortunata y Jacinta*, 664). For Lupe, the balcony becomes a temporally liminal space as she interweaves the tribulations of the present with her joys of the past.

Lupe's reflections alternate between her argument with Maxi and a detailed description of Jáuregui. With nothing to divert her attention in the streets below she focuses on the two most important characters in her own life: "De la memoria de su Jáuregui llevó el pensamiento a su sobrino. Eran sus dos amores" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 666). Specifically, Lupe worries about the social repercussions of Maxi's love affair with Fortunata: "Fíese usted de apariencias. Y ahora resulta que hace meses sostiene a una mujer, y se pasa el día entero con ella y... Vamos, yo tengo que ver esto para creerlo." (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 666). Unable to find human drama in the street, Lupe turns to her own memories and life for the source material that will entertain her for the evening. Notably, she focuses on both idealized love and scandal, showing her infatuation with the stories told in *folletines*, but also pointing out in a metafictional mode the very interest of the novel she inhabits. Her loneliness and powerful imagination are emphasized in the scene in which she maintains a dialogue without an interlocutor, even addressing an anonymous listener directly as 'usted.' As we shall see in the following section, this passage is important for understanding Lupe's emphatic reaction later in the novel when

Mauricia la Dura injures herself in front of her house. As a woman who is, for the most part, confined to the domestic space of the home, she is desperate for excitement and thrilled by scandal and spectacle.

The balcony is also an important space for Lupe's servant girl Papitos⁴⁶. Whereas Lupe finds the streets outside of her home on Raimundo Lulio devoid of spectacle, Papitos is disappointed in the lack of audience available to observe her own devious display on the balcony. When she suffers abuse from Doña Lupe, her immediate reaction is to avenge herself. Papitos knows all of Lupe's secrets, including a physical deformity mentioned by the narrator: "A doña Lupe le faltaba un pecho por amputación a consecuencia del tumor cirroso de que padeció en vida de su marido" (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 674). Doña Lupe uses a cotton ball in order to simulate a breast while she is dressed, an attempt to hide her secret from others. Thus, Papitos intends to use the balcony to publically embarrass Lupe by displaying the cotton ball for all to see:

Se le ocurrió poner, colgado en el balcón, el cuerpo de vestido que pegada tenía la *cosa falsa* con que doña Lupe engañaba al público. La malicia de Papitos imaginaba que puesto en el balcón el testimonio de la falta de su señora, la gente que pasase lo había de ver y se había de reír mucho. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 739)

⁴⁶ Lupe's servant is only referred to in the novel by this nickname. Chamberlain explains its possible comic origin: "Muchas veces al logro de este objetivo [poner motes a los personajes] se suma el toque humorístico mediante el cual se persigue entretener al lector. Por ejemplo, doña Lupe, la tía de Maxi, había recogido de las calles a una niña gitanesca, a quien está entrenando como criada. A ella se le conoce en toda la novela sólo por su apodo Papitos. El narrador finge no saber ni el origen ni el sentido de este mote, pero un lector atento (que recuerda el repertorio lingüístico de las novelas picarescas o consulta un diccionario de la germanía) sospecha que el narrador le toma el pelo. Efectivamente, retrocediendo unos cuantos párrafos en el texto, en el episodio en que la criada denigra a Maxi Rubín respecto a su dudosa virilidad con el insulto 'papos-castos,' se comprueba que el narrador está jugando con el lector. Resulta evidente que tanto el narrador como la criada misma saben perfectamente bien que la palabra 'Papitos' denomina una parte íntima—pero muy íntima—de la anatomía femenina" (61).

This moment in the text shows the importance of the balcony as both a space to observe and perform spectacle. Papitos hopes to undermine an authority figure in the novel by presenting her flaws for all to see, similar to the carnivalesque spectacle displayed by the Troyas in the balcony of their home in *Doña Perfecta*.

Yet, Papitos, just as Lupe, finds the lack of human activity on Raimundo Lulio Street disappointing, and, in the end, takes down Lupe's shameful false breast:

Pero no ocurrieron de este modo las cosas, porque ningún transeúnte se fijó en el pecho postizo, que era lo mismo que una vejiga de manteca; y al fin la chiquilla se apresuró a quitarlo, discurriendo con buen juicio que si doña Lupe al entrar veía colgado del balcón aquel acusador de su defecto, se había de poner hecha una fiera, y sería capaz de cortarle a su criada las *dos cosas de verdad* que pensaba tener. (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 739-40)

Although Lupe is saved from embarrassment from other characters in the novel, Papitos thoughts are revealed to the reader and thus the former's fake breast becomes exposed extra-textually. For both Lupe and Papitos, the move from Chamberí to Lavapiés later in the novel connects them to the spectacle of city life, serving as a form of entertainment that they were unable to enjoy on Raimundo Lulio Street.

The liminal space of Doña Lupe's third house in the vibrant neighborhood of Lavapiés offers more opportunity to observe human drama than in Chamberí. Perhaps for this reason the move is labeled as an important event in novel, and the narrator even specifies the month in which it occurs: December of 1874. Lupe, at first, is anxious about relocating, but makes the sacrifice for her love of Maxi who has found employment in the

Samaniego pharmacy on Ave María Street. Notably, the first description of the new home includes a mention of the balconies:

Cargó, pues la señora de Jáuregui con sus penates, y se instaló en un segundo de la calle del Ave María. Eligió un segundo de la finca inmediata, y sus balcones caían al lado de los de su amiga Casta Moreno, viuda de Samaniego. Los primeros días extrañaba la casa, teniéndola por peor que la otra; mas pronto hubo de reconocer que era mucho mejor, más espaciosa y bella, en cuanto a los barrios, lo que la señora había perdido en tranquilidad ganábalo en animación. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 357-58)

The balconies are close enough to her friend Casta Moreno's house (also a widow) for the two to converse from their respective balconies, an activity, as we noted in Chapter One, performed by Guillermina and Barbarita Santa Cruz (both middle-class characters). The apartment is also only on the second floor, meaning that the views afforded from the balcony would allow the characters there to clearly observe the street below.

In comparison to Raimundo Lulio, Ave María, a much more frequently travelled street, holds the potential for human spectacle. Although Lupe still uses the balconies of the home to mend clothes and meditate, she also recognizes the exciting capacity for diversion in the street below. The narrator notes: "La meditación y el zurcido no le impedían mirar de vez en cuando a la calle, y la del Ave María es mucho más *pasajera* que la de Raimundo Lulio." (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 358). The italicized "pasajera" in the passage above signals a shift in the meaning of the word; in this context, it seems to imply that more people pass through rather than signifying that the street itself is fleeting.

Indeed, Ave María is a street that would attract much more foot traffic than Raimundo Lulio since it is closer to the heart of Madrid, ending to the south in the plaza Lavapiés. The name of the street of her new residence, an obvious religious reference, may have been an ironic choice by Galdós considering Lupe's lack of Christian dogmatism.

Despite living on a busier street, initially the balcony of Lupe's home on Ave María still serves as a space for meditation; however, the people she views from the street now infiltrate her thoughts. The appearance of Guillermina Pacheco interrupts Lupe's introspection, sending her on a tangential thread:

En una de aquellas miradas casi maquinales que la viuda echaba hacia afuera, como para poner solución de continuidad al temeroso problema que tenía entre ceja y ceja vio pasar a una persona que le retuvo un instante la atención. “Parece que la santa frecuenta ahora estos barrios,” murmuró doña Lupe, alargando la cabeza para observarla por la calle abajo. Ya la he visto pasar cuatro o cinco veces a distintas horas. Verdad que para ella no hay distancias... Ahora que recuerdo me ha dicho Casta que es pariente suya, y he de preguntarle... (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 358)

The balcony of her new home allows Lupe to observe the other characters of the novel as they pass by, as well as to gossip about them with her friend Casta. The liminal space of her home gives her access to a social life that she did not have before, and influences her fantasies. Lupe imagines that she could become one of the upper middle-class women that Guillermina socializes with: “No había razón para que ella, que sabía presentarse como la primera, dejase de alternar con las damas que seguían a Guillermina cual las

ovejas siguen al pastor” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 359). Lupe’s thoughts depict her as a woman who both desires to be included, and also has disdain for her social superiors.

The sight of Guillermina is a distraction in the midst of Lupe’s meditation as well as the principal narrative thread of the novel. The narrator refers to these stray musings as ‘asides’ within Lupe’s mind: “Estas reflexiones fueron como un inciso en lo que aquella tarde pensaba la señora, inciso que se abrió al ver pasar a Guillermina, cerrándose cuando la virgen y fundadora desapareció por la calle abajo” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 359). With Guillermina out of sight, Lupe returns to contemplating the central conflict of the beginning of part two of the novel: the reconciliation of Maxi and Fortunata. The narrator notes the mental back-and-forth taking place: “Vuelta a la meditación, tomando el hilo de ella en el mismo punto en que lo había soltado...” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 359). Sewing is not only a sign of her own frugal nature, but also serves as a metaphor for the interwoven nature of her thoughts and the novelistic action. Important plot points are conveyed secondhand through Lupe’s musings as she reflects upon a recent conversation with Feijoo, who has informed her that Fortunata is in his care and wishes to reunite with Maxi. These events occur ‘off camera’ and are filtered through Lupe’s memory as she recalls Feijoo’s seductive tendencies:

Y aunque el Señor me lo niegue hoy, es tan verdad que me rondaba la calle al año de perder a mi Jáuregui. [...] Con todo esto, lo que me ha venido contando estos días ¡me parece tan extraño!... Que está arrepentida, que él la ha tomado bajo su protección... Se la encontró en casa de unos vecinos, y le dio lástima, y qué sé yo

qué.... Por más que diga ese santo varón, tales arrepentimientos me parecen a mí las coplas de Caláinos... Y si por acaso...” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 360)

Lupe’s hopes of reuniting Maxi and Fortunata are tempered by her own memory of Feijoo and his love of women. Nevertheless, this reflection informs the reader of Fortunata’s whereabouts and indicates the possibility of a return to the family.

Galdós’s portrayal of Lupe’s thoughts in a liminal space gives insight into the workings of the mind, as exposure to the outside world infiltrates her thoughts construed through her own past experiences and perspective. When Guillermina again appears, Lupe’s thoughts shift once more to the benevolent “santa”: “Otro inciso. Miró la calle y vio por segunda vez a Guillermina que subía. ‘¿Pero qué trae en la mano?, un palo y un garfio de hierro. ¡Vaya con la santa esta! [...] Vea usted una cosa que a mí me gustaría, edificar un establecimiento, pidiéndole dinero al Verbo...Lo haría tan grande como el Escorial’” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 360). Lupe’s view on the balcony is a form of visual consumption that supersedes her own reflective process. Her mind is again diverted from the dilemma of forgiving Fortunata for her previous trespasses against Maxi, and she imagines herself as a powerful woman, capable of surpassing Guillermina’s greatest feats, and even building a palace.

When Guillermina passes, Lupe’s mind, now free of the external spectacle, returns to her previous deliberations: “Cerrado el inciso, y otra vez al tema” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 360). In these scenes, Galdós depicts the intimate dialectic of inner and outer awareness, in a space half way between in and out of doors.

3.3.1 Morbid Curiosity, Schadenfreude, Sympathy, and Catharsis: The Spectators of Mauricia la Dura's Fall

In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the balcony plays an important role in the drawn-out spectacle of Mauricia la Dura's death. When Mauricia drunkenly falls and injures herself on Ave María Street in Lavapiés, Doña Lupe, Fortunata, and Papitos observe the aftermath of her accident from the balcony of Lupe's home. The reaction of the three women as they interpret Mauricia's misfortune (that, later in the novel, will lead to her death) functions as a metafictional element of the scene. As we shall see, the balcony stands at a crossroads between life and art, empathy and cruelty, performance and imagination.

Eventually, the meditative function of the balcony of Doña Lupe's home transitions to one of observation. It is only after Fortunata is invited by Lupe to live in her house on Ave María Street that the spectacle involving Mauricia la Dura takes place. While Doña Lupe and Fortunata are seated in the living room mending some curtains, Papitos draws their attention to the commotion below: "Papitos, que se había asomado al balcón para descolgar la ropa puesta a secar, empezó a dar chillidos: 'Señoras, venga, mire... ¡Cuánta gente!... Han matado a uno'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 370). Although the narrator never specifically detailed the outcome of Papito's prank with Doña Lupe's false breast, a narrative foray now brought back to mind, Papitos still has the responsibility of hanging clothes to dry. Of late, Lupe has often been outside the house, negotiating the terms of Fortunata's return.

The main function of the balcony in this scene is as an observational space. Drawn by Papitos exclamation, Fortunata and Lupe both appear on the balcony in order to view the scandal: “Asomáronse las dos señoras y vieron que en la parte baja de la calle, cerca de la esquina de la de San Carlos, había un gran corrillo que a cada momento engrosaba más” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 370). In the pages that follow, the incident is described through dialogue between the three women and it is the characters themselves who represent the city using their own words. In this sense, we can see the influence of Fernando de Rojas in Galdós’ novelistic work. Stephen Gilman stresses the importance of dialogue to articulate the life of the characters in *La Celestina*: “Rojas’ dialogic artistry, in other words, has resulted in a cast of lives rather than of characters in the usual sense of the term. It has enabled a new multivalent patterning of life in terms of its conditioning – a radically new approach to the creation of general significance from personal existence” (64). In a similar way, in Doña Lupe’s house, each character, as she interprets the spectacle on the balcony, reveals herself to the reader through her own words.

The spoken words of Fortunata, Lupe, and Papitos express a range of emotions, from sympathy to joy, at Mauricia’s misfortunes. The idea of experiencing pleasure at the humiliation of another person is evident in this scene and speaks to the complexity of human emotions as they are individually experienced. On Schadenfreude, specifically, Wilco Dijk and J.W Ouwekerk note:

Schadenfreude can be categorized as a type of joy, but also a specific and seemingly atypical type of joy. Whereas joy concerns being pleased about a desirable event, schadenfreude concerns being pleased about an event presumed

to be undesirable for someone else. But schadenfreude might be less an atypical type of joy than first meets the eye. The essence of appraisal theories is the claim that it is not the objective properties of an event that produce an emotion, but rather the individual's subjective appraisal of the personal significance of the event. What makes appraisal theories of emotions especially powerful is that they can explain why the same event can evoke different emotions in different people. [...] For example, another's misfortune might evoke sympathy in some people and schadenfreude in others because they differ in how the misfortune is appraised. (7)

Early in the novel, Galdós establishes the balcony as a space where characters experience schadenfreude. A close examination of Juanito's love for drama could help us better understand the role of the balcony for Doña Lupe as well. Much like Juanito Santa Cruz, Lupe also views human life as a source of entertainment. At the beginning of the novel, Juanito recounts the drama between José Izquierdo and his wife to Jacinta on their honeymoon:

“Todo el santo día estaban riñendo, de pico se entiende. ¡Y qué tienda, hija, qué desorden, qué escenas! Primero se emborrachaba él solo, después los dos a turno. Pregúntale a Villalonga; él es quien cuenta esto a maravilla y remeda los jaleos que allí se armaban. Paréceme mentira que yo me divirtiera con tales escándalos. ¡Lo que es el hombre! Pero yo estaba ciego; tenía entonces la manía de lo popular.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 314)

Notably, after telling Jacinta about his love of lower-class spectacle, he refers to the balcony as a theatrical space from which to watch human drama: “¡Lo que allí se dijeron!... Era cosa de alquilar balcones” (*Fortunata y Jacinta I*, 315). The balcony traditionally has been used to represent many types of spectacle occurring in public spaces of urban environments in Spain, and to this day balconies can be rented in Sevilla, Madrid, Pamplona and other cities. As a colloquialism, the expression has come to designate a spectacle that should not be missed.

Initially, the image of the spectacle on Ave María Street is unclear, leaving space for subjective interpretation. Papitos is the first to exclaim what she observes, using colloquialisms that define her as uneducated and lower-class: “‘Hay un cadávere difunto allí en mitad de la gente,’ gritó Papitos que tenía medio cuerpo fuera del balcón” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 370). Papitos’ mistaken use of the word ‘cadáver’ draws attention to the fact that the characters in the scene are attracted to the spectacle of death. Although, at this point, Mauricia is still alive, Papitos displays a sadistic fascination with death through her excited comments and body language. Her eagerness to watch another’s suffering is represented in her movement to the limits of the liminal space she occupies as she leans over and almost out of the balcony in an attempt to get a better view. Here too, Galdós’s novel shares similarities to that of *La Celestina*. Alan Smith notes that in Rojas’ masterpiece, spatial divides fail to keep characters from one another: “las barreras físicas de las viviendas son prácticamente inútiles en *La Celestina*” (129). The balcony connects the women to Mauricia, erasing the barrier between the home and the street.

The dialogue in the scene also displays Lupe's exhilaration at the prospect of witnessing death. Lupe immediately begins to fill in the details of the scene using her imagination: "Yo veo un bulto tendido en el suelo," dijo doña Lupe. "Ves tú algo?... Será algún borracho. Pero observa qué multitud se va reuniendo. Como que los coches no pueden pasar... Y mira qué policías estos. Ni para un remedio" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 370). Changes made to the B manuscript in the galley sheets show that Galdós had the intention of making this initial description more ambiguous and emphasizing class differences. In the galley sheets Galdós replaced 'cuerpo' with 'bulto' (G 3B, 57), dehumanizing Mauricia and making the image of the subject less clear, thereby signaling a mediating consciousness whose vagueness is due to its hurried perception. Lupe's words encourage the reader to imagine the scene for themselves as she describes what she sees. The ambiguous 'tú' could just as easily address the reader as Papitos or Fortunata. Thus, before the source of the spectacle is revealed, the reader, just as Lupe, is left to imagine what has happened to cause the commotion in the street.

The balcony is reaffirmed as a middle-class feminine space when the women realize that they cannot leave the home without first having a reason to do so. As a servant, Papitos has the freedom to exit the home under the pretext of shopping, allowing her to experience the spectacle down in the street while the *señoras* must remain in the balcony: "Señora mándame por los fideos... Ya sabe que no hay..." dijo la mona. "Vamos...lo que tú quieres es curiosear..." "Mándame," repitió la chiquilla dando brincos entre risueña y suplicante. "Pues anda," dijo doña Lupe, que aquel día estaba de buen humor; "si no sales te vas a caer por el balcón" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 370-71). Papitos'

excitement is so great that it can hardly be contained on the balcony, and she leaves the domestic space of the home behind to view the spectacle more closely.

Upon her return, the narrator stresses the social difference between Papitos and Lupe. Galdós changed the sentence, “*Doña Lupe* la vio desde el balcón entrar en la casa y fue a abrirle la puerta... ‘¿Te has restregado bien *los pies?*’” to “*Su ama* la vio entrar en la casa y fue a abrirle la puerta... ‘¿Te has restregado bien *las patas?*’” (emphasis mine) (G 3B, 57). The replacement of ‘Doña Lupe’ with ‘su ama’ highlights the power dynamic of the relationship with Lupe determining Papitos behavior. Lupe, perhaps out of jealousy of Papitos freedom to access the public space of the street, also jabs at her by referring to her feet as ‘patas’ and treating her as a social inferior.

Furthermore, the fact that Papitos wipes her dirty feet on the doormat of a neighbor’s home at Lupe’s behest shows the malicious nature of both characters. Lupe and Papitos are more concerned with asserting their own superiority over their neighbors than they are with helping them: “‘¿Sabes lo que debes hacer siempre que subes? Refregarte bien en el limpiabarros del vecino, en ése que está ahí.’ ‘¿En éste?’ dijo la mona, bailando el zapateado en el limpiabarros del cuarto de la izquierda. ‘Porque todos los pisotones de menos que le demos al nuestro, eso vamos ganando’” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 371). Papitos and Lupe have no problem stepping over others to help themselves, and both master and servant are complicit in benefiting to the detriment of their neighbor.

Although Papitos runs down to see what is happening in the street, nearly the entire scene is related while the women are together on the balcony. Once back in the

home, Papitos reveals that the unfortunate woman is Mauricia, who has been recently released from *Las Micaelas* after the failed attempt at reforming her immoral conduct. Papitos notes that Mauricia's accident is directly connected with her alcoholism: “¿No sabe lo que hay allí? Es una mujer que parece está bebida; pero muy bebida... ¿Y no acierta quién es? La señá Mauricia” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 371). Papitos emphasis of Mauricia's drunken state hints at part of the reason she gains pleasure from the spectacle. Dijk and Ouwerkerk note that deservingness is a potential trigger for schadenfreude: “If another's misfortune is appraised as just and deserved, it will evoke schadenfreude as it satisfies our concern for just and deserved outcomes” (8). From a middle-class perspective Mauricia's drinking deserves to be punished in some way. Fuentes notes that in the nineteenth century: “Excessive drinking, in its turn, came to be regarded as a main cause of poverty and other social problems associated with it, including unemployment and absenteeism from work, subversion, mendacity, criminality, and idleness” (63). Papitos mirrors the very middle-class values that degrade her, and her comments insinuate that Mauricia has no one but herself to blame for her accident.

Although Lupe shares Papitos sentiments, Fortunata expresses a vastly different emotional response to the news of Mauricia's accident:

“¿Pero oyes, mujer, has oído?” dijo doña Lupe desde el pasillo volviendo a la sala. “Mauricia...borracha...ahí tienes lo que reúne tantísima gente.” “¿Pero la viste bien? ¿Estás segura de que es ella?” preguntó Fortunata pasado el primer momento de asombro. “Sí, señorita, ella es...” “Pero hija...” observó doña Lupe volviendo a asomarse con oficiosidad, “cree que me hace esto una impresión...”

¡Y los de Orden Público que no parecen! ¡Ah! sí, la levantan... ¡Qué mujer!...

Miren que ponerse en ese estado.” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 371)

The multiple meanings of ‘oficiosidad’ as both “diligencia y aplicación de trabajo” as well as “importunidad y falso escrúpulo de quien se entremete en oficio o negocio que no le incumbe” (DRAE), show the ironic tone of the narrator who portrays Lupe as a meddling woman, deeply invested in the spectacle. Ultimately, for Lupe, Mauricia’s misfortune becomes her entertainment. As the three women watch Mauricia’s body being carried away, Lupe turns the event into a game: “‘Sí, se la llevan a la Casa de Socorro o al Hospital...Pero ¡quía!, no... Suben. ¿Apostamos a que la traen a la botica?’” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 372). Lupe narrates the events as they happen, hoping to anticipate the next step in the action. Her comments are excited and playful, and display a complete lack of sympathy for Mauricia’s suffering. On the other hand, Fortunata clearly feels distraught by the news and is upset to find out her friend is suffering.

Fortunata’s compassion for Mauricia is directly related to her experiences as a lower-class woman. Fortunata reflects on her past experiences with Mauricia as she observes her friend’s present misfortune from the balcony: “‘Ahora se la llevan...Está como un cuerpo muerto,’ decía Fortunata, acordándose de las escenas que había presenciado en el convento” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 371). While the women watch Mauricia from afar, Papitos fills in the graphic details of the scene, upsetting Fortunata even further. At a distance, Lupe, Fortunata, and Papitos have a bird’s eye view of the general action occurring in the scene. Papitos, however, allows them to zoom in through her own recounting of Mauricia’s horrific injury seen from the street: “‘Si tiene rajada la

cabeza en salva la parte...’ afirmó Papitos dando a conocer gráficamente las dimensiones de la herida. Y echaba la mar de sangre... que corría por la calle abajo, como corre el agua cuando llueve” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 372). Papitos’ lack of human empathy and her infantile perspective are reflected in her interpretation of the scene. Her language is harsh and coarse, with words like ‘rajada’ and ‘sangre’ stressing the violent details of Mauricia’s fall. As a narrator she is also poetic, using a simile to compare the excessive blood flow to rushing rainwater, a strikingly macabre image considering that Ave María Street is located on a hill.

Fortunata’s sympathetic reaction to the scene contrasts greatly with that of Papitos and Lupe. She refuses to continue watching the spectacle as Mauricia is brought closer to Lupe’s home: “Cuando pasaba bajo los balcones el cuerpo inerte de Mauricia la Dura, cargado por los de Orden Público y escoltado por el gentío, Fortunata se quitó del balcón porque le faltaba ánimo para presenciar tal espectáculo” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 372). Fortunata does not share the same morbid curiosity as Lupe and Papitos, nor does she believe that Mauricia deserves to suffer. She is unable to watch as someone with whom she has a personal connection suffers. Galdós reminds the reader that spectatorship is a choice, and that refusing to take part in another’s affliction, even as a passive observer, is an act of kindness.

For their part, Lupe and Papitos have no problem watching Mauricia’s anguish even though they are mostly limited to observing her from the balcony: “Doña Lupe y Papitos sí que lo vieron todo, y ésta tuvo aún la pretensión de que su ama la dejase ir a la botica para ver la cura que le hacían a *aquella borrachona*. Pero esto ya era mucha

libertad, y aunque la chiquilla imaginó diferentes pretextos para bajar, no se salió con la suya” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 372). Lupe forbids her from leaving the domestic sphere, highlighting the balcony as an important surveillance space for women in Galdós’s Madrid, where it was considered “mucho libertad” to walk in the street. Papitos’ perspective informs the focalized narration, as the narrator makes use of free indirect style to echo her words: Mauricia is “aquella borrachona.”⁴⁷

The reaction of each character to this scene paints their intimate portrait. Similar to the general crowd that surrounds Mauricia, Papitos and Lupe show a morbid curiosity. Their attraction to the spectacle depicts a natural reaction to identifying a crisis, assessing the problem and seeing what is being done to help the person in distress. The commotion creates a sense of community, as the feelings of worry and anxiety are shared by the gathering masses. However, Lupe and Papitos’ general excitement and joy at Mauricia’s suffering also suggests that the two experience a type of *schadenfreude*, gaining pleasure at her accident and seeing themselves as both morally and socially superior. Their lack of pity can be attributed in part to their middle-class sensibilities, as they repeatedly condemn Mauricia’s as a drunk.

Fortunata, on the other hand, feels at odds with the reaction of the crowd. Having shared a cell with Mauricia in *Las Micaelas* as punishment for her own ‘immoral’ actions, Fortunata cannot bear to observe the spectacle, nor ridicule the ailing victim. As is the case throughout the novel, Fortunata gains no satisfaction from exerting her social

⁴⁷ In fact, in the galley sheets Galdós changed “ver la cura que le hacían a sená Mauricia” to “ver la cura que le hacían a *aquella borrachona*” (G 3B, 58). This change implies moral judgement on Papitos’ part.

superiority over others. Although she is deeply involved with middle-class characters, she never truly identifies with many of the superficial characteristics they exhibit. Rather, she separates herself from the common ethos and sympathizes with the misfortunes of a marginalized character. Fortunata, after all, had observed Mauricia's carnivalesque spectacle firsthand in the convent, and, perhaps, she even fears a similarly tragic ending for herself.

3.3.2 Mauricia La Dura's Death Spectacle in the *Casa de Corredor*

Mauricia's death "act" extends throughout the second part of the novel, and continues to play an important role in the identity of the characters who observe her final moments. Unfortunately for Mauricia, she does not die on the fateful day she fell in Ave María Street. Instead, Doña Lupe learns that Mauricia has been brought back to the *casa de corredor* to die in her sister Severiana's home:

Al anoecer entró doña Lupe, después de haberse limpiado el lodo de las suelas en el felpudo del vecino. "Oye una cosa," dijo a Fortunata, quitándose el manto. "He sabido esta tarde que Mauricia se está muriendo. ¡Pobre mujer! Tenemos que ir a verla. No es lejos: calle de 'Mira el Río.'" Dióle esta noticia su amiga Casta Moreno, que la supo por Cándido Samaniego. Doña Guillermina había sacado del Hospital a Mauricia, trasladándola a casa de la hermana de esta, y la asistía el médico de la Beneficencia Domiciliaria y de la Junta de señoras. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 379)

Again, the image of Doña Lupe using her neighbor's doormat communicates her own selfish nature. Mauricia's impending death will bring Fortunata, along with Guillermina and other characters, to the *casa de corredor* mentioned in Part One of the novel.

Notably, Doña Lupe stays informed on the status of Mauricia through the connections afforded her by her new home in Lavapiés and her proximity to other gossiping middle-class women such as Casta.

Lupe expresses her desire to witness Mauricia's death, and seems fascinated to watch her repent as her soul departs to the afterlife:

La infeliz tarasca viciosa, con estos cuidados y las ternezas de doña Guillermina, y más aún, con la proximidad de la muerte, estaba que parecía otra, curada de sus maldades y arrepentida en toda la extensión de la palabra, diciendo que se quería morir lo más católicamente posible, y pidiendo perdón a todos con unos ayes y una religiosidad tan fervientes que partían el corazón. "Te digo que si esto es verdad, habrá que alquilar balcones para verla morir. Mañana nos vamos allá."

(Fortunata y Jacinta II, 379)

Doña Lupe cannot contain her morbid curiosity, and wishes to watch Mauricia's death in person. Her words highlight the theatrical interpretation of life expressed by Juanito in the beginning of the novel, when she states that Mauricia's death is worth renting balconies to watch. Clearly, she believes it an event not to be missed.

Mauricia's label as a Tarasca in the passage above also reminds the reader of her role as a carnivalesque character. Citing Maurice Bloch, Gilmore observes that the role of

the monster in Carnival is a sacrificial one, ultimately resulting in the destruction of the beast for the greater good of society:

[...] in order for societies to regenerate themselves over time, they must have rituals in which people are attacked by an external force representing evil, usually embodied in the form of a menacing animal or a monster. The people then defeat the monster through common action, killing the beast and returning to normalcy, not in the same form as before, but with a renewed “vitality” that they derive from appropriating and “consuming” the power of the thing they have killed.

Although Mauricia is not killed by other characters in the novel, her own deviant behavior leads to her demise, and as the Tarasca she must die so that the rest of the characters can move forward and order can be restored. Lupe, in particular, is interested in seeing Mauricia’s ‘evil’ soul reclaimed by God before she dies.

Lupe also sees Mauricia’s death as an opportunity to take part in elite social circles. Guillermina’s presence at the spectacle adds an element of social prestige to the affair. The narrator notes that Lupe desires to observe Mauricia in her final moments because she hopes to meet the other reputable middle-class women who tend to follow Guillermina around:

Doña Lupe no iba a ver a Mauricia por pura caridad. Tiempo hacía que Guillermina la fascinaba, más por el señorío que por la virtud, y ya que la gran fundadora iba a hacer patente su santidad, teniendo por corte a las damas más en lugar accesible a doña Lupe, ¿por qué no había esta de intentar meter la jeta? Pues qué, ¿no era ella también *dama*? (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 379-80)

Lupe admires Guillermina for her ability to network with upper middle-class characters and hopes to gain access to her privileged connections through Mauricia's death.

Liminal space plays an important role in the symbolic cleansing and preparation of Mauricia's soul for the afterlife. The corridor, a space that earlier in the novel communicated social inequality, now is represented as a connection between God and Mauricia. After preparing the interior space of Severiana's home, Guillermina addresses the importance of the shared public spaces of the building: "Salió luego al corredor y habiendo notado que la escalera no estaba barrida aún, llamó a la portera. 'Pero usted en qué está pensando? ¿No le han dicho que hoy viene el Señor a esta casa? ¡Y está ese portal que da asco mirarlo! Coja usted la escoba mujer. Si no, la cogeré yo'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 392). Guillermina shows that her true charity comes not in the material world but in the spiritual one. The narrator notes that she recruits the help of the community in order to mark the solemn occasion and make the setting of Mauricia's death respectable for God's arrival: "subió al principal, y de puerta en puerta exhortaba a los grupos de mujeres que allí estaban peinándose. 'A las doce... que no vea yo aquí estos corrillos, ¿estamos? Y barrerme bien todo el corredor. La que tenga velas que las saque; la que tenga flores o tiestos bonitos que los lleve allá... Y todos estos pingajos que aquí veo colgados, están ahora demás' (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 394-95). Whereas Mauricia had performed carnivalesque spectacle in the convent, Guillermina attempts to transform the *corrala* into a holy space and uses a sense of communal responsibility to sanitize the corridor. Guillermina's belief that Mauricia can ascend to heaven is tied to the appearance of the liminal space she occupies. By cleaning the corridors and introducing

holy candles, she strips the space of any immorality: “‘No se quiere lujo, sino decencia,’ repetía Guillermina, que comunicaba su actividad febril a todos los vecinos y vecinas de la casa” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 395).

Guillermina is highly concerned with the theatrical aspects of Mauricia’s death. In fact, she plays the part of organizing the stage and audience of neighbors that crowd in to watch the spectacle:

Se acercaba la hora, y en el patio sonaba el rumor de emoción teatral que acompaña a las grandes solemnidades. El pueblo ocupaba el sitio infalible que la curiosidad dispone. En el portal no se cabía, y todos los chicos del barrio se habían dado cita allí, cual si creyeran que sin ellos no podía tener lucimiento alguno la ceremonia. Guillermina recorría toda la carrera, desde la puerta del cuarto de Severiana hasta la de la calle, dando órdenes, inspeccionando el público y mandando que se pusieran en última fila las individualidades de uno y otro sexo que no tenían buen ver. Había venido de la parroquia un hombre asacristanado, y estaba repartiendo la carga de velas que trajo. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 397)

The narrator refers to the lower-class neighbors as an audience, even using the word ‘pueblo’ to highlight their status as the general masses. The crowd is drawn to Mauricia through their own morbid curiosity, hoping to see her repent and wondering what will happen next. Guillermina arranges everything as if she were performing a solemn ritual, using the neighbors to create a holy atmosphere and assuring the aesthetic quality of the scene. She even orders the crowd so that everyone in the corridor can get a good view of

the ceremony. The audience is important to Guillermina because it affirms the exemplary importance of Mauricia's return to Christianity.

Mauricia's death is secondary: of utmost importance is her confession and the purification of her soul before she passes to the next world. After Father Nones blesses Mauricia the narrator notes the boisterous reaction of the crowd:

Guillermina, cesando de rezar, acercó su cara a la de Mauricia y empezó a darle besos. Todas las demás, lloriqueando, la felicitaban con ruidosos aspavientos, y por fin la misma santa hubo de mandar que cesaran aquellas manifestaciones de regocijo, porque la enferma se afectaba mucho, y podría resultarle algún retroceso peligroso. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 399)

The women observing Mauricia display their fascination in the spiritual and supernatural, believing that her soul has now been saved, and they seem to consider Guillermina to be a sort of Christian magician. However, they show their blatant disregard for Mauricia's physical well-being by cheering despite her proximity to death. Thus, Mauricia is reduced to a prop in the staged performance of her own death.

While the lower-class spectators help Guillermina perfect the setting of Mauricia's death, their presence disappoints Doña Lupe. The lower-class space of the *casa de corredor* offers her no contact with the respected women she had hoped to see. The narrator makes a special note of Lupe's disillusionment with the rest of the audience of Mauricia's death: "Hay que decir de paso que doña Lupe estaba algo desilusionada, pues había creído que Guillermina iba siempre a sus visitas benéficas con un regimiento de señoras. '¿Pero dónde están esas *damas distinguidas* de que hablan los periódicos? Por

lo que voy viendo, aquí no viene más dama que yo” (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 400-01).

Doña Lupe treats Mauricia’s death like a trip to the opera and her feelings highlight the importance of spectacle as a communal act that can define an individual’s social status.

Furthermore, she confuses the text of the newspaper with the action of a novel, hoping to become one of the respected personages she has read about. In reality, the audience does not represent the upper middle-class group of women that Lupe desired to meet.

However, her condescending language suggests that she ultimately takes solace in considering herself superior to the rest of the crowd.

Mauricia’s death also becomes a nexus for introducing various important characters to one another. In fact, Fortunata and Jacinta first meet in Severiana’s home:

Viendo Fortunata que Mauricia se dormía profundamente, salió a la sala. No había nadie. Acercose a la ventana, mirando a la calle por entre los cristales, y allí estuvo un largo rato con la atención vagabunda y el pensamiento adormilado, cuando un rumor en el pasillo la sacó de su abstracción. Al volverse, se quedó atónita, viendo a Jacinta que, detenida en la puerta, alargaba la cabeza para ver quién estaba allí. Traía de la mano una niña, vestida a la moda, pero con sencillez y sin pizca de afectación de elegancia. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 401).

Hoping to evade the spectacle, Fortunata turns her gaze outwards to the street, and the window allows her to escape from Mauricia’s misfortunes. In this moment, Jacinta’s entrance into Severiana’s home causes a stream of new emotions in addition to the fear and pity caused by Mauricia’s impending death. Fortunata faces her own jealous feelings

towards Jacinta and comes to terms with the general injustice of her own status as a lower-class character.

Not recognizing Fortunata, Jacinta unknowingly takes part in a parallel drama as Mauricia's death unfolds. This is especially highlighted by the presence of Mauricia's daughter, whom Jacinta has taken under her care. When Mauricia exclaims, "Y mi hija está mejor en la tierra con la señorita que conmigo en el Cielo..." (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 404), Fortunata once again finds herself unable to watch the spectacle. She knows that if she ever has an illegitimate child with Juanito she will never be able to care for them financially the way that Jacinta can, and this causes an emotional rupture: "Fortunata no aguardó al fin de la escena. Sentía en su interior un trastorno tan grande que una de dos, o rompía en llanto o reventaba" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 405). The scene profoundly affects Fortunata because it reminds her of her own misfortunes.

The location of Mauricia's death in the *casa de corredor* is also significant because it becomes a liminal space between the spiritual and material world. At one point, Fortunata and Lupe leave Severiana's home with plans to come back later that evening with Maxi. Upon their return, Maxi, Fortunata, and Lupe observe the children of the *corrala* playing a dangerous game:

Las nueve sería, cuando los tres entraban por el portal de la casa de corredor, y no fue poco su asombro al ver en el patio resplandor de hoguera y multitud de antorchas, cuyas movibles y rojizas llamas daban a la escena temeroso y fantástico aspecto. [...] La diversión consistía en romper filas inesperadamente, y saltar por encima de la hoguera... En fin, que semejante escena daba una idea de

aquella parte del Infierno donde deben tener sus esparcimientos los chiquillos del Demonio. Maximiliano y su mujer se detuvieron un rato a ver aquello; pero doña Lupe dirigió a la infantil tropa miradas y expresiones de desdén, diciendo que la culpa la tenían los padres que tal sacrilegio consentían. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 406-07)

This hellish, carnivalesque scene portends Mauricia's death, and puts into doubt her ascent to heaven. The display of a pagan ritual creates a cleavage of culture and utters a pre-Christian discourse that contrasts Mauricia's 'sinful' life with ecclesiastical beliefs. Therefore, the children's game offends Lupe's middle-class sensibilities while it fascinates both Fortunata and Maxi. Ironically, it is in this anti-ecclesiastical space that Guillermina attempts to save Mauricia's soul.

Despite her fascination in the children's carnivalesque activities, Fortunata remains unable to directly observe Mauricia's death. After causing a scandal by revealing herself to Jacinta, Fortunata decides not to return to Severiana's home and is not present for Mauricia's final moments. Instead she receives a graphic description secondhand from Doña Lupe: "...De repente, se descompuso, hija; ¡pero de qué manera...! Se quedó amoratada, empezó a dar manotazos y a echar por aquella boca unas flores, ¡unas berzas...! Era un horror'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 438). Doña Lupe's excitement betrays her attraction to the morbid spectacle of Mauricia's death. Once again, Fortunata is exposed indirectly to Mauricia's misfortunes through another character's description. Furthermore, the image of the blossoming flower protruding from Mauricia's dying

mouth conjures Bakhtinian carnival logic as death generates new life, again suggesting her importance in the cyclical carnivalesque ritual.

When Fortunata finally gathers her courage to return to the *casa de corredor*, she fears seeing Mauricia's body. Rather than viewing it directly she sees it through a crack in the living room door: "Por un resquicio de la puerta que comunicaba la a la primera con la cámara mortuoria, vio Fortunata los pies de la Dura en el ataúd, y no tuvo ánimo para acercarse a ver más" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 441). Fortunata never sees Mauricia's entire body, instead glimpsing only her feet. This fear is directly related to the foreshadowing of her own death: "Dábale pena y terror, y no podía olvidar las últimas palabras que le dijo su infeliz amiga: 'Lo primerito que le he de pedir al Señor es que te mueras tú también, y estaremos juntas en el Cielo'" (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 441).

Ultimately, Mauricia's death is a cathartic experience for Fortunata. After a long conversation with Guillermina, Fortunata observes from the balcony as Mauricia's, now resting in her coffin, is carried into the street:

Cuando Guillermina y Fortunata salieron, ya el ataúd era bajado en hombros de dos jayanes para ponerlo en el carro humilde que esperaba en la calle. La curiosidad y el deseo de dar el último adiós empujaron a Fortunata hacia la escalera... Alcanzó a ver las cintas amarillas sobre la tela negra, en la revuelta de la escalera; pero fue un segundo no más. Después se asomó al balcón, y vio cómo pusieron la caja en el carro, y cómo se puso en marcha este sin más acompañamiento que el de un triste simón en que iban Juan Antonio y dos vecinos. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 448-49)

Fortunata is curious, but she also feels the need to respect and accompany Mauricia as she is taken away. Watching this spectacle, her emotions spill over:

Se vio tan vivamente acometida de ganas de llorar, que no recordaba haber llorado nunca tanto, en tan poco tiempo. Y no era sólo la pena de ver desaparecer para siempre a una persona hacia la cual sentía amor, afición, querencia increíble; era además una necesidad de desahogar su corazón por penas atrasadas y que sin duda no estaban bien lloradas todavía. (*Fortunata y Jacinta II*, 449)

This moment is the most intense emotional release that Fortunata experiences in the novel. For Fortunata, the theatrical aspects of Mauricia's death allow her to face her fears in an indirect manner as well as release previously suppressed emotions. Changes to the B manuscript evident in the galley sheets reveal the emotional connection between the two characters. Galdós changed "por quien tenía cierta simpatía inexplicable" to "la cual sentía amor, afición, querencia increíble" (G 3C, 46). Fortunata's feelings go beyond simple sympathy for a lower-class woman. She is the only character that views Mauricia as a person rather than the prop of a theatrical production. The spectacle of death is portrayed in this scene in such a way that reveals complex emotion and brings Fortunata to life to the reader, exposing her fears, compassion, and grief.

The sense of emotional cleansing experienced in this scene is represented by the liminal spaces of Severiana's home after Mauricia's death. As the carriage carrying Mauricia's body disappears from sight, the women begin to purify the home, washing away all signs of death: "Pronto desapareció el carro, y de Mauricia no quedó más que un recuerdo, todavía fresco; pero que se había de secar rápidamente. A los diez minutos de

haber salido el cuerpo, entró Severiana con los ojos hinchados, y abrió todas las puertas, ventanas, y balcones para que se ventilara la casa. La comandanta empezaba a disponer el tren de limpieza, y a sacar los trastos para barrer con desahogo” (*Fortunata y Jacinta*, 449). Mauricia’s death is followed by a purification of the space she had previously occupied. The women open the windows and doors to finally release all of their pent up feelings, and to start anew.

The spectacle of Mauricia’s death reveals the subjectivity of textual and theatrical interpretation. Through the representation of characters as they ‘read’ the spectacle of death, Galdós depicts the role of fiction as a means of questioning our attraction to tragedy and violence. The liminal spaces of the novel allow us to watch characters as spectators, and ultimately, this proves a more insightful perspective into our human nature than the spectacle itself.

Conclusion

Through the study of liminal spaces in Galdós's novels, we have seen that one of the constants in his fiction is change. Examining the spaces existing between private and public, domestic and commercial, spectacle and observation, has afforded us a better understanding of the dynamic society, characters, and interplay of narration in Galdós's novels.

For Galdós, the transformation of fictional liminal space signals the influence of the rise of the middle class in nineteenth-century Spain. The balcony not only functions to connect the home to the street, but is also an ornamental space replacing the coat of arms used in the past by the aristocracy. The balcony and *mirador* exist as spaces for outward observation and are also the stuff of spectacle themselves, announcing the social status of a family to passersby in the street.

The display window in Galdós's Madrid also portrays a new conception of space in the age of the merchant class. As the middle-class assumes control of the capital, homes become businesses, and in turn, the window is used for commerce. The public space of Madrid is thus transformed into a bazar. Traversing the street and shopping become one simultaneous act, and the fashioning of identity cannot be separated from the marketing techniques that plant desires in their customers.

Galdós portrays the imagination of the disenfranchised, the impoverished, and the unfortunate in liminal space as they struggle against their systemic obstacles. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, the lower-class space of the *casa de corredor* draws the reader's attention to various sources of social tension. The chapter entitled 'Una visita al Cuarto

Estado' is focalized through two middle-class characters, Jacinta and Guillermina, who interpret what they observe as shocking, casting blame on the children's parents for their unfortunate appearance. Whereas the dominant middle-class narrative condemned the lower-class as filthy, immoral, and lazy, the depiction of the liminal space of the *corrala* reveals the stark inequalities suffered by Madrid's impoverished communities.

The social inequality created by the commercialization of space is also evident in the *casa de corredor* described in *Torquemada en la hoguera*. In the novel, the *casa de corredor* signals the transformation of Church-owned properties into real-estate investments for the middle class. Torquemada, the landlord of such a *casa de corredor*, purchases his property through the practice of disentanglement. Torquemada replaces religious practices with his financial endeavors, even deciding to collect rent on Sundays. The fear of the residents of the *casa de corredor* and their general impoverished state speak to the cruelty of Madrid's middle class, one that sees the lives of others as primarily a business proposition.

The social implications of liminal space are profoundly intertwined with the individual lives of Galdosian characters. As the display window links commercial and public space it also determines the hopes, desires, and fears of Isidora Rufete in *La desheredada*. On the one hand, the role of women as consumers liberates Isidora from her domestic confines, yet on the other, she is introduced to seductive advertising and objectification. The glass barrier that separates Isidora from the shop creates an experience of visual consumption not only of the beautiful objects she observes but also of the self—the light in the display projects her own reflection superimposed onto the

image of the illuminated goods. Gazing into the display window is an act of desire and of identity formation; as Isidora observes luxury goods she fantasizes about her future life while also viewing herself as a beautiful object.

Liminal settings also stand at the crossroads between life and death for desperate Galdosian characters. Dulcenombre Babel, Rafael de Águila, and Ramón Villamil, find themselves alienated from their family life. In each case, the balcony is a site of intense consciousness as these characters reflect upon their domestic circumstances and come to contemplate suicide in this in-between space.

Additionally, liminal spaces connect characters to the world outside their home, allowing them to fantasize, dream, and despair. In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Maximiliano Rubin, a sickly adolescent, imagines himself to be a strong, able-bodied soldier when he watches military processions from the window of his bedroom. Later in the novel, he fantasizes about Fortunata as she occupies the balcony, dreaming her to be the perfect version of the middle-class woman. And yet, the balcony is also the source of Maxi's trepidation, for it is there that Fortunata displays her unfaithfulness to him, searching longingly for her lover Juanito in the street. Liminal spaces are a window into Maximiliano's soul, revealing his deepest fantasies and darkest fears.

Liminal space is also a setting that links Galdós's characters to spectacle. Balconies and patios set the stage for human drama, and blur the boundary between life and art, and actor and audience, affirming the function of representation itself as a medium for conceiving and interpreting the world.

Carnavalesque spectacle on the balcony of the Troya home in *Doña Perfecta* and in the patios of *Las Micaelas* convent in *Fortunata y Jacinta* exemplifies the role of liminal space in upsetting social hierarchy through performance. In this sense, the carnivalesque display of the *niñas* Troya and Mauricia la Dura undermines the hegemonic forces that attempt to control them. The games, laughter, insults, curses, and attacks of the *niñas* Troya and Mauricia la Dura defy the Catholic norms established in the provincial setting of Orbajosa as well as in the urban environment of Madrid. These carnivalesque descriptions create a symbolic inversion within the text, and allow marginalized characters to exert their freedom through carnivalesque theatrics.

In *Fortunata y Jacinta*, Doña Lupe's mind becomes the screen of spectacle. When the streets of Madrid lack human activity for her to observe from the balcony of her home in the quiet neighborhood of Chamberí, the narrative turns inward, focusing on events presented through memory and reflection. The depiction of Doña Lupe's thoughts on the balcony highlights the human capacity to imagine spectacle into existence. Influenced by her subjective experience, Doña Lupe associates idealized memories of her deceased husband with the scandalous developments of Maxi and Fortunata's relationship, creating an opaque emotional filter that defines her cognitive process.

Mauricia la Dura's fall in *Fortunata y Jacinta*, as observed from the balcony by Papitos, Doña Lupe, and Fortunata, reminds the reader that human misfortune is the stuff of spectacle as each character reflects upon Mauricia's drunken state and bloodied body. Galdós represents the reactions of each character, showing how a single event can elicit a wide range of emotional responses. Papitos expresses a sadistic fascination in the

violence of the scene, whereas Lupe gains a sense of satisfaction at her social superiority over Mauricia. Having shared deeply moving experiences with Mauricia, Fortunata conveys sympathy for her plight. When Mauricia dies in the *casa de corredor* of the 'Cuarto Estado' Fortunata's previously repressed sorrow is released by the sight of the removal coffin. By drawing attention to the spectator rather than the spectacle itself, Galdós portrays characters who interpret the text they inhabit, with the balcony serving as a stage for metafictional representation.

The topics considered in this dissertation pose further avenues for exploring liminal space in Galdós's art. How do liminal spaces in Galdós's novels relate to in-between spaces in his plays? A study of liminal spaces in his plays could reveal how he intended for windows, balconies, and patios to be represented visually. This would be a particularly interesting study in that it could in turn examine the influence of theater on the settings of Galdós's novels. Similarly, a critical analysis of liminal space in the *Episodios Nacionales* could address the question of historical import of in-between spaces. How do characters based on historical figures interact with the world around them in and through liminal spaces? How are fictionalized politicians viewed from those spaces and how does this differ, if at all, from other characters in Galdós's novelistic universe?

The conclusions of this study should also have value when considering liminal space in narrative representation of other authors. Research remains to be done on representations of the *casa de corredor* as depicted in the works of Galdós's contemporaries, for example. Considering the importance of the display window and

balcony on feminine identity, a study of liminal space in the works of women authors such as Cecilia Francisca Josefa Böhl de Faber (better known by her pen name, Fernán Caballero), and Emilia Pardo Bazán would be of the highest interest.

The representation of liminal spaces in literature transcends the nineteenth century. The study of twentieth- and twenty-first century authors and their depiction of liminal space as compared to Galdós's novels would help us to better understand the way our perception of space has changed over time, and to consider how spaces continually evolve as barriers are created and erased through new technology and cultural practices. Other Spanish women writers from the twentieth century, such as Carmen Martín Gaité, offer a unique perspective on liminal space in Madrid. Twenty-first century Spanish authors such as Elena Becerra Muñoz have even begun to consider virtual liminal spaces as computers and smartphones connect us to one another in new (and sometimes unsettling) ways.

Finally, liminal space theory certainly merits critical consideration in other modes of artistic production. Of special interest to our study are in-between spaces in cinema. In the visual arts, windows, balconies, and other such spaces frame characters as they 'see' their world, connecting them to their surrounding, and allowing them to hide, reveal, or discover secrets. Our hope is that the liminal spaces of Galdós's novels examined in this dissertation can serve as points of departure for many further studies of representations of space on the edge.

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Vita

